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**RESOLVING THE SYRIAN REFUGEES CRISIS: THE FAILURE
OF INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE AND ITS IMPACT ON
HOST-SOCIETIES**

Bachelor's Thesis

Supervisor: Lecturer Vlad Vernygora

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I declare I have written the bachelor's thesis independently.

All works and major viewpoints of the other authors, data from other sources of literature and elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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ABSTRACT

A civil war that started in Syria in 2011 has turned into an inextricable situation which directly and indirectly influences not only the Syrian Arab Republic and its population, but also other international actors and communities. The drastic multi-vectored intervention dragged the country known within particular borders into almost non-existence. Large number of casualties since the beginning of the conflict and unstable environment in Syria have pushed millions of people to leave their country. This tremendous number of people movement that started heading towards neighbouring states (Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon) then later on to Europe, has created a massive refugee crisis with significant implications for the international system as a whole. Although, it has been 5 years already since the beginning of the turmoil, there is still no accomplished result delivered in regards of solving the crisis. This failure of international response has rather brought other concerns related to the issue. The European Union (EU) had to face with the issue seriously after the refugee flow started approaching Europe amass at the beginning of 2015. Since then, Turkey and some of the EU Member States have found themselves as main actors in the middle of crisis. However, there is a vivid failure of establishing common ground on how to respond to the Syrian disarray by the EU, other European nations, and Turkey. This paper argues that lack of coordination between different European countries and Turkey led to a significant degree of social instability within host-societies; as well as made negative impact on refugees and integrative linkages related to security.

Keywords: the refugee crisis, Syria, the EU, Turkey, social instability, security concerns, failure of international response

INTRODUCTION

At present, the European continent as well as Middle East, Turkey and some parts of Africa have been experiencing the biggest migration movement since the end of WWII. Syrian crisis alone – incorporating a civil war, multiplicity of foreign interventions, conflicts between global as well regional powers, and hyper-activity in people smuggling – allowed for the situation when thousands of human beings, for whatever reasons, take the road in a hope for a new life found elsewhere. The conflict in Syria, which started in 2011, continues forcing people to leave their home country. Millions of Syrians were left homeless and began searching for new places to maintain their lives. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), 4.8 million refugees have fled to neighbouring countries Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq, hundreds and thousands to Europe and 6.6 million people internally displaced in Syria (Syria conflict at five years, 2016).

Syria has a strategic location in the Arab world and Middle East due to its border with Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Israel and Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea. Different ethno-religious groups populate Syria; the lion share of the population belongs to the Arabs, who take approximately 90 per cent of the total number; Kurds and Armenians constitute other largest groups respectively. When it comes to religion, about 74 per cent of population are Sunni Muslims, Alawites make up to 12 per cent, and the rest are Christians, Druzes and others.

The Syrian Arab Republic was established at the end of WWI as a French-controlled mandate and it declared independence in 1946. In 1963, the Syrian *coup d'état* brought the Syrian Regional Branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party to power under the leadership of Hafez Al-Assad. He stayed in power as President of Syria since 1971 till 2000. After his death, Bashar Al-Assad – son of Hafez Al-Assad – took over as his father's successor. In 2011, demonstrations by dissident groups against Assad regime countered by a harsh intervention from the government and this military response by the regime dragged the country to chaos. After a relatively short period, the conflict expanded to become a civil war with increasing number of casualties. As Simo Adams (2015) stated: “the net effect has been to turn Syria into the world's worst case of ongoing mass atrocities, civilian displacement, and humanitarian catastrophe”. Since the crisis came out with the civil war, other actors (e.g. Germany, Sweden, and Turkey) have taken their places regarding the problem. Especially, the enormous number of refugee movement and unending conflict in Syria moved affair to the international agenda. In other words, protests against the Syrian government, firstly, turned into a civil war and then grew into an international issue that particularly have to be

concerned by neighbouring countries and Europe; resulting a large number of deaths and displaced people.

This paper concentrates on the particular segment of migrants – the Syrian refugees heading to Europe. Apart from number of problems that are directly associated with the process, the wave of Syrian refugees who eventually get into the boundaries of the European continent brings problematic issues related to the concept of security. This paper argues that **the lack of coordination between different European countries have already led to a significant degree of social instability within those countries**. Furthermore, as suggested, “while the international community continued to be disunited over its response to the armed conflict, the latter’s scope and intensity, as well as its humanitarian consequences, reached unprecedented level” (Cuykens and Crikemans, 2013). In other words, the European Union (EU), other European nations, and Turkey have not established a common ground on how to respond to the Syrian crisis, and the common message has never been delivered to both refugees and the local people in the host countries. Therefore, this paper seeks to find out the impact of failure resulted by non-cooperative actions of different governments as well as insufficient and ineffective solution proposal by the EU and other responsible nations and at the same time, its reflection to society level in host countries.

