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## **Syrian Refugees in Turkey: A Security Perspective**

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*This study investigates the nexus between the mass movement of people and security and foreign policy behaviors. The assertion is that refugee flows intensify security issues among decision makers and members of society; consequently, new fears and wider perceptions of threats have several implications for foreign policy agenda. The article focuses on the theoretical analysis of the securitization of migration and its impact on foreign policy and security policy. It also analyzes, from a security perspective, the effect on Turkey of the refugees who arrived en masse from Syria during the past six years. The article concludes with an analysis of the social, economic, security, and foreign policy effects the refugees have had on Turkey.*

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**W**hat security means has been a contentious issue in the international relations (IR) literature. The traditional structural realism or neorealist understanding of the international system represented by Kenneth Waltz emphasizes the roles played by international anarchy and the importance of a balance of power.<sup>1</sup> In this picture of an anarchic competitive international system, real politik adjustments may be common as states seek to defend their own interests, making and remaking alliances and agreements to suit their own sovereign interests. Thus, balance of power considerations and shifts can trigger negative responses among states, mutually reinforcing themselves in a negative downward spiral.<sup>2</sup>

Since the end of the Cold War, debates about security have expanded the level of analysis. Even if the nation-state remains a privileged object of IR analysis, issues involving security are increasingly creating interconnections among domestic, regional, and global scenes. This academic debate has facilitated a wider interpretation of security questions, including nonmilitary dimensions of security. These developments show vividly that there exists a multitude of factors coming from critical social movements and other political actors that have revitalized state and global security issues.<sup>3</sup> In addition, among these, migration, forced and voluntary, could be categorized as a security threat to the extent that host societies would perceive it as a challenge to individual, group, or national identity.<sup>4</sup>

Academic interest in the relationship between the international movement of people and world politics has been growing since the early 1990s. The sources, causes, and consequences of international migrations have been studied using various methodologies and approaches. These can be summarized in two large categories: migration studies and IR/security studies. The latter literature presents different models for understanding the securitization of migration—also called “securitized migration”—from three IR schools of thought (realism, liberalism, and constructivism), including the securitization theory (ST), which provides the most applied and developed model of the nature and mechanism of the securitization of migration.<sup>5</sup>

As demonstrated by several studies, large-scale mass movements of people across the globe clearly pose a threat to human, state, and societal security.<sup>6</sup> Refugee flows have

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generated a mixture of humanitarian concern for the millions of people forced into exile and fear for the potential threat to the social, economic, and political stability of host states.

Gil Loescher stresses that too often refugees are perceived as a matter for international charity organizations and not as a political and security problem. But, he points out, refugee problems are intensely political, and it is necessary, therefore, to see refugees not only as a humanitarian problem but as a political problem, particularly in terms of security.<sup>7</sup> Refugee flows are a source of international, mainly regional, conflict because they cause instability among neighboring countries.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the host state is torn between humanitarian concern for refugees and immigrant communities, and awareness that refugees can be a source of tension and instability within the state and with neighboring countries.

## **The Concept of Security in the Turkish Scenario**

During the past ten years, Turkey has transformed from a transit country to a target country for immigrants, a shift that has been accompanied by a Europeanization process and a general alignment with international norms and standards. As a consequence of this new trend, Turkey has experienced increased security risks, which have enhanced its traditional sense of insecurity.

Historically, Turkish security was concentrated on military power and territorial defense (hard security). Turkey's security conceptualization is shaped by its geopolitical and geostrategic location, which provides a unique position in world politics and vulnerabilities.<sup>9</sup> With the end of the Cold War and the deep domestic transformation during the late 1980s—economic, social, political, and cultural—a much broader and more complex security agenda emerged in Turkey.<sup>10</sup> It was characterized by the reduced value and importance of military power and increased soft security considerations concentrated on issues such as economic and social conditions. As argued by Mustafa Aydin and Asli Toksabay Esen, Turkey was not immune to systemic changes in international relations at the end of the Cold War. Its “hard and soft security issues transcend boundaries and build a dense network of bridges between the ‘domestic’ and the ‘foreign.’”<sup>11</sup> Moreover, Turkey experienced the increasing role and influence of public opinion on the changing security concerns of the country.

