The Instrumentalization of the Syrian Refugee Crisis and Conflictual Cooperation between the EU and Turkey

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by Elif Schlieter (M.Sc.)

First Advisor: Prof. Dr. Marc Helbling
Second Advisor: Prof. Dr. Ariadna Ripoll Servent
Additional Member of the Committee: Prof. Dr. Thomas Gehring

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Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Marc Helbling
Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Ariadna Ripoll Servent
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ABSTRACT

This study examines the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis, which began in 2011, by the European Union (EU) and Turkey. Within the framework of the EU's external migration policy, the EU opted to transfer its protection responsibilities to Turkey, offering financial and technical assistance in return for Turkey's adherence to a stricter border regime. After years of ongoing negotiations, the EU and Turkey formalized the EU-Turkey Statement in 2016. This agreement, conceived with an emergency mentality, outlined economic and political incentives for Turkey's cooperation. The EU and Turkey viewed the crisis and the Statement as an opportunity to achieve their foreign and national policy objectives. In addition to addressing migration management, the Statement also established the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT), a coordination mechanism under which various projects have been implemented to assist Syrian refugees and affected host communities in Turkey. In February 2020, Turkey announced the suspension of the EU-Turkey Statement, expressing its discontent with the deal and ceasing its preventive duties at the borders. This resulted in significant conflict at the Turkish-Greek border and strained bilateral relations with the EU. Despite this, FRIT cooperation continued at the technical level, presenting a compelling scenario in EU-Turkey relations where conflict and operational cooperation coexisted. This study unpacks the causal mechanisms that led to this complex outcome.

Keywords: Externalization, Instrumentalization, Refugee Crisis, FRIT, Turkey

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	The Justice and Development Party
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DG HOME	Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs
DGMM	Interior Ministry Directorate General for Migration Management
EEAS	The European External Action Service
EU	The European Union
FRIT	The EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation
IO	International Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IR	International Relations
JHA	The Justice and Home Affairs Council
LFIP	Turkish Law on Foreigners and International Protection
MLG	Multi-level Governance
MS	Member States
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

I. The Research Focus and the Aims of the Study

The 2011 Syrian civil war and the following Syrian refugee crisis have challenged the core structures of international refugee protection. In response to the growing security threats of forced migration, the European Union (EU) started implementing off-shore protection measures and shifted its protection and reception duties to third-countries to maintain the safety of the EU's Schengen area. This shift in protection duties empowered the role of third-countries in migration management. The neighboring countries to Syria, namely Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, shortly became prominent actors and cooperation partners in the EU's external migration policy with increasing arrivals of Syrian refugees. Among these countries, Turkey has been hosting most Syrian refugees as a transit country to the EU since the start of the conflict (Statista, 2023)[1]. In addition, Turkey's dynamic yet unstable relationship as a neighboring candidate country to the EU has made the EU-Turkey cooperation in migration management particularly interesting for this study.

Throughout the EU-Turkey cooperation, starting from 2011 onwards, the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement has become the most acclaimed effort of the EU to externalize its asylum processing to a transit country. Turkey became one of the crucial strategic partners to the EU to curb the irregular crossings and fatalities on the Eastern Mediterranean route by agreeing to keep the Syrian refugees within Turkish borders, ensuring stricter border control and preventing irregular crossings. In return for its cooperation, Turkey started to receive financial assistance and was offered political incentives, including visa facilitation for Turkish citizens, opening new chapters in accession negotiations, and updating the Customs Union with the EU. The Statement also created a coordination mechanism called 'The EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT)'[2] to assist the Turkish state in managing the refugee crisis and to support the

[1] In 2022, Turkey hosted the largest number of Syrian refugees, with a total number of 3.5 million. Lebanon followed as the second-largest host, with 831,000 Syrian refugees, and Jordan came next, hosting 660,892 Syrian refugees (Statista, 2023).

[2] This dissertation frequently refers to the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey throughout the dissertation. It is abbreviated as 'FRIT' from here on.

Syrian refugees and affected host communities in Turkey. This study argues that this bilateral negotiation between the two actors and the implementation process of cooperation contributed to the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis.

i. The Instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis

Instrumentalization of migration is defined as the series of attempts of an actor to exert power by strategically creating or exploiting migration flows. This involves threatening to overwhelm the capacity of the target state to accommodate the inflow and potentially destabilize the target state. In this case, migrants can be instrumentalized as a means of coercion or weakening a target country (Sie Dhian Ho and Wijnkoop, 2022). Similarly, the EU defines the instrumentalization of migration as '*a situation where a third-country instigates irregular migratory flows into the Union by actively encouraging or facilitating the movement of third-country nationals to the external borders, onto or from within its territory and then onwards to those external borders* (European Commission, 2021a).'

Exploiting a target actor and instrumentalizing migration to realize domestic and foreign policy goals are not new phenomena, and there are several examples of it throughout the late history of migration diplomacy. The EU's lifting of sanctions for Libya in 2004 in return for Libya's promise to prevent the irregular crossings of North African migrants and asylum seekers across the Mediterranean is one of many examples. The decision was made in favor of Libya, although neither Libya decided to disband its weapons of mass destruction program nor publicly disapproved of terrorism (Greenhill, 2010)[3]. As a recent case, this study is interested in the instrumentalization of migration within the framework of the EU and its third-country relations after the start of the 2011 Syrian refugee crisis. Since the beginning of the refugee crisis, Syrian refugees have been constantly instrumentalized as a means of coercion in EU-Turkey relations. The research focus of this study is the EU's established cooperation with Turkey in migration management, through which both sides persistently instrumentalized the refugee crisis.

In March 2022, the EU published a strategic compass, stating that the EU would enhance its resilience and ability to counter hybrid attacks and foreign interference against the

[3] Please see Greenhill (2010) for more examples on the instrumentalization of migration, such as the NATO and the Kosovo conflict and the United States and the Haitian Boatpeople Crises.

instrumentalization of migration by third-countries (Council of the European Union, 2022). As much as instrumentalization by third-countries is perceived as foreign interference and risk for the EU, this study suggests that instrumentalization occurs as a reciprocal act. The EU's negotiation process with Turkey and the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement are considered acts of instrumentalization, together with Turkey's coercive use of implementing the Statement against the EU. In other words, this study considers both the EU and Turkey as two actors who exerted power by strategically exploiting the Syrian refugee crisis.

Taking this into consideration, instrumentalization is conceptualized within this study as the EU's and Turkey's series of attempts to use Syrian refugees as a tool to persuade or constrain the other actor in achieving domestic or foreign policy goals. This dissertation focuses on the details of the EU-Turkey cooperation scheme established in the aftermath of the 2011 Syrian refugee crisis. It explores both the EU's crisis-induced external migration policy with Turkey and Turkey's active role as a constructor and implementer of this externalization.

II. The Research Gaps and Contributions to the Literature

This study makes several contributions, along with several sub-contributions, to the broader academic literature on the EU's external migration policy, its third-country relations, and the literature on EU-Turkey relations. It argues that the growing scholarly interest in understanding the effects of the Syrian refugee crisis on the EU's external dimension and how this crisis affected its relationship with Turkey requires further attention. The first contribution of this study highlights that the EU's externalization policy and the Syrian refugee crisis response were often viewed from an EU-centric perspective. Most studies focus on the EU's asylum and migration policy while neglecting third-country foreign policy choices. The responses of third-countries and their cooperation with the EU, which ultimately determines the success of the EU's external migration policy strategy, have often been overlooked.

a) The role of third-countries in EU's external migration policy

Reslow (2019b) touches on the issue of overlooking third-country roles in the EU's external migration policy and argues that migration policy outcomes are determined not only by the EU institutions or the Member States but also by third-countries. Third-countries cannot be seen as a 'black-box'; their preferences and characteristics must be included in a multi-level governance

approach. The EU should think beyond applying its 'one-size-fits-all' approach in its external migration policy (Wolff, 2014; Reslow and Vink, 2015; Reslow, 2019c). The EU must acknowledge that third-countries substantially shape the external migration policy, and each country should be handled independently. Therefore, this study claims that the influence of third-countries is as crucial as the EU's role in migration policy-making and implementation.

There are studies that examined the EU's external migration policy and third-country relations, addressing third-country characteristics. Examples include but are not limited to studies on Morocco (Carrea *et al.*, 2016; El Qadim, 2018, 2019; Tittel-Mosser, 2018), Lebanon (Seeberg, 2018), Jordan (Panizzon, 2019a, 2019b), and African countries (Criekinge, 2009; Adam and Trauner, 2019). These studies are mainly based on cooperation schemes with the EU, introducing issues on modern legislation and aligning visa policy for the countries in question. However, they lack either an investigation of the 'carrot' of the eventual EU membership (Groenendijk, 2019) or a multi-level governance perspective that considers the roles of different actors at national and supranational levels of governance in the EU and the third-country.

Some recent studies avoid Eurocentric perspectives and examine the interest of third-countries and the influence of third-country actors on policy processes and outcomes (Niemann and Zaun, 2023). Examples include research on EU Mobility Partnerships in Jordan and Cape Verde (Tittel-Mosser, 2023) and the role of Jordan in migration diplomacy with the EU and implementing the 2016 Jordan Compact (Vaagland, 2023). Among these studies, detailed research on Turkey as an active actor in migration diplomacy is lacking. Given Turkey's candidate status, proximity to the EU, and its central role in migration management, further research is essential to examine its role in shaping the EU's external migration policy.

b) Turkey as an active constructor of EU's external migration policy

Turkey is the initial example of this research, different from other third-countries, as a candidate country to the EU since 1999 and the EU's leading cooperation partner in managing the Syrian refugee crisis. On the one hand, EU-Turkey cooperation is similar to other regional crisis-led cooperation mechanisms, including stricter migration control tools and financial incentives in return for Turkey's compliance. On the other hand, Turkey's relationship with the EU stands out differently as it has prior accession experience with the EU. Secondly, FRIT cooperation mechanism has created an unusual interplay between different EU, Turkish, state and non-state actors at various layers of governance. Labeling the EU-Turkey cooperation that started after

the refugee crisis solely as a migration agreement would be an understatement due to its political and structural complexity. Therefore, the second contribution of this study outlines the EU-Turkey cooperation scheme as a different example than all previous EU approaches and contributes both to the literature on the EU's external migration policy and EU-Turkey studies.

c) Migration diplomacy as an object of research in the EU-Turkey relations

It is argued that the literature on migration studies includes only a limited number of studies focusing on the link between irregular migration and international relations (IR) from a foreign policy perspective. Notably, further empirical research is needed to answer the questions of how foreign policy and migration policy intertwine in third-countries that experience mass influxes with the Syrian refugee crisis (Aras and Mencütek, 2015; Gökalp Aras and Şahin Mencütek, 2018). How can the changing dynamics in the EU's external migration policy be explained vis-à-vis its relations with refugee-hosting third-countries? What have been the drivers of the changes in the third-country foreign policy? To close this research gap and answer the relevant questions, 'migration diplomacy' as an object of study and research, which is missing in the IR discourse, must be addressed and theorized (Adamson and Tsourapas, 2019).[4]

Similarly, Üstübici (2019) asserts that the impact of the EU's externalization on different forms of migration diplomacy is yet to be theorized. Turkey provides a prosperous empirical case to explore migration diplomacy between the EU and third-countries. Müftüler-Baç (2022) argues that Turkey has gained power over the years due to the increasing mutual dependency with the EU on migration management. Turkey has started to function as a 'gatekeeper' for the European Union's external borders since the start of the Syrian refugee crisis and obtained considerable leverage as a bridge between Syria and an increasingly 'immigration-averse' and securitized EU (Okyay and Zaragoza-Cristiani, 2016).

Likewise, Okyay and Zaragoza-Cristiani (2016) state that Turkey had progressively reversed the asymmetries of power between the two sides by demonstrating continued commitment to act as a gatekeeper vis-à-vis an increasingly fragmented and anxious EU against the arrival of Syrian refugees. However, a detailed analysis that takes Turkey as an active participant in the course of events within migration diplomacy is lacking in the literature. Therefore, this study

[4] If interested, please see Vaagland (2023) for a recent study that explores migration diplomacy between donor and host countries, focusing on the relationship between the EU and Jordan as a case study. The research investigates how donors perceive strategies employed by host countries.

explores the growing power asymmetry in migration diplomacy between the EU and Turkey in managing the Syrian refugee crisis while also contributing to migration studies by linking irregular migration and foreign policy formation.

d) Multi-level governance in EU's external migration policy and Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT)

Reslow (2019b) states that unintended consequences arising from the EU's external migration policy with the Syrian refugee crisis result from the multi-actor nature of this policy and policy interactions among actors. The literature on the implementation and evaluation of EU external migration policy is in its infancy, and future work should consider all policy outcomes: those that were intended and unintended. One possible unintended outcome of the EU's externalization is the emergence of multi-level governance between the EU and third-countries in migration management.

Multi-level governance has not been traditionally applied to studying external migration policy (Reslow, 2019c). However, the cooperation between the EU and Turkey could present an example of multi-level governance within the cooperation setting of FRIT. While this cooperation did not entail a transfer of authority and power from the state to local levels of governance in Turkey for project implementation, it did establish frameworks for multi-actor and multi-level cooperation. Therefore, the traditional understanding of multi-level governance, which supports 'the existence of overlapping competencies among multiple levels of governments and the interaction of political actors across those levels (Marks *et al.*, 1996)' cannot be observed. Yet, FRIT still facilitates increased interaction among different actors and governance levels in a multi-level setting.

Kirişçi (2021) argues that FRIT is the relatively successful but inadequately appreciated part of the EU-Turkey Statement. The implementation of FRIT has created a poorly acknowledged but impressively constructive public space of cooperation between various actors: the European MS, the European Commission, NGOs, Turkish government agencies, municipalities, civil society and international organizations. The success of FRIT in terms of intra-institutional dialogue is an underlooked area of cooperation, and this study aims to fill this gap.

Therefore, the main contributions of this study include synthesizing various data and literature on the EU's external migration policy following the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, exploring

migration diplomacy and Turkey's increasing role and leverage as a third-country in EU-Turkey relations, and examining the unintended consequences of the EU's externalization, such as the multi-level cooperation mechanism of FRIT.

III. The Research Design

The research design of this dissertation relies on the qualitative analysis method of process-tracing. This method presents a causal design at the end of the dissertation, explaining the EU-Turkey cooperation with a timeline, starting from the 2011 Syrian refugee crisis until the suspension of the EU-Turkey Statement in 2020. The aim is to develop a sufficient explanation for the puzzling outcome: conflict and cooperation in EU-Turkey relations. Both primary and secondary resources are used to identify and reveal the causal mechanisms leading to conflict in bilateral relations and cooperation among different actors under FRIT coordination mechanism. This study, therefore, applies the form of case-centric explaining-outcome process-tracing.

As part of the data collection, fieldwork involving twenty-one semi-structured expert interviews was completed in Brussels and Turkey between 2018 and 2020. The EU Delegation in Ankara, the Ministry of EU Affairs, the Turkish Presidency of Migration Management, international organizations like the United Nations and its bodies of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Organization for Migration (IOM), academics from Turkish universities working in the field of migration, and national and international non-governmental organizations have been among the main interview partners. The number of interviews was limited to the availability of the interview partners, the access to the respondents, and their willingness to express their opinions on a highly politicized issue in Turkey.

To complement and support the data gathered from the expert interviews, comprehensive desk research, including various Turkish newspaper articles, Turkish policy reports, and public speeches and statements of Turkish and European state leaders, Turkish ministers of Foreign Affairs and Interior Affairs, and other Turkish political actors, are analyzed. The methodology, including expert-interviews and desk research, data categorization, and analysis strategy, are discussed in greater detail in Chapter IV of this dissertation.

IV. The Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into eight main chapters. The first is the introduction, which briefly presents the thematic issue this dissertation deals with and gives the research focus and aims of the study. It discusses the leading research gaps and the study's main contributions to the literature. After the introduction, Chapter II outlines the development of the EU's external migration policy. Its emergence, the debate on the securitization of migration and the legal and institutional framework of this policy are explained. The framework is followed by related conceptual and theoretical approaches defining the EU's external relations with third-countries and the tools of externalization.

After the second chapter, another theory chapter is needed to understand the instrumentalization debate with power relations and foreign policy formation in migration studies. For this purpose, Chapter III summarizes the relevant IR theories and the different concepts of power in IR relevant to this study. After discussing the foreign policy migration nexus in detail, the chapter focuses on migration diplomacy as it constitutes the main framework for examining EU-Turkey relations in the coming empirical chapters. At the end of the two theoretical chapters and introduction of the main relevant theories and concepts in the literature, Chapter III proposes the dissertation's main research question and the main hypotheses that follow it.

Following the conceptual and theoretical chapters II and III, Chapter IV outlays the study's methodology and research design. The main methodological framework is explained with the fundamentals of 'explaining-outcome process-tracing'. In addition to the methodological approach, the data collection strategy and data categorization are explained. Following two theoretical and conceptual chapters and introducing the dissertation's methodology, Chapter V comes out with a bridging element to the study, focusing on the dissertation's case study. Turkey's asylum and migration policy in a historical context is given, and a discussion is started on Turkey's relative power, changing foreign policy aspirations, and domestic constraints like the coup-attempt, public opinion, elections, and the economic crisis. The chapter connects the previous debates on the migration-foreign policy nexus by introducing intervening variables of Turkey's policy decisions.

Moving on, Chapter VI establishes the empirical part of the dissertation with an analysis of the EU-Turkey cooperation. It explains Turkey's response to the Syrian refugee crisis over the

years, beginning with Turkey's open-door policy and continuing with the externalization of the Syrian refugee crisis. The chapter continues by analyzing the evolution of EU-Turkey cooperation and the signing of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement. This chapter concludes with a detailed assessment of the implementation of the articles raised in the Statement.

Following the previous chapter, Chapter VII is the second empirical chapter of the study. It further analyses EU-Turkey cooperation and touches upon the issues perceived negatively by Turkey, which led to the conflict in bilateral relations, such as financial assistance, unrealized articles on visa facilitation and re-energizing accession negotiations, EU's lack of support for Turkey's military operation in northern Syria. The chapter then discusses FRIT coordination mechanism, its unintended outcomes of the cooperation at technical levels of governance, its impacts on institutional engagement and coordination, and Turkey's economic, political and social developments. Chapter VII concludes with the empirical findings and develops a causal model presenting the events leading to conflictual cooperation.

Lastly, the conclusion chapter finalizes the dissertation with an executive summary of the study, its main arguments, discussions, and the assessment of the hypotheses, final notes on the EU's externalization policy and cooperation with Turkey, leading contributions of the dissertation, and thoughts and remarks on future research on the main subject areas.

CHAPTER II: THE EU'S EXTERNAL MIGRATION POLICY

I. Introduction

This chapter outlines the main literature on the theoretical and conceptual structure of the EU's external migration policy to understand the EU's approach towards third-countries in migration management. The chapter points out the emergence of migration as a policy area that intersects with increasing security issues (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2010) and presents how the EU responded to this growing challenge by developing an external dimension of its migration policy. The externalization of migration has brought various forms of close cooperation structures with third-countries. The purpose of establishing these relations has been to ensure and maintain internal security and avoid challenges that arise from migration, mainly irregular migration, organized crime, and terrorism. The most prominent examples of externalization and third-country cooperation in the 2000s have been the EU's 2004 Eastern Enlargement, which integrated the Eastern European countries into the EU with the principle of conditionality, and the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP)[5], which was launched in 2004 and is an ongoing cooperation strategy with the third-countries in the EU's southern and eastern neighborhood.

The EU's external migration policy has been substantially challenged since the 2011 Syrian refugee and protection crisis started. Around five million Syrians were forced to leave Syria to seek refuge within the region and later at the EU (European Commission, 2022). Due to its size and volume, this forced migration caused a humanitarian crisis. Since the beginning of the crisis, there have been discussions and divisions on sharing the burden of the refugee crisis among EU Member States (MS). It should be reminded that MS hold exclusive competence to decide on the number of refugees they would agree to host in their territory. Furthermore, while all states have a legal obligation to support refugees within their borders, no state has any legal obligation to support refugees in third-countries' territory; it is discretionary (Betts and Loescher Gil, 2011, p. 19). For the MS, the second option of supporting Syrian refugees in a third-country became more engaging with the start of the Syrian refugee crisis.

[5]Please see European Commission (2020a) for more details on the European Neighborhood Policy.

Instead of accepting Syrian refugees in a more significant number and managing to establish a fair burden-sharing mechanism among MS, the EU opted for transferring its refugee protection responsibilities to third-countries, notably Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, as they have been hosting the largest number of Syrian refugees (European Commission, 2022). The EU has chosen to actively provide financial and technical assistance to manage the issue through bilateral cooperation agreements.

The agreements were conducted with a crisis mentality and changed the notion of responsibility-sharing in international relations. To understand the EU's prevailing external migration policy and strategy towards third-countries, the following sections portray its externalization policy in greater detail. First, the issue of irregular migration in an increasingly securitized international system is explained, as securitization in a historical context has paved the way for developing the institutional and legal structure of the EU's external migration policy. After introducing the institutional and legal framework in detail, its third-country cooperation mechanisms and tools of externalization will be conceptualized.

II. The Securitization of Migration and the EU's Externalization of Migration

The Copenhagen School of International Relations argues that 'security' has no fixed conceptual meaning and can only be measured by its discursive content instead of objective indicators. In fact, the securitization of migration was conceptualized as a 'speech of act', which refers to the discursive practices in how political actors depict the phenomenon of international migration (Waever *et al.*, 1993; Buzan, Waever and De Wilde, 1998). Likewise, the term 'migration flow' began to be widely used in the EU discourse with a negative meaning of something unrestrained that needs management and control (Babayan, 2010). Bigo (2001) stated that terms like 'flow' in the public policy discourse had become metaphors resembling an image of invasion. Flows must be stopped or channeled to avoid security risks.

Huysmans (2000) states that the expression of welfare and the norm of cultural homogeneity have been stabilizing factors for European states. However, in the contemporary European political context, along with many arising challenges like the financial crisis, demographic changes, and political instability, migration has become one of the most crucial and growing issues that challenged the sustainability of the European area of freedom, security, and justice.

In other words, migration has started to pose a challenge and danger of destabilization within Europe. Accordingly, this section discusses how migration has become a security issue within the EU and how this securitization trend has been reflected in the EU's institutional and legal framework.

i. Post-war immigration: From guest workers to permanent residents

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Western-European countries lacked the labor force they needed for economic recovery and reconstruction. Following this, at the beginning of the 1960s, countries like Germany, France, and the Netherlands made bilateral agreements with third-countries like Italy, Spain, Greece, and Turkey and started to receive guest workers. As the word 'guest' implies, the contracts signed with these countries were limited and temporary, and the guest workers were expected to leave after some time. This resulted in permissive or promotional migration policies (Huysmans, 2000), shaped by economic concerns and interests to meet the massive workforce demand in post-war Europe.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, due to the changes in the labor market with the oil crisis and the growing number of guest workers, migration policies started to get more restrictive to protect the social and economic rights of the domestic workforce. Despite the increasing restrictiveness of the policies, the immigrant population continued to increase mainly due to family reunifications throughout the 1970s and later with political asylum applications throughout the 1980s. As a consequence, the 'temporary' guest workers have started to become 'permanent' settlers. By the beginning of the 1980s, migration was a subject of policy debates about protecting public order and domestic stability (Huysmans, 2000). The issue of migration and the immigrant population were primarily associated with economic and social problems rather than issues related to security. As a response, the EU MS have started to address migration management issues through cooperation with migrant-sending and transit third-countries.

ii. The start of the securitization trend in the EU

The end of the Cold War started changing the perception of migration, and it became increasingly associated with security issues. Migration mobility from the post-Soviet states to the EU had increased, and the issue of migration became highly politicized and started to be

presented as a threat to national security. There had been a shift from entirely external and 'hard' security concerns to an exclusive focus on transnational and internal security matters (Mounier, 2009). Soft security threats like organized crime, irregular immigration, and terrorism were brought to the agenda (Mounier, 2009; Wolff et al., 2009). The traditional division of the internal security nexus eventually disappeared (Bigo, 2001; Mounier, 2009; Wolff et al., 2009). Instead, maintaining security refers to achieving internal security objectives that are contingent upon international security and stability beyond borders (Council of the European Union, 2003; Mounier, 2009).

With the new understanding of internal-external security dependence, the EU migration and asylum policies observed an increasing securitization trend, which continued throughout the 2000s mainly by two critical developments: the 2001 terrorist attack on the USA and the EU's 2004 Eastern European enlargement. The 9/11 attacks in 2001 significantly contributed to linking migration to national security issues (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2010). The issue of migration had moved from the technical sphere of 'low-politics' to 'high-politics' in the IR literature.

Moreover, viewing the issue of migration as a part of national security coincided with the re-emergence of the anti-immigrant politics of the far-right (Lahav, 2003). In addition to the 9/11 attacks, the 2004 terrorist attacks in Madrid and 2005 in London supported the securitization discourse further. They proved that security challenges have become more diverse, less identifiable, and less predictable (Trauner, 2011). While the security rationale began to focus extensively on border security and the fight against terrorism, other migration-related fields, such as economic development, social integration, and human rights and civil liberties-related issues, became secondary concerns (Pinyol, 2006; Trauner, 2011).

The EU's 2004 Eastern Enlargement to the east and south added to the security concerns as the internal security structures of these new Member States like Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia had collapsed together with the communist regime. The security concerns and threats stemming from this void were integrated into the Pre-Accession Pacts for candidate countries in Eastern Europe. It became mandatory for these countries to implement the article that requires 'cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs' before joining the EU. This move was arguably the first demonstration of the external dimension of the Justice and Home Affairs Council (JHA) (Mounier, 2009; Wolff et al., 2009).

To tackle international security threats in order to sustain both internal and external security (Mounier, 2009), cooperation with third-countries for migration management has formed the basis of the 'external dimension' of the EU cooperation in JHA (Boswell, 2003). The cooperation at the JHA matters reflected the 'compensatory measure' to safeguard internal security (Lavenex, 2004). In addition to the political changes and security threats, institutional developments in the EU's structure, such as concluding the 1986 European Act, 1992 Maastricht Treaty, and 1997 Amsterdam Treaty, made it clear that uncontrolled and irregular migration are some of the biggest challenges to the EU's internal security (Yıldız, 2016).

In response to the growing security challenges, the EU MS decided to establish the 'European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (FRONTEX)' in 2004 to support the operational cooperation among MS to manage external borders. The main activities of FRONTEX include training national border guards, coordinating joint surveillance and control operations at the external borders, and assisting with organizing the joint return operations, which are security- and control-oriented. The operationalization of FRONTEX became evidence of the increase in securitization practices against migrants and asylum seekers in the EU (Léonard, 2010). Following the introduction on the securitization of migration and its impact on the EU, the following section focuses on the institutional and legal development of the EU's external migration policy.

III. Development of the Legal and Institutional Framework of the Externalization

The evolution of the EU's externalization of migration can be examined through four main steps: intergovernmentalism, communitarization/supranationalism, externalization, and sectoral integration beyond the EU (Zeilinger, 2011). After the end of the Cold War, state-centered intergovernmentalism started to evolve towards supranational cooperation in migration matters. This was because the EU MS became convinced of the necessity of having a common external migration policy to deal with irregular migration, organized crime, and terrorism that have been rising with new challenges in the international order. The following section explains the pillar system, where migration matters were first handled under intergovernmentalism and later communitarized at the supranational level to a certain extent. With the changing competencies, the discussion continues by showing how externalization and, later, sectoral integration became relevant to solving the issues of immigration and asylum.

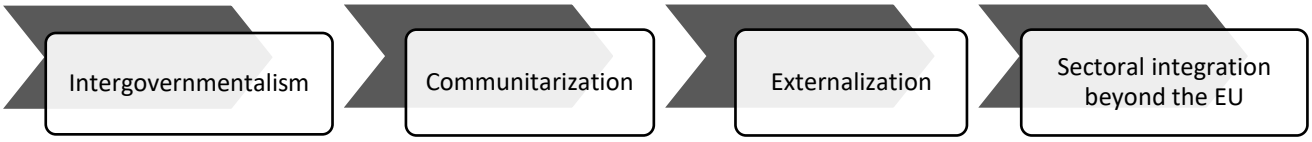

Figure I: The Evolution of the EU's Externalization of Migration

i. The pillar system and the Justice and Home Affairs Council

One of the most prominent developments in the 1990s was the introduction of the pillar system in the EU with the 1992 Maastricht Treaty (see Figure II). Supranationalism was the strongest in the First Pillar, which included economic, social, and environmental matters related to the European Single Market. The Second Pillar was dedicated to the Common Foreign and Security Policy, which was predominantly intergovernmental. The Justice and Home Affairs Council (JHA) formed the third intergovernmental pillar of the EU, in which migration had also become a subject of intergovernmental regulation (Mounier, 2009). Among these three pillars, the Third Pillar was essential in understanding the development of the EU's external migration policy.

