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Humanitarianism and Refugee Crisis: A Comparative Analysis of Germany and Turkey towards Syrian Refugees in the Wake of the Syrian Civil War

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Humanitarianism and Refugee Crisis: A Comparative Analysis of Germany and Turkey Towards
Syrian Refugees in the Wake of the Syrian Civil War

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Introduction

Within the parlance of international relations, citizenship and state sovereignty, a refugee is a term that is used to describe anybody who has been forced into displacement outside the borders of her/his home country as a result of fear of persecution, thus deserving international legal protection and material assistance. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), which is the United Nations' specialized Agency for refugee affairs, protection and resettlement (UNHCR), specifically defines a refugee as someone who has "a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group" and who is unlikely to "return home or are afraid to do so."¹ Most cited reasons for people to flee their home country and seek refuge or asylum in another country are: ethnic conflict and aggression, tribal and religious violence, failed state and ensuing political violence. According to the most recent UNHCR estimate, the great majority of those seeking refuge in contemporary times around the globe come from the civil war-torn countries of Afghanistan, Myanmar, Somalia and Syria. A refugee status should be distinguished from an IDP, internally displaced person status. While the two terms are closely linked, the latter specifically refers to those people fleeing their homes but remaining within the internationally observed state borders of their home country.

Like many other political upheavals and ensuing civil wars, the Syrian Civil War started about eight years ago, on 15 March 2011, and has generated a massive wave of internal displacement within Syria and an equally perplexing wave of Syrian refugees across

¹ "What is a Refugee? Definition and Meaning." USA for UNHCR. <http://www.unrefugees.org/what-is-a-refugee/>.

the neighboring countries in the Middle East region and throughout the globe. According to the United Nations Humanitarian Coordination Office (UN-OCHA)², the Syrian conflict and ensuing violence has forced more than half of the population to flee their homes. To this end, the organization estimates that number of Syrian IDPs as 6.2 million as of July 2018. Other official observers such as the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC)³ that belong to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)⁴ provided an even greater estimate that is close to 7 million IDPs since the beginning of the civil war till end of 2017 and early 2018. The number of IDPs continues to rise albeit at a slower rate till today. With regards to the size of refugees generated by the Syrian conflict, the scenario is grimmer. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)⁵ estimates that the Syrian civil war has generated more than 6.2 million refugees through the region and global wise. Within the region, the majority of Syrian refugees are currently located in Turkey, which currently hosts about 3.5 million or 63% of the total refugees in the region. Outside the region, Germany hosts the highest Syrian refugees which is estimated at 530,000⁶.

There are several factors that made Turkey to be the highest recipient of Syrian refugees in the region and Germany the highest recipient outside the region. While one can argue that the proximity of Turkey can explain the large influx of Syrian refugees into the country, there are other complex political factors such Turkey's long desire to become a member of the European Union and outside factors such as the European Union's difficulty in sharing the burden of asylum seeker registration, determination, and relocation. Embracing

² United Nations. "Syria Emergency." UNHCR. April 2018. <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/syria-emergency.html>.

³ Syria." Syria | IDMC. 2018. <http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/syria>.

⁴ "NRC Middle East Quarterly Newsletter." NRC. September 13, 2018. <https://www.nrc.no/resources/newsletters/nrc-middle-east-quarterly-newsletter/>.

⁵ United Nations. "Syria Emergency." UNHCR. April 2018. <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/syria-emergency.html>.

⁶ Ibid.

humanistic and liberal ideals, along with the necessity of people to fill in the ageing workforce are among the reasons that make Germany the ideal final destination for Syrian refugees. This thesis will analyze the reasons that determined the nature of these two influxes of Syrian refugees and the varying responses and changes which have occurred within the countries .

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

My research will be based on a mixture of qualitative data and mixed methods. Using qualitative analysis, I will discuss and reveal policies and opinions in Germany and Turkey on refugees and asylum seekers. I have analyzed various journal articles, books, news and media reports, documentaries, official statistics as well as official reports from various government, organization and other institutional websites and will identify the variables which influence the varying reasons and ways of acceptance of the two countries. My main reason for choosing to do a case study of Germany and Turkey is because these two countries had received the greatest number of Syrian refugees since the summer of 2015.⁷ The case study will be useful in exploring the differences in policy and opinions among the two countries and observing the variables which generate certain outcomes rather than others. Despite their similarity in receiving many refugees the reasons why each country had received those amounts is quite different. Additionally, the refugee crisis is a topic which ought to be tackled through an interdisciplinary approach as it encompasses both politics and social relations. Given my background in sociology and anthropology, will take the authority of displaying parts of my thesis paper through an

⁷Connor, Phillip. "Where Syrian Refugees Have Resettled Worldwide." Pew Research Center. January 29, 2018. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/29/where-displaced-syrians-have-resettled/>.

ethnological approach. I will reveal not only the politics and data but also the experiences of citizens and refugees alike and will attempt to shine light on their personal stories and accounts.

From a theoretical point of view, migration can be considered to be a major aspect of globalization. Globalization is defined as the “expansion of global communication and market connections, growing social and political interdependences on global scale, and the development of planetary rather than national awareness among many of the world’s people”⁸. It has been observed by scholars that over the past fifty years migration has become more intense, far spread, geographically distant and that the origins and destinations of these migrants have become more diverse⁹. It has also been observed that the terms of migration have also become more diversified and include labor, student, family, and asylum migration as well as temporary and permanent migration¹⁰. Nonetheless, the impact of migration is likely to have both long- and short-term effects especially on the receiving country which include changes in politics, economics and demographics. The migration of Syrians to Germany and Turkey is considered to be a forced migration or refugee movement and it has had immense impacts on the receiving countries. These include changing governance and societal norms and notions within the countries. Overall, Turkey had received the large influx of Syrian refugees at its door steps at the beginning of the Syrian civil war due to its geographic proximity with Syria. Germany on the other had no cultural proximity but rather policies of open reception implemented and for that reason received the large amount it did. Another key difference between the two countries is that Germany is a leading force in the European Union while Turkey has been desiring and lobbying to be accepted as a member of the European union since 2005. The incentives of these two countries

⁸ Peterson, Mark A., and Charles Stevens. *International Studies an Interdisciplinary Approach to Global Issues*. 2nd ed. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013. Chapter 4, 98-99

⁹ Czaika, Mathias, and Hein De Haas. "The Globalization of Migration: Has the World Become More Migratory?" *International Migration Review* 48, no. 2 (2015): 283-323. doi:10.1111/imre.12095.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 268

are opposing and will be discussed. As you will see, Turkey has been playing political game and simply acted as a buffer zone from Syrian refugee influx in the hopes entering the European Union. On the contrary, Germany, the country with no geographical connection with Syria, has had an initial open reception and humanistic and liberal attitude towards refugees. This can be considered to be the depiction of the county's moral values in practice rather than a strategic and solely political approach.

Political History of the Syria

Colonial History

The colonial imperialist period in the Middle East occurred after the fall of the Ottoman Empire and before the rise of independent nation states in the region after WWII¹¹. The current state of Syria and other regions which once were under Ottoman rule were prematurely divided up by the United Kingdom and French in the secret Sykes–Picot Agreement should the Ottoman empire collapse, it did in 1918¹². It was in 1918 that the league of nations gave France control of Syria and its neighbor Lebanon¹³. During the French mandate in Syria political authorities practiced “divide-and-rule” policies along ethnic and religious lines¹⁴. The French specifically formed an alliance with Alawi and Druze minorities which were chosen first to be drafted into French colonial armed forces while the rest of the “Syrian” territory was subdivided, and power was given to various local leaders in hopes of creating a balance of power between sectarian and

¹¹ Gualteri, Sarah. "Revisioning the Colonial Middle East." Review of Book. *Radical History Review*, no. 86 (2003), p.193

¹² Smith @indyvoices, Andreas W. "Once the West Set out to Conquer the World. Those Days Have Gone for." *The Independent*. September 10, 2013. <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/once-the-west-set-out-to-conquer-the-world-those-days-have-gone-for-ever-8807245.html>.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Dostal, J. M. (2014). Analyzing the domestic and international conflict in Syria: are there lessons from political science? *Syria Studies*, 6(1), 1-80. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-55584-7>, 16

local divisions¹⁵. At this same time a Sunni Muslim Arab nationalist movement which was fighting for independence from France was gaining popular support. The French saw Arab nationalism as a force which must be resolved¹⁶; thus, the idea to give power to selected local authorities was a tactful attempt by the French to conquer this opposition¹⁷. The emergence of this Arab nationalism in the early 20th century can be in part accredited to an increase in Syrians attending professional schools and the spread of Arab history and culture¹⁸. Although it was hoped by imperialist powers that the local entities would be enough to exercise power, pan-Arab nationalist movements began to gain even more popular support¹⁹. Syria gained its independence in 1946, and the power within the country remained in the hands of nobles and the landed gentry. As a result, conflict persisted between political leaders and thus made the newly independent Syria weak²⁰.

