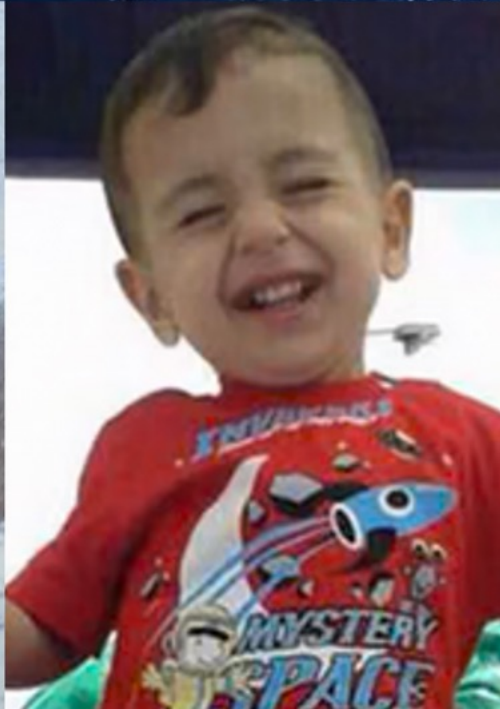




# WFOT Congress 2026

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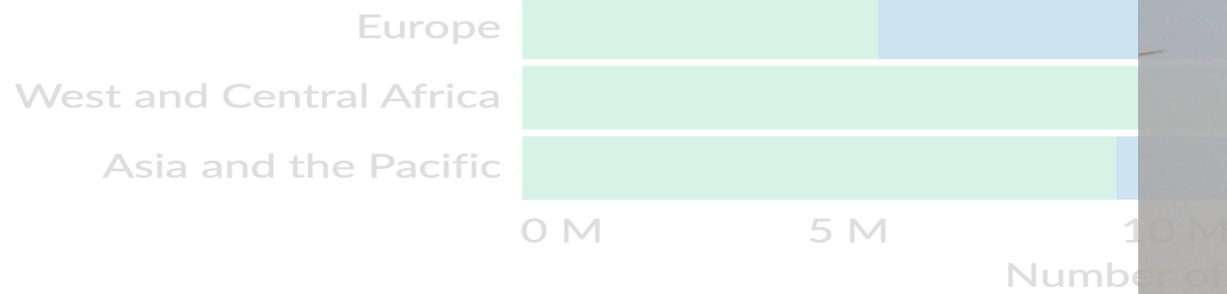
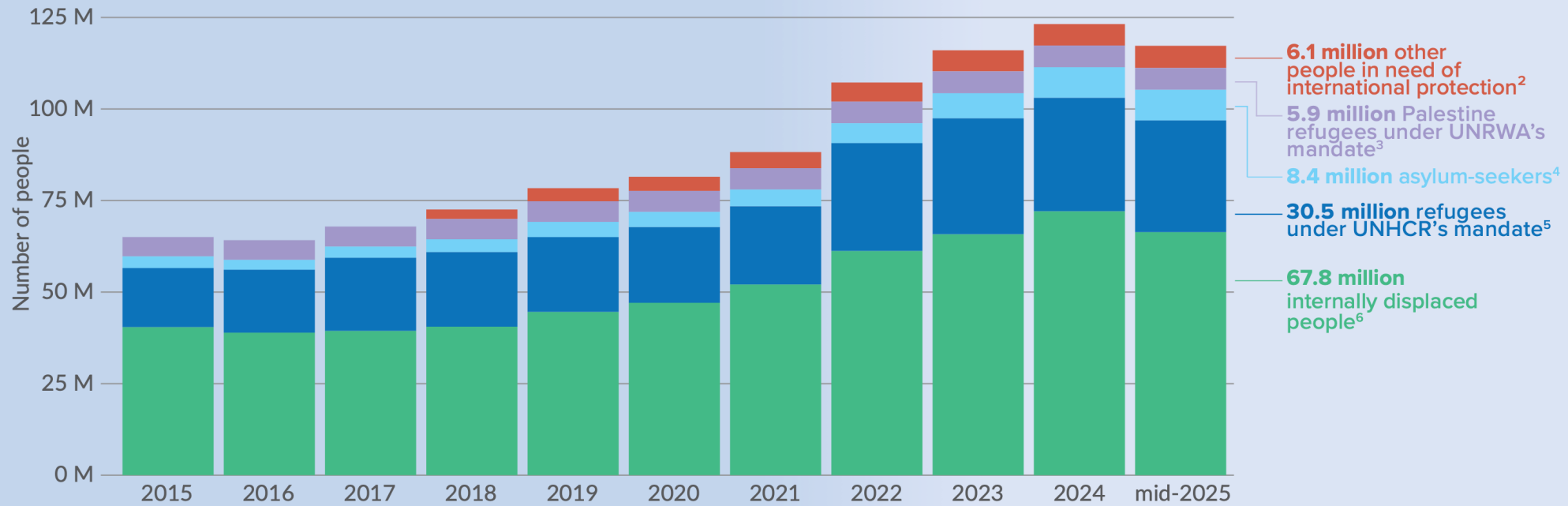


