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Turkey's Way to "Fortress Europe": Two Sides, Two Challenges[1]

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ABSTRACT

Since the evolution of the Justice and Home Affairs and rise of new security threats such as terrorism, European Union slowly became marginalized and formed a very contrasting system to control the illegal immigration which is so strict, composed of very hard measures and clearly controversial to the civilian, in other words "soft" principles of the Union pillars. In the current literature, this evolution of the Union is called as the "Fortress Europe". On the other hand, there is Turkey, an increasingly well economic actor and a long lasting partner, candidate for the European Union. What is significant for Turkey in the area of migration security is that given the latest events in the Middle East and Turkey's geographical location, Turkey tends to be a "safe haven" for illegal migrants mainly coming from the vast areas of Middle East which European Union tries to hold. Moreover, given the latest events and discourse of Turkish politicians, Turkish immigration policy will probably continue to open the gates for these migrants for various reasons. However, Turkey still has a mountain to climb to promote its candidacy status to become a member state of the EU and also has to ensure that Union acquis over Justice and Home Affairs is very well transmitted to the country rules. However, Europeanization of the Turkish Migration Policy over security is still problematic and static. This research is designed to evaluate the factors behind this current stagnation in relations and positions of both sides.

Key Words: Illegal Immigration, Fortress Europe, Europeanization, Migration, Asylum, Border Security, Turkey.

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[1] This research has been scheduled between April 2013 and April 2014. The first phase of this research includes literature review and will be concluded by September 2013. The second phase will contain in-depth interviews with state officials and it will be conducted between September 2013 and December 2013. The third phase will contain analysis of the interviews and will be conducted between December 2013 and February 2014. Finally, the final research paper will be written and edited in April 2014.

INTRODUCTION

It is highly regarded that Turkey has the outmost importance when it comes to geopolitics. It is a bridge between Asia and Europe, which contains a rich history, culture and civilization. For centuries, millions of people use that bridge in order to find the gates of the West. Started its journey as an important part of the Silk Road, today; this so-called bridge is mostly providing a transit zone for reaching the developed West from the conflict-ridden Asia and Middle East. (Keser, 2006:127) The location of the country gains more attention since it is the last stop before start of the Western civilization. This is why it is indispensable for Europe to check and protect its last stop, its buffer zone as controllable and suitable for protection. Turkey started its journey of European Union membership in 1963 and the country is still waiting in line of accession. Even though the negotiations for accession began in 2005, only little progress has been made from the both sides. Two sides are still struggling to open and complete the talks and implement the European Union acquis in every policy area.

Migration and problems coming out from illegal immigration, visa and asylum issues are unquestionably one of these reasons that prevent both sides from progress in talks. The European public is long hostile to Turkish migration and their policies because of high levels of Turkish migration. (McLaren, 2007: 254) However, much more important than that; European Union officials are highly concerned with Turkey's evolution to become a transit zone for illegal immigrants, hundreds of asylum-seekers and a visa-relaxed border. In terms of geopolitics, Turkey and their allegiance to Europe is priceless, however; it is also crucial for Europe to prepare its candidate to be an efficient partner to secure and control hundreds of kilometres borderline and finally to be a part of their "fortress".

The debate of "fortress Europe" is still a valid concern and idea for the people engage in European studies. Whether the European Union is a fortress or not, it is a fact that the borders of Europe is now under a tight security agenda since September 11 attacks and Madrid train bombings. Especially the Schengen rules puts very hard measures over the

people coming from third countries to the European borders and it is fair to admit that European Union mostly uses this agenda over immigration, visa and asylum policies.

Back to Turkey, in order to be a member of the European Union, a candidate should implement all norms and values into the domestic sphere and principally the Schengen acquis has to be implemented before membership. Today, Turkey is in the middle of its Europeanization process to measure and absorb these values but in a very low speed due to various factors. It is not very easy in every way for a country like Turkey since a critical geography and a different historical and cultural development obviously engage with some problems that constantly delays progress in this area.

The subject area of this paper covers the mentioned slow paces and seems never-ending relationship between "fortress Europe" and Turkey. To clear out the reasons for this stagnation in relations, this research aims to answer the question of "Which factors are behind the current deadlock in the Europeanization process of Turkish Migration Policy over security?" To answer the question, it is natural to look at and identify the current status of the Europeanization of the Turkish Migration Policies over security matters like immigration, visa and asylum issues. To understand the relationship between Europeanization and Turkish Migration, actor behaviour, pressures for change and mediating factors; rational choice and sociological institutionalism theories will be used in this research. By using both logics, the reader will easily see the changes, factors, reasons behind these problems, increases in adoption costs and perfect bargains for the both sides with the help of cost-benefit analysis, external incentive and social learning model.

At the end of the research, the study will show that the Europeanization process over Turkish Migration Policies concerning security issues is in a deadlock due to the problems regarding the two sides; lack of incentives, long lasting disputes over readmission agreements and technical/financial difficulties. Moreover and as the integral part of this study; mediating factors like government preferences, historical and cultural

ties and lack of norm entrepreneurs made this deal between "fortress Europe and Turkey" highly inefficient and costly for Turkey.

