The international migration and foreign policy nexus: the case of Syrian refugee crisis and Turkey

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Abstract

The relationship between 'foreign' and 'immigration and asylum' policy is complex and has significant consequences beyond these policy areas. Despite their ever increasing importance, migration and refugee studies have been rarely tackled within the foreign policy dimension of state's responses, in particular regarding refugee crisis. This paper both demonstrates the importance for and impact of foreign policy orientations on immigration and asylum policies. It questions how 'foreign' policy and 'asylum' policy are intertwined and generate differences in coping with the mass influx with a focus on the Syrian refugee crisis and Turkey's policy responses. We argue that assertive foreign policy of Turkey, particularly willingness to be the actor 'establishing the order' in the Middle East' which led to the 'open-door' and humanitarian asylum policy at the initial stages of refugee flow. However, the isolation of Turkish foreign policy along with the increase in the numbers of refugees necessitated recalibration of the adopted policy towards the one based on 'non-arrival', and 'security' emphasizing 'temporary protection', 'voluntary return' and the 'burden share'.

Keywords: Migration management; mass influx; temporary protection; Turkey's immigration and asylum policy; Turkish foreign policy.

Introduction

While international migration appears as an important theme in foreign policy; states' foreign policies orientations, decisions and acts have also dramatic effects upon international migrations trends. The relationship between foreign policy and immigration as well as asylum policy, in particular mass influxes has significant consequences not only for these policy areas but also domestic and humanitarian aspects. Despite its importance, the nexus between foreign and immigration policy has rarely been examined except studies addressing the external dimension of the European Union's (EU) action on migration and asylum and the policies of the United States (US) (Borjas, 2001: Boswell, 2003; Guild, 2006; Geddes, 2009; Lavanex & Ucarer, 2004; Tucker and Wrigley, 1990). However, empirical research seems to be lagging behind,

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particularly studies that question how foreign policy and asylum policy intertwine in other countries which experience mass influxes and refugee crisis.

This study responds to this gap by focusing on foreign-asylum/migration policy nexus in the case of Turkey. The evolution of the Syrian crisis and influx of Syrian refugees to Turkey since 2011 can be regarded as an important case to understand the proposed relationship by considering the characteristics of international protection. In the post-Cold War era, international protection and refugee regime mainly focus on the 'non-arrival policies' that refer to keeping the concerning population where they are as long as possible and supporting the relevant source or transit countries with remote controlling measures and protection (Castles et al., 2014: 226; Papadopoulos, 2007: 98). After 2000, temporary protection and return policies have been introduced extensively and legitimized by the arguments of burden-sharing and securitization discourse. However, Turkey's policies responding the on-going Syrian refugee crisis reflect significant policy shift from general global trend and her previous refugee policies as in Kurdish Iraqi refugee flow in 1988 and 1991. Towards Syrian refugees, Turkish state adopted 'open door' policy, avoided using securitization of refugee movement and did not ask for burden sharing for a long time. Considering the number of refugees, which reached to 1,938,999 as of 14 September 2015, referring to the highest population within the neighbouring countries according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as of 9th July 2015, Turkey's policy change, is very much puzzling for students of migration and foreign policy.[1]

This paper examines the relevance of foreign policy objectives and practices in migration policy making. It argues that Turkey's assertive foreign policy in general; Syrian policy in particular has influenced how it has responded differently to Syrians' mass influx. Turkey has utilized immigration and asylum policy to demonstrate its 'soft power' capabilities, to achieve her foreign policy goal of 'acting as a powerful regional country' and 'order establishing actor' in the Middle East and build a reputation in international society as a pivotal global actor and 'central state' which is able to contribute to the solution of humanitarian and political problems. However, the case also demonstrates how foreign policy priorities, particularly real or perceived security threats required her to make substantial changes in the foreign and migration policies as the crisis evolves. The transition from the open door policy that supported with a humanitarian approach and the avoidance of seeking for international help to a limited open door policy, with a specific emphasis on internalization, burden-share as well as the need for safe heaven and in practice de facto camps within the border of Syria should be analysed. Within this paper, such change was associated with the concerns on border security, economic burden, the realization of false assumptions about the

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[1] See http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=224 (Accessed: 14/9/2015).

length of the crisis and the isolation in the international community in terms of her policy direction in Syrian civil war.

The case of Syria has still been on-going and this case should have been approached with its dynamic character. In this framework, the secondary hand sources such as newspapers, official and informal reports of the national and international organizations, official declarations and existing academic studies are employed in order to reveal the Turkey's respond to the mass influx in the conjunction of foreign and asylum policy.

