Turkish Migration Policies:
A Critical Historical Retrospective

Ahmet İÇDUYGU* and Damla B. AKSEL**

Abstract

As the Turkish state's position on the issue of international migration is being transformed, new questions have arisen about the state's policies on immigration and emigration. These are two issues that have long been seen as separate in migration literature. The aim of this article is to unite these two issues in order to present a retrospective on the Turkish state's responses to the realities of immigration and emigration. We describe the migration patterns in Turkey by focusing on four key periods: a) the two-way immigration and emigration circulation in the early period of modern Turkey; b) the emigration boom since the 1950s; c) the emergence of new migration patterns in the 1980s; and d) the new forms of migration governance employed since the 2000s. By examining these patterns and the state's responses, we aim to analyse the diverging political rationalities of different periods.

Key Words

Immigration, emigration, migration policies, nation-building, globalisation.

---

* Department of International Relations, Koç University.

** PhD candidate at the Department of International Relations, Koç University.

Introduction

As noted by Massey,[1] migration studies have historically paid relatively little attention to the nation-state "as an agent influencing the volume and composition of international migration". In the last decade, although this picture has changed considerably and nation-states are now recognised as important actors in migration, these efforts have been focusing primarily on the cases of migrant-receiving countries. Relatively little work has been done on migrant-sending countries, and even less has been written on the state's role both in emigration and immigration, either in promoting or in limiting. This essay takes up that challenge and aims to elaborate on the dynamics and mechanisms of international migration policies in Turkey. It provides us with a fascinating case study on how emigration and immigration policies are made and transformed over time as a result of changing economic, social and political contexts at the global and local levels.

PERCEPTIONS, Autumn 2013, Volume XVIII, Number 3, pp. 167-190.

167

Since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of the modern Turkish state, both emigration and immigration have become integral parts of deep-rooted state policies concerning the nation-building process and national integrity.

Since the early 20th century, migratory movements have fundamentally shaped the structure and nature of Turkish society. One of the basic characteristics of this phenomenon is that the Turkish state has exploited mobility across and within its borders, either explicitly or implicitly, as a tool of the modernisation process. Since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of the modern Turkish state, both emigration and immigration have become integral parts of deep-rooted state policies concerning the nation-building process and national integrity. For instance, while people of Turkish origin and Islamic faith were encouraged to migrate to Turkey, non-Muslims in Turkey were discouraged from remaining. When Westernisation defined the main political dimension of the state-centric Turkish modernity, one aspect of its sociological grounding was a top-down vision of urbanism that was viewed as a necessity for the making of

Turkey as a civilised and modern nation-state. This contributed to the mobilisation of millions of people, first from rural to urban areas within Turkey, and later from Turkey to other countries. In the mid-20th century, emigration was viewed through the political economy lens and served the country's developmentalism projects. In recent decades, there have been two important developments which have led to important changes in the Turkish state's position on the issues of international migration. First, when transnational spaces built up alongside the formation of Turkey- originated diaspora communities, and as the global changes affected these transnational spaces and networks, the Turkish state engaged in diaspora politics by dynamically using these spaces and networks as diplomatic tools and its expatriates as political and cultural agents abroad. Second, as Turkey has begun to attract non-Turkish and non-Muslim immigrants for the first time in its recent history, it has increasingly become a transit and destination country for immigration, forcing the state to develop new policies and programmes on immigration. The implementation of such measures implies a cautious transition from long- established policies, which were mostly formulated through the lens of nationalism, to new liberal ones that have been partly

affected by Turkey's engagement with global dynamics and its involvement in European Union affairs.

In this essay we do not only intend to address the Turkish state's roles in shaping the nature of immigration and emigration flows concerning Turkey, but will also elaborate on its responses to the shifting realities of immigration and emigration. We portray migration patterns in Turkey by focusing on four key periods: *first*, the two-way immigration and emigration circulation in the early periods of modern Turkey; *second*, the emigration boom since the 1950s; *third*, the emergence of new migration patterns in the 1980s; and *fourth*, the new forms of migration transition and its governance since the 2000s (see Table 1). By examining these patterns, and the state's responses, we aim to analyse the diverging political rationalities of these different epochs.

Table 1: Selected Milestones in Turkish Immigration and Emigration Policy
Since early 20ᵗʰ century

Two-way immigration and emigration circulation (1923-1950s)

- The Treaty of Constantinople between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Bulgaria, facilitating reciprocal optional change of populations (1913)
- Armenian deportation (1915)
- Treaty of Lausanne (1923)
- Foundation of Turkish Republic (1923)
- Convention concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations (1923)
- Law 2510/1934 Settlement Act (1934)

The migration boom after the 1950s

- Law 5682/1950 Passport Law
- Law 5683/1950 related to Residence and Travels of Foreign Subjects (1950)
- United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951)
- Greek emigration from Turkey (1955)
- Early suitcase traders from USSR (late 1950s)
- Turkey-West Germany labour recruitment agreement (1961)
- United Nations Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (1967)
- Oil crisis and the halt of labour emigration to Europe (1973-1974)

The emergence of new migration patterns in the 1980s

- 1982 Constitution
- Soviet Union's invasion in Afghanistan and Afghan immigration
- The First Persian Gulf War between Iran and Iraq (1980-1988)
- The End of the Cold War and immigration from post-Soviet territories
- 1989 expulsion of Turks from Bulgaria (1989)
- Gulf War and mass immigration of Kurdish populations (1991)
- Regulation No. 6169/1994 on the Procedures and Principles related to Possible Population Movements and Aliens Arriving in Turkey either as Individuals or in Groups Wishing to Seek Asylum either from Turkey or Requesting Residence Permission in order to Seek Asylum From Another Country (1994)
- Law 4112/1995 Act on Amendments to Citizenship Law (1995)
- Helsinki European Council (1999)

