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**Can the Syrian Refugees Deliver the Hashemite Kingdom of
Jordan a Much Needed Economical Boost?**

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Introduction

Since the start of the Syrian Civil War on the 15th of March 2011, half of the Syrian population have fled their homes, an estimated 11 million people¹. Of that 11 million, around 5.5 million Syrian refugees have fled the country and are spread all over the world². The majority however remain close to home, in the neighbouring countries of Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. While these nations have been generous in their hosting of the Syrian refugees, it is undeniable that this ongoing situation for more than 7 years, has had a massive impact on those countries, economically, physically, and also socially. With Europe closing its borders and limiting the stream of refugees coming in, instead the focus has been on the countries on the borders of the continent. With the ongoing discussion of the effects of refugees on Europe, I instead wanted to analysis how it impacted those that can truly feel the impact. I chose to focus on Jordan because of the approach the Jordanian government has followed and adapted over the years to deal with the refugee influx. In this thesis I will first analysis the impact refugees had in general on their host countries, using research that has been done in different corners of the world. Based on this analysis, I will then look at the situation in Jordan prior to the refugee crisis. Unlike in Europe, where most research points to all the benefits there are to getting refugees for the European economies, for Jordan and the other nations surrounding Syria, this was not the case. Jordan, with a struggling economy and resources, has seen their problems worsened with an extra 1 million people to care for. Using the general theories on the pro's and con's of refugees on host countries, I will apply this to the Jordanian cases in two separate chapters. With these chapters and additional research on Jordan's situation today, we can gain a better idea of the impact the refugees have had and what they will have in the future. Jordan is still struggling to cope with both their internal problems as well as the additional burden of the refugees. However, with the aid and support they are gaining from international donors and countries, the future is not as bleak as it at first might appear.

¹ Migration Policy Centre, "Syrian Refugees," *Syrian Refugees*, September 2016, accessed September 22 2018,

² UNHCR, "Syrian Refugee Crisis: Aid, Statistics and News," USA for UNHCR, accessed September 22, 2018,

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Literature Review Master Thesis

The UNHCR describes a refugee as the following: “persons fleeing armed conflict of prosecution.”³ They are defined and protected by international law, under the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1967 Protocol, and the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention. Refugees are incredibly vulnerable and their situation perilous. Because of their situation they are protected by the above conventions, which define the basic rights, which States should give to refugees. One of the fundamental rights that States have to adhere to, according to the International law, is that “refugees should not be expelled or returned to situations where their life and freedom would be under threat.”⁴ The protection of refugees is essential and the responsibility of the host countries. Apart from the guarantee of safety, away from the dangers they faced, the protection also includes: access to fair and efficient asylum procedures, measures to ensure they gain their basic human rights, to live in dignity and safely, while gaining aid to find a longer-term solution⁵. The UNHCR is one of the agencies that works closely together with governments and institutions, to help countries implement their responsibilities through an advising and supporting role.

However, despite their protection under the conventions, refugees still face a difficult time when trying to gain or find employment. In some nations refugees cannot start to work in their new host country until they have undergone the official asylum process. These processes however can take a long time, depending on the country. Once the asylum process has been completed and the refugee is given permission to work, finding work can be challenging. Unlike migrants, who entered the country specifically for economic reasons and

³ UNHCR, “UNHCR Viewpoint: ‘Refugee’ or ‘Migrant’ – Which is Right?” *UNHCR*, July 11, 2016, accessed June 25, 2018,

⁴ UNHCR. “UNHCR Viewpoint: ‘Refugee’ or ‘Migrant’ – Which is Right?”

⁵ Ibid

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might have already familiarised themselves with the language they intend to work⁶, refugees often do not speak the language of the country they fled to, and are ill prepared. This naturally makes it difficult for them to find employment, as it would not be in the best interest of an employer to hire them. However, even if there is not language barrier, the process of recertification of credentials and degrees is another obstacle that makes it difficult for refugees to find employment that is related to their skills or previous work experience⁷. Then there is the serious problem of discrimination against refugees that prevents them from gaining employment. Despite these serious problems for refugees to gain employment, it has also been shown that refugees living and working in culturally similar immigrant communities, have a better chance of finding work, due to help in the community⁸. But given the often traumatic experiences refugees have experienced, along with the possible hopelessness felt during long asylum processes and job-finding to try and make a future and a life in their host country. According to Jamil, having a job for many refugees is a source of satisfaction⁹. Employment plays a vital part in the wellbeing of an individual, and being unemployed relates to negative health effects, not just personally but perhaps also the host countries economy.

The literature on the economic impact of refugees on their host-countries, does not give a clear yes or no answer. Instead we see that there are winners and losers depending on the refugees and the host-countries. Research on the economic impact of refugees on low or middle income host countries is quite limited, and the majority of studies that are done, are qualitative rather than quantitative¹⁰. The research is generally more focused on the social impact rather than the economic impact. However recently due to the increasing amount of

⁶ Jamil, Hikmet, Samer S. Kanno, Rami Abo-Shasha, Mazen M. AlSaqa, Monty Fakhouri, and Bengt B. Arnetz., "Promoters and Barriers to Work: A Comparative Study of Refugees versus Immigrants in the United States," *New Iraqi J Med*, 8, no. 2 (2012), pages 2 – 5,

⁷ Jamil et al., "Promoters and Barriers to Work: A Comparative Study of Refugees versus Immigrants in the United States," pages 2,

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Khouddour, David, and Lisa Andersson, "Assessing the Contribution of Refugees to the Development of Their Host Countries," *OECD Development Centre*, September 28, 2017, page 12,

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displaced peoples and refugees, more empirical research is being conducted. Studies mainly focused on two geographical areas: East Africa and the Syrian refugees flows to neighbouring countries, including Jordan¹¹. Looking at Syrian refugees in Turkey, research shows that Turkish workers, particularly low-educated workers and female workers from the informal and agriculture sector suffered from the refugees without a working permit, who would work illegally for very low-wages¹². However, this negative impact is balanced by positive changes. For example, wage levels were also increased for Turkish workers due to them upgrading to higher-wage formal jobs. Additionally, another study found that the influx of Syrian refugees into Turkey actually decreased unemployment among informal workers¹³. The influx also decreased the consumer prices, which is beneficial for both the refugee and local population¹⁴. Looking at Syrians in Jordan, a country with a high unemployment rate, the Syrian refugees did not aggravate the problem further. An investigation by Fakhri and Ibrahim showed that the Syrian refugees only had a very limited impact on the Jordanian labour market, most likely due to the strict policy measures that are in place that prevent firms from hiring refugees.¹⁵ It is therefore almost a given that many refugees work in the informal sector, which is difficult to investigate. Additionally, there could be a mismatch between the skills the refugees have and the needs of the local labour market¹⁶. More research is needed to analyse the effects of refugees on the local labour market, because research suggests that refugees can play an important role in the economic development of a

¹¹ Khouddour and Andersson, "Assessing the Contribution of Refugees to the Development of Their Host Countries," page 12,

¹² Del Carpio, Ximena V, and Mathis Wagner, "The Impact of Syrians Refugees on the Turkish Labor Market," *World Bank Group*, World Bank Group: Social Protection and Labor Global Practice Group, Aug 2015, Web, 30 January 2018,

¹³ E, Ceritoglu., G. Yunculer, H. Burcu, H. Torun and S. Tumen, "The Impact of Syrian Refugees on Natives' Labor Market Outcomes in Turkey: Evidence from a QuasiExperimental Design," IZA Discussion Papers 9348, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), 2015,

¹⁴ B. Balkan and S. Tumen, "Immigration and Prices: Quasi-Experimental Evidence from Syrian Refugees in Turkey," *Journal of Population Economics*, 29: 657-686, 2016,

¹⁵ A. Fakhri, and Ibrahim, M, "The impact of Syrian refugees on the labor market in neighboring countries: Empirical evidence from Jordan," *Defence and Peace Economics*, 1-23, 2016,

¹⁶ Khouddour and Andersson, page 13,

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country, particularly if they are highly educated¹⁷, or when their skills match the needs of the host country.

However, is employment, and the right employment, enough for refugees to positively impact the host country? In turn, is having a type of employment enough for refugees to also have a positive social impact in their host country? Due to the barriers and difficulties that refugees face within the labour market, results in refugees often working low-skill jobs, instead of their skilled profession. In Jamil's study of Iraqi refugees in the United States, only 1 out of 160 were able to successfully secure the same job that they had in their country of origin. This might explain why the Iraqi refugees were less satisfied with their jobs than immigrant workers¹⁸. This dissatisfaction in their work can also lead to dissatisfaction about their living conditions and towards their host countries. This in turn can add to the potential burden on the host-countries. Forced displacement has major implications on the refugees on a personal level. Their social and economic experiences will directly and indirectly affect their ability to contribute to the development of their host country. Due to displacement, often refugees do not obtain the legal right to work in the host country, an example being Jordan. By being forced to work in the informal sector, already prevents refugees from giving a contribution to the state they reside in. Perhaps more worrying, it places refugees in an extremely vulnerable position. With no social protection, they are more vulnerable to economic shocks¹⁹. As for this paper, one question is central. What is the impact of Syrian refugees on their host country Jordan? While this paper will specifically look at the economic aspect, it is more qualitative and can as such support other research that is currently being done. However, as the question is also a social one, and thus based on the economic impact of Syrian refugees in Jordan, we also assessed some of the social implications.

¹⁷ Jamil et al., pages 7,

¹⁸ Ibid, pages 5,

¹⁹ Khouddour and Andersson, page 12,

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The problem of refugees is a global phenomenon that is now experiencing its greatest crisis since World War II²⁰. The UNHCR²¹ estimates that there are currently 65.6 million people forcibly displaced from their homes. Of this record breaking amount 22.5 million are classified as refugees, and half of them are under the age of 18, meaning that an entire young generation will have to suffer the consequences. More than half of the refugees come from three countries alone: South Sudan (1.4 million), Afghanistan (2.5 million), and the majority from a country stuck in a bloody and gruelling civil war since March 2011, Syria, with 5.5 million currently. What is striking is that 56% of the refugees are being hosted in Africa and the Middle East. In order of lowest to highest these countries are hosting the most refugees: Ethiopia (791,000), Uganda (940,800), Islamic Republic of Iran (979,400), Lebanon (1 million), and finally Turkey (2.9 million). UNRIC²² and the World Economic Forum²³, both showed that 84% of all refugees are being hosted in developing countries. These statistics beg the question if the host countries are able to care and support for the refugees in their country, while also addressing the needs of their own local population. Are these countries able to absorb the refugees into their system, boosting their economy, or will they be and remain a burden to their society and nation?

The question whether refugees can be a blessing rather than a burden for their host countries is a highly debated topic. Refugees are often perceived as a burden for the host country²⁴, by putting pressure on society through the use of public services, resources, and public budget. However, according to the study conducted by the OECD, refugees can contribute to development. They provide among others: skills, resources, and increasing the production capacity and consumption demand. In developed Europe, the research shows that the

²⁰Kevin Shellito, "The Economic Effect of Refugee Crises on Host Countries and Implications for the Lebanese Case," *University of Pennsylvania Scholarly Commons*, April 27, 2016. Page 7.

²¹The UN Refugee Agency United Nations, "Figures at a Glance," UNHCR, June 19, 2017, accessed March 26, 2018,

²²UNRIC, "New Report: Developing Countries Host 80% of Refugees," RSS, 2017, accessed March 27, 2018,

²³Charlotte Edmond, "84% of Refugees Live in Developing Countries," World Economic Forum, June 20, 2017, accessed March 27, 2018,

²⁴ Khouddour and Andersson, page 2,

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refugees are a boon rather than burden²⁵. However, this is due to the fact that Europe is dealing with an ageing and shrinking population. An influx and increase of young refugees and give support to the current economic system²⁶. Furthermore, while the amount of refugees coming into the European Union can be a temporary burden, Europe has the resources and social benefits in place to absorb the refugees into society.