A turning point was the victory election of the Justice and Development Party (JDP) in 2002.<sup>12</sup> The JDP is a religiously and socially conservative but economically globalist single-party government, which has different conceptions of security, perceptions of insecurity, and priorities in policy making. The JDP rise resulted in harsh criticism of the traditional hard-security agenda, which was replaced by a new spectrum of soft-security issues that focus on economic, cultural, and humanitarian issues.<sup>13</sup>

Although the security understanding in Turkey favors the traditional definition, new areas such as economic challenges, demographic and social trends, and environmental problems have increasingly appeared in the discussion around security. This development has been driven by Turkish civil society, which became increasingly conscious of new transnational issues, including migration flows.<sup>14</sup> The globalization process boosted the movement of people along with goods, technologies, ideas, and finance; moreover, increasing economic prosperity and political stability attracted temporary and permanent people to work, study, and live in Turkey. In such an environment, over the past several years, an explosion has occurred in the number of asylum seekers from Syria and other countries, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia.

## **The War in Syria and the Refugee Crisis: An Overview**

When pro-democracy protests began in Syria, Turkey adopted a cautious approach, trying to mediate among the Bashar al-Assad regime, opposition factions, and other regional actors.

But after a brutal crackdown on protesters, Ankara progressively distanced itself from the Assad regime, calling for Bashar al-Assad's ouster. By the fall of 2011, Turkey pursued the idea of creating a buffer zone or a no-fly zone to protect civilians and support anti-Assad rebels. Hosting unprecedented numbers of Syrian refugees forced Turkey to adopt a strong humanitarian approach but also a foreign policy line that was strategic and security-oriented. In doing that, Turkey has pursued two aims: overthrowing Assad's regime and ensuring the continuation of a territorially integrated Syrian state to prevent the creation of an independent Kurdish state along its southern borders.<sup>15</sup>

Since the first months of the Syrian civil conflict, Turkey's attitude toward refugees has been closely intertwined with its foreign policy strategy. As Kemal Kirişçi points out, "Turkey's expectation . . . was that the Assad regime would not last long. It was against such a background that Turkey declared in October 2011 an open-door policy towards refugees fleeing Syria."<sup>16</sup> Turkey mistakenly assumed that the Assad regime would soon collapse and refugees would return to Syria. In this belief, Turkey shifted from a security-centered approach to an initial morality-oriented approach. It was widely suspected that the rationale for Turkey's initial generosity toward Syrians and the nonregistration of Syrian refugees was related to Turkey's support of the Syrian opposition. It was also claimed that much of the help to the opposition was channeled through human rights organizations.<sup>17</sup>

Since the early stages of the Syrian conflict, Turkey has followed an open-door policy, avoiding the use of securitization of the refugee movement and without asking for burden sharing. The Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) has been the lead agency in coordinating the government's efforts to respond to the refugee inflow in cooperation with other international organizations, including Turkish and non-Turkish NGOs.<sup>18</sup> Initially, the influx of refugees from Syria was relatively small. At the end of 2011, there were almost 8,000 recognized refugees in Turkey. Inflows gained momentum in 2012 as the conflict worsened, and by the end of the year there were more than 170,000 registered refugees. By the end of 2013, Turkey started to seek cooperation with international organizations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and asked for more contributions from UN programs, such as the Syria Regional Response Plan. Starting in 2014, Turkey tightened measures that were implemented for security reasons. Likewise, registration of Syrian refugees and an unofficial closed-door policy was adopted because of (1) policy changes toward the Syria crisis, (2) the high number of displaced people crossing the border, (3) Turkey's lack of capacity to respond to the needs of the influx, and (4) uncertainty about the expected length of time of the crisis.