New modes of migration transition and its governance since the 2000s

- Law on the Work Permit for Foreigners No. 4817 (2003)
- Turkish National Action Plan for Asylum and Migration (2005)
- Law 5543/2006 on Settlement (2006)
- Law 5901/2009 Turkish Citizenship Law (2009)
- The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (2010)
- Syrian refugees migration (2012)
- Law 6458/2013 on Foreigners and International Protection (2013)

Two-Way Immigration and Emigration Circulation (1923-1950s)

The area which today comprises the Turkish Republic witnessed several periods of Turkification and Islamisation. These changes occurred prior to the establishment of modern Turkey, namely before, during and after the First World War.[2] The changes and the homogenisation of populations were based on a dual pattern: (i) the emigration of non-Muslim populations, mainly Armenians and Greeks, from Anatolia, and (ii) the immigration of Turkish Muslim populations, especially from the Balkan countries. According to estimates, about 16 million people were

living in the region that covers today's Turkey at the start of the First World War, including 13 million Muslims and 3 million non-Muslims.[3] Among the 3 million non-Muslims were 1.5 million Rums, 1.2 million Armenians, 128,000 Jews and 176,000 non-Rum and non-Armenian Christians.[4] These figures suggest that about 19% of the population, or one person in five, was from the minority groups in the Ottoman population in 1914.[5]

The state-led emigration of the late 19th century and the early Republican period was maintained by agreements of reciprocity with other countries (in 1913 and 1925 with Bulgaria and in 1923 with Greece) and forced displacements (as in the case of the 1915 Armenian emigration). The principal concern during this period was the management of immigrants (*muhacir*) who entered the country, rather than emigration. This concept of "migrant" was applied by the state to those of Turkish origin moving to Turkey, not to migrants of other origins or to the non-Muslim populations who voluntarily or involuntarily left the country. The institution for settling the immigrants (*Muhacirin Komisyon Alisi*) was established in 1872,[6] and in 1916 was transformed into the General Directorate on Tribes and Immigrants (*Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdüriyet-i Umumiyesi*). This was followed by laws

and institutions that were implemented on the eve of the foundation of the Republic and in the following period. Examples include the establishment of the Ministry of Population Exchange, Development and Settlement (1923), the Constitution (1924), the Turkish Citizenship Law (1928) and the Law on Settlement (1934).

Among the social engineering initiatives for Turkifying the population living in the Turkish Republic were the administrative and legal arrangements, that were primarily established in the 1930s.[7] The 1934 Law on Settlement is considered by scholars as the principal text that defined the cornerstones of the nation-building process.[8] This law established two divergent statuses by (i) facilitating the migration and integration of those of "Turkish origin and culture" either as migrants or as refugees and (ii) preventing and impeding the entry of those who did not meet this criterion as migrants or refugees. While these two statuses were in line with what had been the state's migration policy since the late 19th century, they also paved the way for succeeding patterns of migration to and from Turkey. The same law also regulated the assimilation process of Turkish citizens who "were neither of Turkish descent nor culture" (including those with a non-Turkish mother tongue). While this second regulation was relaxed

in the late 2000s so as to grant more rights to minorities,[9] the perception regarding the migration and settlement of non-citizens without Turkish descent and culture has not changed.

> While the previous patterns of international migration persisted, economic modernisation, intensive urbanisation and rural-urban migration triggered new problems around the settlement and employment of internal and international migrants.

The migration policies facilitating the mobility and settlement of Turkish communities in the early periods also had the intent of promoting the rapid growth of the post-war population in order to support the economic recovery. During the peak of the modernisation process, the objective for economic recovery was also supported by state-led student migration to Europe and the United States of America. The aim was to generate return migration and a "brain-gain" based on social and professional capital. However, the mass immigration gradually became a problematic issue after the late 1940s.[10] Despite the changing discourse, the migration patterns from the Balkans

(primarily Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia) and other neighbouring countries such as Iraq continued from 1923 throughout the 1950s- creating a migrant population of nearly 850,000 people exclusively from the Balkans. The two-way immigration and emigration circulation resulted in the reduction of the non-Muslim population in Turkey from 19% in 1914 to 3% in 1927, and then later on decreased to nearly 1%, approximately 225,000 people.[11]

The Migration Boom After the 1950s

Following the early days of the Republic, the period between 1950-1980 was marked by the entrenchment of the nation-building process at the "local" level. While the previous patterns of international migration persisted, economic modernisation, intensive urbanisation and rural-urban migration triggered new problems around the settlement and employment of internal and international migrants.[12] Moreover, modern-day Turkey, for the first time, witnessed mass emigration of Turkish and Muslim populations abroad with the labour migration mainly to Europe and other industrialised countries.[13] Turkey's integration with the global migration regime also occurred during this period through the signing of the

1951 UN Convention and the 1967 Protocol which determined the status of refugees and asylum seekers. In the period 1950-1980, the non-Muslim population decreased from 225,000 to less than 150,000.[14] A number of events were behind the acceleration of this mobility. One reason can be pointed to the events occurring on 6-7 September 1955, which led to violence against the non-Muslim population. Other events which caused the decrease of the non-Muslim population was the displacement of the Rum population from Istanbul after the 1963-64 crisis in Cyprus and increasing violence against the minority populations during the 1960s, along with the effects of the Turkish invasion of Northern Cyprus in 1974. In addition, the migration of the Jewish population to Israel after the establishment of the state of Israeli also caused an increase in non-Muslims leaving Turkey. As for the immigration of Muslim populations to Turkey, the state was less enthusiastic in accepting them. Although the movements after the political crises continued, the new public discourse considered co-ethnics as settled in their historical homelands and Turkey as their second and relative homeland. This was evident in the new terminology that was adopted to define co-ethnic communities- "Turkish factors" or "external Turks".[15]

During the 1960s, the rise in unemployment was among the top issues on the agenda. The solution to this problem came through state-sponsored labour emigration and official agreements between the Turkish state and the labour-demanding industrialised countries. The main goals during these labour agreements[16] were different from the view of the labour-requesting versus the labour-requested country (i.e. Turkey). This reflects the classical core-periphery model of migration theories. The interests of the European core countries to the post-war labour shortages were met via short-term migration from less developed countries, while the interests of the periphery countries were met through migrants abroad. In this way the periphery countries would benefit from emigrants' economic (export of surplus labour power and remittances) and social (transfer of knowledge and know-how) capital that they would gain in Europe. For both sides, migration was supposed to be temporary.

