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## EDITOR'S NOTE

FRANCK DÜVELL (Guest Editor)

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International and mobility migration is of growing magnitude, of growing economic importance and of growing international concern. It cuts across diverse policy domains and is as much a matter for economic, trade and labor policy, foreign and development policy, and welfare and integration policy as it is for public order and security policy.<sup>1</sup> It is also of concern for international, regional, national and local governance in that it is dealt by UN agencies such as the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as well as other intergovernmental organisations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), regional organisations or processes as the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and the Budapest or Prague processes hosted by ICMPD. The EU's Council and Commission and their various agencies and working groups, then the various national government institutions as in this case Turkish ministries, agencies and local authorities and finally other stakeholders like civil society organisation. Thus policy processes are complex and may bring about certain tensions between the different mandates and interests, different stakeholders within and across the above groups and the different levels of activities. For instance, conflicts can arise between economic and domestic consideration, between international relations and immigration policy or between humanitarian and security concerns. Striking the balance between diverse interests or concerns is no easy task and subject to intensive disputes.

Turkey is entangled in complex processes of social transformations. First, Turkey has gone through a process of economic transformation from an agricultural to an industrial country. The country has diversified its industrial portfolio as much as its trade partners and now is a global player. It has weathered the recent global economic crisis well and displays continuous economic growth rates, though certain risks have also been identified.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, globally Turkey has risen to the 17<sup>th</sup> most powerful economy in the world. Politically, Turkey is transforming from a Kemalist (or secular) to a more religiously inspired state. The country has gone through a prolonged period of political stability and democratisation, notably when compared with many of its neighbours. However, some critics would argue that there is a certain regression in some areas as some social discontent has become apparent. Socially, Turkey

has enjoyed a significant rise of its GDP per capita and subsequently the broadening of its middle class; this is reflected in increasing levels of happiness of its people. Demographically, Turkey is a growing and youthful country, though it has moved to the threshold where its population starts ageing. Finally, Turkey is surrounded by troubled neighbours across the Mediterranean (Libya, Egypt), the Middle East and beyond (Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan) and some former Soviet Union countries (Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kirgizstan and various parts of the Russian Federation). All of these transformations or troubles facilitate Turkey's migration transition from an emigration to an immigration country.

For economic, political, cultural and foreign policy reasons Turkey engages in diverse ways with many other countries in its neighborhood, the wider region and the world. Turkish state institutions, entrepreneurs and charities invest in business projects, development and cultural exchange, such as construction (e.g. roads, shopping malls and apartment blocks), export TV and movie products, set up Turkish schools abroad, offer grants to foreign students, extend the Turkish Airline network and offer development aid. This is a two-way process and involves sending capital, goods, ideas and people to other countries as much as attracting capital, goods, ideas and people to Turkey. Sometimes, such policies and activities take on some more systemic form and systems emerge representing certain opportunity structures which may then bring about migration systems.<sup>3</sup> These measures also extend Turkey's soft power in the world. On the micro-level, these activities then impact on the perceptions people in other countries have of Turkey; as a consequence this might shape how people think about migration and could finally put Turkey on their mental map as a possible destination country.

In any case, Turkey has woken up to the fact that its migration characteristics have once again changed. A hundred or so years ago, before and after the collapse of the Ottoman empire, it was an immigration country. From the 1960s to the 1990s, it was an emigration country, as many people sought jobs outside of Turkey. Now it is changing once again an immigration country, in which labor, students, refugees and others flow into Turkey. Recent media reports suggest that further policy changes lie ahead. The new migration law entails subsequent changes to, for instance, labour market and the citizenship law. There are talks about recruitment schemes for highly skilled migrants, notably medical professions. Also the future of the hundreds of thousands of Syrian displaced persons is on the agenda and what to do with those who do not or cannot return. All

this is not without challenges. This special issue sets out to throw some light on and facilitate analysis and discussion of the migration transformation of Turkey, on some of the types, categories and nationalities of migrants, some of the policies that regulate this process as well as some of the sometimes hidden tensions this can create. These issues are not exactly new, and have for over a decade been heralded by scholars such as Icduygu, Kirisci and others, but they have become more pertinent in recent times. The contributions in this special issue have first been presented in March 2014 at Hacettepe University in Ankara at a workshop of the Turkish Migration Studies network (TurkMiS) based at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford convened by the author.<sup>4</sup>

