

Refugee Problems in Turkey and Its Evaluation in the Context of Sustainability

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Abstract. Today, a flow of refugee which has turned into the biggest problem of the happened towards various countries due to the disturbances emerged in the Middle East states headed particularly by Turkey. These refugees have failed to ensure the intercultural adaption in the countries where they have taken shelter. At the same time, the refugees are in position of asylum seekers and the physical conditions required in the countries where they are the guests should also be provided for them to be able to survive. In this study, it has been focused on immigration, immigration movements and their conclusions, refugee problems and the standardization of sustainable basic and social habitation spaces in the countries where the humans in state of asylum seekers have taken shelter and the situation of the Syrians living in Turkey is compared with the examples in Europe. The data obtained has shown that the Syrian refugees living in Turkey are in a better condition than the refugees living in European countries.

Keywords: Refugee problem · War · Migration · Camp · Sustainability

1 Introduction

Immigration is being defined as the movement of a person or a group of people to another place by crossing an international border or relocation within a state [1]. Post-relocation movements emerged population movements; Irrespective of time, structure and cause are being comprised to the extent of migration. Such displacement movements can take place voluntarily or due to obligatory causes. Today, millions of people evict the territories where they were born and grew up due to wars, natural disasters, political or economic reasons. Therefore, the refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, irregular migrants and the groups of people displaced from their places due to various means are also added to the concept of migration. While the migration used to be based on usually the economic or natural causes before the technology age, today, the wars being the greatest and most dangerous problem of world are the greatest cause procreating the need for migration.

While the migration movements deliver affirmative outcomes when it is managed well, well it accompanies a number of negative consequences when failed to be managed properly resulting even the human rights violations positive consequences when managed well, they firstly threaten the public order and security that leads up to human rights violations accompanied hereto.

An effective management system which would support an economic development in the country gone to and maintain the public safety and include the framework values such as protection of human rights of migrants. For this reason, in order to develop an effective migration management, it is worth for examining the causes of migration and its consequences.

The concept of migration; is closely associated with the political, economic, social and cultural life. In particular, the international migration simultaneously affects more than one state. While this type of migration provides the labor force contribution to the destination country, it is likely to be also leading to loss of qualified labor force in the source countries. Therefore the immigrants; don not only concern the destination countries but also the countries they have left behind and leave permanent traces by shaping up the interaction between these countries. Migration movements, On the other hand, it is expected that the immigration movements would continue also in future depending on many causes [2].

2 Refugee Problem

2.1 Arab Spring and Internal Disturbances in Syria

The events called Arab Spring and initiated first in Tunisia being one of the Northern Africa countries where a peddler named Muhammed Bouazizi burned himself in 2010 have spread to the countries like Libya, Egypt, Syria and Yemen. These events have led to the commencement of a civil war in Libya and international military intervention has been made to this country upon decision of the United Nations Security Council. The civil war in Libya resulted in killing of Gaddafi, the Head of State and establishment of two different governments in the country. Shortly after that, the Head of State, Mursi has been overthrown in consequence of a military coup made in Egypt and a new government was established. The events that started with the Arab Spring have jumped also to Syria and as a result of turmoil started; the country has been drifted along a civil war in 2011. Thousands of people affected by the civil war in Syria have been impelled to the borders of neighboring countries like Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq in order to save their lives. Upon decision of the UN Security Council taken in 2014, military intervention began under the leadership of countries like USA, UK and France to Syria. Later on, Russia has joined the war alongside the current Syrian government and civil war still continues in the country.

2.2 Refugee Problem in Europe

As a result of the Arab Spring, particularly people who escaped from Libya began to migrate to Italy being the closest European country by sea. While Italy was struggling

to cope with this immigration problem, some of the Syrians who migrated to Turkey following the civil war started within Syria in 2011 have turned towards the border of Bulgaria to go to Europe via Turkey. These people have tried to reach at Germany and France by following the route of Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia and Austria. As for another part of Syrians in Turkey, they have passed to the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea by unsafe marine vessels like rubber boats and boats. Unfortunately, thousands of Syrian children, women and men have died by being drowned during these transitions. The EU countries have been alarmed in front of this refugee flood and have drawn barbed wire to the borderlines and have caused the Syrian refugees to pile up at the borderlines by closing border gates. EU gathered under the leadership of Germany has fallen into a big challenge due to such refugee flow and has sat at the table with Turkey to eliminate this migration. As a result of long negotiations conducted, the readmission agreement for the refugees has been concluded in exchange of financial aids to be made between Turkey and the EU. On the other hand, EU countries headed by Germany have proposed selective and restrictive criteria such as qualified persons to limit the refugee flow [3].