## **Social Determinants of Occupational Balance Among Syrian Refugees**

**M. Rohat Yazici, MSc, PhD (c)**  
**HCPC Registered OT**  
**Lecturer and Researcher**

# 117.3 MILLION FORCIBLY DISPLACED WORLDWIDE\*

At the end of June as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.

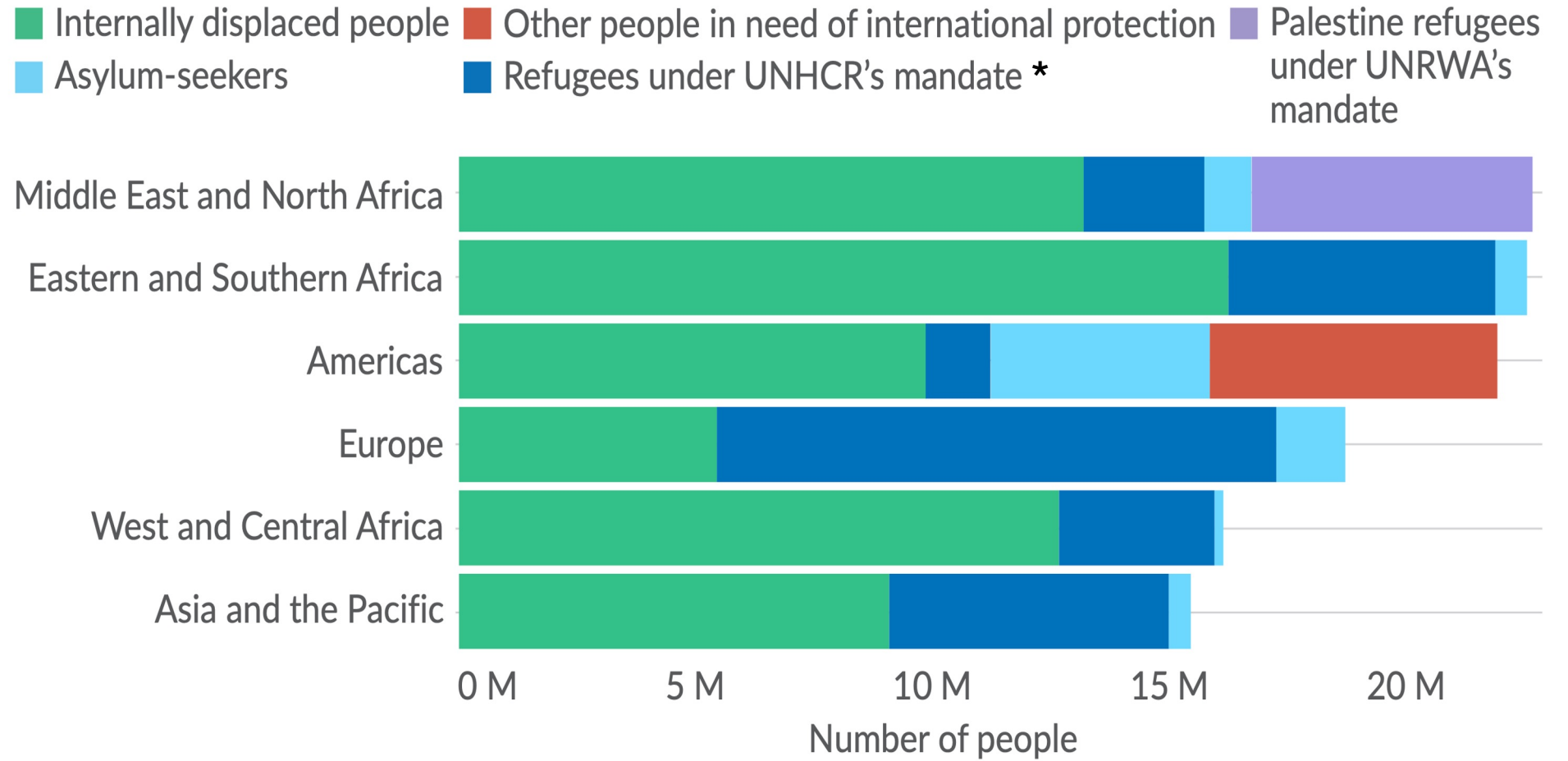


\* The total number of people forcibly displaced is calculated using statistics by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). See *What is the difference between population statistics for forcibly displaced and the population that UNHCR protects and/or assists?*, UNHCR, for more information. UNRWA estimates that 70 per cent of the 2 million IDPs in the Gaza Strip at mid-2025 were Palestine refugees under its mandate. These internally displaced refugees under UNRWA's mandate are counted only once in the global forcibly displaced total.



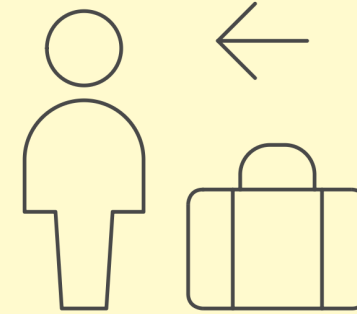
# 100 MILLION FORCIBLY DISPLACED WORLDWIDE<sup>1</sup>

... as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.



\*All references in this infographic to refugees under UNHCR's mandate includes people in a refugee-like situation.