In addition to that, this research also aims to find out the European Union's readiness to include Turkey as a member of the "fortress Europe" and factors that pushing Europe away from the idea of Turkish accession in terms of security and again contributes to the stagnation on relations. The research will start by giving a brief history of the development of both Europe and Turkey over Migration policies and short introduction of the term "fortress Europe". Then, the analysis will continue with the detailed argument of both Turkey's candidacy for "fortress Europe" and Europe's readiness for absorption.

Before start, it is important to remind the reader that this study is focusing over the "fortress Europe" and by meaning that, the security agenda of Europe over border policies like immigration, asylum and visa. The humanitarian side of the debate is not the point of discussion. Additionally, Turkish emigration to Europe is also not a subject matter for this study.

Developments over Border Security

European Union

There are conflicting views over European Union handling security issues and exactly how and when it is started. One view claims that from 1950s to 1970s, security issues like immigration, visa and asylum were in a "liberal phase". (Keser, 2006: 117) Another view frames European policy as a domination of concerns about security and only some recent developments is leading the direction over 'positive' migration. (Geddes, 2003: 2) Since both views have some correct points, the reality is that security has always been a priority for Europe, but after 1990s concerns over security reached its top point and especially after September 11, the "fortress" being formed.

The first development could be considered an important step over securitization over borders was the Schengen Agreement in 1985 with a common regime aspiration over

border security. (Keser, 2006: 117) The start of the illegal migration concerns in Europe started with arrival of boats full of migrants to the shores France and Italy and increasing number of asylum seekers. (Kirisci, 2004: 5) The immigration crisis surrounded Europe in early 1990s because of the opening of Eastern bloc led European countries to find some new measures over security. (Keser, 2006: 117) These new measures were included to the Maastricht Treaty as a third pillar of Justice and Home Affairs dealing with the issues of visa, asylum and immigration, however; the pillar was an intergovernmental pillar and envisaged no common grounds over security. Although the pillar formed as intergovernmental, the common regime aspiration of the European Union survived until Amsterdam Treaty. The Treaty transferred Justice and Home Affairs pillar to the supranational sphere and envisaged area of freedom and security and common measures over external border controls, asylum and immigration, most importantly the Schengen acquis incorporated to the Treaty. (Keser, 2006: 118)

Schengen acquis offered a testing ground for current and future members to see their potential and limits of common ground and cooperation. (Monar, 2001: 752) However, the emergent EU regime became too restrictive with limitation of access to the territory, extensively strict visa policies, carrier sanctions, 'first host country rule', 'safe country of origin' rule, accelerated procedures, punishments for illegal crossings, effective surveillance of borders and readmission agreements. Shortly, it became a system of stem illegal immigration and to reduce possible asylum seekers by putting hard measures over border pass. (Keser, 2006: 118-123) Not every single nation in Europe accepted Schengen acquis and derogations were existed for UK, Ireland and Denmark but candidate states did not have the possibility of opting-out or choosing suitable rules for themselves. (Keser, 2006: 120) Schengen acquis became an indispensable part of the accession negotiations and now it is an obligation for candidates before any demand over membership. It is highly interesting to see that despite the EU member states have not agreed over a common migration policy, the Schengen acquis became a part of their expectation from candidates parallel to their logic of a strong external border. (Vukasinovic, 2011, 150)

Today, the European Union member states are still struggling to find a common migration policy and handle the problem of illegal immigration. Although security concerns are still the significant priority, the European Union envisaged new models like "circular migration" to handle the problem of illegal immigration.

What is "Fortress Europe"?

The term "fortress Europe" started to get its meaning on the day after the September 11, the day that shifted every paradigm in world politics. As anyone can see, security matters were a matter for Europe before the attacks but that day was a turning point. After the attacks of September 11 and Madrid, the immigration issues in Europe became international security matters. (Ozdemir, 2011: 263) At the first time after Single European Act of 1987, topics like immigration and terrorism mentioned together as a consequence of the changing policies. (Ozdemir, 2011: 263) The identity and values that the European Union formed started to change in this area and replaced by active othering in discourse and portrait of the Union as unwelcoming and an even hostile "fortress". (Bretherton&Vogler: 2006: 46-55)

Fortress Europe came out as a new subject of this active othering, hard measures and worshipping the Schengen acquis. The emphasis of the European Union clearly shifted from humanitarian and legal priorities to security and the protection of borders from the "unwanted migrants". (Kirisci, 2008:1) Categorization between migrants became severe by assigning individual migrants to particular classes like "wanted" and "unwanted" types of migrants. As a natural consequence, the individuals which are mostly getting restrictive views were the migration of Muslim communities coming from the south of the Mediterranean. (Kessler and Freeman, 2005: 846)

The discourse over "unwanted migrants" changed immensely with the beginning of the Fortress Europe. Europeans started to distinguish themselves from somehow the inferior, the hostile, the other. (Favell and Hansen, 2002: 586) The change in the discourse have been criticized by an important audience on the grounds of diminishing refugee protection and increasing fear of execution of migrants. (Keser, 2006: 122) However, the

most dramatic change happened in the implementation of the Schengen acquis. The already hard measures of the acquis implemented in a very quick and harsh way in order to close the borders as firm as possible against outsiders. The Seville European Council in 2002 was another turning point for the Fortress Europe. At the Council, immigration became virtually synonymous with illegality and threat and member states crucially declared the ways to prevent "undesirable" migrants, lengthy and intrusive border controls and the most important one; calling all members and candidates to fully implement the Schengen acquis. (Bretherton and Vogler: 2006: 46-55)