2.3 Post-Arab Spring Asylum Seekers in Turkey

Due to its geographical structure and increasingly growing economy, Turkey is affected much more from the irregular migration movements of this nature. Adopting an open door policy from the past up to today, Turkey had hosted approximately 345,000 Turks forced to emigrate from Bulgaria due to the government's assimilation policy in 1989 and 467,489 asylum seekers from northern Iraq during the gulf war happened therein in 1991 [4]. Likewise, Turkey has similarly begun taking in also the Syrian refugees who escaped from the civil war and piled up at its border for the first time from Hatay-Yağlıdağ border gate on April 28th, 2011 and the needs of these asylum seekers were met. For this purpose, the asylum seekers were firstly placed into guesthouses belonging to public institutions and general-purpose tents. In priority, the accommodation and nutrition requirements of these asylum seekers have been met. Predicting that the number of asylum seekers to come to Turkey would exceed hundred thousands, Turkey has begun building the temporary housing centers in accordance with international standards in the provinces in the vicinity of Syrian borderline. Later on, the asylum seekers who came to Turkey were relocated at the housing centres completed within a few months. In line with the non-returnable principle specified in "Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees" signed by the Member States of United Nations in Geneva in 1951 and adopted by Turkey as well [5]. At present, fulfillment of accommodation, nutrition, health, education and the like requirements of the Syrians residing within Turkey are still being maintained.

3 Minimum Standards of Sphere Project

Sphere Project is a program jointly carried out by the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR), the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and VOICE. This initiative was initiated in 1997 by a group of

non-governmental, humanitarian aid organization (NGO), Red Cross and Red Crescent [6].

The Humanitarian Aid Convention is concerned with meeting the needs of people exposed to disaster or skirmish and with the basic requirements needed for them to return to a respectable life. Minimum standards include the services of water supply and healthy environment, nutrition, food aid, shelter, location planning and healthcare to the humans.

3.1 Water Supply and Healthy Environment (Sanitation)

- Adequate water should be available for drinking, cooking and cleaning to all people at the housing camp. The water should be as close to a location where everyone living at the camp can easily reach at meet the minimum amount of water.
- Toilets should be designed and constructed so that all people, including people with disabilities, can use them safely under comfortable, healthy conditions.
- The toilets from the camp should be designed so as to be utilized by all humans including the handicaps, in comfortable, safe and healthy conditions.
- All people at the camp, the facility for living in a solid waste—free, cleaned environment, including medical wastes should be provided with the opportunity to live in an environment. When the disposal of solid waste is being made for hygiene, garbage should be collected daily and placed in garbage containers or buried in a special waste pit.
- The camps must have an environment that is free from the risks of water erosion, stagnant water, rain shower water, flood water, away from the waste waters of the houses and medical centres.
- For hygiene, remaining own traditions of the people and in a way not to create any risk for the health, necessary sources should be provided to the funerals of people [6].

3.2 Nutrition

- All people should always be able to find the food needed for active and healthy life.
- While the nutritional needs of all people are being met, required nutritional values must be met by taking into consideration their cultural lifestyle.
- In order to prevent the nutritional deficiencies of people exposed to the disaster, the nutrition should be provided in accordance with the values given in Table 1 [6].

Table 1. During initial step of the disaster event, the nutrition program has been adapted from (WHO (1997, draft) and WFP/UNHCR (December 1997))

Nutrient	Population average need
Energy	2100 kcal
Protein	10–12% of total energy
Fat	17% of total energy
Vitamin A	1666 IU
Thiamine (B1)	0.9 mg
Riboflavin (B2)	1.4 mg
Niacin (B3)	12.0 mg
Vitamin C	28.0 mg
Vitamin D	3.2–3.8 pg calciferol
Iron	22 mg
Iodine	150 pg

3.3 Food Aid

All people are in need of consuming adequate and quality food to maintain a healthy life.