## Returns of Displaced Populations

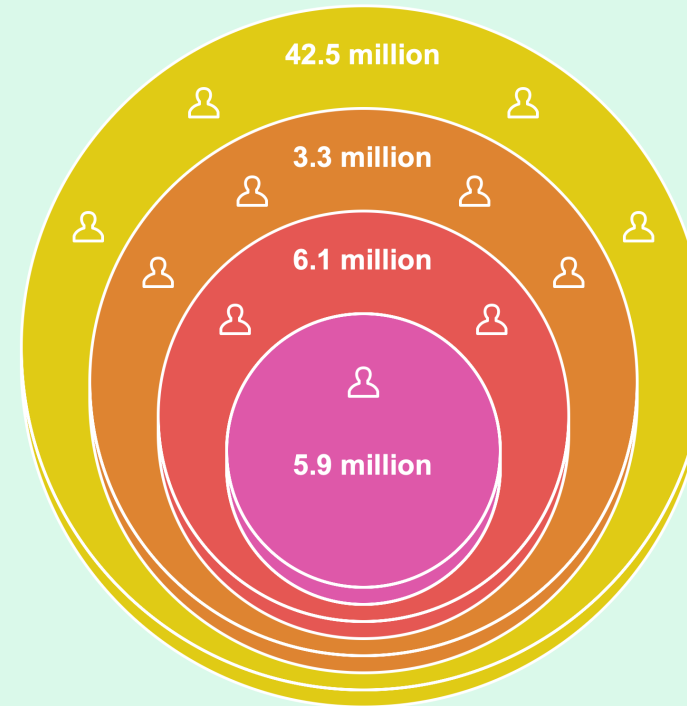
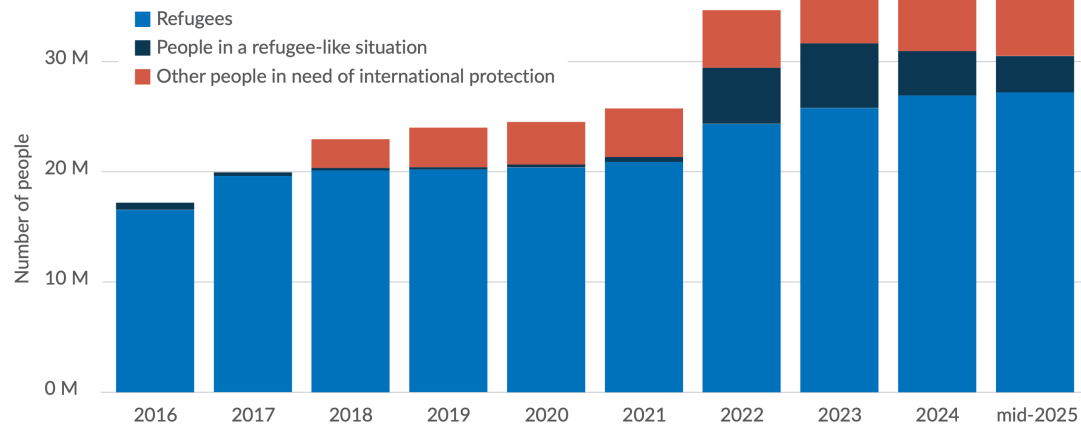


**6.9 MILLION  
DISPLACED PEOPLE  
RETURNED**

**28,600 refugees  
resettled**

**5 million internally  
displaced people and  
almost 2 million  
refugees.\***

**Arrivals through  
resettlement or  
sponsorship pathways  
between January and  
June 2025.\*\***



## Total Refugees

as of June 2025,  
including:

People in a  
refugee-like  
situation

People needing  
international  
protection

Palestine  
refugees under  
UNRWA's  
mandate.