In the last two years, Turkey had several meetings and summits arranged with the EU and EU Member States separately (particularly with Germany), in order to discuss the issue to find a resort for this continuing problem, which has been influencing countries in many aspects. However, those meeting and summits failed to be a successful response regarding the issue and meetings are seen, as they are not really solving the problem, but delaying the solution. The latest summit between the EU and Turkey took place in Brussels in March 2016. The two sides gathered to conclude what supposed to be a ground-breaking agreement. Nevertheless, the deal between Turkey and the EU have brought many doubts and questions, and the EU has already received plenty of criticism by politicians, journalists as well as the society due to the content of the agreement. For example, *The Financial Times* immediately noted in a distinct metaphorical way that “[t]he EU sells its soul to strike a deal with Turkey” (Münchau, 2016). This is to say that the mixed and highly confusing attitudes demonstrated by numerous governments in the process of dealing with the causes and consequences of the crisis have sent a cumbersome message to all parties involved in the process.

The Balkan nations and some other European countries have closed their borders to refugees in order to prevent new transitions and ensure security across their borders. In fact, although the measures, which are taken to prevent refugees and illegal migrants from entering the European continents, help to protect national security, yet, these obstacles push refugees to find other solutions in order to continue their lives. Furthermore, this situation becomes unmissable opportunity for migrant traffickers that are currently banking on it. Unfortunately, most of the genuine refugees have no other choice but go through this, even if it costs their lives. In that case, combating human trafficking/migrant smuggling is not only the issue of national security but also of the refugees' security. That is why it could be argued that the attitudes of states towards refugees make a social unrest in the society that threatens the security of migrants and people of the host-country. Regarding this, methodology wise, **this paper is to analyse the attitudes of states concerning the process of refugee crisis resolution and its impact on host-societies, refugees themselves as well as integrative linkages related to security.** The research will utilise data documentations and archival records as primary sources of evidence while attempting to make a comparative analysis between specific countries concerned with the issue. There are many researches and reports done related to the crisis but, since the fact that "Syria has become the symbol of an international crisis that seems unsolvable" (Cuykens and Crikemans, 2013), there is still a great need of new researches for the on-going issue. Thus, this research is aiming to contribute to a debate in the academic field of International Relations (IR) by providing analysis of the impact on societal level that is occurred as direct consequences of decision making of the EU and other countries, which are particularly concerned with the issue (e.g. Turkey, Germany, and Sweden).

In order to present the analysis, this observational research divided into three chapters. It will commence with a section on challenges the EU has to face because of the incompatible approach taken by and disagreements between the entity's Member States. Then, the chapter continues with responses of other countries, focus on the unstable and non-cooperative actions of the European countries and Turkey and their roles in that particular case, concentrating on Germany, Sweden, Austria, Denmark, Hungary, and Turkey.

The third chapter aims to analyse the degree of social instability in host-countries as well as circumstances, which influence refugees. In other words, it will be attempting to answer how the social situation is changing. In addition to that, while analysing the different cases, there will be focus on two important factors: the current status quo on refugees and their challenges and security concerns that threaten social peace. Furthermore, the first chapter will be arguing on the

real necessity for major powers to offer such a solution to what was once portrayed as “the world’s worst case of ongoing mass atrocities, civilian displacement, and humanitarian catastrophe” (Adams, 2015).

The conclusive remarks will be framed up by the final chapter, giving an overall summary that outline and describe the international response’s failure in terms of providing a working solution to the problem. The chapter will continue with providing suggestions on what can be done by the European countries and Turkey in order to work out a set of working solutions regarding the crisis.

1. THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS

In this chapter, the paper examines the international responses of different governments and the EU. Initially, the role and the policy of the EU (as an international actor) will be perused and later, the chapter continues with the figures, facts and policies of EU Member States (Germany, Sweden, Austria, Denmark, and Hungary) and Turkey.

1.1. The response of the European Union

The immigrants from Syria to other countries took place in two waves. In the first wave, Syrian citizens who have been displaced immigrated to neighbouring countries such as Lebanon and Turkey. The second wave of refugee crisis appeared in the summer of 2015. The large part of Syrian refugees who have long been sheltering in neighbouring countries but not have been reaching enough education, employment and health services has turned their route to Europe. While on the one hand Mediterranean coast has been witnessing of the tragedy of refugees trying to emigrate *en masse*, on the other hand, European states for the first time began to directly experience the effects of the Syrian civil war. According to Frontex data, the number of refugees detected while trying to enter to EU border reached to 340,000 between June-July 2015 while this figure was around 280,000 in all of 2014 (Number of migrants in one month above 100 000 for first time, 2015).

Nevertheless, as suggested, the approaches so far to Syrian refugees of the EU Member States remain well below the EU's capacity and expectations. For instance, Germany, known as a country where most asylum seekers head for and implementing more compassionate policies compare to the other Member States, has temporarily suspended the Schengen due to the increasing demand (Migrants: queues build at border as Germany suspends Schengen, 2015). Hungary built a 175 kilometre-long barbed wire along its border with Serbia in order to prevent entering of refugees to country but later it removed it from border (Hungary removes barbed wire fence from border, 2015). In addition to that, EU Member States has entered into serious disagreements and hard debates on the refugee issue. Especially, Eastern European countries with harsh anti-immigration policies at the EU summits hindered the EU by opposing against the distribution of migrants with quota method in the process of producing an effective solution. For example, the Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orbán, who exhibits a strict anti-immigration stance, said “We are Hungary. We do not see the world through German eyes” and stated that Hungary does not

want to be forced into any sanctions on migration and every country must decide whether accept refugees or not (Werkhäuser, 2015). While Slovakia was announcing to take a small number of refugees but choosing them only from Christians, the Czech Republic started writing numbers on the arms of refugees' the ones who are accepted to country (Keating, 2015).

