

**TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY PRACTICES AGAINST IRREGULAR MIGRATION
IN THE AEGEAN SEA AND ITS IMPACTS ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY IN
THE CONTEXT OF NORMATIVE THEORY**

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Abstract: In today's world, important developments are taking place in the agenda of international politics and scholars are trying to understand and explain these developments in the context of certain theories. In this study, by examining how the Normative Theory is perceived by scholars of International Relations discipline and by using the ethical questions of the Normative Theory, Türkiye's foreign policy practices towards irregular migration incidents in the Aegean Sea and the effects of these practices on international security are examined. In this context, the main factors that play a role in the development process of the Normative Theory are explained in the introduction part while having been briefly examined the basic questions that fall into the field of study in the context of the development process and the arguments of the Normative Theory in the first chapter. In the second chapter, legal aspects of irregular immigration are defined. As the main subject of the article is the effects of Turkish Foreign Policy practices on the problem of irregular immigrants in the Aegean Sea on international security, the third chapter analyzes the foreign policy practices of Türkiye in terms of Normative Theory.

Keywords: *Normative Theory, Irregular migration, Turkish Foreign Policy, Aegean Sea, International security.*

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EGE DENİZİ'NDEKİ DÜZENSİZ GÖÇ KARŞISINDA UYGULANAN TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASI PRATİKLERİ VE BUNUN NORMATİF TEORİ BAĞLAMINDA ULUSLARARASI GÜVENLİĞİ ETKİLERİ

Öz: Günümüz dünyasında uluslararası siyaset gündeminde her geçen gün önemli gelişmeler yaşanmakta ve bilim insanları söz konusu gelişmeleri belirli teoriler bağlamında anlamaya ve açıklamaya çalışmaktadırlar. Bu çalışmada, Uluslararası İlişkiler bilim alanında Normatif Teori'nin bilim insanları tarafından nasıl algılandığı irdelenerek ve Normatif Teori düzleminin etik soruları kullanılarak Türkiye'nin Ege Denizi'ndeki düzensiz göç olaylarına yönelik sergilediği dış politik pratikler ile bu pratiklerin uluslararası güvenliğe etkileri incelenmiştir. Bu bağlamda, çalışma içerisinde giriş bölümünde Normatif Teori'nin gelişim sürecinde rol oynayan temel etmenler açıklanmıştır. Birinci bölümde, Normatif Teori'nin gelişim süreci bağlamında çalışma alanına giren temel sorular ve teorinin savları kısaca incelenmiştir. İkinci bölümde, düzensiz göçün hukuki boyutları açıklanmıştır. Üçüncü bölümde ise, makalenin asıl çalışma konusu olan Ege Denizi'ndeki düzensiz göçmen sorununa yönelik Türk dış politikası pratiklerinin uluslararası güvenliğe etkileri yorumlanarak, Normatif Teori açısından analizi sağlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Normatif Teori, Düzensiz göç, Ege Denizi, Türk Dış Politikası, Uluslararası güvenlik.*

Introduction

After 1945, Realism, which claimed to explain the world with more rational concepts, became the dominant theory in the International Relations discipline. Realism, with the argument of the aggression and power-seeking of states is due to the imperfect human material that establishes them, sees the real cause of war not as famine, which is a product of human conditions, but as sin, which is a product of human nature. In addition, Realism explains International Relations on the basis of states' pursuit of their interests defined by power.

While accepting that actors such as non-international organizations, economic initiatives, non-governmental organizations, and individuals can be effective in some situations and can act independently of the state, Realism defines the main actor in the international system as the state. Because, according to Realism, it is the state that enables all these organs to operate, regulates them and determines the conditions under which they can act. The realist theory, which claims that states act rationally in the decision-making processes in foreign policy, and that, therefore, in a system where the balance of power is established, assumes that states will not prefer to enter into conflict and additionally argues that peace can be established by balancing the power.

However, this understanding of peace, which is based on the balance of power of the realist theory, has destroyed the trust for the theory in the international system, where people were tired of living under the nuclear threat during the Cold War and experienced the “*irregularities*” in the new world order. This situation has increased the need and tendency towards peace initiatives.² In addition, the extent of human rights violations and international sensitivity caused the international civil human rights movement and provided a new field of action for Normative Theory in this context.

This led to an understanding that rights were no longer considered only as a safeguard against state activities, but also as legitimate demands for the state to meet human needs.³ As a matter of fact, in the new world order that emerged after the Cold War, the individual was elevated to a stronger status by being given certain rights not only from being a citizen of a certain state,

² Azime Telli (2013), “Normatif Teori ve İnsancıl Müdahale”, in (eds. by Hasret Çomak & Caner Sancaktar) *Uluslararası İlişkilerde Teorik Tartışmalar*, İstanbul: Beta Yayıncılık, p. 32.

³ Norman P. Barry (2012), *Modern Siyaset Teorisi*, Ankara: Liberte Yayıncılık, p. 383.

but also from being an individual. The most important result of this change was the birth of Normative Theory.⁴

The significant increase in the number of states that have ratified six basic human rights treaties since the 1990s, widespread support for the goals of the human rights regime, observation of human rights violations, and the provision of training and consultancy services related to human rights have enabled Normative Theory to find a place for itself in the discipline of International Relations. Also, Bakan emphasizes that Normative Theory has been neglected for years, but thanks to post-positivist and reflectivist theoretical approaches, it has found a place for itself in the International Relations discipline today.⁵

In addition, the view was put forward by normative theorists that the efforts to prevent and reduce conflicts should be combined with measures to reduce human rights violations and also the chaos and uncertainty of the era placed Normative Theory in a position to be considered in decision-making processes. Frost, one of the leading names of Normative Theory, emphasizes that it is time for the scholars that are trying to shape the International Relations discipline, to change in favor of normative values by using the phrase “*it is high time that ... International Relations theorists be required to spell out and defend their normative positions*”.⁶

In this context, contrary to realist theory, Normative Theory prioritizes the ethical dimension of International Relations and as Seven states, “*normative tradition in political philosophy from Plato to Rawls keep looking for a transcendental foundation from which to evaluate (and better) our societies*”.⁷ On this basis, the theory is an approach that tries to overcome the problems of understanding and interpretation in the International Relations discipline.⁸ In our opinion, Normative Theory differs from other theories by reconciling the discipline with current problems and examining it from different perspectives. In this process, Normative Theory makes significant contributions to the International Relations discipline not only by developing an understanding that is not only a pile of philosophical propositions, but also seeking solutions on current international problems.

⁴ Chris Brown & Kirsten Ainley (2007), *Uluslararası İlişkileri Anlamak*, İstanbul: Yayınodası Yayıncılık, p. 195.

⁵ Zerrin Ayşe Bakan (2008), “Normative Theory in IR: Frost’s Constitutive Approach”, *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, Vol. 63, no: 1, p. 4.