Internal Political Conflict

Between gaining its independence in 1946 and 1963, Syria experienced more than a dozen military coups. This weakened the state and the Syrian Army became the most effective tool to exercise political power. This created another divide as those in the army were generally from lower, middle and minority classes. With the army as a main power these groups were able to compete for political authority²¹. In the 1950's new political parties emerged. Among the most

¹⁵Ibid.,17

¹⁶ Khoury, Philip S. "Continuity and Change in Syrian Political Life: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." *The American Historical Review*, December 1991. doi:10.1086/ahr/96.5.1374., 1388

¹⁷ Dostal, 17

¹⁸ Khoury, 1387

¹⁹ Dostal, 17

²⁰ Ibid., 18

²¹ Ibid. 19

popular were the Baath Party, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party SSNP, and the Syrian Communist Party, all of which differed in their views on pan-Arab unity and socialism ²².

Party & Views ²³

PARTY	SOCIALISM	PAN-ARAB UNITY
BAATH	“UNITY, FREEDOM, SOCIALISM”, ANTI-MARXIST	PROPONENT OF PAN-ARAB UNITY
SYRIAN SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY SSNP	ADVOCATE OF SECULARISM, ORIGINALLY MAJOR RIGHT WING POLITICAL PARTY BUT ALLIED WITH LEFT IN LATE 1960’S.	OPPONENT OF PAN-ARAB UNITY, INSISTED ON SYRIAN NATIONALISM, HOPED TO UNITE THE AREA BETWEEN CYPRUS, LEBANON, SYRIA AND IRAQ INTO ONE STATE BASED ON CULTURAL HERITAGE WHICH WAS DIFFERENT THEN THAT OF THE ARABS.
SYRIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (SCP)	FOLLOWED SOVIET MODEL OF COMMUNISM	NOT NECESSARILY A PROPOPENT OF PAN ARAB UNITY BUT DOESN’T OPPOSE IT.

It quickly became clear that the Baath party was the one with the most popularity and with that power. At its birth, as an anti-French movement²⁴, the Baath party aspired to have

²² Ibid.

²³ Dostal, 19-20

²⁴ Wallace, David and McCarthy, Amy and Reeves, Shane R., “Trying to Make Sense of the Senseless: Classifying the Syrian War under the Law of Armed Conflict.” Mich. St. Int’l L. Rev. 555, 2017. 558

branches in all Arab countries. By 1956, pan-Arab nationalism was especially strong as there were threats of a communist takeover which was seen with an organized communist party and Afif al-Bizir, a communist sympathizer, as the army's chief of staff. This communist threat, along with popular pressure for Arab unity as reflected in Parliament (Britannica)²⁵, proved to be the ultimate pushes towards a Syrian/Egyptian unification into the United Arab Republic (UAR). Overall, UAR, a unified Arabic state between Syria and Egypt was an attempt to save the two countries of communist rule. However, shortly after this unification the true goals of Gamal Abdel Nasser and his pan-Arab Nasserist movement of Egypt became evident. Nasser assumed the leadership role in the union and established a 600 seat National Assembly of which only 200 seats were granted to Syria, the Syrian Baath party was forced to accept this and shortly after Nasser decided to dismantle all existing political parties which included the Baath Party²⁶. It became evident that this was Nasser's plan from the start and Syrian opposition grew. Baath party intellectuals especially disapproved of this one party system and the communist party gained back power temporally. This political Union lasted from 1958 until September 28th 1961, when a Syrian coupe d'état resulted in the end of the UAR and restored the Syrian republic²⁷. The Baath party originally pushed towards this unification²⁸ and therefore when the union proved to be a failure, the party lost much of their influence²⁹. Following the breakup of the United Arab Republic, the Baath Party became controlled mainly by the Syrian army and officer Hafiz-al Assad, *who would later become president*. They took power on March 8th, 1963 and

²⁵ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Hafiz Al-Assad." Encyclopaedia Britannica. October 02, 2018.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Hafiz-al-Assad>.

²⁶ Palmer, Monte. "The United Arab Republic: An Assessment of its Failure." Middle East Journal, vol. 20, no. 1, 1966, pp. 50. ProQuest, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1290681254?accountid=10932>, 53

²⁷ ORON, YITZHAK, ed. MIDDLE EAST RECORD. Vol. 2. ISRAEL PROGRAM FOR SCIENTIFIC TRANSLATIONS, 1961.

²⁸ James P. Jankowski (2002). Nasser's Egypt, Arab Nationalism, and the United Arab Republic. Lynne Rienner Publishers. ISBN 9781588260345.

²⁹ Dostal, 20

then on February 23 1966 a *neo-Baath* group rose and pushed old Baath leadership aside³⁰. This 1966 ruling group was led by Salah Jadid and Baath Army officers with Hafiz al-Assad as defense minister. The party adopted leftist views and engaged in land reform consolidation from the landed gentry.

The Ruling Regime

It was in 1970 that Hafez al-Assad led a coup coined the “corrective movement” with the goal of removing “radical sections” of the Baath party under the leadership of Jadid³¹. His coup was a turning point in Syrian history as in contrast to earlier Baathist leaders, Hafez al-Assad was able to construct a more stable political system which pushed Syrian influence in the region³². Upon gaining control of power in 1971, Hafiz al Assad established a new constitution which allowed him to consolidate power as the head of Syria. Overall, Hafiz al-Assad's approach to “governance was influenced not only by his affiliation with the Baath party but by unity and particularly the valuing of "Arabism" above all other dividing factors, including religious sectarianism and if also endorsed modern secular values, including rights for women”³³. Under his regime Syria was defined by the following institutions: president, army, independently operating security services, formal state institutions headed by prime ministers and assisted by parliament and corporatist institutions such as political parties, unions and other similar bodies³⁴. Hafez al Assad curated the government in the way that he could control all institutions³⁵. From 1967 to the 1980’s the size of the armed forces grew from 50,000 to over 400,000 and at its peak Syria devoted over 20 percent of its gross national production to the

³⁰ Ibid.,21

³¹ Ibid.,22

³² Ibid.,22

³³ Wallace et al., 558

³⁴ Dostal, 23-24

³⁵ Ibid.,23

military(internationalrelations.org)³⁶. Using the military and Baath party as his main platform of support he had ultimate control and was allowed to make changes according to his own personal interests³⁷. His total power thus made it impossible for him to ever lose it, as no checks and balance or a veto system could push him out if there were any concerns with his rule (Dostal 26)³⁸. In 1982, the Baath party's main opponent, the Muslim Brotherhood, led an uprising in attempts to overthrow the government in order to establish power³⁹. Hafez Al-Assad suppressed this uprising by capturing the Muslim Brotherhood's headquarters in Hama and killing up to 20,000 people much of which were civilians⁴⁰. As summarized by Seale, Hafez al-Assad was both respected and feared in his country and had two strong traits of a successful leader: "exceptional political foresight and a persistent fighting instinct"⁴¹.

The government of Hafez al-Assad, which lasted from 1971 to 2000, helped the Syrian economy and promoted social reforms in some respects. He diversified the economy by expanding it beyond the agricultural sector to encompass the industrial sectors and also oil rents^{42 43}. Hafez al-Assad also loosened up some of the state control over the economy; however, his economic interventions proved to be lacking in the long term as strong declines were seen after the initial increases in the 1970's⁴⁴. Corruption within the regime soon became present as some high-ranking officials of used al-Assad to stuff their pockets and as a result Syria's economic development suffered⁴⁵. Overall, Syrian citizens experienced an increased standard of

³⁶ "Hafez Al-Assad." International Relations.org. <http://internationalrelations.org/hafez-al-assad/>.