According to Gressel (2015), the main reason for the strict attitude of Eastern Europe that they have not experienced mass migration issue before as likely Western Europe countries, which demonstrates more moderate stance. When it comes to Keating (2015) opinion, he argues that the economic challenges of Eastern European countries are also a significant factors that causes of negative attitudes on immigration. This is because these countries are expected to be brought economic prosperity within the EU instead of experiencing the problems received as a result of a great wave of immigration. Due to differing ideas and interests within the Union, for the EU, it is seen difficult to produce a joint action and policy in finding a solution to the refugee crisis. The European Commission (Rasten et al., 2015) defines the 'refugee crisis' as a situation of:

[...] extreme pressure characterised by a large and disproportionate inflow of third country nationals or stateless persons, which places significant demands on its asylum system. The crisis situation should be of such a magnitude as to place extreme pressure even on a well prepared and functioning asylum system, while also taking into account the size of the Member State concerned.

1.2. Countries' response to crisis

1.2.1. Germany

With the beginning of the civil war in Syria, thousands of people were hosted by neighbouring countries. Therefore, Europe did not face with the issue for a long time until refugee movement has started moving toward Europe in the beginning of 2015. With an increasing number of refugees as well as asylum seekers to Europe, refugee crisis has become the problem of the EU in general and the issue of Germany particularly due to its prominent role regarding the crisis.

Nowadays, Germany represents a country, which is hosted the highest number of Syrian refugees among other European countries, and since it is the main country of destination in Europe it is preferred in the first place by refugees. There are several reasons why Germany has become the most preferred country in Europe in refugees' sight. In this respect, would be the best option to analyse the refugee policy of Germany in order to have a better idea about Syrian refugees' wish to come and German government attitudes toward them.

Figure 1: Migrant route to Germany



During 2015, more than a million refugees and migrants arrived in Germany. According to data migrants and refugees mostly from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Albania and Kosovo. However, Syrian refugees create the largest group of those asylum seekers (Migration, asylum and refugees in Germany: Understanding the data, 2016). The dramatic images resulted at Hungarian and Balkan countries' border compelled German public opinion to take action. Germany took leading responsibility within the European Union and a result of this, the Dublin Agreement fell into abeyance for a while by Germany gates were opened to refugees in Hungary. This attempt of the German government was perceived as Germany is implementing 'open door' policy for refugees. That is why thousands of refugees have turned their ways to Germany. Moreover, since there is no an agreement on a common policy established by the EU as well as unsuccessful response of the EU to the crisis, the flood of refugees continues unchecked, especially migrants coming to Germany – the preferred destination country for the majority (Influx of refugees: An opportunity for Germany, 2015).

Another factor that influences refugees' preference of Germany and the reason why Germany will remain a 'magnet' for refugees is “due to its high level of prosperity, favourable labour market situation and a widely signalled culture of acceptance” (Influx of refugees: An opportunity for Germany, 2015). However, on the other hand, this enormous number of refugees flow to Germany led to new problems on the political level as well as society level.

At the beginning of refugee flow to Europe, Germany was one of the countries that was initially welcoming refugees into the country. Although the Chancellor Angela Merkel's manner as indicating that Germany would be willing to accept close to a million asylum seekers criticized by a lot of people and politicians but she stated that “[t]here can be no tolerance of those who question the dignity of other people. There is no tolerance of those who are not ready to help, where, for legal and humanitarian reasons, help is due” as a response to criticism (Syrian Refugees: Crisis in Germany, 2015). One of the biggest fear is if opposition side, referring to people who are against accepting refugees, will create big problems for society as well as a large number of people arriving in Germany. Some Germans believe that the government was not successful to give a satisfactory response to newcomers and forced local communities to assist refugees with monetary help. Another significant factor that frightens society is the risk of increasing right-wing Neo-Nazi group demonstrations against asylum seekers and Syrian refugees. However, the majority of the population do not support the idea and attitude of this extremist groups. According to research done by *Berlin Institute for Integration and Migration Research (BIM)* at the Humboldt University of Berlin, German society approaches refugees from more a humanitarian perspective and a

welcoming attitude. The research demonstrated that the number of associations established for refugees has increased by 70 percent in last three years (Coşkun, 2015).

Nevertheless, more than half of the population of Germany believe that refugee influx has brought along security concerns (Demir, 2015). There are several reasons why society considers the situation as a security threat. The first and the most significant reason is whether allowing huge number of refugees to country give a possibility to terrorist groups enter to the country as well. German authorities searching if Syrian asylum seekers in the northeast of Germany have any relations or linkages with ISIS in Syria (Germany probes Syrian asylum-seeker for ISIS links, 2015). Especially, Paris attack of November 13, 2015, enhanced anxiety of local community after claims regarding whether the terrorist was a refugee from Syria. As a result, Germany also re-established border controls since it is “urgently necessary for security reasons” as stated by Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere of Germany (Germany implements temporary border checks to limit the growing tide of refugees, 2015). Furthermore, Germany requests more assistance from the EU in order to overcome large influx of refugees and security concern of situation.