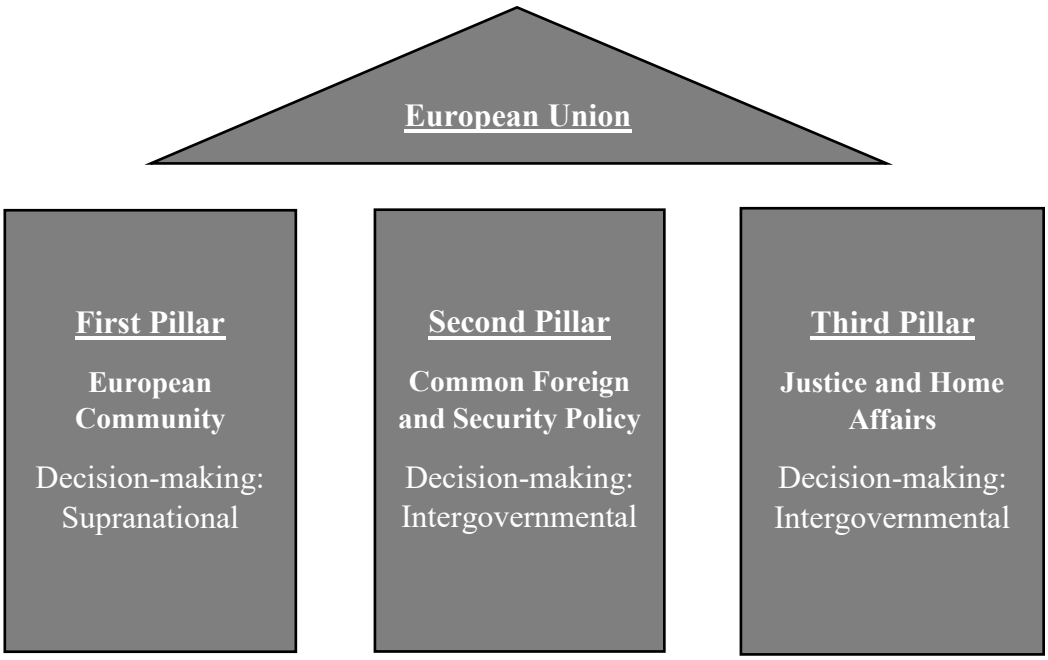

Figure II: Pillar Structure after the 1992 Maastricht Treaty

The Treaty of the European Union identified the following elements as the 'common interest' of the EU under the Third Pillar: asylum policy rules applicable to the crossing of the Union's external borders, immigration policy, and the handling of third-country nationals (TCNs), combatting drug addiction and drug trafficking, tackling international fraud, judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, customs cooperation, police cooperation to combat and prevent terrorism, and lastly police cooperation in tackling international organized crime (European Union, 1992, p. Article VI). The legal nature of the Third Pillar was based on intergovernmental cooperation among the Member States, and the decision-making required unanimity based on public international law (Mitsilegas, Carrera and Eisele, 2014).

Within the intergovernmental negotiating space of the Third Pillar, the key decision-making body became the JHA Council. Consequently, the European Commission's regular function as the initiator of European legislation was diminished by its shared initiative right in JHA. This made the European Commission an 'awkward' actor in the Third Pillar, as its agency capacity and ability to act as a competence-maximizing institution were significantly constrained (Uçarer, 2001). The European Parliament's role remained as consultation, while the European Court of Justice was excluded from the jurisdiction in JHA matters (Uçarer, 2009). Bringing JHA into the EU setup was a crucial institutional step. Nevertheless, the outcomes achieved with the Third Pillar remained limited due to its intergovernmental nature, which caused several criticisms (Trauner and Ripoll Servent, 2019).

The decision-making framework of the JHA was inconvenient; the non-binding policy instruments required long negotiation processes, resulting in a lack of policy progress. Moreover, all JHA decisions in the Third Pillar required unanimity, leading to a deadlock. Even in cases where a consensus was reached, the decision hardly pleased any actor (Uçarer, 2009). The JHA cooperation, specifically in the area of asylum and immigration, had to be reformed for more efficiency in the EU's external migration policy. It had to be separated from its intergovernmental nature and be 'communitarized' at the supranational level. To achieve this and make the Union 'more responsive to their concerns' (Council of the European Union, 1996), an 'area of freedom, security, and justice' had to be created.

a) Communitarization of immigration and asylum

The 1997 Amsterdam Treaty initiated the change for communitarization, which led to significant changes in the EU's institutional setting. JHA embodied the area of freedom and justice, and its instruments were distributed between the First and the Third pillars (Mounier, 2009). With the Amsterdam Treaty, the parts of the Third Pillar related to the migration field, namely asylum, immigration, external border controls, and civil law matters, were carried to the First Pillar (Trauner and Ripoll Servent, 2019)[6]. Therefore, the First Community Pillar in the new setting included immigration and asylum, visa, external border controls, and police and justice cooperation in civil matters. Areas within states' exclusive competencies, like labor migration, police, and justice cooperation in criminal matters, remained in the third intergovernmental pillar.

The EU officially recognized the significance of the external dimension of the JHA with the Amsterdam Treaty (Uçarer, 2009). Together with the transfer and communitarization of the JHA, the competencies of the EU institutions were improved, and the European Commission was granted the competence to negotiate external agreements, like readmission agreements, in the areas of JHA (Yıldız, 2016).

Moreover, the institutional development of the foreign policy dimension of the EU's external migration policy had been characterized as a 'shifting up and out' process. The communitarization process of the EU's migration policy resulted from years of transgovernmental cooperation among the MS. The EU's migration policy moved from the coordination of control to a deeper harmonization of domestic politics (Lavenex, 2006). The rearrangement of the competencies between the pillars helped the EU build its character as an international actor, dealing with migration issues outside its borders.

b) The Externalization of the JHA and the end of the pillarization

Communitarization of the immigration and asylum policies was complemented by 'externalization', a tool of 'control' and 'prevention' (Boswell, 2003). Externalization has been

[6] The Treaty of Amsterdam kept some of the national competences in the third pillar, such as MS competences to conclude agreements regarding 'conditions of entry and residence, and standards on procedures for the issue by MS of long-term visas and residence permits, including those for the purpose of family reunion' (European Union, 1997, art. 73k (3a)).

used interchangeably with the term 'extra-territorialization' (Yıldız, 2016), which refers to the attempt to police the EU borders to control unwanted migration flows. Externalization has also become an approach through which MS try to ensure that third-country nationals remain as close to their country of origin as possible or outside the EU territory (Rijpma and Cremona, 2007). Consequently, externalization became a substantial part of the EU's foreign policy, with measures developing outside the EU borders, such as fighting irregular migration, controlling borders, and signing readmission agreements (Yıldız, 2016).

The 1999 Tampere Summit followed the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty to discuss the future of the JHA cooperation. The external dimension of the JHA was officially accepted at the Summit (Lavenex, 2004), and the conclusions suggested that the EU's external relations should be used to reach the EU's internal security objectives. The Tampere Summit encouraged a 'comprehensive approach' to migration issues and identified the main goals of a common European migration and asylum policy. Article 11 emphasized that '*partnership with third-countries concerned will also be a key element for the success of such a policy, with a view to promote co-development.'* (Council of the European Union, 1999; European Parliament, 1999). It underlined the need to view the JHA as a foreign policy tool that aims for cooperation between countries of origin and transit instead of an exclusive and domestic EU policy (Uçarer, 2009).

Following the Tampere summit, the 2002 European Council of Seville pointed out the need to develop a common asylum and immigration policy with the assistance of third-country cooperation. The Seville meeting emphasized combatting irregular immigration, joint management, border control, and readmission agreements (Council of the European Union, 2002). Third-country cooperation demanded the implementation of the 'positive conditionality' (Lavenex and Wichmann, 2009), through which the EU uses 'carrots' rather than 'sticks' to initiate reforms in third-countries. Positive conditionality has been based on the idea that the EU offers rewards of development aid, financial and economic assistance, trade agreements, and such to third-countries in return for cooperation in migration management. Within the context of external migration policy, positive conditionality has been used as a 'bargaining chip' (Zeilinger, 2011).

Lavenex (2006) states that the externalization of the EU's migration policy has developed into a key focus on cooperation. The EU decided to engage more actively with countries of origin and transit in migration management with an increasing emphasis on extraterritorial control. It can also be said that the shift towards extraterritorialization reflected the security and control-

oriented understanding of JHA. As a result, the externalization of the EU's migration policy became dependent on third-country cooperation, where the issues of migration were bargained until a consensus was reached with third-countries.

Moving on to the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) integrated all the provisions, which were shared competencies between the EU and Member States, in the area of freedom, security, and justice (European Union, 2007, Article 4).[7] Policies on border checks, asylum and immigration belong to it. The integration of the provisions marked the end of the EU's pillar structure. In other words, the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon transferred the policy of 'police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters' into the First Pillar, which ended the journey from intergovernmental decision-making to the Community method (Trauner and Ripoll Servent, 2019).

c) The Establishment of the European External Action Service

Following the structural readjustments in the Treaty of Lisbon, the European External Action Service (EEAS) was launched in 2011. The EEAS is independent of the European Commission and the Council Secretariat. European Security and Defense Policy are listed as part of the EEAS. Yet, trade and development policy remains within the responsibility of the Commission's related Commissioners and Directorate Generals (DG). The EEAS mainstreamed migration into its external relations with a broader focus on offering incentives to third-countries in return for cooperation on migration management.

On the other hand, the European Commission's Directorate for Migration and Home Affairs (DG Home) focuses on the issue of readmission and prioritizes restrictive policy tools in external relations (Yıldız, 2016). DG Home has adopted a leading role in negotiations with third-countries and has used a considerable degree of autonomy and discretion from the EEAS. Thus, it enjoys the ultimate responsibility in the external dimension of migration policy (Carrera, Parkin and Hertog, 2013). The tasks and actions of EEAS and DG Home are highly relevant to each other. The interplay between EEAS and DG Home results from the cross-pillar character of the EU's external migration policy. This puzzling picture leads to an external policy with a fragmented structure (Wessel, Marin and Matera, 2011).

[7] Please see Title V- Articles 67-89 for all the provisions on the area of freedom, security, and justice (European Union, 2007).

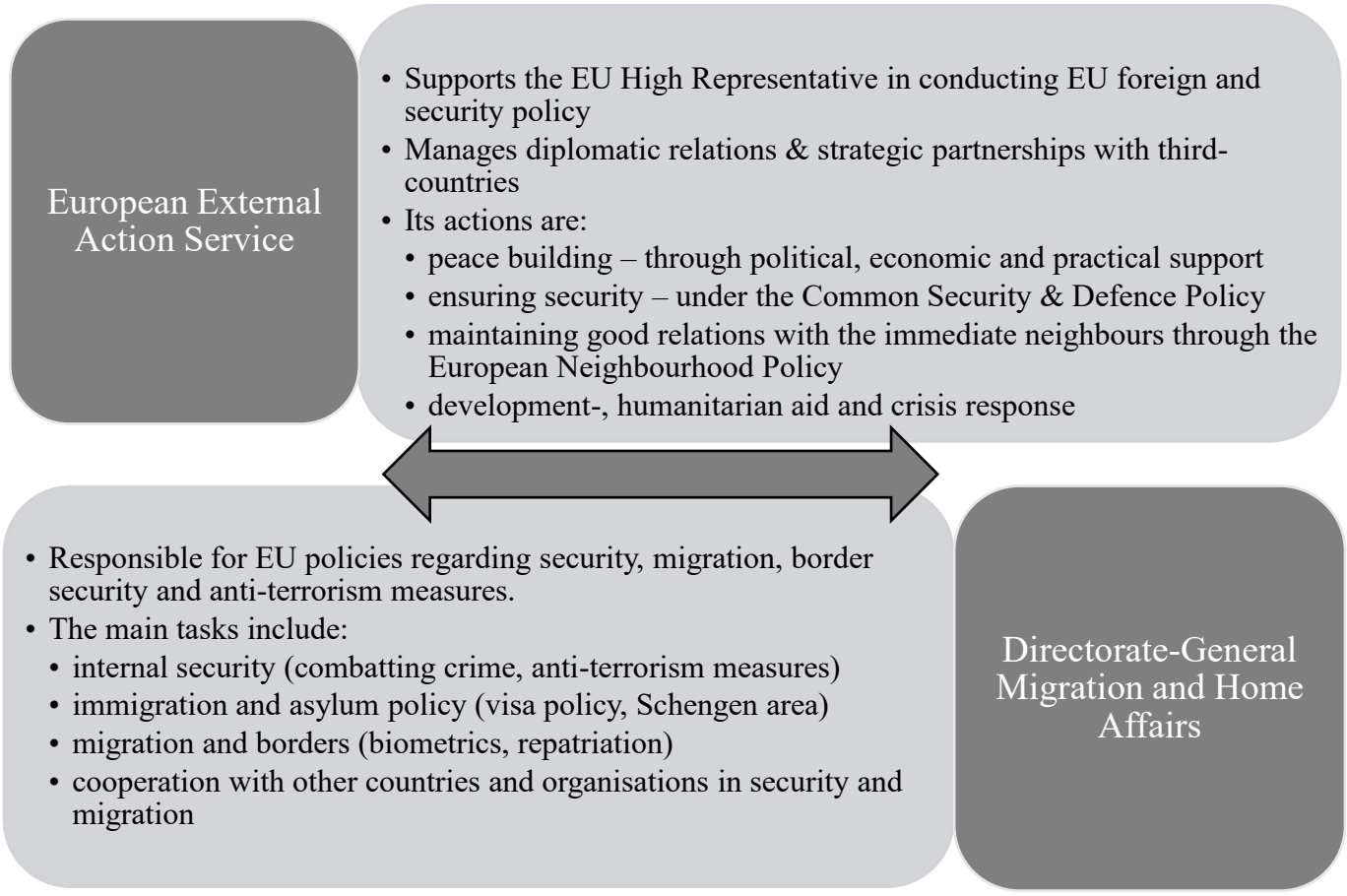

Figure III: The Interplay between the European External Action Service and the DG Migration and Home Affairs

Source: EU Monitor (2022); European Union (2022)

It is important to note that the external dimension has continued to develop with its complex structure in the aftermath of the 2011 Syrian refugee crisis. The EU MS acknowledged the common challenges brought by the refugee crisis and the idea that these challenges require joint action. Zaiotti (2018) argues that the European policy-makers recognized that targeting only individuals appearing at the continent's gates or already within it has not been sufficient to manage migratory flows efficiently. The answer had been to externalize border management to stop or regulate incoming refugees before they reach their final destination, the EU. Therefore, the joint response of MS appeared to be the further externalization of the migration policy. This requires advanced cooperation schemes with third-countries, through which the EU can shift the duty of responsibility-sharing of refugee protection and reception to third-countries while providing administrative, financial, and technical assistance.

IV. Tools of the Externalization

The EU external migration policy decision-making process can be conceptualized as a three-level game between the EU institutions, Member States, and third-countries (Reslow and Vink, 2015). The EU institutions and MS agree on the policy's 'substance and form' in this game. Later on, this policy is opened for negotiation, in some cases bargaining, with the third-country. Meanwhile, EU MS and the third-country can cooperate independently with bilateral agreements, leaving the institutions outside the game. In this form of cooperation, Member State preferences are determined by the degree to which their national and EU external migration policies 'fit' each other (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004).

For the third-countries, the 'policy conditionality' approach determines the willingness to agree to cooperate. This means that third-countries would choose to cooperate with the EU if the benefits of cooperation exceed the domestic adoption costs (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004, p. 664). The cooperation is an outcome of a cost-benefit calculation, depending on the alignment of the EU's external migration policy objectives with the national policy interests of the third-country, administrative capacities, and the domestic costs of adopting the policy (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004; Lavenex and Schimmelfennig, 2009). Thus, decision-making has become a multifaceted process with various intervening factors for the EU and third-countries.

As mentioned earlier in the discussion on the securitization of migration, the EU's external relations and foreign policy agenda have been seen as valuable means to cope with internal security challenges where they originate. Moreover, instead of mainstreaming internal security objectives in external cooperation frameworks, the EU attempts to intensify cooperation with third-countries in specific issue areas (Trauner, 2011). There are five main prioritized issue areas within the EU's external migration policy: asylum policy, border management, mobility partnerships, readmission agreements, and visa policy. These policies are examples of restrictive and control-oriented policy tools, which have been shaped by the change in the problematization of migration as a security issue (Huysmans, 2000).

The Council of the EU stated that 'the EU should adopt the principle to use its relationship with third-countries as an incentive for them to adopt and implement relevant international standards and obligations on the JHA issues. Countries should be aware that their relationship with the

EU will be positively affected by their level of cooperation, given the central importance of these issues for the EU and its Member States (Council of the European Union, 2005).' This clause points out that if third-countries refrain from cooperation on security issues like counter-terrorism or irregular migration, this would negatively impact their eligibility to receive financial assistance or other opportunities to have closer ties with the EU (Trauner, 2011). Therefore, the EU considered the cooperation agreements essential for its third-country relations.

The cooperation is established through international agreements and non-binding instruments, usually memoranda of understanding, joint declarations, joint action plans, etc. The use of such soft law instruments in EU external migration policy has substantially increased with the start of the 2011 Syrian refugee crisis. The most notable examples are the Mobility Partnerships and the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement (Santos Vara, 2019). Within the scope and limit of this study, Mobility Partnerships, the EU Compacts, readmission agreements, and the EU-Turkey Statement are briefly explained in the following section, as they are found to be the most relevant instruments of the EU's external migration policy.

i. EU Mobility Partnerships

The Mobility Partnerships were launched by the European Commission in 2007 and highlighted the goal of combatting irregular migration with the following statement:

'The Commission seeks to identify novel approaches to improve the management of legal movements of people between the EU and third-countries ready to make significant efforts to fight illegal migration. In addition, it looks at ways to facilitate circular migration, which will help Member States address their labor needs while exploiting potential positive impacts of migration on development and responding to the needs of countries of origin in terms of skill transfers and mitigating the impact of brain drain (European Commission, 2007).'[8]

Although Mobility Partnerships are powerful cooperation frameworks that define the EU's externalization efforts, only limited research has been done linking their implementation to externalizing the EU's migration policy (Tittel-Mosser, 2019). They are one of the crucial tools

[8] To date, Mobility Partnerships have been signed with Moldova (2008), Cape Verde (2008), Georgia (2009), Armenia (2011), Morocco (2013), Azerbaijan (2013), Tunisia (2014) and Jordan (2014), Belarus (2016). See (European Commission, 2020c)

of the 'Global Approach to Migration (GAM)' and take the form of a legally non-binding political declaration signed between Member State governments, the European Commission, and the third-country (Reslow, 2012). In a way, the design and implementation of Mobility Partnerships illustrate how multi-level governance works in practice among multiple actors (Reslow, 2019c).

The Commission is in charge of negotiating the partnerships on behalf of the EU with the third-countries, and they are launched through a joint declaration. Then, they are signed by the third-country, participating Member States, and the EU. They often include an agreement on readmission and visa facilitation agreements, which bring operational cooperation, high-level meetings, and dialogue between Member States, third-countries, and EU officials.

Like every other cooperation framework between the EU and a third-country, Mobility Partnerships are based on a trade-off. In this trade-off, the third-country agrees to cooperate with the EU on preventing irregular migration and receive reward(s) in return. The outcomes of partnerships in different countries show differences simply because each country has a different national structure that affects the implementation process. As mentioned in the Introduction Chapter, different outcomes indicate that third-countries cannot be seen as a 'black-box' (Wolff, 2014; Reslow, 2019c). Policy outcomes are determined by the EU institutions, MS (Reslow, 2019c) and third-countries' economic, social, and political characteristics.

Kerr (1976, p.358) in (Reslow, 2019b) argues that a policy's authorizing agent differs from the implementing one. This is the case in implementing Partnerships, which have a complex structure involving MS embassies, EU delegations, and third-country authorities. However, the extent to which each actor is involved in the process differs in every country. It is known that the main actors implementing the partnerships are MS authorities, and the involvement of the third-country authorities is much smaller.

This is most evident in the case of Morocco, as the Moroccan government holds no responsibility for any initiative carried out in projects. Even international organizations seem more involved as sub-contractors in implementing EU projects than third-country authorities (Reslow, 2019c). Lavenex (2016) states that the role of international organizations is getting more prominent in the implementation process. The discussion on Mobility Partnerships proves the need to involve several actors, third-country authorities, other actors from international

organizations and non-governmental organizations, etc., in studying the EU's external migration policy.

As many actors are involved in the implementation, likely with different positions and views, the implementation process is expected to be challenging. In a non-binding policy environment, countries with older and stronger ties with the EU, such as those within the EU's Neighborhood Policy, are expected to implement the Partnerships more effectively than those further away and with weaker ties (Reslow, 2019c). Having previous ties refers to being accustomed to the institutional and legal structures, familiarity with the country's economic, political, and social culture, and so on. Therefore, the implementation process of Mobility Partnerships, their success, and their efficiency depend on the choices of MS, the characteristics of the particular third-country, and the previous partnership history between actors.

The efficiency also depends on the existence of inducements and sanctions to ensure that actors act in accordance with policy objectives. Since partnerships have a legally non-binding structure, the Commission can enforce neither MS nor third-country in a certain way in the implementation process (Reslow, 2019c). They are only political statements, and participation of MS is voluntary (European Commission, 2009). In this case, the Commission can only monitor the progress by organizing meetings and using 'scoreboards' (Reslow, 2015, p. 205). This strongly reduces the efficiency of the cooperation, not only in Mobility Partnerships but also in other unofficial non-binding cooperation agreements like the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement.

ii. Readmission Agreements

Readmission agreements are also often adopted in exchange for financial or technical assistance from the EU. Many readmission agreements, but not all, have been concluded as part of Mobility Partnerships, which facilitate other, non-irregular forms of migration (Niemann and Zaun, 2023). The EU readmission agreements are ambitious and fundamental external policy instruments for tackling irregular migration (Yıldız, 2016). Institutionally, readmission agreements are both an agreement and an incentive-based policy instrument of the EU's external migration policy (Wolff, 2014). These bilateral agreements aim to facilitate the return of irregular migrants and asylum seekers whose asylum claims had been rejected. The signatory

parties agree to readmit both their nationals who have entered and stayed irregularly in the EU Member States and third-country citizens who have irregularly crossed the EU border through their territory.

As given earlier, the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty carried the competence to negotiate and conclude international agreements at the EU level. With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007, the EU was granted the explicit power to conclude readmission agreements with third-countries as stated in Article 79(3) of the TFEU, which is the current legal basis (European Union, 2007). As laid out in Article 218 of TFEU, The European Commission, as the lead negotiator, submits a recommendation to the European Council. Based on the Commission's recommendation, the Council is authorized to open negotiations on readmission agreements, authorize signing agreements, and conclude. The consent of the Parliament is required (TFEU, 2007, Article 218). The Parliament often ratifies a readmission agreement in the third-country in question, depending on its domestic constitutional structure.

To reach success in negotiating the agreement with third-countries, the EU has to make the deal as attractive and generous as possible within the limits of the JHA. The readmission agreements are, therefore, incentive-based instruments for third-countries in the form of operational and financial support (El Qadim, 2019), Mobility Partnerships, and visa facilitation agreements (Eisele, 2019). The type and content of incentives vary depending on the EU's geographical and strategic priorities in the neighborhood and region. As one of the most prominent incentives, the EU has offered visa facilitation agreements to third-countries as a 'package' from 2002 onwards in return for concluding readmission agreements (Eisele, 2019). The first visa facilitation agreements linking the readmission agreements were signed with Russia and Ukraine. Here, the agreement is based on the principle of reciprocity, and the visas are issued for a short-term stay. The long-term stay remains within the competence of Member States, and visa-free travel is only recognized as a long-term objective (Trauner and Kruse, 2008).

The realization of readmission agreements also depends on the domestic and regional characteristics of third-countries. This was seen in the cases of Morocco and Turkey, two countries with different national structures and relationships with the EU. Yet, they shared similar bargaining positions and refused to sign the agreement for over a decade (Wolff, 2014). This supports the idea that negotiations on the readmission agreements empower third-countries and allow them to use 'reversed conditionality' (Cassarino, 2007). In fact, the readmission agreements constitute a considerable part of conditionality for any country that aspires to EU

candidacy, accession (Apap, Carrera and Kirişci, 2004), or closer relations with the EU in one or more policy areas. When membership conditionality does not exist for a third-country, the EU introduces 'policy-oriented conditionality' and offers visa facilitation as a 'carrot' to sign readmission agreements (Yıldız, 2016). Therefore, the conditionality exists irrespective of the membership opportunity or aspiration, in the case of visa facilitation, in return for signing the readmission agreement.

There are various discussions on the effectiveness of these agreements, mainly regarding the number of readmitted persons, the issue of returning third-country nationals and stateless persons, human-rights concerns, and so on. The number of third-country nationals that will be returned remains unclear, and the selection procedure to determine who will be returned remains vague (Yıldız, 2016). It is also hard to assume that the third-countries have sufficient means to host all these readmitted persons. Hosting can quickly become a burden regarding administrative, financial, and social costs.

Lastly, the practice of readmission agreements, in general terms, is against the principle of sustainable return and reintegration (Eisele, 2019). They act as a pragmatic instrument of the EU's external migration policy, which aims to help tackle irregular migration to a certain extent by having incentive-based cooperation mechanisms with third-countries. They represent the shift in understanding responsibility-sharing in the EU's externalization of migration, where the duty of refugee protection and reception happens outside the EU's external borders.

iii. The EU Compacts

The 2016 Partnership Framework under the European Agenda on Migration increased the expected degree of coordination and cooperation with third-countries. Accordingly, the selected third-countries are offered migration 'Compacts' through which both MS and the Union develop and offer instruments, tools, and leverages, such as trade or development assistance, in exchange for third-countries' cooperation in migration management and governance (Andrade, 2019). The EU-Jordan[9] and EU-Lebanon Compacts are recent examples of this approach in the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis (Niemann and Zaun, 2023), through which the EU provided loans, grants and preferential trade agreements in exchange for access to public education and legal employment for Syrian refugees (European Commission, 2016a).

[9] Please see Zeidan (2023) for a detailed research report on the EU-Jordan Compact.

iv. The EU-Turkey Statement and the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT)

The 2016 EU-Turkey Statement includes elements of Mobility Partnerships and the EU Compact, meaning it is a trade-off with the EU, mainly consisting of financial assistance or a trade agreement. The Statement builds on the 2013 EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement and adds more to the traditional understanding of EU and third-country cooperation agreements. It is argued to be one of the most controversial responses to the refugee crisis and a crucial example of the EU's efforts to manage the Syrian refugee crisis through external cooperation (Carrera, den Hertog and Stefan, 2019). Studying the Statement allows a detailed analysis of the growing EU influence in the internal migration policies of its neighbouring countries through the process of border externalization, intending to control access to 'Fortress Europe'[10] (Afailal and Fernandez, 2018). Together with the EU-Turkey Statement, the EU has started negotiating more informal agreements with third-countries.

The informal agreements are considered more efficient since they are negotiated much faster and provide more room for 'manoeuvre', leaving more room for open discussions with third-country governments (Eisele, 2019). Despite the space for more flexibility, the informal nature of the Statement puts fundamental EU norms, values, and constitutional law, giving the third-county government, Turkey, leverage over the EU by also putting refugee protection at risk. Its adoption was justified in the name of the refugee crisis but came at a price to the democratic rule of law and fundamental rights (Carrera, den Hertog and Stefan, 2019).

The EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT) is a specific tool of externalization founded under the framework of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement. The Facility is a coordination mechanism that allows for the swift, effective and efficient mobilization of EU assistance to refugees. It ensures the optimal mobilization of existing EU financing instruments, either as humanitarian or development assistance, to address the needs of refugees and host communities in a comprehensive and coordinated way (European Commission, 2019c). FRIT operates in the

[10] 'Fortress Europe' is a term or a metaphor that refers to the closure of immigration opportunities resulted from the process of European integration and the increased harmonization in the way EU member states organize regular immigration and asylum and control irregular migration (Geddes, 2008).The term later frequently used to describe the EU's externalization of Syrian refugee crisis as well.

policy fields of education, health, socio-economic support, municipal support, and migration management in Turkey (European Commission, 2019a)[11].

FRIT is only designed to assist the Syrian refugees and affected host societies in Turkey; therefore, it cannot be generalized to any other case. However, it is still crucial to mention it here as it combines elements from Mobility Partnerships, readmission agreements, and EU Compacts. It includes a financial assistance scheme and a clause on visa facilitation, and it enforced the 2013 Readmission Agreement between the EU and Turkey.

To conclude, the Statement and FRIT mechanism reflect the emergency mentality of the EU's external migration policy. It involves elements of previous EU instruments of Mobility Partnerships, readmission agreements, financial assistance schemes, and visa facilitation agreements with the principle of conditionality. It adds and builds onto these elements with a coordination mechanism in different policy fields to assist Syrian refugees and host societies in Turkey. It is an uncommon externalization tool that will be elaborated on in detail for the purpose of this study in the following chapters.

V. Conceptualizing the EU's External Migration Policy

i. 'Remote control' and 'root cause' approaches

Boswell (2003) presents two main approaches for cooperation with the refugee-sending, receiving, and transit states within the external JHA dimension: 'remote control' and 'root cause' approaches. As the name suggests, remote control is a security-based approach that aims to restrict people's movement. Using this approach, the EU prioritizes border externalization, which refers to the 'burden-sharing of the European borders with bordering countries, and the set-up of migration management policies in the countries of origin, following European interests (Doukouré and Oger, 2007).' The cooperation with this approach is based on

[11] The Facility Steering Committee provides strategic guidance on the type of actions to be financed, with what amount, and through which financing instruments. The Steering Committee is chaired by the European Commission and composed of EU Member State representatives, with Turkey sitting in an advisory capacity (European Commission, 2019a).

strengthening border controls, combating illegal entry, and signing readmission agreements. European interests are, therefore, preserved through heightened security measures.

The root cause approach differs from the remote control as it is mainly based on eliminating the push factors of migration. It comprises development policies and aims to formulate solutions to migration-related issues through political innovations. The cooperation is carried out through policies aiming to change migrants' decisions to move further from their country of origin or, in some cases, from the refugee-hosting transit country. For Weiner and Münz (1997), migration policies have traditionally focused on controlling and preventing international migration, including stricter border controls, asylum procedures, and fighting irregular migration. Much less attention has been given to how the receiving countries could alleviate conditions in the sending countries that generate large immigration flows. The 'root causes' approaches that consist of prevention and intervention strategies have only later become a part of the foreign policy agenda.

This approach includes instruments like trade, foreign investment, development assistance, incentives, international assistance to facilitate voluntary repatriation, establishing safe third-countries, etc. Noted examples after the end of the Cold War include the readmission agreements signed between Germany and Poland and Germany and Czechia, in which Germany provided considerable financial assistance. Relevantly, the EU has also been supporting the sending countries to prevent employment issues that can result in economic migration, develop better governance, and increase respect for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The EU's cooperation tools include development assistance, trade, and direct investment (Boswell, 2003; Aubarell, Zapata-Barrero and Aragall, 2009), providing more comprehensive access to quality education and improving socio-economic prospects in general. All these measures are accepted as preventive approaches, and the means of cooperation differ from those in the remote control. Hence, the root cause approach attempts to keep the refugee or migrant population in the third-country (either migrant-sending country or transit country) outside the EU borders by assisting the host state with financial and structural assistance.

As a result, the remote control and root cause approaches are both preventive. This study argues that the EU has combined these preventive approaches in its external migration policy with the start of the 2011 Syrian refugee crisis. The EU's main cooperation partners have been the refugee-hosting countries like Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon rather than Syria, the country of origin. Turkey constituted, at the same time, an example of a transit country, where the refugee

population aimed to stay only temporarily and move further to Europe. As part of the remote control approach, the EU has conducted readmission agreements and cooperation schemes with third-countries in the region. It also developed humanitarian, development, and technical assistance frameworks for specific sectors like education, health, and socio-economic assistance to support the refugee population in these host countries to prevent further mobility toward the EU, which could be argued as a root cause approach.

ii. Third-country cooperation

The EU agenda on strengthening cooperation with third-countries has developed throughout the 2000s. The 2005 'Global Approach to Migration (GAM)' attempted to encourage legal migration while decreasing irregular migration through a developmental approach in cooperation (Council of the European Union, 2005). Following the Arab Spring and the events in the Southern Mediterranean in 2011, which led to the Syrian refugee and protection crisis, the GAM was updated to the 'Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)' for a more coherent and comprehensive migration policy (European Commission, 2011). The political framework of the EU's External Action and the objectives of EU cooperation with third-countries in the migration field aligned with the GAMM's main components (Andrade, 2019).

The main components and objectives consist of fighting against irregular migration, strengthening border management, facilitating mobility and promoting legal migration opportunities and the integration of legal residents, maximizing the development impact of mobility, and ensuring asylum and international protection (European Commission, 2011) GAMM introduced a broader thematic and geographical approach and emphasized stronger policy coherence and integration with the EU's external policies like trade and development cooperation. In addition, 'development' was noted to promote legal migration from third-countries to contribute to the EU's economy through the labor market (Yıldız, 2016). Mobility partnerships were highlighted in GAMM (European Commission, 2011) to improve development cooperation strategies, which will be elaborated on in detail in the coming sections.

The third-country cooperation has increasingly become the EU's preferred approach to managing migration. The EU attempts to compensate countries 'disproportionally affected by

the crisis' (Panizzon, 2019b) by developing cooperation agreements, including financial and structural assistance schemes. This points to first, a rise of 'preferentialism' in the EU-third-country cooperation and second, intra-EU exceptionalism, which endangers the solidarity towards the Union, refugees, and migrants. This new setup has changed the institutional interplay in EU-third-country cooperation in migration and asylum policies (Panizzon, 2019b, p. 245). Especially amidst the post-2011 Syrian refugee crisis, third-countries have become the main cooperation actors in the EU's external migration policy (Panizzon, 2019b). Third-countries have been gaining more leverage against the EU due to the change in the institutional interplay and balance of power created with this new set-up. In a sense, third-countries have become essential actors that cannot be ignored in migration management.

iii. Sectoral integration beyond the EU

The last step in the evolution of the EU's externalization of migration—following intergovernmentalism, communitarization, and externalization (see Figure I on page 13)—is named 'sectoral integration beyond EU Member States'. It is a form of international cooperation known as 'Sectoral Integration' or 'Network Governance' (e.g. Lavenex, 2008) in IR literature. Regarding the EU's external migration policy, sectoral integration refers to the institutionalization of cooperation with a third-country through task-specific policy networks and sector-specific institutions (Zeilinger, 2011). Inter-agency cooperation through networks and institutions often develops between the EU and the third-country at the operational level. This study is particularly interested in this form of externalization; the sectoral integration with third-countries in the field of migration necessitates conducting readmission agreements, Mobility Partnerships, and other cooperation instruments. Facilitating these partnership agreements has become a crucial instrument for the EU's migration management strategies with third-countries (European Commission, 2010), especially in the aftermath of the Syrian refugee crisis.

a) Institutional interaction and transformation

It is asserted that the EU now focuses less on grand foreign policy in its external relations but more on sector-specific cooperation or operational cooperation (Dimitriadi *et al.*, 2018) and its

transformative effects (Lavenex, 2014). Here, externalization follows a sectoral logic through which the rules of the political game are managed (Freyburg *et al.*, 2011). In relevance to the sectoral character, the cooperation also follows an institutional logic, and its properties include the institutionalization of transgovernmental cooperation in a particular sector and sectoral independence. In this model, the level of analysis is the policy sector instead of the polity level. Therefore, the sectoral functional cooperation narrows the scope of the cooperation with third-countries to specific issue areas. In this sectoral cooperation framework, the scope of interaction is sectoral, the logic of interaction is functional, and the actors involved in the process are sectoral bureaucracies in the Commission administrations, regulatory agencies, international organizations, and non-state actors (Lavenex, 2004).

Within a specific sector, the EU's influence on the third-countries can be examined through the external incentives (or conditionality) model, the social learning model, and the lesson-drawing model (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004). The external incentives model explains the adoption of EU rules by third-countries. It is a rationalist bargaining model where the EU's influence depends on reinforcing a reward. The model offers several incentives for third-countries to comply with requirements and sanctions in the case of non-compliance. The approach is process-oriented and concerned with rules and practices in specific sectoral areas (Freyburg *et al.*, 2015). A state is predicted to adopt EU rules if the benefits of EU rewards exceed the domestic adoption costs (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2004). This case mainly applied to enlargement countries, where compliance is crucial and mandatory for full membership to the EU.

It should be remembered that membership as a reward cannot be offered to all third-countries with cooperation frameworks with the EU. This does not mean that third-countries that do not qualify for membership cannot benefit from this framework. Instead, the conditionality can be adjusted or complemented by focusing on 'policy conditionality' for third-countries. In this version of conditionality, material rewards do not relate to EU accession. Offering visa facilitation for signing a readmission agreement is the most common example in this model (Trauner, 2009).

Within the context of 'policy conditionality', the cost-benefit calculation by third-countries is stated to be dependent on four main factors: (i) the resonance of the EU policy with national policy objectives; (ii) the administrative capacity of the third-state; (iii) the domestic costs of adopting the EU policy; and (iv) the credibility of the promises made (Reslow, 2012). The

calculation results shape the degree to which the third-country agrees and complies with the terms of the cooperation. In the aftermath of the Syrian refugee crisis, the EU started to apply this incentive-based conditionality model in its relations with refugee-hosting countries.

iv. The emergence of multi-level governance in the EU's external migration policy

a) Multi-level governance as an approach in EU policy-making

From the 1980s onward, a multi-level governance (MLG) system emerged in the EU, in which national government control was weakened by the actions of supranational and subnational actors (Hooghe and Marks, 2001). The concept was introduced for the first time in the literature by Gary Marks (1993), and he argued that MLG is a system of continuous negotiations among several territorial tiers, or levels of authority, in other words, within EU policy-making of supranational, national, regional, and local governments. There is a fluidity and movement between these layers of governance. MLG suggests that a policy can happen in both layers, whether at a supranational or national level. It also denies the idea that a single EU theory can encompass all policy actions due to the complexity of multi-level policy networks (Michelle Cini, 2013).

The scope of MLG involves co-decision-making across several tiers, shifting spheres of competencies and power, and ongoing decisional distribution that intergovernmentalism lacks (Marks, 1993). Multiple actors (institutions and individuals) can participate at the same time at various political levels in a MLG setting. Its most vital characteristic is the linkage that connects these different levels. In MLG, no level of activity is superior to the other; at the same time, there is a mutual dependency through the intertwining of policy-making activities (Stephenson, 2013).

Overall, MLG provides a setting where actors have the opportunity to interact and engage in policy-making at European, national, and sub-national levels of governance. This power structure was primarily observed in accession talks, enlargement processes, or European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). The concept was used to describe the relationship between the EU institutions, EU MS, and local actors, but it was not considered to explain the EU and third-country relations. However, migration management has become a potential area where MLG discourse could be applied to the interaction between the EU and third-countries.

b) Applicability of Multi-level governance into EU and its third-country relations

Together with the EU and third-country authorities, several actors from multiple layers of governance have become involved in the decision-making process, which points to the emergence of MLG in the EU's external migration policy. This is a valuable contribution to the concept and literature of MLG, as it has not been traditionally applied to the study of the EU's external migration policy. Besides, non-EU countries and their agencies were missing from the discussion (Reslow, 2019c).

MLG has the potential to bring a different policy setting to the study of EU external migration policy in cases where MS are reluctant to adopt or agree on highly politicized policy areas like migration. To solve this, non-binding policy instruments emerge, and the flexibility of multi-level governance is used in the decision-making process and the implementation of policy tools (Reslow, 2019b). In other words, it is used in cases where certain MS and/or EU institutions can independently conduct non-binding agreements with third-countries more flexibly.

An example is the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement, which was not ratified by the European Parliament and is a non-binding element agreed upon by EU Member State governments and the Turkish state. The Deal offered flexible bargaining and negotiation grounds for the EU and Turkish counterparts, where action could have entered a deadlock if multi-level governance had not been considered. Reslow (2019b) asserts that third-countries have become key actors in the governance of EU external relations since the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, and their agencies have started to shape policy outcomes considerably. It became possible to develop a model to derive possible expectations on the outcomes of decision-making processes based on the actor preferences in third-countries. Thus, it is crucial to acknowledge third-countries as essential actors in studying MLG and its application to the EU's external migration policy.

Moreover, the premise of the diffusion of power among and between different actors in MLG could be applied to studying the EU's external migration policy. However, in a study concerning the Jordan Compact, Tortola (2017) argues that the MLG approach does not automatically imply that the different layers and actors act towards governing migration and refugee flows. For cooperation to qualify as governance, the layers must interact coherently and in a legally compliant manner, which was lacking in the Jordan Compact. Similarly, Stephenson (2013) asserts that not every term featuring 'multi-actor, multi-policy or multi-level'

necessarily stands for governance. There can be multi-level cooperation frameworks and multi-actor schemes which lack the transfer of power and authority associated with governance.

To summarize the discussion, MLG is a useful analytical tool for considering different actors, their agencies, interactions, and possible power asymmetries concerning the EU's external relations with third-countries. In the EU's external migration policy with a third-country, if the transfer of power or authority is not feasible in governance but migration management involves various actors from both sides at different governance levels, then the relationship between the EU and the third-country could be described as multi-level cooperation.

VI. Re-visiting the EU's External Migration Policy

The EU has gone through a significant transformation concerning the JHA framework throughout the years. Today, the external migration policy relies heavily on the externalization of responsibilities and, therefore, on third-country cooperation to keep the problems outside EU borders and maintain internal security. The institutional interaction with third-countries is often referred to as 'the external dimension of a policy field' (Lavenex and Wichmann, 2009) instead of 'governance' to encompass all aspects of engagement and policies directed beyond borders with third-countries. This definition is crucial for this study, as it investigates the interaction among actors, not governance, beyond EU borders. Due to the increasing dependency on third-countries in external action, the EU has established several cooperation agreements based on positive conditionality. Mobility Partnerships, Compacts, and EU-Turkey Statement are some of the most recent examples of externalization efforts.

Additionally, financial assistance constitutes one of the fundamental incentive mechanisms offered to third-countries in the 'external dimension' of migration. The EU is willing to provide some 'inducement', sometimes considered an indemnity from the perspective of third-countries. Financial incentives are mostly looked at in the literature to determine their effectiveness in obtaining third-country cooperation. Some aspects of financial incentives remain overlooked. The question of whether the recipients of financial incentives perceive this amount of spending as sufficient is rarely asked. More importantly, funding is much more than a money transfer; it is a political instrument that creates opportunities for cooperation. In this

regard, the conclusion of an agreement with financial incentives is perceived as a signal of political will and demonstrate political priorities (El Qadim, 2019).

Since the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, the EU has been struggling to find an adequate and common response to the challenges it faces, which has been highly visible in the field of migration management. Issues like the distribution of asylum seekers within the EU have created deep cleavages between Eastern, Western, and Southern groups of MS (Trauner and Ripoll Servent, 2019). The challenge of diverse interests and preferences among MS, as well as within third-countries, had also been reflected in the cooperation frameworks. The post-2011 agreements were conducted with a crisis mentality, and the issue of their applicability to EU law and international norms is open to discussion.

While it is questionable whether externalizing the system's inherent structural problems, such as finding a common response to the issue of migration, will help solve them, this does not imply that externalizing strategies are inherently misleading or inadequate. External strategies are what they are: an external approach (Lehner, 2019). Within this study's scope, the external dimension refers to the relationship between the EU and the third-countries, particularly EU-Turkey relations in the field of migration management.

VII. Conclusion

This chapter attempted to explain how the securitization of migration led the EU to take measures and develop its external dimension to sustain internal security. In response to external security challenges such as irregular migration, organized crime, and terrorism, the EU went through various institutional processes and developed an external migration policy. The externalization of migration control outside the borders became dependent on third-country cooperation over time, particularly after the Syrian refugee crisis. The EU deals with migration-related issues outside its walls by cooperating with third-countries in the neighborhood or broader region.

The third-countries are integrated into cooperation frameworks in which they receive financial and technical assistance, get offered visa facilitation, and so on in return for their cooperation. The most prominent instruments of the cooperation agreements are Mobility Partnerships, migration compacts, readmission agreements, and the EU-Turkey Statement. These all include

some form of positive conditionality based on incentives, where cooperation becomes a win-win situation for the EU and the third-country.

The chapter also identified some of the most relevant conceptual approaches explaining the EU's external relations in the field of migration. Sectoral functional governance is found most helpful in narrowing down the relationship to a specific area or sector, in this case, the field of migration. Within this particular sector, the cooperation between the EU and third-country could be analyzed within a multi-level governance framework. It provides an analytical lens to consider state and non-state sector-specific local actors as influential as the EU institutions.

Notably, the power and leverage third-countries gain over the EU due to sectoral cooperation and multi-level governance is outstanding in bilateral relations. The dynamic role and increasing importance of the third-countries are mentioned throughout the literature. The imbalances in the power relations between the EU and third-countries, namely the growing role of third-country agencies, necessitate a closer theoretical and empirical analysis of the instrumentalization of migration as a tool in bilateral relations. Such instrumentalization needs to be assessed and revisited in detail from a foreign policy perspective. Taking this into consideration, the following chapter presents a discussion on the relevant theoretical foundations of power, foreign policy, and migration diplomacy. Another theoretical discussion is required to connect the EU's current external migration policy with how third-countries respond to migration cooperation with the EU.

CHAPTER III: THE INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF MIGRATION AS A FOREIGN POLICY TOOL

I. Introduction

The literature on migration studies includes only a limited number of studies focused on the link between irregular migration and international relations from a foreign policy perspective. More empirical research is needed to answer the questions of how foreign policy and migration policy intertwine in countries that experience mass influxes with the Syrian refugee crisis (Aras and Mencütek, 2015; Gökalp Aras and Şahin Mencütek, 2018). Similarly, theorizing 'migration diplomacy' as an object of study and research, which is missing in the IR discourse, needs to be addressed (Adamson and Tsourapas, 2019). This study particularly looks at how migration is instrumentalized between the EU and Turkey and used as a foreign policy tool in bilateral relations in the aftermath of the Syrian refugee crisis.

Traditionally, international migration has been a socio-economic issue associated with the labor market and integration into the host community. However, with the change in the internal-external security nexus in the early 2000s, the issue of migration has started to be perceived more as a security challenge. One of the most fundamental developments in the study of IR is the shift of 'migration' from 'low politics' (socio-economic issues) to 'high politics' (issues related to political and national security). The elevated security concerns and the 'securitization of migration' have created a puzzle between maintaining security and securing human rights (Carlsnaes, Risse and A. Simmons, 2013). States have become constrained within a system of increasing security concerns and threats while promoting economic growth and being responsible for developing migration and refugee policies that safeguard human rights at the same time.

It should be mentioned that the study of migration is not an officially recognized and well-established subfield of IR, yet it has always been crucial for IR scholars. Moreover, the field of migration cannot fully be examined under a specific theoretical approach; each IR theory perceives and interprets the issue differently. Within the scope of this study, the IR theories will only be elaborated with reference to how they perceive the states' international system, power relations, and foreign policy choices. Reslow (2019b) states that the EU's external migration

policy combines migration and foreign policy. Hence, the IR theories will be narrowed down to a foreign policy perspective to analyze the impact of irregular migration, specifically the 2011 Syrian refugee crisis, on the EU's external relations with third-countries. Based on these, the following sections in this chapter will elaborate on different meanings attributed to the concept of 'power', theoretical discussions on foreign policy formation, and, most importantly, migration diplomacy in bilateral relations.

II. The Notion of Power and Leverage in International Relations

Power is a dynamic concept that can be divided into specific categories for this study, such as power as possession, power as a contextual concept, and power as perception. Similar to this division of power, Habeeb (1988), as cited in (Criekinge, 2009), divides power into three groups; 'aggregate structural power', which refers to an actor's capabilities and resources like the power as a possession; 'issue-specific structural power', referring to resources and capabilities within a specific context; and lastly 'behavioral power', indicating the tactical approach adopted by an actor in reaching a preferred outcome. This classification establishes a more complex understanding of power in bilateral relations in IR and EU and third-country relations later for the empirical parts of this study.

i. Power as possession

In the first category of power as possession, the notion of power is central to classical realist thought.[12] Its main premises are based on the importance of state sovereignty, which primarily concentrates on internal security (Lavenex, 2001a). In realism and neo-realism, power refers to tangible resources and capabilities of the state. IR is a zero-sum game in an anarchical system, where states either win or lose with absolute power. Aggregate structural power is reduced to states' military, economic, and technological capabilities and leaves out the intangible elements that would affect the outcomes of political decisions (Gilpin, 1981, p. 13). The tangible elements are what a state considers mandatory for survival. Assuming an interest in survival is a generalization in realist thought: states that are not interested in their survival are not likely to last in an anarchical world (Barkin, 2003). Therefore, power as material possession proves the concept of state-centrality in IR. Conceptualizing power in this material form only generates a

[12] To read classical realism in detail, please see Waltz (1979).

'lump concept of power', which underestimates its full potential and assumes all elements of power can be combined into a general indicator of possessions (Guzzini, 2000).

Within the scope of material power, realists and neorealists explain the failure of stronger states compared to their weaker counterparts as a failure of not using the material resources effectively or with a lack of will to achieve their goals. This simplification fails to explain how weaker states lacking these possessions compared to stronger political entities meet their demands. If using power was only about exercising power based on material resources and possessions, there would not be a reason to analyze IR from the perspective of relatively weaker states, as the stronger states would continuously pursue their interests successfully. Relevantly, explaining the EU and third-country relations would be very straightforward as the EU would always have more power to exercise in the third-countries that do not have the material means to compete. Baldwin (1979, 1985) uses the term the 'paradox of unrealized power' to explain the overlooked elements of power and questions how the weaker states influence the stronger ones in matters where they hold less 'material power' but more 'potential power' (Baldwin, 1979).

ii. Potential power as contextual and perceptional power

The realization and different interpretations of power can overcome the criticism of Baldwin's (1979) 'paradox of unrealized power' to a certain extent. The perceived power is identifying a set of preferences and later deducing how and which preferences were altered and conceded to. It produces a causal analysis, resulting in the intended effects on another actor (Criekinge, 2009). The perceived power depends on the context in which the actors find themselves, which is issue-specific. That is why contextual and perceived power are complementary interpretations. They can be used to look at the cases in international relations where weaker states, in terms of their relative military and economic power, succeed in persuasion and reaching their goals vis-à-vis their relations with stronger states. The outcomes are more important than the resources, so contexts and strategies require more attention.

Zartman and Rubin (2000) add to the contextual meaning of power and say power is also 'the perceived capacity of one side to produce an intended effect on another through a move that may involve the use of resources' (Zartman and Rubin, 2000, p. 14). It means power is what a state perceives of its own power and resources, as much as how that state perceives the other's power as opposed to its own. Power and resources can be perceived as a state's own culture,

values, political structure, or foreign policy. States could use their soft power to persuade the other actor(s) by operationalizing these elements. Suppose a stronger actor is convinced to act according to the demands of the weaker actor. In that case, the emphasis on absolute military and economic power becomes less significant than an actor's soft power. Soft power is 'the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction to obtain preferred outcomes (Nye, 2011, p. 20,21)'. The EU is an example of an actor with soft power to persuade non-EU countries to cooperate.

a) EU's normative power as an example

The EU's normative power is part of its soft power; they can be used interchangeably. The EU, as a 'civilian power', represent five primary norms; the first of these is the centrality of peace, the second is the idea of liberty; the third, fourth and fifth norms are democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. All of them are expressed in the preamble and founding principles of the Treaty on the European Union, the common foreign and security provisions of the Union, and the membership criteria adopted at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993 (Manners, 2002). The EU is expected to advocate and follow these norms in all its actions, including its Europeanization efforts. Europeanization could simply be defined as the impact of European integration at the national level of the Member States (Knill and Lehmkuhl, 2002).

The EU's soft power and Europeanization efforts can also be extended to non-EU countries as these efforts refer to 'a process of change in national institutional and policy practices that can be attributed to European integration' (Hix and Goetz, 2000, as cited in Lavenex and Uçarer, 2004). Therefore, the EU's Europeanization policy to third-countries should also represent its core norms and values, and the norms of the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms should be followed and respected. The emergency-driven migration cooperation schemes with third-countries following the start of the Syrian refugee crisis tested the normative influence of the EU. These cooperation agreements prioritized the control and prevention of irregular migrants and refugees entering the EU, overlooking the humanitarian costs of the crisis. Therefore, the EU's perceived soft power is context- and issue-specific and can change according to the country in which it is in a relationship under specific circumstances.

To conclude, the discussion on the concept of power shows that the realist understanding of power in material terms is still significant but has limits. Power is subject to change according to different contextual settings and perceptions. A contextual analysis is needed to understand an actor's exercise of power. In this sense, contextual and behavioral power are interrelated. For instance, the EU's material power over non-EU countries is often considered stronger. However, in times of emergency or conflict, the third-country could leverage contextual and perceptual power to achieve desired outcomes against the EU, potentially undermining the EU's normative power. Hence, the context in which the power relations occur is highly relevant. The following section discusses power relationships further by looking at the issue of leverage.

iii. Power and leverage

Power relationships are based on mutual asymmetrical dependencies between states. When there is a high level of asymmetry between actors in one or more policy fields, the relationship becomes dependent (Criekinge, 2009). This dependency empowers one actor against the other, sometimes the weaker over the stronger. Accordingly, one should look not only into an actor's power *in se* but to the extent to which power is turned into instances of leverage and control due to the asymmetrical dependencies in inter-state relations. Leverage stands here for the ability of an actor to reach its interests, demands, or preferences vis-à-vis another actor by placing these on the political agenda, by getting the other actor to consider them seriously, and by modifying or shifting others' behavior, political choices, decisions, and preferences (Criekinge, 2009). Leverage and influence are often used interchangeably with bargaining power and strength or negotiating capital.

Leverage and influence can be instrumentalized through persuasion, pressure, coercion, and behavior. Among these, persuasion and coercion primarily include using the principle of conditionality (or external incentives), restrictive policies, and even punitive action to ensure the success of a change or shift in the other actor's behavior and preferences. To use any of these acts, an actor must feel confident enough and have the means to force the other actor to consider and accept its own demands. Both persuasion and coercion are meant to alter the gains or losses the other party can conjure from a negotiated outcome (Hopmann, 1998, as cited in Criekinge, 2009). It can be argued that contextual and perceptional power are materialized

through leverage. When an actor feels confident of its power within a specific context and sees it as higher than the other actor, exercising this power through different means is called its leverage.

iv. Leverage and contextual factors in EU-third country relations

As discussed earlier, both contextual factors and perceptions of the actors are essential in explaining the weaker actor's leverage on the stronger actor in a relationship that contains power asymmetries. To analyze the use of leverage between the EU and third-countries, it is fundamental to consider and develop a clear understanding of the changing international, regional, and national structural contexts which depend on the economic, political, ideological, and institutional structures within which actors define preferences and adopt strategies. These contextual conditions do not automatically determine the outcome of any negotiation, whereas they present both opportunities and constraints for donors and recipients of the negotiation (Whitfield and Fraser, 2009, p. 39).[13] They help each actor to calculate what is possible to reach from the negotiation or what tools and resources they can use to compel the other to accept demands and preferences. Objectives are (re)formulated in accordance with the dynamic contextual factors in combination with actor preferences.

Economic, political/ideological, institutional, and strategic contextual factors could either constrain or act as an opportunity for an actor to exercise leverage and successfully reach goals against another actor. Among these, for the EU, the economic factors strongly influence the power asymmetry in its bilateral relations with financially less secure third-countries and, therefore, positively impact the degree to which the EU can exercise its leverage on the third-country in question. Chapter II explained that through financial assistance schemes and trade negotiations like Mobility Partnerships and migration 'Compacts', third-countries like Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco have become economically dependent on the EU in specific policy fields. The dependency could be stronger in case of economic instability and crisis in third-countries.