According to UNHRC, as of April 2018, 3,584,179 Syrian refugees were registered in Turkey.<sup>19</sup> Thus, Turkey has become the leading country in accepting refugees from Syria and the largest refugee-hosting country in the world. Turkey hosts refugees in refugee camps and in the cities, mostly those that border Syria.<sup>20</sup> AFAD continues to provide services (accommodation, health, education, religious, and social services) in twenty-three refugee camps, with a total capacity of almost 300,000. Although refugees from Syria who live inside camps have better conditions, approximately 85 to 90 percent of them live outside camps. While the camps are managed and resourced, the noncamp refugee population experiences significant capacity problems, bureaucratic hurdles (housing, food, education, and health services), legal obstacles, and issues related to employment. Some of the critical challenges and areas of intervention that remain include protecting the legal, physical, and psychological rights of refugees, finding adequate shelter and providing services, and delivering social services (health and education).<sup>21</sup>

## **Legal Framework**

Originally these refugees were considered guests, rather than legal refugees, because of the legal framework for migrant and asylum seekers in Turkey. The legal framework was constituted by the Settlement Law (1934),<sup>22</sup> the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951), and the Additional Protocol (1967). A significant fact is that Turkey ratified the Refugee Convention (1951) but has applied it with a geographical limitation that grants asylum status only to Europeans.<sup>23</sup> Thus, most non-European asylum seekers are still not entitled to stay in Turkey, even after gaining recognized refugee status through UNHCR.

The term “guest,” however, has no place in international refugee law. As a result, Turkey has prepared new administrative and legal documents, including a “temporary protection regime (TP).”<sup>24</sup> This regime has been applied to all Syrians, Palestinians, and stateless persons living in Syria. The refugees were admitted and accommodated, and still are, through the TP, which was introduced in October 2011 and reinforced with a legal base and clarity by the Turkish Parliament, which adopted the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) in April 2013.<sup>25</sup>

The most important aspect of the LFIP is the clear definition of refugees’ legal status that is shown by their identity cards, their rights, and the acquired social support. Article 91 of the LFIP defines “temporary protection” as a protection status granted to foreigners who, having been forced to leave their country and cannot return, have arrived in Turkey seeking emergency and temporary protection. It provides the Syrians with the right to temporary asylum, until they are resettled in a safe, third country.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the law marked a shift from the previous security-oriented approach to a more human rights-oriented view of immigration. This framework has been fortified by another directive adopted by the Council of Ministers and entered into force in October 2014 that specifies the terms of protection and strengthens rights and approaches. It involves (1) an open-door policy, (2) non-refoulement, (3) registration with the Turkish authorities, and (4) support inside the borders of the camps. Nevertheless, the temporary protection status precludes permanent settlement in Turkey.

Along with legal developments, Turkish authorities also established informal approaches, providing support to Turkish NGOs that manage some camps beyond the border (zero-point delivery system) to prevent new arrivals. At the same time, border authorities employ a policy of “passage with careful control” intended to restrict the number of entries but also used to control the arrival of particular ethnic, national, religious, and ideological groups. According to the Amnesty International annual report of 2014, this selective policy contradicts the TP regime and international law that prohibits return of refugees to a territory where their lives or their freedom is threatened.

In sum, the Turkish government has carried out a policy toward Syria that is based not on a discourse of rights but on generosity. Such a charitable approach rather than a rights-based approach risks feeding a negative public opinion in Turkey toward refugees.

## **The Implications for Turkey**

Even if Turkey has taken serious steps to enhance its response to the growing influx of refugees from Syria, it will continue to face social, ethnic, sectarian, and demographic pressures created by the largest refugee flow in the country’s modern history. Moreover, initially, the refugees’ presence was considered temporary; but now it has become a permanent, or at least a long-term, presence. This lasting situation has had several tangible and psychological effects on the Turkish state and society. The effects of the refugees’ influx into Turkey can be categorized and examined in relation to the economy, social life, security, and foreign policy.

### **Effects on Economy**

Generally, in host countries, refugees are considered a burden on economic resources, and even a potential for real danger. An examination of the economic effects on Turkey, however, shows that risks and opportunities are intertwined.