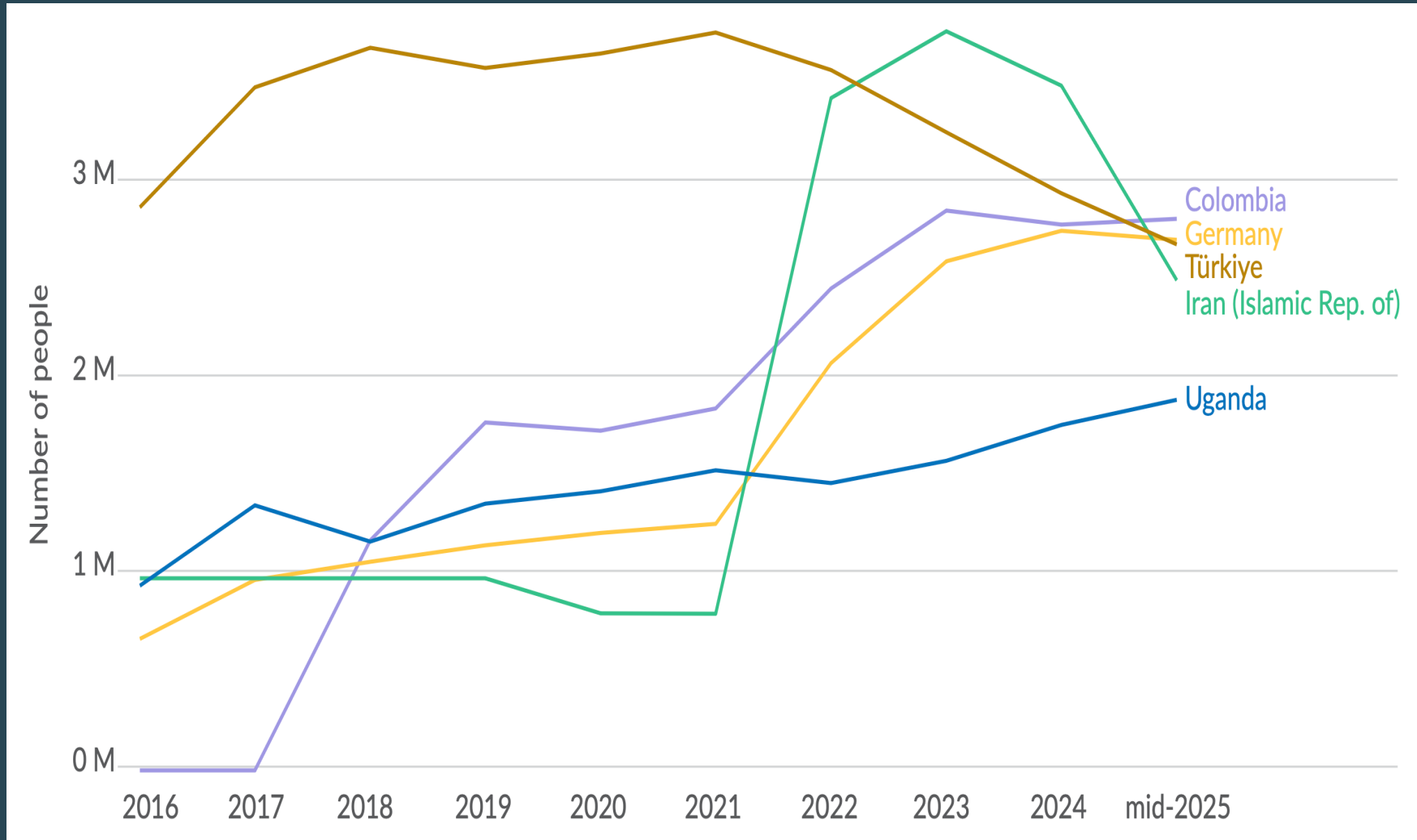






# Major Refugee- Hosting Countries



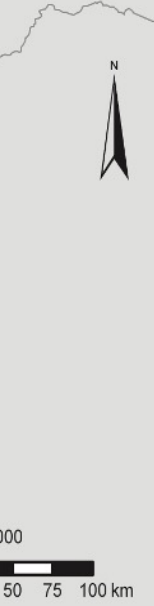
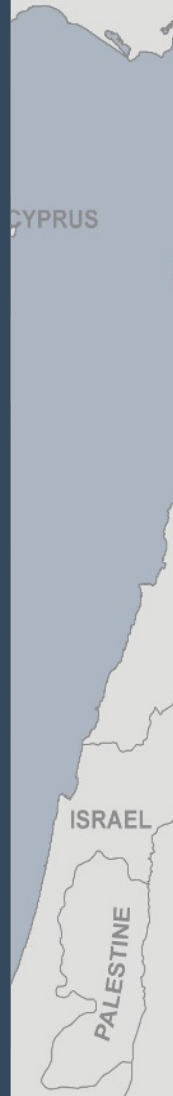


# Syrian Civil War in 2011

13 million Syrians have been forcibly displaced

Due to its geographic proximity and early open-door policy, Turkey became the primary host country.

Victims of the Civil War in Syria Since January 26, 2011



Sources: <http://www.syrishumanrights.org/>  
<http://www.syrishumanrights.org/mediacenter.asp?lang=en&id=664&date=04/16/2012>  
<http://www.diva-gis.org/gdata> (April 16, 2012)

IRAQ  
Damascus  
Quneitra  
Daraa  
April 12, 2012  
4,158  
664  
50  
priorate capital cities  
Krahen, April 2012

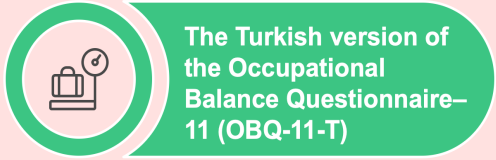
Refugees' participation in meaningful occupations is strongly shaped by social determinants, including education, income, gender, social support, and the socioeconomic context of the host country.



