# A REVIEW OF ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICIES OF POLITICAL GROUPS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT*

## Avrupa Parlamentosu'ndaki Siyasi Grupların Sığınma ve Göç Politikalarına Bakış

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## Abstract

The phenomenon of migration also existed concurrently with the existence of human history. It is known that immigrants lead to many changes in the countries they migrate to. With the beginning of migration movements, changes are experienced in economic, political, social, cultural, and other areas. The European Union has become a target point of migration movements due to its good living standards and sensitivity to democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. Most migrants making their way to the European Union apply for asylum. The European Union is experiencing great difficulties due to the recent mass migration movements. Mass

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İnsanlık tarihinin var olmasıyla beraber göç olgusunun da var olduğu söylenilebilmektedir. Göçmenlerin göç ettikleri ülkelerde birçok değişikliğe yol açtığı bilinmektedir. Göç hareketlerinin başlaması ile birlikte ekonomik, siyasi, sosyal, kültürel ve diğer alanlarda değişimler yaşanmaktadır. Bu sebeple Avrupa Birliği; yaşam standartlarının iyi olması, demokrasi, hukukun üstünlüğü ve insan haklarına duyarlı olması nedeniyle göç hareketlerinin hedef noktası haline gelmiştir. Avrupa Birliği'ne doğru yol alan göçmenlerin çoğu, sığınma başvurusunda bulunmaktadır. Avrupa Birliği son dönemlerde yaşanan kitlesel göç hareketleri nedeniyle büyük zorluklar

migration flows into the European Union have led to a test of the Union's values. The European Union has started to implement security-oriented policies to cope with mass migrations. Its policies on migration and asylum have also led to the development of human rights problems.

In this study, the objective is to examine the asylum and migration policies of political groups within the European Parliament. The views of these groups in the context of asylum and migration policies will be examined, and their similarities and differences will be reviewed.

**Keywords:** Asylum, Migration, European Parliament, Political Groups

yaşamaktadır. Avrupa Birliği'ne yapılan toplu göç akınları, Birliğin değerlerinin sınanmasına yol açmıştır. Avrupa Birliği toplu göçler ile baş edebilmek için güvenlik eksenli politikalar yürütmeye başlamıştır. Göç ve sığınma konusunda yürüttüğü politikalar, insan hakları sorunlarının oluşmasına da yol açmıştır.

Bu çalışmada Avrupa Parlamentosu içerisindeki siyasi grupların sığınma ve göç politikaları incelenmek istenmiştir. Söz konusu grupların sığınma ve göç politikaları bağlamındaki görüşleri irdelenecek, benzerlik ve farklılıkları ortaya konulmaya çalışılacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sığınma, Göç, Avrupa Parlamentosu, Siyasi Gruplar

## INTRODUCTION

Migration has a history as old as human history. It can be said that with the existence of man, the phenomenon of migration also began. People who fled oppression and persecution in the historical process always migrated to have better life opportunities. Many changes have occurred with the migrations experienced in every period of history. The migrations that have occurred in the 21st century have brought about important changes. In the recent period, after the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, mass human mobility has gained even more speed. Again, after 2010, the migrations caused by the civil war in Syria have had a great impact around the world.

Throughout history, migration movements have been to countries that have reached a certain level of prosperity. Today, migration is said to be directed largely to the European continent. Living standards, the point reached in democracy can be shown among the reasons why migration movements are towards the European continent. In the past years, an open-door policy has been carried out for refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants who deserve protection on the European continent. Recently, it is apparent that the open-door policy has been suspended due to the increase in the number of migrants, especially due to the civil war in Syria.

This study aims to examine the policies of the political groups in the European Parliament on asylum and migration issues. In this context, the concepts of asylum and migration will be addressed; the asylum and migration policies of the political groups in the European Parliament will be evaluated. In this context, the similarities and differences between the political groups in the European Parliament in their asylum and migration policies will be evaluated.

## I. CONCEPTS OF ASYLUM AND REFUGEE

Migration movements are increasing both in terms of content and number. Today, many states that have reached a certain level of prosperity are faced with migration movements and asylum applications. People leave their own countries for various reasons, migrate to other countries and apply for asylum. Considering these issues, migration emerges as a social phenomenon that needs to be handled in many ways in terms of its subject, causes, and consequences (Akdoğan, 2018: 49). Due to the multifaceted effects, migration is considered a sociological event that is very difficult to interpret in terms of its causes, situation, and consequences. Migration has many effects including social, economic, political, geographical, cultural, and architectural effects. From this point of view, the phenomenon of migration constitutes the subject of many sciences. Each branch of science tries to interpret migration from its point of view (Özbek, 2019: 17).

The concept of immigration is very broad and includes all migration movements. There are many types of migration such as short-term, long-term, permanent migration, economic, social, political, environmental migration, and national and international migration. In this regard, the concept of immigrants can be said to also include the concepts of refugees and asylum seekers. However, the concepts of refugee, asylum seeker and migrant are different, and their use as synonyms can lead to significant problems (Çakran ve Eren, 2017: 4). Refugee and migrant statuses differ in terms of the title of the asylum seeker. While immigrants and refugees require cross-border migration, the realization of asylum can be considered sufficient to become an asylum seeker (Bulut vd., 2018: 212).

According to the International Organization for Migration, a migrant is a person who migrates. However, there is no universal definition of immigration. In general, the concept of immigration requires that people decide to migrate voluntarily

and for reasons of personal fitness without a compelling reason. A person residing in another country than his/her motherland for more than a year is defined as a migrant by the UN, without any discrimination in terms of reasons, voluntary or irregularity, migration routes, regular or irregular (IOM, 36-37). A migrant can be defined as a person who migrates from a country to another for a short or long time for different reasons (Tosun ve Budak, 2020: 421).