When it comes to Syrian refugees’ point of views, Germany is one of the most preferred countries among the other EU Member States due to the good attitude of society, better life conditions, and job opportunities. However, on the other side, there is a sharp rise in the number of neo-Nazis groups and attacks against asylum seekers home and migrant shelters. The number of extreme-right activities increased 784 ceases in 2015 while it was 235 in 2014 (Neo-Nazis in dock over plan to bomb refugees, 2016). There were four suspects from the group of Neo-Nazis called themselves as “Old School Society” arrested in May, 2015 just two days before their plans to attack against asylum seekers home in the eastern state of Saxony. Therefore, the rise in far-right attacks has brought other challenges for government, German society, and refugees in terms of security. Furthermore, the country's Minister of Interior, Thomas de Maiziere, has brought the idea of planning a new law to agenda regarding refugee integration process. According to the proposal, learning German language will be a requirement for refugees who do not want to lose their right of residency in Germany. The main purpose of the law is to provide a ground which helps refugees to integrate into German society in a better and faster way (Tomkiw, 2016).

1.2.2. Sweden

Sweden experienced the second highest numbers of asylum seeker application from Syria after Germany – among the EU countries – since the beginning of conflict. According to the Swedish Migration Agency, almost 163,000 refugees requested for asylum. The primary reason of refugees' desire to live in Sweden is suggested to be because "Sweden became the first country in Europe to rule that all refugees from the war-torn nation would be granted permanent residency in the light of the worsening conflict" (Why do refugees prefer Sweden to Denmark?, 2016); the logic here is "to ensure that an asylum seeker can live safely and securely in Sweden until the situation in Syria improves" (Fargues and Fandrich, 2014). Moreover, Sweden also has a reputation for being a "safe haven" among Syrian asylum seeker due to its open and receptive attitude toward Syrian refugees (Ostrand, 2015). Hence, Sweden has become a country granted asylum for the high number of Syrian asylum seeker. Furthermore, it has become the place where refugees feel safe and would like to live. However, Swedish government took the decision of tightening the rules for border restriction. According to the *Washington Post* report, "even Europe's humanitarian superpower is turning its back on refugees" (Witte and Faiola, 2015). Migration Minister of Sweden, Morgan Johansson said: "We're willing to do more than anyone else, but even we have our limits."

Sweden has always been a country "with a global reputation for egalitarianism, the recognition of human rights and support for international justice" (Christensen, 2016). However, unpleasant situations such as in October 2015, the fire took place two Swedish schools which were being used as shelters for asylum seekers (Witte, 2015) and the news about the masked men run through Stockholm train station in order to threatening to 'punish' refugee children in February 2016 (Christensen,2016) has besmirched Sweden's humanitarian efforts toward Syrian refugees. According to the Swedish Migration Agency, number of violent act and threats at asylum facilities has increased more than twice in 2015 compared to previous year. On the other hand, there is a significant increase in arson attacks against asylum seekers and refugees (Masked men in Stockholm threaten to 'punish' refugee children, 2016). These worrisome manners of both types of newcomers – asylum seekers and refugees – and anti-refugee groups have been destroying peace in the society. A civil servant, Ribbenvik who explains asylum policy on Swedish television stated that "Society is changing. It's changing in a profound way, and some people are having trouble in handling that" (Witte, 2015).

1.2.3. Austria

Since 2015, Austria has faced with severe refugee flow from Syria. The country has become one of the most preferred destination for refugees due to its strategic position. Many people come overland by following the route of Turkey, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Romania and Hungary. In 2015, Austria received around 90,000 asylum application which is about three times more than previous years (Dearden, 2016). However, Austria's recent policy has been criticized due to its unstable manner as while demonstrating welcoming attitudes towards refugees, on the other hand, restriction on migrants (Reimon, 2015).

The Syrian refugee issue has brought about to an extent of global resettlement needs. The UNCHR organized a conference in December, 2014 in order to make 130,000 places available for Syrian refugees till the end of 2016. The EU Member States promised to have 38,000 Syrian refugees by February 2015. Austria is located in the third place by pledging to receive 1,500 refugees under the Humanitarian Action Syria Program, after accordingly Germany which pledged 20,000 under its humanitarian admission program and 10,000 individual sponsorship visas and Sweden with 2,700 places (Legal entry channels to the EU for persons in need of international protection: a toolbox, 2015).

In January 2016, Austria has closed its border by aiming to send more refugees back to Slovenia. Austria is known for being a country which put the first upper limit for refugees among the EU Member States (Arens 2016). According to *Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) News* from the first day of refugees influx started enter to Austria more than 3,000 people work voluntarily by providing, food, clothing, medical care, blankets and legal advices as well as projects aiming to help young refugees integrate into society. Nathalie Winger is one of the voluntary worker since the beginning also involving integrative projects for teens who arrived Austria by hoping a new life. She signified her unhappiness toward the Austrian government decision as setting quota for the number of refugees allowed enter to country. However, she also point out other countries' decision said that "[i]t's not right to criticise Austria because France, the UK, Poland, Hungary, and all the Balkan countries all said no" (Traill, 2016). On the other hand, there are big number of people who do not pleased with newcomers especially the ones who have unfortunate experiences with other asylum seekers in the country particularly Chechens from the Russian Federation. The bad impressions given by other migrants greatly undermined the attitude of local people toward new refugee flow. Irritating incidents happened so far has been impelling locals to believe that asylum seekers endanger the social peace (Hipfl and Gronold, 2011).