The overall state policy in Turkey was based on facilitating remittance flows and the easy return of labour migrants during the first decade of migrations. According to official Turkish records, a total of nearly 800,000 workers went to Europe through the Turkish Employment Service between 1961 and 1974. Out of these workers, 649,000

(81%) went to Germany, 56,000 (7%) to France, 37,000 (5%) to Austria and 25,000 (3%) to the Netherlands.[17] Compatible with the 1960s state of mind, which was founded on the basis of a planned economy for boosting economic growth and development, the State Planning Organisation (DPT) and the Turkish Employment Service (İİBK) were at the core of the administrative circle regulating the flows of migrants.[18] Other institutions and programmes supported these two main bodies.[19] Remittances were considered a solution to the perennial shortages of foreign currency to pay for imported goods and services.[20] In fact, remittances contributed greatly to the country's economy in the 1990s, even though it was argued that they were somehow insignificant compared to the migrants' saving potential.[21] Turkey received over US $75 billion from remittances since 1960, an average annual figure of US $1.9 billion.[22] Remittances equalled more than one third of the trade deficit in the 1990s, declining to 20% in the early 2000s and 2% by 2004.[23]

This pattern continued until the 1973 oil crisis, which triggered economic stagnation and led to a pause in state-led labour migration in Western Europe. In the 1970s, new geographical locations, such as Australia, the Middle East and North Africa, became the target of immigrants. Subsequent emigration waves to Europe were mainly family reunifications, family formations, refugee movements and clandestine labour migration,[24] which differed significantly from the previous flows of emigrants and consisted primarily of young single men and women from rural backgrounds.[25] Although the overall policy was based on promoting returns, the first signs regarding the permanent settlement of emigrants in Europe appeared in the early 1970s, for which the state responded by taking measures against cultural assimilation and encouraging returns. For instance, the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*) became involved in the management of workers abroad, even sending imams to European countries in 1971. A programme for temporary return migration (Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals) was implemented together with the UNDP in order to promote voluntary returns.[26]

The Emergence of New Migration Patterns in the 1980s

In the 1980s the Turkish migration regime changed drastically as a result of a transition in migration patterns and the transformations in the social, cultural and economic environment. On the one hand, the emerging mass immigration

of "non-Turks", for the first time in the history of modern Turkey, compelled the state to take new measures with regards to the management of migrants and asylum seekers. However, the adoption of liberal policies attracted increasing flows of foreign direct investments (FDI), lessening the role of remittances in the Turkish economy. The FDI inflows to Turkey increased consistently, from an annual average of US $65.4 million from 1980-1984, to an annual average of US $271.2 million from 1985-1989. From 1990 to 1994, the FDI inflows to Turkey had increased to an annual average of US $716.4 million.[27] As the economic mentality vis-à-vis the situation of the emigrants faded away, the management of social and cultural affairs became increasingly important in maintaining ties with the now-permanent emigrants abroad.

> The political turmoil and the economic transformations over the last 30 years in the region compelled people to move to safer and more developed countries, and Turkey was a passage.

All in all, the identity questions of the 1980s, including binary oppositions such as Turk/Muslims vs. foreigners and Turkish emigrants vs. non-Turkish emigrants, occupied a significant position in the policy-making process. After the 1980 coup in Turkey, the identity question became an important issue both for internal and international politics following the global rise in identity politics. Both external factors (i.e. the end of Cold War) and internal factors (including the emergence of the Kurdish issue and left-right politicisation) were behind these phenomena. Inside the country, as Turkey increasingly became a country of immigration, new encounters occurred between the Turkish/Muslim and "foreigner" populations. Outside of the country, the emigration of Turkish citizens with different ethnic and religious backgrounds triggered new tensions between the emigrant populations, as well as between the Turkish state and certain emigrant groups.

Even though modern Turkey had been affected by immigration waves since the 1920s, those were different in that they were based on 'common descent and culture'. The incoming migration on the 1980s was, for the first time, a migration of 'foreigners' who were neither Turk nor Muslim. Some of the immigration flows to Turkey were related to the overall globalisation process that facilitated and boosted the movement of people as well as goods, technologies, ideas and finance. In addition, the political turmoil and

the economic transformations over the last 30 years in the region compelled people to move to safer and more developed countries, and Turkey was a passage. In the east, the draconian politics of Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq, especially towards minorities, as well as the humanitarian insecurity after the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf crisis, pushed people to enter Turkey seeking asylum. In the West, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist systems in Eastern Europe prompted the citizens of these countries to arrive in Turkey in search of temporary work.

A significant portion of the "non-Turk, non-Muslims" immigration to Turkey since the 1980s has been irregular and such immigrants are defined by the Turkish law as "illegal". Until the 1994 Asylum Regulation, a handful of texts laid down the clauses and modalities regarding the entry, exit, stay and residence of aliens,[28] while not addressing topics such as asylum or labour. The 1994 regulation defined the conditions for applying for asylum in Turkey; however, there still remained a limited opportunity for being recognised legally due to the geographical limitation clause of the 1951 Geneva Convention. Despite criticism, the Turkish state did not lift the limitation and allowed only temporary asylum to non-European asylum seekers until they resettled in a

third country. Analysing this from the perspective of nation-state paradigm and international migration, the policies with regards to immigrants in Turkey have been reluctant to recognise the immigration of non co-ethnics and have been resistant in reforming the nation-state centred migration policies in response to the rising migration challenges.

> Beginning with the first Turgut Özal government (1983-1987), the government began paying special attention to the politicisation of the Turkish communities abroad, which was in line with the revised Turkish foreign policy objectives.