According to the Geneva Convention, a person who migrates to another country for justified reasons, such as a direct threat to human life, can become a refugee. When using the concept of refugee, the criterion of life safety is used. A refugee is considered to be a migrant due to the danger to life safety (The 1951 Geneva Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees, items 31-33).

Under international law, refugees cannot be deported except in violation of national security and public order. In addition, for whatever reason, refugees, whose safety and liberty are under threat, cannot be sent back to a country. These rules bind all states that have signed the Geneva Convention (Tosun ve Budak, 2020: 422-423).

According to Article 14 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), it is stated that *"Everyone has the right to seek asylum in other countries and to enjoy the right to asylum in the face of persecution. This right shall not be exercised in the case of prosecution arising from crimes that are not genuinely political or for acts contrary to the purposes and countries of the United Nations."*

In the most general sense, an asylum seeker is a person who applies to any state to obtain refugee status, but whose application has not yet been decided. The concept of asylum is not synonymous with the concept of exile. There is a compulsory relocation of the individual due to the conditions to which the individual is exposed in the case of asylum. On the other than, in the case of exile, the fact that the state obliges the person to leave the country is effective (Özbek, 2019: 24).

According to the International Organization for Migration, an asylum seeker is a person: *"who, for protection from persecution or serious harm, seeks security in a country other than his/her own country and awaits the outcome of his/her application for refugee status under the relevant national or international documents"* (IOM). In this context, an asylum seeker is a person seeking international protection.

There are many documents in international law regulating the rights of refugees. The Geneva Convention on the legal status of refugees of 1951, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the American Convention on Human Rights (American CHR) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African CHPR) can be cited as examples of these documents (Özbek, 2019: 168). Article 14 of the UDHR regulates that everyone has the right to be accepted as a refugee from other countries in the face of persecution.

The Geneva Convention is significant in terms of the rights and freedoms granted to refugees. Articles 3, 4 and 7 of the Convention define the prohibition of discrimination, freedom of religion and the treatment of refugees by the Contracting States. Articles 13-to-32 regulate the human rights of refugees such as the right to own property, form associations and trade unions, the regulation of their working life, access to court, social security and housing, education and travel.

As can be seen, the Geneva Convention of 1951 has the character of the most basic international convention on refugees in terms of the regulations it contains. The rights granted to refugees by the Convention form the basis of legal arrangements made at universal, regional, and national levels (Özbek, 2019: 190).

In refugee camps, human rights issues are emerge that are positioned on citizenship. The concepts of citizen and refugee are difficult to position concerning each other. Today, it is accepted that everyone has inviolable and inalienable human rights. Human rights have a dynamic structure and are formed as a result of struggles. The difference between refugees from all other groups is that they are not in the position of citizenship (Yılmaz, 2018: 785). Thus, it should be taken into consideration that the idea of human rights based on citizenship can create problems in terms of the rights of refugees.

## II. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICIES OF POLITICAL GROUPS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Within the European Parliament, there are political groups organized throughout the European Union. Members of the European Parliament (EP) do not constitute member states of the union. EP represents the people of Europe. In the EU, there are no supranational political parties that deal with European problems and campaign

for elections across Europe. In the EP elections, members are elected as a result of the struggle of the national political parties of each EU member state in its elections. The elected members unite with other parliamentarians with the same worldview and form political groups within the EP. Groups also determine the agenda of the Parliament (Sekman ve Dinç, 2020: 422-423).

The members of the Joint Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) established three political groups for the first time in 1953. These parties include Christian Democrats, Socialists, and Liberals, reflecting the political views of that period (Akçadağ, 2009: 8). Between 1965 and 1973, Conservatives, Communists and Gaullists also formed groups and joined the Common Assembly (Yatağan vd., 2017: 14). In the EP, the names of today's political groups are as follows: "The Group of the European People's Party (EPP); the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D); the Greens/European Free Alliance: Greens/EFA; Identity and Democracy: ID; European Conservatives and Reformists: ECR; Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left: GUE/NGL.". The differences of each political group's asylum and migration policy will be evaluated in the human rights context.

## A. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY OF GROUP OF THE EUROPEAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (EPP)

The EPP states that Europe should protect those fleeing any civil war and political refugees. In this context, the EPP states that the EU should establish an effective common asylum system to fulfill its humanitarian responsibilities. The EPP states that Europe needs a common asylum and migration policy that enhances planned development and humanitarian assistance and gives priority to the provision of labor to EU citizens (EPP Group, Legal and Home Affairs). This shows us that the EPP does not find the current asylum and migration policy sufficient.

The EPP Group's priorities in migration policy includes following items: To reduce the number of migrants arriving in Europe; to organize the fair distribution of refugees and burden among member states; to increase the security of EU external borders. The EPP group believes that one of Europe's strategic priorities should be a common approach to migration. The group notes that, with the expansion of the Schengen area, the external borders have become stronger, the internal borders have

disappeared, that member states are moving towards greater interdependence in the field of asylum and migration (Molendowska, 2017: 137).

The EPP states that the EU's priorities are to combat organized crime, corruption, terrorist organizations, and human trafficking. The EPP says that small countries and those along the European coastline face special challenges considering migration. Accordingly, they express their desire to put an end to organized crime and human trafficking to end tragedies. The EPP stresses that they want to make Europe's borders more secure. The EPP believes that increasing the duties and powers of the border protection agency will increase Europe's economic, humanitarian and technical resources (EPP Group, Legal and Home Affairs). The EPP wants a more equitable division of responsibility for asylum seekers among EU member states. In this context, the group calls on the European Commission to complement the existing system with a binding mechanism (EPP Group, Civil Liberties Justice and Home Affairs).

The EPP states that, while protecting freedom of movement within the EU by promoting the control of safe and effective external borders, sustainable policies by international conventions and the legal framework need to be updated, including effective reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), to meet this challenge. The EPP acknowledges that the Geneva Convention is the basic building block for protecting refugees, but says better adaptation is necessary. In this context, the group advocates the evaluation of the Geneva Convention in terms of 21st-century adequacy and its modernization to ensure a sustainable legal framework (EPP Group, EPP Group Position Paper on Asylum and Migration).

