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THE FUTURE OF EU-TURKEY RELATIONS: MAPPING DYNAMICS AND TESTING SCENARIOS

Extended FEUTURE Voice

WHICH WAY TO GO? UNDERSTANDING MIGRATION POLICIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON EU-TURKEY RELATIONS

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Introduction

This FEUTRUE Voice focuses on the depiction of the ways in which three regional drivers have so far impacted on Turkey's irregular migration policy and relationship with the EU. These drivers are **the Arab Spring, populism and Islamophobism in the EU, and neo-Ottomanism and Islamism in Turkey.** Following the depiction of the impact of these three drivers on Turkey-EU relations with regard to irregular migration, some policy recommendations will be provided to the relevant national and European actors for the improvement of Turkey-EU relations.

1. Arab Spring and Turkey's Quest for being a Soft Power

The way the Turkish government has so far perceived migration and asylum matters indicates that foreign-and asylum-policy are intertwined while at the same time generating differences in coping with the refugees and migrants in general. It is evident that the Turkish foreign policy makers had not been expecting the Arab Spring at the end of 2010. Then Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, (2013a: 866) identified this process as a political "earthquake" in the Middle East. In accordance with this change, Ankara had to reconsider its "zero problems with neighbours" strategy, which entailed a combined approach to cooperative security relations and economic interdependence (Davutoğlu 2013b). The Arab Revolutions forced Turkish foreign policy to take on a new role in the 'new' Middle East, which had serious implications. Turkey did not have sufficient capabilities to be active beyond its role as a model of democracy in a Muslim society

> The Turkish government applies foreign- and asylum-policies to cope with migrants and refugees. These intertwined policy areas, however, create different assessments and actions due to their diverging focus points.

(Gonzales, 2015). Assertive foreign policy of Turkey and its willingness to be the 'play maker actor to establish the order in the Middle East' led to the 'open-door' and humanitarian asylum policy at the early stages of the Syrian migration. However, the failure of Turkish foreign policy in the region along with the growing number of refugees has brought about the revision of the adopted policy towards 'temporary protection', 'voluntary return' and 'burden sharing'.

Turkey's 'open door' policy towards the Syrian refugees could be interpreted in different ways. A multiplicity of drivers such as humanitarian, religious, political and ethno-cultural factors can be taken into consideration to explain the major assumptions of the policy-makers in Turkey. In this

regard, another important factor, which is often neglected, is Turkey's quest for becoming a soft- and smart-power in the region. This has radically changed Turkey's official discourse on becoming a country of immigration. Joseph Nye (2004: 2) defines power, as "ability to influence the behaviour of others to get the outcomes one wants". He further underlines that there are several ways influencing the behaviour of others. One could coerce them with threats, induce them with payments, or attract and co-opt them to want what one wants.

Moreover, Nye (2011: 20-21) defined soft power as, "the ability to affect others to obtain preferred outcomes by the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuasion and positive attraction". In this regard, he suggests three building blocks for a country's soft power coexisting within a multi-actor environment: a. culture, b. political values, and c. foreign policies of a country, which need to be operationalized in line with the contextual realities (Nye 2004: 11). Stephen Castles and Miller (2009: 213) – by referring to Joseph Nye's concept of soft power – assert that a state's immigration policies can also contribute to its soft power, its ability to achieve foreign policy and security objectives without recourse to military or economic means of persuasion. Moreover, they set the examples of having foreign students and treatment of immigrants as a source of soft power to affect a state's reputation.

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Creating a visa-free environment is also strengthening the soft power of states. Accordingly, in line with Turkey´s changing foreign policy towards the Middle Eastern countries in the second half of the 2000s, Turkey abolished visas with its neighbouring and regional countries, such as Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, which were on the EU´s blacklist and subject to strict Schengen visa regulations. At the expense of de-aligning its visa regulations with the European legislation by de-Europeanizing its foreign policy-, Turkey aimed for economic gains from more integration in the region. This perception was reflected by one of the high-ranking bureaucrats of the Directorate General of Migration Management in a workshop organized in Ankara on 19-20 December 2014 by stating that "having an open-door policy to the migrants and refugees has a trade value for us. It pays off for the enhancement of the brand Turkey abroad." At the same time, Turkey's liberal visa policy triggered discussions on the possibility of establishing a "new Schengen area in the Middle East" (Elitok and Straubhaab 2010: 7).

Turkey's willingness to become a country of immigration was originally targeting the attraction of qualified-skilled people. A new Law on Foreigners and International Protection (Law No. 6458) that has been enforced on 1 April 2014 signifies the quest of the ruling government to turn the Turkish state into a soft power using migration and mobility as an important element of its foreign policy. It is partly designed to attract an increasing number of qualified foreigners including students visiting Turkey. Yet, the Syrian refugee crisis had delayed its entry into force and added an humanitarian element.