³⁷ Dostal, 24

³⁸ Ibid.26

³⁹ Wallace et al. 558

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Seale, P. (2000). Hafez al-Assad. The Guardian. June 14, 2000. Available Online: <http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2000/jun/15/guardianweekly.guardianweekly1c>

⁴² Cleveland, W.L. & Bunton, M. (2013). A History of the Modern Middle East. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press., 417-418

⁴³ Dostal, 22

⁴⁴ Cleveland et al., 419

⁴⁵ Ibid.

living under Hafez al-Assad⁴⁶. Farmers were granted access to loans as they became readily available, the government provided education, healthcare and even promoted gender rights and female equality as some women served as parliamentary representatives and began to enter the professions and the judiciary⁴⁷. By his death he managed to: achieve years of stability in Syria, turn Syria into a major national player in the region and fought to prevent Israeli influence in the Arab world, his death in 2000 marked an end of an era for Syria⁴⁸.

Origins of the Syrian Civil War

The Bashar Assad Regime and Internal political dissatisfaction

Since officially gaining its independence as a Preliminary Republic in 1946⁴⁹, Syria's political history has been a turbulent one which has encountered a series of coups and dictators. It had only attained some stability under leader Hafez al-Assad, a member of the socialist Baath party⁵⁰. Upon al-Assad's death his son Bashar al-Assad inherited the current authoritarian regime. It can be argued that too quickly his newly gained power was mismanaged as he began to implement unfair practices which eventually led to the destabilization of the country to leading to its current state of civil war⁵¹.

This unstable political history along with environmental problems, economic instability, and regional unrest were the contributing factors that have displaced and forced millions of

⁴⁶ Dostal, 22

⁴⁷ Cleveland et al., 420

⁴⁸ Seale, P. (2000). Hafez al-Assad. The Guardian. June 14, 2000. Available Online: <http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2000/jun/15/guardianweekly.guardianweekly1c>

⁴⁹ "Syria Timeline: (1920-1960) - From French Mandate to Merger with Egypt." The Hindu, The Hindu, 5 July 2016, www.thehindu.com/news/international/syria-timeline-19201960-from-french-mandate-to-merger-with-egypt/article3609575.ece.

⁵⁰ Wallace et al., 557

⁵¹ Ibid., 558

people to out of the territory⁵². Since March 15, 2011⁵³, numerous state and non-state armed groups have been fighting and has made classifying the conflict exceedingly difficult⁵⁴.

Civil War and Initial International Response

From March 2011, violence against Syrian citizens conducted by Syrian government has been condemned by the United States, European Union and the Arab League. Sanctions had been imposed and with time many international players had become involved in Syria. When the war began the four main groups were the Kurdish forces, ISIS, other opposition (such as Jaish al Fateh, an alliance between the Nusra Front and Ahrar-al-Sham) and the Assad regime. Soon this full-scale civil war between the Syrian government and antigovernment rebel groups had become backed by Russia and Iran on the Syrian (Assad) front and by the United States, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and others on the rebel front. **Image 1**⁵⁵ provides a simplified overview of the various groups involved in the Syrian Civil War. Overall, the three main campaigns which drive the conflict include “coalition efforts to defeat the Islamic State, violence between the Syrian government and opposition forces, and military operations against Syrian Kurds by Turkish forces”⁵⁶. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, as of April 2018, more than 5.6 million Syrians have been forced to flee the country and more than 6.5 million people have been displaced internally due to the conflict⁵⁷. The following timeline depicts some of the major

⁵² Wallace et al., 559

⁵³ Polk, William R. “Understanding Syria: From Pre-Civil War to Post-Assad.” The Atlantic, Atlantic Media Company, 10 Dec. 2013, www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/12/understanding-syria-from-pre-civil-war-to-post-assad/281989/.

⁵⁴ Wallace et al., 562

⁵⁵ Beltyukova, Anastasia, and Henrik Pettersson. "The Free-for-all in Syria Will Make Your Head Spin." April 11, 2018.

<https://www.cnn.com/2016/08/25/middleeast/syria-isis-whos-fighting-who-trnd/index.html>.

⁵⁶ "Civil War in Syria." Global Conflict Tracker. 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker#!/conflict/civil-war-in-syria>.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

events which have occurred from March 2011 to March 2018.

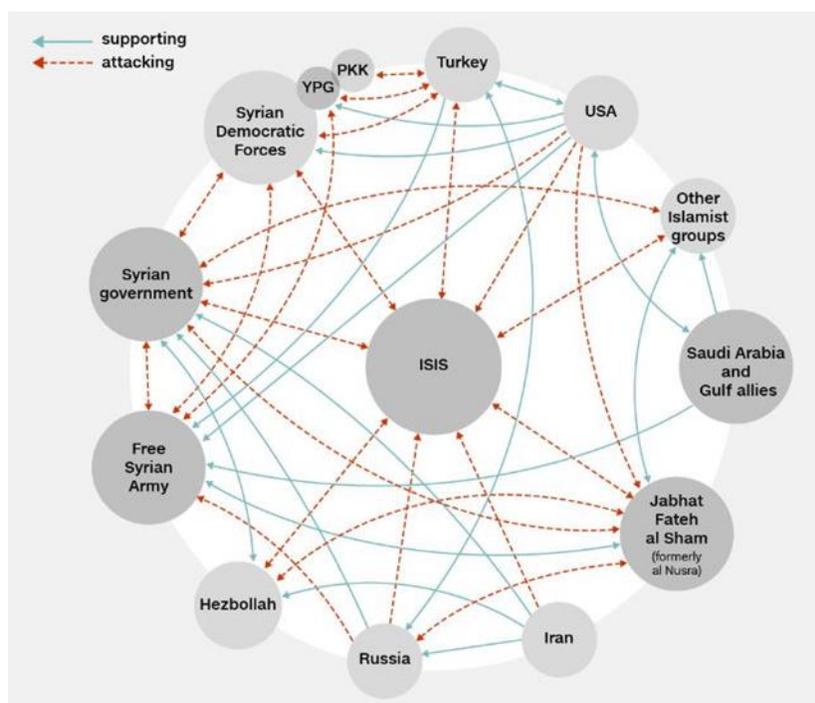


Image 1

Recent Developments: Fall 2018

As of September 2018, the Syrian government had prepared for an offensive on the rebel-held province of Idlib⁵⁸. This province is the last province which is in rebel and jihadist hands⁵⁹ mainly, the landscape of Idlib is divided among the National Liberation Front (NLF) and Tahir al-Sham both of which have different loyalties and outlooks⁶⁰. It is important to note that Turkey favors NLF which is a Muslim brotherhood ally and includes Turkey friendly Islamists. It is held together by Turkish sponsorship and shared enemies which include al-Assad Government, Syrian

⁵⁸ Lund, Aron. "Syrian War: Understanding Idlib's Rebel Factions." IRIN, 3 Sept. 2018, www.irinnews.org/analysis/2018/09/03/syrian-war-understanding-idlib-s-rebel-factions.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Parker, Ben. "US and UK Halt Key Syria Aid Shipments over Extremist 'Taxes.'" IRIN, 4 Oct. 2018, www.irinnews.org/news/2018/10/02/us-and-uk-halt-key-syria-aid-shipments-over-extremist-taxes?utm_source=IRIN%2B-%2Bthe%2Binside%2Bstory%2Bon%2Bemergencies&utm_campaign=c843451c28-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_ENGLISH_AID_AND_POLICY&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d842d98289-c843451c28-75467497

Kurdish groups and jihadists⁶¹. The main rival of the NLF in the Idlib province is Tahrir al-Sham, a jihadist group that controls the provincial capital and the Bab al-Hawa border crossing with Turkey⁶². In mid-September 2018, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Russian president Vladimir Putin agreed to demilitarize and remove all heavy weaponry, including tanks, rocket launch systems and mortar launchers operated by rebel groups from the buffer zone in Syria's Idlib province starting October of 2018⁶³. Due to hostilities thousands⁶⁴ of civilians live in overcrowded conditions and lack basic services and to further contribute to this humanitarian crisis on October 2nd, 2018, the United States and Great Britain were forced to stop funding to Syria⁶⁵. This was due to the fact that trucks delivering humanitarian aid were being taxed at the Tahrir al-Sham controlled Bab Al-Hawa Border and these taxes were used by terrorist organizations⁶⁶. This action to withhold trucking limits support to hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people in Idlib⁶⁷. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing violence in Syria, it can be expected that its citizens will continue to flee and the so called "new exodus" coined by Cordina Csesznek, is expected to continue beyond the near future⁶⁸.

⁶¹ Lund.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ "Syria War: Russia and Turkey to Create Buffer Zone in Idlib." BBC News, BBC, 17 Sept. 2018, www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-45554188.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Parker.

⁶⁶ Ibid..