1.2.4. Denmark

The Europe has been caught unprepared for a large number of Syrian refugees arriving in Europe. Therefore, EU Member States have found themselves under a big pressure to take the urgent action regarding the best solution and providing help. However, existing asylum system failed to perform its role successfully and could not meet requirements for arriving refugees. One of the EU countries failed to give a satisfactory response is Denmark, ‘a known Eurosceptic nation’. Thomas Nørgaard Andersen asserts in his book that in September, 2015 the Prime Minister of Denmark, Lars Lokke Rasmussen announced the country’s decision of willing to accept 1000 more refugees and addition to that granted extra 100 million euros in order to the keep external border safe of the EU. However, a few months later he gave up this proposal (as cited in Rastend et al., 2015).

In 2015, Denmark has received 21,000 application for asylum (Delman, 2016). Although the country has never been among the most popular countries for immigration but it has not been an unwelcome place for migrants either. Since the geographical position as being located between the most preferred European countries of today’s refugees Germany and Sweden, Denmark has become one of the important destination of refugees. However, Denmark government’s harsh attitude toward Syrian refugees causes a plenty of discussions especially, regarding the law which forces refugees to leave their valuable items in order to pay their accommodation during application process for asylum. After heavy criticisms government let refugees to keep their items of sentimental values such as, wedding rings or another items which have essential importance (Kingsley, 2016).

On the other hand, when it comes to society level, the report written by the Confederation of Danish Employers (DA) found out that Denmark has not been successful to integrate immigrants into Danish society. According to report 75 per cent of migrants who arrived Denmark in early 2000s are still unemployed (Tunakan, 2015). The head of the DA, Jørn Neergaard Larsen interpreted this figure as “It is catastrophic that we are so bad at integrating refugees into the Danish job market. This is not acceptable for our refugees, and as a society”. There is also increase in xenophobia and intolerant manner toward refugees as well as Danish Muslims (Tunakan, 2015).

1.2.5. Hungary

Hungary is one of the popular destination used by migrants to go richer European countries due to its geographic position. However, refugees were not very welcome to Hungarian border and they have been stopped crossing the border. Hungary took attention and received plenty of criticism due to its harsh interventions towards refugees. The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that “the treatment of the refugees by the Hungarian police was 'not acceptable'” (UN 'shocked' over Hungary action against refugees, 2015). Furthermore, the controversial statement made by Prime Minister Orban against necessarily ‘Muslim’ influx into Europe has created another challenge for people who trying to pass the main gate away, Hungary, in order to reach central or northern Europe. Actually, Hungary is the only country which has been able to stop daily refugee influx in Europe (Szijjártó, 2016).

Péter Szijjártó (2016), the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, pointed out the importance of protecting border as a primary duty of government because if a country is not able to protect its border that proves inability of state protecting its citizens. Furthermore, this led many people entry to the country without being controlled and knowing about who and for what reason they are coming into the territory. He also took attention to Paris attack and stating that “[t]he migration crisis is not unconnected to the recent events in Paris” while considering refugee problem as a security concern. The main reason is the possible linkage between refugees coming from Middle East, including the region controlled by the so-called Daesh or ISIS.

From the host-society point of view, according to interviews with twelve hundred people in Hungary conducted between September 11 and 15 in 100 localities by Median Public Opinion and Market Research Institute, the percentage of people who would like to put harsher measures targeting the migrants has increased from 66 per cent to 79 per cent in 2015 compared to previous year. Besides that, majority of the population see refugees as threat due to the possibility of contagion, believing that new diseases will be gotten into the country and spread over (The attitude of Hungarians to the refugee crisis, 2015)

Hungary sees possible solution as firstly defending southern border of Hungary, the southern border of Schengen area. However, it only may occur if each the EU Member States put efforts regarding protection of borders according to needs such as common manpower, police officers, military personnel, vessels, ships, planes, helicopters etc. (Szijjártó, 2016).

1.2.6. Turkey

Turkey has been experiencing migrant flow for many years, hosting millions of temporary and permanent migrants. Most of the migrants are people who had to leave because of the unstable situation in their own country. In last thirty years, Turkey has provided temporary protection for people from Afghanistan, Iraq, Philistine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia.