- Food items must be stored in safe and clean places, not under decomposition conditions.
- The method used with the food aid should be fair and in be conforming to the local conditions.
- People who received aid should be informed about their share and how it was decided.
- Distributed food items should not be contrary against the religious and cultural traditions of catastrophes [6].

3.4 Housing and Settlement Planning

It is obligatory that the honor of people under harsh conditions should not be hurt and continuation of a family and community lifestyle must be maintained.

People are moved and placed into a new society or temporary camps.

- In the designed settlement zones, a 45 m²—space as per person should be provided, including infrastructure.
- The land should be adapted to build a sheltering center (drainage etc.).
- The material of shelter to be used should be of high heat—resistant in hot and dry climate conditions.
- As for the cold climates, the material for shelter and construction should ensure optimum insulation.

- The temperature at which those who live at the shelters would be comfortable is obtained with the insulated shelter, proper clothes, blankets, bed material, good heating and eating the energizing foods.
- The social facilities such as grocery stores, schools, places of worship, cemeteries, health centers, solid waste centers, water resources, community and nutrition centers, workshops, woodland and recreational areas should be provided.
- Quarantine camps should be established to prevent the spread of epidemics or places away from general settlements should be determined and prepared for those with such diseases to stay at [6].

3.5 Healthcare Services

The primary objective of the healthcare services rendered to the persons affected from the disaster is the diseases and deaths to be reduced.

- The health services should be arranged to allow fighting against the identified main causes leading to excessive death, illness and injuries.
- The health services should be implemented by the personnel who enjoy appropriate competence and experience and are well-managed and received necessary support.
- The diseases having the risk of creating epidemic should be investigated and controlled under international norms and standards.
- How the disaster affected the human health and what the needs are and what the health programs should be directed should be specified.
- Emergency health services should be developed making use of local capacities and skills [6].

4 Services Provided in Turkey to Syrian Asylum Seekers

4.1 General

It is seen that Turkey has accepted to meet the asylum seekers as a historical duty, which have run away from war in the best way. Within the framework of its responsibilities arising from the international law, Turkey provides temporary protection status of the Syrians and causes them to have access to the basic services and does not send them back and take them under protection [7]. With this understanding, Turkey has provided all kinds of facilities offered in their own country such as education, health, sportive activities and has gained the appreciation of all the countries across the globe.

Turkey has undergone tremendous financial burden due to Syrian asylum seekers who have been given temporary protection status and has given humanity lesson to the whole world. It is stated that currently more or less 3 million Syrians are being sheltered and the sum of funds spent up to now is about TL 36,000,000,000 [8]. As for the International support provided to Turkey for the Syrian refugees has remained at a level not worth to be mentioned when looked at the figure spent. As it would be recall, once

only a few thousand Tunisians set foot to Italy on early days of the Arab Spring has led to the chattering of internally unlimited Schengen area, being the largest project of Europe [9]. At the same time, necessary physical conditions are required to be provided for the immigrants who are in the position of asylum seekers also in other countries where they became guests to maintain their lives as in Turkey.

In year 2013, biometric identity study has been initiated by the Turkish Government to allow the Syrians who took refuge in Turkey utilize and follow the social benefits like education and health and to follow those who involved in crime. With the efforts carried out until 12.02.2016, 2,790,767 Syrians whose fingerprints, identity and domicile information were taken have been registered. Thus, “temporary protection status” has been granted to the Syrians who were officially registered. The endeavors of taking incoming new Syrian guests are being kept on daily. Whenever the Syrians being in this status went out of the cities where they reside, they just get their records revised by the city where they moved to by applying with ID cards in order to utilize the health and education services maintained under the coordination of AFAD [10].

258,571 Syrian and 5993 Iraqi refugee’s shelter at the AFAD—established and managed 24 housing centers. 2,484,997 Syrians have settled many cities, headed by Istanbul outside the housing centers in Turkey [10].