However, this is not the case for developing nations, where the majority of refugees are currently being housed. Prior to the arrival of refugees, a country such as Jordan was already facing difficulties internally. The country has a very young population as well as high youth unemployment rates of around 30 percent²⁷. This in combination with a lack in social safety nets and resources such as water, means that this country is not as equipped to provide for the refugees as a country in Europe. Therefore, we have to question whether the research stating that refugees can be a boon to their hosting nations is indeed true for the less developed countries. In order to give an answer to this question, this review will first address the reasons why refugees are considered a burden. Then we will contrast and challenge this notion by providing arguments and examples why and when refugees have in actual fact boosted a host country's economy, when this was a developing nation. When we can answer the question of whether or not refugees in general can be a blessing or burden, we will then apply this to our specific example of Syrian refugees in Jordan.

First of all, there are several reasons why refugees can be a burden to their host economies. They can strain the available public and private services, cause physical and economic overcrowding, and cause societal unrest which could result in potential civil conflict²⁸. The strain on public and private services can occur in several sectors such as healthcare,

²⁵The Economist, "For Good or Ill," The Economist, January 23, 2016, accessed March 26, 2018,

²⁶Shellito, "The Economic Effect of Refugee Crises on Host Countries and Implications for the Lebanese Case," Page 10,

²⁷Svein Erik, Stave and Solveig Hillesund, *Implications of the Influx of Syrian Refugees on the Jordanian Labour Market: Findings from the Governorates of Amman, Irbid and Magraq* (Geneva: ILO, 2015), page 6,

²⁸ Shellito, Page 11,

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education, housing, and basic necessities and resources such as food and water²⁹. In Turkey for example, the increase of Syrian refugees has led to a decline in quality of education and healthcare, while also increasing the price of housing, which negatively impacts both refugees and local population^{30 31}. In a region in South Sudan, the population rose from 6,000 in 1979 to 40,000 in 1983 due to an influx in Ugandan refugees. However, despite this increase in population, the amount of medical resources as such anti-malarial tablet remained the same, causing strain on the healthcare and assistance available^{32 33}.

An often cited negative impact of refugees on a host's economy is the competition and overcrowding of the labour market. While for developed countries this generally is not a relevant issue due to refugees accepting jobs and wages that the local population would not, in developing countries this could create issues. According to Robert Chambers, Ken Wilson reported in 1984 from South Sudan that the refugee labour situation was alright if one could afford to hire and employ labour. However, that would mean that if one was not in that position it would create problems. A refugee is more likely to accept wages that are far below the local rate. In 1975 in Sudan, an Eritrean refugee would accept a daily wage of 35 piastres instead of 50³⁴. This reduced the opportunities for the local population who relied on the same labour and work for their livelihoods. As part of physical overcrowding, there will also be a negative impact on the environment³⁵. According to the UNHCR Standing Commission 1997, an influx in refugees can have a harmful effect on the natural resources in a host

²⁹Ibid, page 16,

³⁰Ibid, page 16 & 17

³¹Orhan, Oytun, and Sabiha S.Gundogar, "Effects of the Syrian Refugees on Turkey," Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies, Jan 2015, web, 10 April 2016,

³²Robert Chambers, "Hidden Losers? The Impact of Rural Refugees and Refugee Programs on Poorer Hosts," *International Migration Review* 20, no. 2 (1986), accessed March 01, 2018, page 252,

³³Barbara Harrell-Bond, "Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugees", Oxford University Press

³⁴Robert Chambers, "Hidden Losers? The Impact of Rural Refugees and Refugee Programs on Poorer Hosts," page 251,

³⁵Khouddour and Andersson, page 9,

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country, especially when these resources were scarce to start with³⁶. Depletion of water and food resources are some of the most serious consequences³⁷, as well as deforestation, soil erosion, and pollution³⁸. Afghani refugees in Pakistan led to a depletion in wood resources and soil erosion due to the damage of the camps and the over-grazing of livestock³⁹.

With the negative impact on the host country's services and resources can led to resentment, tension, and conflict between the refugees and the local population^{40 41 42}. Thus refugees can have a social impact on their host countries⁴³. According to Salehyan and Gleditsch⁴⁴, refugees have the potential to create internal conflict and war in the host country. In countries like Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, the danger of the Syria's war spilling over their borders is an everyday risk⁴⁵. Likewise, differences within the refugee communities can lead to conflict and the involvement of the local population as well⁴⁶. Looking at the economic impact that refugees can have on the local population, generally the arrival of refugees into poorer regions, will lead to a further decline for the poorer hosts⁴⁷. If investments by international organisations is done in the refugee-region, these investments would first benefit the refugee population, and could then have to potential to trickle down into the local region. The poorer hosts would be the last to benefit from the investments and benefits. However, while they

³⁶UNHCR Standing Committee, "Social and Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries," UNHCR, January 06, 1997, accessed April 04, 2018,

³⁷UNHCR Standing Committee, "Social and Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries,"

³⁸Karen Jacobsen, "The Forgotten Solution: Local Integration for Refugees in Developing Countries," *New Issues in Refugee Research*, July 2001, accessed April 04, 2018,

³⁹UNHCR Standing Committee, January 06, 1997,

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Shellito, Page 18,

⁴² Khouddour and Andersson, page 6,

⁴³ Ibid, page 9,

⁴⁴Idean Salehyan and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, "Refugees and the Spread of Civil War," *International Organization* 60, no. 02 (2006),

⁴⁵Bassel F. Salloukh, "The Syrian War: Spillover Effects on Lebanon," *Middle East Policy Council*, Number 1, XXIV (2017),

⁴⁶ Bassel F. Salloukh, "The Syrian War: Spillover Effects on Lebanon,"

⁴⁷ Chambers, page 256,

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might lose in growth during the arrival of the refugees, if the refugee-affected areas are developed rapidly, they will be better off⁴⁸.

The majority of refugees live in poor developing nations, and by looking at the struggles that these countries and local populations will endure, with no positive impact on the nation, we should question whether we can expect these nations to provide for the refugees. Whenever there is mention of the benefits of refugees this is usually looked at with refugees coming into Europe or other developed nations. Especially with the (ongoing) Migration Crisis in 2015 there were fears that European nations would not be able to provide for the refugees without it resulting in a loss for the local population. While this does not seem to be the case, we can question how countries with less prospects can create a positive outcome. Despite the negative arguments, there is also another side to the discussion, which states that refugees will create a boost to the host's economy.

Shellito⁴⁹ and Khouddour and Andersson⁵⁰ state several reasons why refugees can be a boon to the host country no matter the country's economic situation prior, namely by: filling needed demographic gaps, spurring long-term investment, integrating effectively into the labour market, becoming productive economic consumers and producers, and the potential to increase the bilateral trade with the country of origin. In Uganda, in the 1990's early 2000's, there was influx of refugees coming from neighbouring countries Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This increased the amount of children in need of education. There had been a lack of schools, and therefore new ones were build for the refugee children, but the local students also made use of the new facilities, meaning that the influx encourage the continued investment and improvement of education in Uganda. This spurring long-term investments and boosts to the economic productivity of the nation⁵¹

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Shellito, Page 2,

⁵⁰ Khouddour and Andersson, page 9,

⁵¹ Shellito, page 8,

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⁵².However, in poor nations, where the population is already enduring a lack of educational or other facilities, the local population can only benefit from the investments if they too can have access to the services⁵³. By encouraging investment, refugees also stimulate and create employment opportunities, and attract aid and humanitarian investment, that benefits refugees and local communities. On a larger scale, refugees stimulate consumption in goods, and also basic necessities. This cause supply to also increase, with further investments being done, boosting a country's GDP.

As mentioned before, the filling up of the demographic gap is a positive economic impact that refugees can provide. Because of the reasons to flee their nation, such as war, means that refugees come from all sorts of backgrounds, with ranging class and education. The Jewish refugees from the Soviet Union who came to the United States were often high-skilled and educated and thus filled in the gaps that existed in the United States at the time, leading to quick economic integration, and high labour participation rates, providing the nation with an economic boost. However, the case for Syrian refugees coming to Europe and Jordan is different, which is be discussed in later chapters.⁵⁴

A food-shortage is a possible negative impact that can occur due to an influx in refugees⁵⁵. However, this can also create a positive development. Verwimp and Maystadt⁵⁶, explored that in Tanzania, the influx of refugees coming into the country from Rwanda and Burundi in the late 1990's, increased the food demand and prices. This stimulated the local farmers to sell their food surpluses to the refugees. This was similarly found in Uganda where the majority of refugees (between 68 – 97 percent) would buy their supplies from local Ugandan

⁵²Sarah Dryden-Peterson and Lucy Hovil, *Local Integration as a Durable Solution: Refugees, Host Populations and Education in Uganda* (Geneva: Switzerland, 2003),

⁵³Chambers, page, 253,

⁵⁴Shellito, page 10,

⁵⁵Chambers, page 249,

⁵⁶Philip Verwimp and Jean-Francois Maystadt, "Forced Displacement and Refugees in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Economic Inquiry," *Policy research Working Papers*, 2015,

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producers^{57 58}. Their research was not the first to show that economic activity among refugees would create a positive ripple effect within the local economy.

Economic integration or at least participation by the refugee population will, in most recorded cases, create a positive impact within the region that the refugees reside in. Taylor et al.⁵⁹ stated that providing refugees with cash aid, would create significant positive spill-overs into the host's business and households, stimulating the economy. Betts stated in his study that: "Refugees around the world engage with markets. Even in the most restricted circumstances of closed refugee camps and without the right to work, economic activity can be observed. Refugees engage in consumption, production, exchange, entrepreneurship and the development of capital markets. Much of our research suggests that whether refugees are a benefit or a burden depends not just on who the refugees are, but also on the policies of the host states. When they are given the right to work, access to capital, and educational opportunities, they are likely to have the greatest impact"⁶⁰. Over the years, the integration between the refugee and local population has been stressed by numerous organisations such as the FAO, UNDP, WHO, ILO, and UNHCR. Already in 1983, the UNHCR mentioned the burdens placed on the host's economy should be taken into account, as well as the importance to make the local population also beneficiaries of the refugee-development and investments, and that both groups should not be seen separate from each other⁶¹.

To conclude this review, we can say that a positive or negative impact of refugees on their host countries depends mostly on whether there are official policies and intervention in place⁶². Generally, in countries where there were no policies in place, the impact turned out

⁵⁷Alexander Betts et al, *Refugee Economies: Rethinking Popular Assumptions* (Oxford: University of Oxford, Humanitarian Innovation Project, 2014),

⁵⁸Shellito, page 13,

⁵⁹ Taylor, J, Edward et al, "Economic Impact of Refugees," *PNAS*, 7449-7453, 113, no. 27 (July 05, 2016), accessed December 2017, page 7449,

⁶⁰Alexander Betts et al, *Refugee Economies: Rethinking Popular Assumptions*

⁶¹Chambers, page 258,

⁶²Chambers, page 255,

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negative, as country and population were not protected from the potential burdens. However, in countries where there were policies in place to integrate the refugees into society, and to protect against the negative consequences, the refugees were a boon to the nation. Likewise, the long-term situation should also be taken into account. The poorer hosts might at first suffer from the refugee influx, especially when there is a lack in resources and infrastructure. However, if investments are done into the refugee community, then the hosts will also benefit from these improvements in the long run. Refugees can be a burden to their host countries, and this is more likely in a poorer host country. However, they can become a boost for the host country, especially economically. In some cases, the background and demographics of the refugees meant they could fill up the gaps that were present into society and integrate well. When this is not the case, effective policies and investments should be put in place that benefit both the refugees and the local population in their surroundings, in order to gain rather than lose from the situation in the long-run.