A candidate of the European Union is naturally a candidate for the "Fortress Europe". The Seville European Council pointed out and the Central and Eastern European countries were the first in the line. After the formation of the "fortress" idea, candidate states now have to consider new visa requirements, establish bilateral readmission agreements between the EU and themselves, redefine the jurisdiction of immigration, border police authorities and meet the condition of the EU acquis with the help of technical and financial assistance. (Avci and Kirisci: 2006: 125) Today, a candidate state should implement the Schengen acquis before a possible membership; in other words, a candidate should be a part of "fortress" before actually being a part of the EU.

Future of the "fortress" is still going towards the direction of effective restrictions and exclusion of further non-European migrants. (Favell and Hansen, 2002: 587) Inevitable criticisms over its lacking in humanitarian purposes and constant exclusion of others are a fact but Europe seems to continue to tighten its borders until a common and more detailed de-securitized approach and world political system came into agenda.

Turkey

Turkey's engagement with the migration issues dates back to the formation of the Republic. It is a story of the evolution from emigration to become a hub for transit and illegal immigration. (Elitok and Straubhaar, 2010: 1) The Turkish foreign immigration started by a bilateral agreement with Germany for economic reasons and continued to include all Western Europe. (Ozdemir, 2011: 265) However, since the beginning of

1980s, Turkey position changed as migrant receiver, migrant giver and a state of immigration transition. (Ozdemir, 2011: 265)

The country became an attraction for people coming from the Asia, Africa and ex-Soviet countries due to its geographical location, growing economy and construction of "fortress Europe" which made Turkey as the last stop before the borders of Europe. (Vukasinovic, 2011: 148) The relaxed visa policy of Turkey towards its neighbourhood states was also a factor of attraction for the illegal immigrants and asylum seekers. (Elitok and Straubhaar, 2011: 110-113) Today, people are using forged documents, hiding in border-crossing vehicles and passing the land borders on foot or horses and crossing the sea borders with small boats and ferries. (Icduygu and Sert, 2010: 7) From 1996 to 2008, almost 800, 000 illegal immigrants who are mostly coming from Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan tried their way to get into Turkey and half of them seemed to be transit migrants. (Icduygu and Sert, 2010: 7)

When we take a brief look to the historical development of the Turkish policies on protection of the borders, the very first significant step is the 1934 Law of Settlement. Since the early 1930s was a period of the establishment of the Republic, policies were much more based on injecting the sense of "Turkishness" to the society. The 1934 Law of Settlement was a product of this policy movement. The law was foreseeing the immigration of migrants of "Turkish culture or origin" and immigration rights were only given and secured for the mentioned identities. (Tolay, 2012: 42) Moreover, Turkey also was among the signatories of the Geneva Convention in 1951. (Tolay, 2012: 42) By being a drafting partner of the Convention, Turkey imposed geographical limitation over people seeking asylum where only European refugees could get access of asylum status. (Mannaert, 2003: 7)

Between 1930s and early 90s, Turkey became a country of immigration but survived as a country without any immigration policy that in conformity with the changing time. When 1990s started with huge numbers of migrants and asylum-seekers coming from Iran and ex-Soviet countries, it was inevitable for Turkey to revise its policies over migration.

Accordingly with that idea, 1994 Asylum Regulation came into agenda as an answer. However, the regulation was far from the ideal. The Regulation only offered temporary protection to the non-European migrants and supervision of the UNHCR for resettlement in a third country. (Mannaert, 2003: 7) In other words, geographical limitation survived despite the criticisms coming from international society. With the new regulation, between 1988 and 1999, Turkey extended temporary protection to more than 850, 000 persons including Iraqis, Kurds, Turkmens, Bosnians and Albanians. (Erzan and Kirisci, 2004: 6)

Only after granting the candidacy at Helsinki Summit in 1999 and the start of the negotiations, Turkey found a new pathway to patch things up in migration policies. In accordance with the implementation of the EU acquis, Turkey tried to accomplish some reform movements like new clauses to the Penal Code that criminalized human smuggling, new Road Transportation Regulation sentenced persons who are involved to migrant smuggling, Law on Work Permits for Aliens in 2003 issued all types of work permits for foreigners to avoid employment of irregular migrants. (Icduygu and Sert, 2010: 9) In addition to that, 2005 National Action Plan for the Adoption of the EU Acquis in the Field of Asylum and Immigration envisaged a systematic effort to identify the areas of fit and misfit between the Turkish regulations and acquis communautaire. (Tolay, 2012: 44) In line with that, a task force formed in order to draft a new legislation on asylum and foreigners. (Tolay, 2012: 44)

Meanwhile, Turkey signed readmission agreements with many countries that are a hub of illegal immigrants like Syria, Krygyzstan, Romania, Ukraine and Greece. (Icduygu and Sert, 2010: 10) However, the readmission agreement negotiations between EU and Turkey are still on going. As the next chapter will give a detailed analysis to this debate, it could be said that Turkey has a valid concern over becoming an irregular migration hub if the EU accession deal falls through.