The EPP group plays a leading role in developing the scope of the new rules to modernize refugee rights. The EPP group believes that the presence of open border areas in the EU, and freedom of movement, is the duty to respond to this uncomfortable situation, using a coordinated approach to guarantee high standards in the field of refugee protection (Molendowska, 2017: 142).

The EPP states that the EU faced great difficulties five years ago when close to two million people came to its doorstep to live a new life in two years due to war, political pressures, poverty, or economic reasons, that the lives of these people are

in the hands of smugglers, that it is understood that member states alone cannot solve this migration problem, so a common European approach supporting effective measures taken at a national level will be the solution. The EPP points out that since this wave of migration is the largest since the Second World War, it is very important to act collectively, decisively, and urgently (EPP Group, EPP Group Position Paper on Asylum and Migration). Thus, the EPP addresses the migration problem comprehensively and demands that it to be solved with a common approach in which the EU and its member states act together.

The EPP states that the resettlement of those who fled persecution and war, on dangerous journeys, and took refuge in Europe, is a sign of European solidarity. However, the EPP stresses that EU member states must decide how many people to resettle. It states that the responsibility to protect should be increased not only by the EU but also by the international community (EPP Group, EPP Group Position Paper on Asylum and Migration).

The EPP says the EU needs to improve migration rules and find ways to attract highly skilled legal migrants and entrepreneurs who will work with manual labor and accelerate economic growth. In these cases, the conditions for accessing labor markets should be determined by the member states. In addition, the EPP indicates the necessity for the EU to assist host countries in elimination the problem of irregular economic migration. It states that the purpose of this aid policy is necessary to understand the root causes of migration (EPP Group, EPP Group Position Paper on Asylum and Migration). The EPP stresses that aid and labor recruitment to third countries should be done to prevent irregular migration.

Looking at the EPP's asylum and migration policy states that Europe should protect those fleeing civil war and political refugees. The EPP says it needs a common asylum and migration policy that prioritizes the provision of labor to EU citizens. In its asylum and migration policy, the EPP emphasizes decreasing the number of migrants arriving in Europe and organizing the fair distribution of refugees and burden among member states, prioritizing increasing the security of EU external borders. It also states that EU member states have exclusive authority to accept refugees. It also calls for cooperation with third countries for returns and extraditions. Therefore, it can be said that the EPP's asylum and migration policy is security-oriented, based on returns and low sensitivity to human rights.

## B. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY OF GROUP OF THE PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE OF SOCIALISTS AND DEMOCRATS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: S&D

S&D states that it implements a migration and refugee policy based on solidarity and shared responsibility. In this context, it supports the establishment of a European mechanism within the EP to distribute refugees among member states. Against those who express fear of migration getting out of control, it advocates coordinated and effective management of migration. It respects the rights and dignity of migrants and refugees, tries to protect human life, and supports search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean within this framework (S&D, A European Migration and Refugee Policy Based on Solidarity).

S&D reports that the European Union has faced the most severe refugee crisis since the Second World War. S&D indicates that this crisis is a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented magnitude, caused by conflicts, atrocities, and humanitarian disasters around and beyond Europe. Millions of women, men, and children are being forced to flee violent conflicts in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, oppressive regimes in Eritrea and Sudan, and instability and corruption in various African countries to live in a way that befits security, protection, and human dignity. S&D also indicates that the migration problem seriously endangers the constituent elements of European integration, which require unity among EU member states (S&D, S&D Position Paper on Migration & Asylum).

According to S&D, it is crucial for the EU to adopt a migration policy which ensures member states to undertake full responsibility for problems of refugees. The party says the EU needs a migration policy that allows them to be generous and credible actors in the international community. The S&D states that a successful and sustainable refugee policy requires undertaking to enforce strategy and a common European responsibility in the field of migration. It states that the EU's asylum and migration policy in the past years is not suitable for the purpose and that it should be fundamentally reconsidered in this respect (S&D, S&D Position Paper on Migration & Asylum).

S&D states that Article 80 of the Basic Treaty of the European Union places the principles of unity and equal distribution of responsibility for the whole European system, and therefore, these principles provide a legal basis for the EU's asylum, migration, and border control policies. While acknowledging that Member States

have difficulties in managing their borders responsibly, it notes that this should not be an obstacle to protect those in need. The S&D says that at the EU's external borders, access to asylum rules is not always guaranteed and that the return of people is contrary to international law and the EU's core values. The S&D promotes protection-sensitive border management measures that respect universal asylum applications. However, it states that the EU and its member states should assist member states that are subject to extreme pressure (S&D, S&D Position Paper on Migration & Asylum).

S&D states that the EU's asylum and migration policy should be seen as part of a bigger picture, with its external dimension to be taken into account to deal with the root causes of migration. In this context, it states that actions in asylum and migration policy should be coordinated with all other policies. S&D insists on more effective financing coordination by carefully assessing needs with limited resources in mind. It wants to provide targeted support to non-governmental organizations working in the field and making a difference. The S&D also indicates a necessity for an advanced coordination and cooperation between the relevant parliamentary committees such as the Commission and its Directorate-General, the Union Agencies, and the European Union External Action Service (EEAS) (S&D, S&D Position Paper on Migration & Asylum). In this way, S&D emphasizes the importance of active cooperation of all EU institutions on the migration issue.

The S&D notes the struggle for establishing a powerful and better-funded facility for Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). S&D necessitates that member states make full use of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Fund for Regional Development (ERDF), the necessary parties to create and improve significant integration plans at local, regional and national level (S&D, S&D Position Paper on Migration & Asylum).