4.2 Water

Water supply in adequate amount for drinking, cooking, for personal and household cleaning is provided to the temporary sheltering centers with the water taken from the city network or drilling wells. Water is provided at the houses of the containers in the cities and at certain zones within the tent cities. WC and shower needs have been met in the containers of the container cities. And as for the tent cities, it is designed as a WC as per 20 persons and a shower as per 25 persons. The corpses are shrouded and buried in accordance with religious beliefs and cultures [10].

4.3 Nutrition

Markets where the Syrians living in the temporary shelter centers can meet their basic needs, especially nutrition have been established and an aid I.D. cards valid from these markets has been given to every family. According to the list regularly taken from the camp management software every month, money is being loaded to the card of every family in pro rata with the number of individuals in the family. The families can shop from these markets according to their own culture and tastes and cook their food at their own living spaces [10].

4.4 Food Aid

No further food aid is being made to the Syria’s asylum seekers residing in the temporary sheltering center. For those living outside the shelter center, the demands are being entered to the system with the Electronic Help Distribution System (EYDAS)

developed by AFAD and aid is being actualized in an effective and rapid manner. With this system, duplication of aids is being avoided and the donors to make aid are able to see where and who need what. Since the aids are being so-recorded into system, how much aid was made is being calculated [10].

4.5 Housing and Settlement Area Planning

According to the official records, there are 2,790,767 Syrians in Turkey. Totally 26 temporary shelters; 20 tent cities and 6 container cities have been established in the first stage, including infrastructure in 10 provinces and a total of 264,564 people was allowed to have accommodation at these housing centers. As from 2016, 3 each of the temporary shelters established to be tent have been converted into container towns. These conversion operations have been accomplished using Turkey's own resources. Sphere Project and Şanlıurfa-Akçakale Tent city and Kilis Container city were taken as references for ensuring the maximum standards while the tent and container cities were being established [10].

4.6 Healthcare Services

Practitioners and specialist physicians available at the hospitals within the temporary sheltering centers function. Syrian physicians are also assigned to the health centers according to their branches. There are also emergency response teams and a pharmacy to obtain the drugs. Health service is being provided by 84 doctors and 1174 health personnel from the temporary shelter centers in Turkey. In addition, Syrian asylum seekers were also provided services from the hospitals found across Turkey, and 184,390 deliveries and 797,450 operations have been realized [11].

4.7 Training

In temporary shelter centers, educational services are provided from kindergarten to high school. A total of 325,000 students studies at the temporary shelters and public schools in Turkey. In addition, the vocational training courses are given to all adults, especially children, women, elderly and disabled [10].

4.8 Financial Expenditures

Temporary shelter centers have playgrounds for children, interpreter services, sportive activities, socio-cultural activities and women and youth committees formed democratically through elections. In particular, in order to ensure that the social integration is obtained, all social facilities and services aiming to develop awareness of working together and prevention of social conflict where the Syrian children are taken away from battle ground and their ages—necessitated environment is provided and the efforts

of causing them to take part in the activities and possess a profession through courses and make it possible for them to get income are carried out [10].

5 Services Provided in Turkey to Syrian Asylum Seekers

According to official figures of AFAD and international organizations, 12 million persons out of 20 million persons living within Syria were obliged to migrate. While 8 million of them have left their homes and assets in the country and migrated to other regions, 4 million and 200 thousand Syrians have passed to neighboring countries from the regions where the conflicts were active. More than 50% of Syrians run away from the country took refuge in Turkey. With its open door policy, Turkey has not sent any Syrians back.

Among the countries where the Syrian asylum seekers most frequently go, Lebanon heads first. According to UN figures, there are 1,048,275 refugees in Lebanon. Since the Lebanese government has refused to establish any camps, there are small camps set up by international aid agencies in this country. More than 2 thousands of Syrian refugees stay at Zehle Camp in the city of El Bika. The facilities at the camp are very limited and there are big problems in subjects of heating, clean water, electricity and the like. Even though the conditions of camp are not very good, there is a tent serving as a health center and a school [12]. In another neighboring country, in Jordan, according to the UN figures, 655,217 Syrians live at 5 camps established for them across the country. 83,000 Syrians live at Zaatari established to be the largest camp in 2012 below the minimum settlement standards without adequate amount of food (Fig. 1). Many criminal offenses have been reported, including prostitution and drug trafficking in the public sector [13]. Too many crimes have been reported from the camp, including prostitution, drug trafficking as well [13].



