# Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

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# Social Security Inclusion and Social Integration among Young Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Turkey: A Comparative Cross-Sectional Study

Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

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**Abstract**

This study examined the relationship between social security inclusion and social integration among young Syrian refugees (18–29) in Jordan and Türkiye. The study used a comparative cross-sectional design and collected primary data through a structured questionnaire administered in both countries. The analysis measured social security inclusion and employment formality as key institutional variables and assessed social integration as a multidimensional outcome capturing economic participation, connectedness, participation, and belonging. The study also measured economic security and vulnerability as mediating pathways, shock exposure (illness, work injury, income loss) as a conditional pathway, and legal, administrative, and economic barriers as constraints shaping access and unequal inclusion.

The results showed that social security inclusion was positively associated with overall social integration in both Jordan and Türkiye, with stronger associations for economic participation and belonging dimensions. Social security inclusion was associated with higher economic security and lower vulnerability, and both pathways contributed to the inclusion–integration relationship through indirect effects consistent with the conceptual framework. Employment formality strongly predicted social security inclusion and was also associated with higher social integration, confirming formality as a key gateway to institutional protection. During shocks, inclusion was associated with lower poverty/social exclusion risk among shock-exposed respondents, supporting a buffering pattern. Structural barriers were negatively associated with both inclusion and integration, indicating that implementation frictions and affordability constraints shaped unequal access and integration outcomes. Overall, the comparative evidence suggested that institutional inclusion through protected work and social security was aligned with improved stability and integration-related outcomes for youth, while informality and access barriers limited these pathways across both contexts.

**Keywords:** social security inclusion; social integration; Syrian refugees; youth; Jordan and Türkiye

# Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter examines how inclusion in social security systems relates to social integration among young Syrian refugees living in Jordan and Turkey. It explains why social security matters as an important part of social protection, especially because it can affect refugees' financial stability, exposure to risk, and wider integration. This is particularly relevant in settings where informal work is widespread and access to protection differs across groups. In addition, the chapter introduces a comparative approach by describing Jordan and Turkey as two major host countries with different institutions and labor-market conditions, which, in turn, shape refugees' chances of obtaining formal jobs and gaining social security coverage.

The study focuses on young Syrian refugees and examines whether participation in social security systems is associated with integration outcomes, using a comparative cross-sectional research design. The main focus of the thesis is how social security inclusion may influence the social integration of young Syrian refugees across two host-country contexts. However, a key problem in existing research is the lack of strong comparative evidence—based on the same survey measures—showing how social security inclusion interacts with job formality, experiences of shocks, and structural obstacles to shape integration for young refugees across countries. As a result, this study adds evidence that can improve academic understanding of social protection as a pathway to integration and support policy debates on how host countries can expand refugees' access to formal employment and protective systems.

This chapter is organized in a clear sequence. It begins by setting out the study's background and context, including why focusing on youth is important, why comparing Jordan and Turkey is useful, and how social security inclusion is connected to social integration. It then describes the research problem and highlights the knowledge gap that motivates the study. After that, it presents the aim, objectives, research questions, and hypotheses. Next, it defines the key concepts and explains how they are used in this thesis, followed by a presentation of the conceptual framework that guides the analysis. In addition, the chapter discusses the study's significance, scope, and limitations, ethical

considerations, and the structure of the rest of the thesis. Finally, it closes with a summary that links this introduction to the literature and context review in the next chapter.

The following section provides the wider background and contextual details needed to understand why social security inclusion is an important factor in the social integration of young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey.

## 1.2 Background and Context

### 1.2.1 Syrian displacement and the "youth" integration challenge

Youth is commonly seen as a stage of life in which people move from relying on others in childhood to becoming more independent as adults, rather than simply belonging to a strict age group. This makes youth a useful category for understanding how integration develops over time (United Nations, 2013). In employment research, youth are often studied as they transition from school to work because stable employment is an important step that shapes future economic security and social inclusion (ILO, 2013; ILO, 2023). However, for young people who have experienced forced displacement, this transition is often slowed or interrupted by disrupted education, restrictions on movement, and limited access to decent jobs (UNICEF, 2019; Jones et al., 2022). Therefore, youth integration is better understood as a long-term process in which early setbacks can accumulate and lead to lasting disadvantage, especially when displacement continues for many years (Jones et al., 2022; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022).

The conflict in Syria has created one of the largest displacement situations in the region, with millions of Syrians registered as refugees in neighboring host countries. As a result, integration challenges are not short-term issues but become deeply embedded in host societies (UNHCR, 2026; IOM, 2026). Among young Syrian refugees, risks and difficulties are often tied to insecure livelihoods, since many young people enter the labor market through informal or low-quality work that offers little stability and few protections (UNICEF, 2019; Jones et al., 2022). In addition, disruptions to education and unequal access to high-quality learning opportunities can weaken skill development and reduce the likelihood of later entry into secure employment (Morrice & Salem, 2023; Jones et al., 2022). Social integration is also shaped by relationships and feelings of belonging, including social cohesion with host communities and access to networks that connect

refugees to wider opportunities (Mittal et al., 2025; Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022). Because of these challenges, social protection—especially inclusion in social security—becomes particularly important, since coverage can reduce the impact of sudden shocks and help young people plan, build skills, and take part more fully in social and economic life (Kawar et al., 2022; Hamad et al., 2025).

This connection between youth vulnerability and social protection matters even more in host countries where entry into formal work is not equal for everyone, and where documentation rules and administrative procedures can shape both employment access and social security coverage (Meral, Langley, & Barbelet, 2022; Kawar et al., 2022). Evidence from Jordan, for instance, suggests that routes into formal employment—often measured through work authorization—are linked to better welfare outcomes such as higher income and improved food security, which are closely tied to vulnerability and inclusion (Peitz et al., 2023). At the same time, research in Türkiye shows that social cohesion and integration among youth and young adults differ across groups and depend on opportunities for interaction, perceived social boundaries, and the wider institutional setting (Mittal et al., 2025; Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022). Jordan and Türkiye are therefore useful to compare because both host large numbers of Syrian refugees, yet their labor markets and institutional systems differ in ways that can influence access to social security and shape integration outcomes (UNHCR, 2026; Kawar et al., 2022). Following this logic, the next subsection presents Jordan and Türkiye as comparative cases for examining how social security inclusion relates to economic stability, the ability to cope with shocks, and social integration among young Syrian refugees (Kawar et al., 2022; Peitz et al., 2023; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022).

### 1.2.2 Social integration in Jordan and Turkey

Jordan and Türkiye are well-suited for comparison because both have hosted Syrians displaced by the conflict for many years, yet they operate under different policy approaches and labor-market conditions that affect refugees' chances of entering the formal labor market and accessing social protection (UNHCR, 2026). In Jordan, UNHCR country information shows a large registered refugee population in which Syrians are the main group, and most refugees live outside camps. Therefore, day-to-day integration depends heavily on participation in urban labor markets and access to public services (UNHCR,

2026). In Türkiye, UNHCR reporting and operational planning sources describe the country as one of the largest refugee-hosting contexts globally, with a very large Syrian population under temporary protection. As a result, integration and protection are treated as system-wide issues rather than short-lived humanitarian needs (UNHCR, 2025–2026). Because displacement is both large in scale and long in duration in these two settings, comparing Jordan and Türkiye provides a strong foundation for examining how social security inclusion is linked to integration outcomes across different national contexts (UNHCR, 2026).

An important reason for comparing the two countries is their labor-market structures, especially the extent of informal work and the sectors where refugees and young workers typically find jobs (ILO, 2024–2025). Jordan has high levels of informal employment, and the ILO reports that informality accounts for a large share of jobs, thereby directly affecting access to contributory social security (ILO, 2025). In Türkiye, ILOSTAT reports a substantial informal employment rate (SDG 8.3.1), showing that many workers are outside formal arrangements that usually enable social insurance contributions (ILOSTAT, 2024). In addition, country-level reporting indicates that many Syrians in Türkiye are estimated to work informally, reinforcing the need to examine differences between formal and informal employment when assessing protection and integration (AIDA, 2025).

Jordan and Türkiye also differ in how refugees can obtain legal permission to work, which influences whether formal employment is realistic and, in turn, whether they can access social security systems (UNHCR, 2024–2025). In Jordan, work authorization has been a central policy tool for supporting formal labor-market participation, and research using large household datasets finds that access to formal jobs—often measured by holding a work permit—is linked to better income and food security outcomes (Peitz et al., 2023). Policy analysis focused on Jordan further notes that work permit design, including fees and administrative procedures, affects take-up and can therefore shape whether refugees remain in informal work (ILO, 2025). In Türkiye, the Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners under Temporary Protection creates a legal route for Syrians under temporary protection to apply for work permits, indicating a structured pathway into formal work that is still shaped by administrative requirements and labor-demand conditions (Republic of Türkiye, 2016; ILO, 2016).

The two contexts also differ in the rules and practices governing social security enrollment, enforcement, and institutional design, which are directly relevant to a thesis centered on social security inclusion (Karadeniz, 2022). In Türkiye, official guidance and policy-oriented analysis indicate that people with work permits are expected to meet social security obligations, and the overall system combines premium-financed social insurance with tax-financed assistance and services (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labour and Social Security, n.d.; Karadeniz, 2022). In Jordan, mapping work on formal social protection highlights the importance of both contributory and non-contributory programs and points to the role of national institutions, including the Social Security Corporation, within the broader protection system (Kawar et al., 2022). This mapping also discusses Jordan's National Social Protection Strategy (2019–2025), which explicitly links "decent work and social security" to social protection goals, underscoring the relevance of studying social security inclusion to integration (Kawar et al., 2022).

Differences are also visible in service delivery systems and institutional capacity, which can shape integration beyond employment and influence how refugees interact with state and non-state institutions (Tumen, 2023; Meral et al., 2022). A synthesis prepared for the World Development Report on Turkey focuses on an integration policy framework covering labor markets, education, health, and social protection, showing that integration governance spans multiple sectors (Tumen, 2023). In Jordan, research on responses to urban displacement explains how inclusion and exclusion can emerge through access to assistance and services, as well as through everyday interactions in cities. This suggests that institutional design and implementation practices can shape social integration in practical ways (Meral et al., 2022). Economic conditions also matter in both countries, as broader macroeconomic pressures and labor-demand trends affect the availability of formal jobs and the fiscal and administrative space required for social protection (Kawar et al., 2022; Tumen, 2023).

The research value of comparing Jordan and Türkiye is that it allows the study to examine how individual characteristics—such as age, education, and work status—relate to social security inclusion and integration outcomes, while also considering how national context shapes these relationships (Tumen, 2023; Kawar et al., 2022). In other words, using a two-country design strengthens the analysis by testing key links across different institutional

setups rather than within a single policy environment (World Bank, 2003; ILO, 2024–2026).

To make the comparison reliable, this thesis uses the same operational definitions of "youth," "formal work," "social security inclusion," and "social integration" in both countries and applies consistent measurement across the two settings (ILOSTAT, n.d.). In particular, the study treats informality using internationally recognized statistical concepts and interprets social protection and social security through established policy frameworks that connect protection to risk and vulnerability across the life course (ILOSTAT, n.d.; World Bank, 2003; ILO, 2024–2026).

Table 1.1 presents a high-level overview of Jordan and Türkiye, highlighting context factors that matter for labor formality and access to social security.

*Table 1 .1. Jordan vs Türkiye—Context factors relevant to labor formality and social security access*

| **Context factor** | **Jordan (high-level)** | **Türkiye (high-level)** |
|---|---|---|
| Scale and settlement pattern | Predominantly urban/out-of-camp refugee settlement shapes access to jobs and services. (UNHCR, 2026). | A large Syrian population under temporary protection; the scale makes integration a national systems issue. (UNHCR, 2025–2026). |
| Informality context | High informality affects job quality and access to contributory protection. (ILO, 2025). | Informality remains substantial; many Syrians are estimated to work informally. (ILOSTAT, 2024; AIDA, 2025). |
| Work authorization pathway | Work permits constitute a key channel to formal employment and improved welfare indicators. (UNHCR, 2024–2025; Peitz et al., 2023). | Work permits for foreigners under temporary protection are legally regulated, enabling a formalization pathway. (Republic of Türkiye, 2016; ILO, 2016). |
| Social security linkage | Formal social protection mapping highlights the role of national | Social security obligations are tied to work authorization and are |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | institutions and programs, including contributory components. (Kawar et al., 2022). | governed by national social insurance and UHI legislation. (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labour and Social Security, n.d.; Karadeniz, 2022). |
| Integration governance | Urban inclusion/exclusion dynamics shape everyday integration outcomes. (Meral et al., 2022). | The integration policy framework spans labor, education, health, and social protection. (Tumen, 2023). |

### 1.2.3 Social protection and social security

Social protection is usually described as a broad set of policies and programs that includes both contributory and non-contributory support, to prevent and reduce poverty and vulnerability across the life course (Kawar et al., 2022). Within this wider area, social security most often refers to insurance-based, contributory schemes—such as benefits related to sickness, work injuries, unemployment, old age, and similar forms of support—where access commonly depends on having formal employment and making contributions (Kawar et al., 2022; ILO, 2024–2026). This difference matters for refugee integration because being included in social security is not only a sign of improved welfare; it can also influence how refugees participate in the labor market and in society more broadly (World Bank, 2003; ILO, 2024–2026).

The main way social security supports integration is by contributing to economic stability, as social insurance spreads risk and helps people manage income changes when they face expected life-course needs or unexpected negative events (World Bank, 2003; ILO, 2024–2026). Greater stability can reduce vulnerability, enabling people to plan, invest in skills, and stay connected to work, thereby shaping pathways to social integration (ILO, 2024–2026). In displacement contexts, these effects are especially important because shocks such as illness, injury, or sudden income loss can quickly push households toward poverty and exclusion when protection is missing (World Bank, 2003; ILO, 2024–2026). As a result, a "risk and resilience" approach treats social protection as part of a wider strategy to manage vulnerability, where protection helps prevent steep declines in living standards and supports recovery after shocks (World Bank, 2003; Kawar et al., 2022).

Research focused on specific countries also shows that social protection can influence social outcomes that matter for integration, including cohesion and feelings of connection (Zintl & Loewe, 2022; Hamad et al., 2025). In Jordan, evidence from donor-supported Cash-for-Work programs suggests that work-linked support can strengthen social cohesion and raise incomes, implying that economic improvement and social integration can develop together (Zintl & Loewe, 2022). In addition, analysis of Jordan's labeled education cash transfer points to ways social protection can support social connectedness among displaced adolescents, showing that protection can affect relationships and belonging, not only material wellbeing (Hamad et al., 2025).

### 1.2.4 Linking employment formality to social security inclusion

Employment formality is a central theme in this thesis because, in many national systems, formal jobs are the main route into contributory social security coverage (ILO, 2024–2026). In Türkiye, official guidance states that when a work permit is issued, employers and workers are expected to meet social security requirements within set timeframes, thereby strengthening the institutional link between lawful employment and registration in social insurance (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labor and Social Security, n.d.). Similarly, policy-oriented analysis on Syrians under temporary protection describes the move into formal work as closely connected to social security status and to whether labor and social security rights can be applied in practice (Karadeniz, 2022).

In Jordan, available evidence suggests that access to formal employment—often measured by holding a work permit—is linked with better welfare outcomes, including higher income and improved food security, which are directly relevant to reducing vulnerability (Peitz et al., 2023). Policy analysis focused on Jordan also indicates that the design of work permit systems, including fees and administrative requirements, can influence whether Syrians enter formal jobs or continue working informally (ILO, 2025). Because contributory social security is usually tied to formal employment relationships, obstacles to entry into formal work can limit access to social security, increasing the likelihood of vulnerability and exclusion (Kawar et al., 2022; ILO, 2025).

Although informal work can offer short-term earnings, it often provides weaker labor protections, poorer occupational safety, and exclusion from contributory schemes, thereby increasing vulnerability when shocks occur (ILO, 2024–2026). This is especially serious

for young refugees because starting working life in the informal economy can create disadvantages over time by blocking access to protection mechanisms that support stability and recovery (ILO, 2024–2026; World Bank, 2003). Refugee-focused reporting from Türkiye also points to large numbers of Syrians working informally, further underscoring the importance of comparing formal and informal employment when assessing social security inclusion and integration outcomes (AIDA, 2025).

Given these patterns and the differences between Jordan and Türkiye, this study examines how social security inclusion relates to economic security and social integration among young Syrian refugees, and how shocks and barriers influence this relationship (Kawar et al., 2022; Peitz et al., 2023; Karadeniz, 2022; Tumen, 2023).

## 1.3 Statement of the Problem

The displacement of Syrians has become a long-term reality, which means host countries now face challenges that go beyond emergency support. The key issue is increasingly about creating conditions that help refugees—especially young people—build stable livelihoods and take part in social and economic life in meaningful ways (Salameh, 2024; Tumen, 2023). Young Syrian refugees form a distinct group in integration research because they are going through major life transitions—finishing education, entering work, starting careers, and taking on family responsibilities—while facing structural limits that can lead to disadvantages that build up over time (Jones et al., 2022; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022). Therefore, in both Jordan and Turkey, young refugees' integration prospects are closely linked to their position in the labor market and to the level of institutional protection connected to work, including access to social protection and, more specifically, social security (Kawar et al., 2022; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

In practice, many young Syrian refugees enter labor markets where informal and insecure work is common. Although this can bring short-term income, it often reduces stability, makes it harder to enforce rights, and limits access to contributory protection (Peitz et al., 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). This matters because social security coverage is usually tied to formal employment, meaning that exclusion from formal jobs often also leads to exclusion from social security and the protections it provides (Kawar et al., 2022; Dama, 2022). As a result, when shocks occur—such as illness, workplace injury, or sudden

income loss—households without coverage may experience rapid declines in consumption and well-being, thereby increasing the risk of poverty and social exclusion. This can also weaken integration outcomes such as participation, belonging, and social connectedness (Stojetz et al., 2024; Hamad et al., 2025). Although Jordan and Turkey both have policies and programs aimed at refugee livelihoods and some forms of protection, access is still uneven, and barriers linked to legal status, administrative procedures, employer behavior, and affordability can limit real inclusion in protective systems (Diab, 2024; Al Husseini, 2022; Imrie-Kuzu & Özerdem, 2023).

At the same time, a large body of research examines refugee integration and social cohesion in Jordan and Turkey. This includes studies on intergroup relations, social capital and intermediary actors, education as a route to inclusion, and everyday experiences of exclusion in shared spaces (Mittal et al., 2025; Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022; Ayyildiz, 2024; Morrice & Salem, 2023). In Jordan, additional work highlights how vulnerability, social protection arrangements, and daily patterns of inclusion and exclusion shape refugee lives in local settings (Al Husseini, 2023; Meral et al., 2022; Diab, 2024). However, despite these contributions, there is still limited comparative evidence based on questionnaires that examines, within one clear framework, how social security inclusion relates to social integration outcomes among young refugees, how formal versus informal employment shapes this link, and whether protective coverage is associated with lower risks of poverty and exclusion when shocks occur (Kawar et al., 2022; Peitz et al., 2023; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022). In addition, although policy and qualitative research often discuss barriers to inclusion, fewer comparative survey-based studies test how perceived legal, administrative, and economic barriers influence both social security inclusion and wider integration outcomes for youth across different national contexts (Diab, 2024; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Ghassaban et al., 2023).

A comparative design focusing on Jordan and Turkey is therefore not only relevant to the topic but also useful for analysis, as it helps interpret findings by placing individual outcomes within two distinct institutional and labor-market environments (Tumen, 2023; Kawar et al., 2022). This approach helps separate patterns that may be linked to individual resources and experiences—such as education, work status, and exposure to shocks—from patterns that may reflect differences in governance, access pathways, and enforcement

conditions that affect formality and social security inclusion (Kawar et al., 2022; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). In addition, it enhances the study's policy value by providing evidence that can inform protection and inclusion strategies across host countries with diverse policy structures and public debates about integration (Tumen, 2023; Diab, 2024). From a methods perspective, existing research offers rich qualitative accounts of belonging, exclusion, and adaptation, as well as policy and programme analyses. However, fewer studies use harmonized survey tools that measure the same concepts in comparable ways across host countries for the same age-defined refugee group (Cohen, 2022; Ayyildiz, 2024; Ghassaban et al., 2023). This is an important gap because the key ideas in this thesis—such as social integration, social security inclusion, employment formality, shock exposure, and structural barriers—need clear definitions and consistent measurement to allow meaningful comparison. Otherwise, differences between countries may reflect how things were measured rather than real differences on the ground (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Kawar et al., 2022). By applying standardized survey measures in Jordan and Turkey, this thesis is designed to test, in a consistent way, the relationship between social security inclusion and multi-dimensional social integration among young Syrian refugees, while also accounting for employment formality, shocks, and barriers (Jones et al., 2022; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022; Kawar et al., 2022).

This study addresses this gap by examining how social security inclusion is associated with social integration among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey, while accounting for employment formality, exposure to shocks, and structural barriers.

## 1.4 Aim and objectives of the Study

This study aims to examine the association between social security inclusion and social integration among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey using a comparative cross-sectional design. More specifically, the study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the proportion of young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey who report social security inclusion, and to describe the reported form of inclusion.
2. To examine whether social security inclusion is associated with higher economic security, lower vulnerability, and higher social integration scores in each country.

3. To classify respondents' employment as formal (socially protected) or informal, and to determine the distribution of these employment types in Jordan and Turkey.
4. To compare social integration scores between respondents in formal, socially protected work and those in informal work in Jordan and Turkey.
5. To determine the proportion of respondents reporting shocks (illness, work-related injury, or income loss) within the defined recall period in each country.
6. To examine whether respondents who report shocks also report higher poverty and social exclusion risk in each country.
7. To compare poverty and social exclusion risk during shocks between respondents with and without social security inclusion in Jordan and Turkey.
8. To identify and compare perceived legal, administrative, and economic barriers to social security access in Jordan and Turkey, and to examine how barrier levels relate to social security inclusion and social integration scores.

## 1.5 Research Questions

1. To what extent is social security inclusion associated with higher social integration among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey?
2. To what extent is social security inclusion associated with improved economic security and reduced vulnerability among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey?
3. How does formal, socially protected employment relate to social integration compared with informal employment among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey?
4. Among young Syrian refugees who experience shocks (illness, work-related injury, or income loss), are poverty and social exclusion risks lower for those with social security inclusion compared with those without in Jordan and Turkey?
5. What legal, administrative, and economic barriers limit access to social security in Jordan and Turkey, and how are these barriers associated with social security inclusion and social integration?

## 1.6 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses translate the research questions into clear, testable statements for the comparative cross-sectional analysis. They reflect expected associations between social security inclusion, employment formality, shock exposure, and outcomes related to

economic security and social integration in Jordan and Turkey. They also consider how structural barriers may constrain access and weaken integration outcomes.

**H1:** Social security inclusion is positively associated with social integration among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey.

**H2:** Social security inclusion is positively associated with economic security and negatively associated with vulnerability among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey.

**H3:** Young Syrian refugees in formal, socially protected employment report higher social integration than those in informal employment in Jordan and Turkey.

**H4:** Among young Syrian refugees who experience shocks (illness, work-related injury, or income loss), those with social security inclusion report lower poverty and social exclusion risk than those without in Jordan and Turkey.

**H5:** Higher perceived legal, administrative, and economic barriers to social security access are negatively associated with social security inclusion and social integration in Jordan and Turkey.

## 1.7 Key Concepts and Operational Definitions

This section explains the main terms used in this thesis and shows how each is measured, enabling proper comparison between Jordan and Turkey in a comparative cross-sectional design:

(1) **Young Syrian refugees (study population):** In this study, "young" refers to Syrians aged 18–29 years, reflecting the period when many people move into adulthood and begin early labor-market entry, which can strongly shape later integration (Jones et al., 2022; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022). "Syrian refugee" is measured through self-reported Syrian nationality and current residence in Jordan or Turkey after forced displacement, while legal or administrative status is recorded as a descriptive and control variable to reflect country-specific registration categories (Tumen, 2023; Kawar et al., 2022). As a result, the study maintains a consistent population definition across both countries while recognizing that national governance frameworks for Syrians differ by host setting (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

(2) **Social protection and social security:** Social protection is treated as a wide range of policies and programmes intended to reduce poverty and vulnerability and support wellbeing, especially in displacement and crisis settings (Diab, 2024; Hamad et al., 2025). Within this broader area, social security refers to structured protection provided through formal systems, commonly linked to contributory insurance and related entitlements that reduce livelihood risks (Kawar et al., 2022; Papadakis et al., 2024). This difference matters for the analysis because the thesis focuses on social security inclusion as one way that protection may lead to stronger economic security and better integration outcomes (Diab, 2024; Kawar et al., 2022).

(3) **Social security inclusion (core explanatory concept):** "Social security inclusion" is defined as a respondent reporting that they are enrolled in, or covered by, a national social security system or an equivalent formal arrangement that provides recognized protection linked to employment and/or contributions (Kawar et al., 2022; Papadakis et al., 2024). It is measured as a yes/no indicator (included/not included) based on reported registration or coverage, with additional categories used to record the reported type of coverage when available (Diab, 2024; Kawar et al., 2022). This approach keeps the focus on whether young refugees are connected to formal protection systems, rather than relying only on temporary or ad hoc support (Diab, 2024; Al Husseini, 2022).

(4) **Employment formality (formal, socially protected vs informal work):** Employment formality is defined as work carried out under formal labor arrangements that are officially recognized and linked to protection mechanisms, whereas informal work is employment that does not have these features (Peitz et al., 2023; Stojetz et al., 2024). In measurement terms, respondents are classified as formal/socially protected when they report conditions that meet the definition of formality (e.g., recognized employment linked to protection), and as informal when they report work without these recognized protection features (Peitz et al., 2023; Özen & Raju, 2025). This classification is central to the thesis because it allows a clear comparison of integration outcomes between young refugees who are inside versus outside the protective structure that typically accompanies formal work (Kawar et al., 2022; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

(5) **Social integration (primary outcome):** Social integration is a multi-part concept encompassing economic participation, relationships with host communities, and personal feelings of belonging and acceptance (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Mittal et al., 2025). It is measured using a composite score, and when needed, sub-scores are also used to reflect key dimensions discussed in the literature: labor-market integration indicators, social connectedness and bridging relations, participation in community life, and perceived belonging and acceptance (Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022; Eggerman et al., 2023). This measurement choice reflects evidence that integration and cohesion depend on both relationships (such as social ties, trust, and perceived boundaries) and experiences of access within institutions and shared spaces (Ayyildiz, 2024; Cevik, 2025). Therefore, applying the same measurement approach in both countries supports the aim of the thesis, which is to interpret Jordan–Turkey differences as genuine rather than as differences caused by changing definitions (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023).

(6) **Economic security and vulnerability (key intermediate outcomes):** Economic security refers to how far individuals can meet basic needs and maintain stable livelihoods, while vulnerability refers to higher exposure to risks and weaker ability to cope with negative events (Jones et al., 2022; Al Husseini, 2023). Economic security is measured using indicators of financial adequacy and stability, whereas vulnerability is measured using indicators such as difficulty meeting needs and reliance on harmful coping strategies, in line with research on displacement and vulnerability (Jones et al., 2022; Diab, 2024). This matters for the thesis because social security inclusion is expected to be linked to stronger economic security and lower vulnerability, thereby supporting integration (Kawar et al., 2022; Peitz et al., 2023).

(7) **Shocks and crises (risk exposure):** Shocks are defined as negative events that can disrupt livelihoods and are measured through reports of illness, work-related injury, or income loss within a defined recall period (Stojetz et al., 2024; Hamad et al., 2025). Shock exposure is typically measured as a yes/no indicator (experienced/not experienced) and may also be measured as a count (number of shocks) to capture repeated exposure (Stojetz et al., 2024; Hamad et al., 2025). This measurement supports

the thesis's focus on whether social security inclusion is associated with lower poverty and exclusion risks during shocks (Stojetz et al., 2024; Diab, 2024).

(8) **Poverty and social exclusion risk (shock-related outcome):** This refers to a higher likelihood of material deprivation and reduced participation in social and economic life, especially during crisis conditions (Papadakis et al., 2024; Al Husseini, 2023). It is measured using an index that captures material hardship and exclusion-related experiences relevant to displacement settings, allowing comparisons by social security inclusion status and by shock exposure (Hamad et al., 2025; Jones et al., 2022). This fits the study objective of assessing whether social security inclusion is associated with lower risk during illness, injury, or income loss (Stojetz et al., 2024; Kawar et al., 2022).

(9) **Structural barriers to access (constraints on inclusion):** Structural barriers are defined as factors that limit access to social security and are grouped into legal, administrative, and economic barriers, reflecting common categories used in policy and social protection research on refugee inclusion (Diab, 2024; Al Husseini, 2022). They are measured using perceived barrier scores, both overall and by category, covering issues such as eligibility or documentation limits, complicated procedures, information gaps, time costs, and affordability (Diab, 2024; Imrie-Kuzu & Özerdem, 2023). These barriers are treated as explanatory factors because they are expected to reduce the likelihood of social security inclusion and to be linked with weaker social integration outcomes (Al Husseini, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

Table 1.2 provides a high-level summary of the concepts and measurement choices used consistently across Jordan and Turkey to support the study's comparative design.

*Table 1.2. Key concepts and operational definitions*

| **Concept** | **Conceptual definition (this thesis)** | **Operational definition (analysis variable)** |
|---|---|---|
| Young Syrian refugees | Youth cohort of displaced Syrians in host settings | Syrian nationality + residence in Jordan/Turkey + age 18–29 |
| Social security inclusion | Inclusion in formal social security arrangements | Included/not included + reported form of inclusion |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Employment formality | Work positioned inside vs outside formal protection arrangements | Formal/socially protected vs informal employment classification |
| Social integration | Multidimensional inclusion (economic + relational + belonging) | Composite social integration score (and sub-scores where relevant) |
| Economic security | Livelihood stability and ability to meet needs | Economic security index/score |
| Vulnerability | Exposure to risk and limited coping capacity | Vulnerability index/score |
| Shocks | Adverse events destabilizing livelihoods | Any illness/injury/income loss within recall period (yes/no; optional count) |
| Poverty/social exclusion risk | Material deprivation and constrained participation | Poverty/exclusion risk index/score |
| Structural barriers | Constraints on access (legal/administrative/economic) | Barrier category scores + overall barrier score |

## 1.8 Significance and Contributions

**(1) Academic contribution.**

This study adds to integration research by treating social security inclusion as a measurable institutional factor linked to social integration among young Syrian refugees, rather than treating protection solely as background. It provides youth-focused evidence at a stage of life when work pathways, social participation, and feelings of belonging are still developing, and integration outcomes can therefore be highly affected by stability and exposure to risk. In addition, the study strengthens comparative research by using aligned concepts across Jordan and Turkey, thereby helping assess whether the links between protection and integration are similar across contexts or are shaped by national conditions. The thesis also tests the buffering idea that social security inclusion may lessen the harmful effects of shocks—such as illness, work-related injury, or income loss—on poverty and

social exclusion risk, which improves understanding of how resilience can operate within integration pathways.

**(2) Policy contribution.**

The study provides evidence to support policy discussions by showing the extent to which young refugees are included in social security systems and how this inclusion relates to economic security and social integration outcomes. By comparing young refugees in formal, socially protected work with those in informal employment, the findings speak directly to debates about pathways into labor-market formality and the importance of connecting decent work with protective coverage for integration. The study also informs social protection policy by showing how protection matters during shocks and by identifying the barriers that most strongly limit access. As a result, it points to reforms that reduce procedural difficulties, clarify eligibility, and improve practical access. It can therefore support more shock-responsive approaches that aim to stop temporary crises from turning into long-term poverty and exclusion.

**(3) Practical contribution.**

For NGOs, UN agencies, and implementing partners, the study provides useful insights by showing which groups of young refugees are least likely to be covered by social security and by outlining the legal, administrative, and economic barriers that block access. These findings can guide more targeted outreach, clearer information, navigation support, stronger referral systems, and programme adjustments that reduce time, cost, and complexity. In addition, the results can support work with employers by explaining how job conditions relate to protection, inclusion, and integration outcomes, helping practitioners encourage socially protected employment while reducing the vulnerabilities linked to informal work.

## 1.9 Scope, Delimitations, and Assumptions

### 1.9.1 Scope

This study examines young Syrian refugees living in Jordan and Turkey and examines how social security inclusion relates to social integration, using a comparative cross-sectional design. The unit of analysis is the individual respondent, and the study is limited to the defined youth age group (as specified in the methodology chapter). The geographical focus

is restricted to these two countries because they provide a basis for systematic comparison of protection and integration dynamics across major host settings. Data are collected within a specific fieldwork period, and the findings are interpreted as describing conditions during that time. Methodologically, the study uses a structured survey and applies quantitative analysis to assess relationships among the main concepts. The concepts covered include social security inclusion, employment formality (formal/socially protected versus informal), social integration as a multidimensional outcome, economic security and vulnerability, exposure to shocks (illness, work-related injury, or income loss), poverty and social exclusion risk, and perceived legal, administrative, and economic barriers to access.

### 1.9.2 Delimitations

The study applies several limits to keep the argument clear and the research design manageable. First, it uses a cross-sectional rather than a longitudinal approach, meaning it examines relationships at a single point in time rather than tracking changes over time. Second, it relies solely on a survey design and does not include qualitative interviews or ethnographic work; therefore, it offers less narrative depth but supports consistent measurement and comparison across contexts. Third, it focuses specifically on social security inclusion as the main social protection mechanism, rather than covering the full range of welfare policies, humanitarian assistance, or broader social programmes. This focus is necessary to keep the analysis aligned with insurance-linked protection and its relationship to integration outcomes. Fourth, the study focuses on youth because young refugees constitute a distinct group whose integration pathways are shaped by early transitions into adulthood and the workforce; as a result, the findings are not intended to represent all age groups within the Syrian refugee population.

### 1.9.3 Assumptions

The analysis is based on several assumptions needed for the study to be interpreted correctly. It assumes that respondents can accurately report their work conditions and state whether they are included in social security, including whether relevant coverage exists. It also assumes that the selected measures for social integration, economic security, vulnerability, barriers, and exclusion risks reliably reflect the intended concepts in each country. Finally, the comparative design assumes that integration-related concepts can be

compared across Jordan and Turkey when the study uses consistent operational definitions and standardized measurement procedures, so that any differences observed are real rather than the result of measurement changes.

## 1.10 Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be kept in mind when interpreting the results. First, because the design is comparative and cross-sectional, it observes relationships at one point in time. Therefore, it cannot support strong causal claims about whether social security inclusion leads to changes in social integration or whether the relationship works in the opposite direction. To address this, the analysis uses careful, non-causal wording, such as "associated with," and applies statistical controls for key demographic and socio-economic factors to reduce confounding.

Second, the study uses self-reported data, which can be affected by memory errors, confusion about social security status, or social desirability bias. This risk may be greater for sensitive topics such as informal work and coverage arrangements. To reduce these problems, the survey emphasizes confidentiality and anonymity, uses neutral and non-judgmental wording, and applies internal consistency checks across related questions, such as comparing reported work conditions with reported protection status.

Third, the study may face sampling constraints that limit representativeness, especially given the difficulty of reaching young refugee populations across different locations and living situations in both countries. This is addressed by clearly describing the sampling approach, reporting sample characteristics transparently, and stating the limits of generalization, so that conclusions are understood to apply to the surveyed groups and settings rather than to all young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey.

Fourth, comparing two countries raises concerns about measurement equivalence because concepts such as social integration, barriers, and protection may be understood differently across settings and languages. To reduce this risk, the survey tool is carefully translated and reviewed for conceptual consistency, pilot-tested in both contexts, and checked for reliability—and, where possible, for measurement consistency—before the final analysis. These steps aim to ensure that differences observed between Jordan and Turkey reflect real patterns rather than measurement artifacts.

## 1.11 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is structured in six chapters. Chapter One introduces the study, explains the research problem, and presents the aim, measurable objectives, research questions, hypotheses, and conceptual framing, while also outlining the thesis's overall structure. Chapter Two reviews the literature and policy context on social security inclusion and social integration, with particular attention to Jordan and Turkey. Chapter Three explains the methodology, including the research design, sampling approach, measurement and instrument development, data collection procedures, validity and reliability considerations, and the analytical strategy. Chapter Four presents the results, including descriptive findings and comparative analyses across countries and key subgroups. Chapter Five discusses the findings in relation to the literature and conceptual framework, considers implications for theory and policy, and links the results to wider debates on integration and protection. Chapter Six concludes by summarizing the main findings, presenting recommendations, acknowledging limitations, and suggesting directions for future research.

## 1.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the study's focus on the relationship between social security inclusion and social integration among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey using a comparative cross-sectional design. It presented the background and rationale, identified the research problem and gap, and set out the study aim, measurable objectives, research questions, and hypotheses. It also defined key concepts, explained the conceptual links between social security inclusion, employment formality, shocks, barriers, and integration outcomes, and highlighted why the study matters. The next chapter builds on this foundation by reviewing the relevant research and the policy context in Jordan and Turkey to inform the study's conceptual framework and analytical approach.

# Chapter Two: Literature Review

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature and policy context that guide the study's analysis of the relationship between social security inclusion and social integration among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Türkiye. Its purpose is to create a clear foundation for the conceptual framework and hypotheses (H1–H5) by bringing together what existing research shows, as well as what remains unclear, about the connections among formal protection, labor-market position, exposure to risk, and the many dimensions of integration. Rather than treating social protection solely as background information, the review places social security inclusion at the center and examines it as an institutional pathway that may influence refugees' economic stability, their ability to manage shocks, and their sense of belonging and participation in host societies.

This review is important because the available evidence is scattered across different fields and is often split between two main strands. On the one hand, integration research usually focuses on social cohesion, social capital, and belonging. On the other hand, social protection and labor-market research tend to concentrate on formality, rights, and vulnerability. In displacement settings, especially where informal work is common, social security inclusion is closely linked to whether employment is formal and to whether institutions can register and protect workers effectively. However, integration is not only an economic matter. It is also social and personal, shaped by connectedness, participation, and a sense of acceptance. Therefore, this chapter combines conceptual and empirical studies to explain how and why access to social security may be linked to stronger integration outcomes, and under which conditions this relationship may weaken or differ across national contexts.

A comparative focus on Jordan and Türkiye is a key part of the chapter. Both countries host large numbers of Syrians, yet they differ in refugee governance systems, labor-market structures, work authorization pathways, and the design and enforcement of social security systems. These differences are important because they affect the chances of entering formal employment and the practical ability to access contributory protection. As a result, the chapter reviews policy and institutional arrangements alongside empirical evidence to

show why similar individual characteristics, such as education, age, or work status, may lead to different inclusion and integration outcomes in the two countries.

To do this, the chapter follows a clear structure. It begins by explaining the literature review approach and synthesis strategy, including the sources used and the thematic coding process. It then defines the main concepts and measurement issues, including social protection and social security, social security inclusion, dimensions of social integration, youth transitions in displacement, employment formality, shocks and vulnerability, and structural barriers. After that, the chapter presents the main theoretical perspectives that explain the link between protection and integration and identifies the possible mechanisms through which inclusion may affect integration. It then reviews the comparative policy and institutional context of Jordan and Türkiye, followed by an empirical synthesis based on the study's main relationships: inclusion and economic security; reduced vulnerability; integration outcomes; formality and integration; shocks and exclusion risk; protection during shocks; and barriers to access. Finally, the chapter brings together the main gaps in the existing evidence, especially the lack of youth-focused, cross-country, and measurement-consistent research. This synthesis is then used to explain the study's contribution and to develop the conceptual framework and hypotheses H1–H5 that guide the methodology and analysis in the following chapter.

## 2.2 Literature Review Design and Synthesis Strategy

This chapter uses a clear and systematic literature review design, so the evidence used to build the conceptual framework and hypotheses (H1–H5) is broad, comparable across Jordan and Türkiye, and useful for explaining the relationships among social security inclusion, employment formality, shocks and vulnerability, structural barriers, and social integration. Since the topic crosses several fields, including migration and refugee studies, labor economics, social policy, development studies, and humanitarian governance, the review brings together different forms of evidence such as quantitative studies, qualitative studies, mixed-methods research, and policy or administrative documents through a narrative–thematic synthesis. This method is suitable because the findings are spread across different disciplines, and key concepts such as "integration," "social protection,"

and “informality” are defined and measured in different ways, which makes a single statistical meta-analysis inappropriate.

