

Strengths

- Turkish Syrian Trade Agreement
- Access to GAFTA markets
- Strong entrepreneurial culture
- Little indebtedness as result of owner finance
- Good services and one-stop shop licensing at Sheik Najjar

Opportunities

- Economic Development Unit at Mayor's Office opens public sector dialog with private sector
- Decentralization may raise Aleppo competitiveness
- Central Government change in attitude towards and support of private sector
- Private sector business climate will improve with
 - reduced red tape and regulation
 - Aleppo branding and name recognition
 - Proximity to European market

Weaknesses

- Limited education of labor force
- Low female labor force participation
- Non-competitive transport and logistics sector, low quality airport and limited air services
- Limited business services
- Limited access to business finance
- Red tape limits business creation, leading to delays with registration and licensing
- Foreign Direct Investment low
- Political limits on markets in US and OECD countries

Threats

- De-industrialization trends
- High dependency (30% of jobs) on vulnerable textile sector
- Syrian trade liberalization threat to domestic market
- Foreign trade liberalization in Europe threatens export market via trade diversion
- Energy prices to rise to levels of world market