With the aim of protecting the social rights of migrants and also to prevent social dumping, the S&D encourages member states to ratify the UN Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Family Members, the broadest legislation internationally that provides protection for the rights of migrant workers and their families. The S&D believes that to provide humanitarian assistance to and cooperate with third countries that have experienced large refugee popula-

tions, the EU should do more to help these countries to achieve refugee integration to encourage them to work fully by the International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions. It states that the EU must increase its efforts on these issues. The S&D also calls for humanitarian assistance to help ensure human rights and well-being (S&D, S&D Position Paper on Migration & Asylum).

The S&D states that more efforts need to be made to combat human trafficking, and illegal immigration crimes and prevent irregular migration. In particular, S&D believes that this should be done by offering legal and safe ways to refugees and migrants, effectively changing intelligence information, and combating criminal networks promptly. According to the S&D, the European Union requires a framework that broadens the parameters for authorized migration and organization, offers circular migration agreements, when necessary, creates mobility partnerships in close coordination with partner nations, and issues humanitarian visas to Europe to ensure the secure transfer of refugees. It also expresses the need for large-scale resettlement efforts through countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan establishing legal and secure routes with the EU (S&D, S&D Position Paper on Migration & Asylum).

As it turns out, S&D has an asylum and migration policy that places emphasis on the rights of migrants and refugees and focuses on human life. It states that the return of people and the lack of access to asylum rules at external borders are contrary to international law and EU values. It attaches importance to close cooperation with countries of origin, transit, and destination for routes for legal migration. In addition, S&D states that a migration approach based on human rights is a basic principle. As it can be understood from here, S&D carries out an asylum and migration policy based on human rights and attaches importance to the rights of migrants and refugees.

## C. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY OF RENEW EUROPE (RENEW)

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), a liberal group in the European Parliament, started to use the name Renew Europe: Renew with the participation of En Marche, the party of French President Emmanuel Macron, and other parties after the elections held in 2019 (EUOBSERVER; Politico).

ALDE's successor, the Renew group, has made policy proposals on asylum and migration policy in line with its predecessor's views. Renew states that since migration is an international problem originating outside Europe's borders, it cannot be treated as an EU domestic policy alone. It is indicated that migration policy should be the basis of the EU's foreign policy. To deal with migration-related challenges, cooperation with transit and countries of origin and necessary commitments must be demonstrated. ALDE states that this cooperation should be based on sustainable political and economic cooperation with financial support, and that common responsibility and respect for human rights should be the basis of cooperation (Renew Europe).

Renew promotes constructive dialog with sending countries and transit countries in areas related to migration which includes also effective return, readmission and integration, smuggling, and human trafficking. It emphasizes the need to carry out policies aimed at reducing the brain drain from third countries and thus reversing the process on their behalf. ALDE expresses the need for intensive efforts by the EU to ensure suitable and prestigious admission facilities that are established near homes of people who have left their homes. In this context, it states that governments should cooperate more with international partners such as UNHCR and IOM and provide them with more financial support to ensure and monitor the humanitarian conditions and respect for fundamental rights of migrants in transit and countries of origin. Apart from these, it states that close cooperation with host communities, local communities, authorities, and other relevant migration partners is important. Renew says that refugee camps should not be considered permanent settlements and should have adequate sanitation and access to education for children (Renew Europe).

Renew states that the EU is founded on common values and the rule of law and that EU values must be protected in the field of asylum and migration. In this context, it emphasizes that the efforts of the EU and its member states to protect people fleeing war and persecution specified in the Geneva Convention are one of the main axes of protecting EU values. Renew says that people fleeing war and persecution, especially children and the vulnerable, deserve protection. It says that the EU's current asylum system is not amenable to respond to varying numbers of arrivals, changing countries of origin, and different reasons for migration. This complicates

European solidarity and prevents equal burden sharing. Renew argues that asylum policy needs to be reformed (Renew Europe). Thus, Renew states that the current EU asylum system is inadequate and adopts a migration policy that provides safe and legal routes.

Renew suggests that a common European responsibility is to ensure adequate and prestigious accommodation in European reception centers and to ensure the humane reception of newcomers. It supports the development of a solidarity mechanism for fair sharing among member states, including relocation. It states that resources should be pooled and information should be shared to manage EU asylum policy better, and improve asylum rules and operational standards. It emphasizes that this will encourage European cooperation and improve the mutual recognition of asylum rules. Renew notes that unnecessary waiting times in application and appeal procedures should be avoided for applicants to live in the host community (Renew Europe).

Renew says the return and acceptance of those whose asylum applications have been rejected is a burden as well as local facilities and public support. It states that efforts to increase voluntary returns are sustainable. It supports the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCG), which ensures European coordination between member states on return and readmission issues, to have sufficient operational capacity. Renew stresses the need for European collaboration among member states, the strengthening of joint return operations planned by EBCG, and the recognition of return decisions based on reciprocity, provided that fundamental rights are guaranteed. In this context, Renew states that formal return and readmission treaties should be signed with third countries by international law and fundamental rights (Renew Europe).

Renew supports cooperation with transit and countries of origin, as does S&D and EPP. Renew advocates for the establishment of reception facilities for refugees close to their homes. It demands that the EU upholds its common values and the rule of law in terms of asylum and migration. It calls for the signing of formal return and readmission treaties by international law and fundamental rights. Renew advocates an asylum and migration policy that is less sensitive to human rights because it supports readmission agreements and demands that refugees reside close to their homes.