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ CSESZNEK, Codrina. "SYLUM IN GERMANY DURING THE NEW EXODUS-A SECONDARY ANALYSIS ON OFFICIAL REPORTS." Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brasov., Series VII: Social Sciences., 10, no. 2 (2017): 141-50. EBSCO.

Timeline of Syrian Civil War March 2011 to March 2018⁶⁹

2011:

- Anti- government protests flare violent state response in Daraa.
- The United States , Eu, Arab League and Turkey impose economic sanctions on Syria.
- Members of Al-Qaeda affiliated Islamic State of Iraq from Nusra Front in Syria

2012

- Fighting spreads to Aleppo, Syrias largest city.
- President Obama says the use of chemical weapons would be a "red line" that would change his calculus on intervening in the civil war.
- the changes to the constitution, which include the possibility of a multi-party system.
- Turkey firers on Syrian targets after people are killed by Syrian shelling in the Turkish border town of Akcakale. Israel fires warning shots toward Syria after a mortar shell hits an Israeli military post.

2013

- Assad announces he will not step down and that his vision of Syria's future includes a new constitution and an end to support for the opposition.
- US Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announces the United States has evidence that the chemical weapon sarin has been used in Syria.
- Syrian agrees to give up its chemical weapons.
- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay says that the UN had found massive evidence that the highest levels of the Syrian government are responsible for war crimes.

2014

- A second round of peace talks ends in Geneva, Switzerland, with little progress in ending Syria's civil war.
- Assad is re-elected, reportedly receiving 88.7% of the vote in the country's first election since civil war broke out in 2011.
- Islamic State group declares caliphate in areas it controls in Iraq and Syria.
- The U.S. launches airstrikes on Islamic State targets in Syria focusing on the city of Raqqa.

2015

- Putin claims that Russia is supporting the Syrian government in its fight against ISIS. Russia begins airstrikes.
- American troops help local Kurdish and Arab forces fighting ISIS with logistics and are planning to bolster their efforts.
- Assad acknowledges serious setbacks for his military.

2016

- Turkish forces cross into northern Syria, capturing areas along the border from the Islamic State group.
- Turkey and Russia broker a ceasefire for eastern Aleppo so that civilians can be evacuated. The UN Security Council holds an emergency session amid reports of mounting civilian deaths and extrajudicial killings. The ceasefire is unsuccessful and collapses less than a day after it is implemented.
- Syria' announces government forces have taken full control of Aleppo, ending more than four years of rebel rule there.

2017

- More than 50 people are killed in the town of Khan Sheikhoun in the rebel-held Idlib province. Witnesses say the attack was carried out by either Russian or Syrian Sukhoi jets.
- The United States launches a military strike on a Syrian government airbase in response to the chemical weapon attack on civilians.
- Trump and Putin agree on curbing violence in southwest Syria during their meeting at the G20 in Hamburg, Germany.
- ISIS loses control of its capital in Raqqa.

2018

- More than 1,000 children have been killed or injured this year across Syria according to UNICEF regional communications chief Juliette Touma.

⁶⁹ Humud, Carla E., Mary Beth D. Nikitin, and Christopher M. Blanchard. "Armed Conflict in Syria: Overview and U.S. Response." December 11, 2018. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33487.pdf>.
 "Syrian Civil War Fast Facts." CNN. May 03, 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2013/08/27/world/meast/syria-civil-war-fast-facts/index.html>.
 The Associated Press. "A Timeline of the Syrian Conflict as It Enters Its Eighth Year." Bloomberg.com. March 15, 2018. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-03-15/timeline-of-the-syrian-conflict-as-it-enters-8th-year>.

EU and Germany

Internal EU Strict Policies for Refugees

Overall, the refugee crisis that has confronted Europe has posed a major challenge to the European Union. This can be considered to be an issue for both the refugees who have entered Europe and for the citizens of Europe, because the ruling political classes, groups and organizations do not have any long term solutions . Bauböck explains three reasons why the European Union faces difficulties in burden sharing with regard to refugee admissions⁷⁰. The first reason that this article discusses is that, European Union Member States had already agreed on a principle of assigning responsibility for asylum determination to the EU state of first entry, known as the Dublin principles. The second reason is that there are no norms regarding asylum procedures and the recognition of refugees; thus, asylum seekers face very unequal opportunities in terms of reception, public assistance, and the probability of gaining protection status . The third reason is the Schengen principle of open internal borders . It is important to keep in mind that this Dublin regulation was first enforced in 1997 as a form of security and universal policy to correspond to the Schengen agreement, which allowed for members of the EU to move freely throughout borders and was last adjusted in 2013⁷¹. The Dublin regulation had not been adjusted to account for the infiltration of the refugees to boarder counties since the peak of the crisis in 2015 and has thus failed on some accounts. Bauböck explains that the states of first entry, at the external Schengen border, lacked both capacities and incentives to fully implement the Dublin Regulation and were therefore let asylum seekers move onwards towards other destinations⁷².

⁷⁰ Bauböck, Rainer. "Refugee Protection and Burden-Sharing in the European Union." *Journal of Common Market Studies* , vol. 56, no. 1, 2018, pp. 141–156., doi:10.1111/jcms.12638.

⁷¹ Akın, Şeyma. "The Effects of the Syrian Crisis on German Politics." *Turkish Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2017, 81-103. doi:10.26513/toed.318326.. 85

⁷² Bauböck.

Germany, although not a border country was also forced to suspend this policy in 2015 and decided to grant refugee asylum rather than sending them back to the country of first entry⁷³.

The Rise of Anti-Immigration tendencies in the EU and Germany⁷⁴

There has been a reincarnation of European extreme right wing parties and ideologies. Some of these include the outbreak of Neo-Nazi violence in Germany, the rise of the National Front in France, the Alleanza Nazionale in Italy, the Solvack National Party in Slovenia and the Freedom Party in Austria. Each of these parties share the common ideological notions of ultra-nationalism, virulent anti-communism, hatred towards immigrants and xenophobia. The term xenophobia can be used to describe the intense and generally irrational dislike or the prejudice against people from other countries⁷⁵. This xenophobia has especially been on the rise since the start of the 2015 refugee crisis that has mainly come about as a result of the Syrian Civil War. As recorded by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, about 1.3 million asylum seekers have entered the 28 states of the European Union in 2015 and 2016 of which over half applied for asylum in just the three countries of Germany, Hungary and Sweden⁷⁶. Later in 2017 about 705 thousand asylum seekers applied for international protection in the 28 states of the European Union with the countries of Germany, Italy and France receiving the most⁷⁷. Such an influx of people, has caused there to be new cultural and security concerns for governments and citizens throughout Europe due to the fact that there is a preconceived notion that refugees are responsible for all that is bad including: high unemployment rates, crime, overcrowding of

⁷³ Akin, 85

⁷⁴ Stelzenmüller, Constanze. "After the Election, Germany's Democracy Faces Its Hardest Test since 1949." Brookings.edu. November 28, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/09/25/after-the-election-germanys-democracy-faces-its-hardest-test-since-1949/>.

⁷⁵ "Xenophobia." Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/xenophobia>.

⁷⁶ Connor, Phillip. "Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Million in 2015." Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project. August 02, 2016.

⁷⁷ "Asylum Statistics." Together Against Trafficking in Human Beings. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics#Number_of_asylum_applicants:_drop_in_2017.

schools, diseases, and unwanted changes in culture. There have been many shifts in the countries social and political climate since the summer of 2015. For example, a plethora of populist movements had begun to call for Europeans to shut their borders to Muslim migrants, close Islamic schools and ban Muslim women from covering their hair or face in public⁷⁸. This is all due to the fact that popular right-winged and highly xenophobic political parties "...live off the emotion of fear, and it's a lot harder to take these fears away than to create them"⁷⁹. Hundreds and thousands of refugees are seen on television screens coming from foreign nations with varying cultures. A great fear is felt by Europeans, as images of terrorist events that have occurred around the world by Muslim extremists enter their heads no matter how hard they try not to associate all Muslims to those actions. This was especially true after the sexual assaults which occurred during 2015/2016 New Year's Eve celebrations in Cologne during which, an estimated 1200 women were assaulted and about 2000 men were involved⁸⁰. It is quite evident that such events instill fear and feelings of xenophobia into adults and cannot be tolerated. As described by victims⁸¹, most of the men were said to be of North African or Middle Eastern descent and thus far only 2 were captured due to poor record keeping taken by the police⁸². Later that year, a Christmas market was attacked by a 24-year-old Tunisian, whose asylum application had been rejected, that night he managed to escape, killing 11 people and injuring 56⁸³. It was only a few days later that he was caught in Milan, Italy and shot by police. In Germany specifically, the new AfD party or Alternative for Germany party which was formed in 2013 is split between moderate to far- right supporters. The members of the party have been

