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**ARTICLE REVIEW**

**Attitudes Towards Syrian Refugees in Türkiye: Does Cosmopolitanism Matter? Oznur Ozdamar, Eleftherios Giovanis, Sacit Hadi Akdede, Journal of International Migration & Integration, (2024).**

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### **Introduction, Scope, and Methodology**

Based on the article "*Attitudes Towards Syrian Refugees in Türkiye: Does Cosmopolitanism Matter?*" by Oznur Ozdamar, Eleftherios Giovanis, and Sacit Hadi Akdede, published in the *Journal of International Migration and Integration* in February 2024, this review endeavors to assess its scope, methodology, and contributions to the field of international relations, with a particular focus on migration studies. The article investigates the influence of cosmopolitanism on Turkish attitudes towards Syrians in Türkiye, a pressing issue given Türkiye's position as a host to a significant number of Syrians due to the civil war in Syria.

The authors embark on an exploratory journey to understand how cosmopolitan attributes among the Turkish population affect their attitudes toward Syrians in Türkiye. Given the lack of substantial research linking cosmopolitanism with attitudes toward refugees in the Turkish context, this study fills a crucial gap. The backdrop of Türkiye's socio-political landscape, affected by the influx of Syrians since 2011, provides a rich field for examining the interplay between cosmopolitanism and societal attitudes towards them.

Utilizing a robust dataset covering 1031 individuals from various provinces in Türkiye, the study employs an empirical methodology to assess attitudes towards refugees concerning cosmopolitan traits such as foreign travel, language proficiency, and engagement in cultural activities abroad. The use of ordered Probit models and a focus on various dimensions of cosmopolitan capital are particularly noteworthy, offering insights into the nuanced ways in which cosmopolitan traits can influence societal attitudes.

### **Core Arguments, Findings and Empirical Contribution**

A central argument of the study is that cosmopolitanism—characterized by international experiences, foreign language proficiency, and cultural openness—plays a pivotal role in shaping more positive attitudes towards refugees. This assertion aligns with the broader concept of cosmopolitanism as an openness to the world and a recognition of the interconnectedness of all people. The authors provide evidence that individuals with cosmopolitan orientations are more likely to exhibit tolerance and support for the integration of Syrians into Turkish society. This finding is particularly significant, suggesting that cosmopolitan traits could be leveraged to foster more inclusive attitudes towards migrants and refugees globally.

Another noteworthy aspect of the study is its examination of the relationship between religiosity and attitudes toward Syrians in Türkiye. Contrary to what might be expected in a predominantly Muslim country like Türkiye, where shared religious beliefs with the predominantly Muslim Syrians could hypothetically foster greater acceptance, the study finds that religiosity does not significantly differentiate attitudes towards Syrians in Türkiye. This result challenges assumptions about the role of shared religious identity in migration contexts and prompts a reevaluation of the factors that contribute to societal acceptance or rejection of refugees.

While the article's primary focus is on cosmopolitanism, the authors do not overlook the economic dimensions of migration and integration. They touch upon the complex interplay between economic factors and social attitudes, acknowledging that economic concerns often underpin resistance to refugee integration. However, their findings suggest that cosmopolitan orientations can mitigate such concerns, underscoring the potential of cosmopolitan values in promoting social cohesion and integration even in the face of economic uncertainty.

One of the article's most significant strengths is its empirical investigation into the nuanced relationship between cosmopolitanism and attitudes toward refugees, a relatively underexplored area in migration studies. The authors meticulously demonstrate that cosmopolitan traits, rather than religious affiliations or practices, are key determinants of tolerance towards Syrians in Türkiye. This insight contributes profoundly to our understanding of the socio-cultural factors that facilitate or hinder refugee integration.

The methodological rigor with which the authors approach the study stands out. By employing a comprehensive dataset and sophisticated statistical analyses, the study not only establishes correlations but also offers insights into the potential mechanisms through which

cosmopolitan orientations influence societal attitudes toward refugees. This methodological approach enhances the reliability and validity of the findings.

Another major strength of the article is its policy relevance. In highlighting the importance of cosmopolitan orientations over religious identities in shaping attitudes toward refugees, the study provides policymakers with evidence-based insights into fostering social cohesion and integration. The findings suggest that policies promoting cosmopolitan values such as cultural openness and international exposure could be more effective in enhancing tolerance towards refugees than previously thought.

While the article's conclusion that religious practices do not significantly differentiate tolerance levels towards Syrians in Türkiye is compelling, it could benefit from a more nuanced discussion on how religious identity and practice intersect with cosmopolitan attitudes. The complexity of religiosity in Türkiye, characterized by diverse interpretations and practices of Islam, warrants a deeper exploration of how different facets of religious identity may interact with cosmopolitan traits to influence attitudes toward refugees.

The geographical scope of the study, while comprehensive within the context of Türkiye, limits the generalizability of the findings to other countries with different socio-cultural and political landscapes. Expanding the analysis to include comparative studies with other host countries experiencing significant refugee inflows could enrich the understanding of cosmopolitanism's role in shaping attitudes towards refugees globally.

The article could further explore the concept of negative cosmopolitanism, where increased global exposure and cultural openness do not necessarily translate to positive attitudes toward refugees. Investigating the conditions under which cosmopolitanism might lead to exclusivity rather than inclusivity could provide a more complete picture of the complexities surrounding cosmopolitan attitudes and refugee integration.

## **Conclusion**

Ozdamar, Giovanis, and Akdede's investigation into the relationship between cosmopolitanism and attitudes toward Syrian refugees in Türkiye marks a significant contribution to migration studies. By highlighting the positive role of cosmopolitan traits in shaping public attitudes towards refugees, the study not only broadens academic discourse but also offers practical insights for enhancing social integration and cohesion. Future research could benefit from longitudinal designs and broader geographical coverage to build on these findings and explore the dynamic nature of public attitudes towards refugees in varying socio-political contexts.

The economic backgrounds of Ozdamar, Giovanis, and Akdede bring significant analytical strength to their study of cosmopolitanism's impact on attitudes towards Syrian refugees in Türkiye, employing a methodologically rigorous approach to untangle the economic aspects of migration and integration. However, embracing a more multidisciplinary perspective could further illuminate the complex interplay of cultural, social, and political factors with economic dimensions, enriching the study's contributions to the field of migration studies. This nuanced exploration would not only deepen the academic discourse but also enhance the practical relevance of the research for developing comprehensive, effective policy responses to the challenges of migration and integration in contemporary societies.

As a PhD Candidate with a keen interest in cosmopolitanism, particularly in the context of Turkish migrants in the UAE, I find the article to be a compelling addition to the discourse on international migration and integration. While the article showcases how cosmopolitan traits within the Turkish populace can foster more open and positive attitudes towards refugees, the UAE's approach to migration governance presents a scenario where cosmopolitanism coexists with stringent governance strategies that limit possibilities for integration. The juxtaposition of Türkiye's potential for refugee integration through cosmopolitan openness against the backdrop of the UAE's exclusive cosmopolitanism highlights a critical tension within migration studies. It underscores the complexity of cosmopolitanism as both a facilitator of and barrier to integration, dependent on the governing migration and integration policies.

Ozdamar, Giovanis, and Akdede's investigation into the relationship between cosmopolitanism and attitudes toward Syrians in Türkiye offers critical insights into the dynamics of migration and societal acceptance. By respectfully considering the areas where the study might be expanded, this analysis acknowledges the inherent complexities of researching such a multifaceted issue. The authors' work lays a solid foundation for future research, and an interdisciplinary, nuanced exploration of these themes could further illuminate the pathways to fostering inclusive societies in the face of global migration challenges.