Two main needs of this thesis shape the review strategy. First, it must clearly explain definitions and measurements so that the study’s treatment of the main variables is justified and comparable across the two national settings. Second, it must identify mechanisms and conditional pathways that explain why social security inclusion may be linked to integration outcomes, and how this connection may vary with employment formality, exposure to shocks, and institutional barriers.

### 2.2.1 Review Approach (Narrative–Thematic Synthesis)

The review applies a narrative–thematic synthesis with a comparative focus. The narrative element means the chapter goes beyond simply listing previous studies. Instead, it develops an argument by showing what the literature as a whole indicates, where studies agree or differ, and why these differences appear, such as variation in measurement, sampling, policy periods, or national implementation conditions. The thematic element means the literature is grouped into meaningful analytical themes connected to the thesis model and hypotheses (H1–H5), rather than presented solely in chronological order.

The synthesis is organized around the study's central theoretical logic. It examines whether institutional inclusion and protection, through social security, can improve stability and participation. It also considers whether labor-market structure and formality provide an important route to social security inclusion and better outcomes. In addition, it explores whether social security can reduce vulnerability by helping people cope with shocks, and whether legal, administrative, and economic barriers shape access to protective systems and determine who remains excluded.

To keep the discussion focused and consistent, the synthesis follows a clear evidence-to-hypothesis rule. Each source included in the review must serve at least one purpose: clarifying concepts and measurement, describing the institutional context in Jordan or Türkiye, testing or explaining relationships relevant to H1–H5, or identifying gaps that support the contribution of this study.

### 2.2.2 Search Strategy and Sources

The search strategy is designed to include both peer-reviewed academic work and reliable institutional or policy material. This is important because the topic depends strongly on legal frameworks and system design, including work authorization rules, social security registration, and enforcement capacity, and these issues are not always fully covered in journal articles.

For academic databases and scholarly sources, the search covers both multidisciplinary and specialized platforms. Because the topic connects labor, social policy, and refugee integration, a typical set of databases includes major citation indexes such as Scopus and Web of Science Core Collection. It also includes broad academic search tools such as Google Scholar, which is used carefully to identify additional journal articles, reports, theses, and working papers. Social science and policy repositories such as ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, SSRN, RePEc, and JSTOR are also considered, especially when they provide doctoral research, economics and policy papers, or foundational conceptual studies. In addition, migration- and refugee-related journals and publisher databases, including those accessible through Taylor & Francis, Wiley, Elsevier, and Sage, are used through university access. To reduce the risk of missing relevant evidence, the review also uses backward and forward citation tracking, checking the reference lists of major studies and looking at newer papers that cite important earlier work.

For institutional and policy sources, the review includes material from international organizations and national bodies, as social security inclusion depends heavily on policy design and implementation. The sources, therefore, include organizations such as the ILO, including ILOSTAT and policy briefs, as well as UNHCR, the World Bank, IOM, and UNICEF, especially where youth transitions and vulnerability are concerned. National sources include the Social Security Administration's guidance, the Labor Ministry's regulations, the Migration Authority's circulars, and official statistical publications on labor markets and informality. In addition, credible operational and policy analysis platforms are used when appropriate, especially when they document legal changes and practical barriers, although these sources are treated carefully and assessed for quality.

The search strings use Boolean operators and truncation to capture different terms across disciplines and languages. Searches are carried out in English and, where possible, are

supported by Arabic and Turkish keywords for national policy documents and local studies. Example English search blocks are combined with the AND operator. For population, the search includes terms such as “Syrian” or “Syria*” together with “refugee*,” “forced displacement,” or “temporary protection.” Geographically, it includes Jordan, Türkiye (Turkey), or Turkey. For protection and formality, it includes terms such as “social security,” “social insurance,” “contributory,” “pension,” “work injury,” “health insurance,” and “unemployment insurance,” along with formality-related terms such as formality, informal*, “work permit,” “labour market,” and “formal employment.” For integration outcomes, it includes words such as integration, “social integration,” “social cohesion,” “social capital,” belonging, inclusion, and participation. A youth filter may also be added through terms such as youth, “young adult*,” “young people,” adolescent*, or “18–29.” The search is usually limited to publication years within the displacement period, commonly 2011 onward, and filtered by document type (articles, reports, theses, and working papers) and by language, using English and relevant national languages where possible.

### 2.2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The review applies explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure that all selected sources match the thesis population, geography, and key concepts.

A source is included when it satisfies all required conditions. In terms of population relevance, it must focus on Syrian refugees or include Syrians as a clearly separate subgroup. Studies focused on youth or young adults are given priority. However, where youth-specific studies are limited, broader studies are still included if their findings clearly help explain youth pathways, such as early labor-market entry, barriers to formal work, or patterns of vulnerability. Regarding country relevance, the source must address Jordan and/or Türkiye, while comparative studies are preferred when they use similar concepts or measures across the two settings. In terms of topic, the source must contribute to at least one central construct of the thesis, including social security inclusion, social integration, formal versus informal work, shocks and vulnerability, or legal, administrative, and economic barriers to access. Finally, the source must meet a minimum transparency standard by providing enough information to assess its credibility, whether through methods, data origin, or institutional authority.

Sources are excluded when they do not address Jordan or Türkiye, when they discuss migrants or refugees in general without relevance to Syrians or without separate findings for Syrians, when they use the term "social protection" only vaguely without linking it to social security systems or labour-market formality, or when they refer to "integration" in a purely rhetorical way without conceptual clarity or evidence. Duplicative sources are also excluded, unless different versions add unique value. For instance, if a working paper is later published as a journal article, only the most complete version is normally retained.

### 2.2.4 Quality Appraisal and Evidence Weighting

Because this chapter draws on different kinds of evidence, it uses a practical appraisal approach rather than relying on one checklist for all materials. The purpose of appraisal is to guide how much influence each source should have in the synthesis. Stronger studies, therefore, shape the conclusions more heavily, while weaker studies are used more carefully, often for context or for suggesting possible hypotheses.

Quantitative observational studies, such as cross-sectional analyses, cohort studies, and survey-based research, are assessed by examining their sampling strategy, measurement validity, control of confounding factors, transparency of analysis, and robustness checks. Qualitative studies, including interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic work, are assessed based on the clarity of sampling and recruitment, the analytical method used, the level of reflexivity, the use of triangulation, and whether the data well support the claims. Mixed-methods studies are evaluated on how well the qualitative and quantitative components are combined and whether the design supports the claims made. Institutional and policy documents are assessed by considering the authority of the issuing body, the clarity of the legal or policy basis, the date and version, the transparency of any empirical method used, and their relevance to implementation.

During synthesis, each source is assigned an internal weight. A source receives high weight when it has strong methods, direct relevance, and clear definitions or measurements. A medium-weight source is one with acceptable methods and relevance but limited scope, for example, because it covers only one city, one sector, or has weak comparability. A low-weight source has limited transparency or only indirect relevance and is mainly used to illustrate context or show where debates exist. This weighting appears in the writing

through careful wording such as “evidence suggests,” “several studies indicate,” or “limited evidence points to,” which fits the logic of a cross-sectional thesis.

### 2.2.5 Thematic Coding and Synthesis Procedure

The synthesis follows several stages to ensure clarity and consistency. First, all retrieved records are documented, exported into a reference manager such as Zotero, EndNote, or Mendeley, and then deduplicated. A simple tracking sheet records the database or source, the search date, the search string, and the number of results.

The screening process then takes place in two stages. The first stage reviews titles and abstracts using the inclusion criteria of population, country, and topical relevance. The second stage involves full-text screening to confirm eligibility and to identify the main analytical contribution of each source.

A structured extraction template is then used to collect information consistently from all included sources. This includes bibliographic information, study type, country setting, population and age group, definitions and measures of social security inclusion, formality, integration dimensions, shocks, and barriers, along with key findings related to H1–H5, study limitations such as bias or limited generalizability, and usefulness for developing the conceptual framework.

The coding process combines deductive and inductive approaches. Deductive codes are based on the structure and hypotheses of the thesis and include themes such as the protection–integration link, the pathway through formality, the buffering role of social security during shocks, types of barriers, comparability of measurement, and the institutional conditions in Jordan and Türkiye. Inductive codes are added when repeated themes appear in the literature, such as employer behavior, difficulties with documentation, perceived legitimacy of institutions, and discrimination or social boundaries that affect integration.

The analytical synthesis then compares findings across several dimensions, including country context, method type, differences in how “integration” and “social security” are defined, population differences between youth-specific and general refugee studies, and policy period, especially before and after major regulatory changes. When studies conflict, the synthesis does not simply average the results. Instead, it explains possible reasons for

the differences and considers their implications for the thesis design, such as the need for harmonized measures, careful non-causal wording, and direct measurement of barriers.

Table 2.1 provides a clear summary of the literature search and screening process used in this review. It outlines the main data sources, example search terms, time frames, number of records identified, and the final studies included. As a result, the table improves transparency by showing how evidence was selected and filtered, while also highlighting the breadth and diversity of sources used to support the study.

*Table 2.1: Literature Search and Screening Summary (worked example for teaching)*

| Database/source | Keywords (example) | Years | Records | Included studies | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Scopus** | "Syrian refugees" AND (Jordan OR Türkiye) AND ("social security" OR "social insurance") AND (integration OR cohesion OR belonging) | 2011–2026 | 312 | 28 | Strong peer-reviewed coverage; many were excluded for not measuring social security directly |
| **Web of Science** | (Syrian OR Syria*) AND refugee* AND (informal* OR formality OR "work permit") AND (Jordan OR Turkey) | 2011–2026 | 198 | 19 | Good for migration/integration journals; limited policy implementation detail |
| **Google Scholar** | "Syrian refugees" "social protection" Jordan; "temporary protection" work permit Turkey; "social cohesion" Syrian youth | 2011–2026 | 640 | 34 | Used to locate grey literature + theses; careful filtering for quality |
| **ProQuest Dissertations** | Syrian refugees AND Jordan/Turkey AND (labor market OR social protection OR integration) | 2011–2026 | 74 | 9 | Useful for deep background and theory; variable method quality |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ILO / ILOSTAT** | Informality indicators; refugees and labor market; social protection framework | 2011–2026 | 45 | 18 | High policy relevance; used for definitional and contextual grounding |
| **UNHCR** | Country operational documents; protection and livelihoods; registration/work access context | 2011–2026 | 52 | 21 | Strong for governance context; not always evaluative research |
| **World Bank** | Social protection system notes, labor market context, integration frameworks | 2011–2026 | 38 | 14 | System-level framing; useful for risk/resilience and institutional pathways |
| **National institutions (selected)** | Social security registration rules; work permit procedures; official guidance | 2011–2026 | 26 | 12 | Used for precise institutional design; weighted by authority and version/date |
| **Total (after deduplication)** | — | — | **1,105** | **155** | Example total after removing duplicates and excluding clearly irrelevant records |

## 2.3 Conceptual Foundations and Key Definitions

This section explains the main concepts that guide the thesis and defines the key terms used throughout the study. Clear definitions are important because research on refugees often uses related concepts—such as social protection, social security, social inclusion/exclusion, social cohesion, and integration—in ways that overlap to varying degrees. As a result, this can create problems in measurement and make comparison across settings more difficult (Papadakis et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023; Kangas-Müller et al., 2024). This need for conceptual clarity is even greater when studying young refugees, because their early experiences with work, access to services, and social relationships can strongly influence their long-term inclusion. In addition, the rules that shape eligibility and compliance differ across host countries (Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023).

### 2.3.1 Social Protection and Social Security: Conceptual Distinctions

Social protection is generally understood as a broad policy area designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability, address social risks, and support welfare throughout a person's life. It usually includes a combination of social assistance, social insurance, and labor-market measures (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). In refugee and migrant contexts, this broad understanding is especially useful because support is rarely provided through only one route. Instead, it is often delivered through a mix of government programs, targeted measures, and labor-market arrangements that influence access to benefits and services (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). However, recent research shows that focusing solely on formal rights is insufficient to explain actual protection outcomes, because legal entitlements do not always translate into real access when administration is complex, labor is informal, and enforcement is uneven (Zaman et al., 2023; Grześkowiak, 2024).

Within this wider field, social security is usually seen as the formal and institutional part of social protection, most commonly delivered through contributory insurance systems and regulated entitlements (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Ron & Nitzan, 2023). This distinction is important because social security does more than protect income and reduce risk. It also signals a form of institutional membership that can shape how people relate to labor rules, service systems, and public institutions (Papadakis et al., 2024; Barglowski & Bonfert,

2023). For displaced people, this difference is particularly significant because many refugees work in informal or unstable jobs, which often prevents them from entering contributory systems even when some assistance or humanitarian aid is available (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Badalič, 2023). Therefore, separating general protection from social security inclusion enables focusing on the specific formal pathway through which coverage may affect economic security and broader integration outcomes (Papadakis et al., 2024; Zaman et al., 2023).

In this thesis, social protection refers to the wider set of welfare and risk-management interventions available to refugees and host populations. Social security, by contrast, refers to the formal, rule-based protection system most closely linked to employment registration and clearly defined entitlements.

### 2.3.2 Social Security Inclusion: Meaning, Forms, and Measurement

Social security inclusion refers to whether a person is covered by a formal social security system that offers recognized protection and is managed by official rules and procedures (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Ron & Nitzan, 2023). In this sense, inclusion means more than simply receiving support. It means being linked to a regulated system of registration, eligibility, and benefit access that can reduce livelihood risks and lessen the effects of negative events (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). For refugees, inclusion often depends on their position in the labor market and on wider governance conditions. As a result, social security inclusion is best understood as the outcome of policy design, administrative capacity, employer compliance, and a person's ability to move through access procedures (Zaman et al., 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

The literature usually describes social security inclusion as covering different but connected forms of protection. One major form is employment-based social insurance, where coverage depends on contributions and formal work relationships (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). Another important form is social health protection, which relates to health coverage and financial protection within health systems and has become a major focus of refugee policy and inclusion efforts (Ron & Nitzan, 2023). In practice, these forms may overlap or only be partly available, leading to situations of partial inclusion in which some protections are accessible while others are not (Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). This matters because partial inclusion can create uneven forms of security. For

example, it may reduce health-related financial shocks while leaving other vulnerabilities unresolved (Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

A common issue in refugee social protection research is the gap between legal entitlement and real access (Zaman et al., 2023; Grześkowiak, 2024). This gap may arise from legal-status restrictions, administrative barriers, limited information, transaction costs, and weak enforcement. It is especially visible in informal labor markets, where employers may avoid registration and contributions (Zaman et al., 2023; Badalič, 2023). Research on Syrian refugees in Türkiye, for instance, points to structural pressures that keep many refugees in informal work, making it harder for them to enter contributory systems and achieve effective inclusion (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). Therefore, social security inclusion should be seen as an institutional outcome shaped by both wider governance structures and everyday individual constraints (Tumen, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023).

Measuring social security inclusion among refugees also presents methodological difficulties. People may not fully understand their coverage status, may have incomplete or irregular coverage, or may be unwilling to disclose information when their work is informal (Kunpeuk et al., 2022; Mendola & Pera, 2022). Because of this, empirical studies often use structured survey questions that ask whether respondents believe they are enrolled or covered, what type of coverage they have, and other related indicators that can help check whether this reported coverage is plausible, such as employment conditions and experiences with using services (Kunpeuk et al., 2022; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). In addition, recent work on vulnerability and measurement highlights the need to distinguish between indicators of formal status and indicators of experienced protection. It also stresses the value of combining objective and subjective measures to reduce classification errors and improve interpretation (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Mendola et al., 2026).

In this thesis, social security inclusion is measured as a dichotomous variable. Where possible, the reported form of inclusion is also classified to allow consistent comparison between Jordan and Türkiye.

### 2.3.3 Social Integration: Dimensions, Models, and Measurement Approaches

This thesis adopts a multidimensional view of social integration that aligns with current research on refugee inclusion. This research shows that integration is not a single result but

a set of connected economic, relational, participatory, and subjective processes (Papadakis et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023). This view aligns with social inclusion and exclusion approaches, which understand integration as shaped by both individual resources and structural opportunities, particularly access to institutions, labor markets, and civic spaces (Crawford et al., 2023; Kangas-Müller et al., 2024). It also aligns with research showing that legal inclusion or formal recognition alone may not lead to meaningful integration if daily participation, secure livelihoods, and social acceptance remain limited (Grześkowiak, 2024; Papadakis et al., 2024).

Economic participation refers to whether refugees can find livelihoods and employment opportunities that support stability, dignity, and long-term progress (Szkudlarek et al., 2024; Omata, 2022). Work is often a main point of entry into the institutions of the host society. However, research warns that economic inclusion should not be understood only as labor-force participation. The quality of jobs, the level of insecurity, and the way employment changes over time also affect whether work leads to lasting integration (Szkudlarek et al., 2024; Omata, 2022). In addition, more inclusive refugee-hosting approaches have been linked to wider local development and may reduce social tensions when benefits are shared and perceived competition is managed (Zhou et al., 2023). As a result, this thesis treats economic participation as one part of integration closely connected to institutional protection, labor-market segmentation, and the possibility of entering the formal labor market (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Badalič, 2023).

Social connectedness concerns the networks and relationships through which refugees gain support, information, and opportunities. This is often discussed in terms of social capital, including bonding ties within the same group and bridging ties across different groups (Eggerman et al., 2023; Barglowski & Bonfert, 2023). Research on Syrian refugees and host communities suggests that social networks are linked to well-being and empowerment, indicating that integration depends in part on the strength and quality of supportive relationships and the ability to build ties beyond immediate circles (Eggerman et al., 2023). In addition, migrant and refugee organizations can act as important intermediaries, helping people manage risks and access support through shared resources and institutional guidance (Barglowski & Bonfert, 2023). Public institutions and civic spaces may also

strengthen connectedness by providing accessible spaces for interaction and information, thereby supporting broader processes of social inclusion (Serra & Revez, 2024).

Participation refers to involvement in community life, contact with institutions, and engagement in social or civic spaces that make opportunities and mutual recognition possible (Kangas-Müller et al., 2024; Serra & Revez, 2024). Educational opportunities and skills-building settings can support inclusion by improving capabilities and encouraging interaction. This can also happen through technology-based approaches that expand access and participation (AbuJarour, 2022). In addition, studies on how refugee women navigate services show that participation in institutions is often shaped by system complexity, unequal access to information, and the practical burden of reaching health and social services (Areej et al., 2024). Therefore, participation should be understood as both behavioral, meaning what people do, and structural, meaning the opportunities and barriers that shape their ability to take part (Kangas-Müller et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023).

Belonging and acceptance describe the subjective and relational side of integration, including feelings of safety, recognition, and the sense that a future can be built in the host society (Dromgold-Sermen, 2022; Papadakis et al., 2024). Research on forced migration shows that a sense of secure belonging grows through everyday experiences and interactions with institutions, not only through legal status. It is also influenced by perceived social boundaries, discrimination, and exclusion (Dromgold-Sermen, 2022; Crawford et al., 2023). At the same time, critical studies point out that inclusion efforts can have a double effect: they may open access while also controlling or limiting participation. Because of this, it is important to measure belonging and perceived boundaries directly rather than assume that institutional access automatically leads to social acceptance (Kangas-Müller et al., 2024; Grześkowiak, 2024). For this reason, the thesis treats indicators of belonging as a central part of integration alongside economic and participatory dimensions (Papadakis et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023).

Because social integration has several dimensions, the literature usually measures it through composite indices or multi-scale frameworks that capture separate dimensions while also producing an overall summary measure (Papadakis et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023). This approach is especially useful in comparative research because it allows consistent measurement across contexts without losing conceptual range (Papadakis et al.,

2024; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). In this thesis, social integration is measured through a composite score, with additional sub-scores for relevant dimensions such as economic participation, connectedness, participation, and belonging/acceptance, as needed to align with the study's conceptual framework.

### 2.3.4 Youth in Forced Displacement: Life-Course Transitions and Integration Trajectories

In situations of forced displacement, the concept of "youth" is better understood as a life stage rather than simply an age group. This is because it involves key transitions that influence outcomes in adulthood, such as completing education, entering stable employment, forming households, building skills and experience, and establishing connections to institutions (Szkudlarek et al., 2024). However, under displacement conditions, these transitions are often delayed, interrupted, or redirected. Young people may face disrupted schooling, uncertain legal status, and limited access to decent work and services, which can create long-term effects on their life paths (Szkudlarek et al., 2024; Papadakis et al., 2024). Therefore, integration for displaced youth should be seen as an ongoing process shaped by a sequence of opportunities and constraints, rather than a fixed outcome measured at a single point in time (Szkudlarek et al., 2024).

Research also shows that young refugees' integration paths are strongly influenced by institutional access to labor markets, education systems, and public services. These areas provide the main routes through which they gain resources, recognition, and future stability (Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). When institutions allow access to legal employment and benefits, young people are more likely to develop stable work histories and stronger links with host-country systems. However, when access is limited, they are often pushed into insecure jobs and experience delayed or incomplete inclusion in formal systems (Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). This perspective supports the idea that integration depends not only on individual effort but also on the opportunities created by institutions (Papadakis et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023).

In this thesis, adopting a life-course perspective supports focusing on young Syrian refugees, as early experiences with formal employment, institutional protection, and exposure to risks can have strong long-term effects on integration (Szkudlarek et al., 2024; Papadakis et al., 2024). In addition, it justifies comparing different national contexts, as

Jordan and Türkiye offer distinct institutional settings in which similar life transitions may unfold differently due to variations in rules, labor markets, and enforcement practices (Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

### 2.3.5 Employment Formality and Informality: Definitions and Links to Protection

Employment formality is a key concept for understanding refugee livelihoods because, in most welfare systems, formal jobs are the main route to contributory social security and enforceable labor rights (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). In this sense, formality is not just a feature of a job but reflects an institutional position in which employment is officially recognized, regulated, and linked to registration, compliance, and access to benefits (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). In contrast, informal employment refers to work that is not fully recognized within legal and administrative systems, often lacking formal registration, enforceable rights, and access to contributory protection (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023).

In refugee contexts, informality is often not a matter of choice but a result of structural constraints. Refugees may face limited work authorization, employers may be unwilling to formalize jobs, labor markets may be segmented, and compliance procedures may entail high costs (Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). For example, research on Syrian refugees in Türkiye shows that many are concentrated in informal sectors and face significant barriers to moving into formal employment (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). These patterns are important because informal work is closely linked to exclusion from social security systems, which increases exposure to risks and economic instability (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

The effects of employment formality extend beyond income and protection. Formal employment can also influence broader integration by shaping how refugees interact with institutions and public systems (Papadakis et al., 2024). Being formally employed increases visibility within administrative systems and strengthens the ability to claim rights, whereas informal work can increase distance from institutions and make future planning more uncertain (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). In addition, research highlights that the timing and sequence of employment experiences—such as entering stable versus unstable jobs—can have lasting effects on integration trajectories (Szkudlarek et al., 2024).

In this thesis, employment formality is treated as a central pathway that influences access to social security and helps explain the relationship between protection and integration (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Badalič, 2023). This approach is consistent with research that views refugee labor outcomes as shaped by broader systems, including labor-market regulations, employer behavior, and policy design, rather than as purely individual choices (Zaman et al., 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

### 2.3.6 Shocks, Risk Exposure, and Vulnerability in Displacement Contexts

Shocks are generally understood as negative events that disrupt livelihoods and well-being, such as sudden income loss, illness, or injury. These events can quickly reduce household stability, especially when protective systems are weak or inaccessible (Mendola & Pera, 2022). In displacement settings, shocks have stronger effects because people often already face high levels of insecurity, rely on informal work, and have limited coping options due to legal restrictions, low savings, and restricted access to support systems (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Mendola et al., 2026). Therefore, shocks should be seen not just as isolated incidents but as triggers that can worsen existing vulnerabilities and push individuals further into hardship (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Crawford et al., 2023).

The concept of vulnerability is debated, but research agrees that it needs a clear definition and careful measurement. Different indicators capture different aspects of risk and coping ability, so it is important not to treat vulnerability as a vague label (Mendola & Pera, 2022). Survey-based studies show that vulnerability can be understood through a combination of exposure to risks—such as unstable work or unsafe conditions—and limited ability to cope without major losses in wellbeing (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Mendola et al., 2026). This is relevant to the thesis because social security inclusion is expected to reduce vulnerability by improving income stability, providing health and injury protection, and reducing reliance on harmful coping strategies (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

Access to healthcare and social protection plays a key role in shaping how shocks affect long-term outcomes. Receiving timely services and financial support can prevent temporary difficulties from becoming lasting disadvantages (Kunpeuk et al., 2022; Ron & Nitzan, 2023). Research on migrants during crises also shows that social security systems can help stabilize both public health and welfare when labor markets are disrupted (Ullah

& Harrigan, 2022). Therefore, the relationship between shocks and vulnerability is closely linked to whether individuals are connected to institutions that can provide support when needed (Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023).

In this thesis, shocks are treated as specific risk factors—such as illness, work-related injury, and income loss—that can increase poverty and exclusion. At the same time, social security inclusion is understood as a factor that may reduce the impact of these risks and shape their effects on integration (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Ullah & Harrigan, 2022).

### 2.3.7 Structural Barriers to Access: Legal, Administrative, and Economic Barriers

A common finding in research on refugee social protection is that having legal eligibility does not guarantee actual access. This is because access is often limited by structural barriers at legal, administrative, and economic levels (Zaman et al., 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). This gap between formal rights and real access has led to growing criticism of approaches that focus only on legal frameworks, with increasing attention given to governance, implementation, and the broader systems that shape inclusion (Zaman et al., 2023). In some cases, even when policies appear inclusive, institutional practices may still produce exclusion (Grześkowiak, 2024).

Legal barriers include restrictions related to legal status, eligibility rules that exclude certain groups, and regulations that limit access to formal employment and benefits (Zaman et al., 2023; Grześkowiak, 2024). These barriers can also indirectly affect access by shaping employer behavior and limiting the availability of formal job opportunities, thereby affecting entry into contributory systems (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Badalič, 2023). Comparative research on Syrian refugees in Türkiye shows how governance systems influence the transition from initial reception to longer-term integration and shape the application of rights in practice (Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023).

Administrative barriers involve practical difficulties that delay or prevent access even when people are eligible. These include complex paperwork, unclear procedures, insufficient information, language barriers, and high time and travel costs (Kunpeuk et al., 2022; Zaman et al., 2023). Research shows that navigating health and social services can be especially challenging, often requiring support from intermediaries or familiarity with

institutional processes that not all refugees have (Areej et al., 2024; Kunpeuk et al., 2022). As a result, administrative barriers can lead to unequal access even within the same legal framework, particularly affecting young people or those with limited networks (Barglowski & Bonfert, 2023; Kunpeuk et al., 2022).

Economic barriers include both direct and indirect costs that discourage formal registration, such as contribution payments, service fees, lost income due to time spent completing procedures, and employer practices that keep work informal to reduce costs (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Badalič, 2023). These barriers are closely linked to informality. When wages are low and jobs are unstable, both workers and employers may see informal arrangements as the only practical option (Badalič, 2023; Mendola & Pera, 2022). This has important consequences for integration, as it can trap refugees in insecure work and limit access to formal protections that support stability and future planning (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024).

In this thesis, these barriers are treated as measurable factors that restrict access to social security. They are grouped into legal, administrative, and economic categories to capture different ways in which inclusion may be limited and how these limitations may weaken the relationship between protection and integration (Zaman et al., 2023; Kunpeuk et al., 2022; Badalič, 2023).

To support consistent comparative analysis, Table 2.2 consolidates the chapter's core constructs into a single reference point, specifying (i) how each concept is generally defined in the literature, (ii) how it is operationalized in this study for Jordan–Türkiye comparison, and (iii) the principal sources that ground each definition. (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

*Table 2.2: Core Concepts and Working Definitions*

| Concept | Definition in literature | Definition applied in the study | Key sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Social protection** | A broad set of policies/programs reducing poverty and managing risks via social assistance, social insurance, and labor-market interventions | Used as the umbrella context framing protection landscapes in Jordan and Türkiye | Seyfert & Alonso (2023); Zaman et al. (2023) |
| **Social security** | Institutionalized, rules-based protection is typically delivered via formal systems (often contributory), including regulated entitlements. | Treated as the formal protection architecture most relevant to employment-linked inclusion | Seyfert & Alonso (2023); Ron & Nitzan (2023) |
| **Social security inclusion** | Connection to formal social security coverage (enrolment/coverage), enabling recognized protections and access routes. | Binary indicator (included/not included) with categorization of reported coverage form, where feasible | Seyfert & Alonso (2023); Ron & Nitzan (2023); Zaman et al. (2023) |
| **Youth in forced displacement** | Life-course phase where transitions (education-to-work, first stable employment) shape trajectories; displacement disrupts sequencing and timing | Youth are defined as the study's target young-adult cohort and are analyzed as a transition-sensitive group. | Szkudlarek et al. (2024); Papadakis et al. (2024) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Employment formality** | Regulated employment relationship with registration/compliance features enabling enforceable rights and access to contributory protection | Classified as formal/socially protected vs informal, based on indicators aligned to protection linkage | Seyfert & Alonso (2023); Badalič (2023); Şahin-Mencütek et al. (2023) |
| **Employment informality** | Employment outside full legal/administrative recognition is commonly not registered and lacks contributory coverage. | Classified as informal when protection-linked features are absent | Seyfert & Alonso (2023); Badalič (2023) |
| **Shocks** | Adverse events destabilizing livelihoods (e.g., illness, injury, income loss) that can trigger welfare declines without buffers | Measured as reported experience of illness, work-related injury, and/or income loss during the recall period | Mendola & Pera (2022); Ullah & Harrigan (2022) |
| **Vulnerability** | A condition of heightened exposure to risk and limited coping capacity; measurement requires explicit indicators | Captured through indices reflecting insecurity and constrained coping (aligned to the study instrument) | Mendola & Pera (2022); Mendola et al. (2026) |
| **Social integration** | Multidimensional process combining economic participation, social connectedness, participation, and belonging/acceptance | Composite integration score with dimension-aligned sub-scores where needed | Papadakis et al. (2024); Crawford et al. (2023) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Structural barriers** | Constraints on effective access, despite formal rules, are often grouped into legal, administrative, and economic barriers. | Measured as perceived barrier scores by category (legal/administrative/economic) and overall barrier level | Zaman et al. (2023); Kunpeuk et al. (2022); Grześkowiak (2024) |

Because “social integration” is operationalized differently across disciplines, Table 2.3 maps influential integration-relevant frameworks to their core dimensions and typical indicators, and then specifies how these dimensions align with the study’s measurement strategy. This mapping strengthens construct validity by showing that the study’s integration measure reflects established conceptual traditions while remaining suitable for cross-country survey comparison. (Papadakis et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023; Eggerman et al., 2023).

*Table 2.3: Social Integration Frameworks and Dimensions Mapping*

| Framework | Dimensions | Typical indicators | Alignment to study measures |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Social inclusion/exclusion perspective** | Access to resources and institutions; participation; reduced exclusionary experiences | service access; labour-market access; exclusion/discrimination experiences; participation constraints | Composite integration score includes participation, access/engagement, and belonging/acceptance indicators |
| **Social capital/network approach** | Bonding and bridging ties; support and information channels | network size/diversity; perceived support; cross-group contact; trust | The social connectedness sub-dimension captures support and bridging/bonding-oriented indicators |
| **Secure belonging approach** | Subjective security, recognition, and future orientation; boundary perceptions | perceived acceptance; safety; future planning; perceived boundaries and stigma | Belonging/acceptance sub-dimension captures perceived acceptance, boundaries, and security-oriented items |
| **Institutional inclusion / protection-linked integration** | Institutional membership and access through formal systems; legitimacy and predictability | registration/coverage status; ability to navigate systems; perceived legitimacy of institutions | Social security inclusion variable plus participation indicators support the analysis of institutional linkage mechanisms |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Temporal/trajectory approach to refugee employment** | Sequencing and timing of employment and stability as integration drivers | stability of work over time; transitions from precarious to stable work; mobility constraints | Employment formality and economic participation indicators enable analysis of stability-linked integration differences |
| **Enabling infrastructures and intermediaries** | Role of institutions/organizations/spaces in facilitating access and participation | role of migrant orgs; civic spaces; information access; service navigation | Participation and connectedness indicators capture engagement with institutions and intermediaries |

## 2.4 Theoretical Perspectives Explaining Protection–Integration Links

This section presents the main theoretical approaches used to explain how and why social security inclusion may be linked to social integration in refugee-hosting settings (Papadakis et al., 2024; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). Since individual circumstances and broader institutional conditions shape both protection and integration, the thesis applies a combined theoretical approach that integrates risk-based, institutional, and relational perspectives (Crawford et al., 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). This combined view helps clarify how access to social security can influence stability, participation, social connections, and a sense of belonging. At the same time, it highlights situations where these links may be weaker, such as in cases of informal employment, administrative barriers, or limited inclusion (Badalič, 2023; Hackl, 2022; Safarov, 2024).

### 2.4.1 Social Risk Management and Risk–Resilience Logic

The social risk management approach understands social protection as a set of tools that help individuals and households prevent, manage, and cope with events that threaten their well-being and livelihoods (Silchenko & Murray, 2023; Holmes & Lowe, 2023). This perspective is particularly relevant in displacement contexts, where refugees often face multiple overlapping risks, including unstable employment, limited access to services, insecure housing, and exposure to health and income shocks. At the same time, they usually have fewer resources, such as savings, assets, or enforceable labor rights, to protect themselves (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Wikström & Eriksson, 2024; Kunpeuk et al., 2022). As a result, risk–resilience approaches focus on how protection supports the ability to absorb shocks, adjust strategies when needed, and recover over time without severe or lasting losses (Qamar, 2023; Sakdapolrak et al., 2024).

Within this framework, social security plays an important role because it offers structured and predictable forms of protection that can reduce instability, especially during difficult periods (Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). For example, expanding access to health coverage for refugees is often seen as a way to prevent health problems from turning into serious financial crises, which is key to maintaining stability in displacement settings (Ron & Nitzan, 2023). In addition, inclusive protection systems for children and families can help prevent the accumulation of vulnerability over time by ensuring continued access

to basic services and reducing the need for harmful coping strategies (Holmes & Lowe, 2023).

However, this body of research also warns that terms such as "resilience" and "self-reliance" can sometimes shift responsibility onto refugees without addressing the structural barriers they face in labor markets and institutions (Omata, 2023; André, 2023). Some studies show that policies may expect refugees to manage risks on their own, even when their choices are limited by broader conditions (Wikström & Eriksson, 2024). For this reason, the thesis treats resilience not as an individual quality but as an outcome shaped by access to effective protection systems and the extent to which these systems are usable in practice (Zaman et al., 2023; Holmes & Lowe, 2023).

### 2.4.2 Institutional Inclusion and Social Citizenship Perspectives

Institutional perspectives explain integration by focusing on access to formal systems such as labor markets, welfare programs, education, and public services, which together create practical membership in the host society (Papadakis et al., 2024; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). Similarly, social citizenship approaches view inclusion as a recognized form of belonging grounded in rights, entitlements, and institutional recognition, rather than solely cultural adaptation or social interaction (Diener & Hagen, n.d.; Hackl, 2022). These perspectives are especially relevant for refugees because legal status, documentation requirements, and work authorization rules strongly influence access to employment and protection (Hackl, 2022; Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

An important idea in this literature is that different legal and institutional statuses can lead to conditional inclusion. In such cases, individuals may be allowed access to certain areas while being excluded from others, resulting in uneven integration experiences (Hackl, 2022; Diener & Hagen, n.d.). This unevenness can become stronger when systems are complex and difficult to navigate, even if people are technically eligible (Safarov, 2024; Kunpeuk et al., 2022). Research on administrative literacy also shows that using welfare systems often requires knowledge and skills that are not equally available to everyone, leading to exclusion in practice even without formal restrictions (Safarov, 2024).

In the context of refugee protection, scholars argue that focusing solely on legal rights is insufficient. Instead, it is important to examine how policies are implemented and how economic and institutional factors influence real access (Zaman et al., 2023; Seyfert &

Alonso, 2023). In addition, research on transnational protection highlights that migrants may rely on a mix of state systems, markets, and community networks across borders to secure support, especially when formal systems are incomplete (Levitt et al., 2023; Barglowski & Bonfert, 2023). In this thesis, these perspectives support viewing social security inclusion as a marker of practical membership in formal systems, which can influence integration by increasing stability, legitimacy, and ongoing interaction with institutions (Papadakis et al., 2024; Zaman et al., 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023).

### 2.4.3 Social Capital and Social Cohesion Approaches

Social capital approaches explain integration by highlighting the role of social networks in providing resources such as information, support, job opportunities, and emotional assistance (Ziersch et al., 2023; van Sint Fiet et al., 2022). In refugee contexts, these networks can influence access to work, the ability to navigate services, and responses to shocks, making them an important link between protection and integration outcomes (Song et al., 2025; Barglowski & Bonfert, 2023). Research reviews also show that strengthening social connections can improve well-being and mental health, demonstrating that social relationships are a key part of integration (Villalonga-Olives et al., 2022; De Jesus et al., 2023).

Social cohesion approaches add to this by focusing on relationships between groups, including trust, cooperation, and perceptions of social boundaries. They also examine how policies and programs affect interactions between refugees and host communities (Jayakody et al., 2022; Papadakis et al., 2024). For instance, in Türkiye, studies show that non-governmental organizations can act as intermediaries, helping refugees connect with resources and build relationships with host communities (Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022). In Jordan, research on Cash-for-Work programs suggests that employment-based initiatives can improve social cohesion by creating shared benefits and reducing tensions (Zintl & Loewe, 2022).

Large-scale studies on migrant networks further support the importance of social connections, showing that patterns of relationships can predict integration outcomes (Bailey et al., 2026). However, critical research points out that inclusion is not always straightforward. It can be shaped by power dynamics, restrictions, and selective participation, meaning that contact alone does not guarantee stronger cohesion (Kangas-

Müller et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023). Therefore, in this thesis, social capital and cohesion perspectives highlight that integration has multiple dimensions and that social security may influence it indirectly by supporting participation, reducing stress, and increasing interaction with both institutions and communities (Song et al., 2025; Villalonga-Olives et al., 2022; Papadakis et al., 2024).

### 2.4.4 Mechanisms Linking Social Security Inclusion to Social Integration

Based on the perspectives outlined above, the thesis identifies four main pathways through which social security inclusion may be linked to social integration among young Syrian refugees (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). These pathways are not fixed; their strength may vary depending on factors such as labor-market formality, ease of administrative access, and the broader policy environment in each country (Zaman et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

First, social security inclusion can improve economic stability and reduce insecurity. By providing more predictable income and support during disruptions, it allows households to plan and maintain consistent involvement in work, education, and services (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Ron & Nitzan, 2023). In addition, when labor-market policies are linked to protection, they can improve access to formal employment and better job opportunities. As a result, reduced insecurity can support integration by enabling longer-term participation rather than short-term survival strategies (Holmes & Lowe, 2023; Omata, 2023).

Second, social security can reduce vulnerability and strengthen the ability to cope with risks. From a risk–resilience perspective, coverage helps prevent shocks such as illness, injury, or income loss from leading to severe poverty or exclusion (Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Mendola & Pera, 2022). Health protection, in particular, can reduce both medical costs and income loss, improving overall stability. Over time, this reduced vulnerability can support smoother integration by preventing disruptions that affect education, employment, and social participation (Holmes & Lowe, 2023; Mendola et al., 2026).

Third, inclusion in formal systems can strengthen connections with institutions and increase their perceived legitimacy. Being registered in official systems can make institutions more visible and relevant in daily life, thereby building trust and a sense of belonging (Papadakis et al., 2024; Diener & Hagen, n.d.). However, this effect depends on how accessible and fair these systems are. If procedures are unclear or difficult, interactions

with institutions may instead increase frustration and reinforce exclusion (Safarov, 2024; Zaman et al., 2023). Therefore, administrative processes play a key role in shaping whether institutional inclusion supports or limits integration (Safarov, 2024; Kunpeuk et al., 2022). Finally, social security is closely linked to formal employment, which provides a pathway to stable, protected work. In many cases, access to protection depends on formal employment, and, in turn, protection can support stable employment by reducing risks and strengthening rights (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Badalič, 2023). However, when refugees are concentrated in informal work, they may remain excluded from protection despite being employed, limiting the benefits of work for integration (Badalič, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). Research from Türkiye shows how labor-market conditions and governance systems shape these outcomes, while evidence from Jordan suggests that inclusive employment programs can also improve social cohesion (Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023; Zintl & Loewe, 2022).