The Syrian crisis which returned to civil war by Assad regime's harsh intervention toward protests, affects Turkey both directly and indirectly due to the fact that it is neighbouring country of Syria, since the beginning of the conflict. Since April 2011, Turkey has started to have refugees from Syria by ensuring unconditional 'open door' policy. Turkey opened its door toward refugees without any condition is because people who came from Syria for a new place to live, are considered as guests rather than legal refugees. After a few months, Turkey has provided 'temporary protection' which ensure protection without any pressure to return and any limit imposed while they are staying. Subsequently, in 2014, a new law regarding the migration entered into force which gives them 'conditional refugee status' or temporary asylum under the newly established General Directorate of Migration Management, GDMM (Ahmadoun, 2014). The assumption was that Assad regime would collapse and refugees would go back to their country (Öner, 2014), this was another reason why Turkey apply 'open door' policy toward Syrian refugees. However, the situation turned into a real challenge with the arrival of millions of people rather than as it was assumed. The enormous refugee influx into Turkey has made country the largest host of refugees in the world. The number of Syrian refugees in Turkey is over 3.1 million registered. However, provided camp settings are not sufficient and people have restricted usage of basic services which makes up 90 percent of Syrian refugees (Turkey: Refugee crisis, 2016). Therefore, Turkish government had to review its policy for both countries as well as refugees benefit because wrong decisions taken by the government made it fail to accomplish well conditions in the camps and humanitarian aids for Syrians.

The Syrian refugees flow has been increasing day by day and the government policy toward the issue has created another controversy among public. Most of the people do not have a good feeling about the strategy that is proposed by the government and also the way how it is being implemented as it is reflected in the reports of different think tanks and public opinion researches (Demir, 2015). According to Transatlantic Trends report in 2014, 67 percent of people in Turkey do not approve migrant policy of government and other research done by *Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies* (EDAM) shows that 86, 2 percent of population do not want to receive

more Syrians moreover, want people who already arrived to turn back their country. The survey done in the beginning of 2015 by *Global Policy and Strategy Institute* found out that Syrian refugee crisis is one of the topics that local people are worried most.

There are different aspects that shape public opinion about refugees. The first and one of the most important factors that influence people's point of views regarding the policies about asylum seekers is economic implications and losses occurred as a result of great expenditures for Syrians by the state. According to estimates by European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), Turkey has spent over € 7 billion since the beginning of the crisis (Turkey: Refugee Crisis, 2016). The research of the University of Hacettepe indicated that people, who think having refugees will damage the county's economy, makeup over 70 percent of the population.

The extreme number of migrant influx has brought another big question at the society level. Although the return of Syrians is not acceptable by the majority of the population while the war is still continuing, the perception of the permanence of the Syrian people is quite negative. For instance, the percentage of people who think that it will lead to major problems of Syrians staying in Turkey is 76, 5 per cent. According to the striking findings regarding the matter only "one in five" of people believe that the Syrians can adapt to society in the long run.

Another factor that makes local people worried about is security. Huge numbers of Syrians coming to Turkey and 'open door' policy complicate the process of recording necessary information about refugees. That is why it causes many people enter to country without enrolment. Furthermore, that gives possibility for many people with bad intentions, criminals and even terrorist to enter the country with wrong documentation or with different name. Therefore, the lack of controls in borders has been creating a serious security problem that threatens both country and people.

Regarding security aspect of the crisis, there are several factors to be analysed. The first one is security concerns within country affecting society. The 'open door' policy and negligence of necessary controls at borders led millions of people enter to the country. In other words, people with bad intentions for instance, who have a connection with terrorist groups also had an opportunity to get into Turkey's border. These unexpected and unpleasant incidents have a bad influence on local people's point of views about refugees. People who have experienced unfortunate situations have lost their 'trust' toward Syrian refugees and the number of those people are increasing especially in border cities of Turkey. According to the research, 62.3 percent of the

population believes that Syrian asylum seekers disturbing the peace and social morality at places where they live by involving crimes such as violence, theft, trafficking, and prostitution. This rate is even higher in cities which are closed to border. Moreover, more than a half of the population do not want neighbour with Syrians (Demir, 2015).

Another aspect that threatens security is the increase in migrant smuggling. A huge number of refugee flow and poor, insufficient living conditions has created inevitable opportunity for smugglers to abduct asylum seekers who have hope to find better places to live. Turkey is the main destination for refugees to find a way to Europe that is why migrant smuggling has become one of the most important challenges to be faced for the government. Unstable policies, inadequate life circumstances and tempting offers by smugglers force people to choose the illegal way to achieve their dream which is basically to continue their life. According to the UNHCR, more than 3 hundred thousand people used risky sea route in order to across Mediterranean just until August of 2015 (Fleming, 2015). Since the beginning of conflict hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives while crossing the borders by illegal ways. Syrian refugee crisis has created bilateral troubles as a result of failure to provide comprehensive responses. On the one hand, it is a biggest and worst humanitarian problem of our time which cost millions of people lives on the other hand, at state level it is a severe threat that influences many countries in terms of security.

2. ANALYSIS OF CASES

In this chapter, section of paper is to analyse the responses of different governments which are listed above as Germany, Sweden, Austria, Denmark, Hungary and Turkey to the crisis. As first, the impact of governments' attitude toward the refugee issue on society in host countries is to be examined with a comparison of different manners of states. In addition to that, the local people's opinion and behaviour toward newcomers in different nations will be explained. Secondly, the focus is given to the situation of refugees by answering to what extent the responses and policies have an influence on them and their life in host countries. Finally, the security concerns endanger social peace at the different level of society is to be analysed.