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Historical Chapter

Jordan Prior 2011 and Syrian Refugee Demographics

In order to evaluate the consequences of the Syrian refugees in Jordan, it is important to first understand Jordan's economic and social situation prior to the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War. As research has shown, a well-developed country, with a strong economy and ageing population such as in Europe, will, in most cases, easily benefit from refugees as they supply the nation with a much boost in youthful population and willing workforce. Jordan however, is not in the same situation as a country as such Germany. In this first chapter we will first analyse Jordan's economy and demographic situation prior to the arrival of the refugees. It is important to realise that the refugees did not enter into a country that was necessarily able to cope with such large numbers of refugees. Secondly, by looking at the demographics of the Syrian refugees coming into the country will highlight the issues that Jordan will have to deal with, trying to allow for participation and integration of refugees into their economy.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a small resource-poor country^{63 64}, and has a long history of absorbing refugees from various conflicts in the region into their country. According to the 2018 population census, Jordan has a population of 9,85 million⁶⁵ a third of whom are foreigners⁶⁶. Prior to the start of the Syrian War in 2011, Jordan was host to around 2 million, officially registered Palestinian refugees, many of whom had received the Jordanian citizenship. Still under 400,000 of the Palestinians live in refugee camps⁶⁷. The

⁶³ The World Bank, "The World Bank in Jordan: Overview," *The World Bank*, April 16, 2018, accessed September 17, 2018,

⁶⁴ Namrouqa, Hana, "Jordan World's Second Water-poorest Country," *The Jordan Times*, October 22, 2014, accessed September 17, 2018,

⁶⁵ World Population Review, "Total Population by Country 2018," *Jordan Population 2018 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs)*, 2018, accessed July 02, 2018,

⁶⁶ Williams, Sara Elizabeth, "Jordan Looks to Turn Refugee Crisis into Economic Boon," *IRIN*, March 30, 2017, accessed April 02, 2018, page 3,

⁶⁷ Connable, Ben, "From Negative to Positive Stability: How the Syrian Refugee Crisis Can Improve Jordans Outlook," *RAND Corporation*, 2015, ix-35, accessed July 2018, pages 16 – 17,

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integration of Palestinian refugees went rather smoothly and remained stable. However, with the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, Jordan received several hundreds of thousands Iraqi refugees. The exact number however has never been shown and those given are disputed⁶⁸. The UNHCR gave an estimate that in 2014 24,000 Iraqi refugees still lived in the camps. Many others also integrated into Jordanian society without problems, and when the situation in Iraq was deemed stable many were also repatriated, however several might have returned with the war against the Daesh or the Islamic State, within Iraq⁶⁹. Both the influxes of refugees added jobs, economic growth and diversity. However, with an estimate of 1.3 million⁷⁰ Syrian refugees coming into Jordan, 657,000 (2017) of which are UNHCR registered, have only added to the problems of integrating into Jordanian society⁷¹ and worsening the economic situation.

Jordan's GDP statistics showed that the annual GDP growth had dropped from 5.5 per cent in 2009 to 2.7 per cent in 2012⁷². The country's debt-to-GDP ratio was 90 per cent and their unemployment rate reached 15 percent, while youth unemployment reached a staggering 30 percent⁷³. The Arab Spring had harshly reduced tourism to Jordan and natural gas coming from Egypt has also been reduced, leading to higher fuel prices⁷⁴. The stagnation and decrease in the economy meant that the influx of new young labour overheated an already struggle economy. Measures were put in place to protect the already vulnerable Jordanian populations⁷⁵ meaning that Syrians have become dependent on foreign aid, low-paid informal

⁶⁸ IRIN, "Amid Syrian Crisis, Iraqi Refugees in Jordan Forgotten," IRIN News, June 06, 2013, accessed September 17, 2018,

⁶⁹ Connable, Ben, "From Negative to Positive Stability: How the Syrian Refugee Crisis Can Improve Jordans Outlook," page 17,

⁷⁰ Immenkamp, Beatrix, "Syrian Crisis: Impact on Jordan," European Parliament Think Tank, February 2017, accessed July 2018,

⁷¹ Williams, Sara Elizabeth, "Jordan Looks to Turn Refugee Crisis into Economic Boon," page 3,

⁷² Omar Dahi, "Refugee Crisis in Lebanon and Jordan," Forced Migration Review, September 2014, accessed December, 2016,

⁷³ Azhar Unwala, "Jordan-EU Trade Deal to Benefit Economy, Refugees," Global Risk Insights, August 19, 2016, accessed December 2016,

⁷⁴ Omar Dahi, "Refugee Crisis in Lebanon and Jordan,"

⁷⁵ Williams, Sara Elizabeth, page 3,

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work, which in itself resulted in lower government revenue from taxes and social insurance payments.

The protectionist measures that Jordan has put into place for its local population highlights its own poverty problem. The governorates of Amman, Irbid, and Zarqa host over more than half of the people living under the poverty line, as well as Mafrq being one of the nation's poorest regions. It is precisely in this poorer region where around 30 per cent of the refugees are registered. In 2016, 50 percent of the Mafrq City population were Syrian refugees⁷⁶. According to a Jordanian census in 2004, more than 90 percent of the population in the governorate was Transjordanian⁷⁷. Therefore, a struggle between the poorer local population and the refugees is expectable. Especially in these regions, the view towards the Syrian refugees is negative. The believe is, that Syrians are taking up all the available jobs, leaving even less opportunities for young Jordanian men and women. Because the refugees are willing to work for lower wages and longer hours, the local population fears that employers will therefore pass over Jordanians to go for the cheaper option. However, according the Connable there is no evidence that the unemployment rates in the Mafrq governorate has increased with the arrival of the refugees⁷⁸. In fact, the unemployment rate actually decreased by 1.1 percent between 2010 and 2013⁷⁹. However, it remains a fact that Jordan is already dealing with a significant and potentially very problematic high youth unemployment rate. And the arrival of Syrian refugees will not ease this problem, which would require investment into the economy and workforce.

⁷⁶ The Economist, "Fat Help," The Economist, October 01, 2016, accessed September 21, 2018,

⁷⁷ Department of Statistics, "Distribution of Population by Category, Sex, Nationality, Administrative Statistical Divisions and Urban – Rural," Population and Housing Census 2004, 2004, accessed May 05, 2018,

⁷⁸ Connable, Ben, "From Negative to Positive Stability: How the Syrian Refugee Crisis Can Improve Jordans Outlook," page 17,

⁷⁹ Ajluni, Salem, and Mary Kawar, "The Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on the Labour Market in Jordan: A Preliminary Analysis," *ILO Publications*, 2014, accessed April 06, 2018,

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Syrian refugees coming into Jordan receive a limited legal status. Jordan is not a signatory of the Geneva Refugee Convention of 1951. Therefore, Syrians are not officially recognized as refugees, however, due to a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Jordanian Government and UNHCR in 1998, they are classified as asylum seekers⁸⁰. When they enter the country and register with the UNHCR they are given aid in form of basic necessities and cash aid, as well as service cards for access to subsidized healthcare and government-run education services. However, even then access to further institutions or employment is limited, as well as other legal rights. Therefore, there is an estimate that more Syrians are living undocumented and illegal in Jordan's cities such as Amman. Only the well off and rich refugees are able to afford that lifestyle at least for a certain amount of time. The majority of Syrian refugees that come into Jordan do not have these funds and are poor as they deplete any savings they have as the war drags on⁸¹.

Once registered by the UNHCR they are brought to live in the designated refugee camps such as Za'atari in the Mafrqa governorate. Za'atari is the largest refugee camp in Jordan, and is home to around 80,000 people⁸² which comprises almost 15 percent of all Syrian refugees in Jordan. In Za'atari half of the population is under the age of 18⁸³, which creates several worries for Jordan. To start off, the initial idea and expectation that the refugees would reside temporarily in Jordan, is rapidly fading away as the war has entered its 7th year, with resolution insight. Thus it means that the refugees are here to stay, and in order for Jordan to remain stable, they must be entered and integrated into Jordanian society the best way possible. The median age in Jordan is currently 22 years old⁸⁴, which means that a further

⁸⁰ Carrion, Doris, "Syrian Refugees in Jordan: Confronting Difficult Truths," *Chatham House: The Royal Institute of International Affairs*, September 2015, accessed May 25, 2018,

⁸¹ Gaunt, Anna, "UNHCR Cash Assistance: Improving Refugee Lives and Supporting Local Economies – Jordan," ReliefWeb, 2016, accessed September 21, 2018,

⁸² Oxfam, "From Syria to Zaatari Glimpses of Refugees in Jordan," Oxfam, accessed May 21, 2018,

⁸³ Oxfam, "Life in Za'atari Refugee Camp, Jordan's Fourth Biggest City," Oxfam, accessed May 21, 2018,

⁸⁴ World Population Review, "Total Population by Country 2018," 2018, accessed July 02, 2018,

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influx of young refugees who will have to integrate into society is far from ideal. But before the youths can enter the workforce they need to have a chance to participate fully. This means that education has to be provided, and the Jordanian government has vowed to help the Syrian children. Imad Fakhoury, Jordanian Minister of Planning and International Cooperation stated in an interview that: "We in Jordan, for example, very early on, believed that we cannot afford to have a lost Syrian generation. Syrian boys and girls that don't go to school for 5, 6, 7, 10 years, they'll be left vulnerable to radicalisation."⁸⁵. However, the implementation of methods that Jordan has used for the refugees and the adjustments that followed will be addressed in Chapter 3 of this paper.

Before moving into the Jordan's refugee policies, there is a final important issue that is further intensified, namely Jordan's resources. As mentioned previously, Jordan is a resource-poor nation, and while its terrain and landscape has a wide variety, it is classified as having a desert climate, receiving less than 200mm of rain annually⁸⁶. This makes the issue of water shortage a great one⁸⁷. It is estimated that if Jordan's situation does not improve, it will experience endemic water shortages by 2020⁸⁸. Some of the reasons for this shortage include inadequate infrastructure and management, political motivated overuse, and population growth, as well as a decrease in rainfall due to climate change. These water shortage problems have only been exacerbated by the both the arrival of Iraqi and Syrian refugees^{89 90 91}. While projects to tackle this problem have been put in place since 1988, including a large scale desalination project from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea, the process and

⁸⁵ Guttman, Amy, writer, "World's Largest Refugee Camp Has Developed Its Own Economy," In *PBS NewsHour*, Public Broadcasting Service PBS, June 18, 2016,

⁸⁶ Government of Jordan, "Jordan – Geography and Environment – Geography," King Hussein, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, accessed February 04, 2018,

⁸⁷ Namrouqa, Hana, "Jordan World's Second Water-poorest Country,"

⁸⁸ Connable, Ben, page 13,

⁸⁹ The World Bank. "The World Bank in Jordan: Overview."

⁹⁰ Namrouqa,

⁹¹ Arsenault, Chris, "Climate Change, Refugees Worsen Jordan's Water Woes: Scientists," Reuters, August 30, 2017, accessed September 17, 2018,

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the improvements have decreased in effects due to the population growth and the further demand for water increases⁹².