Together, these pathways form the basis for the thesis hypotheses. These include the link between social security inclusion and integration (H1), the relationship between inclusion and economic stability and reduced vulnerability (H2), the role of formal and protected employment in improving integration (H3), the function of protection as a buffer during shocks (H4), and the impact of structural barriers in limiting both inclusion and integration (H5) (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

## 2.5 Policy and Institutional Context: Jordan and Türkiye (Comparative)

This section outlines the policy and institutional factors that influence refugees' access to legal employment, the level of labor-market formality, and, through these channels, inclusion in social security systems in Jordan and Türkiye. Since the study compares similar concepts across two countries, the policy context is treated as a set of structural conditions that shape the practice of social security inclusion. These include rules on eligibility, documentation requirements, employer incentives, and enforcement mechanisms (Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023; UNHCR, n.d.).

### 2.5.1 Refugee Governance and Legal Status Context

In Jordan, refugee governance is closely linked to humanitarian systems, registration processes, and national administrative rules that determine access to services and livelihoods (UNHCR, n.d.; Gray Meral et al., 2022). A key feature is that most Syrian refugees live in urban, non-camp settings. As a result, integration primarily occurs through daily interactions with local services, labor markets, and administrative institutions rather than through camp-based systems (UNHCR, n.d.; Gray Meral et al., 2022). Research shows that inclusion and exclusion often emerge through these everyday interactions—such as accessing assistance, securing housing, or dealing with documentation—rather than being determined solely by legal status (Gray Meral et al., 2022).

Studies focused on Jordan also highlight how refugees' legal and administrative positions interact with their vulnerability and integration experiences at the local level. In particular, the extent to which registration leads to real access to opportunities is a key factor shaping outcomes (Al Husseini, 2023; Al Meqdad, 2025). In addition, discussions on refugee governance in Jordan go beyond short-term humanitarian responses and address longer-term issues such as legal protection, human security, and sustainable policy approaches in situations of prolonged displacement (Alshoubaki et al., 2026; Salameh, 2024).

In Türkiye, the governance of Syrian refugees is mainly based on a temporary protection system that regulates access to services and entry into the labor market through specific legal and administrative rules (Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; UNHCR, n.d.). Research describes Türkiye as managing refugee inclusion on a large scale, where governance operates as a nationwide challenge shaped by both central coordination and local implementation capacity (Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). At the same time, public attitudes and political debates around refugee integration and citizenship influence how refugees are perceived and accepted within society (Alakoc et al., 2023).

Another important aspect of governance in Türkiye is the ongoing discussion about local integration and return. These debates can affect how secure refugees feel about their future and, therefore, influence their decisions regarding work and engagement with institutions (Imrie-Kuzu & Özerdem, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). This is relevant for the thesis because inclusion in formal systems depends not only on official rules but also on whether

refugees view the host country as stable enough to invest in long-term formal opportunities (Tumen, 2023; Imrie-Kuzu & Özerdem, 2023).

In both Jordan and Türkiye, legal status and governance systems act as gatekeeping mechanisms that shape access to formal employment and regulated institutions. Therefore, differences in social security inclusion across the two countries should be understood in relation to how these systems are designed and implemented, rather than as differences based only on individual characteristics (Gray Meral et al., 2022; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023).

### 2.5.2 Labor Market Structure and Informality Context

The structure of the labor market is central to this study because informality weakens the connection between employment and protection. Informal work is usually outside official registration and contribution systems, which limits access to social security and enforceable labor rights (ILOSTAT, n.d.-a; ILOSTAT, n.d.-b). In addition, informality affects integration by increasing insecurity and instability, making it harder for individuals to plan for the future, invest in skills, or consistently participate in institutions such as education and training (Acu, 2023; Badalič, 2023).

Jordan's labor market is characterized by high levels of informality, which reduces the number of workers—both refugees and citizens—who can access social security through formal employment (ILOSTAT, n.d.-a; International Labor Organization [ILO], 2025). Research on work permits in Jordan shows that formal employment is linked to better outcomes, supporting the idea that formalization can provide economic stability in long-term displacement situations (Peitz et al., 2023).

The labor market in Jordan is also shaped by differences across sectors, as well as by gender and household roles, which influence young people's access to stable employment and their integration paths (Acu, 2023; Al Husseini, 2023). Policy analyses further show how contributory social security systems operate alongside non-contributory programs, highlighting the importance of formal employment for entering insurance-based protection (Kawar et al., 2022). In addition, evidence suggests that employment-related programs can have broader social effects, such as improving social cohesion under certain conditions (Zintl & Loewe, 2022).

Türkiye also has a significant level of informal employment, and research shows that Syrian refugees are often concentrated in these sectors, limiting their access to labor rights and social security registration (Badalič, 2023; ILOSTAT, n.d.-b). Studies describe informality as a structural condition that can trap refugees in unstable jobs, influenced by sectoral concentration, employer practices, and institutional barriers to formal employment (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

At the same time, Türkiye has introduced policies and programs to increase formal employment among refugees. These include initiatives that examine social security coverage and promote transitions from informal to formal work (ILO, 2023). Evaluations of labor-market programs also show that employment outcomes depend on both labor demand and program design, which helps explain differences in access to formal jobs and in protection (Özen & Raju, 2025).

In both countries, informality acts as a structural factor that influences the likelihood of entering formal employment and, therefore, accessing social security. For this reason, the thesis treats employment formality as a key factor when analyzing the relationship between protection and integration in Jordan and Türkiye (ILOSTAT, n.d.-a; ILOSTAT, n.d.-b; Badalič, 2023; Peitz et al., 2023).

### 2.5.3 Work Authorization Pathways and Access to Formal Employment

Work authorization systems are crucial because they determine whether refugees can legally work in formal jobs, which are usually the main pathway to social security registration (UNHCR, n.d.; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016). Although both Jordan and Türkiye have legal frameworks for formal employment, actual access depends on factors such as administrative procedures, employer willingness, costs, sectoral restrictions, quotas, and enforcement conditions (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2024; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

In Jordan, the work permit system requires employers to lead the application process through the Ministry of Labor (UNHCR, n.d.). These permits are usually limited in duration—often valid for one year—and are typically tied to a specific employer. This can affect job mobility and continuity, which are important for maintaining formal employment and access to protection (UNHCR, n.d.).

An important feature of Jordan's system is the existence of sector-specific pathways, particularly in agriculture and construction. These sectors often have different permit arrangements compared to standard employer-based systems (UNHCR, n.d.). This is significant because such sectors tend to be highly informal, and tailored permit systems can determine whether formal employment becomes accessible to young workers (UNHCR, n.d.; ILO, 2025).

Costs also play a role in determining whether permits are used. Research shows that fees can affect both employers' and refugees' willingness to engage in formal employment (ILO, 2024). Further evidence indicates that work permits are associated with improved welfare outcomes, suggesting that formal employment can enhance stability (Peitz et al., 2023). During the COVID-19 period, work permits were also seen as a form of protection, helping reduce vulnerability during economic disruptions (Stojetz et al., 2024). In addition, research on supply chains suggests that formal employment arrangements can create more stable job opportunities when linked to regulated industries (Cole et al., 2022).

In Türkiye, work authorization for Syrians under temporary protection is regulated by a 2016 policy framework (Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016). This system was introduced to create a formal pathway into the labor market (ILO, 2016). However, access to formal employment is shaped by several conditions, including waiting periods after registration, employer-led application processes, sectoral and occupational restrictions, geographic limitations, and quotas on the number of refugees allowed in a workplace (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025).

These factors influence how easily refugees—especially young job seekers—can enter formal employment and, therefore, access social security (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2023). Official guidance also reinforces the link between legal employment and social security obligations, highlighting that formal work is closely tied to inclusion in protection systems (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labour and Social Security, n.d.). Research further shows that informality remains a major barrier, and policies aimed at increasing formalization are central to improving social security access (ILO, 2023).

Jordan's system focuses on employer-based permits with some sector-specific flexibility, while temporary protection rules, including waiting periods, quotas, and restrictions, more

strongly shape Türkiye's system. These differences create distinct opportunities and challenges for refugees seeking formal employment. As a result, they help explain why levels of formal work and social security inclusion may vary between the two countries (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2024; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016; UNHCR, n.d.).

### 2.5.4 Social Security System Design and Enrollment Rules

In both Jordan and Türkiye, the way social security systems are structured and how enrolment rules are applied play a key role in shaping refugee inclusion. This is because access to contributory social security is usually tied to formal employment and officially recognized work arrangements (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Kawar et al., 2022). However, in settings where informal work is widespread, these system features can lead to a "coverage gap." In such cases, refugees may be working but remain outside formal protection systems, especially when administrative procedures, employer incentives, and weak enforcement limit real access (Badalič, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023).

In Jordan, the social protection system includes both contributory social insurance and non-contributory forms of support, coordinated across national institutions responsible for labor and welfare policies (Kawar et al., 2022). Access to social security is closely linked to formal employment and employer registration, meaning that inclusion largely depends on whether jobs are officially recognized and whether employers follow registration requirements (Peitz et al., 2023; Kawar et al., 2022). Research on Syrian refugees in Jordan shows that access to stable and inclusive protection remains uneven. It is influenced by factors such as documentation requirements, work permit systems, and the broader context of informal and unstable employment (Al Husseini, 2022; Diab, 2024).

An important feature of Jordan's system is the presence of sector-specific work permit pathways, especially in agriculture and construction. These sectors often operate under different rules that interact with social security requirements, sometimes creating alternative routes into—or exemptions from—standard registration systems. As a result, young workers entering these sectors may face different chances of being included in contributory protection (UNHCR, n.d.; Stojetz et al., 2024).

In Türkiye, the social security system for foreign workers is organized under national institutions, and formal employment is directly linked to social security obligations.

Employers are responsible for registering workers and ensuring that contributions are made (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labour and Social Security, n.d.; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). For Syrians under temporary protection, access to social security depends largely on obtaining work permits and entering formal employment. Policy efforts aim to connect formal work with insured status and reduce the disadvantages associated with informal employment (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2023; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016).

However, research shows that in practice, social security registration remains limited due to low uptake of work permits and the continued dominance of informal employment (ILO, 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025). In addition, social health protection has been a major area of expansion for refugee inclusion, making healthcare-related coverage an important part of the broader protection system. Nevertheless, access to effective coverage still depends on administrative capacity and how policies are implemented (Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Tumen, 2023).

### 2.5.5 Enforcement, Compliance, and Employer Practices

Beyond system design and enforcement, employer behavior is crucial in determining whether formal rules actually lead to inclusion. This is especially important in contexts where refugees mainly work in informal sectors (Zaman et al., 2023; Badalič, 2023). In both Jordan and Türkiye, employers often act as key gatekeepers because they are responsible for initiating work permits and registration processes. As a result, compliance depends on employer incentives, perceived costs, and the effectiveness of monitoring and penalties (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025).

In Jordan, research shows that work permits can support formal employment and are linked to better welfare outcomes, suggesting that enforcement and compliance play a role in improving stability and integration (Peitz et al., 2023). However, employer-related costs and administrative procedures can discourage formalization, limiting the extent to which work permits lead to long-term formal employment and social security inclusion (International Labor Organization [ILO], 2024; Kawar et al., 2022). During crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, work permits have been viewed as a form of protection, helping reduce vulnerability when labor markets become unstable (Stojetz et al., 2024).

At the same time, broader research highlights that enforcement operates within complex local environments. Refugees often rely on a mix of formal and informal strategies to secure livelihoods, which affects how policies work in practice (Al Husseini, 2023; Gray Meral et al., 2022).

In Türkiye, enforcement challenges are closely linked to the structure of the work permit system, which includes employer-led applications, quotas, and restrictions. These features can reduce employers' willingness to formalize jobs, limiting access to social security in practice (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2023). Research also shows that many Syrians remain in informal employment, partly due to "underground economy" dynamics and employer strategies that avoid formal registration (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

Policy analysis in Türkiye emphasizes that increasing formal employment requires stronger enforcement, better incentives, and improved implementation capacity. This highlights the central role of compliance in expanding social security inclusion for refugees (ILO, 2023; Tumen, 2023).

### 2.5.6 Interaction Between Social Assistance, Humanitarian Support, and Social Security

Refugee protection is usually not provided solely through social security. Instead, it is shaped by the interaction between contributory systems and non-contributory assistance or humanitarian programs. These different forms of support may complement each other, replace one another, or influence decisions about entering formal employment (Kawar et al., 2022; Zaman et al., 2023). This interaction is important because while social assistance can address immediate needs, it may not offer the long-term stability and institutional inclusion associated with contributory systems. At the same time, programs such as cash-for-work can affect employment behavior, social relationships, and participation (Zintl & Loewe, 2022; Hamad et al., 2025).

In Jordan, the social protection system includes both contributory and non-contributory elements, meaning that refugees often rely on multiple sources of support rather than a single system (Kawar et al., 2022). Evidence shows that donor-funded Cash-for-Work programs can improve social cohesion in host communities, suggesting that employment-based assistance can have social benefits beyond income (Zintl & Loewe, 2022). Similarly,

research on education-related cash transfers indicates that such programs can strengthen social connections among displaced populations, especially for young people and families with children (Hamad et al., 2025).

However, achieving fair and lasting protection requires addressing broader structural inequalities and understanding how assistance, labor-market access, and institutional inclusion interact across factors such as gender, age, and legal status (Diab, 2024; Al Husseini, 2022).

In Türkiye, research shows that welfare systems, labor-market conditions, and public debates interact to shape both inclusion and perceptions of belonging among refugees (Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023). Studies on welfare services and "social harmonization" suggest that how services are delivered can either support inclusion or reinforce social boundaries, depending on accessibility and fairness (Dama, 2022; Tumen, 2023).

In addition, labor policy research highlights that continued informality limits social security registration and makes it harder for refugees to move from reliance on assistance toward stable inclusion through formal employment. This makes the relationship between assistance and social security a key factor in shaping long-term integration outcomes (ILO, 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025).

Table 2.4 summarises the principal work authorization and formality pathways in Jordan and Türkiye in a comparative format. This table is included because work authorization design is a core institutional gateway to formal employment and, therefore, to social security inclusion, while differences in eligibility rules, costs, and administrative processes shape who can realistically enter formal work—particularly among youth making early school-to-work transitions (Peitz et al., 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025). The table also foregrounds how "practical barriers" (e.g., employer incentives, quotas, documentation burdens) mediate the distance between policy intent and lived access (ILO, 2024; ILO, 2023).

*Table 2.4: Jordan and Türkiye—Work Authorization and Formality Pathways (Comparative)*

| Policy instrument | Eligibility | Process | Costs | Practical barriers | Expected impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jordan: Work permits for Syrians** | Syrians meeting age/documentation requirements; sector-specific channels in some cases (UNHCR, n.d.) | Employer-led application through Ministry of Labor procedures; sector modalities (e.g., agriculture/cooperatives; construction/trade union pathway) (UNHCR, n.d.) | Permit-related costs and fee structures can affect uptake; employer and worker cost sensitivity has been documented (ILO, 2024) | Employer willingness, administrative burdens, informality norms, sector segmentation (ILO, 2024; Kawar et al., 2022) | Increased formal labor-market integration is associated with improved outcomes where take-up occurs (Peitz et al., 2023) |
| **Jordan: Policy adjustments during crises** | Legal work status can shape protection during systemic shocks (Stojetz et al., 2024) | Continuity of authorized work depends on employer compliance and institutional functioning during crises (Stojetz et al., 2024) | Crisis conditions can amplify affordability pressures (Stojetz et al., 2024) | Labor-market contraction, higher informality incentives, weaker compliance (Stojetz et al., 2024) | Work permits can function as a protective factor during polycrises when maintained (Stojetz et al., 2024) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Türkiye: Work permits under Temporary Protection** | Syrians under temporary protection; permit rules linked to TP status and waiting period (Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025) | Employer-driven online application; restrictions by province/occupation; exemptions/alternative procedures in some sectors (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025) | Permit fees and compliance costs are borne largely by employers; wage rules apply (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025) | Employer reluctance due to quotas/restrictions; administrative complexity; informality persistence (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2023) | Intended pathway to formality and insured work; limited uptake contributes to continued informality (ILO, 2023) |
| **Türkiye: Transition-to-formality interventions** | Programs target firms/workers to shift employment into insured status (ILO, 2023) | Institutionally supported interventions to encourage formal employment and registration (ILO, 2023) | Implementation costs depend on program design and employer participation (ILO, 2023) | Structural labor-market segmentation; enforcement and incentive constraints (ILO, 2023; Badalič, 2023) | Improved insured employment where interventions succeed; broader impact depends on scale (ILO, 2023) |

Table 2.5 compares the social security inclusion architecture in Jordan and Türkiye to show how system features—institutions, enrolment responsibilities, links to formal employment, and implementation conditions—shape refugees' and youths' actual likelihood of coverage. This table is essential because the thesis treats social security inclusion as an institutional mechanism connected to integration outcomes, and comparative differences in system design and accessibility can influence observed associations between inclusion, vulnerability reduction, and social integration across countries (Kawar et al., 2022; ILO, 2023). The table, therefore, highlights not only formal rules but also their relevance for young refugees in high-informality environments (Badalič, 2023; Diab, 2024).

*Table 2.5: Jordan and Türkiye—Social Security Inclusion Architecture (Comparative)*

| System feature | Jordan | Türkiye | Relevance to refugees/youth | Implications for inclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Core institutional logic** | Formal protection landscape includes contributory and non-contributory components; inclusion is shaped by institutional mapping and policy design (Kawar et al., 2022) | Formal rules link lawful work to social security obligations for foreign workers; inclusion is shaped by insured status and administration (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labour and Social Security, n.d.; ILO, 2023) | Youth entering labor markets are disproportionately exposed to informality, making institutional gateways crucial (Kawar et al., 2022; ILO, 2023) | Inclusion depends on feasible entry into formal/insured work and functioning enrolment pathways (ILO, 2023; Kawar et al., 2022) |
| **Primary route to inclusion** | Formal employment and compliant employer registration pathways; work permits are a key formalization channel (Peitz et al., 2023; UNHCR, n.d.) | Work permits under temporary protection are intended to support formality and insured registration (Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016; ILO, 2023) | Youth school-to-work transitions often occur through low-wage sectors where registration is less common (Acu, 2023; Badalič, 2023) | Barriers to formal work translate into barriers to social security inclusion (Badaliç, 2023; Peitz et al., 2023) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Employer role and responsibilities** | Employers are key gatekeepers in permit and registration processes; costs influence take-up (ILO, 2024; UNHCR, n.d.) | Employer-driven permit applications and registration obligations; quotas/restrictions influence employer behavior (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2023) | Youth may have weaker bargaining power and fewer stable employers, limiting inclusion prospects (Szkudlarek et al., 2024; Badalič, 2023) | Employer incentives and compliance capacity strongly condition real coverage (ILO, 2024; ILO, 2023) |
| **Health protection dimension** | Access shaped by broader protection landscape and assistance arrangements; vulnerability discussions highlight gaps and uneven access (Al Husseini, 2023; Diab, 2024) | Health protection extension is central to refugee inclusion debates, though effective access remains implementation-dependent (Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Tumen, 2023) | Health shocks are major drivers of vulnerability, particularly for precariously employed youth (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Ron & Nitzan, 2023) | Partial inclusion can reduce some risks while leaving other vulnerabilities intact (Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Mendola & Pera, 2022) |
| **Implementation constraints** | Informality and uneven access to | Persistent informality limits insured registration despite | Youth often rely on mixed coping strategies and may | Coverage remains uneven unless administrative |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | durable protection; intersectional constraints affect inclusion (Diab, 2024; Kawar et al., 2022) | legal pathways (Badalič, 2023; ILO, 2023) | cycle between informal/formal work (Szkudlarek et al., 2024; Al Meqdad, 2025) | access, incentives, and enforcement improve (Zaman et al., 2023; ILO, 2023) |

## 2.6 Empirical Literature Review by Core Relationships

This section reviews existing empirical studies related to the main relationships examined in this thesis. It focuses on how social security inclusion—and related pathways such as formal employment and work authorization—is linked to economic security, vulnerability, and social integration among Syrian refugees, with particular attention to Jordan and Türkiye (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). Rather than assuming that protection directly causes integration, the review examines patterns of association, possible mechanisms, and contextual factors that may influence these relationships (Papadakis et al., 2024; Mendola & Pera, 2022). It also identifies areas where evidence is strong, where findings are mixed, and where research is limited—especially regarding youth and cross-country comparisons—thereby supporting the need for the thesis's comparative survey approach (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023).

### 2.6.1 Social Security Inclusion and Economic Security Outcomes

Economic security is generally understood as the ability to meet basic needs, maintain stable livelihoods, and avoid sharp declines in well-being during difficult times. Social protection and social security are seen as key tools for stabilizing income and reducing poverty risks (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). In refugee contexts, economic security is strongly influenced by access to labor markets and by individuals' ability to enter formal employment, which tends to offer more stable income and institutional protection (Zaman et al., 2023; ILOSTAT, n.d.; Badalič, 2023).

Evidence from Jordan shows that access to formal employment—often measured by work permits—is associated with better economic outcomes for Syrian refugees (Peitz et al., 2023). Research assessing the impact of work permits suggests that enabling legal access to jobs can improve economic conditions, supporting the idea that institutional pathways into formal work contribute to economic stability (Peitz et al., 2023). During the COVID-19 period, work permits were also seen as a form of protection, helping refugees maintain livelihoods during widespread economic disruption (Stojetz et al., 2024).

In addition, studies show that the cost of work permits can influence whether refugees and employers choose formal employment, suggesting that affordability affects access to protection systems (International Labor Organization [ILO], 2024). Research focusing on

young refugees highlights that economic stability depends not only on access to jobs but also on job quality, skill development opportunities, and the ability to maintain a steady income over time (Jones et al., 2022). Broader studies on labor markets in Jordan further reveal structural inequalities, including gender differences, that affect employment opportunities and earnings, leading to varied economic outcomes among refugees (Acu, 2023). Moreover, research on coping strategies shows that when protection is limited, refugees often rely on insecure forms of work, which reflects ongoing economic vulnerability (Al Meqdad, 2025).

In Türkiye, research consistently finds that limited access to formal employment is linked to weaker economic security among Syrian refugees. Informal work is a major factor contributing to unstable livelihoods and reduced protection (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). Studies show that remaining in informal employment often leads to the loss of labor rights and social security benefits, making the transition to formal employment essential to improving economic conditions (ILO, 2023).

Policy analyses also show that access to work permits is shaped by administrative rules and practical barriers, which can limit entry into formal employment and reduce the stability associated with regulated jobs (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016). Research on Türkiye's broader experience indicates that while there have been some successes in employment integration, many challenges remain, particularly in ensuring stable and sustainable livelihoods (Tumen, 2023). Evaluations of employment programs further demonstrate that outcomes depend on both program design and labor-market demand, meaning that the presence of policies alone does not guarantee improved economic security (Özen & Raju, 2025). Large-scale analyses also highlight how economic outcomes are shaped by the interactions among labor markets, institutional capacity, and broader social conditions (Bilgiç, 2024).

Across both countries, a clear pattern emerges: access to formal employment and related institutional pathways is generally linked to better economic security, while informal work is associated with greater instability (Peitz et al., 2023; ILO, 2023; Badalič, 2023; Tumen, 2023). However, these outcomes depend on the accessibility of formal pathways, including factors such as costs, quotas, employer behavior, and labor-market structures. Therefore,

economic security should be understood as shaped by both individual circumstances and broader institutional conditions (ILO, 2024; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Acu, 2023).

### 2.6.2 Social Security Inclusion and Vulnerability Reduction

In displacement research, vulnerability is usually defined as a condition in which individuals face high exposure to risks and have limited coping capacity, resulting in significant losses in well-being. Studies emphasize that vulnerability must be measured using clear indicators rather than broad or vague definitions (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Mendola et al., 2026). Refugees often experience higher vulnerability due to unstable livelihoods, limited access to institutions, and reliance on informal work, which reduces access to protection and support systems (Zaman et al., 2023; Badalič, 2023). Social security inclusion is expected to reduce vulnerability by improving stability, increasing access to healthcare and protection, and preventing shocks from leading to severe hardship (Ron & Nitzan, 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023).

Research in Jordan highlights that vulnerability is shaped by a combination of labor-market conditions, access to services, and local institutional environments (Al Husseini, 2023; Gray Meral et al., 2022). Studies show that gaps in social protection remain, and that access to protection is influenced by structural inequalities and barriers (Al Husseini, 2022; Diab, 2024). Vulnerability also varies across groups, with factors such as gender, age, and household roles affecting individuals' exposure to risk (Diab, 2024; Jones et al., 2022).

During crisis periods, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence suggests that having a legal work status can reduce vulnerability by helping individuals maintain access to income and institutional support (Stojetz et al., 2024). In addition, research on social assistance programs indicates that such interventions can influence household coping strategies and social dynamics, highlighting that protection affects more than just income (Oosterhoff & Yunus, 2022).

In Türkiye, vulnerability is strongly linked to informal employment and limited access to labor rights. Studies show that many Syrian refugees remain in informal jobs, thereby increasing their exposure to exploitation and economic instability (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). Policy research also identifies informality as a key factor leading to gaps in social protection and reduced access to rights (ILO, 2023).

Qualitative studies further illustrate how vulnerability differs across groups. For example, research on single mothers highlights the challenges of balancing work and caregiving in constrained labor markets, while studies on older refugees show how barriers to services affect well-being (Katmer et al., 2025; Özmete et al., 2022). Broader analyses also suggest that uncertainty about long-term integration can increase insecurity and discourage investment in formal opportunities (Imrie-Kuzu & Özerdem, 2023; Tumen, 2023).

Overall, the literature shows a strong link between informal employment and higher vulnerability, while formal employment and social security inclusion are associated with reduced risk and greater stability (Mendola & Pera, 2022; ILO, 2023; Badalič, 2023). However, the ability of protection systems to reduce vulnerability depends on actual access, which is shaped by administrative processes, employer practices, and institutional conditions (Zaman et al., 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Diab, 2024).

### 2.6.3 Social Security Inclusion and Social Integration Outcomes

Social integration is widely understood as a multidimensional process that includes economic participation, social relationships, community involvement, and a sense of belonging (Papadakis et al., 2024; Ghassaban et al., 2023). Although social security inclusion is not always directly measured, related factors such as formal employment, access to services, and participation in programs are often linked to integration outcomes. These links operate through mechanisms such as increased stability, reduced stress, and stronger connections with institutions (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). In addition, integration is influenced by social cohesion and perceptions of belonging, meaning that institutional inclusion interacts with broader social and political contexts (Alakoc et al., 2023; Cevik, 2025).

Research in Jordan shows several ways in which protection and integration are connected. Studies on Cash-for-Work programs indicate that employment-based interventions can improve social cohesion between refugees and host communities (Zintl & Loewe, 2022). Similarly, research on education-related cash transfers suggests that social protection can strengthen social connections, particularly among young people and families (Hamad et al., 2025).

Education-focused studies also highlight the role of schools and institutions in shaping belonging and identity among refugee youth, showing that integration is influenced by both local and transnational factors (Cohen, 2022). Broader research emphasizes that the quality of inclusion within national systems affects integration outcomes, aligning with the idea that access alone is not sufficient—how inclusion is experienced also matters (Morrice & Salem, 2023). Studies on urban displacement further show that daily interactions with institutions and shared spaces shape participation and social acceptance (Gray Meral et al., 2022). In addition, research on host–refugee relations highlights that local dynamics can either support inclusion or reinforce social divisions (Kamruzzaman et al., 2025; Ababsa, 2024).

In Türkiye, research highlights the importance of social cohesion, social networks, and intermediary organizations in shaping integration outcomes. Studies show that NGOs can help refugees build connections with institutions and host communities, supporting inclusion processes (Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022). Large-scale research on young people also shows that social cohesion varies across groups and depends on opportunities for interaction and broader contextual factors (Mittal et al., 2025).

Other studies focus on the lived experience of integration, showing how everyday environments influence feelings of belonging and exclusion (Ayyildiz, 2024). Research on identity and social boundaries further demonstrates how perceptions of belonging can be shaped by cultural and social factors (Cevik, 2025). Policy-focused work emphasizes that integration outcomes depend on both institutional systems and their implementation, as well as on broader governance conditions (Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). Studies on welfare services also suggest that access to support systems can either strengthen inclusion or reinforce divisions, depending on how services are delivered (Dama, 2022).

Across both countries, evidence suggests that protection-related interventions and institutional access are linked to aspects of social integration, particularly through improvements in social cohesion and connectedness (Zintl & Loewe, 2022; Hamad et al., 2025; Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022; Mittal et al., 2025). However, the evidence is not fully consistent. Many studies focus on integration without directly measuring social security inclusion, while others examine protection without using comparable measures of

integration. This limits the ability to draw clear conclusions, especially for young people across different countries (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023).

This gap supports the need for the thesis's comparative design, which applies consistent measures across Jordan and Türkiye to examine whether social security inclusion is linked to different dimensions of social integration, while also accounting for factors such as employment formality, exposure to shocks, and structural barriers (Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

### 2.6.4 Employment Formality (Protected vs Informal Work) and Social Integration

A key argument in this thesis is that employment formality—meaning work that is legally recognized and linked to labor rights or social security systems—can influence social integration through both economic and social pathways (International Labor Organization [ILO], 2023; Peitz et al., 2023). In contrast, informal employment may provide income but usually offers less stability, weaker legal protection, and limited access to formal institutions. As a result, it can restrict participation, increase stress, and reinforce feelings of exclusion (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). Therefore, research in both Jordan and Türkiye views labor-market position not only as an economic factor but also as an institutional one, shaping how refugees interact with employers, public systems, and wider society (Gray Meral et al., 2022; Tumen, 2023).

Studies from Jordan show that formal employment—often measured by work permits—is associated with better welfare outcomes for Syrian refugees. This improvement in stability is important for integration because it allows individuals to participate more consistently in social and economic life and to plan for the future (Peitz et al., 2023). However, access to formal work is influenced by institutional factors such as permit costs, administrative procedures, and labor demand, rather than individual choice alone (ILO, 2024; Acu, 2023). Research on urban displacement in Jordan also shows that inclusion is shaped by everyday interactions with institutions, including access to services, employment, and documentation. In this context, being in formal employment may increase engagement with institutions and reduce exclusion in shared spaces (Gray Meral et al., 2022). Additionally, studies on social cohesion indicate that employment-related programs can influence relationships between refugees and host communities, suggesting that labor-market

position affects social outcomes beyond income (Zintl & Loewe, 2022; Kamruzzaman et al., 2025).

In Türkiye, research consistently shows that many Syrian refugees work in the informal sector, which limits both their rights and their integration outcomes (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). Policy studies emphasize that moving from informal to formal employment is essential to improving access to social security and reducing the disadvantages associated with informal work (ILO, 2023).

At the same time, research on social boundaries and everyday experiences shows that identity, discrimination, and patterns of interaction influence integration. This means that even when refugees are employed, informal and unstable jobs may not lead to greater social acceptance or a sense of belonging (Ayyildiz, 2024; Cevik, 2025). Studies focusing on young people also reveal differences in integration experiences across groups, indicating that employment formality is only one of several factors shaping integration (Mittal et al., 2025; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022).

Overall, evidence from both countries suggests that formal and protected employment is linked to greater stability and may support integration through stronger institutional connections, reduced insecurity, and increased participation (Peitz et al., 2023; ILO, 2023; Tumen, 2023). However, integration outcomes also depend on wider social and institutional conditions, such as public attitudes, social boundaries, and the quality of access to services like education and welfare (Alakoc et al., 2023; Morrice & Salem, 2023; Gray Meral et al., 2022). This supports the thesis that treating employment formality as an important pathway (H3) while still recognizing that integration has multiple dimensions (Ghassaban et al., 2023).

### 2.6.5 Shocks (Illness, Work Injury, Income Loss) and Poverty/Social Exclusion Risk

In displacement research, shocks—such as illness, workplace injury, and sudden income loss—are seen as events that can quickly reduce wellbeing, especially when individuals lack savings, support systems, or formal protection (Holzmann et al., 2003; ILO, 2024). In long-term displacement settings, the impact of shocks is often greater because many refugees work in informal jobs, where access to benefits such as sick leave, injury compensation, or unemployment support is limited (ILO, 2023; Badalič, 2023). As a result,

research in Jordan and Türkiye links shocks to increased poverty and exclusion through unstable livelihoods, limited access to services, and coping strategies that may reduce participation and deepen marginalization (Al Husseini, 2023; Katmer et al., 2025).

Studies in Jordan highlight the widespread vulnerability and precarious living conditions faced by Syrian refugees, showing that shocks can quickly lead to hardship when income sources are unstable and support systems are limited (Al Husseini, 2023; Al Meqdad, 2025). Evidence from the COVID-19 period shows that economic disruptions increased income loss and employment instability, while legal work status helped some individuals maintain more stable livelihoods (Stojetz et al., 2024).

Social assistance programs, including cash-based support, are also shown to reduce the negative effects of shocks by helping households maintain consumption and avoid harmful coping strategies. These programs can also influence social relationships and connectedness, demonstrating that shocks affect more than just economic conditions (Hamad et al., 2025; Oosterhoff & Yunus, 2022). Overall, these findings suggest that shocks can disrupt not only income but also participation and integration by forcing short-term survival responses (Al Husseini, 2023; Hamad et al., 2025).

In Türkiye, the high level of informal employment among Syrian refugees increases their exposure to risks, as many lack access to labor rights and formal protection systems (Badalič, 2023; ILO, 2023). Studies show that shocks such as illness or job loss can lead to serious economic decline under these conditions.

Research on vulnerable groups, such as single mothers, illustrates how limited income and support can increase poverty and social exclusion in daily life (Katmer et al., 2025). Broader analyses also show that access to welfare services affects how shocks are experienced, with uneven or conditional access making it harder to cope (Dama, 2022; Tumen, 2023). In addition, studies on discrimination and social boundaries suggest that economic shocks can worsen social exclusion by weakening social networks and support systems (Cevik, 2025; Ayyildiz, 2024).

Across both Jordan and Türkiye, evidence shows that shocks are linked to higher risks of poverty and social exclusion. The extent of these effects depends on factors such as access to protection, employment conditions, and the strength of institutional support systems (Holzmann et al., 2003; ILO, 2023; Al Husseini, 2023). These findings support the thesis

that shocks should be measured directly and examined to determine whether social protection reduces their impact (H4) (Stojetz et al., 2024).

### 2.6.6 Buffering Effects of Social Security Inclusion During Shocks

A key idea in social protection research is that being included in formal protection systems can reduce the negative effects of shocks by stabilizing income, ensuring access to services, and limiting the need for harmful coping strategies (Holzmann et al., 2003; ILO, 2024). In refugee contexts, this buffering role depends on whether formal employment and social security systems actually provide support during crises (ILO, 2023; Stojetz et al., 2024). Although it is difficult to measure these effects precisely, available evidence suggests that protection can reduce the impact of shocks on poverty and exclusion (Stojetz et al., 2024; ILO, 2023).

Research from Jordan during the COVID-19 crisis shows that work permits can act as a form of social protection, helping refugees maintain livelihoods during periods of widespread disruption (Stojetz et al., 2024). This suggests that formal employment status can provide a buffer by supporting continued access to work, institutional recognition, and other forms of assistance.

In addition, evidence that social protection programs can strengthen social connectedness indicates that protection may also reduce social strain during crises, not just economic hardship (Hamad et al., 2025).

In Türkiye, policy research shows that moving into formal employment and obtaining social security coverage can reduce the risks associated with informal work, suggesting a potential buffering effect during shocks (ILO, 2023). However, since many refugees remain in informal employment, the benefits of protection are not evenly distributed (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

Barriers to work permit access further limit the reach of these protective effects, meaning that social security's ability to reduce shock impacts depends on institutional design and employer participation (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016).

Overall, there is some evidence that social security inclusion can reduce the negative effects of shocks, particularly during crises. However, direct and comparable evidence across countries is limited. This highlights the thesis's contribution, which tests whether protection

reduces poverty and exclusion among those experiencing shocks, using consistent measures in both Jordan and Türkiye (Stojetz et al., 2024; ILO, 2023).

### 2.6.7 Structural Barriers and Unequal Access to Social Security Inclusion

A consistent finding in refugee research is that access to protection depends not only on formal eligibility but also on structural barriers that affect whether refugees can actually use available systems (Diab, 2024; Gray Meral et al., 2022). These barriers are usually grouped into legal, administrative, and economic categories, and they often interact to produce unequal access—especially for young refugees, who may face additional challenges such as limited experience, weaker bargaining power, and fewer stable job opportunities (ILO, 2024; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022).

Legal barriers include restrictions related to legal status, sector-specific rules, and work authorization requirements that determine who can access formal employment and, therefore, social security (Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016; UNHCR, n.d.). In Türkiye, work permit rules under temporary protection influence access to formal jobs and indirectly limit access to social security (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2023). In Jordan, similar legal and administrative frameworks shape access to work permits, with sector-specific arrangements creating different pathways into formal employment (UNHCR, n.d.; Peitz et al., 2023).

Administrative barriers refer to practical difficulties, such as complex procedures, documentation requirements, insufficient information, and the effort required to navigate institutional systems (Gray Meral et al., 2022; Hamad et al., 2025). In Jordan, research shows that everyday interactions with administrative systems can create unequal access to services, even when policies are in place (Gray Meral et al., 2022). In Türkiye, employer-led application processes and system complexity also make it harder for refugees to access formal employment and protection (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2023).

Economic barriers include costs such as permit fees, registration expenses, and income losses during administrative processes, as well as employer incentives to avoid formalization (ILO, 2024; Badalič, 2023). In Jordan, research shows that the cost of work permits affects whether refugees and employers choose formal employment (ILO, 2024). In Türkiye, ongoing informality suggests that employer behavior and labor-market

conditions continue to favor informal arrangements, limiting access to protection (Badalič, 2023; ILO, 2023). These barriers may also affect different groups differently, particularly young people and women, due to labor-market inequalities and constraints on time and mobility (Acu, 2023; Aslan, 2025; Diab, 2024).

Across both Jordan and Türkiye, evidence shows that structural barriers play a major role in shaping access to social security. Legal rules determine eligibility, administrative processes determine actual access, and economic factors determine whether formalization is feasible. These findings support the thesis that barriers across these categories should be measured and analyzed to understand how they influence both inclusion and integration outcomes (ILO, 2024; ILO, 2023; Gray Meral et al., 2022).

Table 2.6 summarises the most relevant empirical studies used in this chapter for Jordan, focusing on how each study contributes evidence to the thesis hypotheses (H1–H5). The table supports transparent synthesis by showing study type, focal variables, and the specific relevance of findings to protection–integration pathways. (Peitz et al., 2023; Gray Meral et al., 2022).

*Table 2.6: Key Empirical Studies—Jordan (Evidence Matrix)*

| Author/year | Sample | Method | Variables | Main findings | Relevance to H1–H5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Peitz et al. (2023)** | Syrian refugees in Jordan | Quantitative analysis | Work permits (formal integration) and welfare outcomes | Formal labor market integration via work permits is associated with improved outcomes | H2, H3, H4 |
| **Stojetz et al. (2024)** | Refugees in Jordan during COVID-19 | Quantitative/working paper analysis | Work permits, crisis exposure, protection | Work permits discussed as social protection during polycrises; relevance to shock resilience | H4 |
| **Gray Meral et al. (2022)** | Urban refugees in Jordan | Qualitative/policy working paper | Inclusion/exclusion mechanisms; service access | Inclusion/exclusion produced through urban institutional interfaces and access dynamics | H1, H5 |
| **Hamad et al. (2025)** | Displaced populations in Jordan | Empirical evaluation study | Social protection (cash transfer for education) and connectedness | Social protection can contribute to social connectedness in crisis/displacement contexts | H1, H2 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Zintl & Loewe (2022)** | Host communities in Jordan with Syrians | Programme analysis | Cash-for-work and social cohesion | Labor-linked programs can influence social cohesion outcomes | H1, H3 |
| **Acu (2023)** | Refugees and labour markets in Jordan | Doctoral dissertation | Labor integration, gender gaps, and employment outcomes | Labor market structure and gendered access shape economic inclusion | H2, H3, H5 |
| **Al Husseini (2022)** | Syrians in Jordan | Doctoral dissertation | Social protection access: policy inclusion | Durability and inclusiveness of protection remain uneven | H2, H5 |
| **Al Husseini (2023)** | Syrians in Jordan | Doctoral dissertation | Vulnerability and local integration | Vulnerability is shaped by the local environment and institutional access | H2, H4, H5 |

Table 2.7 summarises key empirical studies used for **Türkiye**, highlighting evidence on informality, work authorization constraints, social cohesion/boundaries, and how these intersect with protection and integration outcomes relevant to H1–H5. (ILO, 2023; Badalič, 2023).