Fig. 1. Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan

Again, according to UN figures, 247,339 Syrians have sheltered in Iraq and 89,039 hereof live in 17 each camps established. At the Domiz tent city, many deficiencies from dysentery, sanitation, health, food and up to education are being observed [13].

On the other hand, there are registered 115,204 Syrians in Egypt being an African country and 29,275 Syrians in other northern African countries. In these countries, there are settlement centers established for Syrian refugees. It has been reported that 512,909 Syrians have sheltered in other countries staying outside these countries [13].

6 Refugees Living in European Countries

After the civil war started in Syria in 2011, the flow of refugees also to the European countries has taken place. The Syrian refugee flow has caused a great panic in many countries, especially in EU countries headed by Germany, Austria, France and Hungary. As a result hereof, EU countries, especially headed by Germany have proposed selective and restrictive reasons such as qualified persons to restrict the refugee flow [3].

Greece heads first among EU countries where refugees passed through. To do so, the refugees see this country as a bridge for passing to Europe and they are trying to pass to the Greek islands closer to Turkey. According to the records, hundreds of Syrian refugees who tried to pass to the islands have died as a result of sinking of their boats. Even though, Idomeni camp built on the border of Macedonia in Greece had been planned for 2500 persons, 12,000 refugees shelter at this camp (Fig. 2). 54.9% of these people are Syrians, 24.4% are Afghans and 11% are the Iraqi refugees. At the camp, difficulty of water and sanitation is being suffered and is likened to a Nazi camp [14].



Fig. 2. Idomeni refugee camp in Greece

Another EU country where refugees go is Italy. The reason why refugees choose Italy is because of its proximity to the Mediterranean Sea and Africa. Italy's refugee camp on Lampedusa Island is seen as an important point for African and Libyan refugees who want to pass to Europe through the Mediterranean Sea (Fig. 3). Thousands of refugees are taking refuge to this island every year, but many of the refugees are losing their lives in the Mediterranean Sea while trying to reach the island. It is believed that since October 2015, at least 360 refugees have lost their lives on the way to Lampedusa. On the other side, it is stated that the conditions of the refugee camp in the island are very bad. The inhuman treatment at Lampedusa refugee camp has also shocked Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta. Letta said at a press conference he organized; "They say that the images are extraordinarily striking, that the matter will be investigated promptly and criminal sanctions will be imposed on those responsible." The UN High Commissioner for Refugees warned Italy regarding improvement of conditions from that center [15].



Fig. 3. Lampedusa refugee camp in Italy

Another country where refugees are sheltered to reach Europe is France, being both permanent member of UN Security Council and an EU state. As a cause for refugees to prefer taking shelter at France can be pointed out existence of its coastline to both Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean. The number of refugees desiring to go to England from Junge camp found in the port city of France, Calais on the coastline of English Channel has risen up two fold and reached at 6000 persons in October 2015

(Fig. 4). It has been observed that the refugees who live in this camp stayed in the hut-like shelters they have built with their own means. These shelters seem to be multi sized tents deprived from all kinds of social facilities [15].



Fig. 4. Calais Junge refugee camp in France

7 Comparison of Situations of Refugees in Europe and Turkey

It is seen that the borders of all the refugees and other refugees who have escaped from the civil war in Syria in general all over the world, the borders of the borders are closed, the wires are drawn and the walls are covered. It was reported at the end of 2016 that over 100,000 refugees await at the border of EU States [16]. According to UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres; “This is the largest refugee population displaced by a single conflict in one generation”. A population that needs the support of the world, but instead lives in very bad conditions and drifts to poverty, has emerged. When we look at Macedonia and Greece, where we can think of Europe as an entry, it is obvious that those countries are working as a filter [16]. Today, 54% of the Syrian refugees in Turkey are under the age of 18, while the remaining 46% is composed of women and the elderly, with more than half of the Europeans coming from young people and men [17]. European countries accept refugees who will be able to withstand

the hardships and who can afford everything for them, and the refugee camp images obtained confirm this view. Refugees in Europe, like all sports clubs, have to go to the language and/or vocational courses after they have passed all the difficulties and have stayed in the 1st and 2nd level camps. Home, work and social security are given to the successful refugees in these camps. However, when these refugees risk their lives in some way and go to Europe, if they have a qualification and their bodies are resistant, they are taken to European countries. For example, a four-lingual qualification is accepted as an engineer refugee, and a distinction is made between “good refugee” and “non-refugee”. It is expected that refugees will be able to show their sacrifice in order to stay in Europe [17].