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potential (see Nye 2004). Following encouraging policies, the number of university students particularly from Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia as well as from the EU countries studying in Turkey increased notably. The instrumentalization of the idea of being a country of immigration became also obvious in the efforts of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in organizing the Global Migration Forum under the auspices of the UN in autumn 2015 to present Turkey as "the most courageous and generous country of immigration" welcoming more than 2 million Syrian refugees.[1]

Turkey's approach towards Syrians still seems to be novel compared to worldwide trends in international refugee regimes and to Turkey's past responses to similar refugee movements which explicitly involved securitization discourse and burden sharing (Kirişçi and Karaca, 2015; Gökalp-Aras and Mencutek, 2015). Turkey's shift from a security-centred to a rather humanitarian approach seems to be related to its assertive foreign policy as well as to the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP)'s religious drive in the region. This approach

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allowed Turkey to present itself as a model country in its neighbourhood, playing a regional mediator role and contributing to the solution of humanitarian problems through diplomacy. However, the diplomatic initiatives of Turkey in Syria failed unexpectedly as it invested in the possibility that the opposition could gain power soon. This presumption has not been borne out due to a fragmented opposition, which was unable to overcome Syrian regime forces. Turkey mistakenly assumed that the Assad regime would soon collapse, and refugees would return to Syria. Regarding their numbers, at the beginning of the civil war in Syria the Turkish government expected a maximum of 100,000 Syrian refugees to come to Turkey, while today the actual number increased to more than 3.5 million people residing in Turkey.[2]

2. Revival of the Ottoman past in Turkish foreign policy: leveraging Ottoman past in regional policy

The rupture caused by the Kemalist revolution to distance the new-born Turkish nation from the Ottoman past was repeatedly addressed by several AKP politicians in the last decade to build a 'New Turkey' and to 'close a hundred years old parenthesis' of the Kemalist Westernization project. The mantra of 'Kemalist-modernist parenthesis' was already discussed by Davutoğlu in the early 1990s when he rejected the Western "modernist paradigm" because of the "peripherality of revelation". He argues that the West's emphasis on reason and experience, versus divine revelation results in an "acute crisis of Western civilization" (Davutoğlu,

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[1] For further detail on the Global Migration Forum organized in Turkey on 12-13 October 2015 see http://www.gfmd.org/
[2] Davutoglu mentioned that Turkey's "psychological threshold" would be 100.000 refugees in 2013, http://www4.cnnturk.com/2013/dunya/10/26/davutoglu.siginmacilar.konusunda.kirmizi.cizgi.asildi/728654.0/, accessed on 7 November 2015.

1993: 195). Davutoğlu's intervention goes beyond the boundaries of modern Turkey, claiming hegemony in the Middle East, or in other words in the former Ottoman territories. He assumes that in the wake of the World Wars, the imperial powers imposed their will upon the people of the Middle East, dividing them into artificial nation states. They then subjugated the Middle East by propping up despotic regimes. He declared the past one hundred years since the rise of the Turkish nationalists an aberration, a "parenthesis" that "must be closed." As Davutoğlu warned, "[t]he future cannot be built with recently created concepts of [the] state that are based on

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nationalist ideologies wherein everyone accuses everyone else, and that first appeared with the Sykes-Picot maps, then with colonial administration, and then on artificially drawn maps. We will shatter the state of mind that Sykes-Picot created for us" (Davutoğlu, 2013a).

Ahmet Davutoğlu – an important figure in foreign policy making since the inception of the AKP rule in 2002 – developed the "zero problems" policy. This policy was laid out in Davutoğlu's book "*Strategic Depth: The International Position of Turkey*" (2005) which is based on six core principles:

> "a balance between **security and freedom**, **zero problems** with neighbours, a **multidimensional foreign policy**, a **pro-active regional foreign policy**, an altogether **new diplomatic style**, and **rhythmic diplomacy** […]. Though these principles were by no means static, they have since inspired our institutional foreign policy approach. Together, they formed an internally coherent set of principles - a blueprint, so to speak - that both guides our approach to regional crises and helps Turkey reassert itself as a preeminent country in the international system" (Davutoğlu, 2013b, own highlighting).

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Davutoğlu's work criticises the Western-orientation of Turkish foreign policy for omitting the religious and historical ties within the region. He argues this would fail to realise Turkey's rightful place in the religious-historical narrative that is neo-Ottomanism. This approach is also tied to the balance of power within the region and to the dichotomy of the West and the East. Therefore, leveraging Turkey's Ottoman past in the establishment of regional ties is also articulated as an attempt to balance Western hegemony.

Drawing on Turkish history and its geography, Davutoğlu positions Turkey as the epicentre of historic events. His vision advocates a more balanced approach to international and regional actors, focusing on Turkey's economic and political significance to its surrounding regions (Davutoğlu, 2001; Danforth, 2008: 91). In contrast to the Kemalist ideology that anticipated isolation from regional affairs, AKP's foreign policy constructs Turkey as a pro-active regional player that has the responsibility to mediate regional affairs. In turn, the AKP's foreign policy vision is "pre-emptive rather than reactive".

> "Security for all, political dialogue, economic interdependence and cultural harmony are the building blocks of this vision. Turkey aspires eventually to reach a stage where all

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countries live in a state of welfare and carry the integration among them to the most advanced level by creating a zone of peace and stability, starting from her neighbours" (Official Website of the MFA, 2015).

In other words, it anticipates "a unique 'strategic identity' [that] blends both ideology and Realpolitik" (Kardaş, 2010: 123). Increased activism in the Middle East is also a product of economic pragmatism because when the EU lost its appeal after the economic crisis in late 2000s, the East (Middle East, North Africa, and post-Soviet regions) became viable alternatives (Öniş, 2010: 11-12).

Further, the "zero problems" approach has lost its momentum since the early 2010s in light of the Arab Spring and domestic turmoil that demonstrated Turkey´s vulnerability to civil unrest, following this new pragmatic and neoliberal foreign policy approach.

Davutoğlu's vision also discursively constructs the Middle East in a way that suits the AKP's Islamic identity construction in which Turkey's political, economic and socio-cultural reconnection with the region is articulated as a contribution to the country's position in international relations. During the AKP government, neo-Ottomanism became "predominantly a pejorative term by which Turkey's actual regional policy is being called by those who oppose or at least are suspicious towards that policy" (Somun, 2013: 36). As some understand neo-Ottomanism to be "a metaphor for creating a sphere of influence, while others believe it connotes an Islamist agenda" (Kardaş, 2010: 128), conflicts of interpretation follow the growing influence of this narrative.