⁶ Mervyn Frost (1994), “The Role of Normative Theory in IR”, *Millennium*, Vol. 23, no: 1, p. 118.

⁷ Gülşen Seven (2017), *Reflections on the Relationship between Political Theory and Political Practice: Assessing Realist Challenge to Liberal-Normative Political Theory*, Ph.D. Dissertation, İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, Ankara, Türkiye, p. 5.

⁸ Atilla Eralp (2000), *Devlet, Sistem ve Kimlik*, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, p. 185.

Therefore, Normative Theory is mainly concerned with the world of philosophy and ethics.⁹ For this reason, values are at the heart of the studies with Normative Theory and in a sense, it is possible to discuss politics on moral grounds.¹⁰ In this way, moral elements are brought forward and a moral dimension is given to the interests. In this respect, interests are explained within the framework of a general value. In other words, normativism emphasizes value and differs significantly from other IR theories because it uses relative clauses.

On the other hand, it is not possible to test the propositions of normativism and to verify or falsify with empirical data.¹¹ Normativism adopts value-laden propositions as opposed to positivist propositions. Positivist propositions, on the other hand, are associated with the real world and their verification or falsification is provided by the method of testing the facts. For this reason, positivist propositions differ from normative propositions because they are free of value and practices based on factual propositions related to nature and informing in positivist approaches differ from the values that form the basis of Normative Theory. In other words, normative propositions are relative and cannot be tested because they vary from person to person.

In this respect, the Normative Theory, which basically deals with the ethical aspects of the relations between the individual, society, the state, and the international community, aims to find practical answers to current international problems and they are not philosophical interpretations. In this context, according to Arı, “*Normative Theory questions many concepts such as war, peace, foreign intervention, exploitation, human rights, dependency, independence, foreign aid, the right of nations to self-determination on the basis of ethical values*”.¹² At the same time, Normative Theory is not about what is experienced, but about what should or should be lived, and therefore it tends to determine “*good*” or “*bad*” about “*things*”.

In the light of what has been discussed above, in terms of Normative Theory, it is expected that the international society, which is in such evolution and development in today’s world, will prevent wars and crimes against humanity will come to an end.¹³ In addition, in

⁹ Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, Bursa: MKM Yayıncılık. p. 102.

¹⁰ Zerrin Ayşe Bakan (2002), “Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri Arasında Normatif Teorinin Yeri ve Kapsamı”, *Avrasya Dosyası*, Summer 2002, Vol. 8, no: 2, p. 430.

¹¹ Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, p. 51.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹³ Thorsten Thiel (2020), “The Normative Order of International Politics: Critique and Legitimacy”, in (eds. by Matthias C. Kettemann) *Navigating Normative Orders: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Campus Verlag: Frankfurt/M., p. 28.

Normative Theory, it is necessary for all humanity to benefit from the resources on earth in a fair way, and wars should not even be a problem for the international community. However, the fact that the sharing of natural resources continues in favor of relatively wealthy individuals causes competition over resources and brings more conflict. As a matter of fact, many hot conflict environments in the post-Cold War period show that humanity has not yet completed its expected evolution mentioned in the Normative Theory ideals.

In the international environment where these developments took place, the conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, and the whole of the Middle East caused the people of the region to seek a safer living space. The people living in the region in this search felt the need to live in relatively wealthy countries where the conflict environment is less experienced and tried to settle in these countries, albeit illegally, by various means. The sea routes, where the borders are relatively difficult to protect, have been a method preferred by the people of the region in question. As a matter of fact, the Aegean Sea between Türkiye and Greece has been used as the new route for those who aim to become refugees in the EU.¹⁴ These irregular migrants in distress, which constitute the main subject of our study, are saved by Türkiye in accordance with the principle of respect for international law norms and the right to life.

1. Fundamental Questions in Normative Theory and the “Right to Life”

While accepting that the theory-building process, scientific explanation, and even politics as a field are not far from normative choices, normative approaches have focused on some of the international concerns.¹⁵ There are fundamental questions in the Normative Theory, which examines many concepts depending on the ethical and value dimensions, especially in the occasions of war and peace. The preventability of war, the phenomenon of legitimate war, “*what can be done to keep the peace?*”, the place of exploitation in moral rules, whether developed countries have responsibilities towards underdeveloped countries, the universality of human rights, and, accordingly, the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention are the main problematics of Normative Theory.¹⁶

In Normative Theory, global normative problems such as global justice, human rights, humanitarian intervention, democratic peace, environmental justice, climate change are

¹⁴ Cem Öksüz (2015), “Ege Denizindeki Mülteciler”, *Anadolu Ajansı*, 14.08.2015, Date of Accession: 01.07.2023 from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/pg/foto-galeri/ege-denizinde-kacak-gocmenler>.

¹⁵ Azime Telli (2013), “Normatif Teori ve İnsancıl Müdahale”, p. 31.

¹⁶ Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, p. 52.

analyzed by considering values, while those who adopt empirical theories prefer to make comparative analyzes by carefully choosing the models they will use.¹⁷

It is possible to see the politically oriented features of normative approaches in the debates around the concepts of war and peace, international justice, and human rights. As a matter of fact, according to Hugo Grotius, in order for the war to be justified, it is not enough for both sides to have the sovereign power in their hands, the war in question must have been waged on behalf of the state and must have been notified to the other one.¹⁸ Moreover, normative theories examine the phenomenon of “*just war*”. Normative approaches, while focusing on current international problems, do not get lost in their rich philosophical bases and try to offer solutions. With this aspect, it has a problem-solving understanding of the discipline.¹⁹

According to Normative Theory, human rights refer to a universal human identity that stands above national, ethnic, and religious identities.²⁰ Normative theorists are of the opinion that it is sufficient for individuals to be human to have this right and that the nation or community they belong to has nothing to do with these rights. They also accept the freedom of the human will and its ability to determine the outside world by moving away from imposing assumptions such as national interest or the structure of the international system. In this sense, Normative Theory has a selective aspect.²¹

Today’s international system is highly influenced by the plurality of actors. Major changes in the international system also greatly reduce system-level boundaries and the nature of bureaucratic boundaries is changing with the demand to evolve the standard procedures in decision-making processes. For this reason, psychological factors, which were previously defined as limits, now have a richer role in the decision-making processes. In this respect, these problems that we have listed affect the entire international public opinion and fall into the problem area of Normative Theory in the context of ethical values.

Normative Theory does not deal with abstract philosophical issues, but applies moral philosophy to current international problems.²² From this point of view, Normative Theory is processed with value judgments and makes forward-looking inferences. The propositions of Normative Theory are not only testable, but also guiding, educative, and instructive. It makes suggestions on placing the human element and foreign policy on moral foundations.

¹⁷ Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves (2017), “Normative Political Theory”, *Teoria Polityki*, no: 1, p. 179.

¹⁸ Hugo Grotius (2011), *Savaş ve Barış Hukuku*, İstanbul: Say Yayınları, p. 243.