Influence health, education, social relationships, and economic well-being, often more than biological conditions.

Occupational balance among refugees emerges from the interaction of multiple social factors rather than a single determinant, making it a key element in protecting long-term health and well-being.

This study examined how social determinant, independently and in combination, influence occupational balance among Syrian refugees.



The inclusion criteria included age 18 yr or older, being a Syrian citizen, and having migrated to Turkey after the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in March 2011.

Exclusion criteria included having sufficient proficiency in understanding and speaking Turkish (n=16) and having a cognitive impairment that would prevent comprehension of the survey questions (n=4).

\*Wagman, P., & Håkansson, C. (2014). Introducing the Occupational Balance Questionnaire (OBQ). *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 21, 227–231. <https://doi.org/10.3109/11038128.2014.900571>

\*\*Günel, A., Pekçetin, S., Demirtürk, F., Şenol, H., Håkansson, C., & Wagman, P. (2020). Validity and reliability of the Turkish Occupational Balance Questionnaire (OBQ11-T). *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 27, 493–499. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2019.1673479>

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics and OBQ11–T Scores**

Variable	<i>n</i> (%)
Age, yr, <i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	38.05 (3.45)
No. of people living together, <i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	4.05 (1.42)
OBQ11–T, <i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )	12.6 (3.43)
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	189 (47.25)
Male	211 (52.75)
<b>Marital status</b>	
Married	183 (45.75)
Single	217 (54.25)
<b>Education level</b>	
Illiterate	14 (3.50)
Primary school	146 (36.5)
Middle school	72 (18.0)
High school	89 (22.25)
University	50 (12.5)
Postgraduate	29 (7.24)
<b>Ethnic background</b>	
Arab	216 (54.0)
Kurdish	139 (34.75)
Turkish or Turkoman	39 (9.75)
Other	6 (1.5)
<b>Place of residence</b>	
Villa	27 (6.75)
High-end residence	59 (14.75)
Apartment	223 (55.75)
Refugee camp	74 (18.5)
Homeless	17 (4.25)
<b>City of residence</b>	
Istanbul	203 (50.74)
Ankara	42 (10.5)
Elazig	65 (16.25)
Bingol	90 (22.5)

*Note.* *N* = 400. OBQ11–T = Turkish Occupational Balance Questionnaire–11.