[13] The 'donor-recipient' terminology is more commonly used in the EU's cooperation frameworks with African countries. To read more on the EU's cooperation policies on Africa, please see Stokke and Hoebink (2005) and Whitfield (2009).

Among the political/ideological factors, domestic political legitimacy, political (in)stability, the ideological orientation of the ruling government in the third-country, and resonance between third-country governments and the EU's political or ideological agenda can influence the power relationship in between. In addition, the institutional factors include the capacity to develop and implement policies and other strategies, as well as necessary expertise and experience in a policy field, institutional memory, adequate human resources, technical resources, and institutional culture. The third-countries are notably constrained if they lack the institutional factors and depend on the EU's technical assistance in capacity building. Here, the EU holds more power and leverage than its counterparts.

Last but not least, the strategical contextual factors include a country's geopolitical position and importance vis-à-vis the EU. These refer to the country's importance as a migrant-sending/hosting country or economic significance to the EU as a trading partner. If the EU is interested in establishing itself as an essential international or a regional foreign policy actor, especially in conflict and crisis management, third-countries that are in this region and politically influential are expected to hold a more favorable position to exercise leverage vis-à-vis the EU due to their strategic position (Criekinge, 2009). The EU is expected to cooperate with these third-countries to accomplish its objectives within or outside the EU's borders. In this cooperation, the third-country might be economically weaker, or its technical capacity might be insufficient; however, under issue-specific conditions, it gains strength by increased negotiation and bargaining power due to its strategic geopolitical position and importance in the region. The Syrian refugee crisis had been an example where third-countries gained leverage against the EU with their strategic importance in managing the crisis.

The debate on the structural power asymmetries between strong and weaker actors was primarily used for the EU's development cooperation policies with African countries (Criekinge, 2009). The same approach that uses the concepts of leverage and control can also be attributed to the EU's external migration policy and its relations with third-world countries in the field of migration. This study tries to understand under what contextual factors Turkey, as a third-country gained power and exercised leverage against the EU in migration management with the start of the Syrian refugee crisis. It can be stated that having power and exercising leverage against another actor requires a strategy in bilateral relations. Migration diplomacy as an overarching theory can explain this strategy best.

III. Migration Diplomacy as an Overarching Theoretical Approach

i. Theoretical IR perspectives on power, security and foreign policy formation

a) Realist and constructivist theory in IR

It can be stated that the mainstream IR theories, such as realism and constructivism, often fail to explain the emerging power asymmetry between two actors. In the essence of classical realism, all states use immigration control as the key to state sovereignty (Weiner, 1985, p. 442). States are obliged to regulate international migration to protect state sovereignty and national interest, which includes a wide range of issues like the economy, labor market, culture, etc. (Hollifield, 1992). At the same time, stronger states can be restrained in their efforts to regulate international migration to protect their national interest if the weaker actors in terms of material power increase their leverage in the instrumentalization of migration in times of crisis. This view also applies to the EU and its efforts to secure the safety of the Schengen Area, and one should look at how weaker counterparts could manage to persuade the stronger ones in migration management in times of crisis.

Constructivist theory in IR emphasizes the role of identities, norms, causal mechanisms, and power in making national interests, institutionalization, and international governance (Carlsnaes, Risse and A. Simmons, 2013, p. 114), which could complement the shortcomings of realist theory in explaining the power asymmetries in migration management. According to constructivism, all sorts of relations are constructed through norms; without them, any action would become meaningless (Hopf, 1998, p. 19). Relevantly, the securitization and politicization of migration could be what actors make of them. Similarly, Zakaria (1999) states that perceptions of power and (in)security differ too widely and idiosyncratically to be systematized, making it hard to come up with objective generalizations. Nevertheless, constructivism as a theory in IR can predict the relationship between perceptions of political actors and state policies. What determines the foreign policy of the state is the perceptions of decision-makers; ‘threat’ and ‘security’ are formed through a cognitive process by them.

State actors could perceive or believe in a rise in terms of power or a decline in terms of security, which would result in the expansion or change in their political interests (Zakaria, 1999), and it eventually would result in a shift in foreign policy decisions. All security-related notions like

'threat' and 'national-interest' are, in fact, social constructions and subject to change as diverse actors perceive them differently over time. Identification of a state's material interests is a process that requires significant interpretive work (Kitchen, 2010). It is argued that actors' interests and the political structures within which actors operate are all defined by social norms and ideas that are constructed rather than by objective and material conditions in IR (Barkin, 2003). Lavenex (2001b) uses an example from the EU and states that the organizational structure of the JHA prioritizes the perspective of certain actors and goes along with a 'securitarian framing' of international migration in political discourse, which facilitates restrictive policies in the Member States.

It can be argued that constructivism in IR helps grasp the causal mechanisms resulting in the 'securitization of migration' by looking at how actors and their perceptions construct security itself. Contrary to realism, it offers a more complex way of thinking about foreign policy formation in international relations. However, the intervening variables beyond material possessions and perceptions of state actors in different contextual settings are missing from the picture. As a mediator between the realist and constructivist ways of thought in IR, 'neoclassical realism' emerges as a complementary theory that can help analyze foreign policy formation and migration management, considering the contextual distinctions and power asymmetry between stronger and weaker actors.

b) Neoclassical realism

The responses given to the post-2011 Syrian refugee crisis by both the EU MS and third-countries have been diverse, and power relations have been asymmetric (Şahin Mencütek, Gökalp Aras and Balamir Coşkun, 2020). In particular, the power asymmetry between the EU and Turkey goes beyond the traditional understanding of security and actor preferences. An assuring common-ground theory, neoclassical realism, promises venues for empirical research on the link between power and foreign policy. Neoclassical proposes the consideration of context-specific premises and attempts to examine foreign policy drivers and state interactions in greater detail.

Neoclassical realists believe that understanding the links between power and policy requires closely examining the contexts within which foreign policies are formulated and implemented. The scope and ambition of a third-country's foreign policy are first driven by its position in the international system and, specifically, its relative material power capabilities. This is why the

countries are first realists. However, the impact of such material power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the national and sub-national levels. This is where neoclassical realism steps forth (Rose, 1998). Neoclassical realism does not undermine the debate on power and security, whereas it believes it is equally important to investigate the intervening factors that impact policy choices.

Neoclassical realists look at how power distributions or distribution of state interests (independent variable), together with the internal dynamics of states (intervening variables), affect foreign policy outcomes (Rose, 1998; Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman, 2012). The variables affecting foreign policy decisions are relative and absolute power distribution among states, decision-makers' perceptions and misperceptions of systemic gains, domestic constraints, pressures, and threats. The following table compares neoclassical realism with classical realism to show how it differs in foreign policy analysis.

	View of the international system	Dependent Variable	Underlying causal logic
Classical Realism	Occasionally important	Foreign policies of states	Power distributions or diverse interests → foreign policy
Neoclassical Realism	Important	Foreign policies of states	Power distributions → domestic constraints and elite perceptions → foreign policy

Table I: Main Premises of Classical Realism and Neoclassical Realism

Source: Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman (2012)

As the table suggests, the two realist approaches differ from each other when it comes to explaining how foreign policy is shaped. Classical realism undoubtedly takes anarchy seriously in the international system, and all foreign policy choices are made to protect the state's best interest. On the other hand, neoclassical realism does not disagree with realist thought. Still, the intervening variables of domestic constraints and elite perceptions make the most significant difference in understanding foreign policy outcomes. It seeks to explain why, how, and under

what conditions the internal characteristics of states, such as the capacity of politico-military institutions, the influence of domestic societal actors and interest groups, the degree of state autonomy from society, and the level of elite or societal cohesion (intervene between the leaders' assessment of international threats and opportunities and the actual diplomatic, military, and foreign economic policies those leaders pursue) shape foreign policy decisions (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman, 2012).

Neoclassical realism acts as a 'transmission belt' (Schweller, 2004) between national incentives and constraints, on the one hand, and the actual diplomatic, military and foreign economic policies states select, on the other (Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman, 2012). It also highlights that foreign policy choices are made by actual political actors, so it is these actors' perceptions of relative power that matter, not simply relative quantities of physical resources or forces, as classical realist thought suggests (Rose, 1998). Similarly, Zakaria (1999) asserts that state actors, not states, are the primary actors in international relations, and their perceptions of power shifts, rather than objective measures, are critical. State elite can exploit the power resources of their public through the state structure: foreign policy is thus the product of state power.

With this relative power of elite perceptions and national and political structures, states assess and later adapt to changes in their external environment. Complex domestic political developments mediate and direct policy outputs in response to external changes, pressures, and threats (Schweller, 2004). For neoclassical realists, the elite perceptions refer to ideas these individuals have, which are elements of power in policy-making. Ideas might intervene at the unit level, through the specific individuals that hold them, through institutions in which they may become embedded, and through the broader culture of the state. Moreover, state actors define the national interest(s) and conduct foreign policy based on their perceptions and assessment of relative power and other states' intentions. Yet, they are always subject to domestic constraints (Kitchen, 2010). The domestic constraints are case-specific; they could range from characteristics of the state's political system, culture, prevailing ideologies, and other socio-economic developments occurring in the country or even a crisis.

To sum up the debate on theoretical IR perspectives, one must consider the expectations, perceptions, threats, and interests of states and state actors holding the decision and policy-making power and the ever-changing domestic constraints they face in understanding power and foreign policy formation. Especially in more complex events, such as an international

protection crisis like the Syrian refugee crisis, actor preferences and domestic and international drivers affecting migration policy choices must be considered. This study finds that neoclassical realism offers the most comprehensive approach to exploring the link between power and foreign policy formation, as it prioritizes intervening variables that change foreign policy decisions. The intervening factors, such as economic, social, and political developments, national structures, changing public opinion, etc., must be considered to draw a causal mechanism between internal policies and foreign policy reflections.

ii. The foreign policy-migration nexus

The politics of migration is highly intertwined with international relations; sending and receiving states have figured over time that migration constitutes great importance in bilateral agreements due to its role as an instrument in state-to-state interaction (Mitchell, 1989). In case of a large-scale migratory movement or a refugee crisis, international migration is regulated through codified foreign policy instruments such as international agreements, protocols, and conventions (Teitelbaum, 1984). The most prominent example of such an instrument is the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Additional Protocol, which sets out the principles and criteria by which refugee status can be granted.[14] Another example of a codified foreign policy instrument is the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement, which constitutes the main cooperation set-up to manage the Syrian refugee crisis and its aftermath.

The international agreements and the national migration laws and policies have an inevitable international reflection. To put it differently, while immigration is mainly seen as a national concern and the integration policies, part of migration policies is developed following a 'national policy culture'; such policies often have an international projection (Mitchell, 1989). As an illustration, the policies concerning the labor migrants in Western Europe have influenced the bilateral relations between the sending and receiving states since the 1960s. In fact, the national policies on education, employment, and housing addressing immigrants are not independent of states' foreign policies, and vice versa (Mitchell, 1989). Therefore, migration policies are mostly interdependent, irrespective of domestic or foreign, and foreign policies represent this dependence.

[14] Please see the full text of the 1951 Geneva Convention here: https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10

One could ask how migration policy is differentiated from foreign policy. How distinct are these two 'public actions', and when do they interact? Most scholars argue that these two policies are different yet increasingly interacting. This growing interaction requires more accurate research on the structure of foreign policy interests and power relations between countries. Accordingly, three main sub-questions emerge: (1) what is the influence of a country's foreign policy on migration policies? (2) what is the role of actions on migration in the execution of foreign policies, and (3) how does making migration policies have national and international reflections? (Mitchell, 1989).

The first question arises traditionally from the migration policy practices of the former colonial states. Once the imperial powers declined, the states committed to admitting overseas subjects, which created liberal immigration policies. The second question on the roles of actions on migration in implementing foreign policies refers more to the instrumentalization of migration as a foreign policy tool. Teitelbaum (1984) uses the term 'mass migration for unarmed conquest' to explain this instrumentalization, which refers to using migrant groups for foreign policy purposes, as discussed in the Introduction of this dissertation. Both sending and receiving states use this strategy to establish positive political relations, realize domestic or foreign interests or destabilize or discredit the target countries.[15]

The third question on migration policies and their international reflections is an area of concern for IR analysts. The answer to this question would lay out the political and social interests pursued in developing the migration policies and other sub-national material or ideological interests that arise with the composition of migration-related issues (Mitchell, 1989). Mitchell (1989) also adds that political interests are influenced by general public opinion, which could show changes in the setup of an international migration crisis. As public opinion changes over time, migration decisions and policymaking might have to adapt to these.

This study primarily addresses the second and third questions raised above, which are both issue areas of migration diplomacy. The former is related to the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis, which is the leading research interest of the dissertation. The instrumentalization by the EU and Turkey is explored through the EU-Turkey cooperation agreement and its

[15] To read specific examples of the states using migration as a foreign policy tool, please see Teitelbaum (1984, pp. 473–441).

implementation. The latter relates to how Turkey's foreign policy in migration management reflects actor perceptions and possible changes in these perceptions due to domestic constraints.

As a result, depending on the context, it can be argued that migration and foreign policy could be used interchangeably when explaining bilateral relations that are influenced heavily by the politics of migration between political entities. This foreign policy-migration nexus is part of the migration diplomacy between the EU and third-countries, elaborated in detail in the next section. It looks at how migration diplomacy is theoretically conceptualized and exercised.

iii. Defining migration diplomacy

Migration diplomacy investigates the link between cross-border population mobility, diplomatic aims, and actors' actions. It does not refer to a state's overall migration policy; it is interested in the negotiation process between actors and how they manage cross-border population movements and strategically use diplomatic means to obtain their interests, demands, and goals. Hence, migration diplomacy narrows the discussion on the migration-foreign policy nexus in IR to the strategic use of migration in bilateral relations. Interstate bargaining in migration studies is often found between states or actors with an existing or emerging asymmetrical power relationship; Mexico-United States or EU-Turkey relations are two of the most prominent examples (Adamson and Tsourapas, 2019). Within the framework of this study, the EU's external migration policy towards Turkey in the aftermath of the Syrian refugee crisis is regarded as a part of the broader 'migration diplomacy'.

As previously discussed in Chapter II, the externalization of the migration policy has traditionally highlighted the EU with a powerful position against relatively weak target states, where 'conditionality' is applied as a strategic reinforcement tool through 'rewards' and 'inducements'. In most cases, the EU offers trade agreements or visa facilitation in return for signing a readmission agreement. This picture portrays the target countries as passive recipients dependent on EU incentives. However, in practice, the political agency of third-countries determines which policy frames are accepted and adopted due to the interactive nature of EU-third-country relations (Gokalp Aras, 2019). This means that the third-countries should not be seen as passive recipients of proposals, as they actively react to, interpret, and adapt the EU's policy agenda to their national context (Adam and Trauner, 2019) or vice versa; they actively

construct and shape the EU's external migration policy. From an agency-structure debate perspective, this study considers third-countries' agencies as powerful as the EU in migration diplomacy in affecting the structure.

After the Syrian refugee crisis, the third-country's national preference on whether or not its government will cooperate with the EU on migration issues started to determine the success or failure of the EU's external migration policy (Reslow, 2012). This means that the EU's external migration policy is not independent of the third-country in question's policy responses. The third-country's domestic preferences and foreign policy projections affect the success of the EU's external migration policy. Third-countries often hold geographical importance for the EU and its migration management, and they can usually use the mechanism of conditionality to their advantage and interest (Tittel-Mosser, 2019, p. 254). This suggests that third-countries have gained significant negotiation power against the EU and that migration has become an effective foreign policy tool for the EU and third-countries in their relations with the EU.

For this reason, 'instrumentalization of migration', defined as an actor's series of attempts to exploit or use refugees or asylum seekers to persuade or constrain a target actor to realize domestic or foreign policy goals, started to get more attention. 'The power balance is shifting, and third-countries – with their hand on the button of irregular migration – turn out to have the biggest stick in this bargaining game (Sie Dhian Ho and Wijnkoop, 2022, p. 11).' The EU's externalization of its migration policy in the post-2011 era and third-country responses are examined according to this observation.

Greenhill (2010) asserts that the third-countries view the generation of crises as a necessary precursor to negotiations with their more powerful counterparts. In other words, compared to the EU, countries that lack capacities in some areas attempt to use migration issues as leverage to improve their bargaining position. Tsourapas (2019) conceptualizes the exercise of leverage by third-countries and argues that host states benefit from the crisis environment by using the situation as leverage in an aggressive manner even if they did not play a part in generating the crisis itself. He proposes the term 'refugee-rentier states' to describe refugee-hosting states that extract 'revenue' or 'refugee rent' in material and non-material forms from other actors to keep the refugee population within their state borders. Material forms refer to financial gains through funding mechanisms or trade agreements. In contrast, non-material forms include political incentives such as visa liberalization or re-energizing accession negotiations, as in Turkey's case, which will be discussed in detail in the empirical chapters of this dissertation. The 2016

EU-Turkey Statement is acknowledged as the most prominent example of migration diplomacy (Adamson and Tsourapas, 2019).

iv. Tools of migration diplomacy

a) Issue-linkage strategy

One strategy often preferred by both the stronger and weaker actors in migration diplomacy is the issue-linkage strategy. Issue-linkage appears as the process of simultaneous negotiations on and between a number of issues like migration, aid, trade, development, and security (Geddes, 2009), aiming for joint settlement based on migration diplomacy (Adamson and Tsourapas, 2019). It is a bargaining strategy states use to achieve objectives and increase the probability of an agreement (Poast, 2013).

It is often argued that the issue-linkage creates a mechanism for stronger states to impose their will and power on weaker states, just like the EU's conditionality mechanism over third-countries. Contrary to expectations, relatively weaker states can also use migration as issue-linkage in the absence of other forms of leverage. States like Afghanistan, Sudan, and Libya have pursued issue-linkage policies that manipulate 'migration-independence' by linking migration management to achieve foreign policy and economic interests from stronger actors (Tsourapas, 2017, 2019). With the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, the refugee-hosting states of Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon have started to use the refugee crisis as an issue-linkage and combined it with financial assistance, development, and trade agreements in their bilateral relations with the EU. [16]

b) Blackmailing and Back-scratching

Two main strategies for a host state to exercise revenue or refugee-rent-seeking behavior are 'blackmailing' and 'back-scratching'. Blackmailing refers to 'threats to do something one does not believe to be in one's interest unless compensated and promises to refrain from doing something one does not believe to be in one's interest if compensated'. In simpler terms, blackmailing is threatening to overwhelm the other actor with the refugee population residing within its borders unless its demands are met (Tsourapas, 2019). Backscratching, on the other

[16] See Panizzon (2019a) for non-migration-related trade agreements of Jordan with the EU.

hand, consists of 'promises to refrain from doing something one believes to be in one's interest if compensated, and threats to do something one believes to be in one's interest unless compensated" (Oye, 1979, p. 14) or ensuring to keep the refugee population within state borders as long as compensated (Tsourapas, 2019).

It is argued that the choice between blackmailing and back-scratching depends on national actors' perception of the issue vis-à-vis the target actor(s). If the state actors are aware that their state is geopolitically crucial vis-à-vis the target actor(s), and they have been hosting a serious number of refugees, they often adopt the strategy of blackmailing. This strategy uses threats on unilateral actions to be taken, and states frame their actions around potential losses that the target actor(s) might acquire. These states also tend to pay little attention to international law and norms while retaliating against their stronger counterparts. While blackmailing focuses on threats, a back-scratching strategy evolves around cooperation as a common benefit, and third-countries often value multilateral negotiations (Tsourapas, 2019).

Tsourapas (2019) further argues that in the aftermath of the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon and Jordan adopted a strategy of back-scratching in their foreign policy because, although they knew they hosted large communities of Syrian refugees, they did not consider themselves geopolitically important vis-à-vis the EU. In contrast, he asserts that Turkey adopted a blackmailing strategy that can be explained by state elites' perception of Turkey's geopolitical importance and the large size of Syrian refugees residing within its borders (Tsourapas, 2019). The perceived power of countries in specific contexts can determine which strategy they choose to implement. Geopolitics is one of the variables that play a role in the given example, where Turkey has more reasons to adopt blackmailing due to its strategic position as a neighboring transit country to the EU, whereas Lebanon and Jordan could opt for a bargaining strategy and apply backscratching.

c) Migration-driven coercion

Related to the blackmailing strategy, Greenhill (2010, 2016) defines the concept of 'coercive-engineered migration' or 'migration-driven coercion' as 'those cross-border population movements that are deliberately created or manipulated to induce political, military and/or economic concessions from a target state(s)'. It is a weapon that weak actors can use to influence the behavior or decision of more powerful actors. The instruments used for this

coercion are context-specific and diverse. Migration-driven coercion can be conceived as a two-level, asymmetric coercion by the strategy of punishment, through which the weaker actors on the international or regional level seek to influence or change the behavior of their targets by exploiting the interests of the target state(s) and/or by manipulating the costs or risks of non-compliance (Greenhill, 2010).

Weaker actors often successfully use this weapon on the stronger actors because they can manipulate the political vulnerabilities that arise from the conflicts between an actor's international commitments and national imperatives/interests (Greenhill, 2002). Similar to Tsourapas (2019)'s discussion on blackmailing, Greenhill (2010) acknowledges two strategies of leverage coercers can impose on target actor(s): (1) direct threats to overwhelm the political capacity of the target actor and (2) norms-enhanced political blackmail meant to exploit the domestic interests that exist in every polity.

Both blackmailing and migration-driven coercion resemble Cassarino's (2007) view on 'reversed conditionality', where the third-countries begin to apply the principle of conditionality to the EU in migration management. This can also be interpreted as 'migration of power', as an overarching term, which argues that migration is a bargaining chip for the countries in the South to use to increase their leverage versus their counterparts in the North (Paoletti, 2010; Tittel-Mosser, 2018, 2019). Migration as a bargaining chip is observed in the case of EU-Turkey cooperation in the aftermath of the 2011 Syrian refugee crisis, which is elaborated on in the coming empirical chapters of this study.

IV. Research Question and the Main Hypotheses of the Dissertation

The dissertation introduced the development of the EU's external migration policy with the start of a securitization trend in migration affairs. Migration became an area highly associated with security, even more so after the series of terrorist attacks in the 2000s. With the growing need to protect the safety of the Schengen Area, the JHA was communitarized through supranational decision-making. In the 2010s, with the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, the EU opted to externalize its migration policy further and started looking for third-country cooperation mechanisms. With these mechanisms, the EU partly transfers its protection responsibilities to third-countries and usually offers financial and technical assistance schemes.

In return, the third-countries agree to host refugees and maintain stricter border control. The EU-Turkey cooperation and the 2016 Statement were prominent tools of this externalization.

This chapter continued by discussing power, leverage, and foreign policy formation. Accordingly, the traditional realist understanding of possessing material power can no longer explain the power dynamics between stronger and weaker actors. The weaker states' potential power could be more determinant in inter-state relations. The potential power is context- and issue-specific; the state actors perceive and decide on their power according to the given political and economic conditions or their strategic positions. The bargaining or negotiating power the actors gain is called leverage or influence. Several IR theories discuss power and influence; neoclassical realism fits this study most. It considers intervening variables in explaining foreign policy formation. These can range from economic status, elite perceptions and preferences, domestic constraints like changing public opinion, elections, financial crises, etc.

The theoretical considerations showed that the line between migration and foreign policies is blurred and can be used interchangeably depending on the context. The strategic use of the foreign policy-migration nexus is called migration diplomacy, an overarching terminological term for this study. Within the scope of migration diplomacy, third-countries use the issue of migration strategically, or in other words, instrumentalize the migrants or refugees to achieve foreign or domestic policy goals. They could consistently threaten and use coercive means to manipulate the vulnerabilities of the target actor, the EU.

After the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis, the EU-Turkey cooperation became an area where migration-driven coercion could be observed. Herein, this dissertation defines the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis as follows: an actor's attempt to use refugees or asylum seekers to persuade or constrain a target actor to realize domestic or foreign policy goals. For the EU, instrumentalization would refer to a situation where Turkey initiates irregular migratory flows into the EU by actively encouraging the movement of Syrian refugees from within its territory to the external borders to achieve its foreign and national policy objectives. In return, from Turkey's perspective, the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis occurs when the EU uses the Syrian refugees to conduct agreements with Turkey to secure its internal and external policy goals. The EU external migration policy after the start of the Syrian refugee crisis serves these goals.

Considering the discussion on the increasing leverage and contextual power between the EU and third-countries and the discussion on the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis, this study takes EU-Turkey cooperation in migration management as an example of ongoing migration diplomacy and asks the following question:

'How does the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis as a foreign policy tool affect EU-Turkey cooperation?'

The question seeks to reveal how the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis affects or can impact the relationship between the EU and Turkey and attempts to explain how the two scenarios, conflict and cooperation, can coexist simultaneously. To answer the question, this study looks at the EU-Turkey cooperation framework that started with the 2011 Syrian refugee and protection crisis. The 2013 Readmission Agreement and 2016 EU-Turkey Statement built up a bilateral relationship, aiming to assist Syrian refugees and host communities with financial and technical assistance schemes. Along with its considerable success in its implementation, the Statement experienced several deadlocks, often resulting from Turkey's changing foreign policy ideals, political aspirations, and preferences. The crisis became a bargaining tool, and Syrian refugees became a matter of leverage. Taking these into account, this dissertation comes up with three main hypotheses:

H1: The instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis shifts power dynamics in EU-Turkey relations. When the EU meets Turkey's expectations, it would enhance cooperation, while unfulfilled promises would lead to negative perceptions by the Turkish state and potential conflict.

H2: In Turkey, economic, social, and political domestic constraints would result in a negative shift in the perceptions of political actor(s) towards foreign and national policy choices, consequently hindering cooperation with the EU.

H3: The ongoing instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis by the EU and Turkey would lead to conflict in bilateral relations. However, cooperation would persist among EU and Turkish counterparts, as well as international and non-governmental organizations.

It should be noted that this dissertation does not try to predict the foreign policy behavior of the EU or Turkey; it only attempts to make sense of foreign policy decisions using case-specific process-tracing and tracing to explain the outcome of bilateral EU-Turkey cooperation in migration management. Accordingly, as mentioned in the intended contributions in the

Introduction of this dissertation, this study aims to shed light on three main areas: (1) the EU's evolving external migration policy in times of crisis with third-countries, (2) EU-Turkey relations outside the accession negotiations, (3) Turkey's power and leverage in its bilateral relations with the EU.

V. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the concept of power and leverage and how it is used to instrumentalize migration in foreign policy formation. It found that material power, namely power as possession, is still vital in bilateral relations. The EU holds the financial power in its relations with most third-countries, and financial assistance could be considered one of the main leverages. Nonetheless, soft power, or political/ideological, institutional, and strategic contextual power, is as important as the former and can act as opportunities or constraints in realizing goals, changing power relations between the stronger and weaker actors and exercising leverage.

Moreover, the theoretical discussions on mainstream IR theories and common ground theories of constructivism and neoclassical realism revealed that the intervening factors between power and foreign policy are crucial to understanding the conflictual relationship between the EU and the third-country in question. These intervening factors are the domestic interests, national structures, and actors' perceptions. How political actors perceive issues on migration and cooperation with the EU has a crucial impact on foreign policymaking. In short, this chapter acknowledges the contextual and perceptual factors affecting policy and decision-making.

Lastly, the chapter further argues that foreign and migration policies can often be used interchangeably and that migration diplomacy is an applicable term to describe the link between cross-border population mobility, diplomatic aims, and state actions. It includes forms of negotiations and bargaining processes between actors. The chapter indicated weaker states have developed strategies to impose their interests on more powerful actors. Within the context of the EU's external migration policy, third-country can either blackmail and threaten or back-scratch the EU to achieve its goals. These goals do not necessarily have to be migration-related but can also represent broader economic and political interests, referred to as the issue-linkage strategy.

As a more encompassing approach, migration diplomacy is the most fitting approach for combining discussions on power, leverage, and foreign policy formation. Migration diplomacy includes strategies like backscratching, blackmailing based on coercion, or simply the 'migration of power' to realize one's domestic or foreign policy goals by threatening the more powerful actor. The tools of migration diplomacy are highly relevant to the debate on the instrumentalization of migration and studying EU-Turkey cooperation in the aftermath of the Syrian refugee crisis.

CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

I. The Methodology of the Study

Chapters II and III have discussed this study's conceptual and theoretical frameworks. The primary subjects of interest have been the EU's external migration policy, tools of externalization, the increasing role of third-countries, and migration diplomacy in bilateral relations. Based on the discussions, this chapter introduces the methodology and the research design so that the following chapters systematically analyze EU-Turkey cooperation in migration management. This research is based on a qualitative methodological approach, relying on semi-structured expert interviews and desk research of formal policy documentation and media resources in English and Turkish. Both primary and secondary resources are used to employ a process-tracing method to understand the dynamics of the cooperation framework between the EU and Turkey. The qualitative software program MAXQDA is used to code and categorize the data. The following section describes the process-tracing method used in this study. The chapter continues with the research design, data collection and analysis strategy, and data categorization.

i. Explaining-outcome process-tracing

This study relies on Beach and Pedersen's (2013, 2019) theorization of case-specific explaining-outcome process tracing to examine the relationship between the EU and Turkey in migration management. Process-tracing is a within-case analysis that closely looks at the observable implications of hypothesized explanations over time for a historical event (Bennett and Elman, 2009) or a social and political phenomenon. Through process-tracing, a sequence of causation is established by uncovering traces of a hypothesized causal mechanism (Bennett and Elman, 2007). It is the systemic examination of the selected evidence and analysis in light of research question(s) and an analytic tool for drawing descriptive and causal inferences from pieces of this evidence. For the researcher to identify a diagnostic piece of evidence, one must have adequate prior knowledge of the matter (Collier, 2011). Prior knowledge includes

familiarity with the case and contextual understanding of the subjects that might have contributed to generating certain phenomena.

To characterize a process, one must identify critical steps in the process, which, in the end, permits good analysis of change and sequence altogether. Observing change and sequence in a given process is crucial but not enough. For a good analysis, one must also take snapshots of specific moments and key steps (Collier, 2011). For instance, identifying milestones in bilateral relations in political science could act as descriptive evidence to later draw inferences on phenomena that result in good cooperation or conflict in relations. It is, therefore, meaningful to start process tracing with a good narrative or with a timeline that presents the sequence of events. In this way, one can explore the causal ideas embedded in narratives, consider the evidence that may confirm or disconfirm these ideas, and identify the tests appropriate for evaluating this evidence (Collier, 2011).

ii. Challenges of using process-tracing

In process-tracing, both agencies and structures matter and affect each other, which moves the study beyond the unproductive 'either/or' theoretical debates (Checkel, 2008, as cited in Klotz and Prakash, 2012). For this reason, examining the agencies and their structure is crucial for the study. This study considers the EU and Turkey as the primary agencies shaping the EU's external migration policy. Turkey, as a third-country is mainly explored as an active respondent in migration diplomacy after the start of the Syrian refugee crisis. It is argued that studying certain agencies could be challenging and lead to oversimplifying or exaggerating its power. 'One can ultimately 'never know' as we are not privy to the private thought process. However, the step-wise, cross-checking procedure sharply bounds and minimizes the danger of erroneous inference (Checkel, 2008, as cited in Klotz and Prakash, 2012, p.120).' To avoid exaggerating Turkey's role in migration management, the study aims to refer to sufficient primary and secondary resources within this research's limits.

Additionally, the researcher can never be sure what individuals and political actors in the study think or how they perceive developments around them. This risks the validity of the arguments inferred from the process under investigation. This challenge could be overcome to a certain extent by justifying the interpretation through several different resources over time. A similar criticism often raised against this process-tracing method is the degree of subjective choice of

evidence based on prior knowledge or belief in the causal mechanism (Beach and Pedersen, 2013). A certain degree of subjectivity is inevitable in outcome-explaining process tracing, as the researcher chooses the puzzling outcome based on the existent insight on the subject matter. However, this can be kept at a minimum by intensifying and diversifying the research. A level of subjective choice can even be considered a strength in a study if what is believed to be probable is given explicitly before the analysis.

As Bennett and Elman (2007, 2009) suggest, good practice of process-tracing requires taking alternative explanations and their observable implications into account, together with the potential biases in the available evidence, incorporating a variety of sources of information (often including archived documents, news accounts, secondary literature, and interviews), and presenting an explanation of the key sequential steps in a process For this reason, there has been extensive cross-referencing of the data to ensure plausibility, especially of the Turkish resources published in several national newspapers and policy briefs. This strategy secured the accuracy and reliability of the arguments to a certain extent. As understood, the data used for process-tracing is intensely qualitative, which is both a strength and a limitation of the method.

Process-tracing is stronger on questions of interactions, whereas it is much weaker at establishing structural context. The greatest challenge is the significant amount of time and data required to validate arguments over time (Checkel, 2008 in Klotz and Prakash, 2012). When given unlimited time, the researcher could always find alternative explanations and evidence to the sequence of causation and potential biases within the evidence. However, searching for closer examinations consumes more time, and reading and generating data from secondary sources, news archives, or interviews requires considerable dedication.

Like every other method, it abstracts from and simplifies the real world to a certain extent. The researcher could only try to ‘fill in the blanks’ as much as possible in a causal-process story until it is plausible enough for a reviewer to read (Checkel, 2008 in Klotz and Prakash, 2012). Therefore, there is a limit to every study based on process tracing due to the highly time-intensive work it requires. The causal inference is presented within a given period, knowing other possible intervening variables might be in the process. Finding out all for one case is not feasible, but it will likely complete a story with enough plausible and persuasive arguments.

iii. Applicability of case-centric process-tracing

Process-tracing is divided into three research methods: testing whether a causal mechanism exists in a case, building a theoretical tool, and designing an explanation for a particular outcome (Beach and Pedersen, 2013). The first two represent theory-centric, whereas the latter relies on a case-centric process tracing method, which this dissertation uses. The case-centric process-tracing aims to develop sufficient evidence to explain a particular outcome. As an example, case-centric process tracing would not work on mechanisms that cause wars, whereas it would concentrate on the analysis of explaining a specific outcome. '*The goal is to account for particularly puzzling outcomes* (Beach and Pedersen, 2013, p.11).' Theories remain crucial in case-specific process tracing and are mainly used pragmatically. As the explanations are case-specific, there cannot be right or wrong theories. Their primary purpose is to assist in providing the best possible explanation of a particular phenomenon.

The best possible explanation is, at the same time, the minimally sufficient explanation of a particular outcome. Sufficiency is defined when an explanation accounts for all of the important aspects of the outcome (Mackie, 1965, as cited in Beach and Pedersen, 2013). This requires a strategy to trace the complex pile of systematic and case-specific causal mechanisms that produced the outcome. The strategy resembles '*abduction, which is a dialectic combination of deduction and induction'*, emphasizing that integrating both deductive and inductive inference paths is useful (Beach and Pedersen, 2013).

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that a minimally sufficient explanation of a particular outcome is based on an assessment of whether all of the relevant facets of the phenomenon have been accounted for adequately while ensuring that the developed explanation best explains the evidence instead of other plausible explanations (Beach and Pedersen, 2013). This means that no guideline shows that case-specific process tracing successfully explains one outcome and fails at another. The sufficient explanation for a case is reached by a within-case self-assessment and depends on how strong it is accounted for compared to other possible alternative explanations.

In designing an explaining-outcome process tracing, defining the context in which causal mechanisms are expected to operate and a time dimension is fundamental, as the exact causal mechanism placed in two different contexts could hypothetically produce two different

outcomes (Falleti and Lynch, 2009, p. 1160). The investigated outcome results from causal mechanisms of a defined scope and meaning within a specific context. Likewise, Beach & Pedersen (2013) state that the contextual sensitivity of evidence is one of the most decisive comparative advantages of in-depth, qualitative case study methods, including the outcome-explaining process-tracing. Here, expert knowledge of individual cases is used to evaluate what constitutes evidence and whether it is highly improbable to find specific pieces of evidence in a particular case. Within the scope of this study, the start of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2011 and Turkey's suspension of its prevention duties in 2020 determine the timeframe. The context is shaped by the milestones reached between the EU and Turkey within this period.

As a result, this study is a significant attempt to develop an interdisciplinary work on EU-Turkey cooperation in migration management. It is designed through a multi-method approach to qualitatively analyze Turkey's role as a third-country within the EU's external migration policy. The multi-method practice includes a within-case study and process-tracing supported by semi-structured interviews and desk research. A causal model aims to explain how the instrumentalization process of the refugee crisis eventually led to a conflictual yet cooperative relationship between the EU and Turkey.

II. The Research Design of the Dissertation

i. Data collection strategy

a) Semi-structured expert interviews

The primary resources used for the analysis rely primarily on the semi-structured expert interviews conducted between 2018 and 2020. Open, non-direct questions were asked throughout the interviews, and respondents were allowed to express their ideas and perspectives on a highly politicized and sensitive subject in Turkey. The questionnaire depended on the role and position of each interviewee in the institution, department, or working group they represent.[17] All interviews were conducted based on their consent, and the names were later

[17] Please see a sample questionnaire in the Appendix section of the dissertation.

anonymized. The interviewees are presented here with their job position or title and the institution and the department they are associated with.

The selection of the interviewees was based on their roles in FRIT cooperation mechanism and the relevance of their positions within the institutions they represent. A few interviewees were targeted with the help of a previously established migration policy network in Turkey and asked for an interview. Later, snowball sampling was used to identify and reach the subsequent respondents in the same or different institutions, with the help of the first respondents and their referrals. Twenty-one interviews were conducted in person in Ankara and online in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, and Brussels.

From the Turkish state agencies, EU experts from the Ministry of EU Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Family and Social Services, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Directorate General for Migration Management under the Ministry of Interior have become interview partners. Their EU counterparts were from the EU Delegation in Ankara and the Directorate-General, the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) in Brussels. Interviewees working at international organizations were from the United Nations agencies of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ). 'Support to Life' and 'Research Center on Asylum and Migration' represented the non-state actors. Lastly, two professors from one public and one private Turkish University specializing in migration studies and the Syrian refugee crisis were interviewed. The complete list of interviews, including the interviewees' positions in their institutions, is given below according to their dates of conduction.

	List of Conducted Interviews		
	Position	**Institution**	**Date of the Interview**
1.	President of the Research Center on Asylum and Migration	Research Center on Asylum and Migration/ İltica ve Göç Araştırmaları Merkez (IGAM), Turkish Non-governmental Organization, Ankara	28.12.2018

2.	Monitoring and Evaluation Expert	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), International Organization, Ankara	04.01.2019
3.	Education Adviser/ Support to Refugees and Host Communities (SRHC) Cluster	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), International Organization, Ankara	04.01.2019
4.	Professor of International Relations	Yaşar University, Izmir	12.02.2019
5.	Head of Migrant Integration and Social Cohesion Unit	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	12.03.2019
6.	Program Officer	EU Delegation Ankara	13.03.2019
7.	Program Manager	EU Delegation Ankara	13.03.2019
8.	Policy Officer	EU Delegation Ankara	13.03.2019
9.	Emergency Coordinator	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	08.04.2019
10.	National Program Officer	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	08.04.2019
11.	Program Officer	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO)	11.04.2019
12.	Field Coordinator	Hayata Destek (Support to Life), International Non-governmental Organization, Istanbul	03.05.2019
13.	Social Policy Expert	UNICEF, International Organization, Ankara	08.05.2019
14.	EU Expert/ SIHHAT Project	Ministry of Health, Ankara	09.05.2019
15.	EU Expert	Ministry of Family and Social Services, Ankara	10.05.2019
16.	Social Policy Expert	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	21.05.2019
17.	EU Expert	Ministry of EU Affairs, Ankara	09.12.2019

18.	EU Expert	Directorate General for Migration Management of Turkey (DGMM)[18], Ankara	21.12.2019
19.	EU Expert	Directorate General for Migration Management of Turkey (DGMM), Ankara	21.12.2019
20.	Professor of International Relations	Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara	18.05.2020
21.	Vice-Minister	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ankara	20.05.2020

Table II: List of Conducted Interviews between 2018 and 2020

b) Desk research

The desk research included primary and secondary resources of academic articles, policy briefs, Turkish and foreign newspaper articles, public speeches of Turkish and EU leaders, mainly the speeches of President Tayyip Erdoğan, and official state documents published on the websites of the Turkish Presidency and other ministries like the Ministry of Foreign and Interior Affairs. Various Turkish news sources were selected to ensure a comprehensive and balanced representation of the issue areas. These include the news from government-supportive agencies such as 'A Haber', 'TRT', 'Zaman', 'Sabah', and the primary state-run news agency 'Anadolu Ajansı'. Opposition news sources like 'Cumhuriyet' and 'Sözcü' were also included, along with more neutral agencies such as 'Hürriyet' and 'Milliyet'. This selection aimed to provide higher accuracy and transparency in the coverage. Among foreign newspapers, 'BBC News', 'Deutsche Welle (DW)', and 'Reuters' were frequently used, considering their reliability and

[18] When the interviews were conducted between 2018 and 2020, the institution's name was Directorate General for Migration Affairs (DGMM). Its name later officially changed to the 'Presidency for Migration Management'. The interviewees from different institutions also referred to the institution as DGMM. This is the reason why DGMM is continued to be used throughout the dissertation.

considerable coverage of the EU-Turkey relations between 2011 and 2020. Around a hundred Turkish and foreign news articles were examined for this purpose.[19]

ii. Limitations of the study

a) The political sensitivity of the issue

The Syrian refugee crisis has been a highly politicized issue in Turkey since the start of the conflict due to Turkey's regional role in the Syrian conflict and being a transit county between the EU and Syria. The issue's sensitivity escalated with the increasingly hostile public discourse against the Syrian refugees, which reached four million in a short period, especially in the neighboring cities to Syria like Hatay and Gaziantep. Relevantly, the Syrian refugees started to be included in the citizenship discussions in a time of local and general elections, together with growing economic difficulties in Turkey. These challenges signaled hostile attitudes and rising xenophobia against the refugees within the Turkish public. The issue had to be handled more cautiously at the state level to avoid conflicts, which was understandable.

b) Security concerns and changing dynamics

It is worth mentioning that in the 2016 post-coup period during the state of emergency, researching any political issue in Turkey was challenging for many researchers. For this dissertation, the reshuffling of state institutions in the aftermath of the coup-attempt and general lack of trust caused delays and obstacles in reaching out to the relevant state and non-state actors in the field and conducting relevant data. The time required to contact necessary experts in the field and agree on an interview date had been very time-consuming. The content and quality of responses were sometimes ambiguous because of the institutional pressure. Lastly, the answers were subject to change with Turkey's national and foreign developments, such as the 2018 presidential and 2019 local elections.

[19] The primary and secondary resources in Turkish were transcribed and translated into English for analysis.

c) Access to data

The Turkish government has had a constraining attitude towards all sorts of academic research and information sharing that has been done on the subject. The interview partners were hesitant to talk on such a sensitive issue in Turkey and were often reluctant to share the data they had openly. International and non-governmental organizations were more eager to share their experiences and views on the EU-Turkey cooperation. In contrast, the state officials shared more limited data due to bureaucratic limitations. This affected access to primary data to a great extent and increased the usage of secondary resources in a complementary approach. Moreover, the start of the COVID-19 pandemic became another obstacle to conducting follow-up face-to-face expert interviews, as this was the only way to reach people working in the field in Turkey.

d) Data Quality and Resources

There has been significant media attention and academic interest in Turkey's Syrian refugee crisis and migration management, which could be interpreted as an advantage. However, this popularity resulted in an increase in studies that did not always reflect good quality and reliability. There has been an overload of articles and other studies that did not match the expectations of this study. All these affected the accuracy of the secondary data found in the literature. This required this study to be more selective in validating the data, which was highly time-consuming.

iii. The categorization of the data

The data collected from expert interviews, foreign and Turkish newspaper articles, public speeches of Turkish state officials, policy briefs and reports are analyzed and evaluated through the qualitative data analysis program MAXQDA. Five hundred and eight selected documents were uploaded to MAXQDA, and each was read through a discourse analysis to grasp the primary issue areas leading to the outcome of EU-Turkey cooperation in migration management. Especially in Turkish primary and secondary resources, the use of the language and narratives in broader social and cultural contexts was considered.

The puzzling outcome investigated is the conflict between the EU and Turkey in February 2020 while there was ongoing FRIT cooperation. Therefore, the data is examined to determine the causal events that led to this outcome. The most frequently mentioned issue areas were initially categorized using a deductive approach under main headings. The following table presents the main headings: externalization of the refugee crisis, the issue-linkage strategy, migration diplomacy, the EU-Turkey Statement, FRIT cooperation and strategic partnership, challenges, multi-level cooperation, leverage and conflictual cooperation. Some headings are partially overlapping, such as FRIT cooperation mechanism and multi-level cooperation; however, to grasp the emphasis on FRIT and multi-level actor structure separately for the analysis, these are investigated under similar but slightly different headings. [20]

Number of Documents	**508**
Code System	**Frequency**
EU's externalization of the refugee crisis	30
Issue-linkage	14
EU-Turkey Migration Diplomacy	56
EU-Turkey Statement	38
> EU financial assistance	25
FRIT cooperation mechanism	152
Challenges hindering cooperation	77
Multi-level cooperation	67
Leverage and conflict	49

Table III: Data Categorization and Main Headings on MAXQDA[21]

[20] Please refer to the Appendix for an overview of the codes used for each group of primary and secondary resources.

[21] The table only represents the general framework of the code system; there have been some sub-titles like Turkey's regional power or more specific challenges like the economic crisis or public opinion, but these were not

As the table shows, most references were attributed to FRIT cooperation mechanism as it was easily observable for both the interview respondents and on official state reports. It is important to note that FRIT constitutes the least political part of the EU-Turkey cooperation; it is the cooperation at the technical level in different policy fields, where each expert could comment on an operational aspect of it. Although FRIT is a part of the EU-Turkey Statement, the Statement itself was found to be more political and, therefore, minor data gathered on its implementation, other than the official statistics and policy reports that can be accessed easily on the European Commission's website. After the data were categorized under main headings and sub-headings, the analysis section selected the examples of data that best represent the main arguments and support the hypotheses.

III. Conclusion

This chapter explained the fundamental methodology of the dissertation, which is the explaining-outcome process-tracing. The aim is to develop a minimum sufficient explanation for a specific outcome: the conflictual cooperation in EU-Turkey relations. As part of the data collection strategy, primary and secondary resources support the methodological approach, varying from semi-structured expert interviews conducted between 2018 and 2020 in Turkey and Brussels to comprehensive desk research, including policy briefs and Turkish and foreign newspaper articles and political statements.

The chapter drew attention to the difficulties of conducting this research and expert interviews in Turkey due to the political sensitivity of the refugee crisis in Turkey and Turkey's challenging bureaucratic state structure. As a result of security concerns in state institutions, access to data was limited, and the interviewees often refrained from commenting on the political aspect of the EU-Turkey Statement. FRIT cooperation mechanism was the one issue area in which the respondents felt more confident interpreting, as FRIT constituted the technical and operational part of the cooperation.

All the data gathered from primary and secondary resources within the limit of this research are analyzed and categorized under MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software. MAXQDA enabled the study to collect and reveal the primary events and issue areas leading to the conclusion of conflictual cooperation in EU-Turkey relations in 2020. These causal

mentioned frequently enough to be displayed on the table. The empirical chapters of VI and VII include data gathered from sub-titles, which are also not displayed here.

mechanisms are analyzed in the two empirical chapters of this dissertation, Chapter VI and Chapter VII.

CHAPTER V: TURKEY'S CHANGING ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY

I. Introduction

Chapters II and III presented the increasing securitization trend in migration studies and the institutional and legal development of the EU's external migration policy as a response. Later, they explained how externalization is implemented through different tools, such as mobility partnerships, readmission agreements, or the EU-Turkey Statement and FRIT coordination mechanism with conceptual approaches like sectoral functional cooperation and multi-level governance. These brought up the discussion on the changing power relationship between the EU and third-countries, where third-countries have gained leverage over the EU. This power asymmetry started a theoretical discussion on power and foreign policy-migration nexus in bilateral relations and relevant theoretical approaches inspired by realist constructivism and neoclassical realism, discussing intervening variables of domestic constraints like political and economic developments and elite perceptions affecting foreign policy decisions.

In the end, migration diplomacy revealed how third-countries conceptualize the instrumentalization of migration through 'migration of power' strategies, blackmailing or backscratching. Starting from this point of view, this study argues that EU-Turkey relations in migration management potentially illustrate the asymmetrical power relationship, where the weaker actor gains leverage over the stronger one. To capture this change of power in bilateral relations, the chapter looks into Turkey's migration and asylum policy in a historical framework, followed by Turkey's foreign policy drivers starting from the 2000s.[22] The chapter

[22] This dissertation takes Turkish foreign policy from 2000 to 2020 into consideration, excluding earlier periods. Only the selected most relevant variables within this timeframe are considered, acknowledging that many other factors might have influenced Turkish foreign and domestic policy decisions during these years.

also briefly examines national challenges and developments that affected Turkey's foreign policy decisions, such as the growing negative public opinion against Syrian refugees, local election results, and the economic crisis.

II. Turkey's Asylum and Migration Policy

i. Migration Policy in the early years of the Republic

The main motive for establishing the asylum policy of the newly founded Turkish Republic was shaped by the idea of an ethnically homogenous nation-state in the 1920s and 1930s. The most crucial step for this idea was Law 2510 on Settlement, adopted in 1934 (Law 2510, 1934). According to the law, only individuals of 'Turkish descent and culture' could be granted the possibility to migrate and settle in Turkey or acquire refugee status. Article 3 of the law defined a refugee as someone who arrived in Turkey to seek asylum due to compulsion and who intends to stay in Turkey temporarily. The Article underlined that only refugees of 'Turkish descent and culture' could choose to stay in and integrate into the society. The Law appealed to and involved mostly ethnic Turks from the Balkans and Albanians, Bosnians, Circassians, Pomaks, and Tatars. A minimal number of immigrants and refugees were also admitted from Kazakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan with the same law due to their Turkish descent (Kirişçi, 2001).

ii. The signing of the 1951 Geneva Convention and Turkey's geographical limitation

Later, in the 1950s, during the Cold War, Turkey became a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Additional Protocol (UN, 1951, 1967). Turkey defines the 'refugee status' based on the Convention, and accordingly, Turkey applies the Convention only to a person who is a refugee arriving from 'Europe'. This means Turkey has granted *de jure* asylum only to individuals fleeing communist rule in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (Kirişçi, 1991). The 1951 Convention and Turkey's practice created two groups of refugees; 'Convention refugees and non-Convention refugees' (Kirişçi, 2001). Convention refugees had been those fleeing the Soviet regime, such as Azerbaijan, Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine, and mostly arriving from Eastern Europe.

The non-convention refugees came mainly from Iran in the 1980s and later from Iraq and Afghanistan in the 1990s, resulting from the conflicts in the region. It is important to note that Turkey has been applying the principle of *non-refoulment*, meaning Turkey had not sent asylum seekers back to their country of origin, even though Turkey does not grant refugee status to asylum seekers outside Europe. This practice has become known as Turkey's geographical limitation on the Convention, which remains valid to this date. Turkey has been a crucial country of asylum since the signing of the 1951 Convention and its Additional Protocol. It has offered temporary asylum to those who arrived from the Middle East, and when/if UNHCR recognized individual cases as refugees, they could be resettled.

In the 1980s, the Turkish migration regime changed drastically due to a transition in international and regional migration patterns. For the first time in the history of the Turkish Republic, Turkey witnessed the mass immigration of 'non-Turks' and was compelled to take new measures concerning the management of migrants and asylum seekers (Içduygu and Aksel, 2013). In 1988, around 60 thousand Kurds fled to Turkey, escaping the Iraq-Iran war. Moreover, one year later, in 1989, close to 310 thousand ethnic Turks reached Turkey, this time fleeing from the oppression in Bulgaria. Since Turkish municipal law grants the right to ethnic Turks to migrate to Turkey, asylum seekers from Bulgaria were recognized as 'immigrants rather than 'refugees' and received administrative, economic, and political benefits (Kirişçi, 1991).

Lastly, in 1991, more than 1.5 million people, mostly Kurds from Iraq and Syrians, fled to Turkey due to the Gulf War. Turkey had difficulties at the border during this time, facilitating reception without sufficient international support. The Turkish government extended temporary asylum to those in Turkey and refused to take any more refugees. By the end of the year, most asylum seekers were repatriated to Iraq with the efforts of the Allies and the United Nations (Kirişçi, 1991). Some that have remained in Turkey had their refugee status recognized and resettled in third-countries through UNHCR (Kirişçi, 2001). Although the issue was resolved in numbers, the Gulf War revealed Turkey's vulnerability to a politically unstable neighborhood (Kale, 2005). It showed possible future risks that might arise from another regional migration crisis.

Turkey continued experiencing migratory flows due to regional conflicts, mainly in the Middle East. Overall, on the one hand, the oppressive politics of Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq, especially towards minorities, and the humanitarian insecurity after the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf crisis

pushed people to enter Turkey seeking asylum in the east. On the other hand, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist systems in Eastern Europe prompted the citizens of these countries to arrive in Turkey in search of temporary work in the West (Icduygu and Aksel, 2013).

Turkey has never been the first country of asylum to refugees fleeing from 'outside Europe' due to the continuation of the geographical limitation of the 1951 Geneva Convention. Instead, Turkey has often been a transit country, especially after the second half of the 1990s (Kirişçi, 2003), offering limited legal protection, mostly temporary asylum, until refugees were either repatriated or resettled in cooperation with the UNHCR. The 1994 Asylum Regulation defined the conditions for applying for asylum to prevent irregular immigration in Turkey; however, there remained a limited opportunity for being recognised legally due to Turkey's geographical limitation on the 1951 Geneva Convention (Icduygu and Aksel, 2013).

Turkey's experiences of the immigration of non-nationals in the 1980s and 1990s were solved relatively quickly, and they had been short-lived. Nevertheless, they showed the limits of Turkey's reception capacity in times of crisis and that Turkey's refugee legislation was insufficient to handle the registration and management of refugees (Hoffmann and Samuk, 2016). Since the 1950s, keeping the geographical limitation on the Convention has remained a controversial issue for Turkey. Despite the pressure to lift it to offer more comprehensive protection to asylum seekers, Turkey has been hesitant, in order not to become a 'buffer zone' for irregular migration, primarily due to its geographical position and the political instability in the region and neighborhood.

iii. Turkey's asylum and migration policy after the declaration of Turkish candidacy

The end of the Cold War and the experiences in the 1980s and 1990s, mainly the arrival of Afghans, Iraqis and Kurds, had only little effect on changing Turkey's asylum and refugee policies. There had not been an effort to develop a long-term approach to accommodating asylum seekers and refugees in Turkey, primarily because of the geographic limitation of the 1951 Geneva Convention. Nevertheless, in 1994, Turkey adopted its legislation on asylum and status determination (Republic of Türkiye, 1994)[23] to introduce Turkey's status determination

[23] The full name is: 'Regulation No. 6169/1994 on the Procedures and Principles related to Possible Population Movements and Aliens Arriving in Turkey either as Individuals or in Groups Wishing to Seek Asylum either from Turkey or Requesting Residence Permission in order to Seek Asylum from Another Country'.

framework due to its experience with the refugees escaping the conflict and war in the neighborhood in the last decade. The Bylaw did not bring any radical policy alterations to the existing asylum and refugee policy. It only formalized the existing practices and inserted an official concept of securitization of asylum and migration (Kale, 2005). The securitization of the current asylum policy opened the way to the rights violations of asylum seekers and refugees. This had brought severe criticism from the West and the main international human rights advocacy groups (Kirişçi, 2001).

The most significant change in the asylum and refugee policy was initiated by Turkey's candidate status to the European Union, which was declared in December 1999 at the Helsinki Summit. After the declaration of the Accession Partnership Document, the EU started to expect Turkey to adopt and implement integrated border management, establish a civilian border agency (Turhan and Yıldız, 2022), lift the geographic limitation, and develop accommodation facilities and social support for refugees (Kale, 2005), as part of the *acquis* conditionality. With these expectations, Turkey entered into the phase of increased institutionalization. The aim was to bring Turkish national legislation and practices in line with the EU law and practices in the area of asylum and migration.