To conclude this chapter, when we look at Jordan and analyse and criticise their refugee policies, we have to remember the country's situation. Being a resource-poor nation with an acute water shortage problem already indicates that the country will struggle to provide for an influx of close to a million people in the span of seven years, whilst maintaining their own 2 percent annual population growth rate. As Shellito mentioned previously, one of the main reasons for refugees to have a negative impact on their host country, is when there is a struggle and competition for scarce resources.⁹³ Secondly, a third of Jordan's population is foreign, which like an any country will create tension between the local and foreign demographics. This is especially the case when there are already problems for the local population. Jordan's young population is coping with a significant youth unemployment, especially among the poor Jordanians living in governorates such as Mafraq. It is estimated that half of the Syrian refugees coming into Jordan are below the age of 18. This not only places stress on existing public services such as education, but also has the potential of economic overcrowding. While Jordan had put in place protectionist measures to protect its own population, as the Syrian War continues, the reality is that Jordan and other nations hosting refugees will have to look for permanent solutions, and to absorb and integrated the Syrian refugees into their societies. In order to do so, without the refugees becoming a burden that Jordan cannot afford, measures and policies should be put into place, to shift the situation from a likely bleak outcome, into a boon and a boost for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

⁹² Connable, page 13,

⁹³ Shellito, page 18,

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Chapter 1

The Refugee Burden on Jordan

With the world wide refugee crisis, increasing amounts of research have focused on whether or not refugee negatively impact the host countries they reside in. This is mainly done to see if the fears in particularly Europe are not unfounded. Refugees are generally perceived by both government and local population to be a burden on the host country⁹⁴. These fears are best described by Bett and Collier: “[...] donor states and international organizations such as the UN have urged the governments of Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey to permanently integrate Syrian refugees into their societies. But leaders in those countries are deeply resistant to that idea, because they perceive refugees as a threat to domestic employment and a drain on stretched budgets. Nor are Syrian refugees easily incorporated into the fragile ethnic and sectarian balances that are crucial for maintaining stability in all three countries.”⁹⁵. As refugees are desperate for work, they are willing to work in worse conditions and for lower wages^{96 97 98}, bringing down the average wages in the process. Also besides seen as a threat to overcrowding the work force, refugees are also perceived as a threat to public and private services, especially when the host country is poor and lacks resources for its own population in the first place⁹⁹. These fears and uncertainty creates tensions with the society against the refugee population¹⁰⁰. And even if tensions do not rise dramatically, neighbouring countries to countries at war, fear the over spilling of the conflict into their own nation. These reasons are some of the most basic, when looking at the impact of refugees. Increasingly more

⁹⁴ Khouddour and Andersson, page 2,

⁹⁵ Alexander Betts, and Paul Collier, “Help Refugees Help Themselves: Let Displaced Syrians Join the Labor Market,” *Foreign Affairs*, 01 Nov 2015, Web, 27 Aug. 2018, page 85,

⁹⁶ Svein Erik Stave, and Solveig Hillesund, "Impact of Syrian Refugees on the Jordanian Labour Market," *International Labour Organization Regional Office for the Arab States and Fafo*, 2015, pages 7 – 8,

⁹⁷ Shellito, page 11,

⁹⁸ Chambers, page 251,

⁹⁹ Somya Rajawat, “Jordan: Resource Scarcity and an Increasing Population,” *Future Directions International*, Future Directions International, 16 March 2016,

¹⁰⁰ Carol Tan. “The Syrian Refugee Crisis: Conflict in the Making,” *IE Med, Mediterranean Yearbook 2015 Panorama*, 2015, page 307,

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research shows that the increase in refugees coming into Europe, will be a benefit to European nations, rather than the initial expected burdens^{101 102}. However, this is not the truth for other nations, that have a much larger problem with refugees and where some of the above mentioned fears are not unfounded. In the countries neighbouring Syria, such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan the governments and local population do fear the impact of Syrian refugees on their own nation, and this is not without reason¹⁰³. In this chapter we will look at the areas refugees could potentially become a burden to the host country in relation to the situation in Jordan. To start off we will address the issue of economic overcrowding and resource scarcity due to the refugees in Jordan, looking specifically at the poorer governorates. For several years, Jordan, like many other countries in the Middle East has been facing extremely high unemployment rates, particularly with the youths, which make up the majority of Jordan's population, 54% children and youths, with a median age of 22 years-old¹⁰⁴. Already having a local unemployment problem is not helped by the arrival of similar demographics refugees. Secondly, we will analyse the straining of public and private services due to the large amount of refugees. This is particularly import as Jordan is a resource poor nation. Prior to the arrival of the Syrian refugees, Jordan has been coping with water shortages and water mismanagement^{105 106 107 108}. This was already cause for dissatisfaction among the population towards the government. Refugees on the whole, bring a negative environmental impact with them as stated by the UNHCR¹⁰⁹, and the Syrian refugees in Jordan is no different. This causes tensions between the local population and the refugees¹¹⁰,

¹⁰¹ Shubham Poddar, "European Migrant Crisis: Financial Burden or Economic Opportunity," *Social Impact Research Experience (SIRE)*, 2016,

¹⁰² Christian Bodewig, "Is the Refugee Crisis an Opportunity for an Aging Europe?" September 22, 2015, accessed 28 June, 2018,

¹⁰³ Tan, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis: Conflict in the Making," page 308,

¹⁰⁴ Index Mundi, "Jordan Median Age," Index Mundi, January 20, 2018, accessed September 21, 2018,

¹⁰⁵ Connable, page 13,

¹⁰⁶ Namrouqa,

¹⁰⁷ Arsenault, "Climate Change, Refugees Worsen Jordan's Water Woes: Scientists,"

¹⁰⁸ Keith Proctor, "Tapped Out: Water Scarcity and Refugee Pressures in Jordan," Mercy Corps, March 2014, accessed September 18, 2018,

¹⁰⁹ UNHCR, "UNHCR Viewpoint: 'Refugee' or 'migrant' – Which Is Right?" UNHCR, July 11, 2016, accessed June 25, 2018,

¹¹⁰ Tan, page 309,

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and can lead to an increased risk of conflict in the host country. This is due to the strain on environmental resources, economic out- and overcrowding, altering the ethnic composition of the nation, as well as the possibility of facilitating links for arms, combatants and ideologies to pass borders¹¹¹. It is no surprise, that the potential of refugees bringing instability to the country, through what ever way possible, consciously or unconsciously, is of great concern to Jordan and other host nations in the region.

One of the arguments used by both academics and governments in Europe, to answer why refugees will be beneficial to the European nations, is that they will bring an economic boost in the sectors that are currently demanding their skills. This argument completely falls apart when looking at the Jordanian case. To start off, having a neighbouring country and trading partner descend into civil war, is a blow to the economy. According to Abdih and Geginat¹¹², in an IMF study looking at the macroeconomic consequences for Jordan with the Syrian civil war they came to several conclusions. In 2014 it was estimated that without the conflict in neighbouring Syria, the growth rate in Jordan would have been 4 percent in 2013 instead of the 3 percent they had received¹¹³. Before the war, Jordan's Investment Commission handled \$1.5 billion a year between Syria and Jordan. In 2014 this amount was cut down to \$400 million, and currently there is none at all¹¹⁴. The conflict in Syria has therefore had a negative impact on the Jordanian economy¹¹⁵. With the export route via Syria to Europe dropped, meant that access to this market was limited, and overall exports to Europe but also Lebanon and Turkey dropped a significant 30 percent by 2013¹¹⁶. On the other hand, imports had to increase in order to meet the needs of the rapidly increasing population. Non-energy imports had increased over 11 percent in 2013 alone¹¹⁷. The need for increased imports shows the

¹¹¹ Salehyan and Gleditsch, "Refugees and the Spread of Civil War," *International Organization* 60, no. 02 (2006),

¹¹² Yasser Abdih, and Carolin Geginat, "The Economic Impact of the Syrian Conflict on Jordan," *The Economic*, September 30, 2014, accessed June 25, 2018,

¹¹³ Abdih, and Geginat, "The Economic Impact of the Syrian Conflict on Jordan," page 1,

¹¹⁴ Arwa Ibrahim, "Will Syrian Takeover of Key Crossing Boost Jordan's Economy?" *GCC News*, Al Jazeera, July 09, 2018, accessed September 21, 2018,

¹¹⁵ Aalaa Halaka, "Challenges in the Jordanian Economy beyond the Refugee Crisis," *Economic Research Forum (ERF)*, May 27, 2018, accessed September 21, 2018,

¹¹⁶ Abdih, and Geginat, page 2,

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*,

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problem Jordan has to cope with, with resource scarcity. However, aid agencies and other nations have increased the relief sent to Jordan, to dampen the economic blows. The aid however cannot bring relief to increasing inflation, mainly due to increasing rental prices. The aid received from outside sources such as the UNHCR are often directed to refugee camps, such as Za'atari, where the aid can be monitored and controlled^{118 119 120}. But in 2013, only a fourth of all refugees lived in camps such as Za'atari¹²¹. In 2018 this number had remained relatively the same, however in a UNHCR report from 2018¹²², showed that more than 460,000 persons had passed through the Za'atari camp, meaning that those living outside are not receiving the aid, nor are they or the regions they live in, protected from all the struggles and hardships. Syrian refugees are not allowed to work in Jordan without a permit. These permits are hard to get, only around 10 per cent of employed Syrians gained a formal work permit in 2015¹²³. Thus those not living in the camps have filled the informal work sector^{124 125}. This informal employment has negative consequences for the Jordanian society because the Syrian refugees are out-crowding the legal Jordanian workers, especially in the construction industry and in the wholesale and retail industry¹²⁶. This is due to the fact that refugees universally are willing to accept lower wages and worse working conditions than the local population^{127 128 129}. This makes employers choose them over the Jordanians, not helping the already present and thus worsening unemployment in the country. At the same

¹¹⁸ Lewis Turner, "Explaining the (Non-)Encampment of Syrian Refugees: Security, Class and the Labour Market in Lebanon and Jordan," *Mediterranean Politics* 20, no. 3 (2015), page 387,

¹¹⁹ J, Peteet, "Cartographic violence, displacement and refugee camps: Palestine and Iraq," A, Knudsen & S, Hanafi (Eds) *Palestinian Refugees: Identity, Space and Place in the Levant*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2011,

¹²⁰ N, Seeley "The politics of aid to Iraqi refugees in Jordan," *Middle East Report*, 256: 37-42,

¹²¹ Abdih, and Geginat, page 1,

¹²² UNHCR, "Zaatari Refugee Camp - Factsheet, February 2018," *ReliefWeb*, UNHCR, 4 February 2018,

¹²³ Stave and Hillesund, "Impact of Syrian Refugees on the Jordanian Labour Market," page 6,

¹²⁴ Abdih, and Geginat, page 1,

¹²⁵ Stave and Hillesund, page 6,

¹²⁶ *Ibid*,

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, page 7 – 8,

¹²⁸ Shellito, page 11,

¹²⁹ Chambers, page 251,

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time the Jordanian government will have to deal with a loss in tax revenues, which they would have received had the work been done in the formal sector. This stands alone from the fact that the Syrian won't receive any employment protection or benefits in the informal sector, and places them in an extremely vulnerable position¹³⁰. To account for the increase in population the USAID conducted a study from 2013-2014, to estimate the increase in spending by the Jordanian government to meet the humanitarian needs of the Syrian population. They found that around one percent of GDP made in 2013 and in 2014 was used to accommodate the costs. This would be close to 3,4 billion USD and 3,6 billion USD respectively¹³¹. This rapid rise also contributes to the deterioration of the quality of the public services that are being offered, which also negatively impacts the local Jordanian population¹³². Therefore, economic overcrowding is a serious concern for Jordan. In 2015 the amount of overcrowding was not very severe, however with the conflict now in its eighth year, and will in all probability last a very long time, this will be an even greater issue. This is particularly when there are no protectionist and inclusive measures in place for the refugees. When humanitarian aid to Jordan and the refugees will be scaled down, it will drive up the need for refugees to enter the informal labour market. Thus Jordan will have to change and adapt its current refugee policies in order to prevent this from being exacerbated further. These recommendations will be addressed in the final chapter of this paper.