## D. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY OF THE GREENS/EUROPEAN FREE ALLIANCE (GREENS/EFA)

Between 1999 and 2004, Greens/EFA stated that there was a need to develop a more humane and less pressing EU asylum policy based on the principle of solidarity between former and new members (The Greens/EFA, Successes of The Greens in The European Parliament). Between 2004 and 2009, Greens/EFA reported that Europe needed migration. It also stated that it was a moral duty to provide shelter to those in need. It has demanded open mechanisms which are essentially humane treatment, consistent and efficient asylum procedures and allow migrants to work and enter legally. In this context, as a first step, Greens/EFA reported that the EU should recognize following facts: firstly, there is a need for migrants; secondly, migrants should be given the same rights as EU residents; finally, the revision of the immigration legislation which will be implemented should be adapted to human rights in the international arena (The Greens/EFA, The Greens' Book, Policy Papers of The Greens in The European Parliament).

Greens/EFA consistently votes for a strong pro-immigrant rights policy. In this context, the voting records before and after 2005 are the same. However, after 2005, asylum positions have changed and become more restrictive (Lopatin, 2013: 749).

Greens/EFA has long stated that migration is caused by two reasons: political and economic. Greens/EFA says that asylum seekers and refugees fleeing war, persecuted because of their gender, color, or faith, and fearing for their lives are politically motivated. It states that the search for jobs by the people of the South is caused by economic reasons. It states that the EU needs not only policies on the reception of refugees and other migrants, but also policies that address the causes of migration. Greens/EFA states that the real problem is related to the distribution of wealth in the world and the development of countries. It states that there may be migration pressures on Europe due to factors such as poverty, worldwide decline in living standards, wars for natural resources, civil wars, dictatorship, political persecution, and ecological disasters. It states that in such cases, the EU should have a global approach and a clearer, more transparent, more humane, and more realistic policy so that a sustainable and beneficial response can be given to both countries of origin and host countries (The Greens/EFA, Migration and Asylum, Background Paper).

Greens/EFA notes that Europe's current migration policy has failed, which is why a radical overhaul of immigration policy is needed. It states that for a sustainable immigration policy, the rights of migrants living in both countries of origin and Europe must be taken into account. Greens/EFA states that the majority of third-country nationals who want to work and live in the EU are unskilled workers and that they have no choice but to apply for asylum or to enter illegally and live without documents. Although it is not enough on its own, it states that the establishment of legal and accessible migration channels is a necessary prerequisite to prevent human trafficking and eliminate all kinds of exploitation that cause discrimination and exclusion. Greens/EFA emphasizes that a selective migration policy based solely on the needs of their communities or the values of potential immigrants is unacceptable (The Greens/EFA, Migration and Asylum, Background Paper).

Greens/EFA states that migration policy should not be based solely on labor market needs. It states that migration policies should be accompanied by development efforts in the countries of origin. In this context, it states that the exchange of knowledge and experience should be encouraged and that migrants living in the EU should be informed about career opportunities in their countries of origin. It states that this will be possible with a flexible visa policy that allows return travel without losing the right to return to the EU. It supports the approach to manage labor migration across Europe by adopting the European Commission's establishment of a legal framework that sets out the common conditions for establishing uniform rights and responsibilities for migrants in all member states. Greens/EFA says that the gradual and rapid harmonization of labor and residency rights, which fully ensures economic, social, and political integration, will create equal opportunities for working migrants (The Greens/EFA, Migration and Asylum, Background Paper).

Greens/EFA considers the right to asylum to be an internationally recognized fundamental and inalienable right that must be protected and strengthened. It states that the Geneva Convention of 1951 should be included in the EU Treaty as a political principle. It says that border rules, especially inhumane airport rules, are unacceptable. It states that such rules and restrictive measures to establish a fingerprint database for all asylum seekers within the would lead people who seeks protection being consideredas criminals which is therefore unacceptable (The Greens/EFA, Migration and Asylum, Background Paper). As can be seen, Greens/EFA considers

granting asylum to those in need as a fundamental and inalienable right and openly opposes the restrictive provisions for it.

Greens/EFA supports the Commission's work to extend the asylum rules to include other measures not included in the Geneva Convention. It states that the granting of subsidiary protection must be based on sound legal foundations, not acts of mercy (The Greens/EFA, Migration and Asylum, Background Paper). From this point of view, it can be said that Greens/EFA supports expanding the rights of refugees, regulations that provide the legal basis for refugee rights, and international conventions.

Greens/EFA states that future European migration policy should focus on two issues. It states that the first of these is the abandonment of the zero migration policy and the implementation of a more flexible visa policy based on short and long stays, and the second is the freedom of movement policy that facilitates return travel and eliminates the reasons for staying illegally and gives the rights to travel. Greens/EFA states that integration policy should be based on residency, not nationality and that all citizens and legal residents should be subject to equal rights and treatment, thus being anti-discrimination (The Greens/EFA, Migration and Asylum, Background Paper).

Greens/EFA reports that border controls and the fight against illegal migration are only one aspect of the EU's migration policies to third countries and that an active development policy is needed to reduce the harmful effects of migration. It believes that mass migration is the result of failed economies, population impoverishment, political instability, civil wars, atrocities, and human rights violations. It states that every measure taken to combat external border control and illegal migration must be compatible with the basic rights and freedoms settled in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, also in the ECHR, in particular the right to asylum and non-refoulement (The Greens/EFA, Greens/EFA Motion for a Resoltion).

Greens/EFA considers it a fundamental and inalienable right to asylum from persecution. It demands that the Geneva Convention to be added to EU legislation. It stresses that the EU's asylum and migration policy should be in a manner that respects human rights. As can be seen, Greens/EFA's asylum and migration policy is sensitive to human rights and by international law.

## E. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY OF IDENTITY AND DEMOCRACY (ID) GROUP

In the 2019 elections in the EP, far-right and populist parties that are skeptical of the EU and are anti-Islam and anti-immigrant constitute the ID political group (Güner, 2021: 579). The focus of the ID group is to increase security and combat illegal immigration (Identitiy and Democracy, About). It states that national identities must be protected and appropriated, while at the same time opposing uncontrolled mass migration (Identitiy and Democracy, Identity). The EU states that its external borders need to be better protected and that each state has the right to protect, control and control its borders. It states that the EU needs to do more when it comes to return illegal and criminal migrants to their countries of origin (Identitiy and Democracy, Borders).

