# Management of Irregular Migration in the Context of EU-Turkey Relations

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Turkey, at the crossroads of Europe, Middle East and Asia, has confronted with the mounting pressure of mixed migration flows in recent decades. Among these, management of irregular migration flows is an issue of particular concern due to the complex interplay between its security, humanitarian and economic dimensions.[1] In broad terms, irregular migration is the movement that takes place outside of the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries.[2] Because irregular migrants do not have the necessary authorization to enter, reside or work; the destination country treats their status as illegal.[3] Triandafyllidou clarifies the distinction between illegality and irregularity by defining irregular migrant as 'a migrant who at some point in his migration contravened the rules of entry or residence' whereas illegal migration is 'the act of entering in violation to national law and is confined to illegal border crossing (but not overstaying the terms of visas or residence) referring only a flow and not to stock of persons'.[4]

From a human rights perspective, migrants are entitled to protection under international law regardless of any irregularity under national law.[5] The European Charter of Fundamental Rights also reinforces the need to respect and guarantee the fundamental rights of all persons in the territory of the European Union (EU) regardless of their residential/migration status. In practice, however, management strategies towards irregular migrants range from very restrictive policies to more flexible approaches influenced by an array of security,

1   'In the last four decades, Turkey has become a country of destination and transit mostly for the irregular migrants'. For an in-depth analysis of irregular migration in Turkey, see A. İçduygu, 'The Irregular Migration Corridor between the EU and Turkey: Is it Possible to Block it with a Readmission Agreement?, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies Research Project Reports, 2011. For a broader and comprehensive analysis of irregular migration in Europe, see A Triandafyllidou, (ed) *Irregular migration in Europe: myths and realities,* Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, 2011.

2   K. Ay, M. Ozcan, R. Daysal and F. Isgoren, 'Irregular Migration and Voluntary Return', in *Comparison of European Union and Turkish Legislation on Migration,* Hilkka Becker and Ilknur Baysu (eds), IOM Publications, 2008, p. 81.

3   P. Fargues, 'Work, refuge, transit: an emerging pattern of irregular immigration South and East of the Mediterranean', *International Migration Review,* 43(3), 2009, pp. 544–577.

4   Triandafyllidou, pp. 2-3.

5   Council of Europe, CommDH /IssuePaper (2007) The Human Rights of Irregular Migrants in Europe', available at: https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1237553#P162_18999

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humanitarian and economic issues. In either case, migration policies driven solely by state-centric concerns are becoming increasingly inefficient in responding to the challenges caused by the interlinked pressure of globalisation and multi-layered migratory flows. Turkey's case is no exception to such adjustments given that the policies of the past are reformulated by the worldviews based on globalism, transnationalism and Europeanization.

In parallel with the developments taking place at the European and global levels, Turkey is going through a process of political and legal transformation, in which the adoption of a comprehensive approach to migration management becomes a pressing policy issue. This transformation is closely related to the EU accession process since the adjustment to the EU Acquis in the fields of migration and asylum has become a pre-condition for joining the EU. Despite the slowdown in accession talks due to a number of domestic and external factors since 2006, the launch of the Positive Agenda in December 2011 was considered a crucial step for its potential to revitalise the accession negotiations through enhanced cooperation in a number of areas including migration and visas. In its efforts to comply with the EU law, Turkey adopted the Law on Foreigners and International Protection in April 2013, a turning point towards an effective institutional and legislative framework for migration management. Moreover, Turkey's status as a major country of transit to the EU adds further pressure on domestic policy formation given that the EU has intensified its efforts to transfer the responsibility to non-EU countries of origin and transit in the general framework of the EU's external migration policy. The signing of the EU-Turkey Readmission

Agreement in December 2013 illustrates this point. This paper intends to provide a brief overview of such developments highlighting their domestic implications and the growing importance of irregular migration management in the context of Turkey-EU relations. The discussion also incorporates some of the findings of semi-structured interviews conducted with policy-makers, representatives of non-governmental organisations, security officers, lawyers and academics who are actively involved in the fields of migration and asylum.[6]