On the other side, while 43,429 Syrians passing to Europe through Aegean Sea and Mediterranean Sea have been rescued by Turkish security units due to the sinking of their boats. 670,685 immigrants containing the citizens of many countries including Africa, Afghanistan and Libya have migrated to Europe through the Mediterranean Sea. Refugees not admitted by official application have endangered their lives in order to illegally enter these countries and thousands of people have lost their lives in the Mediterranean waters. Even though the shame photos of baby Aylan baby and other refugees whose lifeless bodies have hit the coast were bumped into their faces, the intensively of United Nations in this respect continues [16].

In the countries sharing an adjacent border with Turkey and Syria, open door policy is being applied without discrimination of religion, language, race and profession [17]. Only in Turkey, 2,743,497 Syrian asylum seekers are being hosted by presenting a sustainable life. Turkey spent totally \$12,000,000,000 for Syrian asylum seekers. This figure exceeds the Ministry of Interior budget of 2016.

This figure exceeds the 2016—Ministry of Interior budget. As for the contribution of international organizations to this expenditure is only \$418,000,000, or TL 1,200,000,000. As for the place of annual average expenditure TL 53,000,000,000 made by Turkey for the Syrians within the economy, it can be understood better in consideration of budgetary figures [18].

The number of Syrian refugees who took shelter in the neighboring countries of Turkey and Syria is approximately 5,500,000 persons. The number of refugees admitted to European countries is given in Table 2. Only the number of official applications made to European countries due to the civil war in Syria has reached up to 1,177,914. However, the total number of refugees admitted to European countries from various countries is around 327,000 [19].

Member States of the EU have agreed to provide €3,000,000,000 aid to Turkey in exchange of prevention of Syrian refugees in Turkey from coming to European countries. However, Turkey states that a very low rate of this money has been sent and that the aid made is inadequate.

Table 2. Number of refugees admitted to European countries

European states	Number of Refugees
Germany	140,910
Sweden	32,215
Italy	29,615
France	20,630
Holland	16,450
Austria	14,045
Switzerland	14,000
England	13,905
Belgium	10,475
Denmark	9920
Norway	6250
Bulgaria	5595
Greece	4030
Finland	1680
Southern Cyprus Greek Section	1585
Malta	1250
Spain	1020
Poland	640
Hungary	505
Ireland	485
Romania	480
Czech Republic	460
Portugal	195
Luxembourg	185
Lithuania	85
Estonia	80
Slovakia	65
Island	50
Slovenia	45
Serbia	40
Latvia	50
Liechtenstein	5

8 Conclusion

The requirements of accommodation and nutrition of the Syrian asylum seekers who have entered Turkey as a result of the civil war in Syria have been furnished. Approximately 3 million Syrian asylum seekers have been given temporary protection status in the direction of the non-return policy adopted by Turkey thus their needs for housing, nutrition, health and education have been met. The contribution made by

European states to the financial expenditures made by Turkey for the refugees has remained at a quite a low percentage.

Although approximately 1,180,000 official asylum requests happened to the European countries following the ongoing war experienced in Syria, the number of refugees accepted is slightly more than one fourths of the applications made. There are 2,790,767 Syrian refugees registered in Turkey, whereas in European countries, this number is only 512,990 refugees.

As a result, being a refugee for people is not a choice. This can be understood better if we can replace ourselves with the refugees. The refugees had a profession in the country they lived in, houses, shops, or cars. On one day, some of these people were bombed at work and their homes, their families disappeared or some of them lost their lives and were obliged to run away from the country leaving their assets behind. After all these things, they had to live in tents with a little help from the country. Every human being needs to earn money, live and receive good education for their children as a means of living humanely. Refugees are looking for a home environment where they can study, have children and have a regular life.

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