Theoretical Explanations for the Migration-Foreign Policy Nexus

The relationship between migration and security captured the attention of international relations scholars in the last two decades. However, migration policies are closely related to the international relations and foreign policies in multiple ways. The changes in international refugee regime that refers to a "set of legal norms based on humanitarian and human rights law, as well as a number of institutions designed to protect and assist refugees" is crucial to understand migration policies (Castles et al., 2014: 225). Due to the politicization of refugee regimes and approaches to international protection since the 1990s, the national legislation became tough and the state security and sovereignty are approached more vital than the refugee protection. The international response to the Iraqi, Bosnia, Kosovo, Somalia and Haiti refugee crisis demonstrated how the receiving countries and international organizations adopted new paradigm in international refugee regime by preferring containment over protection and temporary solution over durable solutions (Mertus, 1998: 328).

While the international refugee regime is decisive for states' responses to migration movements, foreign policy of individual states influence the direction and characteristic of migration (Mitchell, 1989: 682). Naturally, the creation of more efficient border regimes, stricter asylum procedures, the reduction of irregular immigrants or repatriation of them and denying granting asylum status are part of foreign policy making. Foreign policy orientations, decisions and actions influence migration policies, and generate multidirectional forms (Teitelbaum, 1984; Castles, 2014).

Limited number of studies has attempted to theorize the relationship between migration and foreign policy (Geddes, 2009; Greenhill, 2010; Mitchell, 1989; Teitelbaum, 1984; Weiner & Munz, 1997). The linkage between migration movements and foreign policy mainly emerge on four dimensions (Teitelbaum, 1984: 433). First, foreign policies frequently served (often unintentionally) to stimulate international migrations such as mass influxes, in the cases of foreign military/political interventions, or internal or external responses to intervention. Foreign policy may be employed to facilitate or restrict existing refugee flows. Second, both sending and receiving countries may use mass migration movements as tools of their foreign policies, particularly to destabilize or embarrass foreign-policy adversaries

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(Teitelbaum, 1984: 436). Receiving countries may likely to accept refugees from adversarial neighbouring regime to be able to maintain a reservoir of opposition that often express itself in the form of cross-border guerrilla activities. In this respect, Kelly Greenhill (2010) theorizes migration as a strategic option for small states in competitive interaction. For instance, Cuba, Kosovo, Haiti, North Korea have successfully used the intentional creation, manipulation, and exploitation of real or threatened mass population movements a unique kind of coercion vis a via the democratic and developed states. Third, the formulation of foreign policy is also affected by the presence of substantial numbers of refugees, immigrants, and diaspora(s). Not only they affect the receiving country's policies toward the sending country but also sending country seeks to mobilize its expatriate population on behalf of its foreign policy goals such as joining regional organizations (Teitelbaum, 1984: 441). Lastly, some other foreign policy priorities such as the security concerns and border control may shape immigration/asylum policies. Therefore, various dimensions of foreign-policy of both sending and receiving country may lead to differential treatment for similar migrants from different countries and same migrant groups across time. Furthermore, few studies have already addressed the question of how foreign policy, particularly economic policies and development aid can be linked to refugee and immigration policies (Castles, 2009; Harris & Todaro, 1970; Vogler & Rotte, 2000). For instance, Weiner and Munz examined the policy instruments available to Germany and the United States to affect the internal conditions of countries that generate large unwanted migration flow. The vast majority of this literature fails to recognize the how foreign policy and migration relation occur in developing countries.

The case of Turkey is valuable because the four year-long refugee flow from a neighbour country, which has been in a civil war, provide ground to investigate changes both in immigration policies and foreign policy. The case can be beneficial to see how evolving of foreign policy reflect on the immigration policy. Such an analysis can contribute to existing literature because mass influx are very dynamic processes that require receiving countries to adopt policy changes which have important consequences on its immigration-asylum policy.

In terms of methodology, this paper adopts qualitative case study method, in particular process tracing (PT), which can be defined as a "systematic examination of diagnostic evidence selected and analysed in light of research questions and hypotheses posed by the investigator" (Collier, 2011: 823). PT mainly involves an identification process for the "intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable" (George & Bennett, 2005: 206). Since the paper also aims to test the above-given theories and to identify the casual mechanism and the intervening casual processes between foreign and asylum policy; PT appears as the most appropriate method for

this research. It should also be noted that the paper focuses only one case, where PT's high potential for making casual inference in single cases, in other words within-case inferences, appears as an additional important asset.