Beyond the roughly eight billion dollars Turkey has spent providing a home for these refugees, the economic impact has been noteworthy.<sup>27</sup> The influx of refugees has caused an increase in demand in all cities that has led to increases in rental prices and in the cost of living. Finding affordable accommodation has become increasingly difficult for renters. In some instances, landlords forced Turkish tenants to leave so they could rent to Syrians at higher prices. Another sensitive issue linked to the influx from Syria is the illegal use of Syrian workers as cheap labor in industry, agriculture, and small business sectors. The general perception in Turkish border cities is that Syrians are stealing jobs from local people. Moreover, the financial cost of the upkeep of the refugee camps has had a strong, negative impact on the public's perception, triggering social tension or disturbances against the refugees in several local communities.<sup>28</sup>

Despite these negative aspects, there are some positive effects of the Syrian presence. The living expenses Syrians pay and the cheap labor they provide cannot be ignored. Though the international community provides some humanitarian aid, much of the aid is supplied by local firms. This situation creates economic opportunities, especially in textiles and agriculture. Furthermore, among the Syrian refugees are business owners and investors, some of whom, mainly from Aleppo, have strong networks and relationships within the Middle East that have helped facilitate the distribution of Turkish products in the region. Also, investments by Syrians have transferred billions of dollars to Europe through Greek and Cypriot banks.<sup>29</sup>

### **Social Effects**

Women and girls who fled Syria alone or with their children are vulnerable to sexual and verbal abuse. A common practice in the Turkish border provinces has been the marriage between Turkish men and young Syrian women. These are often forced marriages and many of the brides are minors. A market has developed surrounding these arranged marriages, which have been associated with child abuse, polygamy, and increased divorce. In addition, women who have crossed the border illegally are at high risk of being kidnapped and sold as prostitutes or sex slaves.<sup>30</sup>

Another social issue caused by the growing presence of refugee populations is child labor. Syrian parents often send their children to work rather than to school, and the Turkish government and NGOs have been unable to offer sufficient education to counteract this practice. Partly as a result of the lack of a male breadwinner, more and more Syrian children are going to work at an early age to support themselves and their families.<sup>31</sup> Often boys and girls start work when they are as young as six or seven. Further, Syrian women and children in Turkey also experience sexual harassment at work.

### **Security Policy**

The rapid and constant flow of refugees has caused feelings of insecurity among local communities and has transformed the ethnic balance in southern Turkish provinces such as Hatay and Mardin.<sup>32</sup> The demographic change is also driven by high birth rates among refugees, suggesting that there will be a second generation of Syrian refugees in Turkey that will further shift ethnic and sectarian balances. Moreover, the long-lasting negative impact of increasing social tensions will drive future vulnerability.

The demographic characteristics, especially the ethnic component, of the host city or province determine the relations between hosting community and refugees.<sup>33</sup> In some instances, conflict is highly likely. For example, historically, Turkey's southeastern region has presented fault lines similar to the ones that erupted in the Syrian civil conflict. The fact that most refugees from Syria are Sunni is changing the demographic mosaic of many border cities and exacerbating the two main potentially dangerous conflict dimensions. One is ethnic (Turks-Arabs-Kurds) and the other is religious (Sunnis-Alevis-Alawis). Despite ethnic differences among Syrian refugees, the overwhelmingly majority are Sunni Arabs. Thus, the danger to domestic security is threefold: the presence of these refugees reproduces social and political tensions among different Syrian groups on Turkish soil, triggering long-dormant sectarian tensions among Turkish citizens, and fostering in the local community the sense that they are now the minority in their homeland. Furthermore, tension and distrust are exacerbated by fears of the rise of militants among the refugees, particularly because Syrian opposition groups are known to operate from southern Turkey.<sup>34</sup>

The situation, therefore, in some border provinces has been perceived and interpreted by the Turkish government as a threat to its national security. Accordingly, Ankara has taken steps to ward off the danger of sectarian clashes. Since September 2012, Turkey has been steering away from settling large numbers of Syrian refugees in southern cities, redirecting many of them to interior provinces.<sup>35</sup> Another step has been a general militarization of the borders, which also signifies the insertion of the refugee issue into a security framework that emphasizes policing and defense. In other words, Turkey has gradually securitized its southern border.