The new law on asylum passed in April 2013 after a significant waiting period. However, like the 1994 Regulation, it seems rather a disappointment for the international society

because the deal falls short to abolish geographical limitation. (Burch, 2013) Turkey's stubbornness over keeping the geographical limitation is another area of criticism. Mostly humanitarian bodies and NGOs keep reviewing Turkey's dull approach over the debated concept. It is obvious that the "fortress Europe" principles like "safe third country" and "first country of asylum" found reflection on Turkey's constant move to keep geographical limitation despite criticisms. (Baklacioglu, 2009: 5) All in all, Turkey mostly fears to become a dumping ground for migrants right after signing the readmission agreement and lifting the geographical limitation. (Kirisci, 2004: 12)

Between 2006 and 2010, approximately 125, 000 irregular border crossings detected by Turkish officials. (Icduygu, 2011: 6) It is also a fact that this number increases each day with the help of conflicts that surrounded Middle East and Turkish borderline. As a country that is not yet fulfilled the political and economic criteria (Quaissier and Wood, 2004: 8-9), it is questionable for Turkey to become an aspiring nominee for migration.

At the Gate of the "Fortress": The Turkish Dilemma
"At the crossroads of Asia, Africa and the European Union (EU), Turkey delianates the global rich from the global poor at the frontier of the EU." (Pusch, 2012: 168) Turkey is indeed a gateway through the West and it is highly critical for the "fortress Europe" to provide safety and security for its last stop before entrance. This is why the Europeanization of the Turkish Migration System was always an important area of attention for the member states. Although some developments have been made within the subject area after membership prospect, Turkish securitization of borders is still a question mark and seems rather limited for a full membership to the "fortress". This section will be an in-depth analysis of the both international and domestic factors that prevent Turkey to become a potential member of the "fortress Europe".

As one can see at the chapter before, Turkish Europeanization over migration security started right after Turkey granted candidate status. Before the European Union membership pressure, lack of border security and responsibility were the misfits that Turkey had to handle. So, what has changed with the incentive of European Union

membership? When we take a look to the Accession Partnership Documents prepares for Turkey in 2001, 2003 and 2006, one can see that EU needed a fully-fledged asylum policy, the construction of reception centres, signing of readmission treaties with the countries of origin and EU itself. (Kirisci, 2008: 17) Between 2002 and today, reforms had been made in Turkey with the adoption of the National Action Plan like new implementations stated at the chapter before; visas to some EU blacklist countries and a new asylum law. These reforms were the direct results of the EU conditionality and EU financed programmes. (Tolay, 2012: 45-46) In addition to that, Turkey's aspiration to become a EU member state is another important factor beyond these developments. (Vukasinovic, 2011: 156) However, the outcome was not satisfactory.

Regarding the EU demands, Turkey is still far away from any membership. Although several amounts of readmission agreements have been made with origin countries, many is still waiting to be completed and the major one is the deal with the EU. The visa policy over EU blacklist countries turned into reverse after 2005 and relaxed borders maintained for the illegal immigrants and asylum-seekers coming especially from the conflicted areas of Middle East and countries with historical and cultural ties. Moreover; the new asylum law turned out to be a regulation that keeps the status quo over geographical limitation. In addition to these; inhuman conditions of the migrants, clear need for facilitated access of public services to refugees and shortage over the number of enough asylum-officials are the regulations which are still waiting in line. (Baklacioglu, 2009: 10) All in all, it turned out be that Turkey still need an effective border management like tightened border surveillance, unification of border control under civil units and harmonization of visas. (Keser, 2006: 128) As a result of these, Europeanization of the Turkish migration system over security remained limited. This section will cover the factors that causing a serious limitation for Turkey to develop to become a potential part for the European fortress. Lack of credibility of conditionality and readmission agreement deadlock could be counted as facilitating international factors. On the other hand; government preferences, historical and cultural ties and lack of norm entrepreneurs will be the domestic facilitating factors to discuss.

Credibility of Conditionality

In a perfect bargain, the sides have to trust each other and the clarity of needs are indispensable. Clarity means that the candidates know what they need to do and what they are certainly getting after completion of the demands. (Sedelmeier, 2011: 10-12) The European Union mostly uses the use of conditionality where they offer positive and credible incentives as a reward for states who meet their demands. (Sedelmeier, 2011: 10) Most of the time and especially for the candidates, the reward is the full membership like in the case of Turkey. The reward has to be clear and solid in order to gain candidates' trust and make sure that the adoption costs should not exceed the reward of membership, but this was not the case in Turkey.

First of all, the current overall status of Turkish membership story is not much more than a deadlock. Negotiations are stalled in various areas and both sides seem exhausted with the situation. Overall perspective of membership is fading after a lack of trust between the EU and Turkey. Migration is one of these areas that lack of trust surrounds the whole process. It is highly regarded that countries like Greece and Portugal that had a successful accession period with high growth and effective implementation of the reforms reduces the migration pressures. (Erzan et. al., 2004: 124) However, Turkey was always under such pressures coming from the EU due to its unsatisfactory performance in other policy areas.