The paper first provides a detailed narrative, which is highly specific to the tested theories for the Syria case; then, develops an analytical explanation in relation with the focused hypothesis. Thus, it can be seen as an attempt, which can be categorized as a "theory-testing" and "explaining outcomes" variants of PT (Beach & Pedersen, 2011). In this framework, on the one hand, Teitelbaum's theory regarding the interaction between foreign and immigration policy was tested in order to see whether the case of Syria crisis and Turkey's responds is evidence that a hypothesized casual mechanism is actually present. On the other hand, the paper attempts to supply a sufficient explanation of a historical outcome for the Syria refugee crisis and Turkey's changing response in relation with its foreign policy as trying to respond why at the first phase Turkey adopted an 'open door policy' and later 'non-arrival' one. The case of Syria has been still on-going and this case should have been approached with its dynamic changing character. Thus, mainly secondary hand sources such as newspapers, official and informal reports of the national and international organizations, official declarations and existing academic studies are used.

Historical Background: Mass Influxes from the Middle East

Turkey has long been a land of asylum, particularly for refugee flows since its establishment in 1923. However, as starting from 1980s, the country come across with the influx of refugees and irregular and transit migrations, particularly from the Middle East as well as from Africa and Asia. The mass influxes from the Middle East reflect the complex shifting nature of the refugee crises and relief efforts in the post-Cold War era as well as they present unique challenges for Turkey in terms of foreign and refugee policies (Ihlamur-Oner, 2014). They appear as the main determinants of formulating a new refugee and asylum policy.

The first mass influx from the Middle East started with the Iranians fleeing from the new regime in Iran after 1979. As similar to the case of Syrians, Turkey adopted an open door policy, enabling Iranians to enter the country without a visa and stay temporarily. According to some informal data, from 1980 to 1991, a total of 1.5 million Iranians benefited from this policy (Latif, 2002:9). The following three major influxes came from Iraq in 1988 and 1991. Due to the war between Iraq and Iran, 51,542 Iraqis asked for asylum in Turkey (Kaynak, 1992:25). Turkey initially closed her borders; however due to the domestic and international pressure, Turkey agreed to temporarily accept Kurdish refugees on humanitarian grounds without granting them refugee status. As following the declaration of amnesty for the Kurds, majority of them returned to Iraq.

The second flow from Iraq was the consequence of the First Gulf War. After the Iraqi military had attacked to the northern Iraqi Kurds, because of the Kurdish uprising; as of March 1991, 460,000 Iraqis, most of whom are Kurds and Turkmens arrived; but they were not allowed into the country. Turkey did not grant de jure refugee status; but considered them as de facto refugees because she approached to the case as a threat of national security. Turkey closed its borders and even declared that the military intervention could be considered to prevent the refugee flow if the United Nations Security Council did not take necessary measures (Latif, 2012:12). Turkey sought for humanitarian assistance from international community for provision of food and tents from the very beginning and accused international society as being her left alone. However, the most significant difference appears as the creation of the 'no-fly zone/ safe area or haven' in northern Iraq where repatriation of the mass influx was realized.

The 2011 marked another mass influx towards Turkey from the Middle East. Before moving to elaborate Turkey's policy responses to Syrian influx, it is better to briefly introduce Turkish foreign policy towards Syria as the paper hypothesizes a relationship between foreign policy and immigration policy in this case.

The Turkey's Foreign Policy toward Syria

Until 1999, Turkey and Syria had tense bilateral relations due to historical and current problems, including territorial dispute over Hatay, being on the different poles during the Cold War, and disagreements about sharing of water resources. Syria's sheltering and support to the militant Kurdish separatist group called Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) were a significant challenge to the territorial integrity of Turkey and the security. Even in October 1998, two countries came into the brink of war. The hostility between two countries was also related to the elites' utilization of external threats for self-legitimization, which served to deepen mutual mistrust built on historical myths and realities (Hinnebusch & Tur, 2013: 210).

A new era started between two countries, resulting in intense negotiations and cooperation in security, economic, and cultural fields which first lead to normalization between 1998 and 2003, then to rapprochement between 2003 and 2011. The rapprochement, stemmed from intertwined factors including the role of geopolitics, changing systematic/regional dynamics with the US invasion of Iraq, as well as the evolution of domestic politics in each country (Altunisik & Tur, 2006). Particularly, the regime consolidation in Syria under Bashar Assad and the democratic consolidation attempts in Turkey under the Justice and Development Party (JDP) constituted conducive environment for better relations. Turkey's Syrian policy reflected a significant transformation in the foreign policy approach.