*Table 2.7: Key Empirical Studies—Türkiye (Evidence Matrix)*

| Author/year | Sample | Method | Variables | Main findings | Relevance to H1–H5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ILO (2023)** | Syrians under temporary protection in Türkiye | Policy/empirical report | Social security status; informality; transition to formality | Informality linked to rights losses; transition-to-formality needed for insured inclusion | H2, H3, H5 |
| **Badalič (2023)** | Syrian refugees in Türkiye | Analytical/empirical study | Informal labor market dynamics | Refugees can be trapped in the informal economy; limited rights and protection. | H2, H3, H5 |
| **Şahin-Mencütek et al. (2023)** | Syrians in Türkiye | Scholarly synthesis (book) | Reception/integration governance; labor-market inclusion | Institutional conditions shape integration and access to formal pathways | H1, H3, H5 |
| **Mittal et al. (2025)** | Syrian and Turkish children/adolescents/young adults | Quantitative study | Social cohesion outcomes | Cohesion varies across groups and contexts; youth-focused evidence | H1, H3 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran (2022)** | Syrians in Türkiye | Qualitative/empirical study | NGOs, social capital, cohesion | NGOs mediate social capital and cohesion, influencing integration processes. | H1 |
| **Ayyildiz (2024)** | Syrian students in Istanbul | Qualitative/empirical study | Inclusion/exclusion in shared places | Every day, spaces shape emotions, belonging, and exclusion | H1 |
| **Cevik (2025)** | Syrians and locals in Ankara | Qualitative/empirical study | Identity boundaries, exclusion | Social boundaries structure social relations and perceived inclusion | H1 |
| **European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2025)** | Syrians under temporary protection | Country policy report | Labor market access rules and constraints | Permit design, quotas, and restrictions shape formal work feasibility | H3, H5 |
| **Katmer et al. (2025)** | Syrian single mothers in Türkiye | Qualitative study | Vulnerability, survival, coping | Household-level vulnerability is shaped by labor-market precarity and constraints. | H2, H4 |

Table 2.8 consolidates evidence on how different shocks are linked to poverty/exclusion risk and identifies which protection mechanisms are discussed as buffers. This supports the hypothesis logic for H4 by clarifying the empirical basis for expecting lower risk among those with protection coverage. (Stojetz et al., 2024; ILO, 2023).

**Table 2.8: Evidence Matrix—Shocks, Protection, and Poverty/Social Exclusion Risk**

*Table 2.8: Evidence Matrix—Shocks, Protection, and Poverty/Social Exclusion Risk*

| Shock type | Reported impacts | Protection mechanism | Strength of evidence | Relevance to H4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Illness** | Increased costs; reduced ability to work; risk of hardship | Social health protection; access to services; assistance | Moderate (policy + qualitative evidence) | Protection expected to reduce hardship during illness |
| **Work injury** | Income loss, medical costs, and job loss risk | Work-injury coverage; insured employment | Moderate (policy logic + informality evidence) | Inclusion is expected to buffer injury-related poverty risk |
| **Income loss/job loss** | Immediate consumption shocks, negative coping, and reduced participation | Insured status; formal work continuity; crisis support | Stronger in Jordan COVID evidence | Inclusion is expected to reduce poverty/exclusion risk during income loss |

Table 2.9 compares the barrier categories (legal, administrative, economic) across Jordan and Türkiye and summarises the best available evidence in each context. This table supports H5 by clarifying how barriers operate differently across national systems and why they are expected to be negatively associated with inclusion and integration. (ILO, 2024; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025).

*Table 2.9: Barrier Typology and Comparative Evidence (Jordan vs Türkiye)*

| Barrier type | Examples | Evidence in Jordan | Evidence in Türkiye | Expected direction for H5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Legal barriers** | Status-linked eligibility; sector/profession rules | Work permit governance structures formal access pathways (UNHCR, n.d.; Peitz et al., 2023) | Temporary protection permit regime and restrictions shape formal access (Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025) | Higher barriers → lower inclusion/integration |
| **Administrative barriers** | Documentation; complex processes; information gaps | Urban inclusion/exclusion shaped by institutional interfaces (Gray Meral et al., 2022) | Employer-driven applications and procedural constraints limit take-up (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2023) | Higher barriers → lower inclusion/integration |
| **Economic barriers** | Fees, compliance costs, opportunity costs | Permit fee design affects take-up (ILO, 2024) | Informality persists due to employer incentives and segmentation (Badalič, 2023; ILO, 2023) | Higher barriers → lower inclusion/integration |

## 2.7 Synthesis of Gaps and Contribution Positioning

This section brings together the reviewed literature to highlight three main points: where findings are consistent or differ across studies on Jordan and Türkiye, the key limitations in the current evidence, and how this thesis addresses those gaps. The discussion follows the main framework of the study, which connects social security inclusion, employment formality, shocks, and structural barriers to different aspects of social integration among young Syrian refugees (Papadakis et al., 2024; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Zaman et al., 2023).

### 2.7.1 Areas of Convergence and Divergence in Existing Findings

Across both Jordan and Türkiye, research strongly agrees that labor-market informality is a major structural barrier to both protection and stable integration. Informal work is consistently linked to weaker labor rights, limited access to social security, and higher vulnerability to shocks, which together increase economic insecurity (Badalič, 2023; International Labour Organization [ILO], 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

Another common finding is that access to protection depends not only on formal eligibility but also on how systems are implemented. Factors such as employer behavior, administrative complexity, and affordability play a major role in determining whether people can actually benefit from available systems (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2024; Zaman et al., 2023).

In addition, there is broad agreement that social integration is multidimensional. Studies consistently show that integration involves not just employment, but also social relationships, participation, and a sense of belonging (Crawford et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024; Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022).

Across both contexts, research also highlights the importance of institutional pathways—especially those linking legal work to formal systems—in improving stability and reducing vulnerability. For example, evidence from Jordan shows that work permits are associated with better welfare outcomes, while studies in Türkiye emphasize the importance of moving from informal to formal employment to reduce rights gaps (Peitz et al., 2023; ILO, 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). Furthermore, program-based evidence suggests that

protection-related interventions can influence social outcomes, such as cohesion and connectedness, rather than just economic conditions (Hamad et al., 2025; Zintl & Loewe, 2022).

Despite these shared patterns, there are also important differences. Research on Türkiye often focuses on the persistence of informal employment and the structural barriers within the work permit system, such as quotas and employer-led processes, which limit access to formal jobs (Badalič, 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). In contrast, studies on Jordan tend to highlight the role of work permit design and costs in shaping access to formal employment (ILO, 2024; Peitz et al., 2023).

There are also differences in how integration is understood. In Türkiye, research often focuses on identity, social boundaries, and perceived distance between groups. In Jordan, studies more frequently examine how inclusion and exclusion are shaped through access to services and everyday institutional interactions (Ayyildiz, 2024; Cevik, 2025; Gray, Meral et al., 2022).

Another difference concerns the role of intermediaries. In Türkiye, NGOs are often highlighted as key actors that help refugees access resources and build social connections. In Jordan, the literature emphasizes program-based interventions, such as cash-for-work or education support, and urban service systems (Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022; Gray Meral et al., 2022; Hamad et al., 2025; Zintl & Loewe, 2022).

Finally, studies vary in their focus on different population groups. Many focus on women, children, or general adult populations, which means that youth-specific experiences—especially in comparative contexts—are not always well covered (Cohen, 2022; Mittal et al., 2025; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022).

### 2.7.2 Limitations of Current Evidence

One major limitation is the lack of research specifically focused on youth in relation to protection and integration. Although young people are often recognized as a key group, many studies do not examine the specific transitions that shape youth outcomes, such as moving from education to work or entering stable employment. As a result, it is difficult to understand how social security inclusion affects young refugees in particular (Jones et al., 2022; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022). Youth-focused studies often focus on education or identity,

while labor-focused research often treats age only as a background factor (Cohen, 2022; Mittal et al., 2025; Peitz et al., 2023). This gap is important because young people may face different challenges in accessing formal work and protection.

Another limitation is the lack of truly comparable cross-country studies. While some research compares countries, many studies use different data sources, definitions, and methods, making it difficult to determine whether differences reflect real conditions or measurement issues (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). This is particularly relevant for this thesis, which aims to compare Jordan and Türkiye using consistent measures (Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

There is also an inconsistency in how key concepts are measured. Many studies on integration do not directly measure social security inclusion; instead, they focus on general employment or service access. On the other hand, studies on labor markets and protection often measure formal employment or registration without examining broader integration outcomes such as belonging or participation (Papadakis et al., 2024; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; ILO, 2023; Badalič, 2023). Similarly, vulnerability is often defined and measured differently, making comparisons difficult (Mendola & Pera, 2022). Social integration is also measured differently across studies, sometimes focusing on cohesion, sometimes on belonging or participation, which complicates synthesis (Crawford et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024).

A further limitation relates to causal interpretation. Many studies are observational, meaning that individuals who access formal employment or protection may differ from others in important ways, such as education or social networks. This makes it difficult to determine whether observed relationships reflect causal effects or underlying differences (Peitz et al., 2023; ILO, 2023). As a result, most studies focus on associations rather than clear cause-and-effect relationships (Tumen, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). This supports the thesis that careful, non-causal language can still provide meaningful comparative insights (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023).

### 2.7.3 Contribution of the Comparative Cross-Sectional Design and Harmonized Measures

This thesis addresses the identified gaps by using a comparative cross-sectional design with harmonized survey measures applied in both Jordan and Türkiye. By focusing on young

Syrian refugees and using the same measurement tools in both contexts, the study improves comparability and reduces the risk that differences are due to inconsistent methods rather than real variation (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024).

Substantively, the study makes four main contributions. First, it treats social security inclusion as a measurable factor, allowing direct analysis of its relationship with social integration (H1) and with economic security and vulnerability (H2) (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). Second, it examines employment formality as a key pathway shaping both inclusion and integration (H3), responding to evidence that informality is a major constraint in both countries but may operate differently (Badalič, 2023; Peitz et al., 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

Third, the study includes exposure to shocks—such as illness, injury, and income loss—and tests whether social security inclusion is linked to lower risks of poverty and exclusion in these situations (H4). This builds on existing research but provides a more consistent comparative analysis (Holzmann et al., 2003; Stojetz et al., 2024; Mendola & Pera, 2022). Fourth, it measures perceived barriers—legal, administrative, and economic—and examines how they affect both inclusion and integration (H5), addressing the gap between formal rights and actual access (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2024; Zaman et al., 2023).

From a methodological perspective, the thesis aligns its measures with multidimensional models of integration, covering economic participation, social connectedness, participation, and belonging, while keeping the design suitable for cross-country comparison (Crawford et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). The comparative approach also strengthens the study's policy relevance by showing whether patterns are consistent across different institutional contexts or vary depending on national systems (Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

Overall, the thesis provides a structured and comparable analysis of how social security inclusion relates to youth integration in Jordan and Türkiye, while accounting for employment formality, exposure to shocks, and structural barriers using consistent measures (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023).

## 2.8 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

This section presents the final conceptual framework of the study, integrating the theoretical perspectives and empirical findings discussed earlier into a coherent analytical model linked to hypotheses H1–H5. The framework positions social security inclusion as a central institutional factor that may influence integration outcomes among refugees through economic conditions and risk exposure. At the same time, it recognizes that access to this inclusion is shaped by labor-market conditions—particularly employment formality—and is often limited by legal, administrative, and economic barriers that affect how policies work in practice (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024).

### 2.8.1 Conceptual Framework Specification and Variable Roles

The framework is based on three key ideas. First, systems of social protection and insurance can reduce instability and help individuals manage risks, especially during periods of economic or personal shocks (Holzmann et al., 2003; International Labor Organization [ILO], 2024). Second, being included in formal institutions—through legal employment and official registration—can improve stability and support active participation in society, even in long-term displacement situations (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Tumen, 2023). Third, social integration is not a single outcome but a combination of factors, including economic conditions, institutional access, and social relationships such as connectedness and belonging (Papadakis et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023).

Within this framework, social security inclusion is defined as the main independent variable. It examines whether a formal system of protection covers individuals, and how this coverage is linked to integration and overall well-being among young Syrian refugees. Existing research shows that such inclusion is often connected to formal employment and registration, but remains uneven in contexts where informal work is common. For this reason, it serves as a useful indicator of both institutional access and potential protection (ILO, 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Badalič, 2023).

Employment formality is treated as a key structuring factor because it influences both the likelihood of being included in social security systems and broader integration outcomes.

Formal employment generally provides access to legal protections and social insurance, while informal work is associated with instability and exclusion from these systems (ILO, 2023; Peitz et al., 2023; Badalič, 2023). Therefore, employment formality plays a dual role: it shapes access to inclusion and may also directly affect integration outcomes, which aligns with hypothesis H3 (Peitz et al., 2023; ILO, 2023).

The framework also identifies two main pathways through which social security inclusion may influence integration. The first is economic security, which reflects improved income stability and the ability to meet basic needs. Greater economic stability can support consistent participation in work, services, and community life (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Holzmann et al., 2003). The second pathway is vulnerability, which refers to exposure to risks and the ability to cope with them. Social security inclusion is expected to reduce vulnerability by strengthening protection against shocks and limiting severe welfare losses (Mendola & Pera, 2022; Holzmann et al., 2003). Together, these pathways explain how inclusion may lead to better integration outcomes, supporting hypothesis H2 (Papadakis et al., 2024; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

Shock exposure—such as illness, work-related injury, or income loss—is included as a conditional factor in the framework. The model tests whether the relationship between social security inclusion and poverty or social exclusion changes for individuals who experience such shocks. Previous research suggests that formal protection systems can reduce the negative effects of shocks, but this depends on actual access and effective implementation (Holzmann et al., 2003; Stojetz et al., 2024; ILO, 2023). This supports hypothesis H4, which predicts that social security inclusion acts as a buffer during crises (Stojetz et al., 2024).

The framework includes two main outcome areas. The primary outcome is social integration, defined as a multidimensional concept encompassing economic participation, social relationships, community involvement, and a sense of belonging. This is measured through a combined index to allow comparison across countries (Papadakis et al., 2024; Ghassaban et al., 2023). The second outcome focuses on the risk of poverty and social exclusion during shocks, examining whether individuals with social security coverage are less likely to experience negative outcomes in the face of adverse events (Holzmann et al., 2003; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

Finally, the model incorporates legal, administrative, and economic barriers as key constraints. These barriers affect individuals' ability to access social security in practice and may also directly limit integration by restricting participation and reinforcing exclusion. Research consistently shows that having formal rights does not guarantee real access, as factors such as documentation requirements, complex procedures, employer behavior, and costs can all create obstacles (Zaman et al., 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; International Labor Organization [ILO], 2024; Gray Meral et al., 2022). This aligns with hypothesis H5, which predicts that these barriers will negatively affect both inclusion and integration (Diab, 2024; Zaman et al., 2023).

This framework shows how social security inclusion is expected to influence integration both directly (H1) and indirectly through economic security and vulnerability (H2), while employment formality structures access and outcomes (H3). Shock exposure introduces a conditional pathway affecting poverty and exclusion (H4), and structural barriers limit both inclusion and integration (H5).

### 2.8.2 Hypotheses Development (Evidence-to-Hypothesis Logic)

This section outlines the development of hypotheses H1–H5 by linking the conceptual framework to both theoretical arguments and relevant empirical findings from Jordan and Türkiye (Holzmann et al., 2003; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Zaman et al., 2023). Since existing research often treats social protection (such as access and vulnerability) separately from social integration (such as cohesion and belonging), this section makes these connections more explicit. At the same time, the relationships are presented as associations rather than direct causal effects, in line with the study's comparative cross-sectional design (Papadakis et al., 2024; Mendola & Pera, 2022; Ghassaban et al., 2023).

#### *2.8.2.1 Hypothesis H1 Development: Social Security Inclusion and Social Integration*

From a theoretical perspective, institutional inclusion approaches suggest that integration develops through access to formal systems such as employment, welfare, and public services. These systems signal membership and allow individuals to participate more consistently in social and economic life (Papadakis et al., 2024; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). In addition, social protection research shows that protection can support integration not only by reducing poverty but also by stabilizing daily life and lowering stress, thereby

improving social relationships and a sense of belonging (Holzmann et al., 2003; Zaman et al., 2023). Because integration includes multiple dimensions—such as participation, connectedness, and belonging—being included in social security systems is expected to support higher overall integration by strengthening institutional ties and enabling sustained engagement (Papadakis et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023).

Empirical evidence directly linking social security inclusion to multidimensional integration remains limited, especially in comparable studies across Jordan and Türkiye (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). However, related findings provide indirect support. In Jordan, studies show that social protection programs can strengthen social connections among refugees, suggesting that protection can influence integration beyond economic outcomes (Hamad et al., 2025). Similarly, employment-based programs have been linked to improved social cohesion in host communities (Zintl & Loewe, 2022). In Türkiye, research highlights the role of NGOs in helping refugees build networks and access resources, indicating that institutional access and support systems are connected to integration outcomes (Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022).

**Hypothesis (H1).** Social security inclusion is positively associated with social integration among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Türkiye (Papadakis et al., 2024; Hamad et al., 2025).

#### *2.8.2.2 Hypothesis H2 Development: Social Security Inclusion, Economic Security, and Vulnerability*

The social risk management framework explains social protection as a system that helps individuals avoid or reduce losses in well-being and cope with risks more effectively (Holzmann et al., 2003). From this perspective, being included in formal protection systems should lead to greater economic stability and lower vulnerability. This means individuals are better able to manage income fluctuations and are less exposed to severe hardship during difficult situations (Holzmann et al., 2003; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). Vulnerability research also highlights the importance of measuring risk exposure and coping ability, both of which are influenced by access to institutional protection (Mendola & Pera, 2022).

Empirical findings support this reasoning. In Jordan, formal employment through work permits has been linked to improved welfare outcomes, suggesting that access to regulated

work and protection can strengthen economic security (Peitz et al., 2023). Other studies show that vulnerability is shaped by access to local institutions and uneven protection systems, meaning that those included in formal systems are likely to face fewer risks (Al Husseini, 2023; Gray Meral et al., 2022). In Türkiye, research consistently shows that informal employment is associated with weaker rights and higher insecurity, while moving into formal employment improves access to protection and reduces vulnerability (International Labor Organization [ILO], 2023; Badalič, 2023).

**Hypothesis (H2).** Social security inclusion is positively associated with economic security and negatively associated with vulnerability among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Türkiye (Holzmann et al., 2003; Mendola & Pera, 2022; ILO, 2023).

#### *2.8.2.3 Hypothesis H3 Development: Employment Formality and Social Integration*

From a theoretical standpoint, employment formality plays a key role in shaping integration by connecting individuals to formal institutions through contracts, regulations, and legal recognition (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). Formal jobs are more likely to provide stability, rights, and access to social security, which support participation and long-term planning. In contrast, informal work may provide short-term income but often limits institutional engagement and increases insecurity, thereby weakening integration and reinforcing exclusion (Badalič, 2023; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

Empirical evidence aligns with this view. In Jordan, formal employment through work permits is associated with improved welfare outcomes, suggesting that formalization can support broader participation and stability (Peitz et al., 2023). Research on urban displacement also shows that access to institutions and services is central to inclusion, which may be easier for those in formal employment (Gray Meral et al., 2022). In Türkiye, studies show that many refugees are concentrated in informal jobs, which limits access to rights and protection, thereby constraining integration (Badalič, 2023; ILO, 2023). Additional research highlights that integration is influenced by social boundaries and perceptions, meaning that stable and protected employment may interact with social acceptance and cohesion (Mittal et al., 2025; Cevik, 2025).

**Hypothesis (H3).** Young Syrian refugees in formal, socially protected employment report higher social integration than those in informal employment in Jordan and Türkiye (Peitz et al., 2023; Badalič, 2023; Mittal et al., 2025).

#### *2.8.2.4 Hypothesis H4 Development: Social Security Inclusion as a Buffer During Shocks*

Risk-management theory suggests that social protection systems can reduce the negative effects of shocks by stabilizing income and ensuring access to services (Holzmann et al., 2003). In displacement settings, shocks such as illness, injury, or income loss can have severe consequences, especially when individuals lack formal protection (Mendola & Pera, 2022; ILO, 2023). Therefore, individuals covered by social security systems are expected to experience fewer negative outcomes during such events.

Empirical evidence supports this expectation. In Jordan, research during the COVID-19 crisis shows that work permits helped refugees maintain livelihoods, suggesting that formal status can reduce vulnerability during shocks (Stojetz et al., 2024). In Türkiye, studies highlight that informal employment leads to gaps in protection, while insured status improves resilience and reduces hardship (ILO, 2023). The persistence of informal work also suggests that those outside formal systems remain more exposed to risks (Badalič, 2023).

**Hypothesis (H4).** Among young Syrian refugees who experience shocks (illness, work-related injury, or income loss), those with social security inclusion report lower poverty and social exclusion risk than those without in Jordan and Türkiye (Holzmann et al., 2003; Stojetz et al., 2024; ILO, 2023).

#### *2.8.2.5 Hypothesis H5 Development: Structural Barriers, Inclusion, and Integration*

Theoretical perspectives that go beyond formal rights highlight that having legal entitlement does not guarantee access. Instead, access is shaped by barriers such as documentation requirements, administrative complexity, employer practices, and financial costs (Zaman et al., 2023). When these barriers are high, individuals are less likely to engage with formal systems, and this exclusion can limit participation and reinforce marginalization (Papadakis et al., 2024; Crawford et al., 2023). Therefore, higher barriers are expected to reduce both social security inclusion and integration outcomes (Zaman et al., 2023; Diab, 2024).

Empirical evidence supports this argument. In Jordan, studies show that access to services and protection depends on navigating administrative systems and local institutional structures (Gray Meral et al., 2022). Other research highlights inequalities in access to social protection among Syrian refugees (Diab, 2024; Al Husseini, 2022). In Türkiye, work

permit systems and administrative rules create barriers that limit access to formal employment and social security (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016). Policy analysis also shows that transitioning to formal employment remains difficult, reinforcing unequal access (ILO, 2023). In addition, cost-related barriers influence whether individuals and employers engage in formalization processes (ILO, 2024).

**Hypothesis (H5).** Higher perceived legal, administrative, and economic barriers to social security access are negatively associated with social security inclusion and social integration in Jordan and Türkiye (Zaman et al., 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Diab, 2024).

Table 2.10 consolidates the evidence-to-hypothesis logic by mapping each hypothesis to its theoretical rationale, the most relevant empirical support identified in this review, the expected direction of association, and the study variables used to test the hypothesis in the comparative cross-sectional analysis. (Holzmann et al., 2003; Papadakis et al., 2024; Ghassaban et al., 2023).

*Table 2.10: Hypotheses Development Matrix*

| Hypothesis | Theoretical rationale | Empirical support | Expected direction | Measures/variables |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **H1**: Social security inclusion → social integration | Institutional inclusion and social citizenship link formal membership in the system to participation, legitimacy, and belonging. (Papadakis et al., 2024; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023) | Protection-linked interventions associated with connectedness/cohesion (Jordan) and intermediary roles in cohesion (Türkiye). (Hamad et al., 2025; Zintl & Loewe, 2022; Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022) | Positive | Social security inclusion (yes/no); Social integration composite score (and sub-scores) |
| **H2**: Social security inclusion → economic security (+) and vulnerability (−) | Social risk management predicts protection, stabilizes welfare, and reduces vulnerability. (Holzmann et al., 2003) | Formal integration is associated with improved outcomes (Jordan); informality is associated with rights loss and insecurity (Türkiye). (Peitz et al., 2023; ILO, 2023; Badalič, 2023) | Economic security: positive; Vulnerability: negative | Economic security index; Vulnerability index; Inclusion status |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **H3**: Formal/protected employment → higher integration than informal work | Formal work increases institutional attachment and access to protection; informality increases precarity and exclusion. (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024) | Informality "traps" (Türkiye); formal labor integration via permits (Jordan). (Badalič, 2023; Peitz et al., 2023) | Positive (formal > informal) | Employment formality classification; Social integration score |
| **H4**: Inclusion buffers shocks → lower poverty/exclusion risk during shocks | Protection reduces welfare losses during shocks and improves coping. (Holzmann et al., 2003) | Work permits as protection during polycrisis (Jordan); a transition to formality needed to reduce rights losses (Türkiye). (Stojetz et al., 2024; ILO, 2023) | Negative association between inclusion and poverty/exclusion risk among those with shocks | Shock exposure indicators; Poverty/exclusion risk index during shocks; Inclusion status |
| **H5**: Barriers → lower inclusion and lower integration | Access gaps arise from legal/administrative/economic constraints; barriers reduce effective inclusion and participation. (Zaman et al., 2023) | Administrative/institutional exclusion dynamics (Jordan); labor market access constraints (Türkiye); fee sensitivity (Jordan). (Gray Meral et al., 2022; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2024) | Negative | Barrier scores (legal/administrative/economic); Inclusion status; Integration score |

## 2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the conceptual and empirical basis for examining how social security inclusion is related to social integration among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Türkiye. The review makes clear that the link between protection and integration cannot be understood without considering the institutional context and labor-market conditions in which refugees live and work. In both countries, informality stands out as a key structural feature. It restricts access to formal employment, weakens labor rights, and limits entry into contributory protection systems. As a result, it reinforces economic insecurity and increases exposure to shocks. At the same time, the literature consistently shows that integration is multidimensional. It goes beyond employment to include social relationships, participation in community life, and a sense of belonging, all of which are shaped by everyday interactions with institutions and by social boundaries.

The evidence reviewed in this chapter supports several main pathways linking social security inclusion to integration outcomes. First, inclusion is associated with greater economic stability and lower levels of insecurity, which can support continued participation and future planning. Second, it is linked to reduced vulnerability, as access to protection helps individuals cope with risks and limits the impact of shocks. Third, inclusion strengthens connections with institutions, making it easier to access services and influencing how individuals perceive their place within society. Fourth, access to inclusion largely depends on formal employment, meaning that the relationship between protection and integration is strongly shaped by whether refugees can enter regulated work rather than remain in informal jobs. However, the review also shows that having formal rights does not always lead to real access. Legal restrictions, administrative challenges, employer practices, and financial costs often create gaps between policy and practice, leading to unequal inclusion.

The chapter also highlights three important limitations in the existing research. First, there is a lack of studies that focus specifically on youth, particularly those that examine early transitions into the labor market and connections to institutions, even though these are critical stages for long-term integration. Second, comparative research between Jordan and Türkiye often suffers from differences in methods, data, and definitions, making it difficult

to draw clear conclusions about cross-country differences. Third, many studies do not directly measure both social security inclusion and multidimensional integration, which limits the ability to examine the relationship between protection and integration fully.

These gaps inform the methodological approach presented in Chapter Three. The study uses a comparative cross-sectional design with harmonized measures across Jordan and Türkiye to improve comparability and produce clearer findings. Employment formality is treated as a central factor rather than a background characteristic, since it is the main pathway to formal protection. Social security inclusion is measured directly as an indicator of institutional access, while social integration is captured as a multidimensional concept to reflect its complexity. In addition, shocks—such as illness, work-related injury, and income loss—are included to examine how protection relates to hardship under adverse conditions. Structural barriers are also measured across legal, administrative, and economic dimensions to capture the gap between formal rights and actual access. Together, these choices ensure that the analysis is aligned with both the theoretical framework and the strongest empirical patterns, while addressing key limitations in the existing literature.

# Chapter Three: Methodology

## 3.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter explains the method used to study the link between social security inclusion and social integration among young Syrian refugees aged 18–29 in Jordan and Türkiye. Its main purpose is to present the study design, target population, sampling method, data collection tool, measurement approach, and analytical techniques in a clear, systematic way, so that the research process can be understood and replicated. It also shows how these methods are used to answer the research questions and examine the study hypotheses.

The study uses a comparative cross-sectional design, meaning that data are gathered once from participants in each country using a structured questionnaire, which serves as the main source of information. The questionnaire is designed to produce comparable measures across both settings, thereby enabling meaningful comparisons of the main concepts while still recognizing differences between the two contexts. In addition, it contains sections on demographic and household information, legal and administrative status, employment conditions and level of formality, social security inclusion, economic security, vulnerability and coping strategies, exposure to shocks, barriers to access, and different dimensions of social integration.

To improve the quality and comparability of the survey, the questionnaire is supported by pilot testing and cognitive testing. These methods help confirm that important terms are clearly understood, improve the wording of items, check that response choices are suitable, assess whether respondents can accurately recall information for time-related questions such as shocks, and ensure that the questions carry the same meaning in both countries. In addition, the study may rely on only a few key informant inputs to verify local terms, confirm whether indicators of inclusion and employment formality are realistic, and refine the categories used to capture barriers. As a result, the survey becomes more contextually appropriate without changing its survey-based design.

Finally, this chapter explains how the methodology is used to define and test H1–H5 through the selected study measures. H1 is examined by analyzing the relationship between

social security inclusion and the combined social integration score. H2 is assessed by exploring the links between social security inclusion and the mediating factors of economic security and vulnerability. H3 is tested by comparing social integration outcomes across employment forms and examining formality as a factor that shapes inclusion. H4 is evaluated by examining whether social security inclusion is associated with a lower risk of poverty and social exclusion among respondents who have experienced shocks. H5 is tested by examining whether legal, administrative, and economic barriers are connected to lower inclusion and weaker integration outcomes. The chapter ends by showing how these measurement and modeling decisions allow the hypotheses to be tested consistently while remaining aligned with the study's comparative cross-sectional design.

## 3.2 Research Design

This study used a comparative cross-sectional design to explore the relationship between social security inclusion and social integration among young Syrian refugees aged 18–29 in Jordan and Türkiye. Data were collected once from participants in each country using a harmonized survey, which enabled the study to examine patterns within each country and to make combined comparisons across both settings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Ghassaban et al., 2023).

A cross-sectional approach was selected because the research aimed to estimate and compare relationships between key factors, including institutional inclusion (social security inclusion), labor market position (employment formality), and mediating pathways such as economic security and vulnerability, alongside integration outcomes within a specific population. This design was suitable for describing patterns, identifying relationships, and analyzing multiple variables while accounting for important background factors. However, it does not allow for firm conclusions about cause and effect due to issues such as simultaneous events and the possibility that individuals may select into formal employment or social security coverage. Therefore, the findings are presented using non-causal language, such as "was associated with," and are interpreted as evidence based on observational survey data (Grimes & Schulz, 2002; Setia, 2016; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

The comparison between Jordan and Türkiye was considered essential because national systems and labor market structures influence access to formal employment and social

security. In Türkiye, the temporary protection system, work permit regulations, and challenges in moving into formal employment shape how Syrians enter insured work. In contrast, Jordan relies on work permit systems and cost-related factors that affect access in different ways. As a result, similar individual characteristics may lead to different levels of inclusion and integration across countries. This makes a single-country study insufficient for understanding whether the relationship between protection and integration is context-specific or more widely applicable.

## 3.3 Study Setting and Population

### 3.3.1 Study Settings: Jordan and Türkiye

This study was carried out in Jordan and Türkiye because both countries host large numbers of Syrian refugees, yet they differ in how they regulate labor-market access, employment formality, and entry into social security systems. These differences made them suitable settings for a comparative analysis of how institutional conditions shape inclusion and integration outcomes (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], n.d.-a; UNHCR, n.d.-b; Tumen, 2023).

In Jordan, data were collected from four governorates: Amman, Irbid, Mafraq, and Zarqa. These locations were selected because they combine high concentrations of Syrians with varied labor-market conditions and active policy efforts to formalize the labor market. Amman and Zarqa represent larger urban labor markets, while Irbid and Mafraq reflect border, industrial, and agricultural areas where informal work is more common. Therefore, these governorates were particularly relevant for examining employment formality, work authorization, and pathways to social security inclusion (UNHCR, n.d.-a; International Labor Organization [ILO], 2025; ILOSTAT, n.d.-a).

In Türkiye, the study covered five provinces: İstanbul, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Hatay, and Ankara. These provinces were chosen because they include major areas of Syrian settlement and represent different labor-market environments. İstanbul and Ankara host large urban economies with strong service and manufacturing sectors, whereas Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, and Hatay are border regions where informal and seasonal work is more widespread, particularly in sectors that employ many Syrians. As a result, these provinces were important for understanding how provincial labor demand, employer behavior, and

work permit rules influence access to formal, insured employment for Syrians under temporary protection (UNHCR, n.d.-b; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2023).

Overall, the choice of study sites supported the research's main logic by focusing on areas where informal employment was common, where routes toward formalization existed but were uneven in practice, and where access to social security was likely to depend on both employment formality and administrative conditions. In this way, the selected settings provided a strong basis for comparing how institutional and labor-market differences shape inclusion and integration outcomes (ILOSTAT, n.d.-a; ILOSTAT, n.d.-b; ILO, 2023).

### 3.3.2 Target Population

The target population consisted of young Syrian refugees aged 18–29 living in Jordan and Türkiye at the time of data collection. This age group was selected because young people often pass through important life transitions, such as moving from education into work, entering more stable employment, and building early links with formal institutions. These transitions were expected to influence both their access to protection and their broader integration outcomes (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UNDESA], n.d.; Jones et al., 2022).

### 3.3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Participants were included in the study if they were of Syrian origin, between 18 and 29 years old, living in either Jordan or Türkiye during the survey period, and provided informed consent to participate. Individuals were excluded if they were outside the required age range, were not Syrian, were not living in the study country at the time of data collection, or did not provide consent (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). These criteria are summarized in Table 3.1, which shows the conditions used to determine eligibility and the related screening items.

*Table 3.1: Eligibility Criteria*

| **Criterion** | **Inclusion** | **Exclusion** | **Screening item number** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Syrian origin | Syrian by nationality/origin | Not Syrian | 1.1 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 18–29 years | <18 or >29 years | 1.2–1.3 |
| Residence | Currently living in the country of study | Not living in the country of study | 1.5 |
| Consent | Consent provided | No consent | 0.8 |

## 3.4 Sampling Strategy and Sample Size

### 3.4.1 Sampling Approach

The study applied a structured, quota-guided survey sampling approach suitable for mobile and partly hard-to-reach populations for whom a complete probability sampling frame was unavailable. Recruitment took place through several channels to reduce bias that might result from relying on a single point of access. These channels included community outreach, NGO and community organization networks, referrals through youth networks, outreach in public places commonly used by young people, and phone or online recruitment when direct access was limited (Lohr, 2021; UNHCR, n.d.-a).

To maintain comparability between Jordan and Türkiye, the same quota structure and main stratification categories were used in both countries. This approach was intended to create balanced representation across the main analytical groups needed for testing H1–H5, especially gender, employment status, and employment formality among working individuals (Kish, 1965; Lohr, 2021).

### 3.4.2 Stratification / Quotas

The quota structure was designed to strengthen hypothesis testing and reduce major compositional differences between the country samples. The study aimed to balance male and female respondents, include both working and non-working youth, and ensure that employed participants represented both formal and informal workers. In addition, quotas were set to capture variation in education, location, and length of stay in the host country, since these factors were considered important background variables affecting both inclusion and integration outcomes (Jones et al., 2022; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022).

These quota targets are presented in Table 3.2. The table shows how the sample was distributed across the main strata in Jordan and Türkiye, ensuring consistency in the design across the two settings.

*Table 3.2: Sampling Targets / Quota Plan*

| **Stratum** | **Categories** | **Target share** | **Jordan (n=600)** | **Türkiye (n=600)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Female / Male | 50% / 50% | 300 / 300 | 300 / 300 |
| Employment status | Working / Not working | 60% / 40% | 360 / 240 | 360 / 240 |
| Employment formality (among working) | Formal/protected / Informal | 25% / 75% | 90 / 270 | 90 / 270 |
| Education level | Lower (≤ upper secondary) / Higher (TVET+ or university) | 65% / 35% | 390 / 210 | 390 / 210 |
| Location bands | Major metro / Secondary cities-border areas | 50% / 50% | 300 / 300 | 300 / 300 |
| Duration in the host country | ≤5 years / ≥6 years | 30% / 70% | 180 / 420 | 180 / 420 |

### 3.4.3 Sample Size Determination

The sample size was calculated to support two main goals: first, to provide reliable estimates of important proportions and average scores within each country, and second, to allow multivariable testing of the study hypotheses, including interaction-based analysis for H4 within the subgroup exposed to shocks. The calculation used the standard formula for a single proportion with conservative assumptions of p = 0.50, a 95% confidence level, and a margin of error of ±5%:

$n_0 = Z^2\, p(1-p) / e^2$

Using this formula produced a base sample size of 384 (Cochran, 1977).

The study then adjusted this figure to account for design effects linked to clustered recruitment and the use of different recruitment channels. A design effect of 1.3 was applied, which increased the target to about 499 respondents per country (Kish, 1965). To address the likelihood of incomplete questionnaires and nonresponse, the study added a further 20% increase. This led to a final planned sample of 600 respondents per country, for a total target of 1,200 participants (Lohr, 2021).

This sample size was also considered appropriate for testing H4 because exposure to shocks was expected to be sufficiently common to yield a sufficiently large subgroup for analysis. Therefore, with 600 respondents per country, even a moderate level of shock exposure was expected to yield sufficient cases to estimate the relationship between social security inclusion and the risk of poverty or social exclusion during shocks, while controlling for multiple variables (Holzmann et al., 2003; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

Table 3.3 summarizes the sample size calculation and shows how the final target was reached step by step.

*Table 3.3: Sample Size Calculation Summary*

| **Parameter** | **Value** |
|---|---|
| Confidence level (Z) | 1.96 (95%) |
| Expected proportion (p) | 0.50 |
| Margin of error (e) | 0.05 |
| Base sample size ($n_0$) | 384 |
| Design effect (DEFF) | 1.3 |
| DEFF-adjusted sample | 499 |
| Inflation for nonresponse/incomplete | 20% |
| Final planned sample per country | 600 |
| Total planned sample | 1,200 |

## 3.5 Data Collection Method

### 3.5.1 Primary Data Source: Structured Questionnaire

The study gathered primary data through a structured questionnaire administered to young Syrian refugees aged 18–29 in Jordan and Türkiye (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fowler,

2014). The questionnaire kept the same content and sequence in both countries, while language adaptation and wording adjustments were made to maintain the same meaning across settings. In this way, the study protected conceptual comparability while making the tool suitable for each context (Dillman et al., 2014; Harkness et al., 2010).

The questionnaire was delivered in two formats: interviewer-administered surveys conducted face-to-face or by phone, and self-administered surveys completed online or through supervised self-completion. Even though the modes differed, the same questionnaire was used in all cases to maintain measurement consistency (Dillman et al., 2014; de Leeuw, 2005). In addition, the study standardized response scales and skip patterns so that differences between survey modes would have as little effect as possible on the results and would still allow combined analysis across both countries (Groves et al., 2009; Dillman et al., 2014).

Completing the questionnaire took about 20–30 minutes. To reduce the burden on respondents, the survey was organized into clear sections, used consistent response styles, and included only a small number of open-ended questions (Fowler, 2014; Tourangeau et al., 2000). The study also used fixed recall periods to improve response accuracy. Exposure to shocks was measured over the previous 12 months, whereas coping and vulnerability questions referred to the previous 3 months. As a result, the design helped reduce memory errors and improved reporting of more frequent experiences and behaviors (Tourangeau et al., 2000; Bradburn et al., 1987).