As for the management of emigrants abroad, the focus has shifted away from the economic mentality of the 1960s to social, cultural and political measures. Despite the efforts in the 1970s for returning migrants, most emigrants stayed in the European countries. This has gradually become an accepted fact by the Turkish state and the public changed its perception of Turks abroad from distant workers to migrant workers, and from Turkish citizens abroad to minorities in Europe. The post-1980 period has been characterised by the

increasing engagement of the Turkish state with emigrants in the host countries rather than within Turkish territories.[29] It is argued that a number of reasons were behind this policy change: the settling of former labour migrants, as elaborated above, the emerging patterns of political migration of different opposition groups (communists, Islamists, Alevis and Kurdish nationalists) fleeing from the military junta to Europe and the rising cultural revivalist movements of Turkish citizens in European countries.[30] Especially in the early 1980s, the policy of the military rule was to reduce the political opposition both within the territories of Turkey and abroad.[31]

As a result, the state provided legal and official incentives to maintain ties, monitoring and it worked on improving the conditions of Turkish emigrants in Europe. In 1981, the state introduced a law that allowed dual citizenship for the first time in Turkey- significantly increasing the number of Turkish citizens who also obtained the citizenship of a host country.[32] This was followed by the inclusion of Turkish citizens abroad in the 1982 Constitution, in which the government was charged with taking measures "to ensure family unity, educate their children, meet their cultural needs, provide social security, protect their link and facilitate their coming back". Beginning with the first

Turgut Özal government (1983-1987), the government began paying special attention to the politicisation of the Turkish communities abroad, which was in line with the revised Turkish foreign policy objectives. The state started sending "minor armies of Turkish teachers and Imams" via the Ministry of Education and the Directorate of Religious Affairs.[33] These groups were supported by religious organisations, such as the Turkish-Islamic Union of the Religious Affairs (DİTİB), which was established in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1985, and then in Austria, Belgium, France and other European receiving countries in the following years.[34]

> Turkey's current ambition to become a member of the EU, and the accompanying political liberalisation, has been altering the state's traditional conception of national identity.

The state took other legal and administrative measures to facilitate the political and social participation of Turkish emigrants.[35] The early 1990s were marked by a number of incentives facilitating the political and social engagement of emigrants with Turkey, such as the Pink Card procedure

(replaced by the Blue Card in 2009) granting rights to those who had given up Turkish nationality and the change in the Turkish Party Law allowing the establishment of branches of Turkish parties outside of Turkey. According to Kadirbeyoğlu,[36] the reason behind the institution of the Pink Card was the emerging problem of citizenship and the rising xenophobia in Europe, which had emerged with events such as Solingen in 1993. During this period there was a binding belief that voting (and hence obtaining citizenship in Germany) was the key to finding long-term solutions to the problems faced by the Turkish people living there.

New Modes of Migration Transition and Its Governance Since the 2000s

As noted by Fargues[37] the relationship between international migration and the nation-state has in all times and all places been an uneasy one. As observed in Turkey during the 20th century, "while the nation state is a community that recognises itself as one people sharing one territory and one narrative, international migrants are perceived as transgressors to the founding principle of the nation: emigrants, because they live outside the territory of which they still share the narrative; immigrants, because

they are not yet part of the narrative attached to the territory in which they are newcomers".[38] In fact, one must view the challenges of the new modes of migration transition and its governance in Turkey since the 2000s, within this context of nation-state and international migration dilemma.

After decades of being known as a country of substantial emigration, Turkey in the 2000s faced challenges to its immigration policies. As debated above, the country's traditional immigration policy was shaped very much by nation-building concerns, as well as by efforts to sustain a homogenous national identity. In this respect, Marcus'[39]and Zolberg's[40] contributions to the literature on immigration show that the relationship between state-nation formation and often forced movements of people help to better understand Turkey's experience with immigration in the first half of the 20th century. However, in the early 21st century, the situation was quite different. Several external and internal developments have shaped Turkey's experience with immigration in the post- Cold War era. Globalisation has been clearly a major external force behind Turkey quickly becoming a "migration transition" country. This broader phenomenon is captured by Castles, Miller[41] and Stalker.[42] İçduygu and Keyman[43] demonstrate the impact

of globalisation in the specific case of Turkey. However, they also point out the importance of internal developments within Turkey as factors transforming Turkey into a "migration transition" country. Turkey's liberal market economy, characterised by informality, is another internal factor that attracts migration into Turkey. Yet another internal factor has been government policies making entry into Turkey much easier than what was the case during the Cold War. As will be discussed in the following pages, the single party rule of the Justice and Development Party - JDP (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* in Turkish), with its partly liberal stance, has been instrumental in the country's immigration policy reforms since the early 2000s. Lastly, Turkey's current ambition to become a member of the EU, and the accompanying political liberalisation, has been altering the state's traditional conception of national identity. There has been a growing pressure to adopt policies that recognise Turkey's own ethnic and cultural diversity. Inevitably, this has had a bearing on how the Turkish state and society look at foreigners and migrants. In turn, government policy is under growing pressure to be reformed and adapted to the realities of Turkey becoming a "migration transition" country- a transformation from mainly being a country of emigration to a country of immigration.

The 2000s signifies the changing migration flows with respect to four different categories of immigration in Turkey: (i) irregular labour migrants; (ii) transit migrants; (iii) asylum seekers and refugees; and (iv) regular migrants. The irregular migrants (labour/shuttle and transit migrants) are those who either use Turkey as a transit state to cross into a third country, or those who stay or work in the country without the necessary permits. Asylum seekers and refugees are considered in parallel with irregular migrants due to their entry to Turkey, which is often made through irregular border crossing. Regular migrants are comprised of the immigrants and their family members who arrive in Turkey for employment, education, settlement or long-term residence and recreational purposes. Empirical evidence of the last two decades, 1995-2013, directly and indirectly shows the volume and nature of these new immigration flows to the country. It is estimated that in those two decades, there were more than half a million transit migrants apprehended in the country, primarily from the Middle Eastern, Asian and African countries, trying to make their way to Europe. Another half a million, mostly coming from the post-Soviet countries, were apprehended while they were irregularly working in various sectors. In the same period, there were more than

a 100,000 asylum seekers individually arriving in Turkey, in addition to the mass movements of half a million Kurds from Iraq during the first Gulf War in 1991, and another half a million Syrians with the recent crisis. In addition, there is a stock of around a quarter of million foreigners who have residence permits, most of which are professionals, students and retired "sun" migrants.[44]