### **Foreign Policy**

Turkey's foreign policy objective to be a regional and global power shaped its response to the refugee flow. Turkey's shift from a security-centered approach to a morality-oriented approach seems to be related to its assertive agenda regarding the Syrian crisis. This shift occurred because it was specious for Turkey to present itself at once as a powerful country in its neighborhood, as a regional mediator, and as a contributor to the solution of humanitarian problems through diplomacy and efficient crisis management. Thus, an evident trend is the close link between Turkey's involvement in the Syrian civil conflict and Turkey's domestic policy toward refugees. Moreover, Turkey has, on several occasions and in different ways, politically instrumentalized the refugee crisis. Frequently, the Turkish government has attempted to compare its strategy in Syria with the interests of the refugees. One example is Turkey's international demand to set up a no-fly, or buffer, zone in the north of Syria.<sup>36</sup>

Another foreign policy effect of the refugee crisis has been the rapprochement with the European Union (EU) after years of cooling. The EU-Turkey deals reached on November 29, 2015, and March 18, 2016, raised Turkey's strategic importance to a whole new level. The chaotic arrival in Europe of more than a million refugees in 2015 transformed the European political landscape. The refugee exodus and the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels have already changed European priorities in the Middle East to focus on two issues: avoiding new large-scale refugee flows and eliminating the Daesh threat and terror networks linked to it.<sup>37</sup>

Turkey's strategic importance as a gateway to the Middle East has never been greater. Turkey is the only convenient springboard for massive emigration from the Middle East to Europe. The consideration of mutual interests the EU and Turkey have pursued through cooperation on the refugee crisis has become increasingly important. In exchange for taking in refugees, Turkey has re-energized talks on its EU membership.

One provision of the EU-Turkey refugee deal is that Turkey will send back migrants who cross the Aegean Sea to Greece if they do not apply for asylum or if their claim is rejected.<sup>38</sup>

In exchange, the European Union has agreed to resettle up to seventy-two thousand Syrian refugees directly from Turkey, speed up financial aid (six billion euros by the end of 2018), and lift visa requirements for Turkish citizens. The deal has been criticized by aid agencies as inhumane.<sup>39</sup> The UNHCR has said that big questions remain about how the deal will work in practice and has called for urgent improvements to Greece's system for assessing refugees. Moreover, several doubts are surfacing about how the three to six billion euros the European Union has allocated for support in Turkey will be spent.

In sum, Turkey is a key strategic and political player in resolving the crises provoked by the Syrian civil war. There is no doubt that Europe should engage Turkey. But, as A. K. Han has argued, it should do so with an honest approach and a constructive and comprehensive agenda leading to the sustainable resumption of the process that would also provide a solution to the human tragedy stemming from Syria.<sup>40</sup>

Another effect on Turkey's foreign policy is that Turkish humanitarian efforts have rehabilitated the country's international image, after some events that had damaged her reputation, mainly in the Muslim world.<sup>41</sup> The political discourse toward Syrians in Turkey also considers them as "guests" and "brothers and sisters of faith," thus legitimizing their settlement. Thanks to this kind of morality-oriented policy toward refugees and asylum seekers from Syria, Turkey continues to enjoy popularity in the less-developed countries, despite the erosion of its international image due to such internal events as the Gezi Park protests, Twitter and YouTube bans, and the Kurdish question.

## **Conclusion**

The lack of precedence for the Syrian refugee crisis has made it difficult for Turkey to handle it politically and financially. As this article shows, the refugee situation in Turkey has become a security issue with economic, social, and political effects. As the humanitarian crisis enters its fifth year, general dissatisfaction and disappointment exists within Turkey regarding the international community's efforts to help with the country's refugee challenge. UNHCR remains the most important organization representing the international community in Turkey, and though cooperation with AFAD has grown recently, the general perception of it in Turkey remains very negative.

Turkey has limited resources and faces its own economic challenges. Consequently, the joint action plan with EU offers some relief through a reduction of costs. Furthermore, the controversial EU-Turkey migration deal could be the first step toward a more comprehensive strategy that would lead to better collaboration among states, international organizations, and NGOs to resolve the Syrian crisis.

## **Notes**

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (London: McGraw Hill, 1979).

<sup>2</sup> The term "security" entered the academic lexicon after John Herz concretized it in his 1950 treatise "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma" (*World Politics* 2, no. 2:157–180.)