Several contributions are devoted to the determinants of migration to Turkey. In the following article, Düvell summarises what is known so far, highlights some shortcomings in the existing data and research gaps and argues that Turkey is going through a migration transition from a net emigration to a net immigration country. This is put into the context of the macro-level determinants of migration and the discrepancies between Turkey and other countries in the region, and also of the legal-political opportunity structures. The migration transition does not imply that emigration has vanished but that more people move into than out of the country. The country follows the path of several other southern EU countries, notably Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece, who in the 1960s to 1970s were emigration countries but began attracting immigration from the 1980s, and 1990s onwards. Some of this, however, has been reversed again due to the 2008 economic crisis. Özgür et al. analyze another macro-level determinant, the emergence of a new small-scale migration system between Russia and Turkey and Azerbaijan and Turkey which is part of the much larger Eurasian system.<sup>5</sup> Others suggest there is another small scale migration system between North and West Africa and Turkey.<sup>6</sup> Some such migration systems overlap, notably with the Turkey-EU system, and migrants may slip from one system into the other and then continue their journey. Such systems are rooted in the economic, political and cultural relations of countries, and consist of social migration networks as well as a migration industry, including people smugglers. Turkey's Africa policy, to give just one example, further facilitates such linkages. These country systems thus not only facilitate the movements of capital, goods or information but also facilitate the movement of people, tourists, businessmen and workers in either direction and are thus as much a result of international relations as a process that deepens such relations. Such systems are cutting across state boundaries, are international

but also display transnational elements; they thus shape the relations of states in numerous ways.

In addition, processes inherent to the international flow of people in a broader sense also trigger immigration. Several contributions, for example Özgür et al. and Balkir and Südaş, demonstrate that non-economic types of human mobility, notably tourism but also retirement migration, contribute to the emergence of new demands for goods and services by these groups which then in turn entail some business and labour migration to satisfy these demands. This seems to be the case of migration to the southern and south Eastern Aegean coastal regions where in the wake of tourism immigration is observed. This also demonstrates that there is some transition from one type of mobility (like tourism) to another (like immigration) or from short-term to long term residence. For instance, in case tourists develop economic aspirations or aspire to stay for longer once they are beyond working age because they are no longer restricted to short holiday visits. This, however, may cause problems if it is not permitted by law or if people do not comply with legal requirements and can be once source of the emergence of an irregular immigrant population.

For obvious reasons, the influx of displaced persons from Syria and more recently from Iraq is high on the policy agenda and triggers more research. By 2015, 1.65 million Syrians were registered, a number which is unprecedented for Turkey. This flow is also distinctly different from other migration as it occurs against the will of the people who are forcefully displaced and thus falls under specific international legislation: refugee law. So far, Turkey has been internationally praised for keeping its borders open to people in need of protection. In the meantime, however, resilience of the Turkish people wears more and more thin in some parts of the country as occasional protests and outbreaks of violence imply. Also the perception of Syrians as 'guests' resembles the failure of countries such as Germany who understood immigrant workers as 'guest workers' and accordingly denied their integration into society. This suggests the need for a more adequate and coherent policy in particular towards urban refugees, or those not accommodated in camps, as Erdoğan (this volume) suggests.

Another popular theme running through these and other publications is that Turkey is a 'buffer zone' between migrant receiving countries in the EU and migrant sending countries in the East and South. It is thus suggested that Turkey plays a specific role in the world system and specifically in the global mi-

gration order in that it bridges the two main categories and thus represents a third category as a 'transit country' (though this characteristic is rather subordinated to the two other main characteristics according to which Turkey also is an emigration and destination country). However, Zijlstra who is investigating the case of Iranian migration and Alimia who is studying the case of Afghan migration to Turkey suggest that this process also undergoes transformation. Both show that more and more migrants no longer just transit through Turkey but realize that there are opportunities to live, work and conduct business also in Turkey. Thus, some intend or will de facto stay. Research on some African migration seems to point in the same direction.

Several articles ask why migrants chose Turkey as their destination. Two articles, Alimia and Alimukhamedov, specifically highlight the effect of Turkish schools abroad in raising the aspiration to migrate to Turkey. Alimukhamedov also found that Turkey is considered by some an attractive destination for international students, for instance, because it is closer to home, more similar to home, easier to get to due to its visa policy, cheaper than many EU or North American countries or because there are already relatives living in Turkey. For some Turkey might still be only their second choice but maybe a more realistic one than their dream destination. Biehl considers the issue from the micro-perspective not of the country as a whole but of a specific urban neighbourhood, Kumkapi in Istanbul. She explains the attraction that Istanbul has on migrants with the structure of its housing and labour market and its flexible and informal practices that suit mobile populations and populations in precarious situations including migrants. But also complex and partly conflicting market mechanisms, local policies and migration network effects (like previous immigrants or immigrant structures attract subsequent migrants) facilitate and maintain immigration.

International migration does not come without risks, because some migrants are more vulnerable than others. The darker side of international migration and mobility is human trafficking, either for purposes of sex work or labour in other sectors, and the exploitation, coercion and debt bondages that accompany such practices. Nawyn and Birdal argue that some such practices are facilitated by state policies and imply that by according policy reform this could be partially avoided.