The early signs of a changing policy in the area of immigration are becoming increasingly apparent and the EU has been an important driving force since the early 2000s. For example, Turkey, as part and parcel of pre-accession requirements, has to harmonise its legislation in areas identified in the EU "Accession Partnership" document.[45] Specifically, the *Action Plan on Asylum and Migration* adopted by the government in March of 2005 lays out the tasks and the timetable Turkey intends to follow in order to prepare for the development of a fully fledged national status determination system, lift the geographical limitation and adopt EU directives on asylum and migration in general.[46] However, the uncertainty over Turkey's membership prospects is discouraging officials from advising the government to make these changes too precipitously. Furthermore, there is a deep-seated concern that Turkey may become a "buffer zone" or a kind of a "dumping ground" for the EU's illegal migrants and rejected asylum seekers. Yet, the pressures for policy reform are unequivocal. For example, the government has completely overhauled its work permit laws and regulations. The new law was a remarkable change in legislation pertaining to irregular migration and its labour outcomes. In 2003, the Turkish parliament enacted a new law, the Law on Work Permits of Foreigners (Law No. 4817) in order to concentrate the administration of permits in one authority, thus enabling foreigners to obtain their documents in Turkey more easily. The law aims to ensure that the work permit acquisition process in Turkey matches international standards, in particular to those of the EU. Today it has become relatively easier for foreign nationals to seek work and be employed in Turkey.

Although Turkey's migration policies have been undergoing a remarkable transformation since the early 2000s, there seem to be various paradoxical developments about the direction of these changes. There are uncertainties about whether these changes will lead to more liberalisation with new regulations or whether they will be faced with resistance by long- established regulations in migration policies. Evidence from the last decade presents mixed and confusing results.

For instance, the prospects of Turkey loosening its traditional immigration policies seem less likely. Although the new Settlement Law of November 2006 has made similar changes towards the liberalisation of migration policies, it continues to limit formal immigration to Turkey to individuals and groups of "Turkish descent and culture". This approach is very closely related to the traditional conception of "Turkishness" and is reminiscent of the 1930s. The identifying features of "Turkishness" are not solely related to Turkish ethnicity, but the ability and willingness to adopt the Turkish language and to be a member of the Muslim Sunni ethnic group often closely associated with past Ottoman rule. Technically, Albanians, Bosnians, Circassians, Pomaks, Tatars and Turks- mostly from the Balkans- who are included in this definition will be able to immigrate to Turkey. Minorities claiming a link to Turkey who are not Sunni Muslims, that is, everyone from Armenians and Assyrians to Greeks and Jews, as well as unassimilated Kurds and Alevis, are likely to face difficulties in immigrating to Turkey. Such a policy is not in accord with the emerging EU common immigration policy, which increasingly emphasises civic connections to host territory and employment prospects rather than ethnic or national origin as grounds for immigration. How

will the government treat demands from descendents of former non-Muslim Turkish citizens to immigrate and settle in Turkey? Similarly, what will be the position of Turkey in the face of foreign individuals who may wish to immigrate on the grounds of family connections, even if they are not of "Turkish descent and culture"? What will happen to those Kurds or descendents thereof who may have left willingly or unwillingly in the past and want to return and resettle in Turkey? If and when Turkey lifts the geographical limitation to the 1951 Geneva Convention, will the recognised refugees have the right to "integrate" to Turkey and be allowed to become citizens?

As doubtful questions such as these increasingly occupy the public policy agenda of Turkey, one positive aspect out of all of this has been the recent shift towards a liberal immigration and asylum regulation. A new Law on Foreigners and International Protection was adopted by the parliament in April 2013. Combining the two previously planned separate laws, the Law on Aliens and the Law on Asylum, this law introduces some landmark reforms that provide Turkey with a modern, efficient and fair management system in line with core international and European standards. With the new law, Turkey commits itself to taking necessary steps towards

integrating immigrants into the country and treating asylum seekers and irregular migrants according to international norms. The law officially declares the foundation of the General Directorate of Migration Management, which was established under the Ministry of Interior, and will be a hub for implementing and regulating the entry, stay and exit from Turkey for foreign nationals, and for the protection of the rights of migrants and asylum seekers. Critically assessing the fact that while these tasks are currently carried out nationwide by the Security General Directorate they will be gradually replaced by the General Directorate of Migration Management after its establishment in one year, we can conclude that these developments, brought on by this new law, mark genuine progress around the promotion of the idea of "migration management" to the country's public policy agenda.

How will Turkey as a state manage immigration against the backdrop of its domestic pull and push factors accompanying globalisation? Hollifield[47] in his article "The Emerging Migration State", refers to two types of states with respect to regulating migration: a state that follows relatively open-door policies and extracts advantages from immigration, and a state that builds walls around itself and restricts immigration. Which of these states will

Turkey resemble? This is a topic that deserves greater attention. However, it is likely that Turkey will be caught between pressures in both directions. As the letter and spirit of the new Settlement Law suggests, Turkey will remain relatively closed to formal immigration. Yet, the new Law on Foreigners and International Protection, possibly realising the empirical reality in the country, suggests that people abroad will increasingly continue to come to Turkey as migrants for short or long durations. Turkey will be subject to contradictory forces from the outside as well. The Syrian refugee crisis is one of the most recent and worthy examples. This also implies that a case in point is the day to day management of the movement of people into Turkey.

As pointed out earlier, the single party rule of the JDP, with its partly liberal stance, has been instrumental to the country's immigration policy reforms since the early 2000s. This was mainly due to the fact that the JDP government has been very keen on the progress of the EU membership process, particularly between 2004- 2010. Accordingly, it took an exceptionally active position to harmonise the immigration and asylum regulations with the EU's regulations, as seen by the two new laws- the Law of Settlement in 2006 and the Law on Foreigners and International Protection in 2013.