Turkish state's new foreign policy approach, ideationally shaped by Ahmet Davutoglu, aimed to become a power centre, extending its sphere of influence

over several distinct neighbourhoods primarily the Middle East, then the Balkans, North Africa, the Southern Caucasus. "Brotherly" relations with close neighbourhood, particularly those that had been parts of Ottoman Empire have been very much emphasized. Also, foreign policy makers tended to de-securitize traditional foreign policy problems and threats, pursue active diplomacy and introduce new soft policy instruments such as trade relations, public and humanitarian diplomacy, civilizational discourse and cultural cooperation. Syria might be 'show case' or a 'test case' for recently embraced foreign policy goals and roles such as 'strategic depth', 'zero problems with neighbours', 'becoming a soft power', 'de-securitizing problems', and playing the role of mediator' given the fact that the potentials for deepening cooperation with Iraq and Iran was much limited (Aras & Karakaya, 2008; Demirtas, 2013).

One of the most visible reflections of Turkey-Syrian rapprochement was observed in the economic integration. While Turkey considered Syria as a gateway to the Middle Eastern markets, Syrian regime approached Turkey as an opportunity to be integrated into global economy and overcome American sanctions (Hinnebusch & Tur, 2013: 159-160). After the Free Trade Agreement between two countries in January 2007, the trade volume rose substantially, from the 796 million USD in 2006 to 2.5 billion USD in 2010. Further economic goal is to create a zone of free movement of good and persons among Syria, Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon.[2] Rapprochement reached to the highest level in the fall of 2009, when they established High Level Strategic Council (HLSCC). The ministers organized a joint cabinet meeting in October 13, 2009. More than 60 agreements and Memorandum of Understanding aiming cooperation on politics, security, commerce, culture, health, agriculture, environment, education, transportation, and water were signed in the subsequent HLSCC meetings at ministerial and prime ministerial levels. Furthermore, Turkey also took a mediator role in the peace talks between Israel and Syria as well as in brokering talks between Fatah and Hamas, and Pakistan and Afghanistan. Ahmet Davutoglu characterized Turkish-Syrian relations with the motto: "common destiny, common history, and common future (Demirtas, 2013: 111).One important agreement that continued its impact since 2009 is the Visa Exemption Agreement that enabled both countries to abolish visa requirement. The touristic visits between the two countries increased more than doubled[3] . The countries even aimed at formulating a Schengen type of joint visa policy including Iran and Iraq. It would be called "Şamgen".[4]

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[2] 'Relations between Turkey and Syria', Retrieved from http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey%E2%80%93syria.en.mfa (Accessed on 18.04.2015).

[3] For further information on Relations between Turkey and Syria'. from http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey%E2%80%93syria.en.mfa. (Accessed on 18.04.2015).

[4] Can be retrieved from http://www.cnnturk.com/2011/dunya/03/07/schengen.olmazsa.samgen.verelim/609131.0/index.html. (Accessed on 22.04.2015).

The rapprochement period finished in June 2011, when the Syrian opposition started a nationwide struggle against the Bashar Assad regime. Turkey's foreign policy toward the crisis in Syria can be analysed within three stages, which are "diplomacy, confrontation and defence" (Ananicz, 2014). In the very beginning of the protests in Syria, Turkey pursued diplomatic ways to persuade Assad to take necessary steps for reform. Turkey genuinely believed that she could convince Syrian regime for power transition because of close bilateral economic and political relations, which was identified as 'brotherly relations' with politicians. Also, Turkey appropriated the role of 'order establishing country' that might govern regional politics. Immediately, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Davutoglu visited Syria. Nonetheless the attempts for convincing Assad failed. Then, Erdogan called Assad to leave the post and recognized the Syrian National Council as the official representative of the Syrian opposition in September 2011. This statement was also a turning point of the diplomatic relations of both sides that ended with withdrawal of their diplomatic representations as well as the free trade agreement between the two sides was put on hold. Thus, by late-2011 since Turkey's mediator initiative failed, Turkey decided to cut its diplomatic ties with Syria as the second phase of respond, confrontation stage started.

Since then, Turkey overtly became positioned itself against the Syrian regime and relations entered into an enmity stage after a decade long honeymoon (Aras, 2012). For the first time in its foreign policy history, Turkey takes a side in a regional conflict, involves in domestic politics of neighbour country by announcing she wants regime change and international intervention if necessary. [5] Turkey consistently asked international community to take tougher measures and to launch an intervention to outlaw Assad regime.[6] In addition, there are many claims from different actors regarding