Despite the AKP's attempts to reconcile the East/West dichotomy in its foreign policy, the debates surrounding the possibility of an axis shift argument became apparent. The axis shift argument formulates the AKP's 'zero problems' approach as a neo-Ottomanist agenda leading to the 'Middle-Easternisation' of Turkish foreign policy (Kardaş, 2010: 115). This is predicated on the assumed mutual-exclusivity of the East and the West, which meant that Turkey's emphasis on Islam in national politics and

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involvement in the Middle East came "at the expense of its domestic stakeholders and Western allies" (Sevin, 2012). The axis shift stresses that Turkey is not only turning to the Middle East, but to the Muslim Middle East (Danforth, 2008: 86). For instance, Naci Koru (2013) noted that the region "shared a common destiny and contributed extensively to the world civilization, in particular our common civilization, the civilization of Islam", thus the "Turkish-Arab brotherhood and friendship" is not understood in the West.

Neo-Ottomanist ties with the ex-Ottoman territories were also accompanied by questions on the country's allegiances, a so-called 'shift of axis', which was popular criticism of the AKP's foreign policy in the early-2010s. This image attempts to reconcile Turkey's traditional relations between the Western centres and Eastern peripheries. The popularity of the axis shift argument in Europe and the United States stems from their concerns about Turkey's reliability as an ally. These concerns are rooted in the Islamisation of Turkish domestic politics, which negatively affected "democratic freedoms and civil rights" (Barysch, 2010: 2), thus implying that Turkey's modernisation along the Western model is at a standstill if not in retreat.

3. Islamic Tone in Accommodating Syrians in Turkey: Guesthood and Benevolence

Aforementioned drivers of the Arab Spring, European populism and Islamophobism, neo-Ottomanism and Islamism of the AKP have all constrained the culturalization, religionization and civilizationalization of Turkish state actors in different spheres of life including the acts and policies regarding Syrian refugees. The reception of Syrian refugees in Turkey is mainly based on a discourse of tolerance and benevolence driven from path-dependent ethno-cultural and religious premises dating back to the Ottoman Empire of the late 19th century as well as to the establishment of the Turkish Republic in the 1920s. The vocabulary, which has been used to identify the Syrian refugees, reflects somehow a continuity of naming "migrants", "guests", and "foreigners" since the early days of the Republic. For instance, the Law on Settlement (*İskân Kanunu* in Turkish, 1934) is one of the foundational legal texts defining the ways in which the Turkish state has identified newcomers. It was adopted in regards with the arrival of ethnic Turks in the early years of the Republic (Law No. 2510 of 1934) and provides that only migrants of Turkish culture, with an objective of settling in Turkey, can obtain immigrant status (Art. 3), whereas those of non-Turkish origin will not be accepted as immigrants (Art. 4). This Law has been reformed in 2006 without substantially altering its main understanding of who can become an immigrant.

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Moreover, it continued to be the main legislative text dealing with immigration, determining who can enter, settle and/or apply for refugee status in Turkey. However, it also provides individuals of Turkish descent and culture with the opportunity to be accepted as 'immigrants' and refugees in Turkey. For instance, Uzbeks, Turkomans, Bulgarian-Muslims and Uighurs migrating to Turkey from different parts of the world are named as '**migrants**' (*göçmen* in Turkish) in the official documents as well as in everyday life as they are considered as of Turkish descent ethnically. In this regard, there are two other terms, which need to be elaborated further: 'guest' (*misafir*) and 'foreigner' (*yabancı*).

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In the official literature, the term '**guest**' has been hitherto used to refer to the refugees with Muslim origin but without Turkish ethnic origin coming from outside the European continent. Kurdish refugees in the 2000s and Syrian refugees in the 2010s were named as 'guests' since Turkey officially does not accept refugees coming from outside its western boundaries. Bosniac and Kosovar refugees seeking refuge in Turkey in the 1990s represented an exception as they were coming from the western borders of Turkey, and had the right to apply for asylum in

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Turkey according to the geographical limitation clause Turkey decided to keep together with Congo, Madagascar, Monaco in the 1967 Additional Protocol of Geneva Convention on protection of refugees.

The term '**foreigner**' is often used in the official texts as well as in public to refer to those who are neither Turkish nor Muslim. These groups are not able to be incorporated into the prescribed national identity, which is mainly based on what can be called the holy trinity of

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Sunni-Muslim-Turkish elements. Accordingly, not only the non-Muslims coming from abroad but also autochthonous groups such as Greeks and Armenians are named as 'foreigners', or 'local foreigners' in legal texts.

To this extent, a more recent metaphor to qualify the role that the Turkish state and the pious Muslim-Turks should play for Syrians in Turkey has been the *Ansar spirit* (Arabic for helpers). As a metaphor, *Ansar* refers to the people of Medina, who supported the Prophet Mohammad and the accompanying Muslims (*muhajirun*, or migrants) who migrated there from Mecca, which was

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under the control of the pagans. The metaphor of Ansar originally points at a temporary situation as the Muslims later returned to Mecca after their forces recaptured the city from the pagans. Hence, the Turkish government has used a kind of Islamic symbolism to legitimize its acts on the resolution of the Syrian refugee crisis. The government leaders have consistently compared Turkey's role in assisting the Syrian refugees to that of the Ansar. Framing the Syrian refugees within the discourse of *Ansar* and *Muhajirun* has elevated public and private efforts to accommodate Syrian refugees from a humanitarian responsibility to a religious and charity-based duty.