Moving on to public and private services. Refugees will put strain on these services, due to the host country becoming responsible for processing and receiving them, as well as integrating them into society¹³³. These services can range from housing and healthcare, to the basic food, water, and utilities and also the environmental degradation^{134 135}. This sudden increase in the demand will cause strain and decrease the quality of the services being offered. This has been shown in several cases such as in Turkey, that is also coping with Syrian

¹³⁰ Stave and Hillesund, page 6,

¹³¹ The World Bank, "The World Bank in Jordan: Overview," *The World Bank*, April 16, 2018, accessed September 17, 2018,

¹³² Abdih, and Geginat, page 2,

¹³³ Shellito, page 16,

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, pages 16 – 18,

¹³⁵ Shekhar Aiyar, et al, "IMF Staff Discussion Notes: The Refugee Surge in Europe: Economic Challenges," International Monetary Fund, Jan. 2016, Web, 03 Feb. 2018,

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refugees. Turkey has since 2015 seen a reduction in quality of their education and healthcare services¹³⁶. For any country this creates problems and is a cause for concern. However, countries in Europe for example, including the Netherlands and Germany, were not strained providing these services to their citizens, prior to the refugee crisis erupted. This is the complete opposite for Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. For these already resource-strained states, the public service strain is an extremely serious and relevant concern, and had led to the acceptable and unavoidable discussion of “burden-sharing”^{137 138 139 140}. Countries such as Jordan have called upon the international community for more support and diffusion of financial responsibility^{141 142}. Examples of these services include educational services, healthcare, as well as finding accommodation¹⁴³. Apart from the overcrowding in the employment sector and the public and private services sector, the environment is another element that suffers from the refugee influx, and a major concern for Jordan¹⁴⁴. Overcrowding leads to environmental degradation and the UNHCR states that refugees may increase issues of “deforestation, soil erosion, pollution, and depletion of water resources”¹⁴⁵. Jordan is a resource poor nations, especially in areas such as water and is coping with an

¹³⁶ Harun Ozturkler, and Turkmen Goksel, “The economic effect of Syrian refugees on Turkey: a synthetic modelling,” *ORSAM* 196 (2015), Print,

¹³⁷ Astri Suhrke, “Burden-sharing during Refugee Emergencies: The Logic of Collective versus National Action,” *Journal of Refugees Studies* 4.4 (1998): 396-415, Web, 16 Feb, 2018,

¹³⁸ Hirofumi Shimizu, and Todd Sandler, “Peacekeeping and Burden-Sharing, 1994-2000,” *Journal of Peace Research* 39.6 (2002): 651-68, Web, 20 Jan, 2018,

¹³⁹ Keith Hartley, and Todd Sandler, “NATO Burden-Sharing: Past and Future,” *Journal of Peace Research* 36.6 (1999): 665-80, Web, 05 Apr, 2015,

¹⁴⁰ Michael Barutciski, and Astri Suhrke, “Lessons from the Kosovo Refugee Crisis: Innovations in Protection and Burden-sharing,” *Journal of Refugees Studies* 14.2 (2001): 95-134, Web, 11 Feb. 2018,

¹⁴¹ Josh Lowe, “Germany and Turkey Call on NATO for Help with Refugee Crisis,” *Newsweek*, 9 Feb, 2016, Web, 10 Apr, 2016,

¹⁴² Shellito, page 16 – 17,

¹⁴³ CARE International, “7 Years into Exile: How Urban Syrian Refugees, Vulnerable Jordanians and Other Refugees in Jordan Are Being Impacted by the Syria Crisis,” *CARE International*, June 2017, 2-8, accessed June 29, 2018, Riyadh,

¹⁴⁴ Shellito, page 18,

¹⁴⁵ Karen Jacobsen, “The Forgotten Solution: Local Integration for Refugees in Developing Countries,” *New Issues in Refugee Research*, July 2001, accessed April 4, 2018,

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ongoing water crisis¹⁴⁶ that requires international assistance¹⁴⁷. The concept of “burden-sharing” in this case also leads to investments done within the host country in order to deal with the crisis at hand. The Netherlands is one nation that invests in Jordan to help and accommodate the state and the refugees¹⁴⁸ in terms of infrastructure and water supply management and development, as well as investments in the future of Syrian refugees. The depletion of resources, environmental or otherwise creates additional problems with the welfare of refugees but also the local communities. This in turn leads to competition among both groups for the available resources: jobs, services, and water. This competition has the potential to escalate into societal strife which, in turn, can lead to a hostile “us against them” mentality which will be discussed further.

Due to the negative economic consequences, the strain on private and public services and their decrease in quality, as well as the competition between the refugee and local population for scarce resources, can lead to social strife between the two groups, such as between the Lebanese and Palestinian communities in Lebanon¹⁴⁹. This has the potential to erupt into its own internal conflict^{150 151 152}. There are two levels to this threat. On a smaller scale, refugees can create social tensions, especially when refugees have distinct religious, political, or ethnic identities from the citizens of the host country¹⁵³. For Jordan is generally, there is no issue of

¹⁴⁶ Kayla Ritter, "Amman Faces Water Squeeze as Refugees Rush into Jordan," Circle of Blue, June 15, 2018, accessed June 29, 2018,

¹⁴⁷ Jordan Times, "Kingdom Seeks Global Community's Help to Address Water Crisis," Jordan Times, March 24, 2018, accessed June 29, 2018,

¹⁴⁸ Ministerie Van Buitenlandse Zaken, "Brighter Prospects for Displaced Iraqis," Dutch Government, June 28, 2018, accessed June 29, 2018,

¹⁴⁹ Zeina Ghazi Halabi, "Exclusion and Identity in Lebanon's Palestinian Refugee Camps: A Story of Sustained Conflict," *Environment and Urbanization* 16, no. 2 (2004): 39-48, accessed September 21, 2018,

¹⁵⁰ Salehyan and Gleditsch, page 4,

¹⁵¹ Paul Collier, et al. 2003. *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: World Bank, Online.

¹⁵² Todd Sandler, and James Murdoch, "Civil War and Economic Growth: Spatial Dispersion," *American Journal of Political Science* 48:138-51, 2004,

¹⁵³ Ann Tornkvist, "Sweden: Doubling the number of refugees as centres burn," *Al Jazeera*, N.p, 22 Oct, 2015, Web, 08 Mar, 2018,

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religion, and the Syrian and Jordanian histories and culture is intertwined. However due to the war, the multi-ethnic and religious populations within Syria, have started to turn against each other, and this could continue itself within Jordan, which can create conflict both within the refugee community as well as outside¹⁵⁴. This situation is one feared by both the Jordanian government and that of Lebanon¹⁵⁵ that the refugees bring the Syrian conflict into their own country. Tan states that due to the sectarian nature of the conflict in Syria, the political domestic grievances that were already present prior to the refugees have ignited. The continuing instability would topple over the precarious balance into conflict situation as well, including in Israel, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the North Africa and Mediterranean region¹⁵⁶. This relates to the next level of social strife. On a broader level, refugees increase the potential for internal conflict and war in the host nation¹⁵⁷. An example of this was seen in the Horn of Africa, where refugee crises have led to conflicting tribal and ethnic groups confined to a small geographic area, only worsening the conflict^{158 159 160}. This fear led to Lebanon changing its refugee policy from encampment to non-encampment, due to their experiences with rising tensions and conflict with the Palestinian refugee communities^{161 162}. In Jordan currently, the prime minister Hani al-Mulki has resigned from his function to try and stop the ongoing protests against the proposed tax reforms¹⁶³. The dissatisfaction among the population is not only focused on the proposed taxes but includes the limited employment opportunities, lack of investments, and resources. The mentioned problems, as well as

¹⁵⁴ Turner, "Explaining the (Non-)Encampment of Syrian Refugees: Security, Class and the Labour Market in Lebanon and Jordan," page 391,

¹⁵⁵ Ibid,

¹⁵⁶ Tan, page 308,

¹⁵⁷ Salehyan and Gleditsch,

¹⁵⁸ Idean Salehyan, "The Externalities of Civil Strife: Refugees as a Source of International Conflict," *American Journal of Political Science* 52,4 (2008): 787-801, Print,

¹⁵⁹ Oliver Bakewell, "Conflict and the Refugee Experience: flight, exile and repatriation in the Horn of Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 45,3 (2007), Print,

¹⁶⁰ Shellito, page 18,

¹⁶¹ Turner, page 387,

¹⁶² Halabi, "Exclusion and Identity in Lebanon's Palestinian Refugee Camps: A Story of Sustained Conflict,"

¹⁶³ Al Jazeera, "Omar Al-Razzaz Appointed Jordan's New PM amid Protests," *News Politics / Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, 5 June 2018,

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Jordan's continued reliance on international aid and corruption scandals, are further increased by the tensions due to the refugee crisis. Societal uprisings and demonstrations, while happening regularly in Jordan¹⁶⁴, can be concerning to the Jordanian government, that is trying to remain a stable and peaceful nation, besides its less fortunate neighbours.

Therefore, we can say that refugees can have a significant impact on their host's countries, and this impact can be a negative one. The economic consequences for an economy such as the Jordanian can be clearly seen. Overcrowding of the labour market and the lowering of wages are issues that Jordan currently struggles with, as well as the prior existing high unemployment rates among their youthful population. Being a resource poor nation and gaining over a million residents in the span of 8 years, means that there is a scarcity in resources and limited public services, such as healthcare and education, but also in even more basic needs such as water, and bread, which prices have sky rocketed. These problems not only impact the refugee population, but also the host population, leading to tensions between the two groups. These internal tensions as well as the conflict raging outside the borders of Jordan, means that societal strife is a real threat. The stability that Jordan is known for providing in the volatile region of the Middle East, can dissolve due to the pressure of the refugee crisis. This however is the most pessimistic of predictions. In the next chapters we will explore the positive impact that the refugees can bring Jordan, as well as how Jordan, in cooperation with the international community is addressing these current and potential future problems.

¹⁶⁴ Yom, "Jordan's Protests Area Ritual, Not a Revolution."

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Chapter 2

Refugees Are a Boon for Jordan

In chapter 1, we focused on the reasons in which refugees can have a negative impact on their host countries, in terms of economic overcrowding, putting strain on public services and resources, and increase in societal strain. However, while Jordan is faced with the negative implications and consequences of the refugee crisis, there is research and examples that show that refugees can give a positive economic impact in their host country. This positive impact will aid Jordan in coping with the refugees, as well as the refugees also being able to benefit from, and be positively integrated into Jordan. As the end of the war in Syria is still nowhere in sight, and the chances of possible return are nil, this integration and positive participation into Jordanian society and economy is essential for all parties to develop and thrive in stability. There are numerous ways in which refugees can bring a positive economic impact to their host countries. Shellito mentions five ways¹⁶⁵. The first is through investments specifically targeted towards refugees but that also benefit the host community¹⁶⁶. Secondly is the demographic make-up of the refugees, and thirdly, that labour-market disruptions can also become a positive consequence for the economy¹⁶⁷. Fourthly, refugees can boost the market as consumers and producers, and finally, refugees may increase the bilateral trade between the host country and country of origin due to the personal linkages by the refugees¹⁶⁸¹⁶⁹¹⁷⁰¹⁷¹. In the case of the Syrian refugees, not all of these five potential boons come into

¹⁶⁵ Shellito, page 8 – 15,

¹⁶⁶ Chambers, pages 253,

¹⁶⁷ Omar Karasapan, "Jordan's Syrian refugees," *The Brookings Institution*, N.p, 25 Feb, 2015, Web, 03 July 2018,

¹⁶⁸ David A, Gould, "Violence Has Forced 60 Million People From Their Homes," *The Atlantic*, N.p, 17 June 2015, Web, 03 July 2018,

¹⁶⁹ Joshua J, Lewer and Hendrik Van den Berg, "A gravity model of immigration," *Economics Letters* 99.1 (2008): 164-67, Web, 03 July 2018,

¹⁷⁰ Shellito, pages 15,

¹⁷¹ Roger White, "Immigrant-trade links, transplanted home bias and network effects," *Applied Economics* 39.7 (2007): 839-52, Web, 03 July 2018,

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play. The second assumption addresses the demographics of the Syrian refugees is one which does not apply in the Jordan. The refugee population is largely made up of young persons. The Eurostat estimates that around 81 percent of the refugees entering Europe in 2015 were younger than 35 and of this 55 percent were between the working ages of 18 to 34¹⁷². In Jordan these statistics are similar. Of the refugees registered through UNHCR over 50 percent are below the age of 18. Almost 46 percent is between the ages of 18 to 59¹⁷³. Unlike in Europe, where the comparatively young refugees can help alleviate the burden of an aging population, Jordan itself already is trying to cope with the opposite, a very young population, with the median age 22-years-old¹⁷⁴. Therefore, the positive impact where refugees could have complemented the host population is not fulfilled. The fifth and final way the host economy could grow and benefit from the refugees is through increased bilateral trade between the host country and the country of origin. However, in the case of Jordan, its economic ties with Syria, have disappeared¹⁷⁵. It has led to a decrease of growth as well as in the imports towards Lebanon, Turkey and Europe, due to the closing of trade routes¹⁷⁶. This forces Jordan to diversify and expanded their original major trading partners, and while this can benefit their economy in the long-run, this will for a significant amount of time cripple their economy. For these reasons in the remainder of this chapter we will focus on the remaining three ways through which the refugees can be a boon to the Jordanian economy. These will address the investments initiated in Jordan, the positive impact of the labour-disruptions, and the boost in market consumers and producers.