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[5] Official statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, retrieved from http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-suriye-siyasi-iliskileri-.tr.mfa (Accessed on 27.07.2015); President Erdogan said (10.01.2014): "Turkey would fight against Islamic State and other 'terrorist' groups in the region but said it would stick to its aim of seeing Syrian President Bashar al-Assad removed from power.", *Reuters*, retrieved from http://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Turkey-to-fight-Islamic-State-Erdogan-says-377766 (Accessed on 27.07.2015); Official Declaration by the Ministry of foreign Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs (26.05.2012) condemned the massacre of El Hula in Homs and declared that it should be reported as a black stain on the history of mankind and because this operation is described as Turkey gave a diplomatic note to Syria is suspended all diplomatic relations and announced that it was expelling Syrian diplomats, retrieved from http://abuja.be.mfa.gov.tr/Show Announcement. aspx?ID=153832 (Accessed on 27.07.2015); As following the incident on 22.06.2012, President Erdogan said (26.06.2012) "This incident showed that Assad's become a threat to Turkey's security. We will not leave unanswered the security risks posed to Syria as Turkey. Our rules of engagement are now changed accordingly… Turkey, will give the support to the Syrian people until it will be free from the bloody dictator and his gang", from http://www.bbc.com/ turkce/haberler/2012/06/120626_erdogan_syria.shtml (Accessed on 27.07.2015);
[6] Davutoglu asks for international support on burden sharing on 27 August 2012, but in less assertive mood than the 1991 crisis, retrieved from http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/haber/ davutoglu-multeci-yuku-paylasilmali (Accessed on 15.04.2014).

Turkey's support for the Syrian opposition groups and their resistance movement both politically, economically and military.[7] In this regard, Coskum-Balamir (2015: 10) argues that Turkey appears as a 'transit country' not only in terms of refugees, irregular migrants; but also due to the rise of radical militant groups, for terrorist groups as well. Contributing the formation of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, which is a coalition based in exile seeking the overthrow of Assad can be seen as one of the official respond of Turkey. The Syrian National Council was allowed to convene its meetings in Antalya in April and in Istanbul in July 2011 and the most recently, the Political Committee of the Coalition met with the group of friends of Syria ambassadors in Istanbul on 28th July, 2015.[8] Also, the Free Syrian Army's senior commanders are based in Turkey (Balci, 2012). The diplomacy and confrontation in bilateral relations also reflected on the immigration policy towards Syrians arriving in Turkey and will be discussed below.

Syrian Refugee Crisis and Turkey's Changing Responds

Adopting an unconditional 'open door policy', Turkey welcomed all the Syrian refugees fleeing from the conflict. At the beginning of the conflict, they were considered as "guests" rather than legal refugees. However, the term "guest" has no place in international refugee law and as both the number of refugees and criticisms continued to grow, the former Migration and Asylum Bureau (General Directorate of Migration Management-GDMM) under the Ministry of Interior devised a "temporary protection regime (TP)" and declared this policy shift in November 2011 at a UNHCR conference in Geneva. As starting from October 2011, Turkey granted them temporary protection status as referring to the European Union (Council) Directive on "Temporary Protection" of 2001[9] and after adoption of its own Regulation on Temporary Protection in 2014.[10] This regulation can also be seen as the updated version of the 1994 Council of Ministers[11] which could be regarded

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[7] Michael Weiss (22 May 2012), "Syrian rebels say Turkey is arming and training them", retrieved from http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/michaelweiss/100159613/syrian-rebels-say-turkey-is-arming-and-training-them/, *The Telegraph*, (Accessed 27.07.2015); David L. Phillips (2014). "Research Paper: ISIS-Turkey List", from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-l-phillips/research-paper-isis-turke_b_6128950.html (Accessed on 22.07.2015).

[8] For further information http://en.etilaf.org/all-news/news/political-meet-with-syria-friends-ambassadors.html (Accessed on 30.07.2015).

[9] Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences there of, retrieved from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:212:0012:0023:EN:PDF (Accessed on 19.04.2015).

[10] The Directive can be retrieved from http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2014/10/20141022-15-1.pdf (Accessed on 19.04.2015).

[11] The Regulation can be retrieved from http://gocdergisi.com/kaynak/1994_BakanlarKurulu_Yonetmelik_kitlesel_akinlar_yonetmelik_bakanlar_kurulu_ResmiGazete_30Kasim1994.pdf (Accessed on 19.04.2015).

as Turkey's response to the mass influxes of 1991 from Iraq, based on security concerns. The Regulation provides the Syrians with the right to have temporary asylum, until they are resettled in the third safe countries. The time period for temporary protection is determined by the decision of the Council of Ministers. However, the most important aspect of the Regulation is the clear definition of their legal status that is also shown with the identity cards, their rights and the acquired social support.