The former Prime Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, in his speech in Gaziantep, one of the most popular destinations for the Syrian refugees on the Syrian border, publicly stated that the inhabitants of Gaziantep became a city of Ansar: "Gazi[antep] is an Ansar city now. God bless you all."[3] Similarly, President Erdoğan used the same phrase in his speeches in 2014 and afterwards: "In our culture, in our civilization, guest means honour, and blessing. You [Syrian guests] have granted us the honour of being Ansar, but also brought us joy and blessing. As for today, we have more than 1.5 million Syrian and Iraqi guests."[4]

The discourse of Ansar has continued until recently, Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmuş referred to the same rhetoric when he introduced the right to work granted to the Syrian refugees under temporary protection: "The reason why the Syrian refugees are now settled in our country is hospitality and Ansar spirit that our nation has so far adhered to. Other countries cannot do anything when encountered with a few hundred thousand of refugees. But contrary to what the

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[3] *Akşam*, 28 December 2014, http://www.aksam.com.tr/siyaset/davutoglu-gazi-sehir-artik-ensar-sehirdir/haber-367691 accessed on 7 June 2017.

[4] *Hurriyet*, 8 October 2014, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/erdogan-suriyeli-siginmacilara-seslendi-27342780 accessed on 7 June 2017.

rich and prosperous countries could not do for the refugees, our country did its best for the refugees as a generous host, friend, brother and neighbour."[5]

The main common denominator of the ruling political elite is that the Syrian refugees are being portrayed and framed by means of an act of religious benevolence. Hence, the assistance of the state to the refugees is accomplished based on charity, rather than universally recognized rights that are supposed to be granted to refugees fleeing their homelands. Such a religious-based discourse about the reception of Syrian refugees in Turkey was also embraced by the bureaucrats working in the migration sector.

Although the Turkish state was successful in implementing the rules of the Temporary Protection Regulation (No. 2014/6883) aligning with the EU acquis, the discursive frames used by the AKP government and relevant state actors in approaching Syrians residing in Turkey were leading to the de-Europeanization of migration and asylum processes. The framing of the refugee reality by state actors as an act of benevolence and tolerance has also shaped public opinion in a way that has led to the exposure of racist and xenophobic attitudes vis-a-vis refugees. Therefore, unsurprisingly Turkish society has witnessed several lynching attempts, as well as the prevalence of stereotypes, prejudices, communal conflicts and other forms of harassment against Syrians. The massive increase in the number of refugees outside camps and the lack of adequate assistance policies toward them has aggravated a range of social problems. Refugees experience problems of adaptation in big cities and the language barrier has seriously complicated their ability to integrate into Turkish society. There are several problems Syrians have been facing in everyday life, including a growing concern about underage Syrian girls being forced into marriage as well as fears that a recent constitutional court ruling decriminalizing religious weddings without civil marriage will lead to a spread of polygamy involving Syrian women and girls. The sight of Syrians begging in the streets is causing resentment among local people, especially in the western cities of Turkey. There have also been reports of occasional violence between refugees and the local population. In turn, this reinforces a growing public perception that Syrian refugees are associated with criminality, violence and corruption. These attitudes contrast with the observations of local authorities and security officials that criminality is surprisingly low among refugees and that Syrian community leaders are very effective in preventing crime and defusing tensions between refugees and locals.

4.   Growing Populism and anti-Muslim Sentiments in Europe

Right-wing populist parties have gained public support in the last decade sculpted by global financial and refugee crisis.

Growing popularity of right-wing populism and Islamophobia in Europe have impacted on the de-Europeanization of Turkish migration policies. This surge in anti-diversity discourses and growing scepticism towards multi-culturalism influenced the turn in Turkish migration- and asylum-policies.

Since Autumn 2018, the right-wing populist vote share accounts for 26 percent in Austria, 9 percent in Bulgaria, 11 percent in the Czech Republic, 21 percent in

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5   *Ajans Haber*, 11 January 2016, http://www.ajanshaber.com/bakanlar-kurulu-sonrasi-kurtulmustan-aciklama-haberi/325379, accessed on 8 June 2017.

Denmark, 18 percent in Finland, 17 percent in Germany, 7 percent in Greece, 19 percent in Hungary, and 18 percent in Sweden. Previously, the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands, for example, won 15.5 percent of the votes in the 2010 general elections and became the third largest party in the Dutch Parliament with 24 seats. The Freedom Party in Austria won 17.5 percent of the votes in the 2008 general elections. Furthermore, it has to be noted that, that recent electoral failure and consequent political disintegration of the British National Party (BNP) seems to be one of the causes of a rise in racial violence, according to a recent survey of more than 2000 affiliates of the BNP and UKIP (UK Independence Party). Whilst parts of the far-right feel betrayed by the political system and are prepared, hypothetically at least, to take the law into their own hands to 'defend' what they believe to be their 'British, German, Swedish, French, or Hungarian way of life' against an perceived onslaught by non-whites and, particularly, Muslims.

Right-wing populist parties and movements constitute an influential force in several EU member states. The alienation of political parties and politicians with 'their' voters contributes heavily to the emergence of right-wing populism. Right-wing populist parties have gained public support in the last decade sculpted by global financial- and refugee-crisis. Exemplary for these parties are: Victor Orban's *Fidesz* Party and *Jobbik Party* in Hungary, the *Party for Freedom* (PVV) in the Netherlands, *Danish People's Party* in Denmark, Sweden Democrats in Sweden, the *Front National* (now National Rally) and *Bloc Identitaire* in France, *Vlaams Belang* in Belgium, *True Finns* in Finland, *Lega, Casa Pound* in Italy, the *Freedom Party* in Austria, *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) in Germany, the *English Defence League, the British National Party* (UKIP) in the UK, and *Golden Dawn* in Greece. Recent research suggests that these parties and movements are now a durable force in Europe (Akkerman et al., 2017). For instance, in Austria, the extreme right *Freedom Party* is the most popular movement among 18-25-year olds, and support for the leader of the French *Rassemblement national*, Marine Le Pen, is found to be stronger among the younger voters. This suggests that these parties and movements may have a greater potential to become influential political actors in the long-term.