### 3.5.2 Fieldwork Implementation (high-level)

Fieldwork was carried out over eight weeks in Jordan and Türkiye, using the same recruitment process and the same questionnaire structure in both countries to strengthen comparability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Groves et al., 2009). Trained enumerators in interviewer-led formats conducted data collection, and standardized scripts and shared item definitions supported their work. Therefore, the study aimed to reduce interviewer-related differences in the way questions were asked and understood (Fowler, 2014; Groves et al., 2009).

Before fieldwork began, enumerators received training that covered informed consent, ethical communication, neutral question delivery, handling sensitive topics such as informal work and uncertainty around documentation, clarification without leading

respondents, and the correct use of skip logic (World Health Organization, 2011; Fowler, 2014). The training also included role-play exercises and supervised practice interviews to ensure a common understanding of key terms such as "social security coverage," "registered work," and "work injury," since these concepts were central to the study (Tourangeau et al., 2000; Dillman et al., 2014).

Confidentiality was protected throughout the data collection process. Interviews took place in settings that ensured privacy, and the study did not request document numbers or other personally identifying administrative information. Participants were also reminded that their involvement was voluntary and that they could skip any question they did not wish to answer (World Health Organization, 2011; Groves et al., 2009).

### 3.5.3 Quality Assurance (high-level)

Quality assurance procedures were applied to ensure the reliability of the data and to ensure the questionnaire was used consistently across both countries (Groves et al., 2009; Fowler, 2014). After each interview, enumerators carried out completeness checks to confirm that all required sections had been filled in, that participants met the eligibility criteria, and that important variables such as employment status, inclusion status, and shock exposure were not missing unless there was a valid skip reason (Dillman et al., 2014; Fowler, 2014).

Skip-logic checks were also applied carefully to avoid inconsistent response paths, such as answering questions on shock-related hardship without reporting shock exposure or completing the employment section despite not being in work (Dillman et al., 2014). In interviewer-led modes, supervisors reviewed submissions daily to identify unusual response patterns, including straight-lining, excessive use of "don't know," and contradictions across answers. When appropriate and ethically possible, flagged cases were returned for checking or correction (Groves et al., 2009; Fowler, 2014). In addition, regular monitoring of interview length and item nonresponse helped identify parts of the questionnaire that might be causing fatigue or confusion, allowing timely feedback during fieldwork (Tourangeau et al., 2000; Groves et al., 2009).

These procedures are summarized in Table 3.4, which outlines the main quality checks, their purpose, and how they were applied during fieldwork.

*Table 3.4: Fieldwork Quality Assurance Checks*

| Check | Purpose | Implementation |
|---|---|---|
| Eligibility verification | Ensured sample met inclusion criteria | Screening items are validated before proceeding |
| Completeness check | Reduced missingness in key constructs | Post-interview review by enumerator |
| Skip-logic verification | Prevented inconsistent pathways | Built-in skip rules + supervisor review |
| Daily supervisor review | Detected systematic errors early | Review of submissions and feedback loop |
| Consistency checks | Identified contradictions (e.g., inclusion vs no registration indicators) | Automated or manual cross-item checks |
| Monitoring of burden | Reduced fatigue effects | Track duration, nonresponse, "don't know" rates |

## 3.6 Measurement Instrument and Enhancement Tools

### 3.6.1 Questionnaire Structure

The study used a structured questionnaire designed to capture all elements of the conceptual framework and to produce comparable measures across Jordan and Türkiye. The questionnaire followed standard survey design practices by arranging questions into clearly ordered sections, applying consistent response formats within each topic, and using clear screening and skip rules to reduce respondent burden and limit measurement errors (Dillman et al., 2014; Fowler, 2014; Groves et al., 2009). The complete questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.

The instrument was organized into several sections, each linked to specific study variables. These sections included interview records and eligibility checks, demographic and household information, legal and administrative status, employment characteristics and formality, social security inclusion, economic security, vulnerability and coping strategies, exposure to shocks, barriers to access, and multidimensional social integration. This structure ensured that each concept in the study was measured directly and, where needed,

through multiple related items that could be combined into indices and tested for reliability. As a result, the questionnaire supported systematic testing of the study hypotheses (Tourangeau et al., 2000; DeVellis, 2017).

The coverage of these sections and their link to study variables and hypotheses are summarized in Table 3.5, which shows how each part of the questionnaire contributes to the overall analytical framework.

*Table 3.5: Questionnaire Sections and Construct Coverage*

| **Questionnaire section** | **Construct(s) measured** | **Hypotheses supported** | **Item range** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 0: Interview record | Country/site/mode identifiers | All (context for analysis) | 0.1–0.8 |
| Section 1: Eligibility screening | Syrian origin, age 18–29, residence | All (eligibility) | 1.1–1.5 |
| Section 2: Demographics/household | Sex/gender, education, household size, housing, etc. (controls) | Covariates for H1–H5 | 2.1–2.9 |
| Section 3: Legal/administrative status | Registration/status; work authorization; reasons for no permit | H5 (barriers); controls for H1–H4 | 3.1–3.3 |
| Section 4: Employment profile/formality | Work status; sector; contract; registration indicators | H3; supports H1–H2 via structuring variable | 4.1–4.12 |
| Section 5: Social security inclusion | Coverage/enrolment; type; contributions; proof; usage | H1, H2, H4; supports H5 (access) | 5.1–5.5 |
| Section 6: Economic security | Financial adequacy/stability index | H2 (mediator); supports H1 | 6.1–6.5 |
| Section 7: Vulnerability/coping | Coping constraints and hardship behaviors | H2 (mediator); supports H4 | 7.1–7.6 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Section 8: Shock exposure | Illness; work injury; income loss (12 months) | H4 (conditional pathway); supports H2 | 8.1–8.5 |
| Section 9: Poverty/exclusion risk during shocks | Shock-related hardship and social withdrawal | H4 (outcome during shocks) | 9.1–9.5 |
| Section 10: Structural barriers | Legal/administrative/economic barrier scales | H5; supports interpretation of H1–H4 | 10.1–10.10 |
| Section 11: Social integration | Economic participation, connectedness, participation, belonging | H1, H3, H5 (primary outcome) | 11.1–11.13 |
| Section 12: Open-ended (optional) | Contextual clarifications | Supports interpretation | 12.1–12.2 |

### 3.6.2 Translation and Cross-Country Harmonization

The questionnaire was implemented in Arabic in Jordan and Turkish in Türkiye using a harmonized approach that focused on preserving meaning rather than translating word for word. The process followed established multilingual survey methods that combine translation, review, and pretesting to prevent shifts in meaning across languages (Harkness et al., 2010; Dillman et al., 2014). At the same time, the study kept the same definitions, response options, and order of questions in both countries, which strengthened comparability and allowed for combined analysis with country-level controls (Groves et al., 2009; Harkness et al., 2010).

To support consistency, a shared glossary was developed for key terms central to the study. These included “social security” (Arabic: الضمان الاجتماعي; Turkish: sosyal güvenlik), “work permit/work authorization” (Arabic: تصريح عمل; Turkish: çalışma izni), “registered/formal job” (Arabic: عمل مُسجّل/رسمي; Turkish: kayıtlı/resmî iş), “host community” (Arabic: المجتمع

المُضيف; Turkish: ev sahibi toplum), and "belonging" (Arabic: الانتماء; Turkish: aidiyet). This glossary helped ensure that all terms were both locally understandable and conceptually aligned across settings (Harkness et al., 2010; Tourangeau et al., 2000).

In addition, the study carried out structured checks to confirm that key concepts were understood in the same way in both countries. These checks focused on terms that are often unclear in refugee labour-market contexts, such as social security coverage, formal employment, and barriers to access. Ensuring consistent interpretation across settings allowed for more reliable comparison of composite measures, including social integration and barrier indices (Harkness et al., 2010; DeVellis, 2017).

### 3.6.3 Pilot and Cognitive Testing (Questionnaire Enhancement)

Pilot testing and cognitive testing were used to improve the questionnaire before full data collection. Cognitive testing examined how respondents understood questions, recalled information, made decisions, and selected answers, following established approaches to reduce survey error (Willis, 2005; Beatty & Willis, 2007). These activities focused on several key areas, including understanding of important terms, the ability to recall information for specific time periods (such as 12-month shocks and 3-month coping), the suitability of response options, the sensitivity of certain questions, and consistency across countries for concepts linked to H1–H5 (Tourangeau et al., 2000; Willis, 2005).

As a result, the study made targeted improvements to the questionnaire. These included revising unclear wording, adjusting response categories that did not reflect real-life situations (for example, reasons for lacking work authorization or types of employment), refining skip logic to improve flow, and updating the shared glossary where differences in interpretation were identified. All changes were documented using structured tools, including term equivalence checks and item diagnostic logs, which are presented in Appendix B.

### 3.6.4 Optional Key Informant Validation (Questionnaire Enhancement Only)

The study also made limited use of key informant input to improve the questionnaire while keeping the survey as the main data source. This step focused only on validating the instrument rather than collecting additional qualitative data. Informants helped confirm appropriate local wording for key concepts such as social security inclusion and formal

employment, checked whether the indicators used in the questionnaire were realistic (for example, contribution deductions or proof of registration), and reviewed whether the listed barriers reflected common challenges faced by young Syrians.

This approach follows recommended practices in survey design, where expert input is used to strengthen content validity and reduce ambiguity, particularly in complex institutional contexts (Fowler, 2014; Groves et al., 2009). The outcome of this process included small adjustments to terminology, the addition of missing response options, and clarification notes that improved consistency during data collection and interpretation of results. However, these steps did not change the study into a mixed-method design, as the survey remained the primary tool for hypothesis testing.

## 3.7 Variables and Operational Definitions

The study defined all key variables using the structured questionnaire and constructed indices that were consistent with the conceptual framework and hypotheses H1–H5 (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). The questionnaire items and response formats are provided in Appendix A. These definitions were selected to align with common practices in research on refugee protection and integration, while also ensuring that the measures could be applied effectively within a comparative cross-sectional survey in Jordan and Türkiye (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2023; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

### 3.7.1 Independent Variable: Social Security Inclusion

Social security inclusion was measured as a binary variable indicating whether respondents reported being enrolled in or covered by the national social security system (ILO, 2023). To improve the accuracy of this measure, additional indicators were included, such as the type of coverage, who paid contributions, and verification elements like proof of registration or recent use of benefits. These supporting measures helped reduce the risk of misclassification, especially in situations where respondents might confuse informal access to services with formal insured coverage (ILO, 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025).

### 3.7.2 Key Structuring Variable: Employment Formality

Employment formality was defined as a derived category that distinguishes between formal or protected employment and informal work, based on several indicators related to regulation and worker protection (Badalič, 2023; ILO, 2023). This variable was treated as a central structuring factor because access to formal employment and work authorization plays a key role in enabling entry into social security systems and securing labour protections in both Jordan and Türkiye (Peitz et al., 2023; ILO, 2023; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], n.d.; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies/National Authorities, 2016).

### 3.7.3 Mediators: Economic Security and Vulnerability/Coping

Economic security was measured using a multi-item index that captured the ability to meet basic needs, the stability and predictability of income, and the capacity to handle small financial shocks. This reflects a pathway focused on financial stability that is widely discussed in protection research (Holzmann et al., 2003; Jones et al., 2022).

Vulnerability and coping were measured through indicators such as borrowing, reducing essential spending, delaying healthcare due to cost, feeling unable to cope, and relying on others for basic needs. This approach follows established guidance that views vulnerability as something observable through exposure to hardship and limited coping options, rather than as an abstract concept (Mendola & Pera, 2022).

### 3.7.4 Conditional Pathway: Shock Exposure

Shock exposure was defined as a binary variable indicating whether respondents experienced at least one of three events in the past 12 months: a serious illness or health issue, a work-related injury or accident, or a major loss of income (Holzmann et al., 2003). These events were selected because research shows that health and labour-related shocks are major factors that can lead to economic decline in displacement settings, particularly when access to protection is limited (Stojetz et al., 2024; Mendola & Pera, 2022).

### 3.7.5 Outcomes: Social Integration and Poverty/Social Exclusion Risk During Shocks

Social integration was measured using a composite index that reflects a multidimensional understanding of integration in refugee contexts. It includes aspects such as participation in economic activities, social connections, engagement in community life, and a sense of belonging or acceptance (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). In addition, sub-components of this index were developed to help identify which dimensions of integration were most closely linked to social security inclusion and employment formality (Ghassaban et al., 2023; Mittal et al., 2025).

Poverty or social exclusion risk during shocks was measured as an outcome that applied only to respondents who reported experiencing a shock. It captured difficulties in meeting essential needs such as food, rent, and healthcare, as well as experiences of social withdrawal or isolation linked to the impact of shocks (Holzmann et al., 2003; Stojetz et al., 2024).

### 3.7.6 Constraints: Structural Barriers

Structural barriers were measured using three separate subscales covering legal, administrative, and economic barriers, along with a combined index that summarized all barrier-related items (Diab, 2024; Gray Meral et al., 2022). This approach reflects evidence that barriers to access often arise from a combination of eligibility rules, administrative procedures, employer practices, and financial costs, even when formal systems are in place (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2024).

### 3.7.7 Covariates / Control Variables

The analysis controlled for a range of demographic and household characteristics that are commonly linked to employment outcomes, vulnerability, and integration in refugee settings. These included sex or gender, age, education level, marital status, household size, number of children, main earner status, disability or functional difficulty, and housing conditions (Acu, 2023; Jones et al., 2022).

In addition, the models accounted for legal or registration status, length of stay in the host country, and geographic location, since access to institutions and labour-market opportunities can vary depending on these factors in both Jordan and Türkiye (Şahin-

Mencütek et al., 2023; Tumen, 2023). Work authorization status was also included either as a control variable or as part of the employment formality classification, depending on the model used. This reflects the close connection between authorization, formal employment, and access to social security (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; UNHCR, n.d.; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies/National Authorities, 2016).

The definitions and coding of these variables are summarized in Table 3.6, which outlines how each construct was measured and prepared for analysis. Table 3.7 also provides a summary of how the main indices used in the study were constructed from the questionnaire data. It outlines the components included in each index, the method of combining items, and the purpose of each measure within the analytical framework. By presenting this information in a structured format, the table clarifies how complex concepts—such as social integration, economic security, vulnerability, and barriers—were translated into measurable variables. This also ensures transparency in the measurement process and supports the consistency and replicability of the analysis across both country contexts.

*Table 3.6: Variable Operationalization and Coding Rules*

| **Construct** | **Variable name** | **Source items** | **Coding/scoring** | **Role in model** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social security inclusion | SSI | 5.1 | 1 = Yes; 0 = No/Not sure/Prefer not | Independent variable (H1–H2–H4) |
| Coverage type (supporting) | SSI_TYPE | 5.2 | Multi-response categories (A–F) | Descriptive / validation |
| Contribution payer (supporting) | SSI_PAYER | 5.3 | Categorical (1–5) | Descriptive / validation |
| Proof of registration (supporting) | SSI_PROOF | 5.4 | 1 = Yes; 0 = No/Not sure | Validation indicator |
| Used benefit/service (supporting) | SSI_USE | 5.5 | 1 = Yes; 0 = No/NA/Not sure | Validation indicator |
| Employment formality | FORMAL | 3.2, 4.7, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12 | Formal/protected = 1 if any "core formality" indicator was present (registered job=Yes OR employer registers for social security=Yes OR work authorization=Yes OR self-employed licensed=Yes); otherwise 0 = informal | Key structuring variable (H3) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economic security | ECONSEC_IDX | 6.1–6.5 | Mean score; reverse-code 6.4; higher = more secure | Mediator (H2) |
| Vulnerability/coping | VULN_IDX | 7.1–7.5 | Mean score; higher = more vulnerable (more frequent coping constraints) | Mediator (H2) |
| Shock exposure (any) | SHOCK_ANY | 8.1–8.3 | 1 if any shock item = Yes; else 0 | Conditional pathway (H4) |
| Shock: illness | SHOCK_ILL | 8.1 | 1 = Yes; 0 = No | Component of H4 |
| Shock: work injury | SHOCK_INJ | 8.2 | 1 = Yes; 0 = No; NA coded separately | Component of H4 |
| Shock: income loss | SHOCK_INC | 8.3 | 1 = Yes; 0 = No | Component of H4 |
| Shock severity (optional) | SHOCK_SEV | 8.5 | 1–4 scale | Descriptive / sensitivity |
| Poverty/social exclusion risk during shocks | SHOCK_RISK_IDX | 9.1–9.5 | Mean score among shock-exposed only; higher = greater risk | Outcome for H4 |
| Social integration (overall) | INTEG_IDX | 11.1–11.13 | Mean score; reverse-code 11.12; higher = stronger integration | Primary outcome (H1, H3, H5) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Integration: economic participation | INTEG_ECON | 11.1–11.3 | Mean score | Sub-outcome |
| Integration: connectedness | INTEG_SOC | 11.4–11.6 | Mean score | Sub-outcome |
| Integration: participation | INTEG_PART | 11.7–11.9 | Mean score | Sub-outcome |
| Integration: belonging/acceptance | INTEG_BEL | 11.10–11.13 | Mean score; reverse-code 11.12 | Sub-outcome |
| Legal barriers | BARR_LEG | 10.1–10.3 | Mean score (exclude “9”); higher = greater barrier | Constraint (H5) |
| Administrative barriers | BARR_ADM | 10.4–10.7 | Mean score (exclude “9”) | Constraint (H5) |
| Economic barriers | BARR_ECON | 10.8–10.10 | Mean score (exclude “9”) | Constraint (H5) |
| Overall barriers | BARR_ALL | 10.1–10.10 | Mean score across all barrier items (exclude “9”) | Constraint (H5) |
| Demographics | SEX, AGE, MARITAL, EDU | 2.1–2.4, 1.2 | Categorical (sex, marital, education); age continuous | Controls |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Household structure | HH_SIZE, CHILDREN, MAIN_EARNER | 2.5–2.7 | Continuous/categorical | Controls |
| Housing | HOUSING | 2.9 | Categorical | Control |
| Legal/registration status | STATUS | 3.1 | Categorical country-specific coding | Control |
| Duration in host country | DURATION | 1.4 | Ordinal categories | Control |
| Location | GOV_PROV, CITY | 0.2–0.3 | Categorical | Control |
| Work authorization status | WORK_PERMIT | 3.2 | Categorical (Yes/No/In process/Not sure) | Control and/or formality component |

*Table 3.7: Index Construction Summary*

| **Index** | **Items** | **Scale type** | **Reverse-coded items** | **Score method** | **Interpretation** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economic security index | 6.1–6.5 | 5-point agreement | 6.4 | Mean | Higher scores indicated higher economic security |
| Vulnerability/coping index | 7.1–7.5 | 5-point frequency | None | Mean | Higher scores indicated higher vulnerability and constrained coping |
| Social integration (overall) | 11.1–11.13 | 5-point agreement | 11.12 | Mean | Higher scores indicated stronger multidimensional integration |
| Integration: economic participation | 11.1–11.3 | 5-point agreement | None | Mean | Higher scores indicated stronger economic participation dimension |
| Integration: connectedness | 11.4–11.6 | 5-point agreement | None | Mean | Higher scores indicated stronger social connectedness |
| Integration: participation | 11.7–11.9 | 5-point agreement | None | Mean | Higher scores indicated higher civic/community participation |
| Integration: belonging/acceptance | 11.10–11.13 | 5-point agreement | 11.12 | Mean | Higher scores indicated stronger belonging and perceived acceptance |
| Poverty/exclusion risk during shocks | 9.1–9.5 | 5-point intensity | None | Mean (shock-exposed only) | Higher scores indicated greater hardship/exclusion risk during shocks |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Legal barriers subscale | 10.1–10.3 | 1–5 barrier scale | None | Mean (exclude “9”) | Higher scores indicated greater legal access barriers |
| Administrative barriers subscale | 10.4–10.7 | 1–5 barrier scale | None | Mean (exclude “9”) | Higher scores indicated greater administrative barriers |
| Economic barriers subscale | 10.8–10.10 | 1–5 barrier scale | None | Mean (exclude “9”) | Higher scores indicated greater economic barriers |
| Overall barriers index | 10.1–10.10 | 1–5 barrier scale | None | Mean (exclude “9”) | Higher scores indicated greater overall constraints to inclusion |

## 3.8 Data Management

### 3.8.1 Data Entry and Storage

Data were collected using a standardized questionnaire and organized within a structured project directory to ensure clear version control and reproducibility. The study maintained separate folders for raw data exports, cleaned datasets, datasets prepared for analysis, and final outputs, including tables, figures, and logs. This structure allowed all data processing steps to be tracked clearly over time and supported transparent documentation of changes (Groves et al., 2009; Fowler, 2014).

Each participant was assigned a unique study identification number at the time of data collection. This identifier was used consistently across all datasets and served as the only reference in the analysis files. No direct personal identifiers were collected, and any indirect information that could increase the risk of identifying individuals—such as highly specific location details—was stored separately in restricted files used only for field monitoring. These fields were not included in the analytical dataset. In addition, operational information, such as interviewer identifiers and detailed location notes, was kept separate from analysis variables. This approach reduced confidentiality risks while still preserving important contextual information for country-level comparisons (El Emam, 2013; National Research Council, 2007).

### 3.8.2 Data Cleaning

Data cleaning was completed before conducting hypothesis testing and followed a two-step process. The first step involved validating the raw data, while the second focused on creating derived variables and indices. Initially, range checks were used to identify invalid values, such as ages outside the 18–29 range after eligibility screening or unrealistic household sizes. Format checks were also applied to ensure that categorical responses matched the predefined coding scheme (Groves et al., 2009).

Next, consistency checks were conducted to identify logical inconsistencies across related responses. For example, cases were flagged if a respondent reported not working but still completed detailed employment questions without a valid skip pattern, or if a respondent indicated social security coverage but provided no supporting signs such as employer registration or proof of enrollment. Similarly, reports of work-related injuries alongside a

"not working" status were reviewed and, where appropriate, recoded as "not applicable" rather than "no" (Fowler, 2014).

After validation and consistency checks, derived variables were created based on the definitions outlined in Section 3.7. This included constructing employment formality categories using multiple indicators, as well as building composite indices for economic security, vulnerability and coping, barriers, and social integration. The indices were developed using standard scale construction methods, ensuring that all items followed the same direction (with reverse coding where necessary) and that mean-based scoring was used. This approach improved comparability across countries and avoided distortions caused by differences in the number of items included in each index (DeVellis, 2017).

### 3.8.3 Missing Data

Missing data were examined using diagnostic checks at both the item and the overall construct levels. These checks included measuring the proportion of missing responses for each item, identifying patterns of missing data across questionnaire sections, and comparing characteristics of respondents with complete and incomplete data. This helped determine whether missing data were linked to factors such as country, survey mode, gender, or employment status (Little & Rubin, 2019; Enders, 2010).

Responses such as "Prefer not to answer" and "Don't know/Not sure" were treated as meaningful for sensitivity analysis, while "Not applicable" responses were excluded from index calculations when a question did not apply to a respondent (for example, shock-related questions for those who did not experience a shock).

Different strategies were used to handle missing data, depending on the variable type. For multi-item indices, scores were calculated only when respondents answered a sufficient number of items; otherwise, the index was marked as missing. In statistical models used for hypothesis testing, listwise deletion was applied when missing data were limited and evenly distributed. However, when missing data affected key control variables or reduced model reliability, multiple imputation methods were used under the assumption that data were missing at random. The results from imputed datasets were then compared with complete-case results to confirm the robustness of the findings (Enders, 2010; van Buuren, 2018).

The specific rules for handling missing data for each construct are summarized in Table 3.8, which outlines how different types of missing responses were handled in the analysis.

*Table 2 Table 3.8: Missing Data Rules by Construct*

| **Construct** | **Item missing threshold** | **Treatment** | **Rationale** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Social security inclusion (binary) | 0% (single item) | If missing, set to missing; exclude from models requiring IV | Core independent variable required for H1–H2–H4 tests |
| Employment formality (derived) | At least 2 of the core indicators are present | If insufficient indicators, set to missing; sensitivity check using an alternative definition | Reduced misclassification when formality cues were incomplete |
| Economic security index | ≥80% of items completed | Compute the mean of available items; otherwise, missing | Standard practice to preserve scale validity while limiting bias from partial responses |
| Vulnerability/coping index | ≥80% of items completed | Compute the mean of available items; otherwise, missing | Ensured comparability of vulnerability scores across respondents |
| Shock exposure (any shock) | 0% (three items) | If any shock item is missing, classify shock exposure as missing | Prevented undercounting shocks due to partial nonresponse |
| Poverty/exclusion risk during shocks | ≥80% of items among shock-exposed | Compute the mean among the shock-exposed; otherwise, missing | Preserved outcome validity for H4 by requiring sufficient responses |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Legal barriers subscale | ≥67% of items completed | Compute mean excluding "Not applicable"; otherwise missing | Barriers were measured as subscales; minimum completion preserved interpretability |
| Administrative barriers subscale | ≥75% of items completed | Compute mean excluding "Not applicable"; otherwise missing | Larger subscales required sufficient completion to avoid instability |
| Economic barriers subscale | ≥67% of items completed | Compute mean excluding "Not applicable"; otherwise missing | Maintained consistency with other barrier subscales |
| Overall barriers index | ≥80% of barrier items completed | Compute mean excluding "Not applicable"; otherwise missing | Reduced the sensitivity of the overall constraint score to sporadic nonresponse |
| Social integration (overall) | ≥80% of items completed | Compute mean; otherwise missing | Supported reliable multi-dimensional measurement |
| Integration sub-dimensions | ≥67% of items per subscale | Compute mean; otherwise missing | Allowed dimension-level interpretation without excessive loss of cases |
| Demographic covariates | Not applicable (single items) | If missing, impute where appropriate; otherwise, include the "missing" category for categorical controls. | Preserved sample size and reduced bias from dropping respondents |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Legal/registration status | Not applicable (single item) | Treat missing as a separate category or impute (sensitivity) | Status was context-sensitive and could be non-response-prone |
| Location variables | Not applicable | Use broader location coding if the specific value is missing | Reduced disclosure risk and minimized missingness |

## 3.9 Statistical Analysis

### 3.9.1 Descriptive Analysis

The analysis started with descriptive statistics to present an overview of the sample characteristics in Jordan and Türkiye separately. The study summarized key demographic and contextual variables, including age, sex or gender, education, marital status, household size, housing conditions, legal or registration status, length of stay in the host country, and location. This step helped assess how comparable the two country samples were and identify any differences in their composition (Groves et al., 2009; Lohr, 2021).

In addition, the study calculated key prevalence indicators in each country. These included rates of social security inclusion, levels of employment formality, exposure to shocks such as illness, work injury, or income loss, and both the prevalence and average levels of structural barriers (legal, administrative, and economic). Results were presented as means and standard deviations for continuous variables and as proportions with confidence intervals for categorical variables. Standard comparison tests were then used to examine differences between Jordan and Türkiye (Lohr, 2021; Agresti, 2018).

### 3.9.2 Measurement Evaluation

Since several variables were measured using multiple items, the study evaluated the quality and structure of these measures before proceeding to hypothesis testing.

Internal consistency was assessed for each multi-item index, including economic security, vulnerability and coping, social integration and its sub-dimensions, and barrier scales. The study used Cronbach's alpha and, where appropriate, omega as additional reliability indicators. These results were reviewed, along with item–total correlations, to identify any items that reduced the scales' consistency (Cronbach, 1951; McDonald, 1999; DeVellis, 2017).

The study also examined the factor structure of key scales, particularly social integration and barriers, to confirm that items grouped as expected based on theory. Exploratory checks were used where necessary to assess dimensionality, while confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assess how well the data fit the proposed measurement models. Model fit was evaluated using commonly accepted indices such as CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR, which were treated as general guidelines rather than strict cut-off rules (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Brown, 2015; Kline, 2016).

To support comparison between Jordan and Türkiye, the study also assessed whether these scales functioned similarly across both contexts. This involved checking whether items showed comparable patterns and relationships across countries. When CFA was used, multi-group measurement invariance was tested stepwise, including configural and metric invariance and, where possible, scalar invariance. If full equivalence was not achieved, partial evidence was reported, and comparisons were interpreted with caution, focusing more on within-country relationships and pooled models that included country controls (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000; Putnick & Bornstein, 2016; Kline, 2016).

### 3.9.3 Hypothesis Testing Models (Aligned to H1–H5)

The study tested the hypotheses using multivariable statistical models that followed the conceptual framework's structure. Although the models were designed to reflect expected relationships between variables, the findings were interpreted as associations rather than causal effects, in line with the limitations of cross-sectional data (Agresti, 2018; Hayes, 2018). All models included relevant control variables, such as demographic, household, legal, duration, and location factors, and used robust standard errors to improve the reliability of the estimates (Long & Ervin, 2000).

For H1, the study examined the relationship between social security inclusion and social integration using linear regression models. Social integration was treated as the main outcome, and additional models were estimated for its individual dimensions—such as economic participation, connectedness, participation, and belonging—to identify which aspects were most strongly related to inclusion (Agresti, 2018).

For H2, the study estimated separate models to examine how social security inclusion was associated with economic security and vulnerability or coping. It then explored mediation effects using regression-based methods and, in some cases, structural equation modeling

(SEM) to assess both direct and indirect relationships, reporting confidence intervals for indirect effects (Hayes, 2018; Preacher & Hayes, 2008; Kline, 2016).

For H3, the study analyzed the relationship between employment formality and social integration using linear regression. In addition, logistic regression models were used to examine how employment formality was associated with social security inclusion, since inclusion was measured as a binary variable. These models helped clarify whether formal employment plays a key role in shaping both integration outcomes and access to social protection (Agresti, 2018).

For H4, the study assessed whether social security inclusion reduced negative outcomes during shocks. This was done in two ways. First, within the group of respondents who experienced shocks, regression models were used to examine the relationship between inclusion and poverty or social exclusion risk. Second, an interaction model was estimated in the full sample, including social security inclusion, shock exposure, and an interaction term between them. This allowed the study to test whether the association between inclusion and outcomes changed when shocks occurred (Aiken & West, 1991; Hayes, 2018).

For H5, the study used logistic regression to examine how legal, administrative, and economic barriers were associated with social security inclusion. It also used linear regression to assess how these barriers related to social integration outcomes. Models were estimated using both separate barrier categories and a combined barrier index to compare the effects of different types of constraints (Agresti, 2018; DeVellis, 2017).

Across all hypotheses, results were presented both separately for each country and in combined models that included a country indicator or fixed effect. This approach enabled distinguishing patterns within each country from overall trends and supported the study's comparative objective (Lohr, 2021; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000).

The relationship between each hypothesis and the corresponding statistical model is summarized in Table 3.9, which outlines the dependent variables, key predictors, mediators or moderators, control variables, and model types used in the analysis.

*Table 3.9: Hypotheses-to-Model Mapping*

| Hypothesis | Dependent variable | Key predictors | Moderators/mediators | Controls | Model type |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **H1** | Social integration (overall and sub-dimensions) | Social security inclusion | — | Demographics, household, housing, legal status, duration, location, work authorization (as specified) | OLS regression (robust SE) |
| **H2** | (a) Economic security; (b) Vulnerability/coping | Social security inclusion | Mediation through economic security and vulnerability | Same as above + employment formality | OLS regression; mediation (regression-based); SEM (optional) |
| **H3** | (a) Social integration; (b) Social security inclusion | Employment formality | — | Same as above | (a) OLS regression; (b) Logistic regression |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **H4** | Poverty/social exclusion risk during shocks (shock-exposed) | Social security inclusion; shock exposure | Inclusion × shock interaction (pooled) or shock-exposed models | Same as above | OLS regression (shock-exposed); interaction model |
| **H5** | (a) Social security inclusion; (b) Social integration | Legal/administrative/economic barriers (and/or overall barriers) | — | Same as above + employment formality | (a) Logistic regression; (b) OLS regression |

### 3.9.4 Robustness and Sensitivity Checks

The study conducted a set of robustness and sensitivity checks to determine whether the main results remained consistent across different definitions and modeling choices. These checks were important because, in a cross-sectional observational study, findings can be influenced by how variables are defined and by the sample structure (Grimes & Schulz, 2002; Setia, 2016).

First, the study examined alternative ways of defining employment formality by comparing a strict and a more flexible classification. Under the strict definition, respondents were considered formally employed only if several indicators were present simultaneously, such as having a registered job and employer registration in social security, or a valid work authorization. In contrast, the relaxed definition classified respondents as formal if at least one key institutional indicator was present, such as a registered job or employer registration. This comparison helped assess whether the findings depended on narrow or broader interpretations of formality, particularly in contexts where formal work arrangements may be incomplete or inconsistently documented (DeVellis, 2017; Groves et al., 2009).

Second, the study tested different definitions of social security inclusion. One approach relied solely on self-reported coverage, while the alternative required both reported coverage and at least one supporting sign, such as proof of registration or recent use of benefits. This step helped reduce the risk of misclassification and examined whether the results were influenced by possible misunderstandings of what "coverage" means, especially in settings where informal access to services might be confused with formal inclusion (Tourangeau et al., 2000; Fowler, 2014).

Third, the study compared results from country-specific models with pooled models that included a country indicator. The country-specific models allowed the analysis to focus on relationships within each national context, while the pooled models accounted for differences between countries in overall conditions and policy environments. This approach helped determine whether observed relationships were consistent across settings or driven by country-level differences (Lohr, 2021).

Fourth, subgroup analyses were conducted to explore differences across key groups, particularly by gender and by employment status (working versus not working). These

analyses were performed either by estimating separate models for each group or by including interaction terms in the models, depending on the hypothesis being tested. This allowed the study to assess whether relationships varied across population segments (Aiken & West, 1991; Hayes, 2018).

## 3.10 Ethical Considerations

### 3.10.1 Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation

The study obtained informed consent from all participants before data collection. Participants were clearly informed that their participation was voluntary, that they could choose not to answer any question, and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. This approach followed established ethical principles related to respect for individuals and voluntary participation (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979).

### 3.10.2 Confidentiality and Data Protection

Confidentiality was ensured by assigning each participant a unique study ID and avoiding the collection of direct personal identifiers. Any sensitive operational data was stored separately with restricted access, while the datasets used for analysis contained only anonymized information. These procedures followed recognized standards for protecting confidentiality and reducing the risk of identifying participants (El Emam, 2013; National Research Council, 2007).

### 3.10.3 Minimizing Risk in Sensitive Topics

Some survey questions addressed sensitive issues, such as informal employment, documentation status, and employer practices. To reduce potential risks, the questionnaire used neutral wording, included options such as “prefer not to answer,” and avoided collecting sensitive identifying details. Interviews were conducted in private settings, and enumerators were trained to avoid leading questions and to stop or skip items if respondents showed discomfort. These measures followed recommended practices for working with potentially vulnerable populations (Fowler, 2014; World Health Organization, 2011).

### 3.10.4 Referral / Support Protocol

If participants showed signs of distress or requested assistance, the study followed a simple referral approach by providing information about available local support services, such as community organizations or relevant service providers, when possible. Enumerators did not provide counseling but focused on ensuring participant safety, respecting privacy, and responding to individual preferences (World Health Organization, 2011).

## 3.11 Methodological Limitations and Mitigation

The study faced several limitations commonly associated with comparative cross-sectional survey research, and steps were taken to address them where possible.

First, the cross-sectional design limited the ability to draw causal conclusions or to establish the temporal order of events among variables such as inclusion, mediators, and integration outcomes. To address this, the study carefully interpreted results as associations and structured the analysis in line with the conceptual framework while acknowledging the possibility of reverse relationships and selection effects (Grimes & Schulz, 2002; Setia, 2016).

Second, the study relied on self-reported data, including measures of social security inclusion and employment formality, which may be affected by recall errors or misunderstanding of institutional concepts. This risk was reduced by using multiple indicators for key variables, such as combining reported coverage with proof-of-use indicators and including several cues for employment formality. In addition, pilot and cognitive testing were used to improve clarity and reduce misinterpretation (Tourangeau et al., 2000; Willis, 2005).

Third, there was potential selection bias, as individuals with formal employment or social security coverage may differ systematically from those without, for example, in terms of education or access to networks. The study addressed this by including relevant control variables, conducting subgroup analyses, and applying robustness checks with alternative variable definitions, while maintaining a cautious interpretation of results (Shadish et al., 2002; Hayes, 2018).

Fourth, differences between Jordan and Türkiye posed challenges for comparability, as institutional contexts and interpretations of key terms may vary. This issue was addressed

through careful translation, the use of a shared glossary, equivalence checks, and the evaluation of measurement consistency across countries, with cautious interpretation when full comparability could not be ensured (Harkness et al., 2010; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000; Putnick & Bornstein, 2016).

Fifth, the study faced potential issues related to nonresponse and sensitivity, especially for questions about informal work, employer behavior, or documentation status. To reduce these effects, the study emphasized confidentiality, allowed nonresponse options, monitored missing data during fieldwork, and applied appropriate missing-data techniques and sensitivity checks during analysis (Groves et al., 2009; Dillman et al., 2014).

## 3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the study's methodological approach, including a comparative cross-sectional design and a structured questionnaire as the main data source. It also described the steps taken to improve measurement quality and ensure comparability between Jordan and Türkiye. In addition, the chapter defined all variables in line with hypotheses H1–H5, explained data management and quality assurance procedures, and presented the statistical analysis plan, including descriptive analysis, measurement evaluation, hypothesis testing, and robustness checks. The following chapter presents the empirical findings, beginning with an overview of the sample and descriptive results, followed by the results of the hypothesis-testing models based on the conceptual framework.

# Chapter Four :Empirical Results and Hypotheses Testing

## 4.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter presents the empirical results of the comparative survey conducted among young Syrian refugees aged 18–29 in Jordan and Türkiye. Its main aim is to report the findings in a clear and organized way, starting with an overview of the sample and key variables and then moving to the statistical testing of the hypotheses introduced in Chapters Two and Three. The focus here is on presenting the data and model results, while deeper interpretation and discussion of their meaning for theory and policy are addressed in the following chapter.

The presentation of results follows four main steps. First, the chapter outlines descriptive statistics for each country, including sample characteristics and distributions of key variables such as social security inclusion, employment formality, exposure to shocks, and structural barriers. It also summarizes the main indices, including economic security, vulnerability, and coping, and social integration. Second, the chapter assesses the quality of the measurement tools by examining the reliability and structure of multi-item scales, with particular attention to the social integration and barriers indices, to ensure that they perform consistently in both countries. Third, the chapter tests hypotheses H1–H5 using predefined multivariable models, presenting results separately for each country and, where relevant, additional analyses, such as models for specific dimensions of integration, models focused on respondents exposed to shocks, and interaction models. Fourth, the chapter includes robustness and sensitivity checks that test alternative definitions of key variables, compare pooled and country-specific models, and examine differences across subgroups.

A comparative perspective is maintained throughout the chapter. Results are reported separately for Jordan and Türkiye to reflect differences in institutional contexts that influence access to formal employment and social security. In addition, combined models are used where appropriate to capture overall patterns while accounting for cross-country differences through the inclusion of a country indicator and consistent control variables. This approach allows the analysis to distinguish patterns within each country from broader

trends, helping determine whether the relationship between protection and integration is consistent across contexts or varies with institutional conditions.

## 4.2 Data Overview and Analytic Sample

This section describes the dataset used for both descriptive analysis and hypothesis testing in Chapter Four. It outlines the final analytic sample after applying screening and quality checks, provides an overview of item completion, and confirms the creation of derived variables and indices needed to test hypotheses H1–H5. It also summarizes patterns of missing data at both the item and construct levels.

### 4.2.1 Data Preparation Summary

A total of 1,280 interviews were completed across Jordan and Türkiye. After applying eligibility criteria—Syrian origin, age between 18 and 29, and residence in the study country—and conducting data quality checks such as removing incomplete cases, duplicates, and inconsistent responses, the final analytic sample included 1,200 respondents. This consisted of 600 participants from Jordan and 600 from Türkiye. Overall, 93.8% of completed interviews were retained, indicating strong data quality after cleaning and screening.

Response completion was high across most sections of the questionnaire. Demographic and household variables were almost fully complete in both countries. Employment and formality-related questions also showed high completion among those who were working, although slightly higher missing responses appeared in more sensitive items, such as those related to registration or documentation. Multi-item scales—including economic security, vulnerability and coping, barriers, and social integration—had sufficient completion rates to allow reliable index construction in most cases. In addition, skip logic worked effectively, particularly for conditional sections such as shock-related hardship, which was only asked of respondents who reported experiencing shocks.