Initially, Turkey rejected any international assistance for its humanitarian effort, as it wanted to prove that she could deal with matters politically and economically on its own. In international platforms, the cost of Syrian refugee flow was addressed to prove how Turkey is as a strong growing power and how it is a model country in the Middle East. In 2012, the financial support was also asked with a softer tone.[12] Turkey avoided the perception of present Syrian refugees as a threat or risk in domestic and international domains, insistently calling them as guests and brothers who would return back.[13]

Turkey's novel approach towards Syrians represents an important difference from both recent worldwide trends in international refugee regime and Turkey's past responses to similar refugee movements that explicitly involved securitization discourse and burden sharing. Turkey's shift from security centred approach to initial morality oriented approach seems to be related to its assertive foreign policy. This approach allowed Turkey to present itself as an ideal powerful country in its neighbourhood, to play regional mediator role and contribute to the solution of humanitarian problems through diplomacy. The diplomatic initiatives of Turkey failed unexpectedly. Then Turkey invested in the possibility that Syrian opposition could gain power soon, but the opposition was very fragmented and unable to overcome Syrian regime forces. Thus, Turkey mistakenly assumed that the Assad regime would soon collapse and refugees would turn to Syria. Regarding their numbers, 100.000 were mentioned as the welcomed population; but upon the

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[12] Davutoglu asks for international support on burden sharing on 27 August 2012, but in less assertive mood than the 1991 crisis, retrieved from http://www.aljazeera.com.tr /haber/davutoglu-multeci-yuku-paylasilmali (Accessed on 15.04.2014).

[13] "The Former Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan: "Our Syrian brothers will return", 7 August 2014, retrieved from http://www.haber7.com/partiler/haber/1188694-erdogan-suriyeli-kardeslerimiz-geri-donecek. (Accessed on 22.04.2015); The Prime Minister (Former Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Davutoglu states that Turkey will be supporting "Turkey's Syrian brothers" no matter the international society says, 8 January 2014, retrieved from http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-davutoglu_-suriye-turkmen-meclisi-baskani-amro_yu-kabul-etti.tr.mfa (Accessed on 27.04.2015); Davutoglu: "Syrian brothers will be settled as soon as possible and all their needs will be covered", 19 September 2014, retrieved from http://www.aksam.com.tr/siyaset/davutoglu-4-bin-kardesimiz-sinira-geldi/haber-339999 (Accessed on 27.04.2015).

dramatic rise of numbers, this threshold was re-determined as the psychological one.[14]

It was also widely suspected that the reason behind the Turkey's generosity towards Syrians and the non-registration of Syrian refugees in the beginning were related to Turkey's support to Syrian opposition, particularly the armed individuals by providing shelter, training and an opportunity to cross border on occasional bases. Although the national and international media extensively wrote that Turkey provides military, aid and training to fighters, Turkey stated that they were not given arms, equipment, training, or operational assistance such as intelligence, it was claimed that much of the help to the opposition was channelled through human rights organizations (Balci, 2012). Turkish government was highly criticized mainly by the main opposition political parties who approach the support for the armed Syrian opposition a threat to Turkey's national security, and ongoing potentiality for polarization within the Turkish population. The lack of transparency from Turkish side is considered as a proof of having a secret agenda about refugees. The Turkish government does not allow international agencies to have access to the camps. Even the UNHCR was able to access camps only after February 2012, when it deployed a team of advisers to the Turkish authorities. In addition, in August 2012, the main opposition party's demand for visiting the camps was turned down by the government, which resulted in intense critiques and requirement for the transparency of a well-managed civilian refugee protection.[15]

After realizing that unilateral efforts of Turkey did not work, by the end of 2011 Turkey started to support regional and international initiatives, such as the Arab League and the UN envoy Annan's plans[16] to achieve a political solution to the crisis. However, after failures of the UN and the US support, criticizing addressing Turkey and isolationism in the international society era started. Meanwhile, the numbers passed over the certain threshold by October 2012[17], Turkey decided to focus on 'zero point delivery' to be able to

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[14] Davutoglu mentions Turkey's "psychological threshold" as 100.000, retrieved from http://www4.cnnturk.com/2013/dunya/10/26/davutoglu.siginmacilar.konusunda.kirmizi.cizgi .asildi/728654.0/ (Accessed on 21.04.2015).

[15] Parliamentary written questions regarding Syrian refugees and Turkey's foreign and asylum policy: On voting by Syrian refugees during general elections, 19.02.2015, retrieved from http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d24/7/7-61505s.pdf; on Turkey's support for opposition in Syria, 10.10.2014, retrieved from http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d24/7/7-53278s.pdf (Accessed on 27.04.2015); On admission and protection of the Syrians coming from Kobane, 29.04.2014, retrieved from http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d24/7/7-52535s.pdf; On Turkey-Syria border, 13.02.2013, http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d24/7/7-18162s.pdf (Accessed on 27.04.2015).