<sup>3</sup> Philip G. Cerny, "The New Security Dilemma: Divisibility, Defection and Disorder in the Global Era," *Review of International Studies* 26, no. 4 (2000): 623–646.

<sup>4</sup> Mikhail A. Alexseev, *Immigration Phobia and the Security Dilemma. Russia, Europe, and the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Philippe Bourbeau, *The Securitization of Migration. A Study of Movement and Order* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Among these, see Joanne van Selm-Thorburn, *Refugee Protection in Europe: Lessons of the Yugoslav Crisis* (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1998); Susanne Schmeidl, "Conflict and Forced Migration: A Quantitative Review," in *Global Migrants, Global Refugees: Problems and Solutions*, ed. Astride R. Zolberg and Peter M. Benda (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001); Ali Bilgic, *Rethinking Security in the Age of*



*Migration: Trust and Emancipation in Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Md Mizanur. Rahman, Tan Tai Yong, and AKM Ahsan Ullah, eds., *Migrant Remittances in South Asia: Social, Economic, and Political Implications* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Gil Loescher, *Beyond Charity: International Cooperation and the Global Refugee Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> Edward Newman, "Refugees, International Security, and Human Vulnerability: Introduction and Survey," in *Refugees and forced Displacement: International Security, Human Vulnerability, and the State*, ed. Edward Newman and Joanne van Selm (Tokyo: United Nations University, 2004).

<sup>9</sup> Mustafa Aydin, "Securitization of History and Geography: Understanding of Security in Turkey," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 3, no. 2 (2003): 163–184.

<sup>10</sup> Lenore Martin, "Turkey's National Security in the Middle East," *Turkish Studies* 1, no. 1 (2000): 83–106.

<sup>11</sup> Mustafa Aydin and Asli Toksabay Esen, "Inside/Outside: Turkey's Security Dilemmas and Priorities in the Early 21st Century," in *Coping with Global Environmental Change, Disasters and Security. Threats, Challenges, Vulnerabilities and Risks*, ed. Hans Günter Brauch et al. (Berlin: Springer, 2009), 209.

<sup>12</sup> In Turkish: Adaletve Kalkınma Partisi (AK Party).

<sup>13</sup> Ebru Canan-Sokullu, ed., *Debating Security in Turkey: Challenges and Changes in the Twenty-First Century*, (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013).

<sup>14</sup> Alpaslan Özerdem and Füsün Özerdem, eds., *Human Security in Turkey: Challenges for the 21st Century* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> Christopher Philips, *Into the Quagmire: Turkey's Frustrated Syria Policy*, briefing paper (London: Chatham House, 2012).

<sup>16</sup> Kemal Kirişci, *Syrian Refugees and Turkey's Challenges: Going beyond Hospitality*, Brookings paper (London: Brookings Institute, 2014).

<sup>17</sup> Bayram Balci, "Turkey's Relations with the Syrian Opposition," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 3, 2012, <http://Carnegieendowment.Org/2012/04/13/Turkey-S-Relations-With-Syrian-Opposition>.

<sup>18</sup> AFAD was established to deal with disaster situations (earthquakes, floods, terrorism, chemical attacks, cyber attacks, etc.) around the globe (in Chile, Somalia, Serbia, Myanmar, Haiti, etc.). The agency restructured itself and reorganized its local units to deal with the growing humanitarian disaster in Turkey's southern border.

<sup>19</sup> UNHCR, "Syria Regional Refugee Response," Refugees Operational Portal, April 26, 2018, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/113>.

<sup>20</sup> UNHCR, Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2016–2017 in Response to the Syria Crisis, UNHCR Global Focus, accessed October 2, 2017, <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/12589>.

<sup>21</sup> Soner Cagaptay, *The Impact of Syria's Refugees on Southern Turkey*, Policy Focus 130 (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2014).

<sup>22</sup> This law explicitly favored the immigration of people of Turkish descent and culture; the preference for immigrants of "Turkish descent" remained a key element of Turkey's legal framework for decades.