> **Right-wing populist parties seem to be particularly supported by the younger generation. This suggests that these parties and movements may have a greater potential to become influential political actors in the long-term.**

Social-economic factors such as the rise of unemployment, poverty, inequality, injustice, the growing gap between citizens and politics and the current climate of political disenchantment are often explanatory for the growth of right-wing populism in Europe. Relative social-economic deprivation is a driver for right-wing populism and becomes a growing phenomenon in the European Union, when for instance, youth unemployment in Greece was 62.5 percent, in Spain 56.4 percent, in Portugal, 42.5 percent, and in Italy 40.5 percent in Spring 2014.[6] As for the Central and Eastern European countries, one should also be reminded that the collapse of the USSR has allowed long-suppressed national aspirations to find their outlet in ethno-nationalist extreme right-wing political parties and movements. The Jobbik Party in Hungary is a good example, which has been built upon such ethno-nationalist inspirations (Dettke, 2014). From the 1980s onwards, the introduction of neo-liberal

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[6] See http://www.statista.com/statistics/266228/youth-unemployment-rate-in-eu-countries/. One should be informed about the fact that by September 2016 there was a significant improvement in the unemployment rates of these countries: Greece 50.4 percent, Spain 43.9 percent, Italy 36.9 percent, and Portugal 28.6 percent.

policies has contributed to social and economic insecurity (Mudde, 2007). These policies implied that individuals were expected to take care of themselves within the framework of existing free market conditions. This led to the fragmentation of society into a multitude of cultural, religious and ethnic communities in which individuals sought social security and their identity. In turn, ruling elites, which include vote-seeking political parties, exploited these uncertainties and the basic need for social protection by adopting discriminatory discourses and stigmatizing the 'others', especially Muslim migrants and their descendants.

Nostalgic deprivation pops up as another driver for right-wing populism in Europe. Growing visibility of Muslims in public space is perceived by some Europeans as a challenge against their established notions of nation, identity, culture and heritage. The fear of some native individuals

against fundamentalist Islam is exploited and channelled by the populist style of right-wing political parties to mainstream themselves. Following, not only working-class origin, or unemployed people, but also many women and LGBTI individuals becoming susceptible to right-wing populist rhetoric, recently. Social scientists have even coined some new terms to draw attention to these new phenomena such as "femonationalism" (Farris, 2012) and "homonationalism" (Sauer et al., 2017).

> **Nostalgic deprivation also drives right-wing populism in Europe. Growing visibility of 'Muslims' in public space is perceived by some Europeans as a challenge against their established notions of nation, identity, culture and heritage.**

Growing scepticism against diversity, multiculturalism and Islam has also posed obstacles for Turkey's quest for Europeanization. Diversity has become one of the challenges perceived by a remarkable part of the European public as a threat to social, cultural, religious and economic security of the European nations. There is apparently a growing resentment against the discourse of diversity, often promoted by the European Commission and the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, many scholars, politicians and NGOs. The stigmatisation of migration has brought about a political discourse, which is known as 'the end of multiculturalism and diversity' (Kaya, 2012a). This is built upon the assumption that the homogeneity of the nation is desirable, yet at stake and should be restored by alienating those who are not part of a 'state-group', which is ethno-culturally and religiously homogenous. After a relative prominence of multiculturalism both in political and scholarly debates, a turn of coming to terms with nostalgic deprivation can be witnessed in the debate. Evidence of diminishing belief in the possibility of a flourishing multicultural society has changed the nature of the debate on successful integration of migrants in their host societies.

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Initially, the idea of multiculturalism involved conciliation, tolerance, respect, interdependence, universalism, and it was expected to bring about an 'inter-cultural community' (Parekh, 2000). Over time, it began to be perceived as a way of institutionalising difference through autonomous cultural discourses. Whereas the debate on the end of multiculturalism has existed in Europe for a long time, it seems that the declaration of the 'failure of multiculturalism' has become a catchphrase of not only extreme-right wing parties but

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also of centrist political parties across the continent, recently. In 2010 and 2011, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, UK Prime Minister David Cameron and the French President Nicolas Sarkozy heavily criticized multiculturalism (Kaya, 2012a). Geert Wilders, leader of the Freedom Party in the Netherlands, made no apologies for arguing, "[we, Christians] should be proud that our culture is better than Islamic culture" (Der Spiegel, 11 September 2011). Populism blames multiculturalism for denationalizing one's own nation, and to decode one's own people. Anton Pelinka (2013: 8) explains very well how populism simplifies the complex realities of a globalized world by looking for a scapegoat:

> "As the enemy – the foreigner, the foreign culture – has already succeeded in breaking into the fortress of the nation state, someone must be responsible. The elites are the secondary 'defining others', responsible for the liberal democratic policies of accepting cultural diversity. The populist answer to the complexities of a more and more pluralistic society is not multiculturalism [...]. Right-wing populism sees multiculturalism as a recipe to denationalize one's nation, to deconstruct one's people."