In 2002, the European Council adopted negotiating directives for a readmission agreement with Turkey, and accession negotiations officially started in 2005. This was also the start of Turkey's harmonization with EU rules on migration. In 2003, Turkey adopted Law 4817, a legal regulation for the Ministry of Labor and Social Security to process foreign workers' work permits. Later, in 2004, Turkey became a member of the International Organization for Migration. In 2005, Turkey adopted a National Action Plan for Asylum and Migration that was looking for the possibility of lifting the geographical limitation to the Geneva Convention. This reform package demonstrated the EU's efforts to externalize migration governance in Turkey (Müftüler-Baç, 2022).

The harmonization continued with the adoption of Law 5543 on Settlement in 2006. The law replaced the 1934 Settlement Law 2510 but retained its fundamental principles regarding Turkish descent and culture. Lastly, Law 5901 on Turkish citizenship was adopted in 2009, followed by the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities for assisting citizens living abroad in 2010. All the reforms mentioned above and changes aimed to align with the EU *acquis* on migration and asylum governance within the accession process framework have

become examples of the EU's externalization of its migration governance to Turkey (Müftüler-Baç, 2022).

During Turkey's harmonization process between 2002 and 2011, the accession negotiations experienced a stalling phase between 2006 and 2010, primarily due to the problems regarding the Cyprus issue. Turkey refused to open its airports and ports to ships and planes from the Republic of Cyprus (Içduygu and Aksel, 2014). In 2010, the negotiations were re-launched due to the increase in irregular migration. Furthermore, Turkey agreed to sign a readmission agreement with the EU, with the initiation of a visa liberalization dialogue between the European Commission and Turkey, and the final agreement was reached in 2011.

In general, Turkey's membership aspiration and perspective decreased over the years, resulting mainly from the Council's decision to freeze accession negotiations in eight negotiation chapters of the *acquis* in 2006 until Turkey agrees to apply the Additional Protocol of the Ankara Association Agreement to Cyprus, disagreements among the Member States against the membership of Turkey, and domestic social and political developments. Nevertheless, the EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) has continued to provide Turkey with financial and technical assistance for alignment in the JHA. This financial and technical support contributed to Turkey's capacity-building process, uplifted the capacity at Turkey's land and maritime borders, and supported the institutions through joint projects and training that spotted multi-level actors like local administrators, migration experts, national police, land forces, customs authorities, and so on.

iv. Turkey's asylum and migration Policy after the Syrian refugee crisis

The EU-Turkey cooperation entered a new stage with the start of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2011. The integrated border management was relevant to Turkey's accession negotiations and considered an area of 'high politics'. However, the EU-Turkey dialogue that started after the Syrian refugee crisis has facilitated cooperation on irregular migration, particularly border management, and created a network within external governance (Turhan and Yıldız, 2022). In other words, the cooperation framework was not based on the pre-accession scheme but within the context of the EU's external migration policy.

Relevantly, the cooperation was never meant to complement or support Turkey's accession negotiations, whereas, in practice, it became an unintended force to enhance Turkey's

relationship with the EU in the field of migration. The EU and Turkey began establishing a security and control-oriented border management strategy to combat irregular migration. It eventually evolved into a cooperation scheme involving financial and technical assistance and political incentives for Turkey. Despite the problems associated with the political disagreements between the EU and Turkey, frozen chapters and talks in the accession process, a bilateral cooperation understanding that did not exist before was established through the new EU-Turkey dialogue in migration management.

Last but not least, Turkey's asylum and refugee policy had to find solutions to the increasing number of Syrian refugees and the lack of a comprehensive law that secures the rights and access to services for the refugees. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Turkey holds a geographical limitation to the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1956 Additional Protocol. Turkey adopted the Temporary Protection in Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) to overcome this insufficiency in 2013, and a new 'temporary protection status' was created for Syrian refugees. This Temporary protection regulation replaced the 1994 Regulation on Foreigners in 2013. Article 91 of the new Turkish Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) defines the legal conditions of this status:

> "*Temporary protection may be provided for foreigners who have been forced to leave their country, cannot return to the country that they have left, and have arrived at or crossed the borders of Turkey in a mass influx situation seeking immediate and temporary protection* (Republic of Türkiye, 2013)*."*

The Temporary Protection Regulation set the framework for the legal status of the Syrians (Republic of Turkey, 2014). Under this status, Syrian refugees are granted the right to stay in Turkey, but asylum applications are still not allowed. This has made resettlement or voluntary repatriation their only durable option (Ferris and Kirişçi, 2016). UNHCR handled the resettlement process, which took considerable time for each case, and voluntary repatriation was uncommon.

In the same year, Turkey signed a long-awaited Readmission Agreement with the EU in 2013 (European Commission, 2013). In parallel with the agreement, the visa liberalization dialogue was launched with a roadmap with 72 requirements in five thematic groups: domestic security, migration management, public order and security, fundamental rights, and readmission of irregular migrants (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020). The visa dialogue and its roadmap did

not constitute a legally binding agreement and are political instruments between the EU and Turkey. Nonetheless, it represented a political agreement, suggesting that visa liberalization would follow when Turkey fulfils all the requirements (Groenendijk, 2019). Therefore, there had been certain developments in Turkey's asylum and refugee policy after the start of the crisis: the temporary protection status given to Syrian refugees, the signing of the Readmission agreement with the EU, and the starting of the visa dialogue and its roadmap.

Selected Milestones of the Turkish Migration Policy after the Foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923
• Law 2510/1934 Settlement Act (1934)
• United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951)
• United Nations Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1967)
• The First Persian Gulf War between Iran and Iraq (1980-1988)
• The End of the Cold War and immigration from post-Soviet territories
• Expulsion of Turks from Bulgaria (1989)
• Gulf War and mass immigration of Kurdish populations (1991)
• Regulation No. 6169 on the Procedures and Principles related to Possible Population Movements and Aliens Arriving in Turkey either as Individuals or in Groups Wishing to Seek Asylum either from Turkey or Requesting Residence Permission to Seek Asylum From Another Country (1994)
• Helsinki European Council and Turkish Candidacy to the European Union (1999)
• Turkish National Action Plan for Asylum and Migration (2005)
• Law 5543 on Settlement (2006)
• Law 5901 Turkish Citizenship Law (2009)
• Law 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection (2013)
• Readmission Agreement (2013)
• The Visa Liberalization Dialogue and its Roadmap (2013)

Table IV: Selected Milestones of Turkey's Asylum and Migration Policy

III. Turkey's 'Power' and Foreign Policy Drivers

As this study explores the instrumentalization of migration between the EU and Turkey with the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, this section briefly presents the main characteristics of Turkish foreign policy in the 2000s until the civil war broke out in Syria. The aim is to discover the drivers of foreign policy choices that affected its relationship with the EU in the aftermath of the refugee crisis. To begin with, Turkey's power status and power perception in front of the EU should be understood theoretically. The main premises of neoclassical realism, which links power and policy discussed in Chapter III, are used to identify all possible intervening variables that can impact Turkey's foreign policy choices. According to theory, this section takes into consideration Turkey's relative and absolute power, perceptions of the state leaders, domestic constraints and pressures.

i. Turkey as a 'middle power'

Holbraad (1971, p. 78) defines middle power as 'a state occupying an intermediate position in a hierarchy based on power, to a country much stronger than the small nations though considerably weaker than the principal members of the system of the states'. Middle powers are distinguished concerning the strength they possess and the power they command (Holbraad, 1984, p. 76). Turkey can be considered a middle power based on its geographical location, resources, population, developmental level, institutional structures, and democratic tradition within the context of a Muslim-majority country in the region. Compared to the EU's economic, political, and social influence as both a material and normative power, Turkey is relatively less powerful. However, the areas where Turkey holds a relative contextual and geographical advantage over the EU have the potential to shift the balance of power in bilateral relations, as seen during and after the Syrian refugee crisis.

A middle power can be identified not only in terms of its ranking in the power hierarchy but also in terms of foreign policy strategy. These strategies include engaging in multilateral cooperation for managing international issues, participation in global and relative autonomy from the influence of great powers, and dealing with major international conflicts (Müftüler

and Yüksel, 1997). Cox (1989) sees these strategies as the leverage of the middle powers concerning specific policy issues on the current agenda. As a relevant example, Turkey occupies an intermediate position in managing the Syrian refugee crisis as a bridge between the EU and the neighborhood/region. Its foreign policy strategy determines the success of crisis management to a great extent. Here, Turkey uses an 'issue-specific structural power' as discussed in Chapter III, under different forms of power. This means Turkey has the resources and capabilities within a specific context: migration management.

Relevantly, the middle powers maintain relative independence from the decision-making of the great powers. In fact, they might even have more influence within an alliance or partnership unless they are total satellites of a significant power. Turkey can be considered both a middle power and a regional power. Within its neighborhood, it has the potential to balance other forces, maintain codes of conduct, and stabilize the sphere of influence. However, Turkey lacks sufficient financial resources to act unilaterally; it has to work in concert with the West (Müftüler and Yüksel, 1997). This also indicates that Turkey's middle power is influential enough to influence the relations in the region on its own. However, it still depends on bigger powers like the EU, mainly in terms of financial aspects. Although it is relatively easy to conceptualize Turkey as a 'middle power', it remains an inductive term. For this reason, Turkey's material power will be elaborated on in the next section.

a) Turkey's material power in the 2000s

Bridging between the West and East, Turkey can be geographically seen as a European, Middle Eastern, Caucasian, Balkan, Caspian, Mediterranean, Gulf, Black Sea, and Central Asian country simultaneously. It is a central country with multiple regional identities that cannot be reduced to one unified character or region. This position allows it to manoeuvre in several regions concurrently; it controls an area of influence in its immediate environs (Davutoğlu, 2008). It is one of the countries with strong economic, political, cultural, and military ties to these different regions; Turkey is well-positioned to be a middle power (Müftüler and Yüksel, 1997). Although it is often mentioned as a strength in the literature, the geographical location of Turkey can be regarded as its power and weakness at the same time. Turkey borders Bulgaria to the northwest, Greece to the west, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Iran to the east, Georgia to the northeast, Syria to the south, and Iraq to the southeast. Geographically, Turkey benefits from

its connections to many countries and regions. However, this strategic location also makes Turkey vulnerable to conflicts in neighboring countries and the surrounding region.

Another determinant of Turkish foreign policy is its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Turkey is the 19th largest economy in the world, with a GDP of roughly $906 billion. It is a member of the OECD and the G20 and an increasingly important donor of Official Development Assistance. It pursued ambitious reforms and enjoyed high growth rates between 2006 and 2017, propelling the country to the higher reaches of upper-middle-income status and reducing poverty (World Bank, 2023). Although the Turkish economy has been traditionally stronger than the economies of the countries in the region, it is not competitive and stable enough compared to the EU Member States. Additionally, it has been challenged by the ongoing and growing economic crisis.

The next contributor is Turkey's military power. Turkey has been a member of NATO since 1952 and has the second-largest military by size in NATO after the American Armed Forces (International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2019). Historically, political power relations and structures in Turkey have been marked by forms of state in which the military, as an institutional actor and militarism, as a power technique, have occupied a central place (Akca and Balta-Paker, 2012). Military power has been traditionally very crucial in Turkey's self-perception. In fact, the frequent recourse to authoritarian modes of governance has been the major obstacle to the democratization process in Turkey. In the 2000s, this situation began to change as the balance of power in civil-military relations gradually transformed in favor of the civilian government under the rule of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) (Akca and Balta-Paker, 2012). Moreover, in 2008, Turkey gained provisional membership in the United Nations Security Council by receiving support from 151 states in the UN General Assembly (Aral, 2009). This can also be regarded as a crucial achievement for Turkey as a middle power.

These factors of geographical location, economic power, and military power have been the main contributors to Turkey's material power or power as possession and justify Turkey's position as a middle and regional power to a certain degree. Considering this position, the Turkish foreign policy's main characteristics between 2000 and 2010 and later post-2011 will be elaborated on to see how the balance of power between Turkey and the EU has changed according to Turkey's transforming power after 2010.

ii. Turkish foreign policy between 2000 and 2010

The period between 2000 and 2010 represents a generally positive image of Turkey in its international relations in general and bilateral relations in particular with the EU. The leading development in EU-Turkey relations within this period was the launch of accession negotiations in 2005 and the adoption of the Accession Partnership in 2008. Following the start of the accession process, Turkey speeded up the adoption of reformation, integration, and Europeanization progress. In the meantime, Turkey experienced economic growth, which was highly welcomed after the post-2001 financial crisis. These political and economic developments took place under the rule of AKP, which came to power in 2003. Between 2003 and 2010, Turkey's foreign and security policy had transformed from focusing on military security through relying on a balance of power-driven 'hard power' approach to an increasing 'soft power' emphasis on civilian instruments, such as international law and diplomacy (Öner, 2012).

The former AKP prime minister Ahmet Davutoğlu outlined some aspects of Turkish foreign policy in the 2000s relevant to this transition from 'hard power' to 'soft power'. The first element of Turkish foreign policy in the 2000s was the balance between maintaining security and democracy. Any political regime should successfully ensure the safety of its citizens, and this security should not come at the cost of freedom and human rights since this would eventually lead to authoritarian regimes. Davutoğlu uses the example of the 'war against terrorism' in the post-September 11 era when Turkey carried out a military operation in Iraq in 2007. According to him, there had been no negative impact on civil liberties, Turkish authorities did not declare a state of emergency, elections were not postponed, and the results of elections also did not have any adverse effect on the democratic process. Davutoğlu argues that this example points out the soft power of Turkey, which is enforcing democracy (Davutoğlu, 2008). This was regarded as a successful policy of Turkey, ensuring the safety of Turkish citizens while still respecting human rights and democracy.

According to the former prime-minister, the second well-known element of Turkish foreign policy was the 'zero problem policy with neighbors'. Turkey's relations with Bulgaria, Georgia, Iran, and Syria had become good examples of economic interdependence. In fact, Turkey's

good relations with Syria were shown as a 'model of progress' for the region in the 2000s (Davutoğlu, 2008). Turkey also made an agreement with Syria for a broader and more active Turkish role in the Middle East. Turkey had been filling the vacuum left by other Arab states like Iraq and Egypt until 2011. After the Arab Spring and the start of the Syrian civil war, relations were thrown back into a melting pot (Hale, 2012), and Turkey's relations with the Syrian government had degenerated.

With its zero-problem policy in the 2000s, Turkey embraced a peace-making and peace-keeping strategy in the neighborhood and beyond. Cooperation with the neighbors and developing good relations became the key goal. Turkey adopted a 'multi-dimensional foreign policy' through which it attempted to cooperate with global actors. Turkey's bilateral ties with the USA, its EU membership process, and good neighborhood policy with Russia had become significant achievements of Turkish foreign policy. Regarding the relations with the EU in particular, although the accession process was slowed down, a deadlock was successfully avoided (Davutoğlu, 2008).

Moreover, Turkey's foreign policy efforts received support from the international community. In 2008, Turkey was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. The same year, former Turkish president Abdullah Gül visited Armenia to deepen the dialogue between the two countries. All the diplomatic exercises mentioned above would have been unimaginable before the 2000s (Kirişçi, 2009). How can one explain the rationale behind Turkish foreign policy in the 2000s? An in-depth analysis of it is beyond the scope of this dissertation; only a minimal sufficient explanation is given in this section. Accordingly, Turkey's transformation in foreign policy decisions in the 2000s is mainly due to the Europeanization process after Turkey's candidacy for the EU, geopolitical developments in the region, and the change in the concept of security (Kirişçi, 2009). The Turkish foreign policy in the 2010s continued to be shaped by geographical challenges, especially with the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011.

iii. Turkish foreign and national policy after 2011

a) Turkey as the strategic partner in migration management

Turkish government's support of the oppositional forces in the Syrian civil war that broke out in 2011 made Syrian President Bashar Assad an enemy of the Turkish state, and relations

rapidly deteriorated between the two countries. President Erdoğan declared that Turkey's fight was not with the Syrian people but with the Assad regime (T24, 2012). With the increasing severity of the civil war, the number of Syrian refugees arriving and crossing the Turkish border started to rise. Soon after, Turkey became both a destination and a transit country for Syrian refugees who want to claim asylum in the EU.

The crisis environment has opened a new page for EU-Turkey relations; Turkey has become the EU's leading cooperation partner in migration management. The dialogue started with the Joint Action Plan and the EU-Turkey Summit in 2015, and later, in 2016, the EU-Turkey Statement created an asymmetrical relationship with incentives and political interests shared by both sides (Gatti and Ott, 2019). Moreover, the cooperation changed the order of precedence; the crisis outweighed Turkey's accession negotiations and empowered Turkey as the EU's leading migration management partner. Turkey's role in managing the Syrian refugee crisis is elaborated in greater detail in the following empirical chapters of VI and VII. In the meantime, Turkey had two controversial foreign policy decisions in the 2010s: its drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean and the cross-border military operation in northern Syria.

b) Turkey's drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean

In its search for gas in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey has been drilling boreholes, which has been found problematic by the EU Member States, particularly Greece and Cyprus. Turkey has rejected the maritime boundary claims by Greece and Cyprus, stating that Turkey never surrenders to any threats and never will' (Anadolu Ajansı, 2019). The EU has found Turkey's activities illegal, whereas it has avoided a direct confrontation with Turkey, only warning Turkey that it could be sanctioned for 'undermining the sovereignty of Cyprus' (European Council, 2019). Turkey's strategic leverage in bilateral relations was confirmed by its drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean, off the coast of Cyprus. Turkey's former minister of energy stated, 'Turkey has already opened eight boreholes in the region. While there were signs of natural gas, there had been no economically significant discovery, and Turkey aims to drill more of them (TRT World, 2021).'

c) Turkey's cross-border military operations in northern Syria

In the second half of the 2010s, Turkey's foreign policy on Syria had become the creation of a 'safe zone' in northern Syria. Turkey's overarching goal in this 30km-deep zone had been to ensure that it remains outside the control of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and semi-autonomous from the regime in Damascus. Turkey was also hoping to persuade Syrian refugees in Turkey to move to this safe area. Lastly, Turkey firmly regarded its military footprint in Syria as key to protecting Turkey's long-term territorial integrity and to influencing the future of Syria (Aydıntaşbaş, 2020), claiming to eliminate the push factors for future refugees that might arrive from the region. The idea of the creation of a safe zone could be seen as a root-control approach. Nevertheless, the EU Member States refused to support Turkey in this foreign policy goal, and tension rose between the EU and Turkey. This issue comes up in the analysis part of this study, where Turkey expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of support, and the EU-Turkey cooperation experienced a deadlock soon after.

iv. Turkey's domestic constraints and developments in the 2010s

a) Coup-attempt and the following state of emergency

Turkey also experienced several domestic constraints throughout the 2010s that are worth mentioning. The first one is the failed coup-attempt in 2016 and its aftermath. In the aftermath, the AKP government received extensive support from the West and especially the EU, which interpreted the situation through the perspective of the liberal-democratic principle, which argues that elected civilian officials must be supreme over the military. With the EU's support and the power of its domestic constituencies, the AKP 'pared away the military's political influence' and promoted its own agenda. By 2017, the AKP had gained the upper hand, and the military was in a state of political retreat (Gumuscu and Esen, 2017).

The military was not the only institution under the government's pressure. All the other state institutions, including the ministries and their staff working on FRIT projects in humanitarian assistance, education, health, migration management, socio-economic support, and municipal infrastructure, were affected by the pressure of working during the state of emergency in Turkey. There has been serious repositioning and reshuffling of the ministry staff, which caused delays and loss of previously acknowledged networks in projects. Therefore, the coup-attempt

did not directly act as a constraint in Turkey's migration policy; however, its aftermath and the working environment had been a challenge for all state and non-state actors working together.

b) Public opinion, local Elections, and change in the political discourse

The second biggest constraint in Turkey's domestic politics has been the changing public opinion into negative on the Syrian refugees. In a survey conducted in 2014[24], 62% stated that they agree with the statement that '*Syrian refugees break the peace and cause depravity of public morals'.* In the same survey, 39% agreed with the following statement: *'Refugees are not a concern of Turkey, and they should be sent back to their country.'* (Erdoğan, 2015). Back in 2014, the number of Syrian refugees was 1.5 million. After 2015, this number doubled in Turkey and reached 3.4 million in 2017 (İçişleri Bakanligi Göç İdaresi Başkanlığı, 2022), and relevantly, negative sentiments against the Syrian refugees rose.

While the Turkish society overwhelmingly identified Syrians as '*victims who escaped war/persecution'* in the Survey in 2014, the most frequently stated identification with Syrian refugees became *'dangerous people who will cause a lot of trouble for us in the future*' in the following surveys of 2017 and 2019. Lastly, according to the survey results in 2019, the will of Turkish people to live together with Syrian refugees was very weak, meaning that there was a '*reluctant acceptance*' among Turkish society, although almost 80% of the Turkish respondents in the survey were sure that at least half of the Syrians would remain in Turkey after the war (Erdoğan, 2019).[25]

The negative public opinion arguably affected the 2019 local election results and started to become a risk for Turkey's AKP government. It is widely accepted that the government's refugee policy, including the migration deal with the EU that was designed to keep the Syrian refugees in Turkey, played a significant role in losing control of the largest cities of Istanbul and Ankara to the main opposition party in the 2019 local elections (T24, 2019b; Dagi, 2020). The Justice and Development Party (AKP) lost the major cities of Ankara, Istanbul, Antalya, Mersin, and Adana to the opposition in the elections. One of the main reasons for this historical

[24] The survey was conducted with a sample of 1501 people from 18 provinces between September and October 2014. For details, please see Erdoğan (2015).

[25] Please see Erdoğan (2019) further for a collection of comprehensive field studies in 2017 and 2019 conducted simultaneously with the Turkish society and Syrians, presenting results of surveys and focus group meetings.

loss was the increased displeasure of the Syrian refugees residing in Turkey's urban centers (Kınıklıoğlu, 2020).

The loss urged the AKP government to reconsider its public discourse on refugees and ensure the Turkish public that the government is working on the 'refugee issue'. Shortly after the elections, former interior minister Süleyman Soylu declared that the Syrian refugees under temporary protection would be deported to cities where they were registered when they arrived and that the irregular migrants without any registration would be sent to camps (T24, 2019b).

Moreover, the cross-border military operation in Afrin in 2018 and later the operation Peace Spring, under-taken in October 2019, were both reasoned on the need to resettle Syrian refugees into northern Syria to boost Turkish public support for the operation. Turkish government enjoyed a public discourse centered on the eventual return and repatriation of the refugees. At the same time, the government had been focusing on integration policies such as improving employability, language, and vocational training. The Turkish Presidency's development plan for 2019–2023 advocates strengthening the bureaucratic structure working on migration, aims at supporting the social adaptation of refugees and highlights the necessity to develop efficient policies for refugees' economic and social integration (Kınıklıoğlu, 2020).

The worsening domestic political climate towards Syrian refugees has amplified the difference between official integration policies and public discourse in Turkey. The visible presence of Syrians in urban centers stood in sharp contrast with government rhetoric promising their eventual return, fueling increasing resentment (Kınıklıoğlu, 2020). In the meantime, the EU's FRIT mechanism and the multi-level cooperation in various policy fields continued to support refugee integration. The Turkish stakeholders have been working in the field with multiple actors to implement projects, portraying a different picture than the negative attitudes towards Syrian refugees that can be found in the public discourse.

c) Growing economic crisis

The decline in productivity growth in Turkey in the 2010s can be attributed to the diminishing momentum of reforms. The focus has shifted towards boosting growth through credit surges and demand stimulation, further exacerbating internal and external vulnerabilities. The challenges of elevated private sector debt, ongoing current account deficits, climbing inflation rates, and persistently high unemployment have been aggravated by the macro-financial

instability experienced since 2018 (World Bank, 2023). Akcay and Güngen (2019) agree that the global financial tightening in 2018 harmed emerging markets. They argue that Turkey was among the most notable victims, as it suffered from a currency crisis followed by a recession. The Turkish Lira lost 31 per cent of its value against the US Dollar in 2018. Since then, a bankruptcy wave has pulled hundreds of firms down, while the official unemployment rate has reached record levels for the first time since the 2008 economic collapse (Akcay and Güngen, 2019). Moreover, the economic crisis in 2018 turned into a full-blown economic depression in March 2020 in Turkey as the COVID-19 pandemic hit economies around the world (Kubilay, 2022).

Under these circumstances, it is not hard to imagine that the cost of hosting and supporting over 3 million Syrian refugees has been an economic burden for Turkey. Syrian refugees have contributed to the Turkish labor market since the new Regulation on Provision of Work Permits for People under Temporary Protection in 2016. However, there has also been an increase in the unemployment rates in the refugee-hosting cities. This is partly explained due to the rise in informal employment in these regions (Ceritoğlu *et al.*, 2017).[26] Without the EU's financial assistance, it is even less likely for Turkey to continue to provide support for Syrians in a rapidly declining economy.

The economic crisis increases Turkey's dependency on the EU in terms of financial incentives. Here, this study can no longer talk about Turkey's material power and influence but more about the EU's growing leverage in providing sufficient financial support. At the same time, Turkey's weak economy could potentially risk the refugees' aspiration for a long-term stay in the country. In this scenario, they would be motivated to migrate to the EU further, which the EU would not desire. In any case, the EU and Turkey are seen as two actors mutually dependent on supporting one another.

IV. Conclusion

This chapter presented a selective summary of Turkey's migration and asylum policies and the power elements contributing to its foreign and domestic policy decisions. Turkey's asylum and migration policies underwent a process of reformation and Europeanization after the

[26] To read more on the Impact of Syrian refugees on the Turkish labor market, please see Tumen (2016); Ceritoğlu *et al.* (2017); Esen and Oguş Binatli (2017); Kaya and Aydin (2021).

announcement of its EU candidacy at the Helsinki Summit in 1993. Despite the reforms and criticisms, Turkey has maintained its geographical limitation in the 1951 Geneva Convention. Due to the limitation, Turkey today still does not grant refugee status to asylum seekers arriving outside Europe. When refugee status is not granted by law, asylum seekers are deprived of the rights and services attached to it. That is why Turkey often depends on the support and cooperation of UNHCR and the EU for the reception and resettlement procedures of the refugees. This has been an issue since Turkey received refugees in the early 1990s due to the Gulf War, and once again, this issue has been brought up with the arrival of the Syrian refugee crisis starting from 2011 onwards.

The chapter also outlined Turkey's primary elements of power: its strategic geographical location, acting as a bridge between Europe and the Middle East; its military power and the strong perception of it; and its economy, which has its growing challenges and limits but is still one of the better-doing economies in the region. Throughout the 2010s, Turkey experienced several drawbacks to its material and contextual power. The most challenging development was the 2016 coup-attempt. Its aftermath caused huge mistrust in state and non-state institutions, dismissals, and the state of emergency caused damage to Turkey's normative power and status as the respect for democracy, human-rights, and the rule of law were highly shaken.

Additional challenges to Turkey's contextual and perceived power included growing negative public opinion against Syrian refugees as their numbers increased and the disproportionate distribution of refugees in certain cities. This caused displeasure in local communities, and the Justice and Development Party lost the largest cities of Istanbul and Ankara to the main opposition party in the 2019 local elections. In addition to this, the ongoing economic difficulties in the country and the high inflation rate became another challenge to Turkey's material power, both in terms of its dependency on foreign trade and the people's decreasing standard of living.

These domestic constraints have the potential to change the perceptions of Turkey's state leaders, namely President Erdoğan, on foreign and national policy and could hinder cooperation with the EU. This supports the hypothesis that political actors would change their perceptions of the foreign or national policy if domestic constraints emerge (*H2*). As Turkey became more constrained by the growing negative public opinion against the Syrian refugees, which partially reflected in the local election results, the financial problems rising in the country, and the state

of emergency after the coup-attempt, its foreign policy started moving towards a more coercive one. The change in Turkish foreign policy is elaborated in detail in Chapter VII.

Relevantly, Müftüler-Bac (2022) argues that it is crucial to acknowledge the emerging layers of linkages between Turkey's security, military and migration policies. This study believes this argument is more relevant than ever to the intersecting migration-foreign policy nexus in the case of Turkey and its relation to the EU in migration management. Therefore, although Turkey has been undergoing particular domestic social, political and economic challenges, on which the Syrian refugee crisis has an impact to a certain degree, it still holds power and leverage against the EU by being a strategic hub to control irregular migration to Europe.