⁷⁸ Shuster, Simon. "Rise of Right-Wing Politics Changes Europe." Time. September 22, 2016.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ News, VICE. Youtube. December 22, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hl04r1OjRQs>.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Deutsche Welle. "Berlin Christmas Market Attack: 'We Weren't Prepared'." DW.COM. December 19, 2017. <https://www.dw.com/en/berlin-christmas-market-attack-we-werent-prepared/a-41847714>.

vocal about their complete opposition to immigration and some have even turned to violence and have injured foreigners and vandalized their property⁸⁴. The parties platform wants to change the German constitution to: “get rid of the right to an individual hearing in asylum cases, to immediately deport all refugees whose applications to remain in Germany are rejected (regardless of whether the countries to which deportees are sent back are safe or not) and in addition to this the party advocates foreigners who commit crimes in Germany being sentenced to prisons outside the country and treating minors as young as 12 as adults for certain offenses”⁸⁵. The rise of the AfD and other far right platforms can be seen as a direct response to

Merkle’s open door refugee policy, which allowed over 1.5 million refugees into the country, and the attacks which can be linked to these asylum applicants. However, despite the rise in popularity of the far-right, it has not gained enough support to the leading party in Germany. The center-right Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU) and sister party Christian Social Union in Bavaria (CSU) have been the party in power upon the start of the refugee crisis and are still among the favorite according to 2017 elections (see map⁸⁶) and 2018 polls⁸⁷.

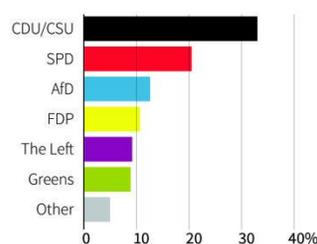
Germany’s general election results

Angela Merkel turns to the task of sounding out partners to build a coalition government after securing a fourth term as chancellor in Sunday’s election, although she has been weakened by a surge in support for the AfD, a far right party.

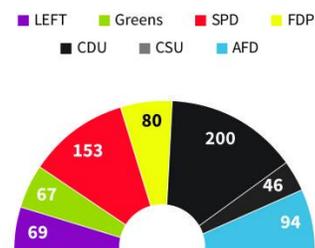
CONSTITUENCY RESULTS
by party of winning candidate



PERCENT OF VOTE



NUMBER OF SEATS



CDU: Christian Democrats; CSU: Bavarian Christian Social Union; SPD: Social Democrats; AfD: Alternative for Germany; Greens: Alliance 90/The Greens.

Source: Germany’s Federal Returning Office, preliminary results.

Map 1

⁸⁴ Connolly, Kate. "Merkel Muss Weg": Far-right Protests Target German Chancellor in Chemnitz." The Guardian. November 16, 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/16/angela-merkel-greeted-by-far-right-protests-in-chemnitz>.

⁸⁵ Deutsche Welle. "AfD: What You Need to Know about Germany’s Far-right Party." DW.COM. September 24, 2017. <https://www.dw.com/en/afd-what-you-need-to-know-about-germanys-far-right-party/a-37208199>.

⁸⁶ Cabrera, G. "Germany’s General Elections Results." Map. September 25, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/09/25/after-the-election-germanys-democracy-faces-its-hardest-test-since-1949/>.

⁸⁷ Stelzenmüller, Constanze. "After the Election, Germany’s Democracy Faces Its Hardest Test since 1949." Brookings.edu. November 28, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/09/25/after-the-election-germanys-democracy-faces-its-hardest-test-since-1949/>.

Germany's "Willkommenskultur": Merkle's policy to welcome Syrian refugees as a call for humanitarianism in the age of rising anti-immigration sentiments

In 2015, when thousands of Syrians started fleeing the developing war in their country, Germany, although not necessarily prepared for such large amounts of refugees, welcomed thousands to seek asylum in their country. Among all European countries Germany, under the leadership of Chancellor Angela Merkel, took leadership and reflected the countries liberal values. Germany's history during World War II is well known and the country views the "fundamental right of asylum as a high priority that expresses the country's willingness to fulfill its historical and humanitarian obligation to admit refugees"⁸⁸. Although the scale of the current refugee crisis is incomparable to any previous migration into Germany's borders, the country does have an extensive contemporary history of migration since the end of World War II.

In the late 1950's Germany started a recruitment program for bringing in educated guest workers and students as a means to fill in the void in the professional workforce during the post-war period. Between the years 1955 and 1968, Germany signed recruitment treaties with Italy, Spain, Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and Yugoslavia. This was all done in efforts to help fill the German workforce during a time of rapid economic growth which was driven by a rapid expansion of production. Overall, these were two-year agreements; however, a 1964 agreement with Turkey allowed the Turks to stay longer. Between the years 1961 and 1973 about 2.7 million Turks applied for jobs in Germany and although only 750,000 were actually approved many more decided to stay in the country. This program ended around the year 1973 in response to the global oil crisis⁸⁹. Germany's also received a significantly large influx of asylum

⁸⁸ Federal Ministry of the Interior. "Asylum and Refugee Policy." Bundesministerium Des Innern, Für Bau Und Heimat. October 05, 2017. <https://www.bmi.bund.de/EN/topics/migration/asylum-refugee-protection/asylum-refugee-policy-germany/asylum-refugee-policy.html>.

⁸⁹ Deutsche Welle. "Turkish Guest Workers Transformed German Society." DW.COM. October 30, 2011. <https://www.dw.com/en/turkish-guest-workers-transformed-german-society/a-15489210>.

applications in the 1990's. This was the time of the fall of the Soviet Union, Yugoslav Wars and humans rights crisis in the Kurdish region of Turkey during which many people sought to escape the internal conflicts within their counties and sought asylum in Germany.

As the current crisis of 2015 deals with Arab refugees from Syria it is important to mention the varying views of acceptance and the process of integration between the mid-1900's and present day. In his documentary filmmaker Mariam Shahin along with presenter Ramy Alasheq, describe the "old" Arab immigrants which came to Germany in the late 1950's as guest workers and they compare them to the current refugees and the resulting Arab-German relations⁹⁰. He presents both the views of Germans towards these migrants and the views and life long experiences of the "old" Arab immigrants. Both the migrants and German citizens are different now when compared to the mid-1900's. As it is well known, but also restated by the documentary, in the 1950's German citizens were motivated towards re-establishing their country within the scope of western civilization and determined to promote democratic values. They were welcoming and insisted on developing good relations with the rest of the world. They especially welcomed guest workers from Turkey as they were educated and also determined to play an important role in the development of the country. The older generation Arabs which came in the 1950's through 1970's was tolerated and was able to assimilate and contribute to German society. This was due in part by both the welcoming culture of Germany but also because of their willingness to establish themselves and prosper in the country. This attribute is also common to many but not all Syrian refugees. The new migrants are refugees who forced out of the county as a result of civil war and this new population is split as half is determined to

⁹⁰ Shahin, Mariam. "The New Germans." GCC News | Al Jazeera. May 24, 2017. <https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/documentaries/2017/05/germans-170524113353148.html>.

return to Syria in the future while the other half would prefer to stay in Germany. An example of this from a refugees point of view is mentioned in the documentary of Mariam Shahin. He presents a couple who is currently living in the Germany countryside. They talk about their family's, and more specifically, daughter's future and the former Syrian journalist, Abdullah, and wife Sumaya, a writer, are divided on what is best for them. Abdullah professes his feelings by stating that if his daughter was to ever become an Olympian he couldn't imagine her representing any country other than Syria as that is where she comes from and he hopes that they will return to their home country one day. Sumaya on the other hand has fallen in love with the German countryside and feels safe and at home there with no plans or wishes of returning to Syria. She wishes and hopes for her daughter to socialize with German children and become a contributing German citizen as she believes that it is impossible for them to return to Syria and prosper .

The concept of willingness is two sided as it is dependent both on the refugees and host country and it is determined based on a number of factors, these include: "historical experience, ethnic composition, and presence of immigrant communities within a country, political discourse, and leadership within political parties"⁹¹. Germany used demographics as one of the reasons to justify the acceptance. Acting in such a way would give Germany the upper hand in politics as well as produce positive economic outcomes ⁹². As a regional and global leader, Germany is confident in its abilities to accept refugees and as stated by Frank Walter Steinmeier, the current president of Germany, it is in need of refugees to boost its aging workforce⁹³. As a country with an aging population German needs and will need immigration to balance its labor

⁹¹ Kelliher, Mia. "Behind Germany's Willkommenskultur and Hungary's Xenophobic Sentiments: Responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis within the European Union." Bachelor's thesis, University of Puget Sound, 2016. December 13, 2016.