¹⁹ Azime Telli (2013), “Normatif Teori ve İnsancıl Müdahale”, p. 34.

²⁰ Chris Brown & Kirsten Ainley (2007), *Uluslararası İlişkileri Anlamak*, p. 199.

²¹ Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, p. 107.

²² Azime Telli (2013), “Normatif Teori ve İnsancıl Müdahale”, p. 32.

As a matter of fact, one of the problematics of Normative Theory is humanitarian or humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian intervention, which is also defined as the use of force by a state against another state to prevent large-scale human rights violations, was first seen in the 19th century as hegemonic countries' military operations to protect their citizens or religious minorities in other countries. Early examples of this are France's intervention to protect the rights of the Christian minority in Lebanon. Over time, the concept of humanitarian intervention has expanded in meaning. While military and similar actions were accepted practices before the Cold War, the applications including the scope of this concept expanded after.

In addition to this, the Security Council brought the issue of humanitarian intervention to the agenda by determining that international peace and human rights were violated in accordance with Article 39 of the United Nations Convention on Southern Rhodesia in 1965, and the first humanitarian interventions were made since the 1970s. However, humanitarian intervention is a concept that is still being discussed by international law and International Relations theorists. Since no consensus has yet been established in the definition of the concept, a certain standard has not been reached in terms of the international community. For this reason, there is still no consensus on how to apply this concept, whose boundaries have not yet been drawn, to real life. This ambiguity causes humanitarian intervention in *realpolitik* to consider the interests of the country²³ and national interests are prioritized against the interests of individuals.

Normative Theory also focuses on the morality of war and ethical limitations in any war in the understanding of International Relations. In this sense, the concept of "*just war*" has been discussed by many scientists and philosophers from past to present, especially Augustine, Cicero, Aquinas, Suarez, and Vitoria.²⁴ While Clausewitz stated that the war was used for political purposes, he recommended that it be used for legitimate purposes and took the morale factor into consideration. In addition, defense against a provocative aggressor is seen as a legitimate political tool that justifies war.

In conclusion, while valuing the ethics, Normative Theory examines the fundamental rights of human beings and as for Normative Theory "*right to life*" is a must, interests of individuals should be prioritized against all national interests. While doing so, Normative Theory defends

²³ Enzo Rossi & Matt Sleat (2014), "Realism in Normative Political Theory, Forthcoming" *Philosophy Compass*, April 2014, p. 10.

²⁴ Tayyar Arı (2013), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri: Çatışma, Hegemonya, İşbirliği*, p. 106.

each individual regardless of their legal status that are demanded by each state's regulations. Therefore, on some occasions legal system and normative approaches differ in classifying the rights of immigrants.

2. Legal Aspects of Irregular Immigration

The preferences of individuals in a crisis environment to live in another country are regulated by different legal regimes according to their current status. These different legal regimes provide these groups with different rights in the countries where they are newly settled, and the reasons underlying these preferences are important in terms of international law. Immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker, and irregular migrant statuses have been established in order to better define the limits of the rights and responsibilities that are recognized in international law.

The 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees are legal instruments that regulate the rights of refugees at the legal basis.²⁵ The concept of “*refugee*” is defined in Article 1 (A)(2) of the 1951 Convention as “*As a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.*”

Regarding immigration status, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines immigrants as those who move away from their place of origin by crossing an international border or going from one place to another within a state. IOM does not consider factors such as the person's legal status, voluntary or involuntary relocation, the reasons for the relocation, or the length of stay at the destination.²⁶ The European Parliament and the Council, on the other hand, with the subparagraph (b) of the 1st paragraph of the 2nd article of the Regulation No 862/2007, defines immigration with the following expression such as “*immigration means the action by which a person establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of a Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having*

²⁵ Veysel Eren & Şebnem Çakran (2017), “Mülteci Politikası: Avrupa Birliği ve Türkiye Karşılaştırması”, *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, Vol. 14, no: 39, p. 5.

²⁶ IOM (2011), “Glossary on Migration”, *International Migration Law Series*, no: 25, Date of Accession: 10.06.2023 from <http://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>.

previously been usually resident in another Member State or a third country”²⁷ and by doing so, the EU adds the time dimension to the classification of the International Organization for Migration.

In summary, as immigrants prefer to leave their country for economic or other reasons, they encounter different legal norms in the country where they have settled. Refugees, on the other hand, are defined as “*people who have a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group or political opinion and who leave their country for this reason and are unable or unwilling to return because of their fear*” and they are provided with a special status and legal protection.

Asylum seekers are classified as individuals whose procedures to obtain this legal protection have not yet been completed. In other words, individuals with asylum seeker status are those who aim to gain special status and legal protection by becoming refugees and their official procedures are continuing. In the light of the above information, in summary, while immigrants leave their country voluntarily, asylum seekers and refugees consist of people who have to leave their country or have been abandoned. The difference between asylum seeker and refugee is related to the fact that the paperwork of the first group has not been completed yet.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, established by the UN General Assembly on 14 December 1950, is responsible for monitoring this special status of refugees and monitoring the continuity of legal protection. Although the Commissariat tries to solve the refugee problems, when evaluated in terms of the current situation, the reluctance of some governments to act in cooperation with regard to international law is also seen in various media sources.²⁸

Should the legislation of the Republic of Türkiye is examined, it is seen that it differs in some classifications from the international legislation. As a matter of fact, in national legislation, refugee is defined in Article 61 of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) No. 6458, “*Article 61—(1) Due to events occurring in European countries; A foreigner who is*

²⁷ European Union (2007), “Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.07.2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 311/76 on the compilation of statistics on foreign workers, No 862/2007”, 11.07.2007, Date of Accession: 11.07.2023 from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/48abd548d.html>.

²⁸ Muhammet İkbâl Arslan (2022), “İsviçre Televizyonu Yunanistan'ın Ege'de Göçmenleri Geri İtmesi ve Türkiye'nin Kurtarma Operasyonuna Şahit Oldu”, *Anadolu Ajansı*, 19.12.2022, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/isvicre-televizyonu-yunanistanin-egede-gocmenleri-geri-itmesi-ve-turkiyenin-kurtarma-operasyonuna-sahit-oldu/2767678>.

outside the country of his/her nationality because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion and who is unable or unwilling to benefit from the protection of this country due to such fear, or outside the country of residence where he/she previously lived as a result of such events. Refugee status is granted to a stateless person who is found, unable to return there, or who does not want to return due to fear, after status determination procedures.”²⁹

Türkiye has made a geographical limitation in the refugee classification and made a geographical reservation to the Geneva Convention. This status, which defines only people coming from Europe as refugees, is called “*conditional refugee*” in accordance with Article 62 of the LFIP, for people coming from outside European countries and seeking asylum.