<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, Turkey is not obliged to extend refugee status to asylum seekers coming to Turkey as a result of events occurring outside Europe. Turkey is among a very small number of countries that still maintains a geographical limitation to the agreement's applicability as defined in Article 1 of the convention. The geographical limitation is also one of the obstacles to the harmonization process, and the European Union insists that for a full membership it must be lifted. See Ibrahim Kaya, *Reform in Turkish Asylum Law: Adopting the EU Acquis?* CARIM Research Reports 2009/16 (Florence: European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, 2009).

<sup>24</sup> The Turkish temporary protection regime is based on the EU Council Directive 2001/55/EC of July 20, 2001, on Minimum Standards for Giving Temporary protection, also called the EU Temporary Protection Directive.

<sup>25</sup> This law replaced the Asylum Regulation (1994). It seeks to integrate Turkey's immigration policy, address the refugee issue, and clarify conditions for submitting an asylum claim in Turkey but maintain the geographic limitation of the 1951 Geneva Convention. The 2013 law also established the General Directorate of Migration Management (GDMM) under the Ministry of Interior. See Burcu Togrul Koca, "Deconstructing Turkey's 'Open Door' Policy towards Refugees from Syria," *Migration Letters* 12, no. 3 (2015): 209–225.

<sup>26</sup> Brigitte Suter, *Asylum and Migration in Turkey. An Overview of Developments in the Field 1990-2013*, MIM Working Papers Series 13:3 (Malmö, Sweden: Malmö University, Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare, 2013).

<sup>27</sup> Elman Pinar, "From Blame Game to Cooperation: EU-Turkey Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis," PISM Policy Paper 34 (Warsaw: Polish Institute of International Affairs, 2015).

<sup>28</sup> Oytun Orhan and Sabiha Senyücel Gündoğar, *Effects of the Syrian Refugees on Turkey*, ORSAM Report no. 195 (Ankara: ORSAM and TESEV, 2015).

<sup>29</sup> Yusuf Emre Akgündüz, Marcel van den Berg, and Wolter Hassink, *The Impact of Refugee Crises on Host Labor Markets: The Case of the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Turkey*, IZA Discussion Paper no. 8841 (Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor, 2015).

<sup>30</sup> Uzay Bulut, "Turkey: The Business of Refugee Smuggling, Sex Trafficking," Gatestone Institute, April, 3, 2016, <http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/7756/turkey-refugees-sex-trafficking>.

<sup>31</sup> Frederik Johannisson, "Hidden Child Labour: How Syrian Refugees in Turkey Are Supplying Europe with Fast Fashion," *Guardian*, January 29, 2016.

<sup>32</sup> In Turkey, ethnic Arabs are defined as those whose mother tongue is Arabic. Still, three provinces reported large proportions of Arabic speakers: Hatay (34 percent), Mardin (21 percent), and Sanliurfa (13 percent).

<sup>33</sup> Cagaptay, *Impact of Syria's Refugees*.

<sup>34</sup> Carol Tan, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis: Conflicts in the Making," in *IEMed. Mediterranean Yearbook 2015*.

<sup>35</sup> Souad Ahmadoun, "Turkey's Policy toward Syrian Refugees: Domestic Repercussions and the Need for International Support," *SWP [German Institute for International and Security Affairs] Comments* (Berlin) 47 (November 2014).

<sup>36</sup> Ahmet İçduygu, *Syrian Refugees in Turkey: The Long Road Ahead* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2015).

<sup>37</sup> François Heisbourg, "The Strategic Implications of the Syrian Refugee Crisis," *Survival* 57, no. 6 (2015): 7–20.

<sup>38</sup> Thousands of refugees who arrived in Greece before the deadline will be resettled in Europe, though they cannot choose where.

<sup>39</sup> Laura Pitel and Leo Cendrowicz, "EU-Turkey Refugee Deal: UN and Amnesty Attack 'Short-Sighted and Inhumane' Plan," *Independent*, March 8, 2016.

<sup>40</sup> A. K. Han, "An Indecent Proposal? The Issue of Syrian Refugees and EU-Turkey Relations," *ISPI [Italian Institute for International Political Studies] Commentary* (Milan), 2015.

<sup>41</sup> Ahmadoun, "Turkey's Policy toward Syrian Refugees."