All derived variables were created following the procedures outlined in Chapter Three. The dataset included a binary measure of social security inclusion along with supporting indicators, a derived classification of employment formality based on multiple criteria, and composite indices for economic security, vulnerability and coping, barriers (both subscales and overall), and social integration (including sub-dimensions). It also included a variable

identifying respondents who experienced at least one shock, defined as illness, work injury, or income loss. This subgroup included 312 respondents in Jordan and 336 in Türkiye, providing sufficient variation for analysis related to hypothesis H4.

The distribution of the analytic sample is summarized in Table 4.1, which shows the number of completed interviews, exclusions, and final sample sizes for each country.

*Table 4.1: Analytic Sample Summary*

| **Country** | **Completed interviews** | **Excluded (screening/quality)** | **Final analytic N** | **% of total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jordan | 642 | 42 | 600 | 46.9% |
| Türkiye | 638 | 38 | 600 | 46.9% |
| Total | 1,280 | 80 | 1,200 | 93.8% retained |

### 4.2.2 Missing Data Profile (Results Snapshot)

Missing data were examined at two levels: first, at the level of individual survey items, and second, at the level of constructed indices to determine whether they could be calculated based on available responses.

At the item level, missing data were generally low across key variables. For social security inclusion, nonresponse rates were minimal (1.7% in Jordan and 1.5% in Türkiye), although some respondents selected "don't know" for related verification questions, reflecting uncertainty rather than refusal. Employment formality indicators also showed low missingness overall, though slightly higher rates appeared for employer registration questions compared to contract-related items. Shock exposure questions had very high completion rates (98% or higher), likely due to their simple format. For barrier-related questions, "not applicable" or "don't know" responses were more common among individuals with limited experience attempting formalization, while refusal remained rare. Social integration items achieved over 95% completion in both countries, with minor missingness concentrated toward the end of the survey, suggesting some respondent fatigue.

At the construct level, most indices were successfully computed for the majority of respondents. The highest level of non-computation occurred for the shock-hardship index,

as it applied only to those who experienced shocks and required sufficient responses within that section. For barrier indices, missingness was mainly due to “not applicable” responses rather than refusal to answer.

These patterns are summarized in Table 4.2, which presents missing data rates for each key construct and the main reasons for missingness.

*Table 4.2: Missingness by Construct*

| **Construct** | **Country** | **% missing** | **Main reason (NA / refusal / don’t know / skip logic)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Social security inclusion (binary) | Jordan | 1.7% | Don’t know / Prefer not |
| | Türkiye | 1.5% | Don’t know / Prefer not |
| Employment formality (derived) | Jordan | 3.2% | Don’t know / incomplete formality cues |
| | Türkiye | 3.6% | Don’t know / incomplete formality cues |
| Economic security index | Jordan | 2.5% | Item nonresponse / fatigue |
| | Türkiye | 2.2% | Item nonresponse / fatigue |
| Vulnerability/coping index | Jordan | 3.1% | Item nonresponse / sensitivity |
| | Türkiye | 3.4% | Item nonresponse / sensitivity |
| Shock exposure (any shock) | Jordan | 0.8% | Don’t know / Prefer not |
| | Türkiye | 0.9% | Don’t know / Prefer not |
| Shock hardship (poverty/exclusion risk during shocks) | Jordan | 4.8% | Skip logic (not shock-exposed) + partial completion |
| | Türkiye | 5.1% | Skip logic (not shock-exposed) + partial completion |
| Legal barriers subscale | Jordan | 3.9% | NA / Don’t know |
| | Türkiye | 4.4% | NA / Don’t know |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Administrative barriers subscale | Jordan | 4.6% | NA / Don't know |
| | Türkiye | 5.0% | NA / Don't know |
| Economic barriers subscale | Jordan | 3.5% | NA / Don't know |
| | Türkiye | 3.8% | NA / Don't know |
| Overall barriers index | Jordan | 4.2% | NA patterns across items |
| | Türkiye | 4.7% | NA patterns across items |
| Social integration (overall index) | Jordan | 2.0% | Item nonresponse / fatigue |
| | Türkiye | 2.3% | Item nonresponse / fatigue |
| Integration sub-dimensions (any) | Jordan | 2.5% | Item nonresponse within subscale |
| | Türkiye | 2.8% | Item nonresponse within subscale |

## 4.3 Descriptive Results by Country

This section presents the descriptive characteristics of the samples from Jordan and Türkiye, with a focus on two main areas: (i) socio-demographic and household features, and (ii) legal or administrative status along with work authorization. To support comparison between the two countries, standardized differences are reported, where values close to zero indicate a high level of similarity between the samples.

### 4.3.1 Socio-Demographic and Household Characteristics

Overall, the samples in Jordan and Türkiye were very similar in terms of age distribution. The average age in both countries was in the mid-twenties, and respondents were distributed fairly evenly across the three age groups (18–20, 21–24, and 25–29). Gender balance was also consistent across both settings, with nearly equal proportions of males and females.

There were some differences in educational attainment. In Jordan, respondents were slightly more concentrated in lower levels of education, particularly primary and lower secondary schooling. In contrast, Türkiye had a somewhat higher proportion of individuals with post-secondary education, including technical training and university degrees. Marital status patterns were broadly similar in both countries, with most respondents reporting that they were single, while a notable proportion were married.

Household characteristics showed moderate variation between the two contexts. Respondents in Jordan tended to live in slightly larger households and reported a higher average number of children compared to those in Türkiye. In both countries, renting was the most common housing arrangement. However, Jordan had a small but noticeable proportion of respondents living in camps or shared shelter settings. In terms of duration of stay, most participants in both countries had been living in the host country for six years or more, indicating long-term displacement.

These patterns are summarized in Table 4.3, which presents detailed comparisons across key socio-demographic and household variables.

*Table 4.3: Sample Profile by Country*

| **Variable** | **Category/Statistic** | **Jordan** | **Türkiye** | **Std. diff.** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age (years) | Mean (SD) | 23.5 (3.1) | 23.8 (3.0) | -0.10 |
| Age group | 18–20 | 22.0% | 20.0% | +0.05 |
| Age group | 21–24 | 38.0% | 36.0% | +0.04 |
| Age group | 25–29 | 40.0% | 44.0% | -0.08 |
| Sex/Gender | Female | 50.0% | 49.0% | +0.02 |
| Sex/Gender | Male | 50.0% | 51.0% | -0.02 |
| Education (highest completed) | No schooling | 2.0% | 1.0% | +0.08 |
| | Primary | 18.0% | 14.0% | +0.11 |
| | Lower secondary | 24.0% | 20.0% | +0.09 |
| | Upper secondary | 30.0% | 33.0% | -0.06 |
| | TVET/Technical diploma | 10.0% | 12.0% | -0.06 |
| | Some university | 7.0% | 8.0% | -0.04 |
| | Bachelor | 8.0% | 11.0% | -0.10 |
| | Postgraduate | 1.0% | 1.0% | +0.00 |
| Marital status | Single/never married | 58.0% | 55.0% | +0.06 |
| | Married | 36.0% | 38.0% | -0.04 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Divorced/separated | 4.0% | 5.0% | -0.05 |
| | Widowed | 2.0% | 2.0% | +0.00 |
| Household size | Mean (SD) | 5.7 (2.0) | 5.4 (1.9) | +0.15 |
| Children in household (0–17) | Mean (SD) | 1.9 (1.6) | 1.7 (1.5) | +0.13 |
| Main income earner | Yes | 44.0% | 46.0% | -0.04 |
| | Shared | 28.0% | 27.0% | +0.02 |
| | No | 28.0% | 27.0% | +0.02 |
| Housing situation | Rent | 72.0% | 68.0% | +0.09 |
| | With relatives/friends | 14.0% | 16.0% | -0.05 |
| | Hosted (non-relatives) | 5.0% | 6.0% | -0.04 |
| | Camp/collective | 6.0% | 1.0% | +0.27 |
| | Employer-provided | 2.0% | 3.0% | -0.06 |
| | Other | 1.0% | 6.0% | -0.27 |
| Duration in the host country | <1 year | 6.0% | 5.0% | +0.04 |
| | 1–2 years | 10.0% | 9.0% | +0.03 |
| | 3–5 years | 20.0% | 18.0% | +0.05 |
| | 6–9 years | 34.0% | 36.0% | -0.04 |
| | 10+ years | 30.0% | 32.0% | -0.04 |

### 4.3.2 Legal/Administrative Status and Work Authorization

Patterns of legal and administrative status reflected the different systems in place in each country. In Jordan, most respondents reported holding national service or administrative documentation, while a smaller group reported UNHCR registration as their main status. In Türkiye, the majority of respondents reported being under temporary protection status. Levels of work authorization were relatively low in both countries. Around one-fifth of respondents reported having authorization to work, while roughly two-thirds reported not having such authorization. Among those without authorization, or those who were unsure or still in the process, the most commonly reported barriers included employer refusal, complex procedures, financial costs, and eligibility restrictions. These findings highlight

the importance of considering barriers and employment formality as key factors shaping access to social security.

These results are detailed in Table 4.4, which summarizes legal status categories and work authorization patterns in both countries.

*Table 4.4: Legal/Administrative Profile and Work Authorization*

| **Indicator** | **Category** | **Jordan** | **Türkiye** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Registration/legal status (Jordan) | UNHCR registration | 18.0% | — |
| | MoI/service card or equivalent | 74.0% | — |
| | Other legal status | 6.0% | — |
| | Not registered/unclear | 2.0% | — |
| Registration/legal status (Türkiye) | Temporary protection (Kimlik) | — | 91.0% |
| | International protection | — | 2.0% |
| | Residence permit | — | 3.0% |
| | Other legal status | — | 2.0% |
| | Not registered/unclear | — | 2.0% |
| Work authorization status | Yes | 22.0% | 18.0% |
| | No | 63.0% | 66.0% |
| | In process | 8.0% | 9.0% |
| | Not sure | 7.0% | 7.0% |
| Main reason (no authorization) | Not eligible | 15.0% | 20.0% |
| | Too expensive | 18.0% | 16.0% |
| | Employer refused | 25.0% | 27.0% |
| | Procedure too complex | 17.0% | 14.0% |
| | Lack of information | 10.0% | 8.0% |
| | Fear of problems | 5.0% | 6.0% |
| | Sector restrictions | 7.0% | 7.0% |
| | Other | 3.0% | 2.0% |

### 4.3.3 Employment Profile and Work Conditions

This subsection describes respondents' employment status and job conditions, with particular attention to indicators directly related to employment formality and possible access to social security. These indicators include written contracts, payslips, methods of wage payment, and signs of official registration. The findings are presented separately for Jordan and Türkiye to reflect differences in labor-market structures and the practical availability of formal or protected employment routes.

Overall, employment levels were very similar in both countries, with around three-fifths of respondents reporting that they were currently working for pay or profit. Among those employed, most worked as private-sector employees, day laborers, casual workers, or self-employed. The distribution across sectors revealed clear country differences. In Jordan, respondents were more concentrated in construction and agriculture-related jobs, whereas in Türkiye, larger shares were found in manufacturing, retail, and service activities. Indicators of job quality pointed to limited formalization in both settings. Only a minority of workers reported having written contracts, receiving payslips, or having evidence of formal registration. In contrast, cash payments and irregular wage arrangements remained common, especially among those in casual or seasonal work.

These patterns are presented in Table 4.5, which provides a detailed comparison of employment characteristics across the two country samples.

*Table 4.5: Employment Characteristics by Country*

| **Indicator** | **Category/Statistic** | **Jordan** | **Türkiye** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Employment status | Working (yes) | 60.0% | 60.0% |
| | Not working (no) | 40.0% | 40.0% |
| Work type (among working) | Employee (private) | 48.0% | 52.0% |
| | Employee (public/NGO) | 6.0% | 5.0% |
| | Self-employed | 14.0% | 16.0% |
| | Day labor/casual | 20.0% | 15.0% |
| | Seasonal | 8.0% | 7.0% |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Family business (paid) / other | 4.0% | 5.0% |
| Main sector (among working) | Agriculture | 16.0% | 10.0% |
| | Construction | 24.0% | 18.0% |
| | Manufacturing | 10.0% | 16.0% |
| | Retail/shops | 12.0% | 14.0% |
| | Food services | 9.0% | 10.0% |
| | Transport/delivery | 8.0% | 11.0% |
| | Domestic work | 6.0% | 5.0% |
| | Services/beauty | 8.0% | 9.0% |
| | Health/education | 3.0% | 4.0% |
| | Other | 4.0% | 3.0% |
| Weekly hours (among working) | Mean (SD) | 46.2 (12.1) | 47.8 (11.5) |
| Pay frequency (among working) | Daily | 33.0% | 18.0% |
| | Weekly | 20.0% | 14.0% |
| | Monthly | 36.0% | 55.0% |
| | Irregular | 11.0% | 13.0% |
| Written contract (while working) | Yes | 28.0% | 26.0% |
| Payslip/wage statement (while working) | Yes | 15.0% | 18.0% |
| Wages paid via bank transfer (among working) | Yes | 22.0% | 35.0% |
| Job officially registered (among working) | Yes | 18.0% | 15.0% |
| Employer registers workers for social security (among working) | Yes | 20.0% | 18.0% |

### 4.3.4 Key Prevalence Estimates (Core Constructs)

This subsection presents the main prevalence estimates that form the basis for the hypothesis-testing analyses. These include social security inclusion and its verification

indicators, employment formality, exposure to shocks by type and overall, and structural barriers measured through average subscale scores and the proportion reporting high barriers. Presenting these estimates by country offers an empirical starting point for understanding the later multivariable results.

In both Jordan and Türkiye, social security inclusion remained limited to a minority of respondents. Among those who reported being included, supporting indicators such as proof of registration and recent use of benefits were more common, which strengthens confidence in the inclusion measure. Rates of employment formality were much lower than overall employment rates, reflecting the widespread presence of informal work in both settings. Exposure to shocks was also common, with illness and major income loss reported most often. Barrier scores showed moderate to high levels of difficulty overall, and economic barriers received the highest ratings among the three barrier categories.

These findings are summarized in Table 4.6, which compares the prevalence of the core constructs across Jordan and Türkiye.

*Table 4.6: Core Prevalence Estimates by Country*

| **Construct** | **Measure** | **Jordan** | **Türkiye** | **Difference summary** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social security inclusion | Included (Yes) | 17.0% | 14.0% | Higher in Jordan (+3 pp) |
| | Not included (No) | 74.0% | 78.0% | Higher in Türkiye (+4 pp) |
| | Not sure | 9.0% | 8.0% | Similar |
| Inclusion verification (among “Yes”) | Has proof of registration | 82.0% | 85.0% | Similar |
| | Used benefit/service (past 12 months) | 41.0% | 45.0% | Similar |
| Employment formality | Formal/protected (total sample) | 15.0% | 15.0% | Same |
| | Informal (total sample) | 45.0% | 45.0% | Same |
| | Formal/protected (among working) | 25.0% | 25.0% | Same |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Informal (among working) | 75.0% | 75.0% | Same |
| Shocks (past 12 months) | Illness affecting work/study | 28.0% | 30.0% | Higher in Türkiye (+2 pp) |
| | Work injury/accident | 12.0% | 10.0% | Higher in Jordan (+2 pp) |
| | Major income loss | 31.0% | 33.0% | Higher in Türkiye (+2 pp) |
| | Any shock (at least one) | 52.0% | 56.0% | Higher in Türkiye (+4 pp) |
| Barriers (1–5 scale) | Legal barriers (mean) | 3.1 | 3.3 | Higher in Türkiye |
| | Administrative barriers (mean) | 3.2 | 3.4 | Higher in Türkiye |
| | Economic barriers (mean) | 3.6 | 3.5 | Higher in Jordan |
| High barriers (share rating 4–5) | Legal (4–5) | 38.0% | 44.0% | Higher in Türkiye |
| | Administrative (4–5) | 41.0% | 46.0% | Higher in Türkiye |
| | Economic (4–5) | 52.0% | 49.0% | Higher in Jordan |

## 4.4 Measurement Evaluation Results

This section presents the results for the multi-item indices used in the analysis. It begins by summarizing the distribution of each index by country, including the mean, standard deviation, and observed range. It then reports internal consistency statistics to assess whether the items within each scale worked together as expected. All indices were scored on a 1–5 scale, with higher values indicating a greater level of the construct. For example, higher scores indicate stronger economic security, greater vulnerability, more barriers, stronger social integration, or higher levels of hardship during shocks.

### 4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics for Indices

In general, the indices showed enough variation within each country and covered similar ranges in both Jordan and Türkiye. Economic security scores were, on average, in the lower to middle range, while vulnerability and coping scores were around the middle of the scale. This pattern is consistent with the earlier descriptive findings showing that many respondents were living under economically unstable conditions. Barrier scores were mostly moderate to high, with economic barriers recording the highest average levels. Social integration scores were centered near the middle of the scale, and within the integration dimensions, belonging and acceptance tended to score slightly higher than participation. Among respondents who had experienced shocks, the shock hardship index indicated moderate hardship and an elevated risk of exclusion.

These patterns are presented in Table 4.7, which compares the average scores and variability of each index across Jordan and Türkiye.

*Table 4.7: Index Descriptives by Country*

| **Index** | **Jordan mean (SD)** | **Türkiye mean (SD)** | **Min–Max** | **Interpretation note** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economic security index | 2.82 (0.77) | 2.90 (0.75) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = greater financial adequacy/stability |
| Vulnerability/coping index | 3.14 (0.80) | 3.22 (0.78) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = more frequent constrained coping/hardship |
| Legal barriers subscale | 3.10 (0.88) | 3.28 (0.86) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = greater legal constraints to access |
| Administrative barriers subscale | 3.22 (0.84) | 3.40 (0.82) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = greater procedural/information burdens |
| Economic barriers subscale | 3.60 (0.82) | 3.52 (0.80) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = greater cost and employer-incentive barriers |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall barriers index | 3.31 (0.73) | 3.40 (0.71) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = greater overall access constraints |
| Social integration (overall) | 3.01 (0.62) | 3.06 (0.60) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = stronger multidimensional integration |
| Integration—economic participation | 3.07 (0.71) | 3.10 (0.69) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = stronger perceived economic pathway |
| Integration—connectedness | 2.92 (0.74) | 2.95 (0.72) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = stronger support/networks |
| Integration—participation | 2.73 (0.76) | 2.78 (0.75) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = stronger public/community participation |
| Integration—belonging/acceptance | 3.18 (0.70) | 3.22 (0.68) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = stronger acceptance/belonging |
| Shock hardship index (shock-exposed only) | 3.20 (0.78) | 3.28 (0.76) | 1.00–5.00 | Higher = greater hardship/exclusion during shocks |

### 4.4.2 Reliability (Internal Consistency)

The internal consistency of the main scales ranged from acceptable to strong across both country samples. The overall social integration index showed high reliability, while its sub-dimensions demonstrated acceptable consistency, particularly given that each subscale included only a small number of items. The barrier subscales also performed well, and the overall barrier index showed particularly strong coherence across all included items. In addition, the shock hardship scale, which was calculated only for respondents who had experienced shocks, demonstrated strong reliability, supporting its use as a composite outcome in the H4 analysis.

These reliability results are summarized in Table 4.8, which reports Cronbach's alpha values for each scale in Jordan and Türkiye.

*Table 4.8: Reliability Statistics (α) by Country*

| Scale | # items | Jordan α | Türkiye α | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economic security index | 5 | 0.81 | 0.83 | Good reliability for short scale |
| Vulnerability/coping index | 5 | 0.84 | 0.85 | Strong consistency across coping items |
| Social integration (overall) | 13 | 0.88 | 0.89 | Strong overall internal consistency |
| Integration—economic participation | 3 | 0.76 | 0.78 | Acceptable for the 3-item subscale |
| Integration—connectedness | 3 | 0.79 | 0.80 | Good subscale coherence |
| Integration—participation | 3 | 0.74 | 0.75 | Acceptable; participation items varied by context |
| Integration—belonging/acceptance | 4 | 0.82 | 0.83 | Stronger coherence in belonging items |
| Legal barriers subscale | 3 | 0.78 | 0.80 | Good internal consistency |
| Administrative barriers subscale | 4 | 0.82 | 0.83 | Strong consistency across process/information items |
| Economic barriers subscale | 3 | 0.79 | 0.78 | Good consistency; cost/employer items aligned |
| Overall barriers index | 10 | 0.90 | 0.91 | Very strong coherence across barrier items |
| Shock hardship index (shock-exposed only) | 5 | 0.86 | 0.87 | Strong reliability for the conditional outcome |

### 4.4.3 Factor Structure Checks

Factor structure analysis was conducted to verify that the main multi-item measures reflected the expected underlying dimensions and could be used reliably in hypothesis testing. The results from confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) supported the proposed four-

dimensional structure of social integration—covering economic participation, social connectedness, participation, and belonging or acceptance—as well as the three-dimensional structure of barriers, which included legal, administrative, and economic components. In addition, the mediator indices, namely economic security and vulnerability or coping, were tested as single-factor constructs and showed clear and consistent unidimensional patterns, supporting their use as combined indices.

Overall, model fit indicators suggested acceptable to good fit across both country samples. For social integration, the four-factor model performed better than a single-factor model, indicating that integration is best understood as a multidimensional concept. This supports the study's approach of reporting both an overall integration score and separate sub-dimension scores. Similarly, the barriers measure showed a clear three-factor structure that aligned with the conceptual framework, supporting the use of both individual subscales and a combined barriers index.

These results are summarized in Table 4.9, which presents model fit statistics for each construct and specification.

*Table 4.9: Factor Model Fit Summary*

| Construct | Model tested | Country | CFI/TLI | RMSEA | SRMR | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social integration | 4-factor CFA | Jordan | 0.94 / 0.93 | 0.055 | 0.046 | Good fit; expected structure supported |
| | 4-factor CFA | Türkiye | 0.95 / 0.94 | 0.052 | 0.044 | Good fit; expected structure supported |
| | 1-factor CFA | Jordan | 0.86 / 0.84 | 0.088 | 0.072 | Weaker fit; multidimensional model preferred |
| | 1-factor CFA | Türkiye | 0.87 / 0.85 | 0.084 | 0.070 | Weaker fit; multidimensional model preferred |
| Barriers | 3-factor CFA | Jordan | 0.96 / 0.95 | 0.048 | 0.039 | Good fit; structure confirmed |
| | 3-factor CFA | Türkiye | 0.95 / 0.94 | 0.051 | 0.041 | Good fit; structure confirmed |
| | 1-factor CFA | Jordan | 0.90 / 0.88 | 0.075 | 0.060 | Acceptable but weaker |
| | 1-factor CFA | Türkiye | 0.89 / 0.87 | 0.078 | 0.062 | Acceptable but weaker |
| Economic security | 1-factor CFA | Jordan | 0.97 / 0.96 | 0.045 | 0.031 | Unidimensional structure supported |
| | 1-factor CFA | Türkiye | 0.97 / 0.96 | 0.047 | 0.033 | Unidimensional structure supported |
| Vulnerability/coping | 1-factor CFA | Jordan | 0.96 / 0.95 | 0.053 | 0.038 | Unidimensional structure supported |
| | 1-factor CFA | Türkiye | 0.96 / 0.95 | 0.054 | 0.040 | Unidimensional structure supported |

### 4.4.4 Cross-Country Measurement Comparability

The study also examined whether the key measures were comparable across Jordan and Türkiye, ensuring that the same concepts were being captured in a consistent way. At a basic level, the analysis confirmed that the same factor structures were present in both countries (configural comparability). Where possible, further tests were conducted using multi-group CFA to assess metric comparability (similar factor loadings) and scalar comparability (similar item intercepts).

The findings showed that both the social integration and barriers scales met the requirements for configural and metric comparability. This means that relationships between variables—such as regression results—can be compared across countries with confidence. Scalar comparability was only partially achieved for social integration. After allowing a small number of item intercepts to vary, partial scalar comparability was established, which allows for cautious comparison of average scores between countries. For barriers, scalar comparability was fully supported, meaning that both relationships and average levels can be compared more directly. The economic security and vulnerability or coping indices also showed stable and comparable structures across both settings.

These findings are summarized in Table 4.10, which outlines the results of each step of the comparability testing process and their implications for cross-country analysis.

*Table 4.10: Measurement Comparability / Invariance Summary*

| Construct | Step | Fit change | Decision | Implication for comparison |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social integration (4-factor) | Configural | Acceptable baseline fit | Supported | Same structure across countries |
| | Metric | ΔCFI = -0.004; ΔRMSEA = +0.002 | Supported | Associations comparable across countries |
| | Scalar | ΔCFI = -0.015; ΔRMSEA = +0.010 | Not fully supported | Mean comparisons require caution |
| | Partial scalar | ΔCFI = -0.008; ΔRMSEA = +0.004 | Supported | Mean comparisons possible with caution |
| Barriers (3-factor) | Configural | Acceptable baseline fit | Supported | Same structure across countries |
| | Metric | ΔCFI = -0.003; ΔRMSEA = +0.001 | Supported | Associations comparable |
| | Scalar | ΔCFI = -0.009; ΔRMSEA = +0.004 | Supported | Mean comparisons acceptable |
| Economic security (1-factor) | Configural/Metric | Stable fit | Supported | Comparable across countries |
| Vulnerability/coping (1-factor) | Configural/Metric | Stable fit | Supported | Comparable across countries |

## 4.5 Bivariate Associations

This section presents selected bivariate comparisons to link the descriptive findings with the multivariable models used for hypothesis testing. The results are shown separately for Jordan and Türkiye to assess whether simple differences in outcomes follow the expected patterns for hypotheses H1–H3 before adjusting for other variables.

### 4.5.1 Inclusion Differences in Outcomes

In both countries, respondents who reported being included in social security systems tended to have better outcomes compared to those who were not included. Specifically, included individuals showed higher levels of social integration and economic security, while reporting lower levels of vulnerability and coping constraints. These patterns are consistent with the conceptual framework, indicating that social security inclusion is positively associated with stability and broader integration outcomes at the descriptive level.

These differences are presented in Table 4.11, which compares average scores across key outcomes by inclusion status in each country.

*Table 4.11: Mean Differences by Social Security Inclusion (Country-Stratified)*

| Outcome | Inclusion = Yes mean (SD) | Inclusion = No mean (SD) | Difference | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jordan** | | | | |
| Social integration (overall) | 3.35 (0.52) | 2.94 (0.60) | +0.41 | < .001 |
| Economic security index | 3.25 (0.70) | 2.73 (0.75) | +0.52 | < .001 |
| Vulnerability/coping index | 2.78 (0.76) | 3.22 (0.79) | −0.44 | < .001 |
| **Türkiye** | | | | |
| Social integration (overall) | 3.38 (0.50) | 3.01 (0.60) | +0.37 | < .001 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economic security index | 3.28 (0.68) | 2.83 (0.74) | +0.45 | < .001 |
| Vulnerability/coping index | 2.90 (0.74) | 3.27 (0.77) | −0.37 | < .001 |

### 4.5.2 Formality Differences in Outcomes

Among respondents who were employed, those working in formal or protected jobs reported higher levels of social integration than those in informal employment in both Jordan and Türkiye. In addition, social security inclusion was much more common among workers in formal employment compared to those in informal jobs. These findings support the idea that employment formality plays an important role in enabling access to institutional protection and improving integration outcomes.

Table 4.12 summarizes these differences by comparing social integration scores and inclusion rates between formal and informal workers in each country.

*Table 4.12: Formality vs Outcomes and Inclusion (Working Respondents Only)*

| **Indicator** | **Formal/protected** | **Informal** | **Difference** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Jordan** | | | |
| Social integration (mean, SD) | 3.30 (0.55) | 2.95 (0.62) | +0.35 |
| Social security inclusion (% Yes) | 45.0% | 8.0% | +37.0 pp |
| **Türkiye** | | | |
| Social integration (mean, SD) | 3.33 (0.53) | 3.00 (0.60) | +0.33 |
| Social security inclusion (% Yes) | 42.0% | 7.0% | +35.0 pp |

## 4.6 Hypotheses Testing Results (H1–H5)

This section presents the results of the multivariable analyses used to test hypotheses H1–H5. The findings are reported separately for Jordan and Türkiye, alongside pooled models where appropriate. The pooled models include a country indicator to account for baseline differences between the two settings, allowing for a clearer comparison of overall patterns.

### 4.6.1 Model Specification Notes

The hypotheses were tested using regression models suited to the type of variables and the cross-sectional design of the study. Continuous outcomes—such as social integration,

economic security, vulnerability, barrier indices, and shock hardship—were analysed using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression with robust standard errors. Binary outcomes, such as social security inclusion when treated as a dependent variable, were analysed using logistic regression and reported as odds ratios when relevant.

Two types of models were estimated. First, country-specific models were used to examine whether relationships held within each national context. Second, pooled models were estimated with a country fixed effect to capture overall associations while adjusting for differences between Jordan and Türkiye.

All models included a consistent set of control variables to improve comparability and reduce potential bias. These controls covered demographic characteristics, household structure, housing conditions, legal or registration status, length of stay in the host country, and geographic location. Work authorization status was also included either as a control variable or as part of the employment formality definition, depending on the model. Importantly, all results are interpreted as associations rather than causal effects.

The full set of covariates used in the models is summarized in Table 4.13.

*Table 4.13: Covariates Included in Main Models*

| **Covariate block** | **Variables included** | **Rationale** |
|---|---|---|
| Demographics | Age, sex/gender, education, marital status | Key factors shaping employment, vulnerability, and integration |
| Household structure | Household size, number of children, main earner status | Reflects economic responsibilities and dependency |
| Housing situation | Housing type (rent, hosted, camp, other) | Indicates stability and socio-economic conditions |
| Legal/registration status | Country-specific legal status | Captures institutional access and eligibility differences |
| Duration in host country | Duration categories | Reflects exposure to labour markets and institutions |
| Location | Subnational regions | Accounts for variation in labour markets and services |
| Work authorization | Work permit status | Linked to access to formal work and social protection |

### 4.6.2 H1 Results: Social Security Inclusion → Social Integration

#### *4.6.2.1 Main Models (Overall Integration)*

H1 examined whether social security inclusion was associated with higher levels of social integration. A series of four OLS models were estimated. The first model included only inclusion, while subsequent models gradually added control variables, employment formality, and structural barriers.

In both Jordan and Türkiye, social security inclusion was positively associated with social integration across all model specifications. However, the strength of this relationship decreased after adding employment formality and barriers. This suggests that part of the observed association is linked to formal employment conditions and structural constraints, although inclusion remained positively associated with integration even after full adjustment.

These results are presented in Table 4.14.

*Table 4.14: H1 Regression Models Predicting Social Integration (Overall Index)*

| Model | Predictor coefficients (β/SE) | Controls included | N | $R^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jordan** | | | | |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: 0.41 (0.05) | None | 588 | 0.11 |
| Model 2 | Inclusion: 0.33 (0.05) | Demographics + household + housing + legal + duration + location | 584 | 0.24 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: 0.22 (0.05); Formality: 0.18 (0.04) | Model 2 + formality | 580 | 0.29 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: 0.16 (0.05); Formality: 0.14 (0.04); Barriers: −0.19 (0.03) | Model 3 + barriers | 572 | 0.36 |
| **Türkiye** | | | | |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: 0.37 (0.05) | None | 586 | 0.10 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model 2 | Inclusion: 0.30 (0.05) | Same controls as above | 582 | 0.22 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: 0.20 (0.05); Formality: 0.17 (0.04) | + formality | 578 | 0.27 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: 0.15 (0.05); Formality: 0.13 (0.04); Barriers: −0.21 (0.03) | + barriers | 570 | 0.35 |
| **Pooled (country FE)** | | | | |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: 0.39 (0.04) | Country FE | 1,174 | 0.10 |
| Model 2 | Inclusion: 0.31 (0.04) | FE + controls | 1,166 | 0.23 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: 0.21 (0.04); Formality: 0.17 (0.03) | + formality | 1,158 | 0.28 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: 0.15 (0.04); Formality: 0.13 (0.03); Barriers: −0.20 (0.02) | + barriers | 1,142 | 0.35 |

*Note: Dependent variable = social integration index (1–5). Robust standard errors in parentheses.*

#### *4.6.2.2 H1 by Integration Sub-Dimensions*

To better understand which aspects of integration were most strongly related to inclusion, additional models were estimated for each integration dimension. These models included the full set of controls along with employment formality.

In both countries, social security inclusion showed the strongest associations with economic participation and belonging or acceptance. The relationship with social connectedness was moderate, while the association with participation was smaller. This pattern suggests that while inclusion is linked to economic and social belonging outcomes, broader participation may still be limited by external constraints such as time, costs, or local opportunities. These results are summarized in Table 4.15.

*Table 4.15: H1 Sub-Dimension Models (Adjusted Specification)*

| DV (dimension) | Inclusion coefficient (β/SE) | Controls | Country | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economic participation | 0.24 (0.06) | Full controls + formality | Jordan | 580 |
| Connectedness | 0.18 (0.06) | Same | Jordan | 580 |
| Participation | 0.12 (0.06) | Same | Jordan | 580 |
| Belonging/acceptance | 0.26 (0.06) | Same | Jordan | 580 |
| Economic participation | 0.22 (0.06) | Full controls + formality | Türkiye | 578 |
| Connectedness | 0.16 (0.06) | Same | Türkiye | 578 |
| Participation | 0.10 (0.06) | Same | Türkiye | 578 |
| Belonging/acceptance | 0.25 (0.06) | Same | Türkiye | 578 |

*Note: Each row represents a separate regression model. Coefficients reflect the association between inclusion and each integration dimension.*

### 4.6.3 H2 Results: Inclusion- Economic Security and Vulnerability (Mediation Pathways)

This subsection presents the findings for H2 in three parts. First, it examines whether social security inclusion is linked to higher economic security (H2a). Second, it tests whether inclusion is associated with lower levels of vulnerability and coping constraints (H2b). Third, it evaluates whether these two factors act as mediating pathways connecting inclusion to social integration by estimating indirect effects with confidence intervals.

#### *4.6.3.1 Inclusion - Economic Security*

In both Jordan and Türkiye, social security inclusion is positively associated with economic security. The strength of this relationship decreases after adding control variables and further declines when employment formality and barriers are included. This pattern suggests that part of the relationship between inclusion and economic security is related to formal employment conditions and structural constraints. However, even after full adjustment, the association remains positive and meaningful.

These results are presented in Table 4.16.

*Table 4.16: H2a Models Predicting Economic Security (OLS; robust SE)*

| Model | Predictor coefficients (β/SE) | Controls included | N | $R^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jordan** | | | | |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: 0.52 (0.06) | None | 585 | 0.12 |
| Model 2 | Inclusion: 0.38 (0.06) | Demographics + household + housing + legal + duration + location | 581 | 0.28 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: 0.30 (0.06); Formality: 0.20 (0.05) | Model 2 + formality | 577 | 0.33 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: 0.23 (0.06); Formality: 0.16 (0.05); Barriers: −0.25 (0.03) | Model 3 + barriers | 569 | 0.40 |
| **Türkiye** | | | | |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: 0.45 (0.06) | None | 587 | 0.10 |
| Model 2 | Inclusion: 0.34 (0.06) | Same controls as above | 583 | 0.26 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: 0.28 (0.06); Formality: 0.18 (0.05) | + formality | 579 | 0.31 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: 0.22 (0.06); Formality: 0.14 (0.05); Barriers: −0.24 (0.03) | + barriers | 571 | 0.39 |
| **Pooled (country FE)** | | | | |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: 0.48 (0.05) | Country FE | 1,172 | 0.11 |
| Model 2 | Inclusion: 0.36 (0.05) | FE + controls | 1,164 | 0.27 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model 3 | Inclusion: 0.29 (0.05); Formality: 0.19 (0.04) | + formality | 1,156 | 0.32 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: 0.23 (0.05); Formality: 0.15 (0.04); Barriers: −0.25 (0.02) | + barriers | 1,140 | 0.40 |

#### *4.6.3.2 Inclusion - Vulnerability/Coping*

Social security inclusion is negatively associated with vulnerability and coping constraints in both countries. This means that individuals with inclusion tend to report fewer coping difficulties and less exposure to hardship. Similar to the previous models, the association size decreases after adding control variables, employment formality, and barriers. However, the relationship remains statistically and substantively significant even after full adjustment.

These findings are shown in Table 4.17.

*Table 4.17: H2b Models Predicting Vulnerability/Coping (OLS; robust SE)*

| **Model** | **Predictor coefficients (β/SE)** | **Controls included** | **N** | **$R^2$** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jordan** | | | | |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: −0.44 (0.06) | None | 583 | 0.09 |
| Model 2 | Inclusion: −0.32 (0.06) | Demographics + household + housing + legal + duration + location | 579 | 0.23 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: −0.24 (0.06); Formality: −0.16 (0.05) | Model 2 + formality | 575 | 0.27 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: −0.18 (0.06); Formality: −0.12 (0.05); Barriers: +0.27 (0.03) | Model 3 + barriers | 567 | 0.36 |
| **Türkiye** | | | | |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: −0.37 (0.06) | None | 585 | 0.07 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model 2 | Inclusion: −0.28 (0.06) | Same controls as above | 581 | 0.21 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: −0.22 (0.06); Formality: −0.14 (0.05) | + formality | 577 | 0.25 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: −0.17 (0.06); Formality: −0.10 (0.05); Barriers: +0.29 (0.03) | + barriers | 569 | 0.35 |
| **Pooled (country FE)** | | | | |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: −0.40 (0.05) | Country FE | 1,168 | 0.08 |
| Model 2 | Inclusion: −0.30 (0.05) | FE + controls | 1,160 | 0.22 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: −0.23 (0.05); Formality: −0.15 (0.04) | + formality | 1,152 | 0.26 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: −0.17 (0.05); Formality: −0.11 (0.04); Barriers: +0.28 (0.02) | + barriers | 1,136 | 0.35 |

#### *4.6.3.3 Mediation Evidence (Indirect Paths to Integration)*

The mediation analysis examined whether economic security and vulnerability serve as pathways linking social security inclusion to social integration. Both mediators were included in the same model along with the standard set of control variables, and indirect effects were estimated with 95% confidence intervals.

The results show a consistent pattern across both countries. Social security inclusion is associated with higher economic security and lower vulnerability, and both factors, in turn, are linked to higher levels of social integration. Economic security contributes positively to integration, while reduced vulnerability also supports better integration outcomes. The combined indirect effects are substantial and statistically significant, indicating that these pathways play an important role in explaining the relationship between inclusion and integration. These findings are summarized in Table 4.18.

*Table 4.18: Mediation / Indirect Effects Summary*

| Country | Path | Indirect effect | 95% CI | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jordan | Inclusion → Economic security → Integration | 0.09 | [0.06, 0.13] | Positive pathway via stability |
| Jordan | Inclusion → Vulnerability → Integration | 0.06 | [0.03, 0.09] | Positive pathway via reduced vulnerability |
| Jordan | Total indirect | 0.15 | [0.11, 0.20] | Combined mediation is substantial |
| Türkiye | Inclusion → Economic security → Integration | 0.08 | [0.05, 0.12] | Positive pathway via stability |
| Türkiye | Inclusion → Vulnerability → Integration | 0.05 | [0.03, 0.08] | Positive pathway via reduced vulnerability |
| Türkiye | Total indirect | 0.13 | [0.09, 0.18] | Combined mediation is substantial |
| Pooled | Inclusion → Economic security → Integration | 0.08 | [0.06, 0.11] | Consistent across contexts |
| Pooled | Inclusion → Vulnerability → Integration | 0.05 | [0.03, 0.07] | Consistent across contexts |
| Pooled | Total indirect | 0.13 | [0.10, 0.16] | Strong overall mediation |

### 4.6.4 H3 Results: Employment Formality → Social Integration (and Formality → Inclusion)

This subsection presents the results for H3 in two parts. First, it examines whether working in formal or protected employment is associated with higher levels of social integration compared with informal work (H3b). Second, it tests whether formal or protected employment is associated with greater odds of social security inclusion (H3a), in line with

the conceptual framework, which identifies employment formality as a main route into institutional coverage.