ID aims to protect the identity of citizens and nations in Europe. Members of the ID group state that the right to control, regulate and restrict immigrants is a fundamental right. In this context, they say that their desire to fight for a safer Europe, which cooperates more strongly to combat terrorism and Islamization and has better protected external borders, is also a fundamental right. It states that every nation has the right to control, protect and control its borders. It expressed that the EU should focus more on ensuring the return of illegal and criminal migrants from countries of origin. In addition, ID openly expresses its opposition to Turkey's possible membership (Statues of The Identity and Democracy (ID) Group in The European Parliament).

ID group's first Vice-President Nicolas Bay states that 8 out of every 10 immigrants are adult males. It states that these people do not seek asylum and are economic migrants. Nicolas Bay states that all illegal immigrants should be deported and the external borders should be closed and the pressure exerted by European migration policy on this issue is unacceptable. It also emphasizes that only a full determination can dissuade migrants who want to take their chances, and as a result, control of immigration policies can be allowed (Identitiy and Democracy, Plenary Booklet, 18-21 January 2021).

Ivan David, Czech Republic delegate of the ID group, expresses their rejection of the EU's common asylum policy. In this context, it states that the member states are against the efforts that restrict them from making decisions on asylum, which means denying the sovereignty of the member states. It states that it is unacceptable

for non-governmental organizations and non-profit organizations to take part in the acceptance and rejection of migrants, in national borders and other relevant decision-making processes, and in monitoring the process (Identitiy and Democracy, Plenary Booklet, 26-29 April 2021).

Marco Zanni, president of the ID group, says that a Europe without secure borders has no future. Even today, they find themselves observing the failure of the EU's migration policy. It is indicated that there is a lack of strategy, vision, and implementation on migration and that there is a need for effective systems that protect legality at borders and support the defense of border countries. It states that the only real remedy for irregular arrivals and uncontrolled flows is to stop mobility and human trafficking in countries of origin.

Harald Vilimsky, Austrian delegate of the ID group, calls for the expansion of external borders, states that it is possible for member states to protect their borders, and states that European policy is not consistent on this issue (Identitiy and Democracy, Plenary Booklet, 4-7 October 2021). It states that the EU needs to change its migration policy. It also states that the EU has failed to grasp the significance of the situation. Since German Chancellor Merkel, Germany has experienced a large intake of immigration, with other member states facing the same problem. In this context, it emphasizes that the problem cannot be solved simply, it cannot be eliminated with border protection troops and fences. It says that in 2020, 400,000 third-country nationals were asked to leave the EU and only 70,000 did so, which is a capitulation of the rule of law. It states that these developments should be stopped and the states such as Poland and Hungary, which protect both their borders and the borders of the EU, should be supported. It also stresses that not everyone who reaches the EU's external borders should be allowed in. It also states that basic attitudes towards migration policy need to be changed so that Europe will have a future again (Identitiy and Democracy, Plenary Booklet, 22-25 November 2021).

When the official website of the ID group is examined, it is seen that there is not much information and documents about the opposition to asylum and immigration. As can be seen from the views of the group's chairmen and members, ID is a far-right and populist political group that is anti-immigrant. The ID group states that it aims to combat illegal immigration and increase security. It states that each Member State has the right to protect its borders. ID operates an anti-immigrant

asylum and migration policy. As can be seen, ID advocates an asylum and migration policy that is contrary to human rights by openly stating that it pursues an anti-immigrant policy.

## F. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY OF EUROPEAN CONSERVATIVES AND REFORMISTS (ECR) GROUP

The ECR proclaimed the Prague Declaration, which sets out its principles and values, in 2009. In this declaration, ending the misuse of effectively controlled immigration and asylum procedures was adopted as a fundamental principle and value (ECR Group, Who we are?; ECR Group, The Prague Declaration). The ECR does not stand against migration unless it is under strict control. Although it has some reservations on behalf of the group, the ECR group supports an EU-wide migration policy in parallel with the EU enlargement policy (Akbaba, 2019: 111-112).

The ECR notes that since its inception it has drawn attention to the flaws in the European migration system and called for the Common European Asylum System to be changed and reformed. It adds that this situation is one of the founding principles and has an important priority. The current EU system, because of mass migration, regional conflicts, and poverty, are ineffective in dealing with the modern changes of globalization. First of all, it determines the need for an immigration system in which the demands of the member states and their citizens are respected. A sustainable EU migration system must have the full support of all member states and the European people. The group stresses that the EU will fail with such an immigration system that is supported and imposed by only a few member states. In this context, instead of coercion, it states that the cooperation system should be valid (ECR Group, Safeguarding Citizens & Borders). In the ECR migration system, it can be said that the member states should be the first to have a say and leave this issue to the discretion of the member states.

The ECR states that the protection of its external borders is very important to ensure the internal security of the EU. It claims that as a result of its efforts, member states are required to conduct routine checks against databases pertaining to their external borders; this action is a response to the growing terrorist threats in Europe and this action will make it possible to identify terrorist foreign fighters, irregular migrants, and human traffickers at external borders (ECR Group, Safeguarding Citizens & Borders).

ECR states that for migration to be sustainable in the EU and for the EU to be able to help real and most vulnerable asylum seekers, member states must return unsuccessful asylum seekers to their countries of origin. To hasten the repatriation of non-EU people who routinely stay in EU member states without valid passports or identification cards, it claims to be leading significant legislation that gives member states a European travel document standard. The ECR states that one of its main objectives is to strengthen the safety features and technical guarantees of the form so that its acceptance by third countries will be ensured. Prior to the release of this document, third countries were hesitant to accept extradition documents submitted by member states because of their insufficient security information and fluctuating forms. It also states that many of the problems in the assertion are addressed in this document. Despite the fact that this paper does not offer a comprehensive answer, it emphasizes that it is a crucial step in avoiding exploitation of the asylum system, allowing the EU to lessen the number of unsuccessful asylum seekers who live in the EU. It is indicated that the number of returns has increased since this document has been used by member states (ECR Group, Safeguarding Citizens & Borders).