The lack of trust between the parties is reached its top level when Cyprus put down the Justice, Freedom and Security chapter in 2009 without even opening. As a result, it became just pointless for Turkey to make constant reforms in an area that the EU already refused to talk about. At the same time, the EU continued to criticize Turkish migration policies for not doing enough to combat and prevent illegal transit migration and suspected that Turkey is actually allowing these illegal migrants to use its territory to move to the Europe. (Kirisci, 2008: 1)

The fading credibility of the conditionality deepened with the failure over incentives. The issue about the technical and financial assistance was another additional point that

contributes to the ill-fated debate. Turkey is country that shares hundreds of kilometres with Syria, Iraq, Iran, Armenia, Georgia, Greece and Bulgaria. To control this border, effective burden sharing between the EU and Turkey is needed, that means an important amount of technical and financial assistance is absolute. Although, the EU helped Turkey on occasion but the current structure is absolutely not enough to reach EU level policy. Meanwhile, the EU kept pressuring Turkey to increase their capacity to combat with illegal immigration for which the government had to assign resources that it does not have and liberalize the existing asylum system again with not available resources. (Icduygu, 2003: 9)

Burder-sharing was the key point in this bargain. In order to make the perfect agreement in a cost-benefit sense; each side has to stick with their promises and share each other's burden or at least give a prospect about it. This was not the case either. By dictating the removal of geographical limitation and signing of readmission agreement without giving any more external incentive or assistance, the EU puts itself into a position that an organization which constantly transfers its asylum burden to the candidate or new member states. (Phuong, 2003: 393) Naturally, Turkey did not want to fall into a buffer zone of first asylum countries or turn into a safe third country without having a certainty for full membership. (Baklacioglu, 2009: 11)

Readmission Agreement Issue

As a natural result of the lack of trust between the EU and Turkey, the readmission agreement deal is another problem that stalled all negotiation process over Schengen acquis. At the first hand, before signing any agreement, Turkey demands a visa liberalization from Europe but members states of the European Union are clear that the readmission agreement is a condition for Europe to take Turkey another level in Schengen acquis negotiations.

Turkey already signed readmission agreements with many of the "countries of origin" that their citizens are among the large groups of illegal immigrants and transit migrants like Syria, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Ukraine and Greece. (Icduygu and Sert, 2010: 10)

However, it seems that Turkey is rather reluctant to sign the deal with the EU before any promise over visa liberalization or full membership. It is mainly because the Turkish officials' fears over becoming a border zone, a hub for illegal immigration since the current acquis would make Turkey the "first country of asylum". (Kirisci, 2004: 16) In addition to that, Turkish officials considering such an agreement is unnecessary since the agreement would come into force automatically on Turkey's accession to the EU. (Icduygu and Sert, 2010: 10) Considering that Turkey is a border country and receives important amount of asylum-seekers every year, it seems a valid concern to demand some concessions from Europe before any deal has been made. Given the fact that the most rejected asylum seekers are not removed from Turkey (Martin et. al., 2001: 605), Turkish nightmare of becoming a transit and illegal migration hub is a reality.

Although Turkey is firmly admitted that the signing of the readmission agreement is not the case until further promises are available, the members of the European Union stay solid on their idea to make no such promises before the agreement. This adds up to the current lack of trust between the parties, which diminishes the credibility of conditionality in a greater way. Because of the unchanged behaviour of the European Union, Turkey stared to feel that the EU is not treating Turkey as a future member but just another third country. (Kirisci, 2008: 20)

Changing Government Preferences

After two facilitating factors that come out from chaotic EU-Turkey relations, additional focus has to be made to the domestic facilitating factors, which are mostly unknown in comparison to the two factors above. One of them is the sharp change in Turkish foreign policy towards migration and its impact over the Turkey's way to "fortress Europe".

Before 2008, Turkish foreign policy was much more concentrated on the accession relationship with the European Union. However, the change was not that sudden. After years of exhaustion over negotiation talks and the impact of Arab uprisings, the Justice and Development Party Government found itself in a position to change their face to the countries that Turkey shares an Ottoman past. Named as "neo-Ottomanism" policy,

Turkey started to take an active role in Middle East within the Arab Spring events as a model nation for newly emerging democracies and this new policy well suited to the governments' position to keep zero problems with neighbour states, neighbours that are in the blacklist of the European Union when it comes to border security.