#### *4.6.4.1 Formality - Integration*

H3 was first assessed using OLS regression models predicting social integration from employment formality. These models were estimated among respondents who were currently working, which served as the main analytical specification. The findings show that formal or protected employment was positively associated with social integration in both Jordan and Türkiye. Although the association declined after adding the full set of control variables and barriers, it remained positive and substantively important. This suggests that employment formality contributes to stronger integration, even after accounting for demographic differences and broader constraints.

These results are summarized in Table 4.19, which shows the estimated association between formality and social integration across the two country samples.

*Table 4.19: H3 Models Predicting Social Integration from Formality (Working Sample; OLS, robust SE)*

| **Model** | **Predictor coefficients (β/SE)** | **Controls included** | **Country** | **N** | **$R^2$** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model 1 | Formality: 0.35 (0.06) | None | Jordan | 360 | 0.07 |
| Model 2 | Formality: 0.26 (0.06) | Demographics + household + housing + legal status + duration + location | Jordan | 356 | 0.18 |
| Model 3 | Formality: 0.19 (0.06) | Model 2 + barriers (overall) | Jordan | 350 | 0.25 |
| Model 1 | Formality: 0.33 (0.06) | None | Türkiye | 360 | 0.06 |
| Model 2 | Formality: 0.24 (0.06) | Demographics + household + housing + legal status + duration + location | Türkiye | 357 | 0.17 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model 3 | Formality: 0.18 (0.06) | Model 2 + barriers (overall) | Türkiye | 352 | 0.24 |

*Note. The dependent variable is the overall social integration index, scored on a scale of 1 to 5. Formality is coded as 1 for formal or protected work and 0 for informal work. Robust standard errors are shown in parentheses.*

#### *4.6.4.2 Formality - Inclusion (Logistic Model)*

The second part of H3 examined whether employment formality predicts social security inclusion using logistic regression. In both countries, respondents in formal or protected employment had much higher odds of being covered by social security compared with those in informal work. This relationship remained strong even after adjusting for the full set of covariates, indicating that the link between formality and inclusion cannot be explained by observable background characteristics or differences in settlement conditions. These findings are presented in Table 4.20, which reports the odds ratios for the association between employment formality and social security inclusion.

*Table 4.20: H3 Models Predicting Social Security Inclusion from Formality (Logistic Regression)*

| **Predictor** | **Odds ratio** | **95% CI** | **Controls** | **Country** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Formality (formal/protected vs informal) | 8.60 | [5.10, 14.50] | Demographics + household + housing + legal status + duration + location | Jordan |
| Formality (formal/protected vs informal) | 8.20 | [4.80, 14.00] | Demographics + household + housing + legal status + duration + location | Türkiye |
| Formality (formal/protected vs informal) | 8.40 | [5.80, 12.10] | Country fixed effect + full covariate set | Pooled |

*Note. The outcome is social security inclusion, coded as 1 for yes, 0 for no, or not sure. Odds ratios above 1 indicate higher odds of inclusion among workers in formal or protected employment.*

### 4.6.5 H4 Results: Buffering During Shocks

This subsection presents the results for H4 in three stages. First, it outlines the prevalence of shock exposure and describes the characteristics of the subgroup exposed to shock. Second, it examines whether social security inclusion is associated with lower poverty and reduced risk of social exclusion among respondents who experienced shocks. Third, it tests a buffering effect in the pooled sample through an interaction model that includes both inclusion and shock exposure, along with their interaction term, to assess whether the relationship between inclusion and hardship becomes stronger when shocks occur.

#### *4.6.5.1 Shock Prevalence and Shock-Exposed Subsample Profile*

Exposure to shocks was common in both Jordan and Türkiye. Major income loss and illness were reported more often than work-related injuries, and the share of respondents experiencing at least one shock was slightly higher in Türkiye than in Jordan. The subgroup of respondents exposed to shocks included a varied mix of men and women, as well as both working and non-working individuals. However, shock exposure appeared somewhat more concentrated among those in informal employment and among respondents reporting higher barrier levels, consistent with the study's expectation that greater insecurity is associated with greater exposure to risk.

These patterns are summarized in Table 4.21, which presents the prevalence of each shock type across the two countries.

*Table 4.21: Shock Exposure Profile*

| Shock type | Jordan % | Türkiye % | Any shock % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Illness affecting work/study (12 months) | 28.0% | 30.0% | 29.0% |
| Work injury/accident (12 months) | 12.0% | 10.0% | 11.0% |
| Major income loss (12 months) | 31.0% | 33.0% | 32.0% |
| Any shock (at least one) | 52.0% | 56.0% | 54.0% |

#### *4.6.5.2 Inclusion → Poverty/Social Exclusion Risk During Shocks (Shock-Exposed Only)*

Among respondents who had experienced shocks, social security inclusion was associated with lower poverty and reduced risk of social exclusion during those shocks in both countries. This negative association remained after adjusting for demographic characteristics, household structure, legal and registration status, duration in the host country, and location. When employment formality and structural barriers were added to

the models, the association became smaller but remained negative. This suggests that part of the protective effect of inclusion overlaps with formal employment and the broader barrier environment, yet inclusion still maintains an independent buffering effect.

These results are presented in Table 4.22, which shows the models estimated for the shock-exposed subsamples in Jordan and Türkiye, as well as the pooled analysis.

*Table 4.22: H4 Models Predicting Shock Hardship (Shock-Exposed Subsample; OLS, robust SE)*

| **Model** | **Predictor coefficients (β/SE)** | **Controls included** | **Country** | **N** | **$R^2$** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model 1 | Inclusion: −0.38 (0.07) | None | Jordan | 300 | 0.06 |
| Model 2 | Inclusion: −0.28 (0.07) | Demographics + household + housing + legal status + duration + location | Jordan | 296 | 0.18 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: −0.21 (0.07); Formality: −0.13 (0.06) | Model 2 + employment formality | Jordan | 292 | 0.21 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: −0.16 (0.07); Formality: −0.10 (0.06); Barriers (overall): +0.22 (0.04) | Model 3 + barriers | Jordan | 286 | 0.27 |
| Model 1 | Inclusion: −0.35 (0.07) | None | Türkiye | 320 | 0.05 |
| Model 2 | Inclusion: −0.26 (0.07) | Demographics + household + housing + legal status + duration + location | Türkiye | 316 | 0.17 |
| Model 3 | Inclusion: −0.20 (0.07); Formality: −0.12 (0.06) | Model 2 + employment formality | Türkiye | 311 | 0.20 |
| Model 4 | Inclusion: −0.15 (0.07); Formality: | Model 3 + barriers | Türkiye | 305 | 0.28 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | −0.09 (0.06); Barriers (overall): +0.24 (0.04) | | | | |
| Model 4 (pooled, country FE) | Inclusion: −0.15 (0.05); Formality: −0.10 (0.04); Barriers: +0.23 (0.03) | Country FE + full covariate set | Pooled | 591 | 0.28 |

*Note. The dependent variable is the shock hardship index, scored from 1 to 5 among respondents exposed to shocks. Higher scores indicate greater hardship and a higher risk of exclusion.*

#### *4.6.5.3 Interaction Model (Buffering Test in Pooled Sample)*

A pooled interaction model was then estimated to test whether the association between social security inclusion and hardship differed depending on whether respondents had experienced a shock. This model included an interaction term between inclusion and shock exposure. The interaction coefficient was negative, indicating that inclusion was more strongly associated with reduced hardship among respondents who had experienced shocks. At the same time, the main effect of shock exposure was positive, indicating that shocks increased the overall risk of hardship. The main effect of inclusion among respondents without shocks was smaller and less clearly distinct, consistent with the argument that the most important role of inclusion emerges when adverse events occur.

These findings are reported in Table 4.23, which summarizes the pooled interaction model.

*Table 4.23: H4 Interaction Model Results (Pooled Sample; OLS, robust SE)*

| **Term** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | **p-value** | **Interpretation** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social security inclusion | −0.06 | 0.04 | .120 | Small reduction in hardship among non-shock respondents |
| Shock exposure (any) | +0.34 | 0.03 | < .001 | Shock exposure increases hardship risk |
| Inclusion × Shock exposure | −0.11 | 0.05 | .020 | Inclusion reduces hardship more strongly during shocks |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employment formality | −0.08 | 0.03 | .010 | Formal/protected work is linked to lower hardship |
| Overall barriers | +0.19 | 0.02 | < .001 | Higher barriers are linked to greater hardship |
| Country fixed effect (Türkiye) | +0.04 | 0.03 | .180 | Small baseline difference after adjustment |

*Note. The dependent variable is the hardship or exclusion risk score, measured on a 1–5 scale. The interaction term captures the additional reduction in hardship associated with inclusion among respondents exposed to shocks, beyond the main effect of inclusion.*

### 4.6.6 H5 Results: Barriers → Inclusion and Integration

This subsection presents the findings for H5 in two parts. First, it examines whether perceived barriers—legal, administrative, and economic—are associated with lower odds of social security inclusion. Second, it tests whether these barriers are linked to lower levels of social integration. Results are shown separately for Jordan and Türkiye, with pooled estimates included where useful to summarize overall patterns after accounting for country differences.

#### *4.6.6.1 Barriers Predicting Inclusion (Logistic Models)*

The logistic regression results show that higher levels of barriers are associated with a lower likelihood of social security inclusion in both countries. When the three barrier subscales are included in the same model, administrative and economic barriers show the strongest negative relationships with inclusion, while legal barriers remain negatively associated but with a smaller effect once the other barrier types are included. When the overall barriers index is used as a single measure, the association remains clearly negative, suggesting that barriers also operate cumulatively.

These results are summarized in Table 4.24, which reports the odds of inclusion associated with each type of barrier.

*Table 4.24: H5 Models Predicting Social Security Inclusion from Barriers (Logistic Regression)*

| Model / Predictor | Odds ratio | 95% CI | Controls | Country |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Subscales model** | | | | |
| Legal barriers (per 1-point increase) | 0.86 | [0.76, 0.98] | Full covariate set | Jordan |
| Administrative barriers (per 1-point increase) | 0.78 | [0.68, 0.90] | Full covariate set | Jordan |
| Economic barriers (per 1-point increase) | 0.72 | [0.62, 0.83] | Full covariate set | Jordan |
| Legal barriers (per 1-point increase) | 0.84 | [0.74, 0.96] | Full covariate set | Türkiye |
| Administrative barriers (per 1-point increase) | 0.80 | [0.70, 0.91] | Full covariate set | Türkiye |
| Economic barriers (per 1-point increase) | 0.74 | [0.64, 0.86] | Full covariate set | Türkiye |
| **Overall barriers model** | | | | |
| Overall barriers (per 1-point increase) | 0.62 | [0.53, 0.72] | Full covariate set | Jordan |
| Overall barriers (per 1-point increase) | 0.60 | [0.52, 0.70] | Full covariate set | Türkiye |
| Overall barriers (per 1-point increase) | 0.61 | [0.55, 0.68] | Country fixed effect + full covariate set | Pooled |

*Note. The outcome is social security inclusion, coded as 1 for yes, 0 for no, or 0 for not sure. Odds ratios below 1 indicate lower odds of inclusion as barrier levels increase.*

#### *4.6.6.2 Barriers Predicting Integration (OLS Models)*

The OLS results also show that barriers are negatively associated with social integration in both Jordan and Türkiye. The overall barriers index shows a clear negative relationship with integration, while the subscale models indicate that administrative and legal barriers are particularly important in explaining lower integration scores. This pattern is consistent with the idea that barriers can limit access to institutions, reduce opportunities for

participation, and weaken feelings of inclusion. Economic barriers are also negatively related to integration, although part of their effect appears to operate through economic security and vulnerability pathways examined elsewhere in the analysis.

These findings are presented in Table 4.25, which reports the estimated effects of barriers on the overall social integration index.

*Table 4.25: H5 Models Predicting Social Integration from Barriers (OLS; robust SE)*

| **Model / Predictor** | **Coefficient (β)** | **SE** | **Controls** | **Country** | **N** | **$R^2$** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Subscales model** | | | | | | |
| Legal barriers | −0.10 | 0.02 | Full covariate set + employment formality | Jordan | 572 | 0.36 |
| Administrative barriers | −0.12 | 0.02 | Full covariate set + employment formality | Jordan | 572 | 0.36 |
| Economic barriers | −0.08 | 0.02 | Full covariate set + employment formality | Jordan | 572 | 0.36 |
| Legal barriers | −0.11 | 0.02 | Full covariate set + employment formality | Türkiye | 570 | 0.35 |
| Administrative barriers | −0.13 | 0.02 | Full covariate set + employment formality | Türkiye | 570 | 0.35 |
| Economic barriers | −0.07 | 0.02 | Full covariate set + employment formality | Türkiye | 570 | 0.35 |
| **Overall barriers model** | | | | | | |
| Overall barriers | −0.19 | 0.03 | Full covariate set + employment formality | Jordan | 572 | 0.36 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall barriers | −0.21 | 0.03 | Full covariate set + employment formality | Türkiye | 570 | 0.35 |
| Overall barriers | −0.20 | 0.02 | Country fixed effect + full covariate set + employment formality | Pooled | 1,142 | 0.35 |

*Note. The dependent variable is the overall social integration index, scored on a scale of 1 to 5. Negative coefficients indicate lower integration as barriers increase.*

## 4.7 Comparative Synthesis of Hypothesis Results

This section brings together the main findings from the hypothesis tests across Jordan and Türkiye. It summarizes whether hypotheses H1–H5 were supported in each country and in the pooled models, and then compares the size of the observed effects across the two settings. This comparison helps identify where the relationships were broadly similar and where differences in magnitude may reflect variations in institutional arrangements and labor-market conditions.

### 4.7.1 Summary of Support for H1–H5

Overall, the results from both countries were strongly aligned with the conceptual framework. Social security inclusion and employment formality were positively associated with social integration, while inclusion was also linked to higher economic security and lower vulnerability. In addition, inclusion showed a protective association during shocks by reducing poverty and social exclusion risk. Structural barriers, by contrast, were negatively associated with both inclusion and integration. The pooled models, which included a country-fixed effect, showed the same direction of association, indicating that these patterns were not explained solely by baseline differences between Jordan and Türkiye.

These findings are summarized in Table 4.26, which provides an overview of whether each hypothesis was supported across the different model specifications.

*Table 4.26: Hypothesis Results Summary (Traffic-Light Table)*

| Hypothesis | Jordan result | Türkiye result | Pooled result | Notes on consistency |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1: Inclusion → Social integration | Supported | Supported | Supported | Positive association remained after controls and attenuation checks |
| H2: Inclusion → Economic security (+) and Vulnerability (−) | Supported | Supported | Supported | Both mediator paths remained significant after adjustment; indirect paths supported. |
| H3: Formality → Social integration; Formality → Inclusion | Supported | Supported | Supported | Formal/protected work is linked to higher integration and much higher odds of inclusion. |
| H4: Inclusion buffers hardship during shocks | Supported | Supported | Supported | Inclusion is negatively associated with shock hardship; interaction supported buffering. |
| H5: Barriers → lower inclusion and lower integration | Supported | Supported | Supported | Strong negative associations in both logistic and OLS models |

### 4.7.2 Cross-Country Differences in Effect Sizes

Comparisons of effect sizes showed that most relationships were very similar in Jordan and Türkiye. This suggests that the connection between protection and integration operates through comparable mechanisms in both contexts. The clearest cross-country differences appeared in the barrier-related pathways. Barriers were somewhat more strongly associated with lower integration in Türkiye, whereas economic barriers were descriptively somewhat higher in Jordan. At the same time, employment formality remained a strong and highly similar pathway into social security inclusion in both countries, with large odds ratios in each case.

These comparisons are shown in Table 4.27, which summarizes the main effect sizes across the two settings.

*Table 4.27: Comparative Effect Size Summary*

| **Hypothesis pathway** | **Jordan standardized effect** | **Türkiye standardized effect** | **Difference** |
|---|---|---|---|
| H1: Inclusion → Social integration (adjusted) | +0.26 | +0.25 | +0.01 |
| H2a: Inclusion → Economic security (adjusted) | +0.30 | +0.29 | +0.01 |
| H2b: Inclusion → Vulnerability (adjusted) | −0.23 | −0.22 | −0.01 |
| H2 (indirect): Total indirect via mediators → Integration | +0.15 | +0.13 | +0.02 |
| H3b: Formality → Social integration (adjusted; working sample) | +0.31 | +0.30 | +0.01 |
| H3a: Formality → Inclusion (odds ratio) | OR = 8.6 | OR = 8.2 | +0.4 OR |
| H4: Inclusion → Shock hardship (adjusted; shock-exposed) | −0.21 | −0.20 | −0.01 |
| H4 (interaction): Inclusion × Shock exposure → Shock hardship | −0.11 (unstd.) | −0.11 (unstd.) | 0.00 |
| H5a: Barriers → Inclusion (overall barriers; odds ratio per 1-point) | OR = 0.62 | OR = 0.60 | −0.02 OR |
| H5b: Barriers → Social integration (overall barriers; adjusted) | −0.31 | −0.35 | +0.04 |

Taken together, these findings suggest that the effects of inclusion, formality, and the mediation pathways were largely similar across Jordan and Türkiye. This indicates that protected employment and access to coverage are linked to integration through comparable processes in both settings. At the same time, the somewhat stronger relationship between barriers and integration in Türkiye, along with the higher descriptive scores for legal and administrative barriers, suggests that procedural and eligibility-related constraints may play a more prominent role there in shaping participation and belonging. In Jordan, however, the relatively higher economic barrier profile points more clearly to affordability and cost-related access difficulties.

## 4.8 Robustness and Sensitivity Results

This section presents the results of several robustness and sensitivity checks conducted to assess whether the main findings for hypotheses H1–H5 remain consistent across alternative definitions and modeling approaches. The checks focused on four main areas: different ways of defining employment formality, alternative definitions of social security inclusion, comparisons between pooled and country-specific models, and subgroup analyses by gender and employment status.

### 4.8.1 Alternative Formality Definitions (Strict vs Relaxed)

The results remained consistent when employment formality was defined using a stricter rule compared to the main specification. Under the stricter definition, which required multiple indicators of protected work (such as a registered job combined with employer registration or valid work authorization), the relationship between formality and social integration became slightly stronger. In contrast, when a more flexible definition was used—where any key indicator was sufficient—the association remained positive but somewhat smaller. This difference reflects the inclusion of borderline cases with partial formalization features. Despite these variations, the overall direction and statistical significance of the H3 results did not change in either country, and the pattern of attenuation after adding barriers was consistent with the main models.

### 4.8.2 Alternative Inclusion Definition (Coverage Alone vs Coverage + Proof/Usage)

The findings for H1, H2, and H4 were also stable when a more restrictive definition of social security inclusion was applied. When inclusion was measured solely by self-reported coverage, the estimated effects were larger in simpler models, reflecting a broader classification. When a stricter definition was used—requiring both reported coverage and supporting evidence such as proof of registration or recent benefit use—the coefficients decreased slightly but remained positive for social integration and economic security, and negative for vulnerability and shock hardship. This suggests that the main findings are not driven by misclassification and that the relationship between inclusion and outcomes remains consistent even under more conservative measurement.

### 4.8.3 Pooled vs Stratified Models

Comparisons between country-specific and pooled models showed consistent results across all hypotheses. The models estimated separately for Jordan and Türkiye produced similar conclusions, and the pooled models—including a country fixed effect—showed comparable coefficient directions and magnitudes. Where small differences appeared, they were mainly due to sample composition, weighting, or minor differences in covariate distributions and missing data, rather than meaningful changes in the underlying relationships.

### 4.8.4 Subgroup Checks

Subgroup analyses were conducted to examine whether key relationships differed by gender and employment status. The gender-based models showed that the association between social security inclusion and social integration (H1) was positive for both females and males, and that the association between inclusion and economic security (H2a) was also positive, though slightly stronger among females in both countries. Similarly, the relationship between inclusion and vulnerability (H2b) remained negative for both groups, with a somewhat larger reduction in vulnerability among females. For H4, inclusion was associated with lower hardship during shocks for both genders, with a stronger buffering effect observed among females, which may reflect higher baseline vulnerability in some household contexts.

Among working and non-working respondents, inclusion was positively associated with social integration in both groups, though the relationship was stronger among employed respondents. This pattern is consistent with the idea that inclusion is more directly linked to workplace-related mechanisms—such as formal employment and employer registration—among working individuals, while for non-working individuals it may reflect household-based coverage or past employment experiences.

These robustness checks are summarized in Table 4.28, which shows whether the main findings changed under each alternative specification.

*Table 4.28: Robustness Summary Table*

| **Check** | **Main finding unchanged (Y/N)** | **Direction stable (Y/N)** | **Notable change** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strict vs relaxed formality definition | Y | Y | Strict definition slightly increased formality–integration effect size |
| Coverage-only vs coverage+proof/usage inclusion | Y | Y | The conservative definition slightly reduced the coefficients |
| Country-stratified vs pooled models | Y | Y | Pooled estimates closely matched country-specific results |
| Gender-stratified models | Y | Y | Effects are slightly stronger among females |
| Working vs not working | Y | Y | Stronger inclusion–integration link among working respondents |

Further details on subgroup differences are provided in Table 4.29, which summarizes key results from gender-stratified pooled models.

*Table 3 Table 4.29: Subgroup Results Summary (Gender-Stratified, Pooled Models)*

| **Outcome** | **Key predictor** | **Female effect** | **Male effect** | **Interpretation** |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social integration | Social security inclusion | +0.18 | +0.13 | Positive for both; slightly stronger among females |
| Economic security | Social security inclusion | +0.26 | +0.20 | Positive for both; modest gender difference |
| Vulnerability/coping | Social security inclusion | −0.20 | −0.15 | Negative for both; larger reduction among females |
| Shock hardship (shock-exposed) | Social security inclusion | −0.18 | −0.13 | Buffering effect for both; stronger among females |
| Social security inclusion (logit) | Economic barriers | OR = 0.58 | OR = 0.64 | Barriers reduce inclusion for both; stronger effect among females |

## 4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the empirical findings from the comparative survey of young Syrian refugees aged 18–29 in Jordan and Türkiye. The descriptive results showed that social security inclusion remained limited in both countries, while employment formality was much lower than overall employment levels. This indicates that a large proportion of working youth were engaged in informal work. In addition, exposure to shocks was widespread, with illness and income loss reported most often, and work-related injuries affecting a smaller but still notable share of respondents. Perceived structural barriers were generally moderate to high. Legal and administrative barriers were more prominent in Türkiye, whereas economic barriers were slightly higher in Jordan. Overall, these patterns support the study's main assumption that labor-market conditions, risk exposure, and barriers to access shape institutional inclusion.

The hypothesis-testing results were largely consistent across both countries in terms of direction and interpretation. H1 was supported, as social security inclusion was positively associated with overall social integration, with stronger effects observed in economic

participation and belonging or acceptance. H2 was also supported, showing that inclusion was linked to higher economic security and lower vulnerability, with mediation analysis confirming that these factors act as pathways connecting inclusion to integration. H3 was also supported: formal or protected employment was associated with higher levels of integration among workers and strongly predicted social security inclusion, highlighting the role of formality as a key entry point into protection systems. H4 was confirmed, as inclusion was linked to lower poverty and social exclusion risk during shocks among affected respondents, and the interaction analysis supported a buffering effect. Finally, H5 was supported, demonstrating that higher levels of legal, administrative, and economic barriers were associated with both lower inclusion and lower integration, emphasizing the importance of access constraints.

The next chapter builds on these findings by interpreting their implications for the study's conceptual framework and broader theoretical perspectives on the relationship between protection and integration. It places the results within the policy and labor-market contexts of Jordan and Türkiye, examines how institutional arrangements shape access to formal employment and social security, and discusses practical implications for programs and policies aimed at improving inclusion and integration outcomes for young Syrian refugees.

# Chapter Five :Discussion and Implications

## 5.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter explains the findings presented in Chapter Four and places them within the study's conceptual framework and the policy and institutional settings of Jordan and Türkiye. It aims to clarify the results' implications for the research questions and hypotheses, to describe how social security inclusion may influence the social integration of young refugees, and to draw conclusions based on observed evidence rather than on assumptions derived solely from theory.

The discussion remains focused on young Syrian refugees aged 18–29 in both countries, examining how access to social security relates to their level of social integration. This relationship is considered both directly and through two main pathways: economic security and vulnerability/coping capacity. In addition, the chapter explores how employment formality shapes inclusion, how exposure to shocks such as illness, workplace injury, or income loss affects hardship and exclusion risks, and how legal, administrative, and financial barriers limit access and long-term participation.

The chapter follows a structured sequence that moves from results to interpretation. It begins with a brief overview of the main findings, highlighting what is consistent and what differs between the two countries. It then analyzes the results against the study's hypotheses (H1–H5), linking each finding to the mechanisms outlined in the conceptual framework and to the institutional context discussed in Chapter Two. A comparative section then explains why some relationships vary in strength between Jordan and Türkiye. Finally, the chapter discusses policy implications, reflects on methodological limitations, and ends with a short conclusion that connects to the final chapter.

## 5.2 Summary of Key Empirical Findings

In both Jordan and Türkiye, the data reveal a broadly similar pattern. Social security coverage remains limited, formal employment is much less common than overall employment, exposure to shocks is widespread, and barriers to access are reported at moderate to high levels. Only a minority of respondents report being covered by social security, with slightly higher coverage in Jordan than in Türkiye. Most young workers are employed informally, which weakens the connection between employment and access to protection systems.

Furthermore, many respondents experience shocks, especially illness and income loss, and these events often lead to noticeable hardship. Barriers to accessing social security are evident in both countries. Legal and administrative challenges are more pronounced in Türkiye, whereas financial constraints appear slightly stronger in Jordan.

The hypothesis testing results align with the conceptual framework and show consistent patterns across both settings. H1 is confirmed, indicating that social security inclusion is linked to higher levels of social integration, particularly in areas related to stability and a sense of belonging. H2 is also supported, as inclusion is associated with improved economic security and reduced vulnerability, both of which contribute indirectly to stronger integration outcomes. H3 is confirmed, showing that formal or protected employment increases both the likelihood of social security inclusion and the level of social integration, highlighting the importance of formal work as a key entry point. H4 is supported as well, demonstrating that among individuals who experience shocks, those with social security coverage face lower risks of poverty and exclusion, suggesting a

protective effect. Finally, H5 is validated, indicating that barriers reduce both inclusion and integration, meaning that limited access continues to shape unequal outcomes even when formal systems are in place.

Several findings remain consistent across both countries. The positive relationship between social security inclusion and social integration holds even after accounting for other factors. Similarly, the pathways through economic security and reduced vulnerability operate in the same direction in both contexts. Employment formality consistently serves as a key gateway, with formal workers being far more likely to access social security than those in informal jobs. In addition, the protective effect of social security during shocks is evident in both countries, as coverage is linked to lower levels of hardship among those affected.

Differences between Jordan and Türkiye mainly appear in the strength of these relationships rather than their direction. Türkiye shows slightly higher levels of legal and administrative barriers, along with a somewhat stronger negative link between these barriers and social integration. This suggests that procedural challenges may have a greater impact on daily participation and feelings of inclusion in Türkiye. On the other hand, Jordan faces slightly higher economic barriers, with affordability as a key constraint.

There are also small differences in descriptive patterns, such as somewhat higher social security coverage in Jordan and slightly greater exposure to shocks in Türkiye. These variations help explain why similar mechanisms may produce different levels of impact across countries. Overall, these differences reflect how context shapes outcomes, rather than indicating fundamentally different processes.

## 5.3 Interpretation by Hypothesis and Mechanism

This section explains the results for H1–H5 by referring back to the mechanisms outlined in the conceptual framework and placing the findings within existing research on Syrian refugees in Jordan and Türkiye. Since the study employs a comparative cross-sectional design, the discussion focuses on plausible explanations that align with the data rather than making direct causal claims (Holzmann et al., 2003; Zaman et al., 2023; Ghassaban et al., 2023).

### 5.3.1 H1: Social Security Inclusion and Social Integration

The positive link between social security inclusion and social integration can be understood through an "institutional linkage" perspective. In this view, being included in social security reflects a stronger connection to formal systems such as regulated employment, protection schemes, and administrative recognition. As a result, individuals may experience greater stability and are better able to participate consistently in social and economic life (Papadakis et al., 2024; Zaman et al., 2023; ILO, 2023). In contexts where informal work is common, access to social security is an important marker of belonging to formal structures and of recognized rights, which can support integration beyond income improvement (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

A closer look at different aspects of integration helps explain this relationship further. The strongest connections appear in areas such as economic participation and a sense of belonging, suggesting that inclusion reduces insecurity and allows individuals to plan, invest in skills, and remain engaged in work and institutions (Jones et al., 2022; Peitz et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024). The link with social connectedness is also consistent with research showing that social protection can strengthen relationships and support networks, especially during crises (Hamad et al., 2025; Eggerman et al., 2023). When inclusion is tied to formal employment, it may also increase everyday interactions with employers, service providers, and broader social groups, thereby improving access to information and expanding social ties (Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022; Gray Meral et al., 2022).

However, the weaker relationship with participation in community or civic life is understandable. Such participation often depends on external factors like time, cost, safety, discrimination, and local social norms, which are not immediately improved by access to social security (Ayyildiz, 2024; Cevik, 2025; Mittal et al., 2025). Therefore, while inclusion may increase confidence and capacity to participate, actual involvement still depends on available opportunities and the level of acceptance in the local environment, particularly for young refugees (Cevik, 2025; Alakoc et al., 2023; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022).

### 5.3.2 H2: Pathways Through Economic Security and Vulnerability

The findings support a mediation pattern in which social security inclusion improves economic security and reduces vulnerability, both of which are linked to stronger social

integration. This reflects the broader idea of risk and resilience found in social protection frameworks (Holzmann et al., 2003; ILO, 2024). In this context, inclusion helps stabilize living conditions, lowers the risk of major losses, and improves the ability to cope with challenges, allowing individuals to remain active in work, education, and social life (Holzmann et al., 2003; ILO, 2024).

The economic security pathway is clear in both countries. Inclusion is usually associated with more stable and regulated jobs, which reduce uncertainty about income and working conditions (ILO, 2023; Peitz et al., 2023). Evidence from Jordan shows that formal employment through work permits is linked to better outcomes, supporting the idea that formalization reduces insecurity (Peitz et al., 2023; Stojetz et al., 2024). Similarly, in Türkiye, policy discussions emphasize that moving into formal, insured employment helps reduce rights-related risks and improve stability for Syrians under temporary protection (ILO, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

The vulnerability pathway is also supported by existing research. Households with unstable work and limited protection often rely on coping strategies such as borrowing money, cutting essential expenses, or delaying healthcare, which can worsen their situation and limit social participation (Al Husseini, 2023; Oosterhoff & Yunus, 2022). By reducing vulnerability and limiting the need for such strategies, social security inclusion can ease stress and reduce withdrawal from social life, thereby supporting better integration outcomes (Hamad et al., 2025; Eggerman et al., 2023).

These pathways are especially important for young people, as those aged 18–29 are at a critical stage of transition. Stability during this period supports completing education, entering the labor market, building skills, and forming long-term social connections (Jones et al., 2022; United Nations Children's Fund, 2019). For young refugees, short-term instability can have lasting effects by disrupting these transitions and limiting opportunities to build both human and social capital (International Labor Organization, 2013; Jones et al., 2022).

### 5.3.3 H3: Employment Formality as a Structuring Condition

The strong relationship between employment formality and social security inclusion indicates that formal work is the main pathway to accessing protection systems in both Jordan and Türkiye. This reflects the structure of contributory systems, which are generally

linked to registered employment and employer compliance (ILO, 2023; Peitz et al., 2023). In Jordan, research shows that work permits and formal labor policies play a key role in determining access to protection, while in Türkiye, access to insured status largely depends on moving from informal to formal employment (Peitz et al., 2023; Stojetz et al., 2024; ILO, 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025).

Employer practices and institutional arrangements can explain this strong link. When work authorization depends on employers, and when there are costs or uneven enforcement, inclusion often relies on whether employers are willing and able to formally register workers and contribute to social security systems (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2024; Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labor and Social Security, n.d.). In Jordan, financial costs and incentives influence the uptake of work permits, while in Türkiye, legal and practical restrictions under temporary protection shape access to formal employment, reinforcing the role of employers as gatekeepers (ILO, 2024; UNHCR, n.d.; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025).

The positive link between formality and integration also reflects broader labor market dynamics. Informal work may provide income, but it often comes with instability, weak protections, and limited access to institutions, which can restrict integration (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023). In contrast, formal employment is associated with greater stability and stronger institutional ties, which can support a greater sense of belonging and participation (Peitz et al., 2023; Papadakis et al., 2024).

### 5.3.4 H4: Buffering During Shocks

The results show that among individuals who experience shocks, those with social security coverage are less likely to face severe hardship or exclusion. This supports the idea that social protection systems help reduce the negative effects of events such as illness, injury, or income loss by improving coping capacity and limiting the need for harmful responses (Holzmann et al., 2003; ILO, 2024). In Jordan, research highlights that work permits can protect during multiple crises, while in Türkiye, studies emphasize that informal work leads to loss of social security rights, making formal inclusion important for protection during difficult times (Stojetz et al., 2024; ILO, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

Different types of shocks have varying impacts. Illness and income loss tend to affect more people than workplace injuries and can quickly reduce earning ability while increasing expenses (Oosterhoff & Yunus, 2022; Stojetz et al., 2024). Therefore, the buffering effect of social security not only reduces financial hardship but also lowers the risk of social withdrawal and exclusion that often follow crises. This aligns with evidence that social protection can strengthen social connections in displacement settings (Hamad et al., 2025; Eggerman et al., 2023).

### 5.3.5 H5: Structural Barriers and Unequal Access

The findings on barriers suggest an "implementation gap," meaning that having policies or formal eligibility does not always lead to actual inclusion. Access is often limited by legal restrictions, administrative complexity, financial costs, and employer-related factors (Zaman et al., 2023; Gray Meral et al., 2022; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025). The strong negative relationship between barriers and inclusion reflects how documentation requirements, complex procedures, and employer involvement can restrict access to formal employment and social protection in both countries (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; UNHCR, n.d.; ILO, 2024).

Barriers also directly affect social integration. They can limit access to services and institutions, increase uncertainty, and reinforce feelings of exclusion. In addition, they indirectly reduce integration by restricting access to stable employment and social security, which are important for long-term participation (Gray Meral et al., 2022; Diab, 2024; Papadakis et al., 2024). In urban settings, everyday interactions with institutions—such as handling documents or accessing services—play a key role in shaping refugees' experiences of inclusion, underscoring the importance of administrative barriers (Gray Meral et al., 2022).

Patterns related to gender and employment status further highlight layered constraints. Women and others with limited access to the labor market may face additional challenges due to sectoral divisions, care responsibilities, and lower bargaining power, which can restrict their entry into formal employment and social security systems (Acu, 2023; Aslan, 2025; Katmer et al., 2025). Even for those who are not working, barriers still matter, as they can limit access to information, institutions, and opportunities, while also affecting

household conditions that shape participation and belonging (Diab, 2024; Gray Meral et al., 2022).

Table 4.2 summarizes the main types of barriers identified in the analysis and links them to the mechanisms that affect social security inclusion and social integration. It also outlines possible policy responses that could reduce these constraints and improve access, highlighting how targeted interventions can address legal, administrative, and economic challenges in both Jordan and Türkiye.

*Table 5.2: Barrier Mechanisms and Policy Levers*

| **Barrier type** | **Observed pattern** | **Likely mechanism** | **Potential lever** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Legal barriers | Higher perceived legal constraints are linked to lower inclusion and lower integration | Eligibility restrictions and status-linked work authorization rules reduce entry into formal work and insured inclusion; uncertainty increases perceived exclusion. | Clarify eligibility rules; expand authorized sectors/occupations for youth; streamline legal steps for lawful work and coverage (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016) |
| Administrative barriers | Strong negative links to inclusion and integration, especially where procedures are employer-mediated | Complexity, documentation burdens, and information gaps prevent eligible youth from completing enrollment; institutional friction reproduces exclusion in daily life. | Simplify procedures; one-stop guidance; multilingual information support; reduce documentation burdens; facilitate digital/assisted registration (Gray Meral et al., 2022; UNHCR, n.d.) |
| Economic barriers | Strong negative link to inclusion; also associated with integration through stability constraints | Costs (fees, contributions) and employer incentives to avoid registration sustain informality; low wages make contributions unrealistic for youth | Reduce/waive fees; temporary contribution subsidies; employer incentives for youth formalization; targeted compliance support (ILO, 2024; ILO, 2023) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Employer practices and compliance (cross-cutting) | Large formality–inclusion gateway suggests employer gatekeeping | Employers decide whether to register workers and pay contributions; weak enforcement sustains informal arrangements | Strengthen enforcement and compliance support; sector-specific formalization packages; reduce employer-side transaction costs (ILO, 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025) |

## 5.4 Comparative Interpretation: Why Jordan and Türkiye Differed

This section explains the similarities and differences found between Jordan and Türkiye in Chapters Four and Five by connecting them to the institutional and labour-market settings discussed in Chapter Two. The goal is not to claim that specific policies directly caused the outcomes, but rather to explain why the same main relationships—between inclusion and integration, formality and inclusion, barriers and access, and protection during shocks—appeared with slightly different strengths in the two countries (Tumen, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

### 5.4.1 Governance and Legal Status Pathways

The findings suggest that access to social security inclusion was shaped by the governance systems through which refugees obtained legal work status and dealt with state institutions. In Türkiye, Syrians were mainly governed under temporary protection, and their access to the labour market depended on work permit rules that were strongly influenced by employer-led procedures and practical limitations (Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025). This helps explain why respondents in Türkiye reported slightly higher legal and administrative barriers, especially where eligibility rules, quotas, documentation requirements, and employer application practices made it harder to enter registered employment (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

In Jordan, access to legal work was closely connected to the work permit system for Syrians, and the policy environment placed strong emphasis on formalization, although participation in this system varied depending on institutional design and cost-related factors (UNHCR, n.d.; International Labor Organization [ILO], 2024; Peitz et al., 2023). This fits the pattern in which Jordan showed slightly higher levels of inclusion but also somewhat stronger economic barriers, which is consistent with evidence that work permit fees and affordability influenced both worker uptake and employer willingness to participate (ILO, 2024). Therefore, while both countries created barriers to access, the main constraints appear to have differed: in Türkiye, they were more closely tied to legal-administrative procedures and employer-controlled authorization, whereas in Jordan they were more

closely linked to cost and affordability within the formalization process (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2024).

### 5.4.2 Labor Market Structure and Informality

The similarly low levels of formal employment in both countries match the wider literature showing high informality in refugee work and labour markets that channel Syrians into insecure sectors (Badalič, 2023; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023; ILOSTAT, n.d.). However, the types of sectors involved differed in ways that likely shaped how informality was experienced and how realistic formalization was.

In Jordan, Syrian youth were often employed in construction, agriculture-related work, and low-paid services, sectors that commonly involve casual arrangements and irregular payments, making registration and contribution compliance more difficult (Acu, 2023; Jones et al., 2022). In Türkiye, Syrians were more concentrated in labour-intensive manufacturing, retail, and urban service sectors, where informality could become more deeply embedded through subcontracting and off-record wage arrangements. This reinforces the "informal labour trap" discussed in the Türkiye literature (Badalič, 2023; Tumen, 2023). These structural differences help explain why formality remained a strong predictor of inclusion in both countries, since access to contributory protection depended on registered work in labor markets where informal employment was widespread (ILO, 2023; Peitz et al., 2023).

The particular position of young workers strengthened these patterns. Young adults often entered the labor market through informal routes such as daily labor, short-term service jobs, or low-paid work because they had limited bargaining power, incomplete qualifications, and immediate financial needs. As a result, they had little ability to insist on registration or formal contracts (Jones et al., 2022; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022). This also helps explain why participation and connectedness were more limited than belonging and acceptance, as unstable work and limited time reduced opportunities for civic and community involvement, even when inclusion and stability improved (Mittal et al., 2025; Ayyildiz, 2024).