As a matter of fact, in Article 62 it is stated that, “*Due to events occurring outside European countries; A foreigner who is outside the country of his/her nationality because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion and who is unable or unwilling to benefit from the protection of this country due to such fear, or outside the country of residence where he/she previously lived as a result of such events. Conditional refugee status is granted to a stateless person who is found, unable to return there, or does not want to return due to the fear in question, after the status determination procedures. Conditional refugees are allowed to stay in Türkiye until they are resettled in a third country*”.

Foreigners who cannot be defined as refugees or conditional refugees and if they are sent back to their country of origin will be subject to death, torture, inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment, conflict or a serious threat to their person, within the scope of the ban on refoulement, the status of “*secondary protection*” is given.

In the Readmission Agreement signed between the Republic of Türkiye and the European Union on December 16, 2013 and entered into force on March 20, 2016, arrangements were made for Syrian citizens. According to this agreement, it has been decreed that as of 20 March 2016, the obligation to take back all irregular migrants who crossed to the Greek Islands in the Aegean via Türkiye has been brought back by Türkiye, and in return for every Syrian citizen

²⁹ Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) No. 6458.

taken back by Türkiye, a Syrian citizen under temporary protection in Türkiye will be placed in EU member states.³⁰

In addition, Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union states that “*The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.*”³¹ and in accordance with this article, all member states are encouraged to comply with this legislation.³² From this point of view, although the protection of human rights, which can be considered as the most important ethical values in Normative Theory, is prioritized with the European Union Treaty³³, the contradiction in practice is an indication that these values are not sufficiently internalized by the EU member states.

Ayata and Sütçü emphasize that right-wing parties are on the rise due to the increasing xenophobia in Europe.³⁴ These set of circumstances cause a tendency to restrict migration within the European Union.³⁵ For this reason, the European Union, which tries to prevent migration movements through various summits and agreements, is not successful and attaches importance to establishing the “*Fortress Europe*” system. Owing to the programs such as EURODAC, EUROPAL, FRONTEX, and INTERREG³⁶, the borders of “*Fortress Europe*” are strictly controlled.³⁷ For this reason, the number of irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea, which is a relatively easy transit route for migration, is increasing. With this increase, the practices of Greece resulting in the violation of the right to life in the Aegean Sea become more acute.³⁸ As a member state of the EU, Greece is bounded with the legal system of it and

³⁰ Ali Can Özkan (2022), “The Role of External Actors in the Securitisation of Asylum and Migration in the EU and Their Impacts on the EU’s Normative Power”, Master’s Thesis, TOBB University of Economics and Technology, Ankara, Türkiye, p. 106.

³¹ European Union (2016), “C 202/01”, article 2, 07.06.2016.

³² Daniel C. Thomas (2009), “Explaining the Negotiation of EU Foreign Policy: Normative Institutionalism and Alternative Approaches” *International Politics*, Vol. 46, pp. 339-357.

³³ Emilian Kavalski & Young Chul Cho (2018), “Worlding the Study of Normative Power: Assessing European and Chinese Definitions of the “Normal”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 15, no: 57, p. 56.

³⁴ Ali Ayata & Elif Sütçü (2022), *Avrupa’da Bir Güvenlikleştirme Konusu Olarak Göç*, Ankara: İksad Yayınevi, p. 65.

³⁵ Sühâl Şemşit (2010), *Avrupa Birliği Göç Politikasının Güvenlikleştirilmesi ve Dışsallaştırılması: Türkiye’ye Yansımaları*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İzmir, Türkiye, p. 160.

³⁶ Esra Çil (2019), “Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemde Uluslararası Göç Olgusu ve Toplumsal Güvenliğe Etkileri”, Master’s Thesis, Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi, Trabzon, Türkiye, pp. 94-96.

³⁷ Jaume Castan Pinos (2009), “Building Fortress Europe? Schengen and the Cases of Ceuta and Melilla”, Centre for International Border Research, p. 4.

³⁸ European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2023), “Greece: Elections on Both Sides of the Border as Pushbacks and Push for Returns Continue, Border Guards Arrested in Evros – More Deaths in the Aegean”,

therefore although the Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union emphasizes “*respect for human rights*”, Greece is obliged to protect the borders of the Union. As a matter of fact, it has been determined that Greece pushed back a total of 41,523 irregular migrants from 2020 to May 31, 2022.³⁹

This irregular immigration, which is the main subject of the study, is classified differently in terms of source, destination, and transit states. The term state of origin is used for the ones of which an irregular migrant is originally a citizen, which he/she chooses to leave by not following legal procedures. The destination state is called the ones where the irregular migrant enters illegally or does not leave within the specified exit time even though he/she arrived legally. Transit state, on the other hand, defines the ones on the route used by the irregular migrant leaving the source state while passing to the destination state.⁴⁰

In all three classifications, since irregular migration includes entering a country illegally, staying in a country illegally, or entering a country legally and not leaving within the legal time limit, it makes it difficult to follow the individuals within the region, and this situation causes negative effects on the security policies of the states.

3. Turkish Foreign Policy Practices Against Irregular Migration in the Aegean Sea and its Impacts on International Security in the Context of Normative Theory

3.1. Migration Policies in Türkiye

The geographical location of Türkiye and the international system have caused it to undergo a wave of migration at various times. The first of these events, which can be examined in four time periods, is the immigration wave, which originated from the First World War and mostly consisted of Turks in the Balkans.⁴¹ The fact that the immigration wave in this period consisted of individuals who were compatible with both cultural and social structure, and their resettlement in economic terms, supported by the state and within a certain plan, facilitated

ECRE, 02.06.2023, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://ecre.org/greece-elections-on-both-sides-of-the-border-as-pushbacks-and-push-for-returns-continue-border-guards-arrested-in-evros-more-deaths-in-the-aegean/>.

³⁹ Seval Ocak Adıyaman (2022), “Yunanistan, 2020'den bu yana yaklaşık 42 bin göçmeni geri itti”, *Anadolu Ajansı*, 17.06.2022, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/gundem/yunanistan-2020den-bu-yana-yaklasik-42-bin-gocmeni-geri-itti/2616018>.

⁴⁰ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İçişleri Bakanlığı Göç İdaresi Başkanlığı, “Düzensiz Göç Hakkında”, Date of Accession: 10.06.2023 from <https://www.goc.gov.tr/duzensiz-goc-hakkinda#:~:text=D%C3%BCzensiz%20g%C3%B6%C3%A7%20hedef%20%C3%BClkeler%20i%C3%A7in,%C3%BCIke%20s%C4%B1n%C4%B1rlar%C4%B1n%C4%B1%20ge%C3%A7en%20ki%C5%9Fileri%20i%C3%A7erir.>

⁴¹ Kıvılcım Akkoyunlu Ertan & Birol Ertan (2017), “Türkiye'nin Göç Politikası”, *Contemporary Research in Economics and Social Sciences*, Vol. 1, no: 2, p. 14.

the integration of the said group into the country. As a matter of fact, this group does not have immigrant status.