As a consequence of this policy shift from Europe to Middle East, Turkey started to make liberalisation attempts over these states since Turkey wanted an increased integration in the region between Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. (Elitok and Straubhaar, 2011: 124) As an example, the dramatic change over visa policy is the direct effect of this policy shift. In contrast to the demands of the Schengen acquis, Turkey's already liberal visa regime further relaxed in parallel to the changes in Turkey's foreign policy. (Korfali et. al., 2010: 35) By 2005, Turkish officials were only five countries short to complete the visa regulations with EU blacklist countries but after 2009, the preferences shifted in a great deal. (Tolay, 2012: 56) Align with the policy of "zero problems" with neighbours, Turkey signed visa-free agreements with Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Russia. (Elitok and Straubhaar, 2010: 7) It is important to note that these countries are in the EU blacklist in terms of illegal immigration and border security. (Vukasinovic, 2011: 158) As IHAD (Human Rights Research Association) Report of 2011 indicates, these countries are in the list of countries that Turkey receives highest amounts of asylum applications along with Somalia, Tunisia, Iraq, Iran and Egypt. As a result, growing allegiance to its Eastern neighbourhoods has led Turkey to relax visa restrictions and opened the door to cheap "immigrant express" ways. (Alexander, 2010)

Within this policy change, one major impact was the crisis in Syria and uprisings started in 2011. Before Syria, Turkey was already a country that receives important amount of asylum applications from the Middle East like Iraq, Palestine and Somalia. (Kirisci, 2008: 8) Various reasons like ease of border crossing; no visa requirements, low travel cost and familiarity were the main factors behind the applications. (Icduygu, 2003: 33) However, when Arab Spring events facilitated inner conflict in the adjacent countries, people started to cross borders for humanitarian purposes. The crisis in Syria was the closest one to Turkey and Turkey had so far generously welcomed at least 300,000-

450,000 Syrians in Southern cities and in refugee camps. (International Crisis Group, 2013) It is important to remember here that according to the Turkish asylum law, Turkey is not giving a full refugee status to those without European citizenship and only providing them a temporary protection status and sent them to UNHCR office for settlement in a third country. This situation also generates a transit migration situation from Turkey to Europe. As Eurostat report prepared by Alexandros Bitoulas (2013) indicates; increase of asylum applications from Syria in the EU-27 in 2013 increased around 6000 and 4000 more. So, relaxing the borders in Turkey directly affected the migration flow in Europe due to the fact that Turkey is the only stop between Europe and Syria if a migrant is travelling from the land.

There is no doubt that Turkey's response and intention to the crisis in Syria is purely humanitarian and it was an international duty to help those in need. As Yabasun (2013) mentioned; right from the start of the conflict, Turkey is opening borders to those in need for protection. However, the humanitarian approach is not the only matter of discussion here. Prime Minister Erdogan, in a speech dated back to 2011, dictated that Syria is a domestic issue for Turkey because of the Ottoman past and historical/religious ties between the nations. (TRT Haber, 2011) As a result of this policy, even opposition fighters illegally passed the border to get training within the Turkish border. (International Crisis Group, 2013)

It is a fact that an 822 kilometres border is a though test for Turkey to protect without a mistake even in peacetime. Obviously, when people started to get into the country to escape death, it is not easy for a police officer to separate those in need and people trying to seek ways of illegal immigration but it is also possible with the help of professional personnel, border police and financial assistance. However, Turkish government selected the way to relax the borders even more to show the message that this is a domestic issue for us and we are helping the country that we share a common past. Today, many Syrians choose to avoid legal entrance but smuggling themselves across the 822 km border. (IRIN, 2012) Since it is much less costly for an illegal immigrant, they are even jumping over the fences to cross the border. The constant relaxing of borders also subjected an

increase in the asylum applications from other Middle East countries besides Syria where the application rate rose by 50 percent between 2011 and 2012. (Burch, 2013)

As a result of this sharp change in the government preferences, Turkey is now much more far away from completing the Schengen acquis due to the constant liberalization of visa and border policies with Middle Eastern countries or in other words; the EU blacklist countries for border security. Moreover, Schengen acquis and strict border controls are also not the perfect bargain for the Turkish government any more for a state tries to be a model nation and leader for newly emerged democracies in the Middle East. As President Abdullah Gul indicated clearly in 2011; "fortress Europe" is not a rational choice and it is also a threat for Europe to turn inwards completely. (Hurriyet Daily News, 2011)

Historical and Cultural Ties

Another domestic factor that keeps the "fortress Europe" as an irrational choice for Turkey is the Turkey's historical and cultural ties with many neighbour and adjacent countries. Since most of them are sharing the same region, history, values and traditions, it is highly unlikely for any one to impose visa restrictions or securitizing borders over the other. Turkey mainly shares those ties with Syria, Iran, Iraq, Bosnia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Jordan and Armenia. The most important one is Azerbaijan, which also has ethnic links and allegiance links to Turkey. (Kuniholm, 2001: 9) The problem for Turkey is that many of these countries are blacklist countries according to the Schengen rules.

Although it is a condition for the EU to convince candidates to impose visa regulations over all blacklist countries, it is also *sine qua non* for Turkish state to keep good relations with close societies. So, it is a state policy to exempt their nationals from strict visa requirements. (Kirisci, 2008: 21) As a consequence, changing this policy to impose visa measurements is highly unlikely for current Turkish policy agenda.