⁹² Akin, 91-92

⁹³ Shahin

market it is estimated that about 500,000 migrants are needed until 2050⁹⁴. Such opinions of a need to fill in the workforce due to aging population also touch upon the topic of repatriation or the plans for refugees to eventually return back home. Many Germans from the right wing AfD party state that their government should immediately start talks with Syrian authorities over a deal to repatriate the refugees⁹⁵. Alexander Gauland and Alice Weidel of the AfD party stated that: “this deal should ensure that the returnees will be accepted in Syria and accommodated only in safe areas” and also proposed that Syrian refugee children whom are residing in Germany should be taught the Syrian school curriculum, either by Syrian teachers already resident in Germany or by teachers sent by the Syrian government. Such statements made by the AfD are thought to be preposterous and unrealistic and deemed “irresponsible, inhumane and heartless” by the Greens party as war is still ongoing and those who escaped military draft face the possibility of persecution by the Syrian government⁹⁶. Thus, the likelihood of a quick and safe return is unrealistic in the current day and Germany must take measures to ensure the successful integration of refugees into society.

Practicing *Willkommenskultur* has proven to be difficult in some cases, German citizens have reacted angrily racist protests and riots. As mentioned by Germany's most prominent citizen of Arab heritage, highly renowned journalist Dunja Hayli the reactions towards Arabs old and new have changed since the wake of the crisis in 2015⁹⁷. Previously she and many Arabs of the “older” generation were regarded positively and some, like her, never experienced any sort of discrimination against them due to their background. These older Arabs were proud of their

⁹⁴ Akin, 92

⁹⁵ Alkousaa, Riham. "Germany's Far-right AfD Calls for Repatriation of Syrian Refugees." Reuters. November 09, 2017. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-syria/germanys-far-right-afd-calls-for-repatriation-of-syrian-refugees-idUSKBN1D92QI>.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Shahin

background and it did stop them from developing prospering businesses and careers within the country as they did not feel any sort of danger by being Arab. Nowadays, a negative feelings and options are constantly being portrayed by ethnic Germans. Dunja and other “older” Arabs like her have revived hate mail and have been called racial slurs on the streets on multiple occasions. Such situations evoke feelings of resentment and anger in these older generation Arabs toward the Syrian refugees as many feel that the refugees are ruing everything which they had worked for. Such situations prove that there is a great danger is Germany becoming a very divided society if proper actions towards integration are not implemented.

The notion of successful integration is a process that covers many areas and has multiple layers to it. To understand the process in Germany one must know that integration is a key component and obligation under the Act on the Residence, Economic Activity and Integration of Foreigners in the Federal Territory (Gesetz über den Aufenthalt, die Erwerbstätigkeit und die Integration von Ausländern im Bundesgebiet). This Residence Act, in its first section states the following : “

*“This Act shall serve to control and restrict the influx of foreigners into the Federal Republic of Germany. It shall enable and organise immigration with due regard to the capacities for admission and integration and the interests of the Federal Republic of Germany in terms of its economy and labour market. At the same time, the Act shall also serve to fulfil the Federal Republic of Germany’s humanitarian obligations. To this end, it shall regulate the entry, stay, economic activity and integration of foreigners...”*⁹⁸.

⁹⁸ German Law Archive. <https://germanlawarchive.iuscomp.org/?p=1464>.

Thus, if one is to gain lawful residency, he or she must show eagerness in learning the German language and about German history, culture and law. In addition to this Residence Act, the Integration Act or Integrationsgesetz was passed in July 31, 2016 in direct response to the massive influx of refugee and asylum seekers. This act was made to facilitate the integration of the new refugees into the German society and workforce through means of extensive integration classes, vocational training and employment training. Upon successful completion and shown willingness to learn and cooperate in the integration process, refugees would have better changes in staying and finding work in Germany and those who were not as successful could possibly lose some of the benefits which they receive⁹⁹. A permanent residence permit would be granted after five years upon proof of German skills on the A2 level and integration achievements and three years for those who have advanced skills on the C1 level¹⁰⁰. In practice, the reality of this Integration Act could be better as in some cases the process of Integration is limited due to factors such as a limited interaction with native Germans mainly due to housing which is shared with other refugees and long wait times, up to 18 months, to get into integration programs¹⁰¹. Drawing from Arndt Kunnecke 's conclusion on her article on "The German Federal Law On Integration", one can confirm that such integration initiatives are certainly taking steps towards the right direction when it comes to dealing with the millions of new refugees; yet, ought to be further developed as there are multiple limitations which remain and stop refugees from becoming completely integrated in the society in the same manner as their older Arab predecessors were able to accomplish.

⁹⁹ Gesley, Jenny. "Germany: Act to Integrate Refugees Enters Into Force." *Planning D-Day (April 2003) - Library of Congress Information Bulletin*. August 15, 2016. <http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/germany-act-to-integrate-refugees-enters-into-force/>.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ News, VICE. December 01, 2016. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Re4wpZ-NPgM&index=11&list=PLBNix0F2Hcd1wgpdlLcIzt4wFFQHfwRrQz>.

Turkey and the EU

Short history of Turkey's relations with the EU

Since after the fall of the Ottoman empire and its proclamation as a Republic in 1923, Turkey has been determined to establish itself as secularized nation state and maintain good relations with the West. As member of United Nations (1945), North Atlantic Treaty Organization or NATO (1952), the Council of Europe (1949) and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development or OECD (1961), Turkey has developed strong ties with the West and Europe. As a member of these organizations it has become a protector as well as a proponent of international co-operation, human rights, democracy, the rule of law and economic progress through trade. In 1958, the predecessor to the European Union, the European Economic Community or ECC was formed in the hopes of increasing economic cooperation in Europe¹⁰². Shortly after in 1959, Turkey applied to join the ECC but was not admitted. Instead "The Association Agreement" or the Ankara Agreement was signed on the 12 September 1963¹⁰³. Its aim, as stated in the agreement, was "to promote the continuous and balanced strengthening of trade and economic relations between [Turkey and EEC member countries], while taking full account of the need to ensure an accelerated development of the Turkish economy and to improve the level of employment and the living conditions of the Turkish people"¹⁰⁴. A major element of this agreement was the establishment of "a "Customs Union" so that Turkey could trade goods and agricultural products with EEC countries without restrictions"¹⁰⁵. The Ankara Agreement was to pave a path towards eventual accession into the EEC but no clear date was

¹⁰² "The History of the European Union." European Union. June 24, 2017. https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en.

¹⁰³ "CHRONOLOGY OF TURKEY- EUROPEAN UNION RELATIONS." Türkiye Avrupa Vakfı. <http://turkiyevrupavakfi.org/chronology-of-turkey-european-union-relations/?lang=en>.

¹⁰⁴ "AGREEMENT Establishing an Association between the European Economic Community and Turkey." Official Journal of the European Communities, September 12, 1963. http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2003/december/tradoc_115266.pdf.

¹⁰⁵ "EU and Turkey's History." EU Delegation to Turkey. Accessed 2018. <https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/eu-and-turkeys-history-711>.

ever established¹⁰⁶. Later in 1987, Turkey applied for full membership of the EEC under Prime Minister Ozal who was determined unlike his predecessor to push Turkey close to accession. In 1993 the European Economic Community, a strictly economic union was renamed the European Union which was both a political and economic union¹⁰⁷. After substantial development Turkey was admitted to the Customs Union with the European Union in 1996 and in 1999 became a candidate country for European Union in Helsinki¹⁰⁸.

Turkey's long desire to become an EU member

Since becoming a candidate for accession at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999¹⁰⁹ and negotiating for accession since 2005, Turkey has been pushing its main political and economic goals to gain membership into the European Union (EU-Turkey statement, 29/11/2015)¹¹⁰. A main condition of entering the European Union is to have similar common economic and political ideals to help promote “political, economic and social reforms and to strengthen peace, stability and democracy across the [European] continent” (Voica 78)¹¹¹. Unfortunately for Turkey, since submitting its application the country is yet to meet the terms and conditions set by the Copenhagen European Council on the rule of law, democracy and human rights (Voica 78)¹¹². Among the criteria which Turkey did not meet, from the political and social perspective, included limited freedom of expression and censorship¹¹³. Turkey had

¹⁰⁶ "TURKEY-EU RELATIONS / History of Turkey- EU Relations." Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs. June 06, 2017. Accessed December 18, 2018. https://www.ab.gov.tr/brief-history_111_en.html.

