

Stories of Refugee's in Turkey



Ahmed

His name is Ahmed, he is like a Turkish guy coming from Ankara, but he is Syrian. He is so well-dressed that you cannot even tell that he is a “guest” of Turkey. His name can also be Turkish by making the “d” in the end of his Arabic name to “t”. It does not mean that he was not stranger when he came to Turkey. By now, he speaks Turkish after spending three years in the country. He fled from Syria when he was ...teen, and now he is still young and full with plans. But there is a lot of desperation in his story. Although he is talented and presented his story in English with the greatest enthusiasm I have ever heard in a presentation, he has serious financial problems. In a way, he burns the candles at both ends: working in the evening and learning civic engineering in daytime. He is constrained to do so: otherwise there is not enough money to get on, working is the only way. Now, he can translate Arabic to Turkish and vice versa, but still doing a lot of par-time jobs illegally and for lower salary. There is only hope left that after finishing university he will be able to get a legal job with good salaries as an integral part of the Turkish society. Because he does not plan to go abroad: he is so boastful and has so much dignity that he wants to organize his life himself without bureaucratic and cultural constrains. Just like every person: live and let live.



Diana

Her name is Diana and she is 28 years old a mother of 3 kids. She came from Syria. Right now, she lives in Ankara since 1 and half year in Altındağ district. During the visit she share with us lot of her personal stories like one of them was also how she got her name .During the time that her mother pas a pregnant one Italian doctor who helped her for to have a free visits to the hospital and also she was helping with clothes and food and when they found out that she was waiting twins girls she asked



her to leave her name to one of them. So this is why she has not very common Arabic name . During our visit she explained to us also about difficult days that they passed after leaving their country. She said that before coming to Ankara they didn't had enough money for the transportation so she was obligated to sell her gold bracelet for finding better living place. As we said Diana had 3 kids and 2 of them were girls and the youngest one was a boy but she was original mother only to the boy. She was really proud to say that when they had Bayram holidays or even in normal day first she was thinking first for the girls and latter for her son. After coming to Ankara Diana's family was staying outside close to the mosque so no safe place where to sleep and what to eat but one rainy day a man and his wife saw them and they were thinking to help them and in the end. They took her family to their house for 15 days. Another character of Diana was that she was really strong women .On the beginning her husband was sick and she decided to go at work and earn money for surviving so she took a loan and was paying her transportation till the work by herself and after 2 weeks when she went to the work, everything was closed and nothing inside like everything was disappeared in a day and she never took her salary for those 2 weeks. Now the Turkish family was paying for the medicine of her husband and now he found a new job around 2 weeks before our visiting day and we can say that were quite happy for this good news. Most of her time Diana was spending at home taking care for her children and homework and probably for this reason she didn't had Turkish friends at all only the family that was helping them. And because of this she was considering him as a father and for all good things that he did for her she will be grateful for the rest of her life. As an end we can say that above everything that she had passed she was still smiling and being patient that one day she will go back to her country and live in a PEACE.

Path of Hope
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20 – 28 August 2016, Ankara



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HATAY

In Hatay province we had a chance to visit some other refugees and their houses. We met two families Syrian families. They live in a block of flats in _____ neighborhood. The neighborhood looks nice and clean. Altogether there are 4 Syrian families living in that block and more of them in the surroundings.

We entered the flat of _____ who came to Turkey over two years ago. He works as a greengrocer. Back in Syria he was a car parts dealer. It was a good job. When he came to Turkey he wanted to do something similar, but he was offered only 600 TL (150 EUR). So now he sells fruit on a local bazaar. As he says – this way he can earn more money to support his family, but he has to work for 12 to 14 hours per day. He gets 1000 TL (250 EUR) per month. The flat he rents costs 300 TL per month. It consists of two small rooms and a bathroom. The kitchen is in the corridor. He lives there with his wife and 3 children: a daughter who is 20 and two sons – 18 and 16 years old. They miss Syria a lot. That is why they didn't migrate to Europe. They hope the war will end soon and that they will be able to return to their home in Syria. They are very thankful to the government of Turkey for letting them stay and live more or less a "normal" life in Hatay. Although _____'s wife refused to speak we could see how emotional she got when we talked about Syria. First she was smiling, but then her eyes got wet from tears and she tried to cover her face. Sometimes body language speaks louder than words.



2ND PART



_____ is a barber. He moved here just a month ago. He also came with his family – his mother, wife and two little children – a boy and a girl. The flat he rents is a little bit bigger than _____'s. It has one room more, but _____ uses it for his barber shop. He says a rent of a salon in the city costs 1500 TL per month. He cannot afford it, so he prefers to work at home. His clients are other Syrians. They pay him 5 TL for a haircut. He's not a registered barber and he doesn't pay taxes, so his business is illegal, but it's accepted by the government, just like the other Syrian shops in the neighborhood. _____ doesn't complain. He says it could be worse. A lot of his

friends and family members died in the war. He was lucky to come here. He's thinking of migrating further, but not now.

_____ (first guy) says he never thought the war will last so long. Everyone thought after few months it will be over, just like in other Arab Spring countries. He also said that his relatives had paid 35.000 EUR (7000 EUR per person) to human traffickers to transport them to Germany. He couldn't afford it and he didn't actually want. So here they are... The life goes on. They are happy that they are alive and together. That's the most important.