However, the Turkish government has not always taken a compatible position concerning the harmonisation efforts of the EU pre-accession period. For instance, travel restrictions have been eased and visa requirements lifted for travellers mainly from nearby countries such as Azerbaijan, Jordon, Lebanon, Libya, Russia, Syria, and Ukraine, as well as from various distant countries, such as Brazil, Tanzania, Guatemala, Venezuela, Colombia, Andorra and Paraguay.[48] Interestingly, many of these new visa arrangements are contradictory to the EU *acquis* and are paradoxes in Turkey's EU membership agenda. Turkey is in the process of adopting the EU Schengen visa system, which requires member countries to apply a common visa policy to third country nationals. This requires replacing Turkey's current relatively liberal visa system with a much stricter one. Although this will align Turkish practice with that of the EU, it will also make it more difficult for nationals of neighbouring non-EU countries to enter Turkey. This may result in a net cultural, economic and social loss for Turkey.[49] It may also exacerbate illegal migration by forcing people to circumvent visa restrictions. So far, in spite of the requirements of the EU, the Turkish government has been reluctant to adopt the Schengen visa system fully, allowing the movement of people between Turkey and neighbouring countries to continue to grow. One way in which the country's new liberal visa policies could be interpreted is as a part of a larger context of the JDP's foreign affair policies of "zero problems with neighbours" and as part of the ideological setting of policy makers, which favours the legacy of the Ottoman past.

Indeed, the reflections of this newly emerged ideological setting have become very clear with the establishment of a new government department, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Relative Communities (*Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Toplulukları Başkanlığı*) which is linked to the Prime Minister Office. The Presidency was set up in 2010 with the objective to maintain and strengthen the relationship of the Turkish state with Turkish citizens living abroad, those of Turkish origin living outside of Turkish territories and with the foreign students in Turkey. The motto and philosophy of the group is "wherever there is our citizen and kin, we are there". This is the first time that the emigrants abroad and the Turkish ethnic communities who are not citizens of Turkey have been brought together under the same institutional roof. According to the Presidency, close contact with Turkish citizens living abroad is of foremost importance and "citizens who are dispersed to a vast geographies in the world, from Germany

to Jordan, Balkans to Australia, are increasingly becoming more effective and successful in their residence countries in different fields including economics, science, arts, sports and politics".[50]

From the mid-1990s until recent times, the Turkish state's position regarding international migration has broken away from the approach of "ignorance and neglect" that dominated the 1980s and early 1990s: both emigration- and immigration-related issues have gained importance on the public policy-making agenda.

A content analysis of the quarterly journal entitled *Artı 90* (*Plus 90*), published by the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Relative Communities since January 2012, reveals the nature of the official worldview towards the Turkish expatriates and ethnic Turks living abroad. The journal has a nearly equal distribution of articles focusing on host countries of emigrants and countries with co-ethnic populations. Yet, while the Balkan region is represented as a special section, the cover sections have always had coverage on the emigrants in the European countries and are longer

than the other sections. The journal places an emphasis on the Turkish state's belated interest in re-connecting with the emigrant populations, which has been done in other countries. This was maintained by Kemal Yurtnaç in the latest issue in January of 2013:

> Institutions such as Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in India, Ministries of Diaspora in Central Asian countries, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in Britain, General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad, International Organization of the Francophonie in France, Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation and Jewish Agency for Israel [that reinforce the ties between the state with emigrants] show us how important it is to have administrative structures. […] Unfortunately we have a lag of 50 years in this arena. However, I believe that it is better to have them belated rather than not having at all.[51]

Besides this interest, the journal projects a discourse, which often makes references to the glorified Ottoman past, to its history, people and geography. Following Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu's call in July of 2012 for the reconnection of Armenian, Greek and Jewish populations who have emigrated from Anatolia during the Ottoman era,[52] the journal also makes references to former Ottoman populations. This discourse can be followed by the references to the Ottoman history: "A great number

of 'Ottomans' live in South America" (January 2012), "Cities of the Balkans that bear the Ottoman colours, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tiran, Novi Pazar, Pristine, Prizren and even Belgrade, Sofia and Thessaloniki are now the target of a part of Turkish tourists who place importance on culture…." (July 2012). By calling upon the emigrants, co-ethnics and ex-Ottoman citizens to reconnect with the Turkish state, the Presidency and the journal reinvigorate Turkey as a hegemonic power. As Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said in a speech in January 2013:

> My brothers who are living abroad should know this well: They are not alone anymore. They have the strength of the Turkish Republic. With TIKA we thrust our hand to every corner of the world, bring heirloom objects to daylight. With the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Relative Communities we evoke the warmth and power of Turkey. By establishing Yunus Emre Institutes we teach Turkish to the world. With TRT Avaz, TRT Turk, TRT Arabic, TRT Şeş we broadcast Turkey's messages to the world.

Since the early 2000s, various external and internal factors have made Turkey take more systematised steps towards institutionalising the "management of international migration flows and their outcomes". It seems like there has been a considerable shift within the last decade towards a proactive policy-making position on emigration and immigration issues. However, with the changing global, regional and local outlook, it is too early to say whether the country is on a smooth path with regards to its policy-making on international migration.

Conclusion

This essay tries to constitute the first step towards mapping the changes in government policies on emigration and immigration as observed in Turkey over time, and addressing some of the challenges associated with the transformation of the migration paradigm from one based on nationalism and the nation-state to one founded on transnationalism and the globalised world. Given the history of the 90-year-old Turkish Republic, which has been characterised by emigration and immigration, the above discussion relates to both relatively old as well as new cases of migratory contexts involving Turkey.