¹⁰⁷ Anonymous. "The EU in Brief - European Union - European Commission." European Union. July 04, 2018. https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-in-brief_en#from-economic-to-political-union.

¹⁰⁸ "CHRONOLOGY OF TURKEY- EUROPEAN UNION RELATIONS." Trkiye Avrupa Vakf. <http://turkiyevrupavakfi.org/chronology-of-turkey-european-union-relations/?lang=en>.

¹⁰⁹ "TURKEY-EU RELATIONS / History of Turkey- EU Relations."

¹¹⁰ Aamann, Preben, and Jüri Laas. "Meeting of Heads of State or Government with Turkey - EUTurkey Statement, 29/11/2015." Council of the EU. November 29, 2015. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/11/29/eu-turkey-meeting-statement/>.

¹¹¹ Voica, 78

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Voica, Ileana. "TURKEY'S ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION – PRESENT OR PERSPECTIVES?" Perspectives of Business Law Journal6, no. 1 (December 2017): 77-83.

topped the list of countries with the highest number of judgments from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) regarding violations of freedom of expression in 2015¹¹⁴ and is ranked 157 of 180 countries in 2018 World Press Freedom Index¹¹⁵. In addition to this Zeid Ra'Ad al Hussein, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, “expressed his concern about the actions of the Turkish security forces in south-eastern Turkey which were threatening the fundamental rights of civilians”¹¹⁶ and Turkish President Erdogan’s suggestions of reintroducing the death penalty in 2016¹¹⁷ were also be against the EU’s standards. Turkey has also had difficulty in meeting the criteria of economic stability as its recent “high growth is coupled with significant macroeconomic imbalances”¹¹⁸ and the economy has proven to be extremely susceptible to external shocks such as those induced buy terrorist attacks and tensions with Russia¹¹⁹. Overall, despite the Turkish governments continuing talks of commitment in the areas of energy, transport and economy and trade to gain EU accession it has not been completely matched by the measures which it has been taking. Under some respects it can be said that Turkey has been moving away towards its goal while at the same time it is improving¹²⁰. In the areas of justice, freedom and security the attempted coup of 15 July 2016 which is still trying to dismantle the Gulen movement and the establishment of terror organizations to fight terror within Turkey¹²¹ are signs of weakness while the implementation of the March 2016 EU-Turkey Statement in 2017 to curb the influx of irregular migrants to the European Union has showed progress towards human rights and security¹²².

¹¹⁴ Kirisci, Kemal. "Europe's Refugee/migrant Crisis: Can 'illiberal' Turkey save 'liberal Europe' While Helping Syrian Refugees?" February 19, 2016.

¹¹⁵ "2018 World Press Freedom Index | Reporters Without Borders." RSF. 2018. <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2018#>.

¹¹⁶ Kirisci.

¹¹⁷ Voica, 79

¹¹⁸ Turkey 2018 Report. Working paper. April 17, 2018. <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20180417-turkey-report.pdf>, 7

¹¹⁹ Voica, 79

¹²⁰ Turkey 2018 Report.3

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Turkey 2018 Report. 41

Turkey as the keeper of the Flood Gate of Syrian Refugees to the EU

By the end of 2015 it became quite obvious that the European Union's was having difficulty in sharing the burden of asylum seeker registration, determination, and relocation. More specifically, Niemann discusses that given the absence of an effective response to internal redistributive challenges, the EU needed to find alternative venues to respond to pressures resulting from the inflow of asylum-seekers¹²³. One of these venues has been to set up agreements with Turkey to help curb flows into the European Union. Initial meetings between the European Union and Turkey took place on the 29th of November 2015 during which the managing of the deteriorating migration crisis and ascension were discussed. A Joint Action Plan between the EU and Turkey had been adopted in order to deal with the ever-increasing amounts of Syrian refugees entering Europe¹²⁴. According to this Joint Action Plan the EU was to provide €3 billion euro of resources to Turkey to help support Syrian refugees and both the EU and Turkey were to be strict about migrants who did not qualify for international protection¹²⁵. In order to do this both parties were to prevent travel to Turkey and the EU, ensure the application of the established bilateral readmission provisions and quickly return migrants to their countries of origin¹²⁶. During these negotiations, Turkey made sure to make further talks about accession into the EU a condition to give concessions on the immigration issue (Kaplan 6). Thus, the EU agreed to apply the readmission agreement starting from June 2016 and to work towards the completion of the visa liberalization for Turkish citizens in the Schengen zone, by

¹²³ Niemann, Arne, and Natascha Zaun. "EU Refugee Policies and Politics in Times of Crisis: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 56, no. 1, 2017, pp. 3–22., doi:10.1111/jcms.12650

¹²⁴ Laas, Juri. "International Summit Meeting of the EU Heads of State or Government with Turkey, 29/11/2015." November 29, 2015. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2015/11/29/>.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

October 2016¹²⁷. Author Kaplan makes the point that it is ironic that a mass immigration influx from Turkey to the EU is one of the most influential arguments used against the Turkish membership, yet the EU members needed to promise ‘free movement’ to Turkish citizens in return for an agreement with Turkey on the irregular immigration problem¹²⁸.

By Spring of 2016, Turkey’s accession talks came to yet another standstill and the relationship between the European Union and Turkey had become increasingly tense. President Erdogan threatened to open the borders for immigrants wishing to enter Europe¹²⁹. Through a televised report he stated that the European Union had been very slow to disburse the 3 billion euros which it had promised to give to assist Syrian refugees in Turkey¹³⁰. On March 7th, 2016, Turkish prime minister Davutoglu, met with European officials and demanded an extra 3 billion euro as a condition for stopping new migrants from crossing the Turkish waters of the Aegean Sea to reach Europe^{131 132}. Mr. Davutoglu also used this chance to put the topic of Turkey’s accession to the European Union on the table¹³³. Soon after, the EU-Turkey Statement took place on 18 March 2016, EU member states and Turkey discussed the conditions of Turkey’s role in taking measures to prevent new sea or land routes for illegal migration¹³⁴. The following conditions were confirmed between the parties: EU member states were required to resettle Syrian refugees from Turkey¹³⁵, promised 3 billion euros and the

¹²⁷ Laas, Juri. "International Summit Meeting of the EU Heads of State or Government with Turkey, 29/11/2015." November 29, 2015. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2015/11/29/>.

¹²⁸ Kaplan, Yilmaz. "Analysing Instability as a Future for an Institutionalization Process: The EU, Turkey and the Issue of Migration." *European Journal of Futures Research* 6, no. 1 (2018). doi:10.1186/s40309-018-0144-x.

¹²⁹ Voica, 69

¹³⁰ Kanter, James. "Turkey Places Conditions on E.U. for Migrant Help." *The New York Times*, March 7, 2016.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Aamann, Preben. "EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016." March 18, 2016. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>.

¹³³ Kanter.

¹³⁴ Aamann, Preben. "EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016."

¹³⁵ RELOCATION & RESETTLEMENT RELOCATION – SHARING RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN THE EU. PDF. EUROPEAN COMMISSION, September 2017. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20170906_relocation_and_resettlement-sharing_responsibility_and_increasing_legal_pathways_to_europe_en.pdf

fulfilment of the visa liberalization by the end of June 2016¹³⁶. More specifically all “irregular migrants” arriving in Greece from Turkey since March 20TH, 2016 would face being sent back, and for every Syrian refugee returned, another Syrian refugee would theoretically be resettled from Turkey to the EU¹³⁷. According to the European Union’s 2018 Turkey Report, this policy has seen outstanding efforts and had resulted in the “reduction of irregular and dangerous crossings and in saving lives in the Aegean Sea”¹³⁸. Overall, Turkey has made good progress in the area of migration and asylum policy and has remained committed to the effective implementation of the March 2016 EU-Turkey Statement on migratory flows along the Eastern Mediterranean route. It has provided massive and unprecedented humanitarian aid and support to more than 3.5 million refugees from Syria¹³⁹. However, two years after the agreement, Turkey has threatened to terminate The Joint Action Plan because the EU has not paid the agreed upon amount, and has not implemented the visa freedom for Turkish citizens. Originally, Turkey was to receive €6 billion in financial aid, in March 2018, the Turkish government had claimed to receive only €1.85 billion from the EU while the EU claimed to have already sent half¹⁴⁰. This financial assistance from the EU is transferred in the form of projects and the first half of the aid focused on meeting refugees' immediate needs, while the second half was to be used for cultural integration, language learning, vocational training and employment¹⁴¹.