A refugee crisis can be detrimental to a host country's economy, resources, and society. However, a struggling nation can receive outside aid in order to manage the crisis effectively. As is the case in Jordan. The United Nations and affiliations such as the UNHCR are mandated to help those in need. Jordan can call upon these institutions to aid the refugees

¹⁷² Drew Desilver, "Refugee surge brings youth to an aging Europe," Pew Research Center, 8 Oct, 2015, Web, 03 July 2018,

¹⁷³ UNHCR, "Zaatari Refugee Camp Factsheet – February 2018," *UN High Commissioner for Refugees*, UNHCR, Feb, 2018, Web, 18 July 2018,

¹⁷⁴ Index Mundi, "Jordan Median Age." January 20, 2018,

¹⁷⁵ Ibrahim, "Will Syrian Takeover of Key Crossing Boost Jordan's Economy?" GCC News, Al Jazeera, July 09, 2018, accessed September 21, 2018,

¹⁷⁶ Abdih and Geginat, page 2,

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coming into their country. This includes; providing the shelter necessary, basic needs such as food and water, and also the financial needs. Setting up educational facilities is also an area where the UNHCR is helping both the refugee population in camps such as Zaatari and Jordan in trying to prevent the formation of an entire 'lost Syrian generation'. This aid, although directed towards the refugee population, is beneficial for the host country as well. The investments made explicitly for the refugees and the implementation of provisions offered can have a spill-over effect into the host country's society. An example of this is where schools build to provide education to the refugee children also allowing a host country children attendance¹⁷⁷. Due to the Syrian refugees, the enrolment into schools remains stable, which keeps schools necessary, thus open and running, which encourages further investment into the educational infrastructure, which in the long-term can boost economic productivity¹⁷⁸¹⁷⁹. Other fields of investment that institutions, governments, and NGO's can look towards, is mainly infrastructure, such as medical clinics, housing developments, and roads. While these may initially be placed for the refugee camp, when maintained, the local population can gain further access to these newly acquired resources once the refugee crisis has subsided¹⁸⁰. Even when the structures are temporary, it fuels the host country's prospects for further investments. As Shellito states: "In this sense, these short-term negative economic shocks that refugees provide to the system can give way to a longer-term positive economic outcome."¹⁸¹. It provides a wake up call to the country that problems Jordan has been struggling with for many years, such as water shortages due to inefficient infrastructure should be solved¹⁸². A refugee crisis such as the one in Jordan, puts Jordan into focus among the NGO's such as the UNHCR, of a nation that needs support and investment, in order to survive. Similarly, the European Union has adopted the policy of containment in the region,

¹⁷⁷ Shellito, page 8,

¹⁷⁸ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, and Lucy Hovil, "Local integration as a durable solution: refugees, host populations and education in Uganda," *New Issues in Refugee Research*, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, n.d, Web, 11 July 2018,

¹⁷⁹ Shellito, pages 8 – 9,

¹⁸⁰ Roger Zetter, "Are refugees an economic burden or benefit?" *Forced Migration Review*, Oxford Department of International Development, Dec, 2012, Web, 11 July 2018,

¹⁸¹ Shellito, page 9,

¹⁸² Proctor, "Tapped Out: Water Scarcity and Refugee Pressures in Jordan," page 9,

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instead of welcoming a large part of refugees themselves. This policy of containment, means that development aid into multiple parts of the Jordanian economy are necessary, not only focused on the refugees but also Jordan as a whole. For Jordan this is of utmost importance and very much necessary, when looking at the country's economic and social situation. However, the problems that Jordan is facing due to the refugee crisis, are being looked to being resolved by the Jordanian government with aid of institutions such as the European Union, other nations, and NGO's. A method to ensure aid can be registered and given, is through the encampment policies that Jordan has put into place. Jordan, unlike Lebanon uses this system for both historical and practical reasons. The Iraqi refugee crisis in Jordan was approached with non-encampment, however this meant that it worked against Jordan's efforts to gain and secure financial aid. Due to the non-encampment, the Iraqis became less 'visible' for the international community, as observed by the UNHCR¹⁸³. States, such as Jordan, will promote encampment because it makes the refugees visible and the spatially legible population, which apart from aid in counting the refugees, improving administrative efficiency¹⁸⁴, and also facilitates in fundraising by potential donors for the refugee camps¹⁸⁵¹⁸⁶. This shifts the costs from host governments to international actors, primarily the UNHCR, that usually fund and run the refugee camps, such as the Zaatari camp in Jordan¹⁸⁷¹⁸⁸¹⁸⁹¹⁹⁰, therefore taking away part of the burden of host countries and creating investment

¹⁸³ Jill I, Goldenziel, "Regulating Human Rights: International Organizations, Flexible Standards, and International Refugee Law," *Chicago Journal of International Law* 12, no.2 (2013), accessed June 24, 2018,

¹⁸⁴ Guglielmo Verdirame, and Barbara Harrell-Bond, "Rights in Exile: Janus-Faced Humanitarianism," *International Journal of Refugee Law* 18, no. 2 (June 01, 2006): 478-81, accessed July 13, 2018,

¹⁸⁵ Barbara Harrell-Bond, "Camps: literature review, *Forced Migration Review*," 2, pp. 22–23, 1998,

¹⁸⁶ Turner, page 393,

¹⁸⁷ N, Seeley, "The Last Refugee Camp." *Foreign Policy*. 30 October 2013. Accessed 30 July 2018.

¹⁸⁸ Turner, page 389,

¹⁸⁹ Sarah A, Tobin, "NGO Governance and Syrian Refugee 'Subjects' in Jordan," *Middle East Report*, 278, page 5,

¹⁹⁰ Dennis Sullivan and Charles Simpson, "Oasis in the Desert? Coproduction and the Future of Zaatari," *Middle East Report*, 278, 12-19, 2016,

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opportunities, including investment from companies, knowing there is an untapped and accessible market with target groups.

When looking at the impact of refugees on the labour market supply, refugees may, in certain sectors of society, such as in the agriculture and construction sector, overcrowding the labour force and due to their cheap labour, take the place of locals. This is of course a very negative consequence especially for the poor Transjordanian population. Whether refugees will impact economic development through depression or stimulation, depends very much on official policies and interventions put into place by the host government. Chambers argues that the worst depressions in economic development come as a result of little to none invention, whereas the best stimulation comes with major efforts by the government that have proven to be successful¹⁹¹. Encampment or non-encampment is a policy put into place by a host government that impacts the control they have on the refugee population. Non-encampment provides refugees with more freedom and enables them to increase the labour supply, worker precarity, while it also reduces wages. For refugees that access to the market is one of the ways that integrates them better into society. Encampment is the opposite. When a government feels threatened by the inflow of refugees into society and feels this might negatively impact the labour supply, the policy enables government to reduce labour market competition¹⁹². It is therefore a more beneficial policy for the host country, especially if the nation already has problems with an overheated labour market. Stopping the flow of more workers or dictating only certain area that refugees are permitted to work takes pressure of the labour market of also eases the publics worry of losing jobs due to refugee competition. In the case of Jordan, this method is partially in place. It is however important to remember that the majority of Syrian refugees do not live in refugee camps but rather outside in cities in Mafraq governate and the capital Amman. The Azraq refugee camp currently hosts over 36,600 refugees in 2018¹⁹³ and Zaatari camp hosts close to 80,000 refugees, with 461,700

¹⁹¹ Chambers, pages 255,

¹⁹² Turner, page 388,

¹⁹³ UNHCR, "Jordan Factsheet: Azraq Refugee Camp – January 2018," *UN High Commissioner for Refugees*, UNHCR, Jan, 2018, Web, 18 July 2018,

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refugees having passed through the camp¹⁹⁴. There are three additional official camps; King Abdullah Park, Cyber City, and Zarqa^{195 196}. It is estimated that of the 1,3 million Syrian refugees residing in Jordan, only around 200,000 are living in these camps combined and thus part of the encampment policy that Jordan has in place. This means that the labour market could potentially still be vulnerable. Thus far however, research into the impact of refugees on the Transjordanian workers, have shown that the impact is relatively limited¹⁹⁷. A report from Connable in 2014 describes that the long-term stability of Jordan is not at risk due to the refugees. In fact, challenging the pessimistic view, and rather showing that the refugees can offer opportunities that will improve Jordan's long-term economic, social, and security outlook¹⁹⁸. But the vulnerable feel more threatened and vulnerable, and the longer the Syrian refugees stay in Jordan, without the current economic climate changing, the more at risks the local population becomes. Thus the Jordanian government knows that it needs to investment into employment and a healthy labour market. The encampment policy helps to achieve this goal, as it makes the refugees visible to the international community and NGO's, which promotes them to invest into both the refugees and the Jordanians.

Instead of only relying on aid and support from the host government and international institutions and organisations, refugees can themselves create investment into the country's economy. Due to the overcrowding of resources such as food, investment and expansion of the food industry is required to keep up with the increased consumer demand that the refugee provide¹⁹⁹. This can lead to farms in the region of refugee camps gaining investment and incentive to expand business. This can be done on only a local level, but can also involve the

¹⁹⁴ UNHCR, "Zaatari Refugee Camp Factsheet – February 2018," *UN High Commissioner for Refugees*, UNHCR, Feb, 2018, Web, 18 July 2018,

¹⁹⁵ Turner 2015,

¹⁹⁶ André Bank, and Susanne Schmelter. "Auf Duaer in der Schweben? Syrische Flüchtlinge in der Türkei und im Libanon." *Friedensgutachten*. Münster. Print. 2016. 101-113.