[16] To bring an end to fighting in Syria through diplomatic means, the UN appointed Kofi ANNAN as the UN and Arab League Envoy for Syria in early 2012. However, he resigned after the failure of political negotiations and Lakhdar BRAHIMI was appointed for seeking a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

[17] See http://www.sabah.com.tr/gundem/2012/10/16/multeci-sayisi-psikolojik-siniri-asti (Accessed: 21/4/2015).

slowdown the arrivals of refugees, in accordance with the international law as avoiding to infringe on Syria's national sovereignty by delivering aid shipments to a border crossing (Ahmadoun, 2014:14). The shift in the policy is related to several factors. First, Turkish government started to experience difficulty in providing assistance inside Syria without the approval of the Syrian government. Second, Turkey's support to Syrian opposition became apparent, but the opposition was very much fragmented. Third, Turkish security authorities are increasingly concerned that they are losing control over Turkey's border with Syria and fear for the undermining of Turkey's security due to three deadly incidences. In February 2012, the bombing which killed 17 Turks at the Cilvegozu border crossing worsened the security concerns. In May 2012, two car bombs exploded in border town Reyhanli, leaving 46 dead and more than 100 injured. In June 2012, a Turkish fighter jet was shot down by the Syrian regime army. Furthermore, in late September 2014, three Turks were injured when mortar shells landed in border town Suruc, as Islamic State (IS) fighters clashed with Kurdish forces on the other side of the border.

Spill-over risk of Syrian war became evident along with Syrian–Turkish border incidents[18], which would bring the request of 'safe haven' and 'no-fly zone' as similar to the Iraqi refugee crisis on 1988 and 1991. Indeed, Turkey finally urged the UN Security Council in mid-2012 to authorize the establishment of a buffer zone or a no-fly zone on the Syrian side of the border, similar to the one enforced between 1991-2003 in northern Iraq, and if necessary for military action against the Assad regime. Aside from the incidents, in September 2012, as a response to the growing tensions regarding sectarian escalation[19], the government adopted measures to avoid further problems, such as transferring some Sunni refugees from Hatay to other provinces after clashes with locals. The idea of buffer zone came into agenda, but not accepted as it happened in 1991 case.

Since the mid-2013, Turkey started to experience the defence stage by realizing that the issue has long-lasting, there will be no military intervention to Syria and Turkey is not the sole actor who would control unfolding civil war in Syria. By 2013, international society's support was asked[20], which became more crystalized during Geneva II conference on 10-15 February 2014, where alienation of Turkey became an issue. Meanwhile, Turkey started to ask for burden share with adopting an economization discourse.[21]

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[18] December 2011 incidents: : Syrian–Turkish border clash; F4 jet incident: June 2012 interception of Turkish aircraft; October 2012 cross-border clashes; January 2013 incident; February 2013 bombing; April 2013 border air raid; May 2013 Akcakale incident; 2013 Reyhanli bombing; 2013 helicopter incident; January 2014 incident on Syrian Kurdistan border; January 2014 Turkish airstrike; March 2014 Turkish shoot down of a Syrian aircraft

[19] See http://www.iha.com.tr/davutoglundan-multeci-uyarisi-politika-297023 (21.04.2015).

[20] See http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/haber/davutoglu-multeci-yuku-paylasilmali (21.04.2015).

[21] Deputy Prime Minister, who is also coordinating the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), stated that "Until we realized expenditure to meet the needs of Syrian

As starting from 2014, registration of Syrian refugees and unofficial 'close door' policy is adopted due to the changes Turkey's foreign policy toward Syria crisis, the high number of displaced people crossing the border, the lack of capacity of Turkey to respond to the needs of the influx and the uncertainty about the expected time. The GDMM started a new campaign with the motto of "Register and Benefit from Rights and Services" and recorded 1,097,740 Syrians both in camps and urban areas.[22] This registration process is also important since the non-camp refugees do not receive access to the given rights unless they register themselves. The only exception was the right to benefit from free primary health care that was given to all Syrians by the governmental decree of January 2013.[23]

Turkey has recently made the admission of Syrians at official border crossings conditional on the availability of places within the camps, or on specific humanitarian circumstances. This represents the transition from the full self-confidence to handle issue without external help; then to seek for burden sharing, which can be considered as the diverging from 'open door policy' to the contemporary international protection trend in refugee regime: 'non-arrival' policy. Thus, Turkey returned to its traditional tougher refugee policies. She also started to seek for cooperation with international organizations like the UNHCR and for more contributions from the UN's plans: the Syria Regional Response Plan (RRP) and the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (SHARP) and all the official reports reflect the expenses and further financial needs.