¹³⁶ Aamann, Preben. "EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016."

¹³⁷ Connolly, Kate. "EU-Turkey Deal Begins as Syrian Refugees Arrive in Germany and Finland." *The Guardian*. April 04, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/04/eu-turkey-deal-syrian-refugees-germany-istanbul-hanover>.

¹³⁸ Turkey 2018 Report.

¹³⁹ Turkey 2018 Report.

¹⁴⁰ Deutsche Welle. "The EU-Turkey Refugee Agreement: A Review." *DW.COM*. March 18, 2018. <https://www.dw.com/en/the-eu-turkey-refugee-agreement-a-review/a-43028295>.

¹⁴¹ Deutsche Welle. "The EU-Turkey Refugee Agreement: A Review." *DW.COM*. March 18, 2018. <https://www.dw.com/en/the-eu-turkey-refugee-agreement-a-review/a-43028295>.

Employment: A Means Towards Effective Integration

Upon receiving 3.5 million refugees and counting, it is inevitable that integration has become a major topic of discussion and a crucial component of properly dealing with the new influx of people within Turkey's borders. As stated by Metin Çorabatır, the president of the Center for Immigration and Asylum Studies, "If the reasons that have taken you away from your country and made you a refugee disappear, in case democracy comes or the war ends, the ideal solution is to return home. As long as the first solution in Syria does not take place, Syrians will live in Turkish society. Therefore, integration of Syrian refugees in Turkey is essential"¹⁴². As the likelihood of repatriation is not foreseeable in the near future, Turkey must develop long term policies for integration so that the Syrian refugees can live with decency for the time being. It has been proposed that an integration plan centered around employment and social policies is better than one which gives out temporary aid as it is more likely to have social and economic benefits in the long-term¹⁴³. As mentioned in previous sections, Turkey has mainly served as a transit country and country of emigration rather than immigration and it is for this reason that the country does not have any concrete integration policies enacted. Fortunately, with this recent shift in migration patterns and Turkey's opportunistic view of possible accession into the European Union, new legislative efforts which push towards the integration of refugees have begun to coincide with EU standards¹⁴⁴. As described by Bariscil et al. the Turkish government has developed the following five step plan to aid the Syrian refugee population:

(1) to establish safety and security

¹⁴² Akin, Miray. "Long-term Integration of Syrian Refugees in Turkey Vital." Daily Sabah. November 07, 2018. <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2018/11/08/long-term-integration-of-syrian-refugees-in-turkey-vital>.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ İçduygu, Ahmet, and Doğu Doğu Şimşek. "SYRIAN REFUGEES IN TURKEY: TOWARDS INTEGRATION POLICIES." Turkish Policy Quarterly 15, no. 3 (2018): 59-69. <http://turkishpolicy.com/>.

- (2) to implement an urgent humanitarian aid project
- (3) to launch a program aimed at empowering the Syrian refugee youth by letting them study in Turkey at all levels of national and higher education.
- (4) to provide free Turkish language courses to the adult asylum-seekers
- (5) to promote legal business establishment to the more stable segments of the refugee population.¹⁴⁵

Following the integration of children into the Turkish education system, employment opportunity is the most effective and direct way in which Syrian refugees can integrate, contribute to and become autonomous in the Turkish society and economy. This is also one of the most argued and disputed topics among Turkish nationals as the massive influx has put many Turkish establishments out of business as a result of the cheaper and illegal Syrian ones which have entered the market. This is indeed a problematic as the process has led to a number of bankruptcies among the native Turkish shopkeepers and has created a conflict between refugees and Turkish nationals. As stated by a report by the Building Markets organization “The presence of informal Syrian businesses has led to accusations of unfair competition, and such perceptions may have already delayed the establishment of valuable partnerships. Owners of local small businesses complain that informal Syrian businesses are not subject to tax inspectors, health codes, or police visits and as a result, local communities feel threatened in the face of the new arrivals¹⁴⁶. Bariscil et al. also mentions an example where within the city Mersin, over a period of three months, more than 1,250 Turkish shops were forced to close their doors due to the

¹⁴⁵ Bariscil, Ahmet, Wisam N. Hussein, and Abdulkерim Abdulkерim. "SOME ASPECTS OF THE INTEGRATION OF SYRIAN REFUGEES IN TURKEY." *EURASIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES*, no. 4 (2017): 1-6. doi:10.15604/ejss.2017.05.04.001.

¹⁴⁶ Building Markets. *Turkish Syrian Business Partnerships: A Nascent Opportunity*. June 2018. https://buildingmarkets.org/sites/default/files/pdm_reports/20180612_syrian-turkishbusinesspartnerships_en_1.pdf.

cheap and often illegal Syrian concurrence¹⁴⁷. If Turkey was to effectively facilitate the means of establishing a legal business for Syrians both parties would benefit. Not only would the country receive tax revenue but Syrians, who were previously working in trade and commerce, would be able to economic autonomy and therefore would better integrate. To facilitate this sort of economic integration, organizations such as the *Turkiye Suriye Isadamlari Dernegi* (or Trust of Syrian Business People in Turkey)¹⁴⁸ and the Syrian International Business Association (SIBA)¹⁴⁹ been officially established and reports such as “Turkish-Syrian Business Partnerships: A Nascent Opportunity”¹⁵⁰ have been published to show the potential of Syrian business in Turkey.

Conclusion

The Syrian Civil War which started in 2011 is one of greatest humanitarian crisis’ that Germany and Turkey have faced. It is important to understand that this crisis was the direct result of a war caused by the neglect and the oppression of practicing democratic values and civil rights in Syria. Although at first, the Assad family regime, under the leadership of Hafez al-Assad from the 1970’s, established stability after years of foreign rule and political unrest and promoted various social reforms such as the expansion of education and gender equality and the expansion of the economy by expanding the agricultural and industrial sectors this came to an end upon his death in 2000. When Bashar al-Assad inherited the current authoritarian regime the progress made by his father deteriorated as Bashar al-Assad mismanaged his power and began to

¹⁴⁷ İçduygu, Ahmet et al.

¹⁴⁸ Barisci, Ahmet, Wisam N. Hussein, and Abdulkemir Abdulkemir. "SOME ASPECTS OF THE INTEGRATION OF SYRIAN REFUGEES IN TURKEY." *EURASIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES*5, no. 4 (2017): 1-6. doi:10.15604/ejss.2017.05.04.001.

¹⁴⁹ "Syrian International Business Association Officially Registered in Turkey ~ SIBA." SIBA. August 20, 2018.

<https://siba.world/2018/08/20/siba-syrian-international-business-association-officially-registered-in-turkey/>.

¹⁵⁰ Building Markets.

implement unfair practices. The destabilization of the country inevitably led to protests which were responded to in the form of attacks rather than reform and have led current state of civil war. This war has generated more than 6.2 million refugees and has had impacts on multiple countries including Germany and Turkey.

Both countries were unprepared for this massive influx and decided to manage the situation in varying ways. In Germany, the response was initially very welcoming as both the German government led by Angela Merkel and the native Germans were willing to open their country and homes in the name of human rights. However, as the amount of refugee's entering the country continued to grow responses and sentiment changed. Germany saw an increase of nationalism and far-right movements which ran racist and Islamophobic platforms that were especially fueled by various attacks by refugees of Arab background. Although this was not the view of the majority, such nationalist responses pushed the government to develop and implement more effective policies of integration in hopes of facilitating better relations between the natives and refugees. Laws which were implemented in response included the Residence and the Integration Acts which set standards for integration of the refugees into the German society and workforce through means of integration classes, vocational and employment training.

Turkey, a neighbor to Syria, was more heavily impacted in terms of sheer numbers entering the country and needed more financial aid as the country was struggling prior to the refugee crisis. In a mutual agreement with the European Union, Turkey adopted the Joint Action Plan which would ensure financial assistance from the European Union to help deal with the financing of both the immediate needs of refugees and various aspects of integration. In a larger context, Turkey's response to the refugee crisis proved to be centered around economic gains as various agreements and talks with the European Union fostered the possibility of gaining membership

into the EU and the main parts of the integration policies which the country promoted put a large focus on employment integration with the hopes of fiscal contribution of refugees to the economy. As the war in Syria is still ongoing and possibilities of repatriation are currently unrealistic, both Germany and Turkey must continue to develop long-term solutions to deal with these refugees within their borders.

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