For the right-wing populist crowds, the answer is easy. They need to have some scapegoat to blame in the first place. The scapegoat should be the others, foreigners, Jews, Roma, Muslims, sometimes the Eurocrats, sometimes the non-governmental organizations. Populist rhetoric certainly pays off for those politicians who engage in it. For instance, Thilo Sarrazin was perceived in Germany as a folk hero (*Volksheld*) on several right-wing populist websites that strongly refer to his ideas and statements after his polemical book *Deutschland schafft sich ab: Wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen (German Does Away with Itself: How We Gambled with Our Country), which was published in 2010.* The newly founded political party *Die Freiheit* even tried to involve Sarrazin in their election campaign in Berlin and stated *Wählen gehen für Thilos Thesen* (Go and vote for Thilo's statements) using a crossed-out mosque as a logo.[7] Neo-fascist groups like the right-wing extremist party National Democratic Party (NPD) have also celebrated the author. They stated that Sarrazin's ideas about immigration were in line with the NPD's programme and that he made their ideas even more popular and strong, as he belonged to an established social democratic party.

> **It seems that social groups belonging to the majority nation in EU Member States are more inclined to express their distress resulting from insecurity and social-economic deprivation, through the language of Islamophobia; even in those cases, which are not related to the actual threat of Islam.**

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[7] See http://www.morgenpost.de/politik/inland/article105070241/Pro-Deutschland-ueberklebt-Sarrazin-Plakate.html

These populist outbreaks contribute to the securitisation and stigmatisation of migration in general, and Islam in particular. In the meantime, they deflect attention from constructive solutions and policies widely thought to promote integration, including language learning and increased labour market access, which are already under financial pressure due to austerity measures across the Member States. Islamophobic discourse has recently become mainstream in the west (Kaya, 2015b). It seems that social groups belonging to the majority ethnic group in European territories are more inclined to express their distress resulting from insecurity and social-economic deprivation, through the language of Islamophobia; even in those cases, which are not related to the so-called threat of Islam. Several decades earlier it was Seymour Martin Lipset (1960) who stated that social-political discontent of people is likely to lead them to anti-Semitism, xenophobia, racism, regionalism, supranationalism, fascism and anti-cosmopolitanism. If Lipset's intervention is translated to the contemporary time, then one could argue Islamophobia has become one of the paths taken by those in social-economic and political dismay.

> **Islamophobic discourse has certainly resonated very much in the last decade. It has enabled the users of this discourse to be heard by both local and international community, although their distress did not really result from anything related to Muslims in general.**

Islamophobic discourse has certainly resonated very much in the last decade. It has enabled its users to be heard by both local and international communities, regardless their distress not resulting from anything related to Muslims in general. In other words, Muslims have become the most popular scapegoats in many parts of Europe to blame for any troubled situation. For almost more than a decade, Muslim migrants and their descendants are primarily seen by the European societies as a financial burden, and virtually never as an opportunity or enrichment for the country. They tend to be associated with illegality, crime, violence, drug, radicalism, fundamentalism, conflict, and are represented in negative ways in many other respects (Kaya, 2015b).

> **As a political party, which originally gained legitimacy with its culturalist and civilizational perspective in a period of time constrained by Huntington´s paradigm of the clash of civilizations, the AKP also invested in the culturalization and religionization of what is social, political and economic in nature by highlighting the cleavages between "crescent" and "cross".**

The rise of right-wing populist and Islamophobic rhetoric in Europe has also negatively impacted the AKP's European perspective. As a political party, which originally gained legitimacy with its culturalist and civilizational perspective in a period of time constrained by Huntington´s paradigm of the clash of civilizations, the AKP also invested in the culturalization and religionization of what is social, political and economic in nature by highlighting the cleavages between "crescent" and "cross" (Davutoğlu, 2005; Yetkin, 2018).

5. Migration Diplomacy: Readmission Agreement and Turkey-EU Refugee Statement

The Readmission Agreement and the Turkey-EU Refugee Deal are shaping Turkish and European migration and Asylum policies today. Both documents were signed in a period with many public discussions in the background ranging from the issues on Islamophobia, populism, ISIS recruits,

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radicalisation of Islam or Islamization of radicalism, to the process of Islamization and the ISIS and PKK threats becoming more visible in Turkey. Both agreements were exploited by EU as well as Turkish officials to appease their populations. The agreements aimed at easing of political and societal instability caused by the refugee crisis. The AKP government has instrumentalized the issues related to mobility of Turkish citizens and visa liberalization with the EU as a bargaining chip in domestic politics. İçduygu and Aksel (2014: 360) draw the attention on the periods when the government accepted to start readmission negotiations, which date back to 2011 just before the general elections whereas the agreement was signed in 2013 prior to 2014 local elections. Such an instrumentalization seems to be motivated by the believe, that the readmission agreement coupled with visa liberalisation debate would have the potential to shift public opinion in favour of the AKP, securing an electoral win. Similarly, one could witness the success of the strategic use of 'migration diplomacy' as a bargaining tool over and during the membership negotiation process between the EU and Turkey (İçduygu and Aksel 2014: 361) as well as over the electoral win of the AKP in the General Elections of 1 November 2015.

> **The AKP administration has partly perceived the Syrian refugees as a bargaining chip to be used when it is needed. The successful strategic use of such 'migration diplomacy' could be observed during the refugee crisis and membership negotiations between the EU and Turkey.**

The AKP administration has partly perceived the Syrian refugees as another bargaining chip to be used when needed, for example in making a deal with the EU resolving the refugee crisis. In a meeting between Erdoğan and Merkel in Istanbul prior to the 1 November 2015 General elections, the two leaders had a mutual understanding of sharing the burden of refugees and financially supporting Turkey to better accommodate them. Further, they agreed on providing Syrian refugees with opportunities for a better access to housing, education, health services and the labour market.