Conclusion

International migration is an important theme in foreign policy. While states conduct their foreign policies, they pay attention to the migration related issues ranging from border security to the provision of protection for refugees. Particularly mass influxes seem a challenge to receiving countries in terms of taking immediate decisions that should balance humanitarian and security centred approach. The migration and refugee studies have rarely addressed the foreign policy dimension of state's responses in refugee crisis.

In this respect, possible main contribution of this paper is twofold. First, it demonstrates the importance of foreign policy orientations of countries in

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refugees, $ 4.6 billion, according to UN standards (old money of 10.3 quadrillion) has exceeded, while *Bugun*, 5 November 2014: Boston University (2014). "Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing", retrieved from http://www.bu.edu/law/central/jd/programs/clinics/international-human-rights/documents/FINALFullReport.pdf (Accessed on 20.02.2015).

[22] The statement of the Director of the GDMM at the First National Migration Research Workshop on 19th Dec. 2014, Ankara; HUGO (2014). Türkiye'deki Suriyeliler: toplumsam Kabul ve Uyum Araştırması", retrieved from http://www.hugo.hacettepe.edu.tr/HUGO-RAPOR-TurkiyedekiSuriyeliler.pdf (Accessed on 17.03.2015).

[23] The Decree can be retrieved from https://www.afad.gov.tr/tr/IcerikDetay.aspx?ID=44 (Accesed on 19.05.2015).

structuring immigration/asylum policies. Second, it shows how variations in foreign policies immediately reflect on states responses. Process tracing of the case shows that Turkey first adopted 'open door' policy towards Syrian refugees by diverging from its traditional non-arrival policy, burden sharing and securitization. This policy change cannot be fully understood by Turkey's recently adopted humanitarian approach or her respect for international refugee law. Due to the close relationship between two states in the last decade and Turkey's foreign policy orientation, diplomacy, in the initial step played a role in accepting Syrian refugee into the country. Moreover, Turkey's foreign policy objective which is to be an emerging regional and global power shaped its response to the refugee flow without securitization, economization and internationalization. Lastly, the foreign policy decision to support Syrian opposition against the regime led to the continuation of such policy. However, new developments in the Syrian civil war required Turkey to change her foreign policy orientations towards confrontation and the defence. Security concerns and the isolation in international relations along with the growing burden of refugees necessitated Turkey to recalibrate its immigration policy towards a more traditional direction. Furthermore, in terms of foreign policy designing, Syrian crisis made it clear that Turkey could not fully be an 'order establishing/global actor'; instead she should behave like a middle range power that has to take strategic steps to balance her relations within the region and with global powers. In terms of immigration/asylum policy Syrian crisis showed that Turkey should better calculate its capabilities and continue to adopt burden sharing approach. As it is the case for all countries, integrated migration management seems a necessity for Turkey, given the fact that mass influxes and internal displacement are recurring problem due to the conflicts in the region.

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The case of Turkey cannot be exceptional with regard to the significance of foreign policy in designing immigration/asylum policies as well as simultaneous changes over time. There is a need for further studies comparing the case of Turkey with similar cases; particularly experiencing recent mass influxes to evaluate what extent the foreign policy priorities influence acceptance/rejection policies. In this regard, considering the Syria refugee crisis and the nexus between foreign and asylum policy; other regional countries that faced with the same refugee flow should be compared for most-similar case comparisons such as Jordan or Iraq or and even the deviant cases such as Lebanon to test the paper's hypothesis with process tracing. In addition, not only cross-country comparisons; but also cross-time comparisons for different cases for Turkey are needed. In this regard, Turkey's responds to different mass influxes such as Bulgarian refugee flow in 1989 or Iraqi Kurdish refugee crisis in 1991, which appears as the most important case since it has significant similarities in terms of size, the origin of region and the non-refugee status due to the geographical limitation (in Turkish law); but also regarding foreign policy concerns important differences. During the 1991 crisis, Turkey, for a short period, allowed

Kurdish refugees in on a temporary basis considering that they would return or would be provided resettlement abroad; but then adopted very restrictive policies, including the border closures (Kaynak, 1992; Danis, 2009, Long, 2010; Ihlamur-Oner, 2014). Examination of both cases demonstrates that domestic and international politics is closely intertwined in state policies towards refugee flows along with foreign policy. Thus, not only foreign-asylum policy; but also domestic policy dimension for analysing the response to mass influxes requires further researches.

Finally, it should be noted that this paper focuses on an ongoing crisis, which is still extremely dynamic and varying. While this article was getting written, a tragic explosion happened on 20th July in Suruç[24], which appear as an important turning point for Turkey's foreign policy regarding Syria and inevitably will create significant outcomes on the adopted asylum policy. Thus, further studies in this field and more specifically regarding this case appear as a need.

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