## THE EUROPEAN UNION'S MIGRATION POLICY AND EXTERNALISATION EFFORTS

Migration and its implications on European policy-making have become salient issues in recent decades. Although state-centric approaches to migration management and diverse policy practices were prevalent during the 1990s,[7] the EU competence on immigration, asylum and crossing external borders has developed remarkably since the Amsterdam Treaty's coming into force in 1999. The pressure of globalisation, coupled with the changing dynamics and patterns of migration in post-1989, has accelerated the process of policy harmonisation across Europe. Contextual factors, such as the intensification of labour mobility and the creation of a single

6  **The interviews were conducted by the author as part of a postdoctoral research project on the Europeanisation of migration and asylum policies in Southeast Europe. The project was carried out at the European University Institute under the supervision of Professor Anna Triandafyllidou.**

7  **M. Ugur, 'Freedom of Movement vs. Exclusion: A Reinterpretation of the 'Insider' – 'Outsider' Divide in the European Union',** *International Migration Review,* **29(4), 1995, pp. 964-999; Triandafyllidou, 2011.**

external border for the Schengen Area enabling free movement of the EU citizens, have all contributed to the process of reinforcing supranational policy mechanisms. Such developments not only set the legal framework of regulating internal migration, but also paved the way for collectively addressing the issues of external immigration into the EU, including the management of irregular migration.

Triggered by the EU's enlargement agenda towards Central and Eastern European countries, one of the early externalisation instruments for controlling migration flows to Europe was strengthening the return dimension of migration policy through the conclusion of multilateral readmission agreements with third countries.[8] Since the competence to negotiate and conclude readmission agreements with third countries was conferred upon the European Community in 1999,[9] the readmission and visa-facilitation agreements gained ever increasing importance in the EU's external relations. As will be elaborated later, readmission agreements have become effective technical instruments for transferring responsibility to non-EU countries of origin, transit and destination in the control/ management of irregular migration.[10]

The objectives laid out in the Amsterdam Treaty for creation of the EU as an area of freedom, security and justice were subsequently materialised through the multi-annual work programmes of Tampere (1999-2004), The Hague (2004-2009) and Stockholm (2009-2014).[11] These programmes also initiated the development of EU's policy on irregular migration as an integral part of the migration policies at the EU level.[12] Overall, the programmes emphasise the EU's determination for developing a common asylum and migration policy with a strong external dimension: fighting against international crime, enhancing external border control, and negotiating readmission agreements with third countries at the Community level. In terms of establishing a comprehensive framework for the EU's external migration policy, the Union adopted the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility in 2005 (renewed in 2011), which entails close partnership between the countries of origin, transit and destination.[13] In partnership with non-EU countries, the GAMM establishes a clear conditionality for legal migration and mobility: 'well-functioning border controls, lower levels of irregular migration, and an effective return policy'. Finally, in response to the increased migration pressures following

8   'The first multilateral readmission agreement was signed between the Schengen states and Poland in 1991'. For a comprehensive discussion, see S. Lavenex, 'Shifting up and out: The foreign policy of European immigration control', *West European Politics*, 29(2), 2006, pp. 329-350.

9   Title IV, Article 63 Treaty establishing the European Community.

10  I. Kruse, 'EU Readmission Policy and its Effects on Transit Countries – The Case of Albania', *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 8, 2006, pp. 115–142.

11  Presidency Conclusions, Tampere European Council 15-16 October 1999, available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/tam_en.htm; The Hague Programme: Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union, 13 December 2004, 2005/C 53/01, available at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/41e6a854c.html; The Stockholm Programme- An open and secure Europe serving the citizen, 16 October 2009, 2010/C 115/01, available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:115:0001:0038:en:PDF

12  Triandafyllidou, p.12.

13  European Commission, COM (2011) 743 final, 2011, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/homeaffairs/news/intro/docs/1_en_act_part1_v9.pdf

the political and social upheavals in North Africa and the Middle East, the EU member states adopted the plan 'EU Action on migratory pressures- a strategic response' in 2012.[14] The document specifies priority areas for action, including stronger cooperation with the countries of transit and origin on migration, enhanced border management at the external borders, and prevention of illegal immigration via the Greek-Turkish border.