Even in the period when EU influence at its top level, Turkey resisted to impose requirements over these countries. Align with 2004 National Program; Turkey started to conform its practice to match EU negative list to countries like Bosnia, Iran, Kyrgyzstan,

Macedonia, Morocco and Tunisia. In that list, Turkey rejected to terminate visa free arrangements with Bosnia and Macedonia because of the cultural ties and the presence of Turkish minorities living in that region. (Apap et. al. , 2004: 29) This resistance resembles the Central and Eastern European countries' reluctance over to impose visa obligation to Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian citizens. (Keser, 2006: 122) For many years, people living in Hatay (the southern end of Turkey) jumped over the fences to see their relatives living in the other side of the border. To separate these two communities by dictating both sides to get visa for 10 minutes walk is just unimaginable for Turkey to establish.

Besides the historical ties and important amount of Turkish minority living in these regions, there is a financial side of this debate. Because of this close ties and no visa requirements, Turkey is getting important amount of tourists each and every year mainly from Arabic states, Azerbaijan, ex-Soviet countries and Russia. European Union fears that an establishment of a significant pathway of illegal entry which is represented by these people entering the country as tourist who overstay their visa. (Duvell and Vollmer, 2009: 20) Even that this tourist flows could contribute to illegal entries and settlement; Turkish government would likely to keep allowing these people in economic senses which concerns relaxing the way for important touristic route.

All in all, it is another challenge for Turkey to distance itself from the Schengen acquis. As Kemal Dervis, the ex-Minister of Economy indicated; Turkey should be a member of the EU but definitely not the Schengen partnership. Turkey should not be in a position to impose visa requirements to the people coming from Egypt or Jordan, this would effect the current policy towards Middle East as well. (Milliyet, 2013).

Lack of norm entrepreneurs

From the perspective of the sociological institutionalism theory, a number of factors increases the likelihood that persuasion and socialisation are effective. (Sedelmeier, 2011: 15) Existence of civil society actors or so-called norm entrepreneurs is vital to develop a

normative discourse within the society in relation to the EU norms and values. Their existence is an obligation to ease the process of social learning.

For our subject, the position of the civil society actors mainly the non-governmental organizations in Turkey are having such importance to help the society to absorb European Union values over migration security. According to Juliette Tolay (2012); NGOs with humanitarian purposes are currently employing concepts of rights and freedoms that clearly refer to European norms. (p. 50) Organizations like Human Rights Research Association (IHAD), Human Rights Association (IHH) and Amnesty International in Turkey are the ones that are working tirelessly over to monitor and criticize the Turkish policies over migration. However, the policy area seems dominated and limited by the non-governmental actors only focusing over the humanitarian side of the migration issues.

As Kemal Kirisci (2008) notes out; "In relation to the size of the problems associated with irregular migration management civil society remains relatively weak." (p. 14) Issues that concern the security side like problems coming out because of illegal immigration, asylum-seeking or overstay visa is not finding any attention from civil society and this led to a deficit of societal pressure to establish the rules of the "fortress Europe".

Lack of norm entrepreneurs in this area and not enough societal pressure prevents Turkey to engage in a social learning process that prioritizes border security and problems coming out the illegal immigration along with the humanitarian problems that the refugees are facing in Turkey. For today, it is again highly unlikely to establish an organization since the country is surrounded by conflicts and naturally every attention eventually turns to the humanitarian side of the problem.

European Side of the Dilemma: An unprepared absorption
This section will cover the other side of the problem, the European perspective over the Turkey's potential membership to the "fortress Europe". Within the EU-Turkey studies,

Europe's absorption capacity for Turkey was always a debatable issue to solve. At this last part, the research aims to show the current difficulties for Europe to bargain over losing Turkey as a migration hub and its contribution to the current relations.

As mentioned many times at the above paragraphs, Turkey is currently a location and point for illegal and transit migration and it is a fact that hundreds of people are coming to Turkey with a desire to relocate Europe after spending some time in Turkey. Around the core of a "fortress", Turkey is a buffer state, a gatekeeper for asylum-seekers heading to Europe. (Keser, 2006: 116-120) For many years, Turkey played the role of "hub state" that only a limited number of illegal migrants accomplished to get the borders of Europe and Turkey indeed filtered a significant number of these transit movements and sent them to their nations of origin or to the UNHCR office for settlement in a third country. In terms of the credibility of conditionality, this arrangement set not a good example for Turkey. (Vukasinovic, 2011: 161) However, it is clear that Europe insisted to shift the burden of illegal migrants to Turkey to overcome crowded numbers of applications. As a result, the European Union used the accession process as a tool to "make good use" of Turkey. (Tolay, 2012: 54)

It is highly important for Europe to have a "buffer zone" like Turkey just before its border and losing it without a valid replacement will make the "fortress Europe" neighbours with countries like Syria, Iran and Iraq, which are all struggling with conflicts. This means that the European Union have to spend more in both technical and financial assistance to make Turkey ready for strict border protection. Turkey shares a 269 km border with Bulgaria, 203 km with Greece, 276 km with Georgia, 328 km with Armenia, 18 km with Azerbaijan, 560 km with Iran and most importantly 384 km with Iraq and 911 km with Syria. (Icduygu and Sert, 2010: 6) Keeping in mind that the EU is still making financial sacrifices to keep Greece-Turkey border safe and being unsuccessful many times, it is hard to imagine that how much technical and financial assistance is needed to keep hundreds of kilometres of Syria-Iraq-Turkey's mountainous borderline. Currently, with the financial crisis surrounded the member states, it is just not feasible for Europe to handle Turkey's border problem.