¹⁹⁷ André Bank, "GIGA Focus Middle East," GIGA Sanctions Dataset | GIGA, August 2016, accessed July 02, 2018,

¹⁹⁸ Ben Connable, "From Negative to Positive Stability: How the Syrian Refugee Crisis Can Improve Jordans Outlook," *RAND Corporation*, 2015, page ix,

¹⁹⁹ Edward J, Taylor, et al, "Economic Impact of Refugees," *PNAS*, 7449-7453, 113, no, 27 (July 05, 2016), accessed December 2017,

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refugee population, which not only increases the amount of suppliers and producers in the country but also aids in the integration of both populations. This is extremely important if it becomes clear that the refugees will stay a long period of time and the host country will have to look towards long-term solutions. Such is the case with the Syrian refugees in Jordan. However, in order to increase not only the amount of consumers but also producers, refugees have to be allowed to interact with the local economy. Current encampment policies prohibit this. But, as mentioned previously, only a fraction of the Syrian refugee population in Jordan are living in camps and creating government revenue through aid and donations towards the camps. In the camps themselves, refugees are setting up businesses, transforming the camp into its own city: "But since residents have not been able to leave, they have started 3,000 businesses, including pastry shops, a pizza place, a supermarket and a garden shop, and cities nearby have loosened employment restrictions"²⁰⁰. The businesses also attract attention from locals living close to the camps, and creating a small ripple effect into the regional economy: "The most popular [products] attract local customers from nearby towns. Some Jordanian partners are even exporting goods produced in the camp."²⁰¹. Outside of the camps, refugees are creating a similar effect. The Zaatari camp is located 10 kilometres from Mafraq, the capital city of the same-named governorate. Mafraq is one of the poorest regions in Jordan²⁰², a conservative city, known for its traditional agriculture and trade with Iraq. Since the start of the Syrian war in 2011, the population has doubled from 100,000 to 200,000 inhabitants²⁰³. While this has led to problems due to lack in governmental resources such as water, electricity, healthcare, and waste disposal²⁰⁴, it has also placed Mafraq in the spotlight for both investments by the Jordanian central government, and also by international organisations due to its proximity to the Zaatari camp. This has also led to an increase in pricing especially in the housing rental sector, negatively impacting both the Jordanian and Syrian population. However, it has led landowners benefiting and resulting in a construction boom by developers buying up the available land for construction. The restaurant and retail

²⁰⁰ Guttman, "World's Largest Refugee Camp Has Developed Its Own Economy,"

²⁰¹ Ibid,

²⁰² OCHA, "Climate Fact Sheet – Jordan," *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs*, Aug, 2012, Web, 19 July 2018,

²⁰³ Bank, "GIGA Focus Middle East," page 5,

²⁰⁴ Ibid, pages 5 – 6,

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industry that prior to the influx was none existing, has exploded²⁰⁵. This, for a large part is aided by donor contributions. This need for aid and donors by Jordan is understandable due to the strain to country is under. But this support for the Syrian refugees, when invested efficiently can result in both sides benefiting from the aid to increase development in infrastructure such as in the Mafraq region, but also improve other government sectors and services in the entire country. This development will in the near-long-run result in more opportunities and a reduction in the chronic unemployment among both the Syrian refugees and the Jordanian population²⁰⁶.

As such we can see, that while the refugee crisis is creating problems in Jordan, these problems can very much transform into positives, in three ways. The most important factor, that effects all, is the international funding and aid that Jordan receives. While a heavy reliance on donor aid can also cripple an economy and population group, it is a very necessary evil for Jordan, as it cannot deal with the problems alone. Jordan for years has needed investment in order to deal with its internal problem such as a lack of infrastructure in the northern parts of the country as well as dealing with the high unemployment rates. The influx of Syrian refugees, while burdening the problems further, have also created to opportunity for Jordan to claim the aid and funding necessary to care for the refugees and the very necessity to tackle these issues head on before they become worse. The in part encampment policy in place, is a way in which Jordan protects its own population from the negative labour impact the refugees can have. The fear of labour competition has led to a renewed focus and also the necessary help to invest in new infrastructure and jobs in order to ease the unemployment problems for both the refugee population as the local Jordanians. Investments done for and inside the refugee camps such as Zaatari, have a trickle-down effect that aids the Jordanian economy as well. Investments into the Mafraq governorate and its subsequent development is also due to the influx of Syrian refugees, and the necessary attention by the Jordanian government and international organisations. The truth is that the Syrian refugees have negatively impacted Jordan, its society and economy. However, it has likewise increased the necessity for development and investment, and will in the long-run be

²⁰⁵ Ibid, page 5,

²⁰⁶ Connable, page 23,

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part of this multi-beneficial process for both populations. Now the main focus of the Jordanian government should be how to effectively and most efficiently use the aid that they are receiving, and to invest in their country and entire population, without becoming dependent on foreign investments.

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Chapter 3

Jordan's Plan for the Future

Research has shown that international institutions are among those that advise countries to permanently integrate refugees into their society and economy²⁰⁷. However, in order to deal with the large amounts of refugees, the Jordanian government has implemented several measures that includes a partial encampment policy and limiting Syrian participation in the work force by only giving out small amounts of legal working permits. These measures are put into place for differing reasons. The first is done in order to protect the Jordanian labour market and limiting further pressure on the increasing high unemployment rates in the country, particularly among the youths. The second, is that through encampment, the movement and doings of refugees are easier to control as well as that the presence of refugees is highlighted. This encourages donors, such as UNHCR, to provide the funding needed in the camps. In this chapter we will go in to more depth on the workings of these policies, the reasons behind them, as well as some of the disadvantages. As the years have passed, policy makers and academics alike have been studying the refugee crisis in the Middle East as well as in Europe. The effect that the new population can have on a country in all parts of society is not completely predictable and situations can alter quickly. However, we can look at the last few years, such as the situation in Jordan, and look at what we can improve. Thus in the final part of this chapter we will look at some of the suggestions that have been given to the Jordanian government, as well as some of the current changes that are already put into place, to help both the Jordanian state and the refugees to gain and support each other, for the next foreseeable future. It is important to remember when advising and changing Jordan's refugee policy, that the most effective refugee policy is one that improves the lives of the refugees in the short-run as well as their prospects for them and the region they are in, in the long-run. All should be in the economic and security interests of the host states in which they reside²⁰⁸.

²⁰⁷ Betts and Collier, "Help Refugees Help Themselves: Let Displaced Syrians Join the Labour Market," page 85,

²⁰⁸ Ibid,

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States that receive refugees, especially large quantities, can be concerned that the incoming refugees will create internal problems. This can include intervening in the conflict from which they fled, promote or trigger the intervention by the host state into the conflict, or trigger a reaction from the state from which they fled. Also their arrival could lead to destabilizing competition for scarce resources²⁰⁹. Due to some of these fears, states may believe that camps will allow easily monitoring and controlling of the refugee in the country^{210 211}. Jordan is a country that has adopted an at least in part encampment policy, and the Jordanian government has set up five official refugee camps for Syrians who fled the war after 2011. These camps are the following: Zaatari, Azraq, King Abdullah Park, Cyber City, and Zarqa. In 2016 these camps hosted approximately 200,000, which is around a one-third of all the Syrian refugees residing in Jordan that are registered by the UNHCR. An estimated 400,000 are currently living in the cities and towns in northern Jordan including Mafraq^{212 213}²¹⁴. One of the reasons for this protectionist measure, is for the local population and the competition in the labour market. Jordan, has in recent years, also prior to the Syrian civil war, has been attempting to reduce its reliance and dependence on low-wage foreign labour²¹⁵. Following through with this attempt, the encampment has excluded more than 100,000 mainly lower-class Syrian workers from the labour market. These protectionist policies are mainly in the interest of the regime Transjordanian supporters, who typically live in the more rural areas, such as Northern Jordan, while the of Palestinian origin Jordanians mainly occupy the cities such as Amman, Irbid, and Zarqa²¹⁶. These 'tribal' and Bedouin

²⁰⁹ G, Loescher and J. Milner, "Protracted Refugee Situations: Domestic and International Security Implications," *Abingdon: Routledge*, 2005, accessed 26 July 2018,

²¹⁰ Karen Jacobsen, "Factors influencing the policy responses of host governments to mass refugee influxes," *International Migration Review*, 30(3), pp, 655-678, 1996, accessed 26 July 2018,

²¹¹ Turner, page 389,

²¹² *Ibid*,

²¹³ Bank and Schmelter. "Auf Duar in der Schweben? Syrische Flüchtlinge in der Türkei und im Libanon," 107-111.

²¹⁴ Bank, "GIGA Focus Middle East," page 4,

²¹⁵ G, Chatelard, "Jordan: a refugee haven," *Migration Policy Institute*, 31 Augustus 2010, accessed 26 July 2018,

²¹⁶ C, Ryan, "Identity politics, reform, and protest in Jordan," *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 11(3), pp, 564-578, 2011, accessed 26 July 2018,

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communities have traditionally formed important power bases for the regime²¹⁷. However, their communities have the highest unemployment levels, predating 2011²¹⁸. It is these communities and areas that have struggled to cope with the influx of refugees, as the economic strain of hosting the refugees falls heavily on the rural areas^{219 220 221}. In the Mafraq Governorate the increase in population is clearly visible. Prior to the influx of refugees, around 60 per cent of the 300,000 Jordanian population lived in settlements of under 5,000. Now it is host to 70,000 registered non-camp refugees, while the actual estimates are higher, moving towards 200,000.^{222 223 224 225}. Thus the encampment of Syrian refugees is not only based on a policy of containment, but also of contentment, specifically the Transjordanian population.

The contentment of this part of the population is important for the stability of the state. Even prior to the Syrian civil war, there were signs of discontent with the regime from the traditional Hashemite supporters. The Transjordanian population has typically occupied jobs in the public sector, military and security services in Jordan. Due to the King Abdullah's programmes of neo-liberal economic reforms and privatizations, the Transjordanians have been consistently and disproportionately disadvantaged, unlike the Jordanian elite of Palestinian-origin that benefitted from them. The reforms are the main reason for the rise of

²¹⁷ J, Schwedler, "Jordan's risky business as usual," *Middle East Report Online*, 30 June 2010, accessed 30 July 2018,

²¹⁸ Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), "Jordan's National Employment Strategy," *Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation*, 2011, accessed 30 July 2018,

²¹⁹ Ministry of Labour (MoL), "Suq al-'amal al-urduni bi-alarqam 2010," [The Labour Market in Figures 2010] *Amman: Ministry of Labour*, 2010, accessed 26 July 2018,

²²⁰ Ryan, "Identity politics, reform, and protest in Jordan,"

²²¹ Turner, page 387,

²²² Albawaba, "Syrians make up 88% of Jordan's Mafraq population," *Albawaba*, 1 March 2015, accessed 30 July 2018,

²²³ Department of Statistics (DoS), "Estimated Population of the Kingdom, by Urban and Rural, at End-year 2012," 2012a, accessed 30 July 2018,

²²⁴ *Ibid*, 2012b,

²²⁵ Turner, page 396,

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the Transjordanian nationalist voice over the 2000's²²⁶. In the wake of the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011, protests also took place in Jordan. The protests were diverse but mainly initiated and led by the Transjordanians and were motivated by economic grievances, including rising prices and stagnant wages^{227 228}. The amount of labour-related protests increased in the period from 2011 to 2013, from 139 a year to 870 protests per year²²⁹. In May 2018 33 unions and professional associations called for a strike against to government proposed taxes. To please the protestors and the angry public, King Abdullah II accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Hani Mulki, called for a new government and a review of the current austerity measures^{230 231}. Since the nation's existence, Jordan has been dealing with a national debt equivalent to around 95% of the country's GDP. The government proposed taxed were meant to bring this down to around 77% of the GDP in 2021²³². However, the bad state of the economy lead to protests against these higher taxes. The encampment policies that Jordan has put in place should therefore, be understood through the grievances of the Jordan public and unrest against the government²³³.