While the above-mentioned developments only give a hint of the extensive scope of the internal and external dimensions of the EU migration policy; the increasing cooperation among EU member states at the external front could be related to a number of contextual factors. In his analysis, Huysmans draws attention to the social and political context where the development of a common migration policy takes place concurrently with a number of challenges faced by Western European countries. Such challenges include pressures of global economy, the rise of multiculturalism and yet the resurgence of xenophobic and racist movements, which overall lead to the increasing portrayal of migration as a 'danger to public order, cultural identity, domestic and labour market stability'[15]. Kirişçi also points to the direct impact of anti-immigrant political discourse and platforms across Europe in the early 2000s on the development of 'control and prevention' of immigration rather than the

human rights dimension.[16] Furthermore, the threat of global terrorism and its implications in the post 9/11 period posed new security challenges on the management of both irregular and regular migration. Accordingly, since the EU has become more actively involved in regulating migration in Europe, the issues of control-based, securitised migration policies have come under scrutiny for having been developed at the expense of a rights-based approach.[17]

On the other hand, there is also a shift towards 'management of migration', which, as İçduygu emphasises is closely linked to the emergence of 'good governance' discourse at the EU level.[18] Even though challenges faced by EU member states in coping with the pressure of migration are no less significant than before and the control measures still prevail, the migration management rhetoric also entails establishing stronger cooperation with third countries – thus transferring responsibility-through offering concrete incentives. Linking readmission agreements to visa facilitation agreements, for instance, provides a strong incentive for the third country in terms of creating opportunities for mobility, while also benefiting the EU in terms of preservation of security and reducing risks of irregular migration. As indicated in a recent report assessing the effectiveness of readmission agreements, the decision to negotiate visa facilitation agreements in parallel with the

14  Council of the EU, 8714/1/12 REV 1, 2012, available at: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%20 8714%202012%20REV%20 1&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa. eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F12%2Fsto8%2Fsto8714-re01. en12.pdf

15  J. Huysmans, 'The European Union and the Securitization of Migration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 38(5), 2000, p. 753.

16  K. Kirişçi, 'The Question of Asylum and Illegal Migration in European Union- Turkish Relations', *Turkish Studies*, 4(1), 2003, pp. 79-106.

17  Concerns over humanitarian aspects of the EU migration policy are addressed in a number of reports by the international NGOs, such as the Amnesty International, Red Cross, Human Rights Watch.

18  İçduygu, 2011, p.1.

readmission agreement negotiations has accelerated the process with Russia and Ukraine, whereas the negotiation process has not shown any progress in the absence of such incentives as happened in the case of China and Algeria. [19] It is in light of these developments that the increasing level of cooperation between Turkey and the EU takes place in the fields of migration and asylum and the following section aims to elaborate on this.

## MANAGEMENT OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION IN TURKEY: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, NEW CHALLENGES

Since the early 1980s, irregular migratory movements towards Turkey have been shaped by the country's geographical position between East and West, South and North routes of migration.[20] Its relatively prosperous and stable profile in comparison to continuing political and social upheavals in neighbouring regions, and the increasing immigration controls and restrictive entry measures implemented by the European countries contribute to Turkey's position as a destination/ transit country of irregular migration. [21] In addition to these factors, the application of liberal and flexible visa policies towards the neighbouring countries in the Middle East and Caucasus also contributes to irregular migration flows. Transit migration, irregular labour migration and asylum flows

are some of the major forms of irregular migration existing in Turkey today.[22] With regard to the development of management strategies, aligning the legal and institutional framework with the EU Acquis gained precedence with the adoption of the 2005 National Action Plan on Asylum and Migration. In 2008, the Asylum and Migration Bureau under the Ministry of Interior was established whose main tasks were increasing the administration capacity and drafting the law on migration and asylum. In the words of a respondent from the Bureau who was actively involved in the drafting process of the legislation,

> *'We included as many actors as possible. Civil society organisations, related ministries, academics, the UNHCR, the Council of Europe and the EU, they were all part of the consultation process. We worked carefully on transposing international treaties into national law, which was not done after Turkey signed the treaties. It is a comprehensive and pluralistic legislation. Recent developments at the EU level have also been influential but the legislation is never a copy of any EU Acquis, or a copy of a country's law. It is based on internal dynamics of*

19 European Commission, 'Evaluation of EU Readmission Agreements', COM (2011) 76 final, February 2011, available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0076:FIN:EN:PDF

20 A. İçduygu, 'Demographic Mobility and Turkey: Migration Experiences and Government Responses,' *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 15(4), 2004, pp. 8-90.

21 İçduygu, 2004.