The attempt to instrumentalize the Syrian refugees appeared again prior to the 16 April 2017 Constitutional Amendments Referendum when there were tensions between Turkey and some of the European Union´s Member States. Some Member States did not allow AKP ministers and MPs to actively campaign and deliver public speeches to the Turkish diaspora with regards to the content of the Referendum. In the aftermath of the growing diplomatic tension especially with the Netherlands, the Turkish Minister of the Interior Süleyman Soylu threatened to send Europe "15,000 refugees each month" just a couple of days before the first anniversary of the Turkey-EU Refugee Statement.[8] Soylu's threatening statements came after the very polemical analogy of President Erdoğan associating the European politicians such as the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte with "Nazis".[9]

The battle of Kobane in northern Syria in the Summer of 2014, next to the Turkish-Syrian border, has made things more complicated in Turkey, and epitomized the struggle between Kurdish fighters and ISIS.[10] The ISIS members became actively involved in three major attacks against the HDP-related and

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[8] For further information on this see http://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/turkey-threatens-to-send-europe-15000-refugees-a-month/ accessed on 5 April 2017.

[9] For further information on President Erdoğan's Nazi analogy see http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-turkey-idUSKBN16D1FO accessed on 5 April 2017.

[10] Hurriyet Daily News (2014) 'Turkish police clash with Kobane protesters near Syria border', http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/video-turkish-police-clash-with-kobane-protestersnear-syria-border.aspx?pageID=238&nID=75120&NewsCatID=341 accessed on 2 November 2016.

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left-wing mass demonstrations causing the death of more than 140 people. On 5 June 2015, ISIS members attacked the HDP (Peoples' Democracy Party) rally in Diyarbakır killing 4 people and wounding 414 people. On 20 July 2015, ISIS suicide bombers attacked a public demonstration in Suruç, Urfa, a southeast province of Turkey, organized by young activists, mostly university students, transferring aid from all around the country to the Kurds of Kobane whose denizens were fighting against ISIS. In the Suruç bombing, 32 people were killed and more than 100 people injured.[11] Eventually, ISIS organized the biggest terrorist attack in the history of the Republic in the Ankara Peace demonstrations on 10 October 2015 killing 102 people and injuring more than 300. The presence of ISIS has also affected Turkey's relations with the West, due to the lack of support from the United States and Europe for Turkey's position toward the Assad regime, and the increasing pressure on Turkey to participate in the International Coalition against ISIS (Gonzales, 2015). In other words, ISIS has not only been a threat to Turkish national and societal security but also it has influenced perceptions of Turkey as a reliable partner in the West.[12]

Conclusion

This extended FEUTURE Voice mainly scrutinized the impact of three drivers on Turkism migration policies: Arab Spring, European right-wing populism, and AKP's Islamism and neo-Ottomanism. Accordingly, it was found out that the first driver, the Arab Spring, coupled with the civil war in Syria has directly impacted on the Turkish foreign policy aspirations, triggering Turkey's quest for becoming a "soft power" in the region. Following these changing foreign policy aspirations, Turkey's migration policies have become more liberal and humanitarian because of the European integration.

The second driver is the growing popularity of Islamophobic and populist tendencies in the EU, which have direct resonance on the discourse of the leading political elite as well as on the formation of diaspora politics of the Turkish state. The analysis has highlighted that such populist and Islamophobic attitudes in the EU prompt qualified descendants of Turkish origin migrants to search for alternative places for settlement and work. In early 2010s, Turkey became a popular destination for such groups. However, the current political situation in Turkey has caused the interruption of this tendency. On the other hand, it is also found that the Turkish political elite has become more Islamist and occidental in their discourses instrumentalizing populist tendencies to consolidate their pious Muslim constituencies. This extended FEUTURE Voice also focused on the changing patterns of diaspora politics of the Turkish state, which has lately become more neo-Ottomanist and Sunni-Islamist in a way that extended the polarizing discourse of the Turkish state in domestic level to the diaspora groups.

The third driver is the acts of benevolence of Turkish state actors driven from AKP's Islamist and neo-Ottomanist acts, discourses and policies. These acts of benevolence and charity go in parallel with the discourse of "Ansar Spirit" reminding the leading political elite with the early Muslims of Medina welcoming the Prophet Mohammad and his entourage coming from Makkah. It is argued that it is this act of benevolence, which has likely comforted many Syrian refugees as well as the cultural intimacy, which they have witnessed in their neighbourhoods in Turkey.

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[11] "Suruc Massacre: 'Turkish student' was suicide bomber," *BBC News*, July 22, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33619043.

[12] The Guardian (2014) 'Can Turkey under Erdoğan any longer be deemed a reliable western ally?' http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/15/turkey-erdogan-western-ally Accessed 3 November 2016.

These three drivers have so far been very decisive in the formation of Turkey's irregular migration policies. Despite all these political and ideological changes in the mind-set of the Turkish political elite, Turkey continued to collaborate with the EU on the issues related to management of refugee crisis since 2011. The EU-Turkey Refugee Statement enacted since 18 March 2016 seems to be the confirmation of the strong cooperation between the two sides. However, the source of cooperation between the EU and Turkey making the two sides work together is not value-based, but lies within their mutual interests. Hence, the EU-Turkey Refugee statement could be interpreted as an indication of the process of de-Europeanization rather than Europeanization.