The process that caused the second wave of immigration started with the Gulf Operation and the U.S. intervention in Iraq. The demographic structure of individuals in this migration wave differed from the individuals in the first migration wave. As a matter of fact, the perception of the state towards the individuals in question had differed and because of this perception, the state-sponsored settlements close to the Iraqi border in terms of location were affected from the migration wave, rather than all regions of Türkiye.

The third wave that Türkiye has faced and is still under influence stems from the Syrian crisis (Syrian civil war). During this wave, some of the refugees stayed in temporary shelters, while others settled in other cities of the country on their own initiative. Over time, this initiative had a negative impact on the country's ability to absorb the group in question. Due to the fact that the plans were made according to the number of citizens registered in the settlements in question, the said initiative caused insufficient satisfaction in the distribution of public resources to the citizens in the cities that received immigration.

The fourth wave was due to the fact that the Taliban administration in Afghanistan has re-emerged simultaneously with the wave originating from the Syrian Crisis.⁴² This wave was formed by a group that mostly came from the Eastern Anatolian border and generally had more male population. No resettlement policy was carried out for the group in question, and it is observed that some members of the group are occasionally involved in acts of violence against women and children, and therefore, the negative point of view towards the group in question was being established in the public opinion.

The simultaneous occurrence of the third and fourth waves and the fact that the individuals in these waves did not have an identity structure that would assimilate the social balances in Türkiye compared to those in the first wave caused concern in terms of the sustainability of the said migrations. Both the uncontrolled dispersal of the group in the third wave on their own initiative and the tendency of some men in the fourth wave to commit crimes against women and children, who prefer to leave their spouses in Afghanistan, caused public concern about the immigration policies of decision-makers.

⁴² Deniz Kaygusuz (2021), "Uluslararası İlişkilerde Göç Olgusu ve Göçün Güvenikleştirilmesi", *Akademik Düşünce Dergisi*, no: 3, Spring 2021, p. 64.

In addition, the third and fourth migration waves coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic and the last earthquakes, which caused the deterioration of the economic balance of the country. These two destructions had a significant impact on social welfare. Due to these incidents, social welfare and quality of life were highly affected and the transfer of public resources to immigrants/refugees who spread uncontrollably throughout the country caused reactions in the public.

However, Türkiye's vast experience from the past and its superior respect for the right to life ensure that the policies of the decision-makers towards asylum seekers/immigrants in recent waves remain unchanged. In this respect, it is obvious that Türkiye's policies towards immigrants coincide with the priority of the right to life in the normative approach.

3.2. Turkish Foreign Policy Practices Against Irregular Migration in the Aegean Sea

Türkiye's respect for the right to life, which we mentioned above, also shows continuity in terms of its practices in the Aegean Sea. However, there are some problems in the Aegean Sea due to the disagreements between Greece and Türkiye. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye lists the search and rescue activities carried out in the open seas under the title of "*Main Problems in the Aegean Sea*".⁴³ Emphasizing the importance of search and rescue activities here, independent of political concerns, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs finds Greece's approach in the Aegean Sea contrary to the 1979 Hamburg Convention and considers the search and rescue zones determined to save human lives as service areas, not sovereignty areas.

The "*International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR)*", called the Hamburg Convention, was accepted on April 27, 1979 and was opened for signature in London on November 1, 1979. It was signed by Türkiye on October 24, 1980. The main purpose of the said convention was to assist people in distress at sea.

At the first paragraph of the second article of the contract, it is stated that: "*Nothing in the Convention shall prejudice the codification and development of the law of the sea by the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea convened pursuant to resolution 2750(XXV) of the General Assembly of the United Nations nor the present or future claims and legal views of any State concerning the law of the sea and the nature and extent of coastal and flag State jurisdiction.*".

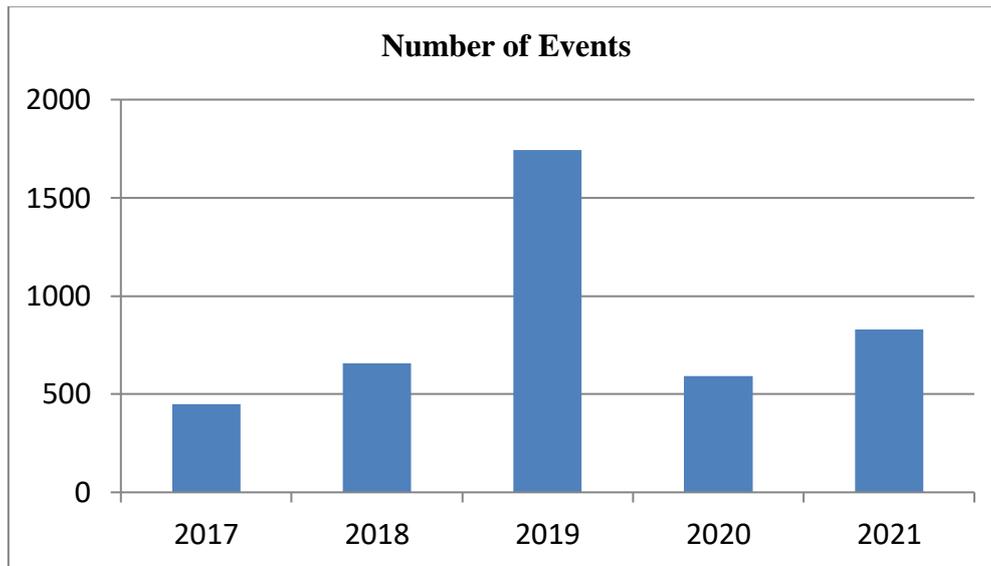
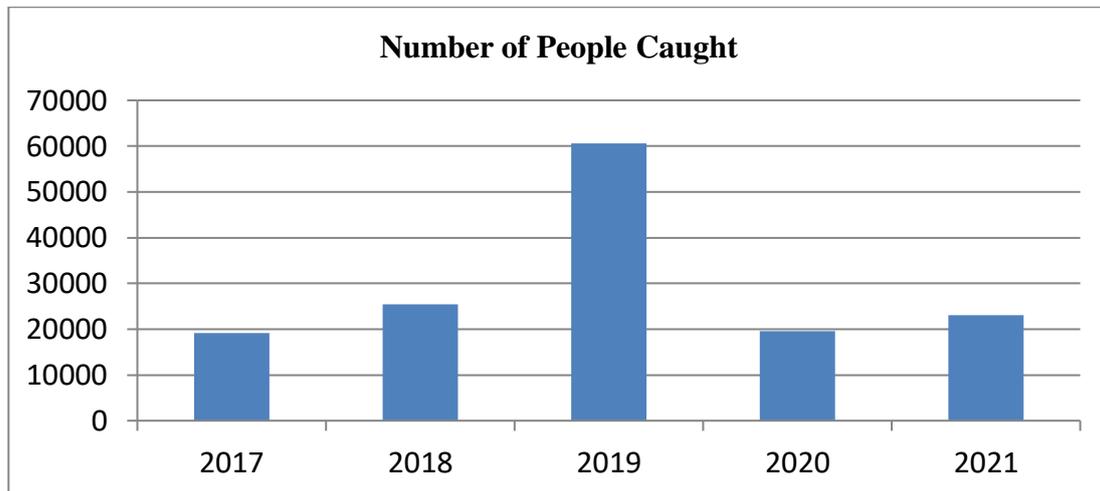
⁴³ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı, "Başlıca Ege Denizi Sorunları", Date of Accession: 09.06.2023 from <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/baslica-ege-denizi-sorunlari.tr.mfa>.