22 Apprehension figures give a rough estimate on the numbers of irregular migration in Turkey. According to the figures provided in the European Commission Progress Reports on Turkey, the numbers of irregular migrants apprehended by Turkish authorities were around 95,000 in 2001 and 2002. In 2012, the apprehension numbers were decreased to 47,510; however, still indicating an increase of 7 per cent compared with 2011. While the apprehension numbers indicate a declining trend in the last decade, a comprehensive data set compiled by Icduygu (2011) provides further insight into the key features of irregular migration flows towards Turkey and from Turkey to Europe. According to these figures, 55,000 irregular migrants were apprehended annually between 1995 and 2009.

*Turkey, not drafted only for the EU or any other party, but drafted for Turkey, Turkey's needs'.* [23]

The adoption of the 'Law on Foreigners and International Protection' in April 2013, paves the way for formulating a coherent migration policy and setting up an institutional framework that would meet international human rights standards in the field of migration and asylum.[24] The law will be complemented by additional legislation on irregular migration management, integrated border management and other interrelated matters. Actors involved in the drafting process emphasise that managing regular migration would facilitate the process of coping with the pressures of irregular migration, which will be the fundamental task of the institutional framework. They also highlight that the drafting process extensively contributed to the emergence of a constructive dialogue between the state and non-state actors in the field of migration and asylum.[25]

The law is mostly considered as a by-product of Turkey's alignment process to the EU Acquis as it renders various effects of Europeanization mechanisms visible from institutional compliance to changes in domestic opportunity structures and perhaps most significantly, policy-learning process. It creates a comprehensive legal framework for the management of entry rules, visa regulations, work and residence permits. It also widens the scope of individual rights and freedoms for refugees, asylum seekers and

victims of human trafficking. Touching upon the management of irregular migration, it specifies the rules and procedures for deportation, administrative detention and removal centres. The institutional framework the law puts forward will contribute to the transferral of authority from security forces to the Directorate General for Migration Management, established under the Ministry of Interior. The Directorate is in charge of implementing policies and strategies concerning both regular and irregular migration.

The law has been criticised on several grounds. Firstly, the lack of emphasis on the economic dimension of migration is considered as a disadvantage, which Turkey needs to develop as an effective strategy if it wants to attract high-skilled migration and reverse brain drain. Secondly, the law maintains the geographical limitation to the 1951 Geneva Convention despite the de-facto situation that most asylum applicants come from non-European countries. As a pragmatic solution, the new Law differentiates between refugee status, conditional refugee status and subsidiary protection. Among the respondents, there are mixed perceptions concerning Turkey's decision to maintain the geographical limitation. Whereas most consider the decision as a 'political decision' and not a legal issue, some argue that the implementation of the new law would make it dysfunctional. Some respondents assert that it can be removed anytime if it serves Turkey's interest. Also, there is a general agreement that the issue should be open to discussion once Turkey is ready to accommodate refugee flows from its eastern borders when the administrative capacity is strengthened through cooperation and financial support of the EU.

23  Personal Interview, Ankara, January 2013.

24  Law no. 6458 on Foreigners and International protection has been published in Official Gazette on 11 April 2013, No: 28615, available at: www.unhcr.org.tr/uploads/root/law_on_foreigners_and_international_protection.pdf

25  Personal Interviews, Ankara, January 2013.

As recently addressed in a resolution adopted by the Council of Europe in 2013, the mounting pressures in the Eastern Mediterranean have actually made Turkey the main country of transit, in which the main flow is directed towards Greece. [26] While referring to increasing efforts of both Greek and Turkish authorities for effective management of borders, the resolution emphasises the need for greater support and burden sharing by the other member states of the Council of Europe. Against this background, Turkey's status as a major transit country for irregular migration flows to Europe has also intensified the development of management strategies within the general context of EU-Turkey relations. [27] One key issue with high importance for both sides was the signing of the EU-Turkey readmission agreement. Until reaching a final settlement on the terms of the agreement in 2011 and its being initialled a year after, seven formal negotiations had taken place since May 2005. The agreed upon text was finally signed on 16 December 2013, also initiating the EU-Turkey visa liberalisation dialogue. Despite the reluctance of the Turkish side to conclude a readmission agreement with the EU 'because of fears of becoming a buffer zone and dumping ground for irregular migrants', the eventual cost-benefit analysis has balanced the

negative consequences of cooperation. [28] In the words of a respondent from the Turkish Ministry of EU,