To deal with the grievances of unemployment and job competition with the Syrian refugees, the Jordanian government has put into place work permit restrictions to the refugees that either prevent or reduce employment of Syrians. Between March 2011 and September 2013, the Jordanian government gave out less than 2,600 work permits to Syrians, although it has a

²²⁶ C, Ryan, "We are all Jordan... but who is we?" *Middle East Report Online*, 13 July 2010, accessed 30 July 2018,

²²⁷ M, Beck and S. Hüser, "Jordan and the 'Arab spring': no challenge, no change?" *Middle East Critique*, 24(1), pp. 83-97, 2015, accessed 30 July 2018,

²²⁸ Ryan, "Identity politics, reform, and protest in Jordan,"

²²⁹ Jordan Labour Watch, "Labour Protests in Jordan 2013," *Amman: Phenix Centre for Economic and Informatics Studies*, April 2014, accessed 30 July 2018,

²³⁰ Yom, "Jordan's Protests Area Ritual, Not a Revolution,"

²³¹ Holmes, "Jordan's Prime Minister Steps Down After Large Anti-Austerity Protests,"

²³² *Ibid*,

²³³ Turner, page 396,

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policy of facilitating the provision of investment permits to wealthy Syrians^{234 235}. There have been all out searches and consequences for businesses that employed Syrians without working permits. The ministry of Labour scaled up its labour regulations enforcements, with which they closed down 589 Jordanian businesses²³⁶. Syrians found working without working permits are placed in the Zaatari camp, to inhibit their access to the labour market^{237 238 239}. In order to formalize Syrian refugee workers into the Jordanian labour market, the private sector should be more encouraged to employ these workers, in sectors where migrant workers are permitted. This is a way to battle the negative labour condition aspects that are common within the informal labour market such as child labour. A controlled inclusion by the government can lower the present tensions in the labour market and can also contribute to a regulated market in the future. The encouragement of such a new strategy should also be accompanied by adaptations in the regulatory system and involve the authorities who issue the necessary work permits. Foreign aid donors, such as the Netherlands, have requested and supported the Jordanian government in providing more working permits for the Syrian refugees²⁴⁰. Another method the Jordanian government can use is the formalization of the informal market. Currently the informal market gives refugees a comparative advantage over Jordanian workers due to their willingness to accept lower wages and poorer conditions. This unregulated and strongly competitive nature of the informal market leads to unsustainable conditions for both parties. Additionally, the expanding informal market is known for its low productivity as well as the limited contributions to the national economy. By addressing the informal market and formalizing it with direct and short-term measures, the workers will be

²³⁴ M, Hall, "The Syrian Crisis in Jordan," *Middle East Report Online*, 24 June 2013, accessed 30 July 2018,

²³⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO), "The Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on the Labour Market in Jordan: A Preliminary Analysis," *Beirut: ILO*, 2015,

²³⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO), "Access to Work for Syrian Refugees in Jordan: A Discussion Paper on Labour and Refugee Laws and Policies," *Beirut: ILO*, 2014, page 20,

²³⁷ L, Achilli, "Syrian Refugees in Jordan: A Reality Check," *Migration Policy Centre*, 2015, accessed 30 July 2018,

²³⁸ Amnesty International (AI), "Growing Restrictions, Tough Conditions: The Plight of Those Fleeing Syria to Jordan," *London: AI*, October 2011,

²³⁹ Turner, page 395,

²⁴⁰ Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, "Steun Voor Jordanië en Libanon," *Werken in het Onderwijs*, Rijksoverheid, December 01, 2017, accessed September 16, 2018,

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better provided for against the market hardships and the Jordanian government can start benefiting too²⁴¹. An example of how formalization can benefit the economy is the transformation of the Zaatari camp into a city, full of businesses. The effects of this inside economy is starting to spread outside the camp, especially into the neighbouring community. If this market would be formalized and integrated into the Jordanian society, it could boost the Jordanian economy. Another reason for governments to urge this change in working regulations, is for Syrians to liberate themselves legally from the dependence on precarious relief efforts. Currently both the Syrian refugees and the Jordanian government are completely reliant on the donor agencies that facilitate and fund the refugee camps such as Zaatari²⁴².

With Jordan's own financial and economic problems, it cannot run without the help of the donor agencies. This financial aid is necessary and a long term requirement. In order for the Syrian refugees to become integrated into Jordanian society, or not become a burden to Jordan economical, the country needs financial aid to improve the economic situation in their own country and among their own public before the refugees can be helped. The need for funding, is therefore ultimately necessary. Therefore, the refugee camps, where only the minority of refugees reside, are also necessary. The camps give the refugees a face, and an easy target for the donor agencies to locate and analyse the needs that are required. The camps, however, are expensive to maintain, and more expensive than non-camp alternatives^{243 244}. Thus UNHCR's 2014 funding targets called for over 50 per cent more funding per capita for Jordan, in comparison to Lebanon, which has not implemented any encampment policies. And while the camps account for more funding, UNHCR funding appeals have consistently not been met. However, the short comings for the Jordanian

²⁴¹ Stave and Hillesund. *Implications of the Influx of Syrian Refugees on the Jordanian Labour Market; Findings from the Governorates of Amman, Irbid and Mafraq*. Geneva: ILO, 2015, page 8 – 9,

²⁴² Bank, "GIGA Focus Middle East," page 7,

²⁴³ N, Seeley, "The Last Refugee Camp," *Foreign Policy*, 30 October 2013, accessed 30 July 2018,

²⁴⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps," *Geneva: UNHCR*, 2014a,

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funding were the smallest for any Syrian refugee-hosting country^{245 246 247}. Donor aid short comings, for both the refugees in and outside the camps are very dangerous for their livelihoods as they are dependent on the aid, as is the Jordanian government. The aid needed is also diverse. Bank states this the following way: “While the Syrians living in the unofficial camps such as Rukban require immediate emergency aid and basic supplies for survival, Syrians in the Zaatari camp need, aside from basic services, more support for education and training. Syrian children and young people in cities like Mafraq need to be better integrated into the local school system, and adult Syrians must be given a work permit and the authorization to engage in regulated, legal labour in order to liberate themselves from dependence on precarious relief efforts in the medium term.”²⁴⁸. Jordan cannot yet move away from international aid funds. However, in order for both the refugees and the Jordanian government to relieve themselves from the economic and social problems, international donor agencies should focus their efforts at strengthening Jordan itself. This can be done through better cooperation and communication between the Jordanian state and its institutions with international donors and also local partners.

One of the first and foremost areas in which development and investment is necessary is through the promotion of school enrolment among the Syrian children²⁴⁹. Jordanian schools have been opened for the Syrian children, however most schools do not have sufficient resources to absorb the large increase in pupils²⁵⁰. In Mafraq, schools have begun to work in double shifts to accommodate the students. While it has provided education to the Syrian children, the quality of the education has decreased for both the Jordanian and Syrian

²⁴⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “Syria Regional Response Plan 5: Funding Status as of End of December 2013,” *Geneva: UNHCR*, 2014c,

²⁴⁶ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “2014 Syria Regional Response Plan 6: Funding Snapshot,” *Geneva: UNHCR*, 5 February 2015,

²⁴⁷ Turner, pages 393 – 394,

²⁴⁸ Bank, pages 7 – 8,

²⁴⁹ Stave and Hillesund, page 10,

²⁵⁰ Human Rights Watch (HRW), “We’re Afraid for Their Future: Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan,” *Human Rights Watch*, June 06, 2017, accessed September 16, 2018,

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children²⁵¹. At the same time there has been a low enrolment rate among the refugee children. This has negative short and long term implications for the labour market and the society in Jordan. As the Jordanian Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Imad Fakhoury stated that low enrolment rates can create a 'lost Syrian generation' which leaves them vulnerable radicalization in the future²⁵². Therefore, Jordan should strengthen its national framework of child labour to Syrian child labour. This will help with the implementation for a more comprehensive and integrated policy for the entire labour market²⁵³. This policy will help with the development for a basic strategy of the Jordanian labour market. By setting realistic scenarios, appropriate actors and forces can be identified to help with the realization of the set scenarios. Stave and Hillesund give several examples why Jordan should guide the Syrian refugees into the Jordanian labour market. The first is that Syrian refugees will remain in Jordan for the next coming years and this will therefore lead to implications for the labour market. Secondly they also suggest that there should remain a focus on how Syrians can be formally be involved in the labour market so to be beneficial to the Jordanian economy. This can be done for example by focusing on the potential of short-term employment, using the aid. While this is not a long-term solution, it can directly create new job opportunities for all in Jordan. This will solve the larger challenges at hand such as the dependency on development aid and international support, especially when these support agencies are reduced. Therefore, the sooner this challenge and problem is addressed the better.²⁵⁴.

Jordan already has a strategy since May 2011 called The National Employment Strategy (NES). This attempts to provide a vision for an inclusive yet also protective labour market. The NES was paired with an Action Plan elaborated into an Implementation Plan. These Plans outlined the actions that should be taken by the public agencies. However, since its implementation in 2011, the NES should be adjusted to include the above mentioned actions in order to provide a better framework for Jordan to address the Jordanian and Syrian refugee

²⁵¹ Svein Erik Stave, et al, "Improving Learning Environments in Jordanian Public Schools: Lessons from School Visits and Community Dialogue in Northern Jordan," *Education for the Future*, February 2017, accessed September 01, 2018, page 5,

²⁵² Guttman, "World's Largest Refugee Camp Has Developed Its Own Economy,"

²⁵³ Stave and Hillesund, page 10,

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, page 9,

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communities. If the coordination of the improved NES is done on a national level, with strong communication between the other actors, it can truly change the situation instead of being limited and unsustainable²⁵⁵. With this strategy in mind, Jordan can also focus on the transition of becoming a more industrial nation. In order to make this transition, Jordan would need a small number of large businesses alongside a large amount of skilled labourers. Therefore, the perceived burden of Syrian refugees can be used and turned to benefit both parties. Through a zonal development model, the Jordanian government can turn refugee camps and the urban environment surrounding the camps into more industrial originated economical zones. This investment would give Syrians access to education, training, and the right to work. Such investments can come from international actors, directing aid towards this goal, and also further attract international business and investments, to further boost the Jordanian economy as a whole²⁵⁶. Jordan therefore has the capabilities when using their policies effectively to turn the burden of the Syrian refugees into a boost, that will benefit both the Jordanians and the Syrian refugees in the near and coming future.

²⁵⁵ Ibid, page 10,

²⁵⁶ Betts and Collier, page 86,

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Conclusion

Through the research we can conclude that Jordan's economy and society is currently suffering under the burden of a failing system. A failing system that is under further pressure due to the Syrian refugee crisis. With a struggling economy for the start, with unemployment rates among its young population, the added influx of more young people desperate for work, Jordan has been licking its wounds ever since. The problems that Jordan was facing have been highlighted to the world. With a partial encampment policy, the Jordanian government has tried to protect their vulnerable labour market, forcing Syrians to work in the informal market, where they become victim to exploitation and poor working conditions. In the northern governorates of the country, such as Mafraq, schools are struggling to provide education to both their regular Jordanian pupils and the Syrian refugees, leading to a free of a 'lost generation' and the consequences of this in the future. The scarcity of Jordan's water resources has also never been clearly than it is today.

However, despite all these burdens and troubles Jordan seems to have gained in the past 7 years, the country has realized that it can turn to situation around. The damage today can be turned into a blessing tomorrow. The Syrian refugees can help to boost the nation. However, in order for this to truly take place, steps have to be taken.

The main answer to do this, is investment. Jordan has called upon the international community for help, and they have responded with aid to support with the housing of the refugees. As the years have gone by, countries in Europe that have shifted their focus from housing refugees themselves to helping the neighboring countries of Syria to handle the majority of Syrian refugees. This has resulted in aid and investments not only for the refugees but also for the country itself. Armed with investments, the Jordanian government has allowed the Syrian refugees to enter their labour market formally. This would boost their economy, for both communities. It would also take away the risk factor of the 'lost and radical' refugee population, helping Jordan to remain the stable country it is today. Therefore, by adapting their current strategy towards their economy and integrating the Syrian refugees into it and their society, Jordan might have lost some, but will gain a much need boost, with

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the ability to develop further as a country in its own right, without relying on the international community for help.

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