Within the context of this research, its contextual and perceived power impacts Turkey's foreign and national policy decisions. As discussed briefly in Chapter III, within the framework of migration management after the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, Turkey gained a greater contextual power by being a destination and transit country. Similarly, Turkey's perceived power as a regional power and a key strategic partner to the EU in managing the crisis made it hold more extensive leverage. Before concluding this chapter, it is worth reminding that the purpose of this chapter was not to lay out a Turkish foreign policy analysis. Only the most relevant variables, from Turkey's different forms of power to its foreign and domestic policy drivers over the years, are selected to represent better the most applicable scenarios affecting the EU-Turkey migration diplomacy that started in 2011 with the Syrian refugee crisis and became official in 2016 with the EU-Turkey Statement and its implementation afterwards until 2020.

CHAPTER VI: THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS AND EU-TURKEY RELATIONS: AN ANALYSIS

I. Introduction

This chapter analyzes EU-Turkey relations in migration management from the start of the Syrian refugee crisis until the signing and implementation of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement in three consecutive sections. It begins by discussing Turkey's responses to the Syrian refugee crisis. It is essential to understand how Turkey perceived the crisis and the arrival of the Syrian refugees to understand how the political discourse had changed in the later years. Turkey initially started pursuing an open-door policy in 2011, partially ending it by 2015 with the realization of the economic burden Turkey had to carry and the need for international support. The chapter later examines the externalization of the Syrian refugee crisis by the EU and Turkey. Accordingly, the migration diplomacy between the EU and Turkey, where both sides negotiate the terms of cooperation to manage the refugee crisis, is analyzed. The 2016 EU-Turkey Statement constitutes the last main section of the chapter, and it reflects the mutual understanding of cooperation between the two parties. The chapter ends by assessing the implementation of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement.

II. Turkey's Initial Response to the Crisis: The Open-door Policy

The first arrival of the Syrian refugees in Turkey dates back to April 2011. Around 300 Syrian citizens crossed the border irregularly and were found by the Turkish soldiers in Hatay (Hürriyet, 2011b). Turkey had neither an official border control nor a reception policy back then; Syrian refugees could cross the fence and quickly enter Turkish territory. In June 2011, Syrian President Bashar Assad and Turkish President Erdoğan had an official phone call where Assad congratulated Erdoğan on his electoral victory. Erdoğan reportedly expressed his concerns over the growing unrest in Syria, civil casualties, and the refugee flow toward Turkey (Hürriyet, 2011a). This was the last contact between the two leaders. The situation in Syria continuously deteriorated afterwards. The number of Syrian refugees who passed the Turkish border soon reached 14,700. Erdoğan asked for a capacity inventory in the neighboring cities

to Syria, deciding to host the refugees in camps at the border. The Turkish media viewed it as the 'big refugee alarm' (Hürriyet, 2012a).

a) Turkey's normative basis for accepting Syrian refugees

As the mass migration of Syrian refugees continued, Turkey kept its borders open and implemented an unconditional open-door policy that welcomed them. The policy was supported on various grounds by the Turkish government. Accepting refugees in need was argued to be a state tradition, as Turkey once hosted Bosnian and Kurdish refugees in the 1990s (NTV Türk, 2012a). Helping Syrian refugees was also a reference to the Islamic 'ensar tradition' (Sabah, 2014; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2015), which is a religious reference to the time when Prophet Muhammad fled from Mecca to Medina and was welcomed and hosted by the local population. In his speech, President Erdoğan emphasized the historical and religious importance of providing refuge to Syrian civil war refugees, drawing references to the 'ensar tradition' (Sabah, 2014). Therefore, Turkey adopted an open-door policy based on humanitarian, religious, and normative principles.

b) Turkey as a regional role model in the crisis

In addition, Turkey aspired to be a role model in the region. Former Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's foreign policy approach had regional and global reflections that promoted the soft power capabilities of Turkey by using cultural, historical, and religious ties with other countries (Kale, 2018). President Erdoğan introduced Turkey as a member of the region's shared history, civilization, and geography. Hence, Turkey perceived a role through which it was responsible for solving issues in the region's common interest (T24, 2012).

Similarly, Davutoğlu stated that Turkey is the strongest country in the region and should intervene in the Syrian conflict to protect the values it has been defending. He continued by saying that solving the Syrian crisis and sustaining peace in the region is now part of Turkey's foreign policy. If Turkey follows and supports Assad's regime, it will lose all its reputation in the region (NTV Türk, 2012a). Turkey's Syrian refugee crisis shortly became a policy tool for Turkey to determine its broader domestic and foreign policy decisions.

c) Syrian refugees as 'guests'

It is important to mention that when the liberal open-door policy toward Syrian refugees was adopted in 2011, the Turkish government assumed the crisis would end quickly, as it did in other Arab Spring countries. Former Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Davutoğlu argued that the Syrian conflict would end within weeks or a few months (NTV Türk, 2012a). Relevantly, President Erdoğan referred to Syrian refugees as '*Syrian brothers and sisters that are guests'* (NTV Türk, 2012b; T24, 2012). As the word 'guest' suggests, refugees were perceived as temporary visitors and expected to leave after a short stay. In fact, Davutoğlu assured the public that the numbers would not exceed 100.000, which was stated to be the 'psychological threshold' of Turkish society (Milliyet, 2012). Until this point, Turkey did not feel the need to make a long-term plan for managing the issue and focused on keeping the refugees in camps in the neighboring cities.

Moreover, apart from Turkey's regional foreign policy aspirations, it also had to fulfil its international commitments arising from the 1951 Geneva Convention. Even though Turkey cannot grant refugee status to non-European refugees due to its geographical limitation on the Convention, as discussed in Chapter V, it still must comply with the *non-refoulement* obligation, meaning Turkey cannot send asylum seekers back to their country of origin. They can seek asylum because they are fleeing persecution but cannot be given refugee status or sent back. That is why the Syrian asylum seekers became 'guests', emphasizing both the normative meaning and ensuring their stay for their legal protection. However, 'guest' was an ill-defined condition without legal protection (Ferris and Kirişçi, 2016).

Under these ambiguous circumstances, the number of Syrian refugees increased to 185.000, surpassing Davutoğlu's 'psychological threshold' (Hürriyet, 2012c). The guest rhetoric legally ended with the adoption of the new 2013 Law on International Protection, and the Syrian refugees acquired temporary protection status (see Chapter V, p.78). To avoid legal uncertainty, the 'Syrian guests' became 'Syrian refugees under temporary protection status'.

d) The need for international cooperation and the end of the open-door policy

During the first years of the open-door policy, Turkey did not call for international assistance and shared the burden of refugee-hosting alone to a great extent. However, towards the end of 2013, it became evident that the Syrian conflict was not coming to an end anytime soon as

expected. Turkey also realized that it did not have sufficient diplomatic and military instruments to solve the Syrian civil war on its own in the region (Şahin Mencütek, Gökalp Aras and Balamir Coşkun, 2020). Turkish former prime minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and the former minister for EU Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu stated the need for international assistance and cooperation, as the capacities of the refugee camps in the bordering cities were under high pressure (Hürriyet, 2012b, 2012c). The increasing number of refugees and the high cost of hosting and supporting them raised the need for a burden-sharing mechanism.[27]

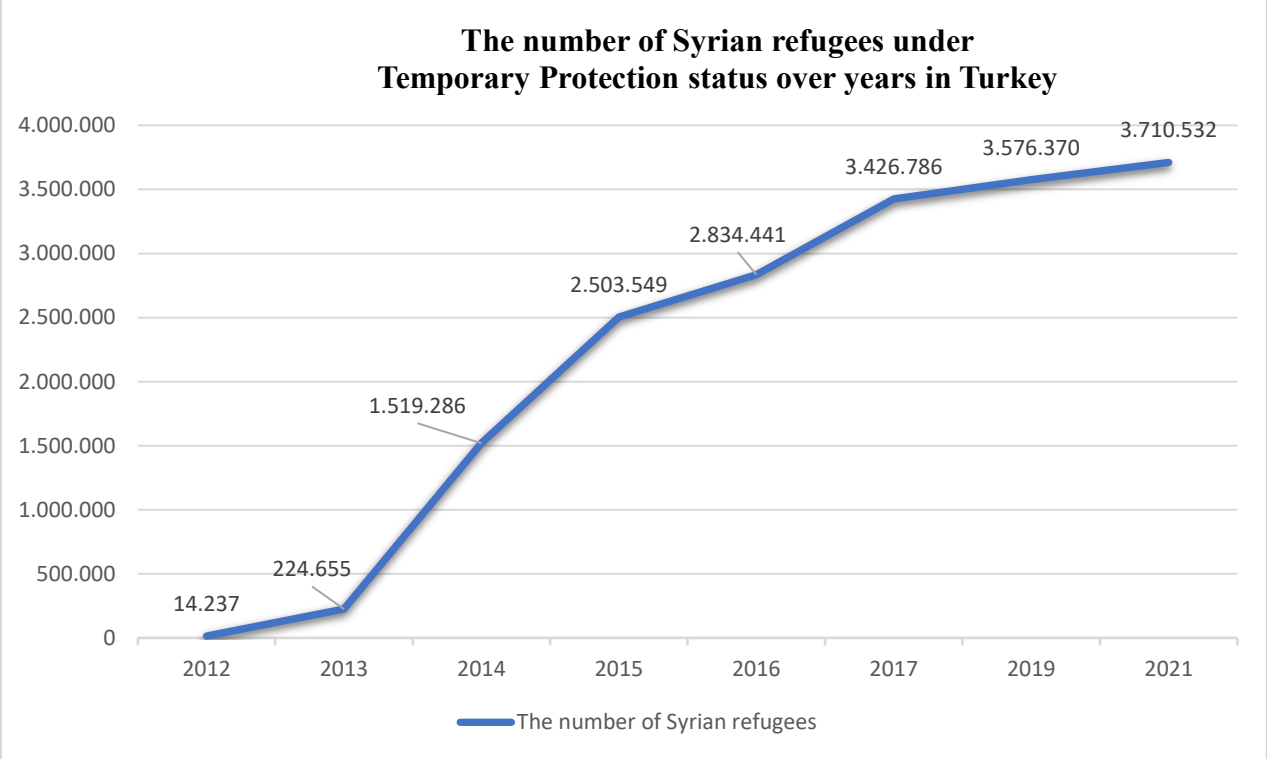

Figure IV: The Number of Syrian Refugees under the Temporary Protection Status in Turkey

Source: Ministry of Interior Presidency of Migration Management (2020)

Figure IV shows the number of Syrian refugees under temporary protection reached over 1.5 million in 2014. In parallel with the rise in the number of Syrian and non-Syrian refugees arriving in Turkey for protection, the irregular crossings from Turkey's land and sea borders to the EU through the Eastern Mediterranean route drastically increased and peaked in the summer

[27] In addition to the Syrian refugees under Temporary Protection status, there has also been a continuous increase in the arrivals of non-Syrian refugees seeking international protection, mostly Afghans, Iraqis, and Iranians (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Interior Presidency of Migration Management, 2020a).

of 2015. This massive increase in arrivals created a fear of instability and insecurity within the EU (Kale, 2018), and further strengthening cooperation with Turkey from the EU's perspective became inevitable. Between 2011 and 2015, Turkey was criticized for not managing its borders effectively as becoming a 'highway' for refugees and irregular migrants who are finding their way to Europe. In fact, Turkey was more of a 'dam' than a 'highway' that was overtopped and flooded toward the EU (Kale, 2016).

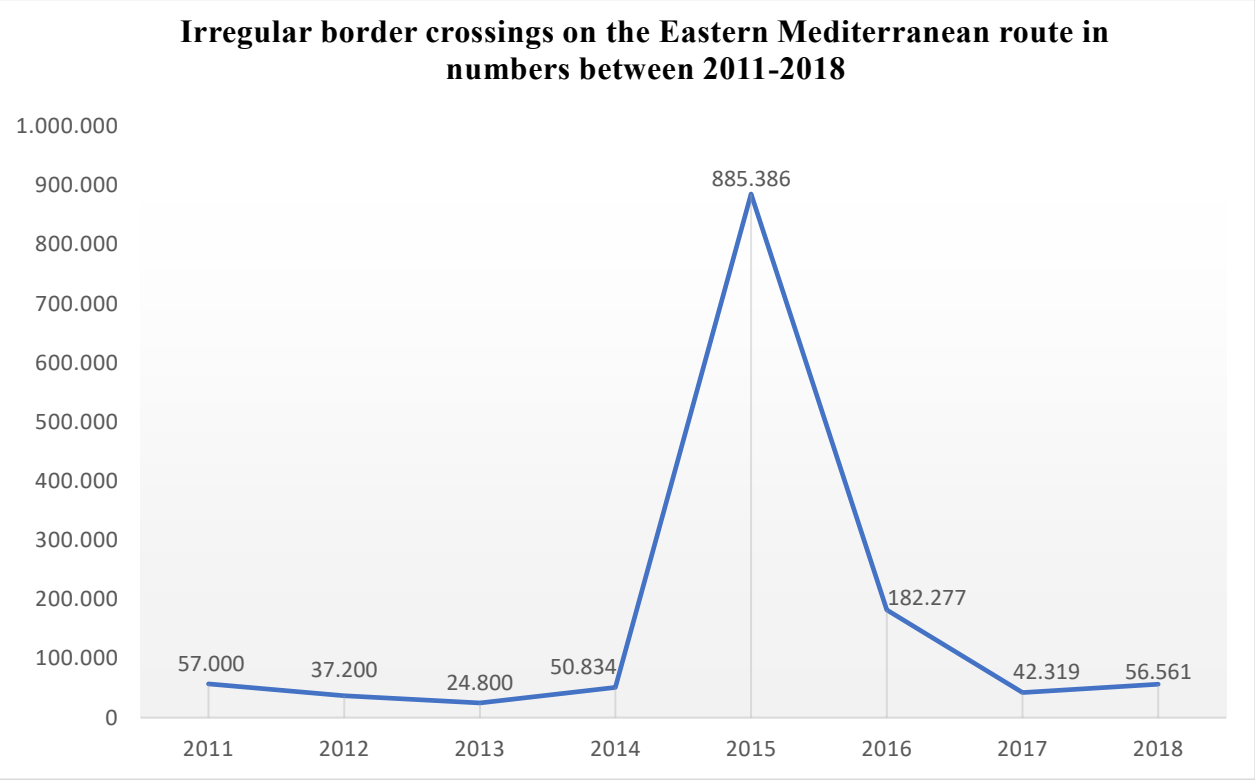

Figure V: Irregular Border Crossings on the Eastern Mediterranean Route[28]

Source: FRONTEX (2019)

Along with the drastic numbers of irregular crossings, the humanitarian catastrophe of the crisis became more apparent as many could not make it to European soil and lost their lives in the Mediterranean.[29] Particularly, the images of a 3-year-old Syrian boy found at the Turkish shore after he drowned trying to reach Greece displayed the human tragedy of the crisis (The

[28] The irregular crossings shown in Figure V include Syrian and non-Syrian refugees.

[29] Please see the Missing Migrants project by International Organization of Migration for the details and statistics of the recorded missing asylum seekers in the Mediterranean (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2021).

Guardian, 2015a). The news set off a debate where the international community was responsible for falling short of solving this protection crisis. The EU failed to develop a concrete cooperation plan with Turkey in the first half of 2015, partly because of the developments in Turkey's domestic politics: general elections in June 2015 and repeated elections in November 2015. The EU preferred to leave Ankara alone for the time being and observed how the internal political developments proceeded before proposing an agreement for crisis management (Deutsche Welle, 2015).

However, the escalating crisis environment urged the EU to take faster and more efficient action to combat irregular migration. With the increasing number of irregular crossings, increasing to over 885 thousand in 2015, as shown in Figure V, and fatalities occurring on the Eastern Mediterranean Route, alongside the humanitarian tragedy witnessed internationally, the EU decided to externalize migration governance further and institutionalize its cooperation with Turkey.

III. Migration Diplomacy between the EU and Turkey and the Start of the Cooperation

a) The EU's externalization of the Syrian refugee crisis

By 2015, the EU's externalization efforts to Turkey intensified alongside the peak in irregular crossings (see Figures IV and V). The former European Council President Donald Tusk stated in a press conference with President Erdoğan that "*it is indispensable that the EU has to manage its border better, and we expect Turkey to do the same",* and added, "*to solve this crisis, we discussed financial assistance, border management, the fight against smugglers, integration policies and visa liberalization* (Barigazzi, 2015)." To address the escalating refugee crisis, the EU needed to externalize and transfer its responsibilities to a strategic partner, Turkey. Consequently, Turkey became a key cooperation partner in securing the EU's borders.

> *"Turkey has been geographically in a very key place in solving the Syrian refugee crisis. There has been a growing need to develop cooperation with Turkey to manage the refugee crisis* (Interview, International Organization for Migration, Ankara)."

As part of migration diplomacy, externalization was combined with an issue-linkage strategy. Migration became the most dynamic policy field and contributed to the new dynamics in other areas (Gatti and Ott, 2019). As the EU was trying to ensure the safety of the Schengen Area, it

offered Turkey a cooperation mechanism based on humanitarian and development assistance to reach a win-win deal. Turkey immediately realized the opportunity of the issue-linkage strategy and combined it with the issues of membership talks and visa facilitation for Turkish citizens.

Former Turkish prime minister Ahmet Davutoğlu had seen the negotiations with the EU as an opportunity: "*The Syrian refugee crisis can lead to a new vision of EU-Turkish relations* (BBC News TR, 2015b)." Similarly, the former foreign minister, Mevlüt Cavuşoğlu, said EU-Turkey relations are passing through a historical phase, as four EU-Turkey summits were held within four months. He referred to the 'refugee deal' with the EU, which accelerates Turkey's EU membership bid and aims for visa-free travel for Turkish nationals within the Schengen area. He also highlighted expanded cooperation with the EU across various fields, noting the successful management of irregular crossings in the Aegean Sea (Anadolu Ajansı, 2016). Both former foreign ministers linked the cooperation to a potential re-energization of EU-Turkey accession negotiations, which were frozen.

In the post-2015 era, the EU and Turkey continued to heavily instrumentalize the Syrian refugee crisis to achieve various foreign and domestic policy goals. As another example of the issue-linkage strategy, Turkish President Erdoğan stated that creating a safe zone in the north of Syria has long been a priority for Ankara. This secure area could end smuggling operations and prevent further influx of refugees. Refugees could live inside this safe zone, which should also be of interest to the EU (BBC News TR, 2019; NTV Türk, 2019). In this way, Erdoğan linked his foreign policy and fight against terrorism agenda in Northern Syria to the EU's externalized refugee policy.

As a result, the issue-linkage strategy in the form of spillover was used to connect different areas of interest with the EU-Turkey cooperation deal. Turkey realized that its external borders became a priority for the EU to protect its Schengen area and used this leverage to influence the EU's decisions to support Turkey in its foreign policy goals, such as Turkey's accession to the EU, visa liberalization for Turkish citizens and creating a safe zone in Syria. It is open to discussion to what extent Turkey has succeeded in achieving these goals. However, Turkey managed to bring all these points to the negotiation table and used its leverage to enforce them, demonstrating the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis to a certain degree.

In a similar manner, the EU utilized the crisis to appeal to Turkey's interest in cooperation, linking its internal security concerns with offers of financial assistance, development aid, and other political incentives such as visa facilitation and accession negotiations. The highly securitized external migration policy turned out to be a bargaining game between two sides, far from the EU's shared norms and values on prioritizing human rights and the welfare of the refugees. The aim was to ensure security at the external and internal EU borders. For this purpose, the Syrian refugees and the crisis situation continued to be heavily instrumentalized in reaching foreign policy goals.

On 5 October 2015, the EU leaders and President Erdoğan met to discuss a cooperation strategy. The European Council's Donald Tusk asserted that 'it is indispensable that the EU has to manage its borders better, and Turkey is expected to do the same. Thus, financial assistance, border management, the fight against human-smuggling, integration policies, and visa liberalization must be discussed to solve the crisis with Turkey' (Barigazzi, 2015). It became apparent that the EU was willing to offer Turkey financial and political incentives to maintain its internal and external security. This approach has also been referred to as the policy conditionality approach in Chapter II, which influenced Turkey's willingness to cooperate in exchange for the rewards it would receive.

b) The 2015 Action Plan and the EU-Turkey Summit

The externalization of the refugee crisis and the issue-linkage strategy enforced migration diplomacy between the EU and Turkey. To prevent further irregularities and better manage the crisis, former German Chancellor Angela Merkel visited Istanbul to meet with Davutoğlu and Erdoğan to discuss the issue on 10 October 2015. Merkel stated that Turkey plays a crucial role in solving the refugee crisis and needs support (BBC News TR, 2015b, 2015a). Following the visit, the Joint Action Plan was released on the 15th of October (European Commission, 2015), followed by the conclusions of the EU-Turkey Summit on the 29th of November of the same year (European Council, 2015). The EU external migration policy had become a three-level game between the EU institutions, Member States, and Turkey. Germany highly supported the cooperation, and there has been a 'fit' in terms of Turkey's national policy and the EU's foreign policy.

The 2015 Action Plan was a response to the drastically increased irregular crossings and fatalities on the Eastern Mediterranean Route (Öztürk Övünç and Soykan, 2019) and

emphasized the need for solidarity, togetherness, and efficiency. It aimed to address the crisis in three main ways: addressing the root causes of the massive influx of Syrians, supporting Syrian refugees under temporary protection and affected host communities in Turkey and strengthening cooperation with Turkey to prevent irregular migration (European Commission, 2015).

With the Plan, the EU offered 3 billion € of financial assistance to support Turkey's efforts to manage irregular border crossings and to implement a readmission agreement in exchange for visa liberalization for Turkish citizens (European Commission, 2015; Kale, 2016). Both the Plan and the Summit addressed migration management, strengthening border controls, combatting irregular crossings, providing financial support to Syrian refugees in Turkey through the Facility for Syrian Refugees in Turkey (FRIT), and visa liberalization dialogue for Turkish citizens began in 2013. With these developments, the EU and Turkey entered a closer cooperation phase. Turkey's agreement to cooperate on the security clauses validates the view of Trauner (2011), who mentioned that third-countries agree to cooperate on security issues like irregular migration because otherwise, refraining from cooperation would have a negative impact on receiving financial assistance and other opportunities.

Furthermore, Kale (2016) drew attention to the Action Plan, and she suggested it should not undermine the status of EU-Turkey relations, changing it into a strategic relationship only (Şenyuva and Üstün, 2015) or making Turkey a buffer zone or a board guard of the EU. The cooperation must ensure high protection standards for refugees by enhancing a burden-sharing mechanism that requires both MS and Turkey to address the root causes of the crisis. It must also provide technical and financial assistance, effective and efficient distribution of humanitarian assistance, and lastly, share the responsibility of resettlement of the refugees (Kale, 2016). Hence, the Action Plan and its implementation had to ensure durable solutions based on responsibility-sharing and long-term planning.

The Summit also included non-migration-related issues on its agenda; it agreed to launch the 'High-Level Economic Dialogue Mechanism' and establish a 'High-Level Energy Dialogue and Strategic Energy Cooperation' between the EU and Turkey. Upgrading the Customs Union and fulfilling the 'Visa Facilitation Roadmap' were also among the agreed elements of the Summit (European Council, 2015). Turkish government expected and hoped to put visa liberalization into force and speed up Turkey's accession negotiations in return for the readmission agreement and their cooperation with the EU (BBC News TR, 2015b).

Following and finalizing the elements of the 2015 Joint Action Plan and EU-Turkey Summit mentioned above, the third meeting between the EU heads of state and Turkey took place on 18 March 2016, later recognized as the EU-Turkey Statement, or EU-Turkey Deal (Council of the European Union, 2016). Together with the Statement, the EU's and Turkey's foreign policies have become dependent on each other in migration management, justifying the argument on the increasing intersection of migration and foreign policy nexus discussed in Chapter III. The EU-Turkey Statement laid down the structure of this inter-dependency of the EU's and Turkey's foreign and migration policies and materialized the ongoing instrumentalization of the crisis. It opened up a debate to see if the cooperation could develop into either a cooperative or a coercive one over time. As the former prime minister Davutoğlu stated at the 2015 EU-Turkey Summit, the EU Statement was expected to assist Syrian refugees in Turkey and build mutual trust between the EU and Turkey, potentially contributing to Turkey's accession process (Hürriyet, 2015). It was considered a win-win situation for both sides (Kirişçi, 2015). The details of the Statement and its aftermath will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

IV. The EU-Turkey Statement as the Materialization of Externalization

Müftüler-Baç (2022) states that there had been a high degree of interplay between changes in Turkish migratory policies and its security concerns rising from irregular migration to the Turkish territory, shaping its willingness to align to the EU rules and continue functioning as a gatekeeper for the EU's external borders. Relevantly, the agreement reciprocatively reflected Turkey's aims and motives in engaging in cooperation with the EU. "*The cooperation showed and reminded us of the strategic importance of two parties to each other* (Interview, Turkish University, Ankara)." The Statement re-enforced this importance and created a strategic partnership where mutual dependency has been observed (Müftüler-Baç, 2019; Dimitriadi and Kaya, 2021; Saatçioğlu, 2021).

The EU-Turkey Statement materialized the EU's new form of external migration governance as discussed under the tools of externalization in Chapter II of this dissertation, and it laid down the general cooperation framework between the EU and Turkey. In addition to the framework on migration management, it brought up incentives for Turkey regarding visa liberalization, updating the Customs Union Agreement, and re-energizing the accession negotiations. In this sense, the Statement combined migration and non-migration-related issues and brought up nine

main points, which will be presented in the following section on the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement.

With the signing of the EU-Turkey Statement in 2016, the externalization based on the issue-linkage strategy was formally recognized. *"In return for Ankara's stricter measures for border control, the EU will grant visa facilitation to Turkish citizens* (BBC News TR, 2016d)." While visa facilitation and accession negotiations had never been directly dependent on the Statement or any other migration policy, they were perceived as rewards of a migration deal. This proves the argument by Zeilinger (2011) in Chapter II, stating that positive conditionality has been used as a 'bargaining chip' against the third-countries by the EU, and here it also applies to the case of Turkey.

An academic from a university in Ankara confirms that the Statement is a part of the EU's externalization process of its asylum and migration policy to third-countries. *"It can be called the EU's efforts of exporting its migration policy to third-countries, and a transfer of its burden-sharing responsibility to Turkey* (Interview, Turkish University, Ankara)." In this process of externalization, the EU prioritizes its internal borders. Relevantly, an EU expert working at the Ministry for EU Affairs in Ankara asserted, "*The EU's perception of Turkey's borders represents the EU's idea on Turkey's EU membership. If the EU saw Turkey as a possible EU Member State, eastern Turkish borders would have been regarded as future borders of the EU; however, this has not been the case so far* (Interview, Ministry of EU Affairs, Ankara)."

It can be argued that the success of the EU's external migration depends on the extent to which Turkey efficiently implements its migration and asylum policy. *"If the EU wants to protect its borders efficiently, it needs to ensure Turkish borders are well protected; it has a domino effect and affects one another. The peak of the crisis in 2015 was enlightening in this sense, showing the EU's internal security cannot be ensured unless Turkish internal security is established. This is named a 'spillover effect' in the literature, and Turkey has successfully used it to carry this security issue to other fields of its national interests. (*Interview, Turkish University, Ankara)."

i. The controversies of the EU-Turkey Statement

a) The legal ambiguities of the EU-Turkey Statement

The 2016 EU-Turkey Statement has brought several controversies and concerns regarding its applicability, legal status, and moral standards. Unlike international agreements, the Statement is a politically non-binding agreement that the European Parliament has not ratified (Eisele, 2019). It is stated to be a legal mystery in its form (Gatti and Ott, 2019). Since the European Parliament never ratified it, it only has a non-binding, informal character. It is in the form of a press release published on the European Council website. Therefore, the Statement is neither a formal 'deal' nor an 'agreement' but a political declaration that is partially implemented and regularly monitored by Turkey, Greece, and Brussels (Groenendijk, 2019).

The EU-Turkey Statement challenges the core foundations of the EU legal and constitutional system. Chapter II of this dissertation previously discussed the development of the institutional framework of the EU's external migration policy. It showed how the migration policy evolved from a state-centered intergovernmental understanding to a supranational area of common concern over the years. Article 4 of the 2007 Lisbon Treaty integrated all the provisions in the area of freedom, security, and justice, including asylum and immigration, which were shared competencies between the EU and Member States (European Union, 2007).[30] The fact that the Statement was adopted as a political declaration, not as an international agreement, by the EU Heads of Governments and States, shows a crucial departure from the Union method. In this sense, the adoption determines the creation and exercise of the extra-Treaties instrument. It is a form of 'reverse Lisbonization', a step backwards from supranationalism to intergovernmentalism (Carrera, den Hertog and Stefan, 2019).