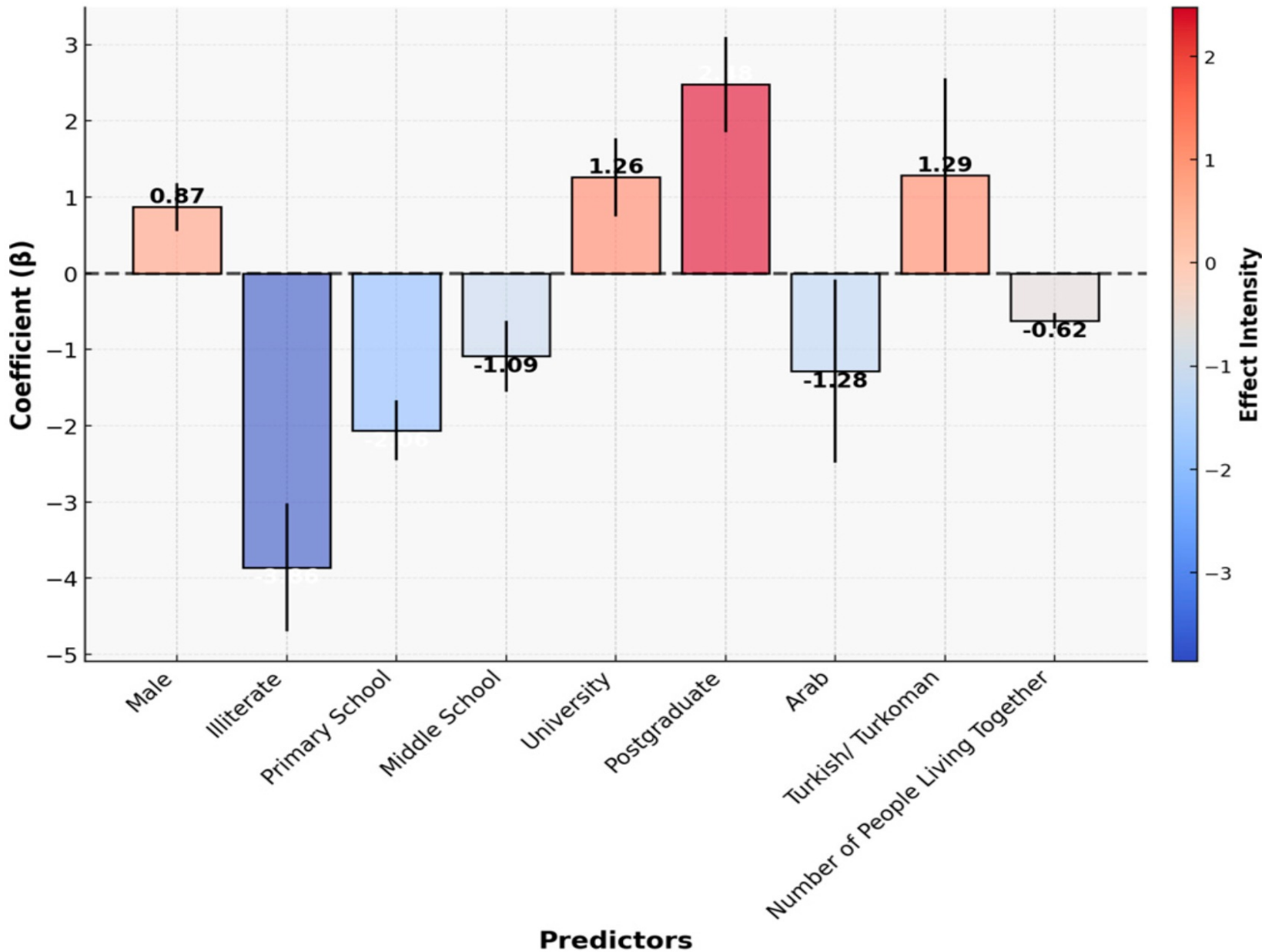
**Table 2. Significant Predictors of Occupational Balance**

Variable (Predictor)	Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	<i>SE</i>	95% CI	Significance ( <i>p</i> )
<b>Gender</b>				
Female (ref.)				
Male	0.869	0.313	[0.161, 1.392]	0.007*
<b>Marital status</b>				
Single (ref.)				
Married	–0.542	0.292	[–1.116, 0.031]	0.064
<b>Education level</b>				
High school (ref.)				
Illiterate	–3.858	0.837	[–5.503, –2.213]	<0.001*
Primary school	–2.062	0.393	[–2.834, –1.29]	<0.001*
Middle school	–1.087	0.464	[–1.998, –0.175]	0.02*
University	1.26	0.512	[0.254, 2.267]	0.014*
Postgraduate	2.478	0.624	[1.251, 3.705]	<0.001*
<b>Ethnic background</b>				
Other (ref.)				
Arab	–1.282	1.201	[–2.27, –0.29]	0.011*
Kurdish	–2.022	1.209	[–4.398, 0.355]	0.095
Turkish or Turkoman	1.288	1.268	[–3.515, 1.471]	0.013*
No. of people living together	–0.624	0.102	[–0.825, –0.422]	<0.001*

*Note.* *N* = 400. CI = confidence interval; ref. = reference.