A more traditionally important issue is the return of former emigrants back to Turkey or the remigration of second generation ethnic Turks abroad.<sup>7</sup> A

recent reverse in the net migration figures, notably with Germany, imply that more Turks are coming back than leaving. It could be assumed that Turks when they return would integrate easily because of their ethnicity, their language proficiency, their Muslim background and other cultural skills. Susan Rottmann, however, shows that they may face significant problems which are similar to those of other immigrants. At first sight this is surprising and contrary to any ad hoc intuition. However, this can be explained with processes whereby the indigenous populations perceive returnees as too adapted to 'western' culture and thus deviate from 'Turkish' values and customs. This then leads to some probably unexpected intercultural conflicts. Such conflicts are also the result of some broader rejection of 'European' values as opposed to Turkish values which has emerged in the wake of the declining enthusiasm for the EU. It seems that 'Europeanised' Turkish returnees become the first victims of the increasing alienation between Turkey and the EU. So far, because Turkey has been a major migrant-sending country, Turkish authorities have been mostly concerned with the Turkish Diaspora abroad, as in Germany or the Netherlands. However, Rottmann's findings suggest that return migration too is not without its challenges. This raises questions for reintegration policies addressing the Turkish society as well as the returnees and whether there is scope for Turkish and, for instance, German authorities to collaborate on such measures.

An important issue for migration studies is the reception of immigrants, the interaction and co-habitation of immigrants and hosts and the integration of immigrants into their host society, how this is best managed or whether a more *laissez faire* approach is taken. Academic and policy discourses dispute over two contrasting approaches: that integration is a one-way process whereby the 'newcomers' have to adapt to their host society or that it is a two-way process whereby the host society also has to change. So far it seems that the reality of increased global mobility, subsequent increasing diversity as well as the Turkish government's policy encourage more mobility which seems to contradict the Turkish people's views who, as Erdoğan and Semerci imply, perceive immigration as a threat. Turks in Turkey and Turks abroad, as Balkir and Südas show, also seem to make rather contrasting claims for themselves as immigrants abroad or as hosts to immigrants in Turkey. In the EU they purchase properties, claim political participation rights and bemoan discrimination whereas in Turkey they seem to deny such rights to immigrants and instead discriminate against them. In this volume Özgür et al. reveal that there are considerable tensions between certain migrant strategies and host populations'

attitudes. Notably the tendency of some immigrant groups to invest in property in Turkey is high, as for Russians whilst surveys demonstrate that Turkish nationals largely object immigrants' rights to purchase property in Turkey. This points towards inconsistent political values or even a double-edged standard held by Turks at home and abroad.

Such an asymmetry is also a challenge to Turkey's foreign policy. While Turkey promotes non-discrimination of equal rights for its citizens or naturalized Turks abroad, such an approach towards immigrants in Turkey does not yet seem to be supported by significant proportions of the population. Meanwhile, the discrimination of foreign nationals in Turkey could backfire and negatively impact foreign relations with other countries. For these reasons one might wonder whether there is scope for some public education on the universal rights of migrants whoever they are and wherever they reside and on principles of non-discrimination.

As implied throughout this commentary, the migration transition of Turkey and new and old forms of immigration are not without their challenges. The main current domestic challenges are the protracted displacement situation of Syrians, the significant levels of irregular migration, the integration of migrants and refugees and the according support of local authorities, and the information, preparation and education of the host society with regards to these challenges. Internationally, regional and global competition for certain types of migrants, like investors, the highly skilled or students, will further increase. And whilst it is suggested that Turkey's plans to attract health professionals from Greece and other countries<sup>8</sup> she would compete with Germany which has similar plans of. The outcome of such a competition would depend on the attractiveness of the respective country. It will be the migrants who make the final decision and winning their confidence will be part of the future game.

Turkey has already embarked in a timely fashion in 2006 on the modernization of its migration and asylum regime, not simply in response to EU demands related to its candidate status but also due to its own national interests. Notably, the new law 6458 on 'Foreigner and International Protection' and the creation of the Directorate General for Migration Management in 2014 are crucial steps in the right direction to properly manage and regulate international mobility, migration and international protection. However, most secondary legislation is yet to be finalised. Further reforms like of its citizenship, labour and other laws lie ahead. Also the new migration administration is still to be rolled out

across the entire country and provided with according personnel. Even more important will be the spirit in which these new legislations will be implemented. There are already some though probably inevitable glitches and also on the migrants' side there are some irritations. This can be expected to be resolved in due course but may require some patience and tolerance on the migrants' sides as well as some leniency and constructive responses on the authorities' side. Also the integration of these new temporary or not so temporary populations of diverse ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural backgrounds, as well as the education of the host society, are issues on the agenda. Turkey will want to do it its own way but some mutual learning from some other old and new immigration countries like the UK but maybe rather other more recent immigration countries like Portugal or Spain maybe well be on the agenda.

In conclusion, as Turkey is becoming a destination country for internationally mobile people and migrants, for students, businessmen, workers and retirees as well as refugees, the questions are whether Turkey, its legislation, authorities and society are ready for this, and what needs to be done to prepare its authorities and society for this new reality. ■

## Endnotes

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2. Jesse Colombo, Why the worst is still ahead for Turkey's bubble economy, *Forbes*, (May 3, 2014), retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jessecolombo/2014/03/05/why-the-worst-is-still-ahead-for-turkeys-bubble-economy/>
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4. For more information see <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/research/dynamics/turkish-migration-studies-group/>
5. Also see Karacay's seminal work on this issue, Aysem Biriz Karaçay, *An anatomy of a migration system: the case of Turkey and Russia* [in Turkish], unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Istanbul: Marmara University, 2011.
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