A number of paradigmatic shifts since the early 20th century have initiated a process of revisionism with regards to Turkey's international migration policies. For the first half of the 20th century, nation-building concerns determined the nature of emigration and immigration flows in the country as the departure of non-Muslims and arrivals of Turks and Muslims dominated the flows. In the mid-20th century, migration policies focused on the economic gains

from emigration flows: labour migration to Europe was seen as a tool for reducing unemployment, obtaining remittances and acquiring skills. Starting in the early 1980s, Turkey was faced with flows of immigrants with different national, ethnic and religious backgrounds: regular and irregular labour migrants, transit migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. In the 1980s and early 1990s, any noticeable policy concern on emigration and immigration issues was absent from politics. From the mid-1990s until recent times, the Turkish state's position regarding international migration has broken away from the approach of "ignorance and neglect" that dominated the 1980s and early 1990s: both emigration- and immigration-related issues have gained importance on the public policy-making agenda. Today, in the early 21st century, Turkey is confronted with very dynamic questions about the consequences of emigration and immigration, and how various migration patterns can be managed by policy makers. It appears that the country's migration policy-making processes are now caught up between "the politics of the past" (nationalist legacies) and "the politics of future" (globalist trajectories).

Endnotes

1   Douglas S. Massey, "International Migration at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century: The Role of the State", *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (June 1999), pp. 303-322.

2   Ahmet İçduygu and İbrahim Sirkeci, "Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye'sinde Göç Hareketleri", in Metin Celal (ed.), *75 Yılda Köyden Şehirlere*, İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Kitapları, 1999, p. 249.

3   Youssef Courbage and Phillipe Fargues, *Christians and Jews under Islam*, London and New York, Tauris, 1998, p. 128.

4   Ahmet İçduygu, Şule Toktaş and Ali Soner, "The Politics of Population in a Nation-Building Process: Emigration of Non-Muslims from Turkey", *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* Vol. 31, No. 2 (February 2008), pp. 358-389.

5   Ahmet İçduygu, "Den Nationalstaat errichten und bewahren, auch in der globalisierten Welt: Der politische Hintergrund internationaler Migration in die Türkei", in Barbara Pusch and Tomas Wilkoszewski (eds.), *Facetten internationaler Migration in die Türkei: Gesellschaftliche Rahmenbedingungen und persönliche Lebenswelten,* Istanbul, Orient-Institut, 2008.

6   Ahmet İçduygu et al., *Türkiye'nin Uluslar arası Göç Politikaları, 1923-2023: Ulus-devlet Oluşumundan Ulus-ötesi Dönüşümlere*, TÜBİTAK Raporu, 2009.

7   Ayhan Aktar, *Varlık Vergisi ve Türkleştirme Politikaları,* Istanbul, İletişim, 2000; Ahmet Yıldız, *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene,* İstanbul, İletişim, 2007.

8   İçduygu, "Den Nationalstaat errichten und bewahren, auch in der globalisierten"; Kemal Kirişci, *Turkey: A Transformation from Emigration to Immigration, Migration Information Source Paper*, Washington, Migration Policy Institute, 2003; Soner Çağaptay, "Kemalist Dönemde Göç ve İskan Politikaları: Türk Kimliği üzerine bir Çalışma", *Toplum ve Bilim,* Vol. 5, No. 2 (2002), pp. 218-241; Yıldız, *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene*.

9   Şener Aktürk, *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia and Turkey*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

10   İçduygu et al., *Türkiye'nin Uluslar arası Göç Politikaları*.

11   İçduygu, "Den Nationalstaat errichten und bewahren, auch in der globalisierten Welt".

12   Among the legal and administrative steps taken during this period regarding immigrants are the establishment on the General Directorate on Land Affairs and Settlement (1950) and the Law on Residence and Travel of Aliens (1950).

13   Nermin Abadan-Unat, *Bitmeyen Göç: Konuk İşçilikten Ulus-ötesi Yurttaşlığa,* İstanbul, Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2002; Ahmet İçduygu, "Demographic Mobility over Turkey: Migration Experiences and Government Responses", *Mediterranean Quarterly,* Vol. 15, No. 4 (Fall 2004), p. 88.

14   İçduygu, "Den Nationalstaat errichten und bewahren".

15   İçduygu et al., *Türkiye'nin Uluslar arası Göç Politikaları*.

16   Turkey signed bilateral labour recruitment agreements with the following: Federal Germany (1961), United Kingdom (1961), Austria (1964), Netherlands (1964), Belgium (1964), France (1965), Sweden (1967), Australia (1967), Switzerland (1971), Denmark (1973) and Norway (1981).

17   Ahmet Akgündüz, *Labour Migration from Turkey to Western Europe-1960-1974*, Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, 2006.

18   Ibid.

19   These include,the Ministry of Labour and Social Security Overseas Branch, First Five year Development Plan (1963-1967) (1963), Law on Housing and Artisan Loans and Lending Money to Workers Abroad (1964) DG on Overseas Workers' Problems (1972), Second Five Year Development Plan (1968-1973) (1968), Coordination Committees on the Problems of Workers and Citizens Abroad, Village Development Cooperatives and State Industry and Workers' Investment Bank (1975).

20   Sabri Sayarı, "Migration Policies of Sending Countries", *Annals*, Vol. 485 (May 1986), pp. 87-97; Philip Martin, *The Unfinished Story: Turkish Labor Migration to Europe*, Geneva, International Labor Office, 1991.

21   Ahmet İçduygu, "50 Years After the Labour Recruitment Agreement with Germany: The Consequences of Emigration for Turkey", *Perceptions,* Vol. 17, No. 2 (Summer 2012), pp. 11-36.

22   Ahmet İçduygu, "Migration, Remittances and Their Impact on Economic Development in Turkey", *OECD SOPEMI Country Report for Turkey*, 2005.

23   Ahmet İçduygu, "International Migration and Turkey", *OECD SOPEMI Country Report for Turkey*, Istanbul, MiReKoc, Koç University, 2011. Even though the declining trend of remittances since 1999 is obvious, the reason for the sharp decline since 2002 is not so clear, partly due to the rising tendency towards migrants' decision for permanent settlement, and partly due to the increasing informal channels of remittances and changing calculations.