Evaluating these two provisions together, it can be deduced that the main purpose of the contract is to save human life and that the issues related to sovereignty, which should be seen as a secondary status besides the right to life, are not considered within the scope of the contract. Also, in article 2.1.5 of the Hamburg Convention, it is stated that “*In case agreement on the exact dimensions of a search and rescue region is not reached by the Parties concerned, those Parties shall use their best endeavors to reach agreement upon appropriate arrangements under which the equivalent overall co-ordination of search and rescue services is provided in the area. The Secretary-General shall be notified of such arrangements.*” and this statement calls on all parties to cooperate in taking the most effective measures for search and rescue.

Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tanju Bilgiç, in a statement dated November 23, 2020, said, “*Search and rescue zones at sea are service areas to save human lives, these areas are not sovereign areas according to international law. Greece’s approach is an unlawful attitude contrary to the 1979 Hamburg Convention.*”⁴⁴ and by this statement he emphasized that Greece’s concerns about its own sovereignty preclude human life. In addition, in the said statement, it was underlined that innocent asylum seekers were pushed back against international law and their lives were endangered by Greece.

This perspective of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, which prioritizes human life, also affects the practices in the field. As a matter of fact, when the statistics of the Coast Guard Command, which is responsible for ensuring border security, regarding irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea are examined, the effects of Turkish Foreign Policy prioritizing the right to life are seen. As shown in **Graphic I**, 448 events occurred in 2017, 656 in 2018, 1,744 in 2019, 591 in 2020 and 829 in 2021. In a total of 4,268 incidents that took place between 2017 and 2021, 147,582 irregular migrants, described in **Graphic II**, were intervened. These numbers were 19,084 for 2017, 25,398 for 2018, 60,544 for 2019, 19,512 for 2020, and finally 23,044 for 2021.

⁴⁴ Investing.com (2022), “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı Sözcüsü Bilgiç: ‘Yunanistan’ın yaklaşımı 1979 Hamburg Sözleşmesi’ne aykırı”, 23.11.2022, Date of Accession: 07.07.2023 from <https://tr.investing.com/news/politics/dsisleri-sozcusu-bilgic-yunanistann-yaklasm-1979-hamburg-sozlesmesine-aykr-2390257>.

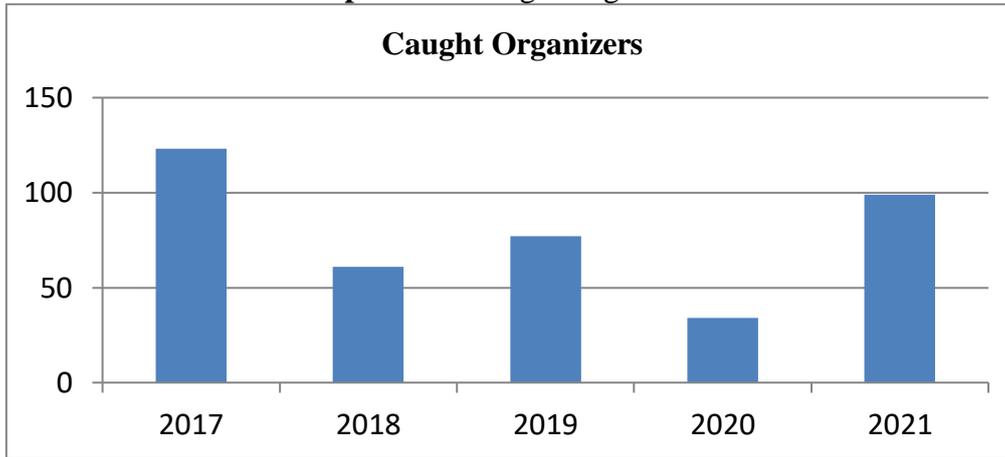
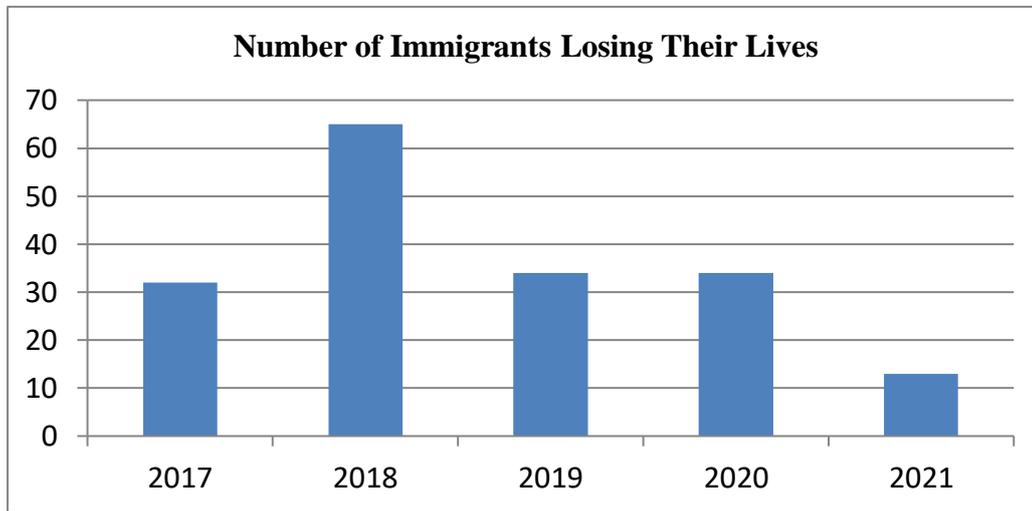
Graphic I: Number of Events⁴⁵**Graphic II: Number of People Caught⁴⁶**

As shown in **Graphic III**, a total of 394 transactions were made, 123 in 2017, 61 in 2018, 77 in 2019, 34 in 2020, and 99 in 2021. As seen in **Graphic IV**, unfortunately 178 lives were lost between these years. The aforementioned number 178 is given as 32 for 2017, 65 for 2018, 34 for 2019, 34 for 2020, and 13 for 2021. However, since the loss of life in the open seas is not known exactly and the statistics provided by Greece are not included in these graphics, it is thought that the loss is much higher.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ The table is created by the author using the data at <https://www.sg.gov.tr/ege-denizi-duzensiz-goc-istatistikleri>.

⁴⁶ The table is created by the author using the data at <https://www.sg.gov.tr/ege-denizi-duzensiz-goc-istatistikleri>.