> 'The cost of an irregular migrant (living expenses daily) is between 40 and 80 euros. No matter 5 or 500 people are re-admitted after signing the agreement, this comes with fixed costs, establishing centres, employing special officers, etc. It is a costly process; yet we are ready to make concessions, improve border controls. But we have created conditionality. We would ratify and implement the agreement, but the EU should give what we deserve in relation to visa liberalisation'. [29]

Accordingly, the Commission's decision to initiate the visa liberalisation dialogue in exchange for signing the readmission agreement has been one of the major driving forces for Turkish policy-makers. This bargaining approach, however, has been criticised by representatives of national-NGOs on humanitarian grounds,

> 'Re-admitting, re-admitting, like a tennis ball. After a month, the migrant is back in Afghanistan facing a life-threatening situation. Let's say, the readmission agreement is signed, the EU has responded to all Turkish demands and the visa liberalisation is complete. This is very ugly. Just because I will drink coffee with pleasure in France, why would people be sent to death? This matter frustrates me'. [30]

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26 See, Council of Europe, 'Migration and asylum: mounting tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean', 2013, available at: http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/XrefViewPDF.asp?FileID=19467&Language=EN.

27 'In 2012, 56 per cent of detections of irregular entry into the EU occurred on the Greek-Turkish border'. See, Frontex Risk Analysis Network (FRAN) Quarterly, Issue 2, April-June 2012, available at: www.frontex.europa.eu.assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Fran_Q2_2012_pdf.

28 A. Burgin, 'European Commission's agency meets Ankara's agenda: why Turkey is ready for a readmission agreement', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2012, 19(6), p. 884.

29 Personal interview, Ankara, January 2012.

30 Personal interview, Izmir, April 2013. The respondent raises similar concerns in his own article published recently. See 'What does the readmission agreement signify?', December 2013, available at: www.todayszaman.com/news-334601-what-does-the-readmission-agreement-signifyby-tanerkilic-.html

The motives leading to the signing of the EU readmission agreement could also be linked to Turkey's own transformation process, as previously mentioned, which necessitates the development of a comprehensive approach to migration management. Within this context, establishing a closer framework for cooperation with the EU correlates with Turkey's own domestic policy priorities in its efforts to enhance the administrative capacity for migration and asylum systems, improved border management, and other related objectives. Indeed, increased financial and technical EU support is asserted in the final text of the agreement, as will be outlined below.

As set out in the agreement, readmission obligations are fully reciprocal, which implies that all contracting states must be prepared to readmit people on the same terms. While this is a general characteristic of the Community readmission agreements, the reciprocity argument raises questions in practice, since the Community is likely to benefit more than the other party given that the numbers of EU citizens illegally residing in third countries would be lower than the opposite.[31] The agreement specifies the categories that fall under the obligations of readmission for Turkey: '(1) Turkey's own nationals, including former own nationals who have either been deprived of or renounced their Turkish nationality, (2) the spouses and minor unmarried children of own nationals, (3) third-country nationals and stateless persons, including those who are holders of a valid visa

issued by Turkey entering the territory of a Member State directly from the territory of Turkey; holders of a residence permit issued by Turkey, and those who illegally and directly entered to the territory of the Member State after having stayed on, or transited through the territory of Turkey'.[32]

The readmission obligation does not cover third country national or stateless persons who have only been in airside transit via Turkey. It also does not include those who enjoy a visa free access to the territory of the requesting Member State and those who are holders of a visa or a residence permit of the Member State. As noted by a respondent from the Turkish Ministry of EU Affairs, the inclusion of non-nationals into the readmission agreement was an issue of disagreement during the early stages of the negotiation process since there is no equivalent international law obligation to admit non-nationals (including transit migrants).[33] Some argue that the international legal notion of 'good neighbourly relations' and the idea of European solidarity may establish this obligation; and the EU is actually seeking to transform international law by creating this obligation through state practice.[34] The agreement is complemented by joint declarations on the cooperation in the area of visa policy, on Article 7(1) emphasising that efforts should first prioritise returning the

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31  Kruse, p.122; M. Schieffer, 'Community Readmission Agreements with Third Countries-Objectives, Substance and Current State of Negotiations', European Journal of Migration and Law, 5, 2003: 356.