The ECR member states indicate their belief in appropriate and comprehensive information sharing among law enforcement agencies, which is essential to combat terrorism, cybercrime, and cross-border crime. It says ensuring the safety of European citizens against the threat of crime and violence should be a priority for the EU. They express their belief in the need for the EU to achieve a more sustainable level of migration. They state that they have developed the ground-breaking concept of utilizing private entrepreneurship to combat global poverty. The ECR takes satisfaction in having forced the European Commission to abandon short-term fixes and communiques in favor of a framework that aids in the development of durable social structures, robust economies, and vibrant industries in communities and nations. It says that the fund is used to fund private enterprises in developing countries, address the root causes of poverty and mass migration to the EU, help restore people's reputations through work, and helps to grow innovations in developing countries (ECR Group, We are the Voice of Common Sense).

The ECR strives to prevent the abuse of immigration and asylum rules. It emphasizes that they demand a system that responds to the wishes of member states and their citizens on asylum and migration. It supports the further strengthening of external borders and the return of unsuccessful asylum seekers to their countries of

origin. Therefore, it can be said that ECR has a security-oriented asylum and migration policy that is not compatible with human rights.

## G. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY OF THE CONFEDERAL GROUP OF THE EUROPEAN UNITED LEFT/NORDIC GREEN LEFT (GUE/NGL)

The GUE/NGL says it rejects repressive approaches to immigrants. GUE/NGL indicate that they believe that developing a comprehensive and reasonable migration policy that guarantees human rights is a historic task for Europe. It states that they support the harmonization of the EU's asylum systems as a means of adopting the best possible protective standards for the rights of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. It also states that they are at the forefront of reacting to the condemnation of inhumane incidents, the detention of migrants, and the violation of their fundamental rights. GUE/NGL says that since the administrative detention of immigrants also results in the detention of criminals and non-addicted persons, this situation is also unacceptable both legally and morally (GUE/NGL, For a Respectful and Responsible Migration Policy).

GUE/NGL demands that multinational rescue operations to be coordinated in the Mediterranean, including boats set up on the high seas. It supports the legal access of asylum seekers and migrants for resettlement and the use of humanitarian visas. UN actors support increased cooperation with member states and international law, including maritime exploration and rescue, non-refoulement, international protection, fundamental rights, children's rights, and the right to family life, and the judiciary of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). It condemns the construction of walls at EU borders to get asylum seekers out and hold migrants, the increased border surveillance, and the restriction of people's freedom of movement. It also demands the evaluation of agreements on mobility partners and the suspension of all readmission agreements. It supports the transition away from the existing Dublin system, the increase of the reception and sharing of asylum and refugees among member states, including relocation programs, the opening of reception centers, and the closure of detention centers, taking into account family, language and cultural ties, as well as adequate funding (GUE/NGL, Guidelines for an Alternative EU Migration Policy). From these perspectives, GUE/NGL opposes the implementation of security-oriented migration policies and demands policies that center on the fundamental rights of asylum seekers and refugees.

The GUE/NGL notes the need to work closely with Civil Society Organizations (NGOs) and UNHCR to ensure a major increase in aid to southern countries, which host the majority of the population of migrants and refugees. GUE/NGL states that the economic trade policies taken as the basis have led to the exploitation of the southern countries and poverty and misery affecting millions. It emphasizes the need for EU foreign and neighborhood policy reform to contribute to the sustainable political and economic development of countries of origin. In this context, it supports the development of real development cooperation policies based on solidarity and the needs of the people. The GUE/NGL calls for an end to military conflicts and the need for reforms in EU foreign and neighborhood policy to contribute to sustainable political and economic development in countries of origin. It stresses the need to assess, continuously monitor and ensure transparency of all EU funds related to migration and asylum, both internally and externally (GUE/NGL, Guidelines for an Alternative EU Migration Policy).

Both before 2005 and after 2005, the GUE/NGL consistently votes to make irregular migration legislation less restrictive. However, after 2005, there has been a greater change in the votes and a transition to a more restrictive policy on the issue of asylum (Lopatin, 2013: 750; Attina, 2019: 8).

GUE/GNL advocates an EU migration policy based on human rights. It aims to provide the best rights to migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. It expresses that it is against the violation of the rights of migrants, that they are in favor of the settlement of asylum seekers, and that humanitarian visas should be issued. As can be seen from these points, GUE/GNL carries out a pro-immigrant asylum and migration policy based on human rights.

## CONCLUSION

Migration has a history as old as human history. When it comes to human beings, migration mobility will continue as efforts will always be made for better opportunities. With the experience of migration mobility, many changes are experienced in both the origin and receiving countries in economic, political, cultural, social, and all other areas. This shows that migration has led to wide changes in terms of its causes, consequences, and effects.

After the Arab Spring, there was an uncontrolled flow of mass migration to the EU due to the civil war in Syria in 2011. The EU has implemented security-oriented policies to cope with the mass influx of migrants. Due to the number of migrants in the millions, the EU has taken various measures. EU member states have taken different measures against the migrant crisis. In this respect, different policies have been adopted by the member states of the Union and not a single EU-wide policy has been carried out. Migrants have made dangerous journeys into the territory of member states that are on the borderline to enter through Europe's borders. Since most of these journeys took place through the Mediterranean, they caused many traumas.