Policy Recommendations

Turkish State Actors…

* … should refrain from using a civilizational discourse in framing Turkey-EU relations;
* … should be open to negotiate with the EU about the lifting of geographical limitations in 1961 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees;
* … should be more willing to appeal to a rights-based approach rather than an approach of benevolence towards Syrian refugees;
* … should be willing to negotiate with the EU actors to introduce visa-free travel for Turkish citizens in Europe;
* … should find ways not to be so sceptical about the acts of the European institutions willing to collaborate with Turkey on sharing responsibility of refugees.

European Union Institutions

* The European commission should continue to support Turkey in developing a sustainable policy on refugees including the lifting of geographical limitation;
* The European Commission should promote policies to open legal routes and to implement an effective resettlement scheme to undermine human trafficking and to share responsibility with Turkey;
* The European Parliament, European Commission and EU Member States need to support Turkey over the long run by extending their support beyond mere financial packages. Long-term integration is a major key to addressing the lack of prospects in Turkey, which in turn encourages refugees to flee to Europe;
* The European Commission should closely collaborate with the Directorate General of Migration Management to establish safe and quick procedures to guarantee asylum to refugees in third countries;
* The European Commission, European Parliament and EU Member States should continue to collaborate with Turkish state actors (executive, legislative and judiciary) to reinforce the awareness in Turkey to rebuild respect for the rule of law and human rights, which became more fragile in the aftermath of the failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016;
* The European Parliament, European Commission and EU Member States should find ways to strengthen the relations with the civil society in Turkey by making concessions with regard to the facilitation of visa-free travel negotiations.

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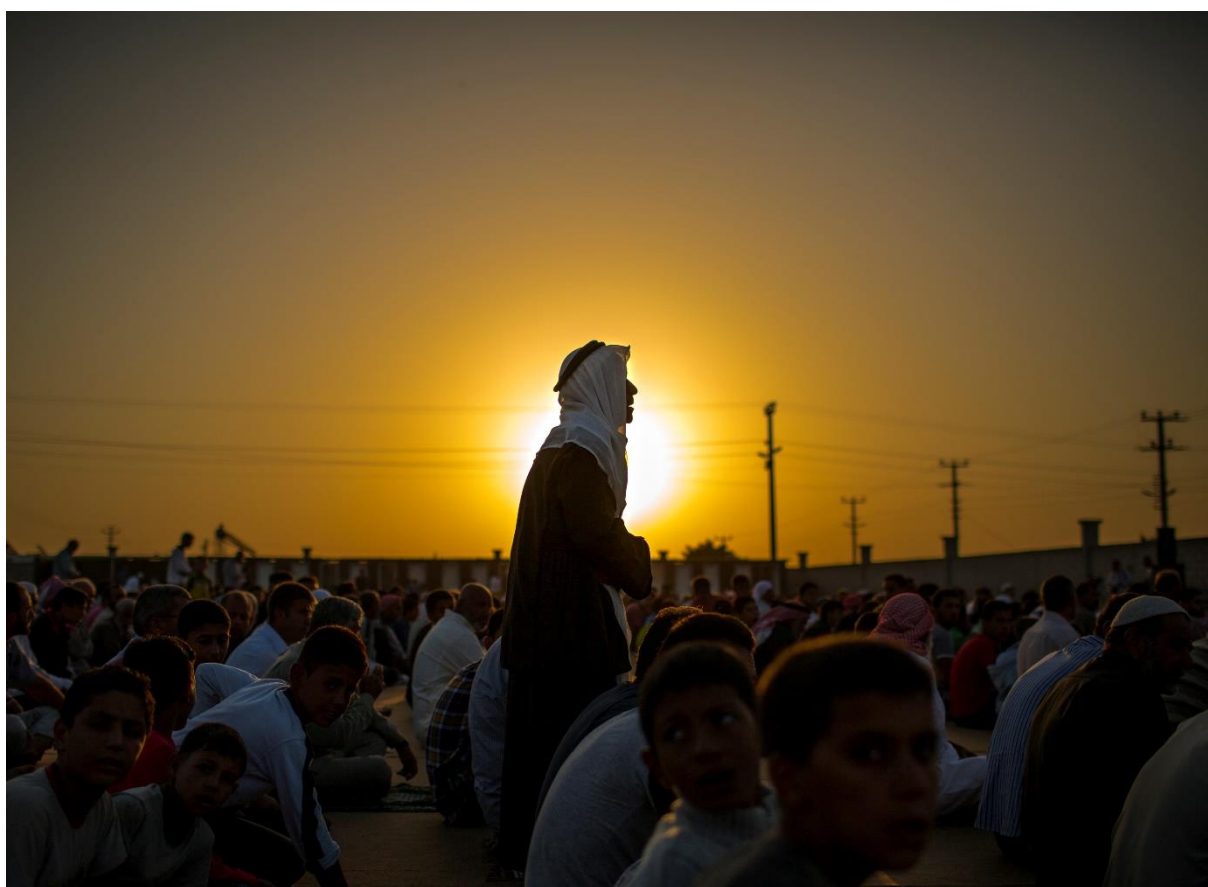
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FEUTURE sets out to explore fully different options for further EU-Turkey cooperation in the next decade, including analysis of the challenges and opportunities connected with further integration of Turkey with the EU.

To do so, FEUTURE applies a comprehensive research approach with the following three main objectives:

1. Mapping the dynamics of the EU-Turkey relationship in terms of their underlying historical narratives and thematic key drivers.
2. Testing and substantiating the most likely scenario(s) for the future and assessing the implications (challenges and opportunities) these may have on the EU and Turkey, as well as the neighbourhood and the global scene.
3. Drawing policy recommendations for the EU and Turkey on the basis of a strong evidence-based foundation in the future trajectory of EU-Turkey relations.

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