32  'Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation', European Commission COM(2012) 239 final, 2012, available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0239:FIN:EN:PDF

33  Personal interview, January 2013, Ankara.

34  Kruse pp.121-122; A Roigh and T Huddleson, 'EC Readmission Agreements: A Re-evaluation of the Political Impasse', European Journal of Migration and Law, 9, 2007, p. 364.

person to the country of origin, and a joint declaration on technical assistance ensuring that the EU will increase its financial assistance to support Turkey's implementation of the agreement. The EU's assistance will contribute to Turkey's institution and capacity building, including the purchase of border surveillance equipment, establishment of reception centres and border police structures, and support to training activities.

The readmission obligations for third country nationals or stateless persons will become applicable three years after the agreement comes into force. Although it would be unrealistic to assume that this transitional period would be sufficient enough to complete the entire restructuring of administrative and policy mechanisms, there are certain issues that could be prioritised for the establishment of a fair and efficient migration and asylum management system. First, effective implementation of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection is critical for addressing the deficiencies and improving the services provided for refugees, asylum-seekers and irregular migrants. The total population of refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey is expected to arise from 1,053,690 (December 2013) to 1,695,930 by the end of 2015.[35] This certainly necessitates further cooperation with the EU (both technically and financially) since Turkey's burden will increase once the readmission agreement comes into force concurrently. One area concerns the improvement of reception, screening and accommodation capacities. The EU is currently supporting Turkey through twining projects in its efforts to improve the reception and

removal infrastructure as part of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), including the opening of seven asylum-seeker reception and accommodation centres in various cities. Nonetheless, both government and non-government representatives raise concerns over the long delays in the finalisation of joint-EU projects. Second, despite difficulties raised by authorities, increasing the pace of concluding parallel readmission agreements with countries of origin and transit and as well as assisting voluntary return programmes would be essential. Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Moldavia, Iran, Palestine, Georgia, Romania, Somalia and Bangladesh appear as the top ten source countries of irregular migrants in Turkey between 1995-2009.[36] Turkey has so far concluded readmission protocols/agreements with Greece (2001), Syria (2001), Kyrgyzstan (2003), Romania (2004), Ukraine (2005), Pakistan (2010), Nigeria (2011), Russian Federation (2011), Yemen (2011), Bosnia-Herzegovina (2012) and Moldova (2012). Third, a thorough assessment of existing bilateral readmission agreements becomes a vital issue for related authorities in light of the recent readmission agreement signed between the EU and Turkey. In the case of Greek-Turkish readmission protocol, for instance, findings of previously mentioned fieldwork reveal that despite effective cooperation at various levels of governance, the implementation of the protocol has been problematic. According to the Greek authorities, the lack of political will is the reason of low readmission rates and Turkey has to take more responsibility in controlling its borders.[37] Based on the figures of Bureau of Migration and Asylum compiled

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35  See, UNHCR 2014 planning figures for Turkey, available at: www.unhcr.org/pages/49e48eofa7f. html

36  Icduygu, 2011, p.5.

37  Personal interview, July 2014, Athens.

by İçduygu, out of the 65,300 claims made by Greece between 2002 and 2010, Turkey accepted 10,124 to be readmitted. The actual number sent by Greece and readmitted by Turkey for the same period is 2425.[38] According to the Turkish authorities, the low rate of readmission stems from difficulties in identifying whether the migrant actually transited through Turkey since in most cases there is not enough evidence to validate this. Several respondents from the Turkish National Police also report that the readmission list submitted by the Greek authorities included migrants who actually entered from Macedonia and Albania.[39] Another issue concerns international protection. As raised by respondents from national NGOs; the right to apply for asylum at the first entry is not implemented since many migrants claim that they did not have the chance to submit their asylum application in Greece once they entered, and instead they were sent back to Turkey.

As briefly outlined in this paper; integration of migration and asylum issues into the EU's external relations gained significant momentum in the last two decades. As a central actor in the European migratory regime, the dynamics of international migratory movements will continue to shape Turkey's unique status as a country of origin, transit and destination. What further challenges will arise in the implementation of the new law or the EU readmission agreement remains uncertain. However, as Turkey's role as a transit and receiving country grows, management of irregular migration will continue to be a dynamic topic defining its role in the globalised world as well as the trajectory of its relations with the European Union.

38  Icduygu 2011, p.7.
39  Personal interviews ,March 2013, Ankara.

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**TESEV**

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