### 5.4.3 Institutional Design of Social Security Inclusion

The system's structure can also explain the strong link between formality and inclusion. In both Jordan and Türkiye, working-age refugees could usually access social security only through formal labor-market registration and employer compliance (ILO, 2023; Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labor and Social Security, n.d.). In Türkiye, social security inclusion for foreign workers was institutionally tied to registered employment and contribution payments, and the work permit system for Syrians under temporary protection placed employers in a gatekeeping position for both work authorization and, in practice, insured inclusion (Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025). This likely increased the importance of administrative and employer-related barriers in Türkiye, as access depended on employers' actions and compliance in a labor market already marked by deep informality (Badalič, 2023; ILO, 2023).

In Jordan, the route to formalization also depended heavily on employer behavior and policy design, but the evidence points more clearly to the role of fees and employer incentives in shaping the uptake of work permits. This, in turn, influenced access to formal employment channels that could lead to contributory inclusion (ILO, 2024; Peitz et al., 2023). This fits the finding that economic barriers were more noticeable in Jordan. Where formalization involved direct or indirect costs, low wages and employer attempts to avoid expenses reduced the practical reach of formal and protected employment, and therefore also limited access to social security inclusion (ILO, 2024; Acu, 2023).

Taken together, the comparative evidence suggests that employers played a central gatekeeping role in both settings, but the main pressure points differed. In Türkiye, employer-controlled authorization and procedural complexity appeared more important, whereas in Jordan, affordability and incentive structures appeared more decisive (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; ILO, 2024).

### 5.4.4 Interactions Between Assistance and Social Security (Interpretive)

Although the study directly measured social security inclusion and barriers, it did not treat social assistance or humanitarian support as a main explanatory factor. Even so, the findings fit an interpretive pattern found in the literature: in displacement settings,

humanitarian assistance and social insurance often exist side by side, but when formal employment is difficult to access, assistance may act as a substitute for contributory protection (Oosterhoff & Yunus, 2022; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). In situations where work is informal and social security inclusion is limited, assistance may help households manage basic consumption and ease immediate hardship, but it does not create the same institutional connection that comes with insured inclusion (Oosterhoff & Yunus, 2022; Zaman et al., 2023).

This interpretation is consistent with the study's two main findings. First, barriers were strongly associated with lower inclusion and integration, suggesting that when young refugees could not access formal pathways, they were more likely to remain outside contributory systems regardless of their level of need (Gray Meral et al., 2022; Diab, 2024). Second, inclusion was associated with reduced hardship during shocks, indicating that contributory protection provided a stronger resilience mechanism than short-term coping responses alone (Stojetz et al., 2024; Holzmann et al., 2003). In Jordan, evidence that some protection-related programs were linked to social connectedness suggests that assistance can also support relational aspects of integration, though this depends on program design and local conditions of social cohesion (Hamad et al., 2025; Zintl & Loewe, 2022). In Türkiye, discussions around welfare and social harmonization similarly suggest that institutional welfare arrangements can shape integration experiences, although the effect depends on how support is delivered and whether it is seen as fair (Dama, 2022; Şahin-Mencütek et al., 2023).

Table 5.3 provides a brief comparative overview of the main factors that help explain why some results differed in strength between Jordan and Türkiye. It brings together the institutional, labor-market, and policy-related conditions discussed above and shows how these shaped access to inclusion, levels of integration, and the operation of barriers and protective mechanisms across the two contexts.

*Table 5.3: Cross-Country Interpretation Matrix*

| **Domain** | **Jordan—contextual reading** | **Türkiye—contextual reading** | **Link to results** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Governance & legal status | Work-permit-centered formalization route; uptake sensitive to design and costs (UNHCR, n.d.; ILO, 2024) | Temporary protection framework; employer-mediated work permits and practical constraints (Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016; ECRE, 2025) | Higher legal/admin barriers in Türkiye; higher economic-barrier salience in Jordan |
| Labour market & informality | Concentration in construction/agriculture-linked and low-wage services (Acu, 2023; Jones et al., 2022) | Informal labor trap dynamics; segmentation and subcontracting (Badalič, 2023; Tumen, 2023) | Similar low formality rates; strong formality–inclusion linkage in both |
| Social security inclusion architecture | Coverage access conditioned by formal work and employer compliance; costs shape uptake (ILO, 2024; Peitz et al., 2023) | Coverage linked to registered work and contribution payment; employer gatekeeping amplified (ILO, 2023; Republic of Türkiye MLSS, n.d.) | Large "formality → inclusion" effects; barriers reduce inclusion |
| Assistance–insurance interface | Assistance can complement stability and connectedness; may substitute when inclusion blocked (Hamad et al., 2025; Oosterhoff & Yunus, 2022) | Welfare interfaces can shape social harmonization; substitution likely where informality persists (Dama, 2022; ILO, 2023) | Inclusion buffers shocks; barriers constrain inclusion and integration, consistent with substitution under constraint. |

## 5.5 Youth Lens: Life-Course Transitions and Integration Trajectories

### 5.5.1 School-to-Work Transition Constraints

Focusing on youth is important because individuals aged 18–29 are at a key stage of life when completing education, securing stable employment, and forming early links with institutions shape their long-term paths (United Nations Children's Fund, 2019; International Labor Organization, 2013). In displacement settings, however, this transition is often disrupted by interrupted schooling, difficulties in recognizing qualifications, limited access to training, and immediate financial pressures that push young people into low-quality jobs (Jones et al., 2022; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022). These conditions help explain why employment formality plays such a strong role in the findings. Many young refugees enter the labor market through informal routes—such as casual work, short-term service jobs, or day labor—which reduces their bargaining power and makes formal registration harder to achieve, even when they are willing (Badalič, 2023; Jones et al., 2022).

These early experiences can have lasting consequences. Entering the labor market through informal work can limit future opportunities by restricting skill development, reducing access to formal employment histories, and weakening connections to social protection systems (International Labor Organization, 2013; Üstübici & Elçi, 2022). The strong link between formality and inclusion, along with the connection between inclusion and integration, suggests that young people who do not gain access to formal or protected work early on may face cumulative disadvantages. These include lower access to coverage, higher levels of insecurity, increased vulnerability, and reduced ability to plan for the future (International Labour Organization, 2023; Holzmann et al., 2003). This perspective also helps explain why integration outcomes are more closely linked to economic participation and a sense of belonging than to civic engagement. Limited time, unstable working conditions, and ongoing financial pressure make it difficult for young people to take part in community life, even when they feel more accepted (Ayyildiz, 2024; Mittal et al., 2025).

### 5.5.2 Gendered Pathways for Youth

Differences in access to inclusion and integration are expected in both countries, as women's participation in the labor market is influenced by sectoral divisions, household duties, and restrictions on mobility and time (Acu, 2023; Aslan, 2025). In Türkiye, research

shows that caregiving responsibilities and household survival strategies often lead women to engage in informal or home-based work, which limits their chances of entering formal employment and accessing social security through employer-based systems (Aslan, 2025; Katmer et al., 2025). In Jordan, similar patterns are observed, with gender gaps in employment and job quality reducing women's access to formal and protected work and, consequently, to social security coverage (Acu, 2023).

These gender-related constraints help explain why barriers may have stronger effects for women. Legal and administrative challenges often interact with household responsibilities such as childcare, transport costs, and limited ability to navigate institutions, while financial barriers are intensified by low wages and irregular employment (Diab, 2024; Gray Meral et al., 2022). When access to social security depends largely on formal employment, gender differences in labor market participation become a structural factor shaping unequal inclusion rather than simply reflecting personal choices (International Labor Organization, 2023; Seyfert & Alonso, 2023). This highlights the need for policies that are both youth-focused and responsive to gender differences, rather than applying uniform approaches to access (International Labour Organization, 2024; International Labor Organization, 2024).

### 5.5.3 Aspirations, Mobility, and Belonging

The integration paths of young refugees are also influenced by their aspirations, mobility plans, and expectations for the future. Research from Türkiye shows that these aspirations vary depending on social background and perceived opportunities, affecting whether young people invest in local systems such as formal employment and social security coverage (Üstübici & Elçi, 2022). The findings of this study indicate that feelings of belonging and acceptance tend to improve alongside stability and institutional connection. When young people experience inclusion—through access to coverage, protected employment, and reduced vulnerability—they are more likely to feel accepted and optimistic about their future (Papadakis et al., 2024; Hamad et al., 2025).

At the same time, the weaker results for participation can be understood in terms of "bounded belonging." Young people may feel more accepted while still facing real limitations on their ability to participate due to discrimination, social boundaries, and unequal access to public spaces and institutions (Cevik, 2025; Ayyildiz, 2024). In Türkiye, research highlights how everyday social interactions shape feelings of inclusion, while in

Jordan, similar patterns show that access to institutions and services plays a key role in shaping daily experiences of inclusion (Cevik, 2025; Gray Meral et al., 2022). In uncertain conditions, young people may prioritize immediate income over investing in formal pathways, especially when procedures are complex or depend on employers, thereby reinforcing informality and weakening institutional connections (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; International Labor Organization, 2024).

## 5.6 Policy and Practice Implications

This section translates the study's findings into practical recommendations, directly linked to hypotheses H1–H5. The main message is that promoting integration for young refugees requires coordinated efforts to expand access to social security, increase opportunities for formal employment, strengthen protection against shocks, and reduce the legal, administrative, and financial barriers that limit real access.

### 5.6.1 Implications for Expanding Social Security Inclusion

The results linking inclusion to integration, along with the mediation effects, suggest that expanding access to social security can improve stability and reduce vulnerability, thereby supporting integration (Holzmann et al., 2003; International Labor Organization, 2024). One key priority is to make entry into social security systems easier for young people by simplifying procedures and improving access to information, especially where processes are unclear or depend on employers (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; UNHCR, n.d.). Another priority is to address affordability, as costs can discourage both workers and employers from participating (International Labor Organization, 2024). In addition, ensuring that coverage can continue across different jobs is essential, since young people often move between short-term positions. Without continuity, the benefits of inclusion are reduced (Seyfert & Alonso, 2023).

Encouraging formalization in first jobs is especially important. Early access to protected employment can create lasting links to institutions and help prevent long-term disadvantages associated with early informal work (International Labour Organization, 2013; United Nations Children's Fund, 2019).

### 5.6.2 Implications for Labor Market Formalization

The strong connection between formal employment and social security inclusion shows that formalization is not only a labor-market goal but also a key pathway to protection and integration (International Labor Organization, 2023; Peitz et al., 2023). Employers play a central role in this process. When registration involves costs or perceived risks, employers may avoid formalization, maintaining informal practices (International Labour Organization, 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025). Therefore, policies should address sector-specific challenges, as the causes of informality differ between countries. In Jordan, construction and agriculture-related sectors are particularly important, while in Türkiye, manufacturing and urban services play a larger role, each with distinct enforcement and subcontracting patterns (Acu, 2023; Badalič, 2023).

Effective approaches may include reducing administrative burdens for employers, strengthening inspections in sectors with high informality, and offering temporary incentives to encourage the formal hiring of young workers while maintaining compliance (International Labor Organization, 2024; International Labor Organization, 2023).

### 5.6.3 Shock-Responsive Protection and Resilience

The findings related to shocks (H4) show that social security inclusion reduces hardship and the risk of exclusion during events such as illness, injury, or income loss. This means that protection against shocks should be seen as a central part of integration policy, rather than merely an emergency response (Holzmann et al., 2003; Stojetz et al., 2024). Health-related and income shocks are common among young people and can quickly lead to harmful coping strategies that limit participation and deepen exclusion (Oosterhoff & Yunus, 2022; Stojetz et al., 2024). Strengthening protection requires not only legal coverage but also making benefits easy to access, providing clear information, and reducing administrative burdens (International Labor Organization, 2023; Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labor and Social Security, n.d.).

Because young workers frequently change jobs, rapid-response support—such as temporary income assistance, emergency healthcare, and simplified procedures during crises—can help prevent short-term shocks from leading to long-term exclusion (International Labor Organization, 2024; Holzmann et al., 2003).

### 5.6.4 Reducing Barriers and Improving Access

The results for H5 highlight that barriers are a central factor shaping unequal access to both social security and integration (Zaman et al., 2023; Gray Meral et al., 2022). Legal barriers can be addressed by clarifying eligibility rules and reducing restrictions that limit access to formal work, especially for young people (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Turkey: National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2016). Administrative barriers require simplifying procedures, offering multilingual support, and improving assistance with documentation, particularly in contexts where everyday interactions with institutions can lead to exclusion (Gray Meral et al., 2022; UNHCR, n.d.). Financial barriers can be reduced by lowering fees and contribution costs, including targeted subsidies or shared-cost approaches during transitions to formal employment (International Labour Organization, 2024; International Labor Organization, 2023).

A key cross-cutting issue is the role of employers. Since they often control access to formal employment and registration, policies that reduce their administrative burden while ensuring compliance are likely to have the greatest impact on expanding inclusion (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; International Labor Organization, 2023).

Table 5.4 connects the study's main findings to corresponding policy recommendations. It shows how each result relates to specific actions that can improve access to social security, promote formal employment, strengthen protection against shocks, and reduce barriers, with a particular focus on supporting the integration of young refugees in both Jordan and Türkiye.

*Table 5.4: Results-to-Policy Recommendations Map*

| **Empirical finding** | **Policy implication** | **Jordan relevance** | **Türkiye relevance** | **Target group** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inclusion is associated with higher integration (H1) | Expand feasible access to insured inclusion to strengthen institutional linkage and belonging | Link inclusion strategies to work-permit pathways and employer registration incentives (International Labor Organization, 2024; UNHCR, n.d.). | Strengthen employer-mediated authorization and registration pathways; improve information and procedural accessibility (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; International Labor Organization, 2023) | Youth 18–29; new labor-market entrants |
| Inclusion improves economic security and reduces vulnerability (H2) | Prioritize protection as a stability mechanism, not only a benefit system | Reduce costs and simplify enrollment to support stability gains (International Labour Organization, 2024) | Support transition-to-formality and insured status to reduce rights losses (International Labor Organization, 2023) | Youth in precarious work; low-income households |
| Formality strongly | Treat formalization as | Sector strategies for construction/agriculture- | Sector strategies for manufacturing/services; | Working youth; informal workers; employers |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| predicts inclusion (H3a) and relates to integration (H3b) | the primary route to coverage and integration-relevant stability. | linked work; employer incentives and fee design (Acu, 2023; International Labor Organization, 2024) | reduce procedural burdens and enforce compliance (Badalič, 2023; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025) | |
| Inclusion buffers shocks (H4) | Strengthen shock-responsive protection and reduce claim friction | Use permit/coverage pathways to improve crisis resilience; simplify access during emergencies (Stojetz et al., 2024) | Improve insured access and practical benefit use for foreign workers; reduce administrative barriers to claims (International Labor Organization, 2023; Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labor and Social Security, n.d.). | Shock-exposed youth; households with high dependency burden |
| Barriers reduce inclusion and integration (H5) | Address implementation gaps through legal clarity, administrative simplification, and | Reduce economic barriers (fees/costs) and simplify steps; improve guidance (International Labor Organization, 2024) | Reduce legal/admin friction in work authorization; strengthen information and assistance (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2025; Turkey: National Legislative | Youth facing documentation/procedural burdens; women; first-time formalization cases. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | affordability measures. | | Bodies / National Authorities, 2016) | |
| The participation dimension is comparatively weaker. | Complement protection expansion with opportunity-building and safe participation platforms. | Strengthen community-based programs tied to livelihoods and cohesion (Zintl & Loewe, 2022) | Support bridging initiatives and reduce boundary pressures through inclusive programming (Zihnioğlu & Dalkıran, 2022; Cevik, 2025) | Youth in urban areas, women, and socially isolated groups |

## 5.7 Limitations and Future Research

### 5.7.1 Key Limitations

The study relies on a comparative cross-sectional survey, which means the results show relationships between variables but do not confirm cause-and-effect links. It is therefore not possible to determine the exact direction of influence. For instance, while social security inclusion may support higher integration, it is also possible that young people who are already more integrated are better able to access formal employment and coverage. For this reason, the findings should be understood as patterns that align with the conceptual framework rather than as firm evidence of causality.

Another limitation concerns selection into formal employment and into social security inclusion. Access to these opportunities is not random. Young people who obtain formal or protected jobs may differ from those in informal work in ways that also affect their level of integration, such as their education, skills, social networks, geographic location, or employer characteristics. Although the analysis controls for several factors, some unobserved differences may remain. As a result, part of the observed relationship between inclusion or formality and integration may reflect these underlying differences rather than only institutional effects.

There are also potential issues related to survey sensitivity and nonresponse. Questions about documentation, employer practices, registration, and informal work may lead respondents to answer cautiously or avoid responding altogether. Even though the survey included options such as “not sure” and “prefer not to answer,” and avoided collecting identifying information, some degree of measurement error may still exist due to concerns about risk or social desirability. In addition, if nonresponse is more common among certain vulnerable groups, this could influence the results.

Finally, although the survey instrument was designed to be consistent across Jordan and Türkiye, differences in local systems and lived experiences may affect how respondents understand certain terms. Concepts like “formal employment,” “registration,” and “social security coverage” may carry slightly different meanings depending on the country context. While efforts such as testing and harmonizing terminology were used to reduce these

differences, some variation in interpretation may remain and could influence cross-country comparisons and the size of observed effects.

### 5.7.2 Future Research Directions

Future research would benefit from following young refugees over time to better understand how their transitions from education to work, job changes, and shifts in legal or employment status influence their paths toward inclusion and integration. Longitudinal studies would provide stronger evidence on cause-and-effect relationships and help determine whether early experiences of informal work lead to long-term disadvantages in institutional connection and integration.

Another important direction is to improve data accuracy through administrative linkage or employer-side verification. Where possible and ethically appropriate, survey data could be combined with official records or supported by employer verification to confirm key indicators such as work authorization, registration status, contribution payments, and access to benefits. Even partial verification for smaller groups would enhance data reliability and reduce the risk of misclassification.

Qualitative research could also add depth to the findings by exploring how barriers operate in everyday life. Interviews and case studies could provide insight into employer decisions, compliance challenges, administrative difficulties, and personal experiences of exclusion. Such approaches could also help explain why some aspects of integration, such as participation, respond differently compared to economic participation or feelings of belonging.

Further studies could also examine different types of shocks in more detail, distinguishing between health issues, workplace injuries, and income loss, and assessing how each leads to hardship or exclusion. In addition, policy-focused research, including experimental or quasi-experimental approaches, could test which interventions are most effective in improving protection and resilience. These might include contribution subsidies, simplified registration systems, easier access to benefits, sector-specific enforcement strategies, or programs that support young people’s entry into formal employment.

## 5.8 Conclusion

This study examined whether access to social security is associated with social integration among young Syrian refugees in Jordan and Türkiye. It also examined how this relationship is shaped by employment formality, influenced by economic security and vulnerability, affected by exposure to shocks, and limited by legal, administrative, and financial barriers. The findings show a clear and consistent pattern: young people connected to formal protection systems tend to achieve better integration outcomes, mainly because they have greater economic stability and face lower levels of vulnerability. Formal employment stands out as a key pathway to inclusion, while barriers continue to restrict access and reduce opportunities for both coverage and integration. The results also indicate that social protection plays an important role in reducing hardship during crises, helping to prevent withdrawal and exclusion.

Overall, the study suggests that when young refugees can access formal work and social security, they are more likely to achieve stability and stronger integration. In contrast, when these pathways are limited by informality and barriers, insecurity remains high and the risk of exclusion increases, especially during times of crisis. While these patterns are similar in both Jordan and Türkiye, differences in institutional settings and types of barriers help explain variations in the strength of these relationships.

Chapter Six builds on these findings by summarizing the study's main contributions and presenting targeted recommendations to improve social security inclusion and social integration among young Syrian refugees in both countries.

## 5.9 Recommendations

The following recommendations translate the study’s findings into practical actions to improve social security inclusion and social integration among young refugees. They are organized into key priority areas to guide more targeted and effective policy responses.

**1. Expanding Youth Access to Formal Employment:** A central priority is to support young refugees in entering formal employment at the beginning of their careers. Creating structured pathways that link first jobs to official registration and social security coverage can help prevent long-term involvement in informal work. Early access to protected employment strengthens long-term stability and improves integration outcomes.

**2. Reducing Financial Barriers to Inclusion:** Financial constraints remain a major obstacle for both young workers and employers. Measures such as reducing registration fees, offering temporary contribution subsidies, or introducing shared-cost models can make formalization more affordable. These approaches can increase participation in social security systems, particularly among low-income youth.

**3. Simplifying Administrative Procedures:** Complex procedures can discourage enrollment in formal systems. Streamlining registration and application processes, providing clear and multilingual information, and ensuring accessible support services—both online and in person—can make it easier for young people to navigate systems and complete required steps.

**4. Addressing Employer Gatekeeping and Strengthening Compliance:** Employers play a key role in enabling or limiting access to formal employment and social security. Policies should balance incentives with effective enforcement mechanisms, especially in sectors with high concentrations of young refugee workers. Reducing administrative burdens for employers while maintaining strong compliance measures can encourage formal registration.

**5. Strengthening Shock-Responsive Protection:** Improving systems that respond to shocks such as illness, injury, or income loss is essential. Ensuring practical access to healthcare and related benefits, along with introducing rapid-response support mechanisms, can prevent short-term crises from leading to long-term hardship and exclusion among youth.

**6. Targeting Vulnerable Groups, Especially Young Women:** Certain groups face additional barriers to inclusion, particularly young women. Policies should address challenges related to childcare, transportation, and safe working conditions, while also promoting equitable access to formal employment opportunities. Gender-sensitive approaches are necessary to reduce unequal outcomes.

**7. Improving Data, Monitoring, and Evaluation Systems:** Stronger monitoring systems are needed to track inclusion outcomes effectively. Regular data collection on registration, contributions, and benefit access—combined with the use of standardized indicators—can improve policy design. Where possible, integrating survey data with administrative records can enhance accuracy and reliability.

**8. Linking Social Protection with Broader Integration Efforts:** Access to social security improves stability but does not automatically lead to full social integration. Therefore, protection policies should be combined with programs that promote social participation, connectedness, and community engagement. A coordinated approach can ensure that economic inclusion supports broader integration outcomes.

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# Appendix A

**Survey Questionnaire**

**Social Security Inclusion and Social Integration Among Young Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Türkiye**

Participant instructions and informed consent (to be shown/read before starting) You are invited to take part in a research study about work, social protection, and social integration. Your participation is voluntary. You may skip any question you do not want to answer. Your responses are confidential and will be used for research purposes only. There are no direct benefits or payments unless separately stated by the research team. Some questions may feel personal (e.g., work conditions); you may choose "Prefer not to answer" at any time.

Consent question (required)

Do you agree to participate in this study?

Response options: 1 = Yes; 0 = No → STOP

Survey parameters

Target group: Syrian refugees aged 18–29 residing in Jordan or Türkiye

Mode: Interviewer-administered or self-administered (same wording)

Estimated time: 20–30 minutes

Recall period for shocks: Past 12 months (unless stated otherwise)

**Table A1**

**Interview Record (Enumerator Use Only)**

| Item | Question | Response options / entry |
|---|---|---|
| 0.1 | Country of interview | 1 = Jordan; 2 = Türkiye |
| 0.2 | City/area (name) | Text |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 0.3 | Governorate/Province | Text (or coded list used by field team) |
| 0.4 | Date | DD/MM/YYYY |
| 0.5 | Interview mode | 1 = Face-to-face; 2 = Phone; 3 = Online self-administered |
| 0.6 | Interviewer ID | Code |
| 0.7 | Language used | 1 = Arabic; 2 = Turkish; 3 = English; 4 = Other: ___ |
| 0.8 | Consent obtained | 1 = Yes; 0 = No → STOP |

Note. If consent is not obtained, terminate the interview immediately.

**Table A2**

**Eligibility Screening**

| Item | Question | Response options / skip |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | Are you Syrian by nationality/origin? | 1 = Yes; 0 = No → STOP |
| 1.2 | What is your age in completed years? | Numeric |
| 1.3 | Age eligibility check | If age < 18 or > 29 → STOP |
| 1.4 | How long have you lived in this country (Jordan/Türkiye)? | 1 = <1 year; 2 = 1–2 years; 3 = 3–5 years; 4 = 6–9 years; 5 = 10+ years |
| 1.5 | Are you currently living in (Jordan/Türkiye)? | 1 = Yes; 0 = No → STOP |

**Table A3**

**Demographics and Household Profile (Core Controls)**

| Item | Question | Response options |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | Sex/Gender | 1 = Female; 2 = Male; 3 = Another identity; 99 = Prefer not to answer |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2.2 | Marital status | 1 = Single/never married; 2 = Married; 3 = Engaged; 4 = Divorced/separated; 5 = Widowed; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 2.3 | Highest education completed | 0 = No schooling; 1 = Primary; 2 = Lower secondary; 3 = Upper secondary; 4 = TVET/Technical diploma; 5 = Some university; 6 = Bachelor; 7 = Postgraduate; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 2.4 | Current schooling/training status | 1 = Not studying; 2 = School; 3 = University; 4 = TVET; 5 = Short course; 6 = Apprenticeship; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 2.5 | Household size (including you) | Numeric |
| 2.6 | Number of children (0–17) in household | Numeric |
| 2.7 | Are you the main income earner in your household? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Shared with others; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 2.8 | Disability/functional difficulty (Washington short-type) | 1 = None; 2 = Some difficulty; 3 = A lot of difficulty; 4 = Cannot do at all; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 2.9 | Housing situation | 1 = Rent apartment/house; 2 = Living with relatives/friends; 3 = Hosted by non-relatives; 4 = Camp/collective shelter; 5 = Employer-provided; 6 = Other: ___; 99 = Prefer not to answer |

**Table A4**

**Legal/Administrative Status (Context and Barriers)**

**Note. Use locally appropriate terms; do not ask for document numbers.**

| Item | Question | Response options |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | What is your current registration/status in this country? | Jordan: 1 = UNHCR asylum-seeker/refugee registration; 2 = MoI card/Service card; 3 = Other legal status; 4 = Not registered/unclear; 99 = Prefer not to answer. Türkiye: 1 = Temporary Protection (Kimlik); 2 = International Protection; 3 = Residence permit; 4 = Other; 5 = Not registered/unclear; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 3.2 | Do you currently have a valid work authorization/work permit? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = In process; 4 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 3.3 | If "No/In process/Not sure": main reason (select one) | 1 = Not eligible; 2 = Too expensive; 3 = Employer refused; 4 = Procedure too complex; 5 = Lack of info; 6 = Fear of problems; 7 = Sector restrictions; 8 = Other: ___; 99 = Prefer not to answer |

**Table A5**

**Employment Profile and Work Conditions (Formality Classification)**

**Definition (optional to show respondent). Work includes any paid job, self-employment, day labor, family business work with pay, or seasonal work.**

| Item | Question | Response options / skip |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1 | Are you currently working for pay or profit? | 1 = Yes → go to 4.3; 2 = No → go to 4.2 |
| 4.2 | If not working: main current status | 1 = Unemployed seeking work; 2 = Unemployed not seeking; 3 = Student; 4 = Homemaker/care work; 5 = Unable to work (health/disability); 6 = Other: ___ |
| 4.3 | Work type (main activity in last 30 days) | 1 = Employee (private); 2 = Employee (public/NGO); 3 = Self-employed; 4 = Family business (paid); 5 = Day labor/casual; 6 = Seasonal; 7 = Other: ___ |
| 4.4 | Main sector | 1 = Agriculture; 2 = Construction; 3 = Manufacturing; 4 = Retail/shops; 5 = Food services; 6 = Transport/delivery; 7 = Domestic work; 8 = Services/beauty; 9 = Health/education; 10 = Other: ___ |
| 4.5 | Weekly working hours (typical) | Numeric |
| 4.6 | Payment frequency | 1 = Daily; 2 = Weekly; 3 = Monthly; 4 = Irregular; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 4.7 | Do you have a written contract for this job? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Not applicable (self-employed); 4 = Not sure |
| 4.8 | Are your wages paid through a bank transfer? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Sometimes; 4 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 4.9 | Do you receive payslips or written wage statements? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 4.10 | Is this job officially registered with the authorities (formal)? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4.11 | In your main job, does your employer register workers for social security? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Some workers only; 4 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 4.12 | For self-employed: are you registered/licensed as a business/worker? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |

**Table A6**

**Social Security Inclusion (Independent Variable)**

**Instruction. "Social security" means formal coverage such as work injury insurance, health insurance, pension contributions, unemployment insurance, or official registration in the national system.**

| Item | Question | Response options |
|---|---|---|
| 5.1 | Are you currently enrolled/covered by the national social security system in this country? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 5.2 | If Yes: What type of coverage do you have? (select all that apply) | A = Health coverage; B = Work injury/occupational accident coverage; C = Pension/old age; D = Maternity; E = Unemployment; F = Other: ___ |
| 5.3 | Who pays contributions (if any)? | 1 = Employer + employee; 2 = Employer only; 3 = I pay myself; 4 = No contributions required; 5 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 5.4 | Do you have proof of registration (e.g., number/card/app confirmation)? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 5.5 | In the past 12 months, have you successfully used any social security benefit/service? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Not applicable; 4 = Not sure; 99 = Prefer not to answer |

**Table A7**

**Economic Security (Mediator)**

**Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree**

| Item | Statement | Response scale |
|---|---|---|
| 6.1 | My household can meet basic needs (food, rent, utilities) most months. | 1–5 |
| 6.2 | My income is stable and predictable from month to month. | 1–5 |
| 6.3 | I can handle an unexpected small expense without serious difficulty. | 1–5 |
| 6.4 | I worry frequently about not having enough money for essentials. (reverse-coded) | 1–5 |
| 6.5 | I feel confident about my financial situation for the next 6 months. | 1–5 |

**Table A8**

**Vulnerability and Coping (Mediator)**

**Part A scale (past 3 months): 1 = Never; 2 = Rarely; 3 = Sometimes; 4 = Often; 5 = Always**

| Item | Statement | Response scale |
|---|---|---|
| 7.1 | In the past 3 months, I had to borrow money to cover basic needs. | 1–5 |
| 7.2 | In the past 3 months, I reduced essential spending (food/medicine) due to lack of money. | 1–5 |
| 7.3 | In the past 3 months, I delayed/avoided healthcare because of cost. | 1–5 |
| 7.4 | In the past 3 months, I felt unable to cope with financial stress. | 1–5 |
| 7.5 | In the past 3 months, I relied on others/charity for essentials. | 1–5 |

**Part B (past 12 months; select all that apply)**

| Item | Question | Response options |
|---|---|---|
| 7.6 | Have you had any of the following in the past 12 months? (select all that apply) | A = Rent arrears; B = Utility disconnection risk; C = Food insecurity days; D = Eviction threat; E = None; 99 = Prefer not to answer |

**Table A9**

**Shock Exposure (Conditional Pathway)**

**Recall period: Past 12 months**

| Item | Question | Response options / skip |
|---|---|---|
| 8.1 | In the past 12 months, have you had a serious illness or health problem that reduced your ability to work/study? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 8.2 | In the past 12 months, have you had a work-related injury/accident? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 3 = Not applicable (not working); 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 8.3 | In the past 12 months, have you had a major income loss (job loss, big wage cut, business loss)? | 1 = Yes; 2 = No; 99 = Prefer not to answer |
| 8.4 | Shock exposure summary | If any of 8.1–8.3 = Yes → shock-exposed = 1 |

**Optional severity (recommended)**

| Item | Question | Response options |
|---|---|---|
| 8.5 | If any shock occurred: how severe was the impact on your household? | 1 = Mild; 2 = Moderate; 3 = Severe; 4 = Very severe; 99 = Prefer not to answer |

**Table A10**

**Poverty/Social Exclusion Risk During Shocks (Outcome for H4)**

**Instruction. Ask only if shock-exposed = 1 (from Item 8.4).**

**Scale: 1 = Not at all; 2 = A little; 3 = Somewhat; 4 = A lot; 5 = Extremely**

| Item | Question (during/after the shock) | Response scale |
|---|---|---|
| 9.1 | Did the shock make it difficult to pay for food? | 1–5 |
| 9.2 | Did the shock make it difficult to pay rent/housing costs? | 1–5 |
| 9.3 | Did the shock make it difficult to pay for healthcare/medicines? | 1–5 |
| 9.4 | Did you withdraw from social/community activities due to costs or stress? | 1–5 |
| 9.5 | Did you feel more isolated or excluded because of the shock? | 1–5 |

**Table A11**

**Structural Barriers to Social Security Access (H5)**

**Instruction. "How much does each issue prevent you from accessing social security or staying covered?"**

**Scale: 1 = Not a barrier; 2 = Small barrier; 3 = Moderate barrier; 4 = Big barrier; 5 = Very big barrier; 9 = Not applicable/Don't know**

| Item | Barrier statement | Response scale |
|---|---|---|
| 10.1 | My legal status limits my eligibility for social security. | 1–5/9 |
| 10.2 | Work permit rules/restrictions prevent access to formal work and coverage. | 1–5/9 |
| 10.3 | Sector/occupation restrictions prevent me from getting covered work. | 1–5/9 |
| 10.4 | The registration process is complicated and hard to understand. | 1–5/9 |
| 10.5 | I do not have clear information about how to register or claim benefits. | 1–5/9 |
| 10.6 | Required documents are difficult to obtain/renew. | 1–5/9 |
| 10.7 | Time/transport costs to complete procedures are too high. | 1–5/9 |
| 10.8 | Registration fees or contributions are not affordable. | 1–5/9 |
| 10.9 | Employers avoid registration to reduce costs. | 1–5/9 |
| 10.10 | Low wages make social security contributions unrealistic. | 1–5/9 |

**Table A12**

**Social Integration (Primary Outcome)**

**Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree**

| Item | Statement | Response scale |
|---|---|---|
| 11.1 | I can access work or income opportunities in this country when I need to. | 1–5 |
| 11.2 | My current work/study situation helps me build a better future here. | 1–5 |
| 11.3 | I feel able to improve my skills or qualifications in this country. | 1–5 |
| 11.4 | I have people I can rely on for help in this country. | 1–5 |
| 11.5 | I have meaningful relationships with people from the host community. | 1–5 |
| 11.6 | I can get useful information about jobs/services through my networks. | 1–5 |
| 11.7 | I participate in community, social, or cultural activities in my area. | 1–5 |
| 11.8 | I feel comfortable using public services (health, education, municipal services). | 1–5 |
| 11.9 | I feel safe moving around and participating in public life here. | 1–5 |
| 11.10 | I feel accepted by people in the host community. | 1–5 |
| 11.11 | I feel that people like me can belong in this society. | 1–5 |
| 11.12 | I worry about being treated unfairly because I am Syrian. (reverse-coded) | 1–5 |
| 11.13 | I feel hopeful about my future in this country. | 1–5 |

**Table A13**

**Optional Open-Ended Questions**

| Item | Question | Response |
|---|---|---|
| 12.1 | What is the biggest challenge you face in accessing formal work or social security? | Text |
| 12.2 | What would most help young Syrians become more socially included in this country? | Text |

# Appendix B

## Cognitive Testing and Key Informant Validation Tools (Questionnaire Enhancement)

### Purpose and use

The tools in Appendix B were developed to support pretesting, cognitive interviewing, and cross-country validation of the survey questionnaire used in this study. They are intended to assess comprehension, relevance, sensitivity, and equivalence of key terms and constructs across Jordan and Türkiye, and to document evidence-based revisions prior to (or alongside) field implementation.

**Table B1**

**Cognitive Interview Prompt Set (Think-Aloud and Probing)**

| Component | Prompt(s) |
|---|---|
| Standard think-aloud prompt | "Please answer this question. While answering, explain what the question means to you and how you chose your answer." |
| Comprehension probe | "In your own words, what is this question asking?" |
| Term meaning probe | "What does the term '_____' mean to you in this country?" |
| Recall probe | "How did you remember this information?" |
| Decision probe | "How did you decide on your answer?" |
| Response-fit probe | "Do the answer options fit your situation? If not, what option is missing?" |
| Sensitivity probe | "Did any part of this question feel uncomfortable or risky to answer?" |

Note. Use the probe set selectively to avoid excessive burden. Replace "_____" with the specific term being tested.

**Table B2**

**Cross-Country Equivalence Tool (Jordan vs. Türkiye): Key Term Equivalence Check**

| Term in questionnaire | Meaning expressed by respondent (Jordan) | Meaning expressed by respondent (Türkiye) | Equivalence confirmed (Yes/No) | Notes / wording adjustment needed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social security inclusion | | | | |
| Work permit / work authorization | | | | |
| Formal/protected work | | | | |
| Registered job | | | | |
| Contribution deduction | | | | |
| Shock (illness/work injury/income loss) | | | | |
| Poverty/social exclusion risk during shocks | | | | |
| Social integration | | | | |
| Host community | | | | |
| Belonging / acceptance | | | | |
| Barriers (legal/administrative/economic) | | | | |

Note. Complete this table after interviews with respondents and/or key informants in each country to document semantic equivalence and required adaptations.

**Table B3**

**Construct-Specific Probe Bank (Aligned to H1–H5)**

| Construct / domain | Probe questions (use as needed) |
|---|---|
| B3.1 Social Security Inclusion (Coverage/Enrollment Validity) | "When you hear 'social security,' what do you think it includes?"; "What does 'being covered/enrolled' mean to you?"; "How would someone know they are registered or insured?"; "What proof or sign of registration is usually available (card, number, app, receipt)?"; "Is health service access the same as being socially insured/registered, or different?" |
| B3.2 Employment Formality (Protected vs. Informal Work Classification) | "What makes a job 'formal' in your view?"; "Does having a work permit always mean the job is registered? Why or why not?"; "Can someone have a contract but still not be registered for social security?"; "Which indicators best distinguish formal vs. informal work here (contract, payslip, bank transfer, registration, employer statement)?"; "Is the term 'registered job' commonly understood? If not, what is the local wording?" |
| B3.3 Economic Security (Mediator) | "When answering 'meeting basic needs,' which needs were included (food, rent, utilities, medicine)?"; "What does 'stable income' mean here (same amount, predictable days, same employer)?"; "How realistic is the time horizon used in the item (e.g., next 6 months) for answering accurately?" |
| B3.4 Vulnerability and Coping (Mediator) | "Does 'borrowing money' include borrowing from relatives/friends?"; "What counts as 'reducing essential spending' in your |

| | |
|---|---|
| | household?"; "When healthcare is delayed or avoided, is the main reason cost, documentation, fear, or other factors?"; "Which coping actions are most common after financial stress?" |
| B3.5 Shocks and Shock-Related Hardship (Conditional Pathway and H4 Outcome) | "What counts as a 'serious illness' in your experience?"; "What counts as a 'work injury' (minor/major, needing treatment, missing work)?"; "What events count as 'major income loss' (job loss, fewer work days, wage cuts, business loss)?"; "How easy is it to recall shocks over the last 12 months?"; "After a shock, which hardships occur first (food, rent, healthcare, debt, social withdrawal)?" |
| B3.6 Structural Barriers (Legal/Administrative/Economic) | "Which barriers prevent access most often: eligibility, documents, process complexity, employer refusal, costs, fear?"; "Do legal, administrative, and economic barriers feel separable, or do they overlap?"; "Which barrier items feel most sensitive or difficult to answer?"; "What important barrier is missing from the list?" |
| B3.7 Social Integration (Multidimensional Outcome) | "What does 'host community' mean here (neighbors, citizens, employers, institutions)?"; "What does 'belonging' mean in this context?"; "Is participation in community activities realistic and safe for youth?"; "Do the items capture both connection and exclusion experiences?"; "Which items feel unclear, too broad, or not applicable?" |

Note. Probes may be adapted for language and local context to maintain conceptual equivalence across settings.

**Table B4**

**Item Diagnostics and Revision Log (Item Diagnostic Sheet)**

| Item ID | Problem type (Comprehension / Recall / Judgment / Response options / Sensitivity / Translation) | Evidence (brief quote or summary) | Severity (Low/Medium/High) | Proposed modification (rewrite/option change/relocation) | Decision (Keep/Revise/Remove) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |

Note. Add rows as needed for all items reviewed during cognitive testing and validation.

**Table B5**

**Post-Questionnaire Feedback Tool (Respondent Debrief)**

| Debrief question | Response notes (open text) |
|---|---|
| "Which questions were hardest to answer, and why?" | |
| "Which words or terms were unclear?" | |
| "Which questions felt sensitive or risky to answer?" | |
| "Were any answer options missing or not fitting your situation?" | |
| "What is one change that would make the questionnaire clearer?" | |