2.1. Social implications of crisis in host countries

The process that began with the spread of domino effect, which has been created in Arab Spring period, over Syria has turned into a chaotic environment that influences many different elements. The biggest victim of this chaotic structure is the civil population as it has been in every conflict. One of the main problems of Syrian issue is refugees/ asylum seeker question occurred as a result of the extended of internal conflict to international agenda. The Syrians escaping from the war as they play an important role in changing the demographic structure of the region also takes an important place in domestic politics of countries where they have been taken as refugees.

Since the beginning of the crisis, Turkey and other neighbouring countries of Syria such as Lebanon and Jordan have started to receive a large number of people who seek asylum. However, due to the fact that the conflict has not ended and the increase for refugee flow has impelled other international actors such as the EU and its Member States, the USA and Russia to take action regarding the issue. This is because the crisis has different dimensions which have several impacts on the different level. For instance, from a state level, while some states considering the problem as a humanitarian crisis and taking immediate measures and acting for the sake of resolution of the issue, on the other hand, some other countries took it slow to respond the crisis.

When it comes to the impact of government's attitude toward refugee crisis, it is one of the significant factors that explains the reason why migrants willing to arrive in Europe and the reason of what makes Germany and Sweden most preferred and Denmark least attractive country for

refugees. The welcoming manner demonstrated toward migrants by the local as well as respected persons of countries such as prime ministers or other statesmen encourage refugees to come. However, hate speeches or harsh precautions, on one hand, make the country less appealing for refugees to live and on the other hand, influence public opinion regarding newcomers. According to the analysis done by *Gallup*, is an American research-based, global performance-management consulting company, “people's attitudes toward immigration were generally in line with their governments' existing policies.” (Esipova and Ray, 2015).

In the society level, there are several concerns of the local community about refugee crisis. One of the fear is economic implications of the issue. A large number of people feel uneasy about economic outcomes. The general opinion is that accepting migrants to the country will bring along severe financial challenges. Especially, in Eastern Europe, where economic power is weaker than Western European countries, the question regarding monetary issues is bigger and is more concerned with local people. Furthermore, people are also worried due to the belief that Syrian refugees will be taking the job opportunities of the local community and may receive more income. In this context, the main culpable role player is government, more specifically, mismanagement of government and lack of regulation system. For instance, in Turkey, where the population is larger and the unemployment rate is already pretty high, Syrians are being run as cheap labour in industry, in agriculture and small-scale business in illegal ways. According to the survey done by the Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM), the percentage is changing from 40 per cent to 100 per cent of unemployed, in border cities of Turkey, who believe that the reason of losing their job is Syrians (Orhan, 2015).

From another point of view, there is an assumption that taking refugees will bring positive impact on the economy. The main argument is that the countries with advanced economies such as Germany can take this crisis as an advantage to develop their economies further by benefitting from the labour force of refugees entering the country. Thus, if the government creates a convenient environment and make necessary regulations regarding this possible opportunity, by then, this will provide mutual benefits.

Another factor that causes a big concern in the society is integration process of migrants. There is an increase in xenophobia with the arrival of new refugees to the continent and that threatens social cohesion in Europe. Due to the differences in language, culture, religion, lifestyle, way of thinking and so forth, both sides have a question mark on their mind about whether if they will be able to overcome challenges and accomplish living together peacefully. However, there

are people from both sides who make the challenges even harder for society as well as migrants. For instance, on one hand, refugees experienced very intimate effort through warm welcoming represented by local people while entering the country, however, on the other hand, there is an unwelcoming attitude by far-right parties. This unpleasant approach damages both local people's effort who tries to provide social stability and guarantee social peace, and also refugees' sentiment which is already broken due to the previous experiences. Furthermore, this put a negative impression on newcomers mind and draws negative images about the country in international arena.

The countries, which have unpleasant experiences with previous migrants, exhibit more conservative attitude toward new migrant flow. This emphasizes the importance of refugees' role in the integration process. Even a few amount of refugees' nasty behaviour could cause to put the same label to all others because of serious prejudice toward them.

2.2. The situation of refugees

The Syrian refugee crisis has become one of the hot topics of global arena. Since it is still an ongoing-issue, the news, solution proposals, facts, researches has been taking its place on the international agenda. On one side, there are plenty of discussions regarding the better solutions for the problem and many criticisms of current policies that governments applied. On the other side, every day dozens of people has been losing their lives while attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea by boat with a hope of a new life.

One of the main challenges was the insufficiency of existing asylum system of countries and in addition to that, false steps taken by governments which badly influence state itself, the society of host country and refugees as well. The best examples to this can be given as Turkey and Germany. Since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, Turkey has received the largest number of refugees to the country by implementing 'open door' policy. Very similar to that, Germany has become a country which accepted the biggest number of Syrian refugees amongst other EU countries, again by applying 'open door' policy proposed by the Chancellor Angela Merkel. However, with an excessive amount refugee coming to both countries, the governments have failed to fulfil the needs and provide food, water, shelter and basic health care. As it is mentioned earlier more than 3 million Syrians registered in Turkey. Besides this number, it is estimated that there

are thousands of people who entry to the country without being registered. This has been demonstrating the fact that the door is also open for malicious people and possible damaging incidents in Turkey as well as European countries since Turkey is a passageway for Syrians who are willing to arrive Europe. The lack of regulation system in host countries has been creating significant damages. From refugees' point of views, they are reduced to live in very bad conditions even sometimes without basic needs and this forces them to find another place with better circumstances especially for their children in order to maintain their lives. In this stage of their life, migrant smugglers seem a reasonable option in their opinions which threatens countries' security and refugees' safety as well.