⁴⁷ Kamu Denetçiliği Kurumu (KDK), "Ege Denizi'ndeki Geri İtmeler ve Boğulan İnsan Hakları Özel Raporu", Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://www.ombudsman.gov.tr/Faaliyetlerimiz/Faaliyetlerimiz?gosterilecekFaaliyetId=99&uygulamaId=1>.

Graphic III: Caught Organizers⁴⁸**Graphic IV: Number of Immigrants Losing Their Lives⁴⁹**

3.3. The Effects of Turkish Foreign Policy Practices About Irregular Immigration in the Aegean Sea on International Security within the Context of Normative Theory

While the decision-makers take measures regarding issues such as ensuring the welfare of the citizens of their own country, protecting the integrity of the country's borders, and ensuring internal security within the country, they have to act foresight against any interference that may come from outside. In today's world, decision-makers who prioritize the survival of their countries can describe any change in the agenda as a situation that threatens security. As a matter of fact, the post-Cold War structure shaped new security understandings in the

⁴⁸ The table is created by the author using the data at <https://www.sg.gov.tr/ege-denizi-duzensiz-goc-istatistikleri>.

⁴⁹ The table is created by the author using the data at <https://www.sg.gov.tr/ege-denizi-duzensiz-goc-istatistikleri>.

discipline of International Relations and security, which Buzan divided into 5 sectors; began to be examined at military, political, economic, social, and environmental contexts.⁵⁰

With this new understanding of security, it has been seen that the survival of the country can be threatened by different elements in terms of security and the previous narrow-scoped traditional security understanding has begun to be abandoned. As a matter of fact, Rumelili and Karadağ states that beyond military threats, economic, political, social problems, environmental pollution, destruction of natural resources, socioeconomic inequality, ethnic conflicts, epidemics, gender, international smuggling have begun to be examined in the context of security.⁵¹

Since international migration constitutes a step in the emergence of the abovementioned problems and the security due to international migration can affect the survival of the state, human security, and social security, it creates an obstacle to the establishment of security according to new security approaches. Both the new epidemic derivatives that may come with the immigration wave and the relatively low-income level of the immigrants have the potential to negatively affect the values in human strength. In this context, any structural deterioration due to migration may cause the human power, which is one of the elements of national power, to be threatened.⁵²

According to Şimşek and İçduygu, although the migration policies of countries change, the generally accepted rule that they define as “*ensuring the continuity of the economic, social, political and cultural institutions of nation-states*” does not.⁵³ Decision-makers who aim to maintain their rights of power by maximizing the welfare of their own citizens, therefore, see the phenomenon of migration, which is itself a security threat, as an obstacle.⁵⁴

Whether the immigrants in question can adapt to the dynamics of the country and whether they will be dragged into crime are categorized as drawbacks attributed to the local law enforcement officers. Türkoğlu, on the other hand, states that due to the poor economic situation of the refugees, they cause the deterioration of the peace and stability environment in

⁵⁰ Barry Buzan (1991), *People, State and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pp. 134-136.

⁵¹ Bahar Rumelili & Sibel Karadağ (2017), Göç ve Güvenlik: Eleştirel Yaklaşımlar, *Toplum ve Bilim Dergisi*, no: 140, p. 71.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁵³ Doğu Şimşek & Ahmet İçduygu (2017), “Uluslararası Göç, Politika ve Güvenlik”, *Toplum ve Bilim Dergisi*, no: 140, p. 7.

⁵⁴ Myron Weiner (1992/1993), “Security, Stability, and International Migration”, *International Security*, Vol. 17, no: 3, p. 104.

the countries they settle to.⁵⁵ As a result, international migration processes can take on a securitized structure in terms of all the abovementioned facts and events, and immigrants can be perceived as a threat to the survival of the state by decision-makers at the stage of sharing the welfare.⁵⁶

The Copenhagen and Paris schools, which examine the connection between migration and security, approach the issue on different points of view. For example, according to the Copenhagen School, the connection between migration and security is examined at the level of social security.⁵⁷ The discourses that social identity is threatened with migration and that security gaps may occur due to the inability to internalize the social culture by the newly arrived communities is the contribution of the Copenhagen School to the International Relations discipline on the securitization of migration.⁵⁸ This school states that social actors consisting of powerful people or institutions such as heads of state, politicians, or the media carry out securitization.⁵⁹

Paris School, on the other hand, examines the relationship between migration and security on many levels, not on the level of social identity as in the Copenhagen School.⁶⁰ The main reason for this approach is that the school focuses more on the practices of the security problems which constitutes the basis of migration.⁶¹ While examining these practices, the Paris School considers security professionals (such as law enforcement, military personnel) as the main actors to ensure security. Emphasizing that immigration has effects not only on social identity, but also on internal security, social security, and economic security, the Paris School states that professionals such as police and soldiers are involved in the process due to this complex structure.

However, another point that should be considered is that the internal political dynamics of states can be shaped to support immigration policies. In fact, Teitelbaum underlines that some

⁵⁵ Oğuzhan Türkoğlu (2011), “Mülteciler ve Ulusal/Uluslararası Güvenlik”, *Uludağ Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, Vol. XXX, no: 2, p. 102.

⁵⁶ Michael Collyer (2006), “Migrants, Migration and the Security Paradigm: Constraints and Opportunities”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 11, no: 2, pp. 255-270.

⁵⁷ Barry Buzan & Ole Wæver & Jaap De Wilde (1998), *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Pub., p. 119.

⁵⁸ Birgül Demirtaş (2019), “Mülteciler ve Güvenikleştirme”, *Güvenlik Yazuları Serisi*, no: 8, September 2019, p. 2.

⁵⁹ Mine Nur Küçük (2021), “Göç-Güvenlik Bağlantısını Yeniden Düşünmek: Eleştirel Güvenlik Yaklaşımları, Özgürleşme ve Türkiye’deki Suriyeli Mülteciler”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 18, no: 69, p. 7.

⁶⁰ Jef Huysmans (2000), “The European Union and the Securitisation of Migration”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 38, no: 5, p. 758.

⁶¹ Jef Huysmans (2006), *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU*, London: Routledge, p. 4.

of the states which seek temporary labor from labor-surplus countries stimulate the migration in order to create low-cost working industry.⁶² But as for Teitelbaum, these migration policies also may lead to unarmed conquests or assertion of sovereignty.⁶³ In both circumstances, the important point in terms of Normative Theory is that any event where human life is not prioritized will have a negative impact on both society and the system. In addition, the practices of countries towards immigrants can also lead to international conflicts in some cases.

For example, an operation carried out by the Republic of Türkiye for search/rescue purposes in the Aegean Sea was described as an attack on sovereignty rights by Greece, since the search and rescue zones that Türkiye and Greece declared in the Aegean and Mediterranean to the International Maritime Organization overlap with each other. Also, the overlapping of search/rescue zones may cause security weakness in the detection of irregular migrants, and the follow-up processes of those prone to crime in the target or transit countries may be adversely affected.