24   Ahmet İçduygu and Deniz Sert, "Consequences of Transnational Citizenship for Migrant Sending Countries: A Debate on Dual Citizenship", *Transnationalisation and Institutional Transformations*, Collected Working Papers from the TRANS-NET Project, Bielefeld, 2010.

25   Nermin Abadan-Unat, *Turks in Europe, From Guest Worker to Transnational Citizen*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2011.

26   Özge Bilgili and Melissa Siegel, *Understanding the Changing Role of the Turkish Diaspora,* (No. 039), United Nations University, Maastricht Economic and Social Research and Training Centre on Innovation and Technology, 2011.

27   Data is gathered from UNCTAD statistics on "Inward and outward direct investment flows", at http://unctadstat.unctad.org/ReportFolders/reportFolders.aspx [last visited 10 July 2013].

28   Law No. 2510 on Settlement (1934), Law No. 5683 on Residence and Travel for Aliens in Turkey (1950), the Passport Law No. 5682 (1950) and Turkish Citizenship Law No. 403 (1981).

29   Can Ünver, "Changing Diaspora Politics of Turkey and Public Diplomacy", *Turkish Policy Quarterly,* Vol. 12, No. 1 (2013).

30   Eva Østergaard-Nielsen, "The Politics of Migrants' Transnational Political Practices", *International Migration Review,* Vol. 37, No. 3 (September 2003), pp. 760-786; Gamze Avcı, "Religion, Transnationalism and Turks in Europe", *Turkish Studies,* Vol. 6, No. 2 (June 2005), pp. 201-213; Liza Mügge, "Managing Transnationalism: Continuity and Change in Turkish State Policy", *International Migration,* Vol. 50, No. 1 (February 2012), pp. 20-38.

31   Mügge, "Managing Transnationalism".

32   Ahmet İçduygu, "Citizenship at the Crossroads: Immigration and the Nation State", in Eleonore Kofman and Gillian Youngs (eds.), *Globalization: Theory and Practice,* New York, Pinter, 1996; Zeynep Kadirbeyoğlu, "Country Report: Turkey", EUDO Citizenship Observatory, European University Institute, 210, at http://eudo-citizenship.eu/docs/CountryReports/Turkey.pdf [last visited 10 July 2013].

33   Eva Østergaard-Nielsen, "Trans-State Loyalties and Politics of Turks and Kurds in Western Europe", *SAIS Review,* Vol. 20, No. 1 (Winter- Spring 2000), p. 108.

34   Ünver, "Changing Diaspora Politics of Turkey and Public Diplomacy", p.185.

35   These include the establishment of the General Directorate on Overseas Workers' Services (1983), Higher Coordination Council for Workers' Problems (early 1980s), Law No. 2299 and 3478 on shorter Military Service (1980; 1988), Law No. 3270, 2820 and 2839 on Political Parties and Elections (1986), TRT broadcast in Western Europe (1990), Law No. 3803 on paid Military Service (1992), Law No. 4112 on Turkish Citizenship (1995) and Higher Council and Advisory Council on Citizens Living Abroad (1998). Banu Şenay's research on Turkish state's increasing interest in mobilizing nationals abroad around official Kemalist ideology provides an ethnographic account on the different mechanisms adopted by the Turkish state even at geographies as far as Australia. See, Banu Şenay, *Beyond Turkey's Borders: Long-Distance Kemalism, State Politics and the Turkish Diaspora,* London, I.B. Tauris, 2013.

36   Kadirbeyoğlu, "Country Report: Turkey".

37   Philippe Fargues, "International Migration and the Nation State in Arab Countries", *Middle East Law and Governance,* Vol. 5, No. 1-2 (2013).

38   Ibid, p .5.

39   Michael Marcus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985.

40   Aristide Zolberg, "The Formation of New States as a Refugee-generating Process", *ANNALS (AAPSS)*, Vol. 467, pp. 24-38.

41   Stephen Castles and Mark Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 2nd Edition, New York, The Guilford Press, 1997.

42   Peter Stalker, *Age of Migration and Workers without Frontiers*, London, MacMillan, 2000.

43   Ahmet İçduygu and Fuat Keyman, "Globalization, Security and Migration: The Turkish Case", *Global Governance*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2000), pp. 383-398.

44   Ahmet İçduygu, "Turkey and International Migration", *OECD SOPEMI Country Report for Turkey*, Istanbul, MiReKoc, Koç University, 2012. For the details of the figures, see various OECD SOPEMI Reports for Turkey.

45   "Accession Partnership" documents lay down the tasks that Turkey has to implement to harmonize its laws and policies with that of the EU *acquis*. There is a whole section relating to issues under immigration. The most recent one is *Accession Partnership Strategy for Turkey*, Council Decision, 18 February 2008.

46   The Action Plan on "Asylum and Migration" was officially adopted by the Turkish government on 25 March 2005. It is available with a book entitled *Asylum and Migration Legislation*, Ankara, MOI and UNHCR, February 2006, at www.unhcr.org.tr. The Border Management Action Plan was adopted 27 March 2006, *National Action Plan towards the Implementation of Turkey's Integrated Border Management Strategy*, Ankara, MOI, March 2006. This Action Plan too touches upon issues to do with immigration.

47   James Hollifield, "The Emerging Migration State", *International Migration Review,* Vol. 38, No. 3 (Fall 2004), pp. 885-912.

48   For detailed information on current visa requirements, see, Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at http://www.mfa.gov.tr/visa-information-for-foreigners.en.mfa. [last visited 18 September 2013].

49   Kemal Kirişci, "A Friendlier Schengen Visa System as a Tool of 'Soft Power': The Experience of Turkey", *European Journal of Migration and Law,* Vol. 7, No. 4 (2005), pp. 343-367.

50   T.C. Başbakanlık Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı, "Yurtdışı Vatandaşlar Danışma Kurulu", 2013.

51   Kemal Yurtnaç "Başkan'dan. Üçüncü yıl biterken…", *Artı 90 Dergisi*, 2013.

52   "El Turco Açılımı", at http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25364645/ [last visited 9 July 2013].