Before the establishment of the famous Greece-Turkey fence wall, the Minister of European Union Affairs Egemen Bagis said "Greece can do whatever its wants on its territory, but there's also a whole Aegean Sea to control." (Pop, 2011) Taking Turkey as a part of "fortress Europe" is not just make EU to control the whole Aegean Sea but hundreds of kilometres down to South and as a rational actor, it seems the rational choice to keep Turkey as a "buffer zone" at the gates of the "fortress" with an alternative solution. Member states constantly came up with plans to overcome this possible burden. The UK plan was to keep asylum-seekers closer to their countries of origin in "regional processing centres" and Turkey was the envisaged centre for Iran and Iraq. (Geddes, 2005: 795) Of course, the feasibility of these types of plans are debatable, however; it seems an obligation for Europe to come up with an alternative to keep a buffer zone.

In addition to the above factor, Arab Spring and the events occurred in Arab states opened a new chapter for the EU to think about the possible membership of Turkey to the "European fortress". As the International Crisis Group Report (2013) indicates, by allowing hundreds of Syrians into their border, Turkey took a significant burden from international community over Syria. By using Turkey as a hub in both security and humanitarian purposes, the European Union escaped from controlling a conflicted border and hundreds of people coming in every purpose. With a simple future projection and taking account that this conflict will survive in Middle East in the upcoming years, the European Union will be dealing with these escaping migrants if the EU allows Turkey to be a part of European borders. Again, protection of the borders and people will probably exceed the beneficiaries that Turkey would make to the "fortress Europe". According to Ole Schroder, the undersectary of the German Internal Affairs Minister, Europe's neighbour states are already crowded with Syrian asylum-seekers and Germany has no enough place to answer their call. (T24, 2013) By taking account to all these claims, it is just unimaginable for Europe to take the burden over all these asylum-seekers.

To sum up, the whole picture at the above shows that the Turkey-"Fortress Europe" membership journey is not the beneficial deal for the both sides. For Turkey, the lack of

trust between the parties and endless competition over the readmission agreement just decreases the enthusiasm for membership and increases the adoption costs. In addition to that, changing government preferences, the question of historical and cultural ties and lack of norm entrepreneurs makes the "fortress Europe" even undesirable and inefficient with regard to current Turkish foreign policy. Turkey has too much to lose when it compared to the beneficiaries of the "fortress Europe". All in all, Turkey is not ready to be a member of the "fortress Europe" and the current deal over Schengen acquis is not parallel to Turkey's intentions over Middle East and its neighbour regions.

On the other hand, it is not the ideal deal for Europe either. In a period of financial crisis, the last thing Europe has to deal is opening up a new borderline for the Europe and trying to control a border with hundreds of kilometres through the Middle East. By taking account the whole new picture in the Middle East after the Arab Spring, Europe has not enough capacity to include a country like Turkey even with more serious border protection which is again at the hands of Europe by distributing more technical and financial assistance. At the end of the day, it is much more beneficial for Europe to keep Turkey as a hub for mass migration waves.

Conclusion

Turkey-EU relations started in 1960s and still continue at a slow pace. The enthusiasm of post-Helsinki seems faded after 2008 and now going through in a patchy way where both sides became negotiation fatigue. The problem over migration and Europeanization of Turkey over migration security stayed as a problematic subject after all these years. When Europe started to build a "fortress" all around the borders, Turkey had to overcome serious migration flows coming down from Asia and Middle East. Within this slow pace relationship, the readiness and potential of Turkey for "fortress Europe" was always a question mark. Even though serious reforms and regulation changes happened in Turkey after candidacy, Turkey seemed a reluctant partner to finish the implementation of Schengen acquis. On the other hand, Europe was also unwilling to give Turkey enough prospect and vision for membership. This aim of this research was to find out the factors that behind this struggle between the parties.

The first part indicated that lots of change in both Europe and Turkey over the years. Europe developed a strategy of common practices over border security, visa and asylum policies. Although serious attempts have been made in Amsterdam and Seville, Europe is still struggling to find a common solution to the migration problem. After September 11 and Madrid attacks, Europe securitized its borders with a new discourse and strict border policy named "fortress Europe". Turkey was never highly busy with the migration regulations. Only after the prospect of full membership, Turkey started to a serious attempt to make reforms but failed to fulfil readmission agreements and lifting the geographical limitation. When Turkey's membership to "fortress Europe came into agenda, Europe demanded the full implementation of the Schengen acquis like it did to every candidate states. However, different factors like the ambiguity over the credibility of conditionality and lack of trust between the sides prevent Turkey to focus over implementation. Moreover; domestic policy changes, the existence of historical and cultural ties and lack of civil society actors made the deal even more inefficient for Turkey. At the current situation, it turned out to be that Europe is also better off if Turkey stays a hub for migration right before the borders but not a part of the "fortress".

The current position of the both parties is against for this engagement. Government preferences and events happening all around Middle East are also factors for stay out. However, if the positions will ever change, both sides have to do some concessions and sacrifices for the good health of this relationship.

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