Normative Theory examines what has to be lived, not what has happened. In addition, the right to life should not be taken away from anyone, as the foreign policy of the Republic of Türkiye, which is based on the ethical values in this theory, precedes the Aegean Sea practices. When the effects of foreign policy practices on the problem of irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea on international security are evaluated in terms of this theory, which brings ethical values to the fore, the fact that Greece pushes the said irregular migrants back into the territorial waters of the Republic of Türkiye shows that Greece disregards the right to life.⁶⁴

This approach sometimes causes uneasiness between the two countries and is condemned by the international community. The problem of irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea, as emphasized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, is not a matter of sovereignty but a service to humanity.

In this respect, this disagreement and difference in approach between Türkiye and Greece, which have mutual borders in the Aegean Sea, constitute an obstacle to the building of mutual trust. Türkiye, which repeatedly emphasizes that the right to life is the fundamental value, has a conflict with Greece due to its approach to irregular migrants who have been repeatedly

⁶² M. S. Teitelbaum (1984), "Immigration, Refugees and Foreign Policy", *International Organization*, Vol. 38, no: 3, p. 435.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 437.

⁶⁴ Lydia Emmanouilidou (2023), "Migrant boat disaster has Greece and European authorities facing criticism", *NPR*, 22.06.2023, Date of Accession: 15.07.2023 from <https://www.npr.org/2023/06/22/1183842802/migrant-boat-disaster-has-greece-and-european-authorities-facing-criticism>.

pushed back in the Aegean Sea. This disagreement, on the other hand, leads to an increase in the ongoing marginalization in the relations between the two countries. As stated above, this incompatibility between the two countries is the basis for the lack of coordination in the detection of criminals, and this deficiency forms the basis for new problem subjects⁶⁵ that threaten international security such as drug trafficking and human smuggling.⁶⁶

The right to life⁶⁷, which in our opinion, constitutes the most important of the propositions stemming from ethical values in Normative Theory, unfortunately cannot find a place for itself in the foreign policy practices of countries with Machiavellian approaches. As a matter of fact, the pushing back of irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea by Greece with the perception of a threat to their sovereign rights in the said region should be recognized as a violation of the most important value, the right to life. The international community also condemns these practices.

The fact that Türkiye does not push back the irregular immigrants in the Aegean Sea out of respect for the right to life, applying the necessary legal procedures to these groups in its own country is an indicator of how much it internalizes the normative propositions and ethical values, and this approach of Türkiye also contributes to the establishment of international security as it ensures the follow-up of irregular migrants.

Although this foreign policy practice of Türkiye in the field contributes to the establishment of international security, the different approaches of the two countries regarding the measures taken against irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea, unfortunately, have the characteristics that may cause conflicts in the international system in terms of security over time.

When the individual events that led to the First World War and the Second World Wars are examined, it is seen that the international atmosphere was actually ready for these incidents. In this respect, there is a concern in general belief that any single incident that may occur between Türkiye, which prioritizes the right to life, and Greece, which pushes back irregular immigrants with the thought that their sovereignty rights are violated, may cause the re-establishment of the mentioned camps that were initiated before.

⁶⁵ Arif Behiç Özcan (2011), “Uluslararası Güvenlik Sorunları ve ABD’nin Güvenlik Stratejileri”, *Sosyal Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol. 11, no: 22, p. 452.

⁶⁶ İbrahim Mavi (2022), “İnsan Hakları Bağlamında Göçün Güvenleştirilmesi”, *MSGSÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, no: 26, p. 259.

⁶⁷ Çağrı Emin Demirbaş (2010), “Normatif Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri Açısından İnsan Hakları”, Unpublished Master’s Thesis, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, Çanakkale, Türkiye, p. 34.

Conclusion

Ethical values and norms are at the forefront in Normative Theory. Normativism is a doctrine that argues that social and political life should be organized according to norms. These theories are approaches that deal with the ethical dimension of International Relations and also try to solve the wider problems of meaning and interpretation of the discipline. Normativism differs from other theories in that it reconciles the discipline of International Relations with current problems and tries to examine it from different perspectives. In this sense, Normative Theory, which is considered to have important contributions to the International Relations discipline, is not only a collection of philosophical propositions, but also an understanding that seeks solutions on current international problems.

Since “*value*” is the basis of the studies conducted with normative theories, in these studies not only what is experienced but also what needs to be lived due to ethical values is examined. The answers for questions like “*How can wars be prevented? Is there a just war? What should be the attitude towards human rights violations? How should interventions be made against a country that is considered to have violated fundamental human rights? Which actors should participate in this humanitarian response?*” are sought in normativism.

After the Cold War, new forms of security concerns emerged in the restructured international system. As a matter of fact, Buzan and Weaver divided security into 5 main compartments with 5 sector analysis and classified the threat elements as military, political, social, environmental, and economic security. In addition, the international system has faced new security threats such as climate change, widespread diseases, worldwide terrorist attacks, environmental security, human trafficking, drug trade, cyber threats, hybrid wars, and therefore, the concept of international security has arisen to different dimensions.

New security approaches such as human rights violations, which have gained importance today, have evolved into a different dimension with the change of the actors in the international system and competition has arisen in terms of ethical values in Normative Theory between states that continue to be the main actors in real politics and international organizations that are increasingly important. The diversity and complexity of threats in this competitive environment required the cooperation of all parties, and the foundations of Normative Theory were laid in line with these needs.

In today’s world, there is an undeniable level of immigration due to the crisis in the Middle East and Central Asia. The increase in the number of irregular immigrants, on the other hand,

causes an increase in incidents caused by widespread diseases, terrorist attacks around the world, environmental security, human smuggling, drug trade and the like, which are described as new problem areas in international security. For this reason, it is important for the establishment of international security to follow the crime-prone people among the irregular immigrants in question, who are in search of a new life.

Türkiye's foreign policy, exhibits an attitude that prioritizes the right to life, inspired by the country's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's "*Peace at home, peace in the world!*" motto. This attitude ensures that irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea are rescued and intervened within the necessary legal procedures. However, by pushing these groups back, Greece exhibits an attitude against ethical values in terms of Normative Theory and causes a new sovereignty crisis in the interventions to irregular migrants in the Aegean Sea due to the overlap of search/rescue areas between Türkiye and Greece.

In summary, Türkiye carries out its activities for the rescue of irregular migrants by considering the ethical values to which Normative Theory attaches special importance. While ensuring the follow-up of crime-prone people among irregular migrants, Türkiye also contributes to the establishment of international security by preventing common diseases, terrorist attacks around the world, environmental security, human smuggling, drug trade, and similar events, which are classified as the problematic areas in the new international security perception. On the other hand, these activities of Türkiye cause security concerns by the decision-makers in Greece's foreign policy and this security concern may also threaten international security over time.

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