EU member states have carried out different policies to stop this mass flow of migration to Europe's borders. Since each of the member states took its measures, there were different practices from each other. Countries such as Greece, Italy, Spain, and Bulgaria, which are on the European external borderline, have made great efforts to stop the flow of irregular migration. In this respect, there is no fair burden distribution among EU member states in irregular mass migration flow. While the countries that are not at the EU's external borders do not make any effort against the flow of migrants, the countries located at the external borders have had to make efforts against the migration flow alone. With the policies carried out differently by the member states, migrants have experienced grievances. Member states have adopted attitudes and policies that violate human rights to combat the irregular migration flow. In particular, countries such as Poland and Hungary have exhibited behaviors that are incompatible with EU fundamental values, conventions, and human rights, to protect their borders. Considering that the vast majority of migrants seek asylum, it is seen that the EU does not fulfill the rights granted to refugees by international conventions. Therefore, it can be said that the EU does not fulfill its human rights commitments in cases of asylum and refugees.

Considering the asylum and migration policies of the political groups in the European Parliament, there are groups with similar views in terms of similarities or differences. In this context, first of all, when the asylum and migration policy of the EPP, the largest political group within the EP, is examined, it is stated that the EU should establish an effective common asylum system. The EPP seems to give priority to reduce the number of migrants, to distribute refugees fairly among member states, and to increase the security of EU external borders in terms of asylum and

migration. The EPP advocates the modernization of the Geneva Convention on the legal status of refugees. It states that each member state must decide for itself who will remain on its territory and that the right to have a say in this matter belongs to the member states. It also states that Europol has undertaken an important task in the fight against migrant smuggling. It states that close cooperation with transit and origin countries is necessary to prevent migrant smuggling. From these perspectives, it seems that the EPP carries out an asylum and migration policy that tries to prevent migrants from coming to Europe, and attaches importance to the security of external borders. Taking into account the priorities of the EPP, it can also be said that it carries out a policy that prioritizes European citizens and whose sensitivity to human rights is not at the forefront.

The S&D states that refugees should be divided among member states and draws attention to the rights of migrants and refugees. In this context, the EU wants to ensure access to asylum rules at its external borders and states that people should not be sent back in violation of international law and EU core values. The S&D states that close cooperation with countries of origin, transit, and destination is needed to manage the flow of migration, such as the EPP. It is understood that S&D has a human rights-based asylum and migration policy that protects immigrant rights.

The Renew group also supports cooperation with transit and countries of origin to overcome migration-related challenges such as the EPP and S&D. Renew also argues that intensive efforts should be made to establish reception facilities for refugees close to their homes. Meanwhile, it demands that the EU uphold its common values and the rule of law in the field of asylum and migration. It calls for the signing of formal return and readmission treaties by international law and fundamental rights. As can be seen, although the Renew refers to international law and fundamental rights in its asylum and migration policy, it can be said that it carries out a policy that is less sensitive to human rights, considering that it supports readmission agreements and demands that refugees to reside close to their homes.

Greens/EFA considers it a fundamental and inalienable right to asylum from persecution. Meanwhile, it demands that the Geneva Convention to be, in principle, added to EU legislation. It states that a return to countries of origin can only take place if it is safe and respects fundamental rights. It stresses that the EU's asylum and migration policy should be in a manner that respects human rights. Therefore, it is

seen that Greens/EFA's asylum and migration policy is sensitive to human rights and international law.

ID stands out as a far-right and populist group with its anti-immigrant stance. It makes it the main objective to combat illegal immigration and increase security. It makes it the main objective to combat illegal immigration and increase security. It states that the EU should accelerate the return of illegal and criminal migrants. As can be seen from the rhetoric of the President and its members, ID carries out an anti-immigrant asylum and migration policy. Therefore, ID advocates an asylum and migration policy that is contrary to human rights by openly stating that it is pursuing an anti-immigrant policy.

ECR states that it is against abuse of immigration and asylum rules. It emphasizes that they demand a system that responds to the wishes of member states and their citizens on asylum and migration. It supports the further strengthening of external borders and the return of unsuccessful asylum seekers to their countries of origin. Considering these statements related to ECR, it can be said that ECR has a security-oriented asylum and migration policy that is not compatible with human rights.

GUE/GNL indicates that the EU carries out a migration policy based on human rights. It demands to provide the best rights for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. It states that it stands against the violation of the rights of immigrants. They also express that they are in favor of the settlement of asylum seekers and that humanitarian visas should be issued. Thus, it is seen that GUE/GNL's asylum and migration policy is a pro-immigrant policy based on human rights.

EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA, ECR, and GUE/GNL state that the current EU asylum and migration policy is not working. Similarly, it supports cooperation with transit and countries of origin. As can be seen, six of the 7 political groups within the EP talk about the inadequacy and lack of the current asylum policy. This shows us that political groups are dissatisfied with EU asylum and migration policy. Considering the asylum and migration policies of political groups, it can be said that S&D, GUE/GNL, and Greens/EFA carry out pro-immigrant soft policies based on human rights. On the other hand, EPP, Renew, and ECR are seen to carry out migration policies that are not very sensitive to human rights and are based on security-oriented migration and the return of migrants. The ID group is an anti-immigrant group and the asylum and migration policies are considered to be contrary to human rights.

The EPP, Renew, and ECR, which carry out security-oriented policies, and the ID groups, which carry out anti-immigrant policies, have a total of 407 seats in Parliament. Therefore, they constitute the majority in decision-making mechanisms for asylum seekers and migrants. In this case, it seems unlikely that the EU will be able to produce asylum and migration policies in the context of human rights. Considering the practices against Syrian asylum seekers and Ukrainian asylum seekers in the recent war between Russia and Ukraine, it is seen that there are differences in practice in the context of human rights even between asylum seekers.

By carrying out asylum and migration policies based on human rights, political groups will act by EU core values, international law, and human rights. Considering the stages that the EU and the EP have gone through in the historical process, it is known that human rights are the main focus. In this sense, it is deemed necessary that the 7 political groups within the EP carry out asylum and migration policies by human rights to achieve their true founding values.

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