\**p* < .05.

### Impact of Significant Predictors on Occupational Balance



# OCCUPATIONAL BALANCE

## Social Determinants and Barriers to Occupational Balance

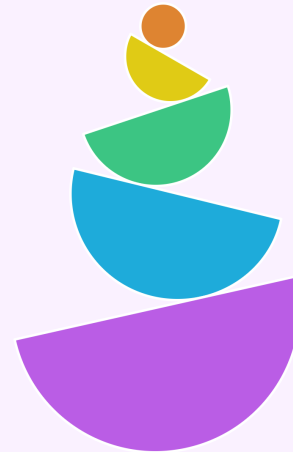
Gender, education level, ethnic background, and household size significantly affect occupational balance.

Women, individuals with lower educational attainment, and those living in larger households report lower occupational balance.

Social structures and access to resources play a critical role in daily functioning and participation in meaningful occupations.

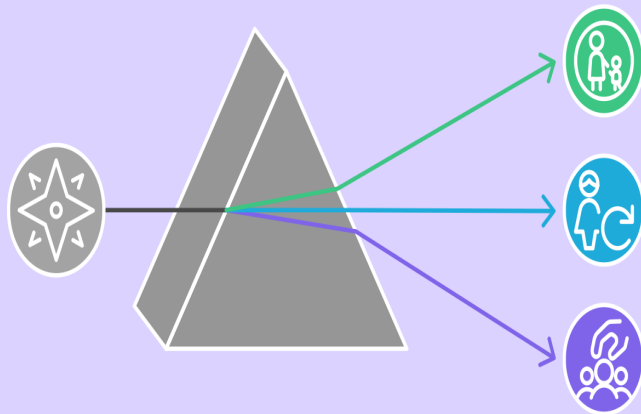
Targeted interventions addressing language barriers, employment opportunities, and gender disparities are essential to improve occupational participation.

Social support and inclusive policies are key to enhancing quality of life and integration within host communities.



# BALANCE OCCUPATIONAL

# Implications for Occupational Therapy Practice

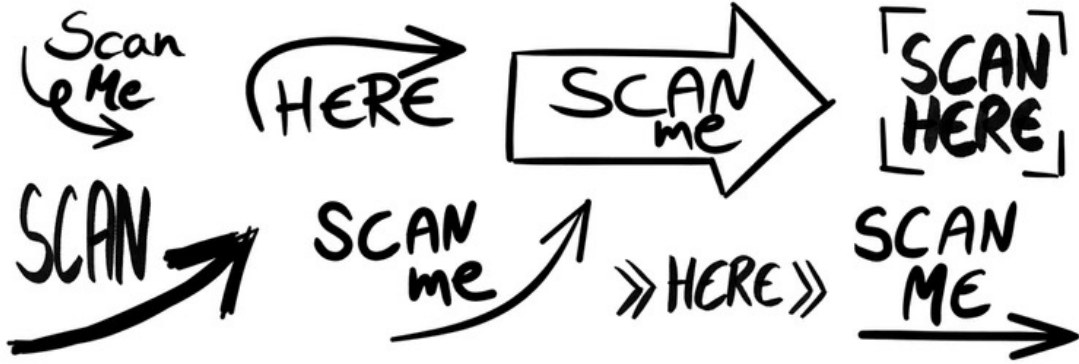


Occupation-based interventions need to be developed that align with refugees' cultural values and daily routines, ensuring meaningful engagement.

Occupational therapy programs need to be designed that empower women by facilitating access to education, work, and social participation.

Group-based interventions need to be implemented that strengthen social support, mentorship, and integration within the host society.





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Research Article



## Social Determinants of Occupational Balance Among Syrian Refugees

Muhammed Rohat Yazici, Gülşah Zengin Yazıcı, Gokcen Akyurek



Let's say the word racism and let's do anti-racist work in occupational therapy.

Let's stop saying social justice,

Let's be social justice.

-Dr. Musharrat Ahmed-Landeryou