After recovering from the stage of the struggle for survival, the other challenge is to be accepted by the public indulgently. In this stage of their life undermined by hate speeches or bad discoursed of people, particularly politicians. Furthermore, this disturbing manner not only offend refugees but at the same time influence public opinion about them. Thus, this creates another stage for refugees with a full of difficulties.

2.3. Security concerns

The security concern of refugee issue has different dimension as influencing the different level of a country. The main and might be the most challenging security problem has occurred due to lack of regulations or controls at borders. This creates a big concern especially at the border cities. However, since governments failed to established common policy or regulation system regarding the issue that made harder to control an unmanageable number of refugee movement.

The unsuccessful policies of governments bring about troubles in society level even in the countries which opened their doors to refugees since the beginning. The main reason of that is mismanagement of governments by failing to provide necessary assistances and to ensure the security at borders. In this context, ensuring the security does not mean to close borders or put barbed wire but it is necessary to make sure that not letting possible attackers into the country. Especially, the presence of ISIS terrorist group and its current attacks in Europe create the biggest fear and prejudice in the society. In this regards, the countries located in transitions such as Turkey (as the main passageway to Europe), Hungary and Austria (two important destination on the way

to Germany which is one of the most popular place of refugees) have the greatest responsibility to make standardized controls at the borders and provide required safety.

On the other hand, another factor that threatens public security is the increase in opposing groups against refugees. In different countries of Europe, happened severe mistreatment toward refugees and attacks targeting asylum shelters. Although they are not the majority, the incidents still create social instability and endanger social peace. Another reason of fear is the possibility of increasing this figure.

The security concern also occurs as a result of harsh attitudes of states toward refugees. The more countries increase regulations and restrict rules, the higher tendency of migrants in using illegal ways. In this regard the host countries have a significant responsibility while introducing their policies. It is especially necessary in order to stop migrant smuggling.

3. CONCLUSION

The last chapter of the paper summarizes the discussion and gives overall conclusion. While pointing out the failure of international response to crisis, possible solutions will be discussed.

3.1. Summary

This paper has studied the international response to current Syrian refugee crisis. First of all, the EU's response and its challenging regarding to provide solutions examined. Later on, the paper gave clearer picture by demonstrating various facts and their policies of how different governments approach the issue. The research argued that the EU, EU Member States and Turkey could not establish a common framework for the solution this deficiency has brought many problems along. The cases and analysis which are listed above has become an evidence of the failure of international response to crisis and its negative impact on countries -in terms of security and social instability- , refugees and society.

The EU and 6 countries' (Germany, Sweden, Austria, Denmark, Hungary and Turkey respectively) attitude examined. The figures and facts were indicated and government's policies were presented. The analysis proved that the damages on society and refugees are occurred directly or indirectly as a result of countries' (government's) attitude. This is mainly because if the state failed to provide a successful policy and put necessary regulations, it concluded with a complicated outcome. In a case where the country acted too flexible, it is resulted with management disorder due to high amount of refugees. While this does a severe disservice to refugees due to lack of providing necessary assistance on the other side, this endanger country's security by accepting people without controls. When it comes to the situation where the country approached the issue with a hard stance, in that case, this hard line manner directed refugees to find another way which mostly becomes illegal way in order to continue their life. Thus, this again threatens country's security and also refugees' life. On the other hand, the attitude of government also influences public opinion about the issue.

The research points out the importance of country's (more specifically statesmen's) approach toward an issue. The governments have the greatest impact on whether crisis will be better or worse. Since, their attitude influence different aspects and different level of a country

both internal and external, government has to take many factors into consideration while taking decision especially for the issue which affects different actors as well.

3.2.Possible solutions

The initial and the most important step is concerted action of countries in order to achieve success in terms of ensuring peace and security. Stable and similar approach of each government are necessary to overcome the issue with least damage. This has great importance because ‘Syrian refugee crisis’ is not an issue that could be handled by one or two states. Since the beginning of the civil war in 2011 till present-day, Syrians has been searching for new places where they can sustain their lives. As the figures indicate, it will take a longer time to end of the crisis than it was expected. Therefore, shortcomings should be eliminated as soon as possible by involving of all responsible states.

Deficient in asylum system has become one of the most problematic matter in host countries. Regarding this, there is a great need to establish a common framework on how to improve it and provide necessary assistance for refugees. Another important point here is that countries with a strong economy should be aware of being responsible for providing a financial support to other countries with weaker economic power in case when the situation exceeds their capacity.

Nevertheless, every country has its own specific responsibility to protect their country and people. While decisions are taken regarding to find the resort, their influence, outcomes, public opinion and other important factors has to be considered. Otherwise, this could create another challenge for the state.

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