The Statement's informal, highly politicized, non-binding nature illustrates how crisis-led decision-making in the EU challenges the roles of the European Parliament and the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU). The General Court ruled that the EU-Turkey Statement lacked jurisdiction and could not be regarded as an instrument adopted by an EU institution (Groenendijk, 2019). This case may entail severe consequences for the EU's relations with

[30] Please see Title V- Arts 67-89 on the TFEU for all the provisions on the area of freedom, security, and justice.

other third-countries.[31] Relevantly, its informal and extra-treaty nature creates problems in its authorship, meaning it is unclear who holds the legal responsibility for its implementation (Carrera, den Hertog and Stefan, 2019).

Furthermore, for the functioning of the return of irregular migrants, the EU Commission foresees that all non-EU asylum seekers have access to international protection in Turkey or that it constitutes a safe country for them (Carrera, den Hertog and Stefan, 2019). This assumption derives from Articles 35 and 38 of the Asylum Procedure Directive (Official Journal of the European Union, 2013), which states that "*a country can be considered as the first country of asylum only if that country recognizes the particular applicant as a refugee*" and "*a third-country can only be regarded as safe when it ensures a certain number of principles such as non-refoulment and access to international protection, following the Geneva Refugee Convention*." However, this has not been the case for Turkey, which has a geographical limitation on the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol, as discussed in Chapter V.

As previously emphasized, Turkey does not recognize and grant full refugee status to individuals from other countries unless they are members of the Council of Europe. Consequently, the non-EU asylum seekers who returned to Turkey within the framework of the EU-Turkey Statement cannot be granted a 'refugee status' but are only offered temporary protection, a conditional refugee status, under the National Law on Foreigner and International Protection (LFIP). Moreover, only Syrian refugees can benefit from this temporary protection status (Republic of Türkiye, 2013), and non-Syrian refugees, whose numbers cannot be underestimated, are excluded from this deal. Despite the Commission's belief that Turkey qualifies as a 'safe third-country', this decision is problematic since various legal uncertainties remain unsolved.

Therefore, the lawfulness of using the 'first country of asylum' and 'safe third-country' concepts is limited for the above reasons. The statuses are 'temporary', and there is always a risk that this temporariness will never become permanent. In addition, Turkey's state of democracy, the rule of law, and freedom of expression have also been raising concerns about the applicability of such a deal (Kirişçi, 2015). It is highlighted that the EU has not adequately assessed the Statement's implications from a protection and rights perspective (Danish Refugee Council, 2017) when the safe third-country concept and its application in the case of Turkey is

[31] To read more on the legal discussion on the Statement, please see Carrera, Hertog and Stefan (2017) and Idriz (2017a, 2017b).

challenging, risky and morally delicate (Lehner, 2019). Therefore, the Statement's compatibility with the rule of law and human rights is open for discussion.

b) EU's damaged normative power

The EU's reputation as a normative power has been scrutinized as it prioritized security over human rights in the EU-Turkey Statement. Chapter III identified the EU's normative power as its soft-power and highlighted the core norms of respect for human-rights, the rule of law, and democracy. Dagi (2020) states that accepting Turkey, with a concerning human rights record as a safe third-country for Syrian refugees, for the sake of the 'deal' has damaged the EU's claim to be a normative power. The fact that the EU sat down with Turkey and agreed to the prospect of closer ties and support is enough to signal Turkish officials that Turkey's backsliding in democracy and the rule of law could easily be swept under the rug when it comes to securing the EU's core interests (Saatçioğlu, 2016). Okyay and Zaragoza-Cristiani (2016) highlighted that the EU-Turkey Statement and the broader cooperation it entails may bring about long-term costs from both normative and interest-based perspectives, which could outweigh the short-term benefits.

The EU's lowering of its standards, including those expected from 'safe third-countries,' has a negative effect on the development of rights-based migration-management approaches in countries with inadequate or less developed governance regimes. The EU is increasingly adopting an approach that incentivizes cooperation from third-countries in migration control and the provision of international protection, thereby contributing to the instrumentalization of migration policies. The case of Turkey indicated that creating issue-linkages between various issue areas governed by different logics and criteria (such as the visa facilitation for Turkish citizens, upgrading the Customs Union or re-energizing the accession process) and the 'refugee issue' risks being counterproductive for progress in any of these realms. Such issue-linkage contributes to the impression of the EU as an unreliable partner that does not fulfill its commitments. The EU's deprioritization of rights and principles in its external migration policy, particularly in migration management cooperation with third-countries, in an attempt to maintain cooperation, has negatively impacted its image and credibility as a normative actor founded on liberal democratic values (Okyay, 2018).

An interviewee from a university in Turkey confirmed that the Statement proves that the EU's security and control-oriented externalization contradicts its normative basis. Sending asylum seekers to third-safe countries, building up readmission centers, and strengthening border controls do not coincide with the EU's norms and values:

"This approach does not question whether this funding mechanism contributes to Europeanization; instead, it looks at whether it is committed to the EU's external migration policy.....Including European norms and values in the external migration policy could be possible if the EU could put a realistic global approach to migration into practice. This approach should have brought the strict implementation of resettlement, relocation, and development-oriented policies, such as building factories or other sustainable work opportunities for refugees, contributing to the peace-building and peace-keeping operations in Syria, helping rebuild the infrastructure in Syria, etc. These could be considered to be in line with European norms and values. Europeanization would have aimed for more democratic governance in Syria. Yet, the external migration policy has nothing to do with these greater goals (Interview, Turkish University, Izmir)."

Moreover, the EU-Turkey Statement was finalized only a few days after the arrests of Turkey's two prominent journalists, Can Dündar and Erdem Gül, for charges of spying and "divulging state secrets (The Guardian, 2015b)", causing an uproar in Turkey's democratic circles. Had these arrests happened in earlier years, the EU would have most likely withheld or postponed any type of cooperative arrangement from Turkey (Saatçioğlu, 2016). Dagi (2020) argues that the Turkish government saw the Statement as a power instrument, a rhetorical push to test the currency of its newly acquired power. The Statement further politicized EU-Turkish relations, creating an impression in Europe that the EU has been taken hostage by an untrustworthy Turkey that often threatens to open its borders.

Additionally, an expert working at the Presidency of Migration Management in Ankara asserted that the EU had not been interested in peace-building activities in Syria, which is the cause of the crisis: *"In a conference on the Syrian refugee crisis in Brussels, where various state leaders, governmental and non-governmental organizations attended, no one brought up the issue of negotiating with the Syrian government, or Iran or Russia to bring long-lasting peace in the region. The only focus was on the issue of repatriation* (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara)." The EU's external migration policy did not prioritize a root-causes approach at the origin of the crisis. It had been strictly based on security control, which lacked

the aim and the common European norms of bringing democratic governance and ensuring human-rights and the rule of law in Syria.

As understood, the Statement is criticized on two main points: its legal ambiguity due to being a political declaration and the lack of normative and moral basis. The Statement externalized the EU's protection responsibilities and migration control in exchange for financial assistance and political incentives to Turkey as a quick-fix solution at its borders (Danish Refugee Council, 2017; Gatti and Ott, 2019). The Statement was too pragmatic, unethical, and overly strategic (Kale, 2018). The welfare of the refugees became instrumentalized to serve the interests of the EU and Turkey (Kirişçi, 2015). The EU found itself trapped in a new strategic partnership with Turkey instead of the accession perspective of conditionality, where its hands were tied to critically asses the Turkish government on human rights violations, de-Europeanization, increasing authoritarianism, freedom of the press and so on.

In spite of the normative criticism of the EU´s external migration policy discussed in the previous section, some assert that this method had been the most efficient one in helping solve the issue in the short-term:

> *"When the EU is being judged on its merits, its external migration policy is highly rational. If the EU had tried to negotiate with Syrian President Bashar Assad, the success of the negotiation would have been at a higher risk in the short and long-term. It was much easier, faster, and even safer to agree with Turkey than with Syria. The Statement offered a more concrete plan where both sides could agree on funding, technical assistance, political incentives, etc. The project implementation could also be carried out more efficiently and clearly with Turkey. It benefited both sides* (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara)."

In this sense, despite the criticisms based on norms and values the EU failed to support, the agreement was plausible regarding speed and efficiency, and the crisis-led Statement has constituted the official framework of the cooperation and collaboration between the EU and Turkey since 2016. Examining the implementation of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement allows this study to consider both the EU's and Turkey's drivers in migration cooperation. For this purpose, the Statement's articles will be examined in detail. They will be categorized into two groups: the articles related to migration management and political incentives.

ii. Implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement

The Articles of the EU-Turkey Statement	
Articles on Migration Management	
I.	Starting on 20 March 2016, all irregular migrants will be returned to Turkey following EU and international law. The principle of *non-refoulment* will be respected, meaning all migrants arriving on the Greek islands will be registered for asylum applications. Only the migrants who do not apply for asylum or whose application has been found inadmissible will be returned to Turkey.
II.	For every Syrian refugee being returned from Greece to Turkey, a Syrian refugee already residing in Turkey will be resettled from Turkey to the EU under the UN Vulnerability Criteria. This principle has been known as the '1-1' criteria.
III.	Turkey agrees to take necessary measures to prevent new sea or land routes for irregular migration from Turkey to the EU.
IV.	Once the irregular crossings substantially decrease or end, a 'Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme' will be established. It will be based on the voluntary contributions of the EU Member States.
V.	The EU agrees to speed up the disbursement of the initially allocated 3 billion euros under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT) and ensure the funding for further projects in the fields of health, education, infrastructure, food, and other living costs for the Syrian refugees. Once the funding is used effectively, the EU potentially agrees to mobilize an additional 3 billion euros.
VI.	"The EU will work with Turkey in any joint endeavor to improve humanitarian conditions inside Syria, in particular in certain areas near the Turkish border, which would allow for the local population and refugees to live in areas which will be safer."

Articles Related to Political Incentives	
VII.	The fulfilment of the visa liberalization roadmap for Turkish citizens will be accelerated vis-à-vis provided all requirements have been met by the end of July 2016. For this purpose, Turkey will have to fulfill the remaining requirements to allow the Commission to make a proposal to the European Parliament for a final decision.
VIII.	The EU and Turkey agreed to work on upgrading the Customs Union.
IX.	The EU and Turkey repeated their commitment to re-energize Turkey's accession process as stated in the joint statement of 29 November 2015. They welcomed the opening of Chapter 17 on 14 December 2015 and decided to open Chapter 33 as a next step[32].

Table V: Articles of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement[33]

Source: (Council of the European Union, 2016)

Among nine articles of the EU-Turkey Statement, only four are discussed in detail below with the support of the data gathered from the expert interviews. These are the articles on 1-1 criteria (see Table V, Article II), the fight against irregular migration, the voluntary admission scheme, and the visa facilitation for Turkish nationals. The main reason for this selection is that the interview respondents either did not mention the other articles or only slightly referred to them, mainly because there had been no real progress or critical discussion to elaborate on. For instance, regarding re-energizing the accession negotiations, although two Chapters (17 and 33) were opened in 2015 and 2016, no progress was reported. When it comes to financial assistance, which is a highly disputed topic raised often by the Turkish government, none of the interviewees preferred to elaborate on it.

[32] Chapter 17 refers to 'Economic and monetary policy' and Chapter 33 refers to the 'Financial and budgetary provisions'. The EU launched accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3, 2005 and only 16 out of 35 chapters have been opened, one of which has been provisionally closed (Anadolu Ajansı, 2016).

[33] Although the Statement is not a formal agreement, the points that are raised will be referred as 'articles' throughout the study to clarify the terminology for the analysis.

a) On Fighting with Irregular Migration and 1-1 Criteria

The migration management clauses of the Statement highlighted the necessity of stopping irregular migration. "*Together with the implementation of the Statement, in 2019, only 11.000 irregular migrants attempted to cross the border; This is a considerable decline. The fatalities in the Eastern Mediterranean route also decreased. Therefore, the aim of reducing irregular crossings and fatalities was successfully achieved. Furthermore, border controls got stricter, especially in the EU's eastern border, and a support mechanism for Greece was developed* (Interview, Turkish University, Ankara)."

An interviewee from a Turkish ministry confirms this view and says that since 2015, there has been a drastic decrease in irregular crossings, which is an important fact.[34] The EU perceives this as a success (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara), and the Commission claims the substantial decrease is a '*testament to its effective delivery'* (European Commission, 2016c).

Despite the acknowledged success of the Statement in decreasing irregular crossings, an expert stated that this success analysis might not be plausible. "*I would hesitate to make such an analysis and say the Statement dropped the number of irregular crossings. I believe what stopped the crossings was the closure of the Balkan Route. The refugees realized their journey would end in Greece since they could not continue crossing the borders through the Balkans. Thus, it is hard to be sure how much the Statement actually decreased the numbers* (Interview, Ministry of EU Affairs, Ankara)."

In addition, "*The Statement only closed one door between Turkey and Greece. There is an increasing number of irregular crossings in other Mediterranean and Black Sea routes; therefore, the Statement changed the irregular migration routes, not irregular migration itself* (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara)." Therefore, although the numbers are 'encouraging' from a border control perspective (Carrera, den Hertog and Stefan, 2019), arguing that the numbers declined only because of the Statement's success would be an overstatement.

[34] Monthly irregular arrivals to Greece through Turkey have decreased drastically by 97% since the adoption of the Statement. They have dropped from 25.000 in March 2016 to 1.400 by May 2016 in just two months (European Commission, 2019b).

Relevantly, there is an overall consensus on successfully applying the 1-1 rule. Turkey accepted all irregular migrants from Greece whose asylum applications could not be processed. The EU, in return for every irregular migrant returning to Turkey, resettled one Syrian refugee from Turkey to the EU. The numbers remained considerably low[35], or just 'symbolic', but it is agreed that the EU and Turkey implemented the agreed rules successfully (Interview, Foreign Ministry, Ankara; Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara; Interview, Turkish University, Ankara).

Last but not least, it was emphasized that the 1-1 rule was a crisis-solving mechanism and had a temporary nature. Once the irregularities decreased considerably, the EU agreed to replace it with the voluntary humanitarian admission scheme (Interview, Ministry of EU Affairs, Ankara), which never occurred. There must have been a better burden-sharing mechanism to consider the readmission-resettlement ratio effective (Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara; Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara).

"*The main idea of the burden-sharing has been to enable more refugees residing in Turkey to be resettled in the EU. This goal has required a voluntary admission program, aiming to consistently reduce the burden of Turkey over the years, outside the general rules of readmission or 1-1 agreement* (Interview, Ministry of EU Affairs, Ankara)." Despite this ideal, the fight against irregular migration was handled through either stricter border controls or the implementation of readmission of third-country nationals to Turkey. The burden-sharing aspect of the fight against irregular migration was found insufficient because voluntary admission of Syrian refugees by EU MS was lacking.

[35] The total number of returns from the Greek islands have been 2.140 by 2020 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 2020), and around 27.000 people were resettled to the EU from Turkey (European Commission, 2020b). The low numbers were due to Greece's obligation to process all asylum applications according to the Dublin Regulation. The return scheme only involved those who did not apply for asylum or could not qualify for it. It was improbable that those who reached the Greek Islands had no motive to apply for asylum. Those who chose this challenging route hope for a better future or that their relatives had already been residing or resettled in one of the EU MS. In most cases, they have ambitions to move further in the EU (Elizabeth Collett, 2016).

b) On Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme

The voluntary admission scheme is one of the instruments of the Statement that had not been materialized. The disagreements between the EU MS over relocation and resettlement have been the main reasons hindering the realization of it (Reslow, 2019a). The scheme's success would have depended on the MS and their appreciation of the strategic necessity of relocation from Turkey. As the voluntary admission scheme was never adopted, it hindered the efforts to have a similar responsibility-sharing mechanism in managing the Syrian refugee crisis (Walter-Franke, 2018).

According to the interviewees, the voluntary admission scheme was the least realistic, yet one of the most significant expectations of the Statement for long-term responsibility-sharing. *"A promise made by the EU was the voluntary admission scheme. The EU could not even establish a voluntary admission or resettlement scheme within the EU among the Member States. Therefore, admitting migrants from Turkey and resettling them voluntarily was not even brought up and was never put into practice* (Interview, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ankara)."

Another interviewee from a Turkish ministry agreed with the previous view and stated, *"The article on the voluntary humanitarian admission scheme was perhaps the most critical point of the Statement. Still, the EU hesitated to talk about it even after the irregular crossings dropped and stayed low consistently for an extended period. There was not even a symbolic practice of this voluntary mechanism by the Member States* (Interview, Ministry of EU Affairs, Ankara)."

It can be said that the voluntary humanitarian admission scheme was an underestimated and overlooked clause of the Statement, even though it was the core of a fair responsibility-sharing mechanism. "*Humanitarian admission scheme remains more important than financial assistance. Resettlement quotas must be increased voluntarily. This is important for humanitarian reasons and a fair burden-sharing mechanism between the EU and Turkey. Right now, resettlement quotas are absurd (*Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara)." A voluntary humanitarian admission scheme continues to be fundamental to the discussion of the EU's fair and long-term burden-sharing mechanism in migration management.

c) On Visa Facilitation for Turkish Citizens

Chapter V showed that the visa liberalization dialogue and the roadmap were first brought up in 2013 with the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement. Since 2013, Turkey has been expected to meet 72 requirements under five headings: document security, migration management, public order and security, fundamental rights, and readmission of irregular migrants (Içduygu and Aksel, 2014; Zoeteweij and Turhan, 2017; Groenendijk, 2019). Article VII of the Statement mentioned lifting the visa requirements for Turkish citizens by the end of June 2016 with the condition that all benchmarks stated on the Roadmap have been met. In this case, the Commission agreed to make a proposal to the European Parliament and the Council for a final decision (Council of the European Union, 2016). The Statement, therefore, reminded and enforced the commitment to the dialogue on visa facilitation and made it an essential driver for cooperative action for Turkey (Kale, 2018). Following this, the Turkish government committed itself to fulfilling the Roadmap, and by May 2016, only five requirements were left (European Commission, 2016b).[36]

An interviewee from a Turkish university stressed that although there had been serious steps towards fulfilling the requirements for the realization of visa facilitation for Turkish citizens, it had been postponed and later failed altogether: "*The EU does not have a singular, homogenous structure; the attitude of the Commission, Parliament, the Council, and the Member States often vary deeply when it comes to the decisions on Turkey. When it came to the realization of visa facilitation, a consensus was observed for the first time, which was very positive. As long as Turkey could complete the requirements, no one would have objected. Turkey's motivation towards it was also relatively high. Unfortunately, the developments after the 2016 coup-attempt destroyed all the positive developments and efforts* (Interview, Turkish University, Ankara)."

In the aftermath of the coup-attempt and the following state of emergency, the deterioration of the human rights situation in Turkey has made it highly unlikely that Turkey would be able or

[36] Five requirements that are not met are as follows: (1) adopting the measure to prevent corruption foreseen by the Roadmap, ensuring an effective follow-up to the recommendations issued by the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO); (2) aligning the legislation on personal data protection with EU standards; (3) concluding an operational cooperation agreement with Europol; (4) offering effective judicial cooperation in criminal matters to all EU Member States; (5) revising the legislation and practices on terrorism in line with European standards, notably by better aligning the definition of terrorism in order to narrow the scope of the definition and by introducing a criterion of proportionality (European Commission, 2016b).

willing to complete the requirements in the near future (Groenendijk, 2019). Hence, the Article on visa facilitation lost its importance in bilateral negotiations, and the remaining five requirements were never put into Turkey's national agenda.

iii. Assessment of the EU-Turkey Statement

Apart from the efforts in preventing irregular migration and the 1-1 program, no other article of the Statement, updating Customs Union, re-energizing the accession process by opening new chapters, or visa facilitation has been put into practice. Moreover, the conclusions of the 29th November 2015 Summit included and agreed on starting a high-level energy dialogue and strategic energy cooperation. These points agreed on at the Summit were carried to the EU-Turkey Statement later; however, these were never implemented (Interview, Ministry of EU Affairs, Ankara).

The interviewees were not surprised by the problems in implementing certain articles. They highlighted the symbolic and political meaning and importance of the Statement. The Statement was a sign of the EU's solidarity with Turkey. However, it failed to ensure a fair burden-sharing mechanism (Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara). It was almost natural for a deal that instrumentalized the Syrian refugee crisis to have risks; nonetheless, both sides had to make the best out of it despite the inefficacies. "*The EU-Turkey Statement has been a political statement, a declaration of intention for both sides. It has no enforcement power and has never been formally binding, so its agreement always carried risks* (Interview, Ministry of EU Affairs, Ankara)."

Another issue worth mentioning in the Statement is that it failed to recognize the non-Syrian refugees:

"*The assistance scheme in the EU-Turkey statement is designed only for Syrian nationals. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the success in decreasing the number of irregular crossings through the Eastern Mediterranean route does not involve the number of non-Syrians trying to cross the border. In this sense, the Statement remains exclusive and only successfully reduces the number of Syrian refugees. The financial assistance helped Syrian refugees stay in Turkey and stop further movement to the EU. The more access they have to education, health, income, and other rights and privileges, the more convinced they are to live in Turkey. The same thing does not apply to Afghans, Iraqis, and other non-Syrian refugees*. This has been an

overlooked issue in fighting irregular migration (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara)." [37]

The Statement, therefore, offered a temporary burden-sharing mechanism and failed to establish a more comprehensive voluntary resettlement mechanism, which could have decreased the EU's and Turkey's interdependence and ensured a fair responsibility-sharing tool which would stand as an example for a successful external migration policy for the EU. Secondly, the Statement focused only on Syrian refugees and failed to acknowledge the growing number of non-Syrian refugees. This exclusive setting undermined the protection and access to rights and services of non-Syrians in Turkey. It could potentially start other 'refugee crises' in the EU due to the insecurities they have to face under international protection in Turkey.

V. Future of the Statement and FRIT Cooperation

FRIT cooperation and the project implementation are estimated to run until 2025. Most interview partners agree that the EU-Turkey cooperation must continue even after, perhaps in a different form and size. "*There should be a vision and a long-term perspective for the projects being conducted. Their effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability should be analyzed for 2040, 2060, and 2070. They should be analyzed following the changing demographics of Turkey* (Interview, Ministry of Labour, Ankara)." The respondent from the Turkish ministry draws attention to the long-term perspectives of the projects. Similarly, another respondent from another Turkish ministry states that the EU aims to strengthen institutional capacity building through the project implementation process; however, achieving this aim in the short-term in developing countries like Turkey is challenging. The EU needs a long-term strategy, and FRIT must continue to ensure ongoing capacity-building (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara).

The interviewees representing the EU agree and recognize the need for an ongoing cooperation mechanism. *"It is difficult to imagine that there will be nothing after the Facility in Turkey, as the needs are severe. The EU-Turkey relationship is what it is and will not go from ´six to zero´. The shape of the cooperation after the Facility will be discussed and determined* (Interview,

[37] The issue of the increasing number of non-Syrians with little to no legal protection requires further attention, although it is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)." The DG ECHO respondent means here that EU-Turkey relations might degenerate and face obstacles; however, The relationship itself will never cease; rather, it will transform into a different form. Within the framework of the prevailing structure of the relationship, some form of FRIT cooperation would continue.

The DGMM respondent agrees with this statement and adds that future cooperation should consider the voluntary repatriation of the Syrian refugees. *"First, the EU and Turkey should plan voluntary repatriation to Syria; political steps must be taken for this purpose. Secondly, it is estimated that around eighty per cent of Syrian refugees will stay in Turkey permanently. To support this population, the EU and Turkey continue to work together, and FRIT should continue as 'FRIT+' or 'FRIT II' with the sustainability transition efforts of previously implemented projects. Turkey cannot bear the burden alone* (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara; Interview, Ministry of Health, Ankara)." The burden here refers mainly to economic difficulties. With the growing economic crisis, the Turkish state cannot support Syrian refugees alone without the EU's financial assistance.

*"Together with the start of the economic crisis in Turkey, the Turkish state is now more willing to have more projects under the Facility mechanism to sustain the money flow in the country (*Interview, IOM, Ankara)." A similar view states, *"The economic situation is not going very well in Turkey; the informal economy is already considered 1/3 of all the jobs in Turkey. We should ensure that Syrian refugees do not replace Turkish seasonal workers; it would create more tension in the country. We try to have this more holistic approach in our view on FRIT* (Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)."

The DGMM delegate agrees on the critical impact of the worsening economy on the financial assistance provided for Syrian refugees. Turkey's current economic crisis is severe, and it might affect the progress in financial aid given to Syrian refugees monthly through the EU funded 'Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) program'. Around 1.5 million Syrian refugees benefit from this cash assistance under FRIT mechanism. It is not likely that these people will all be employed and be self-sustainable soon, especially within the current economic situation. Therefore, even if not in all fields, FRIT and EU-Turkey cooperation must continue to support the refugees, at least in certain areas (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara).

The last critical comment on the future of the cooperation is related to the inclusion of non-Syrian refugees in Turkey, who were also excluded from the study. Since the EU-Turkey Statement and FRIT coordination mechanism are only designed for Syrian refugees, this dissertation limited itself to considering only Syrian refugees in its analysis and discussions. This does not imply that non-Syrian refugees, such as Iraqis, Afghans, and individuals of other nationalities, are less significant in humanitarian terms or in terms of their numbers. *"Both the EU and Turkey have so far perceived the refugee crisis over Syrian refugees. However, as the last Migration progress reports show, there is a drastic increase in the arrival of Afghan refugees and other nationalities to Turkey. Consequently, irregular crossings have also been increasing. Both sides must urgently discuss this issue* (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara)." Hence, the future FRIT coordination mechanism, in any form and size, should be more inclusive and acknowledge an equal and fair assistance mechanism, counting all refugees from all nationalities.

VI. Conclusion

This chapter first analyzed Turkey's responses to the Syrian refugee crisis and later the development of EU-Turkey relations in migration management. It laid down the emergency response of the Turkish state to the start of the arrival of Syrian refugees as background information. Due to the increase in the number of Syrian refugees under temporary protection in Turkey and irregular crossings to the EU through Turkey as a transit country, a cooperation mechanism became essential between both sides. Later, the chapter examined migration diplomacy and legal progress: the 2015 EU-Turkey Summit, the Action Plan, and the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement.

The management of the Syrian refugee crisis was linked to other foreign policy areas like Turkey's EU membership talks and accession negotiations, visa facilitation, building a safe zone in northern Syria, etc. This justifies the migration-foreign policy nexus discussed in Chapter III, stating that migration and foreign policy issues are interlinked. The EU and Turkey's foreign policies became mutually independent in dealing with the crisis. Furthermore, it can also be argued that the EU applied a remote control approach, introduced in Chapter II, to prevent further mobility of the Syrian refugees and ensure they stay in Turkey under

improved conditions in the fields of health, socioeconomic welfare, education and so on, instead of dealing with the root causes of the crisis in the originating state of Syria.

The chapter later tackled the specifics of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement on two grounds: the controversial aspects referring to its legal ambiguity and the ethical grounds as it instrumentalized the Syrian refugees. It has failed to represent the core values of the EU, as the safe third-country concept fails to fit Turkey. Turkey has been holding a geographical limitation on the 1951 Geneva Convention and cannot grant refugee status to Syrian refugees. Despite this, the EU agreed with the terms of keeping the Syrian refugees in a country where they can never acquire refugee status and the rights and services attached to it. This left the Syrian refugees with a vulnerable and ambiguous temporary protection status in Turkey.

In spite of the criticisms, the Statement has also been an efficient emergency mechanism to curb the irregular crossings of Syrian refugees. Thus, it has been a partially successful tool of the EU's externalization. Out of nine articles, those related to migration control and management are reported to be relatively successful by observing the decreasing numbers of irregular crossings in the Eastern Mediterranean route and the regularities in the application of the readmissions to Turkey and resettlements from Turkey. However, the articles on establishing a humanitarian admission scheme and visa facilitation for Turkish nationals were never realized, together with other unrealized elements of the Statement, such as re-energizing the accession talks, upgrading the Customs Union, or supporting Turkey to improve humanitarian conditions inside Syria.

This brings the focus of this study to the next issue area that needs to be analyzed. On the one hand, growing dissatisfaction from Turkey started to signal a conflictual position against the EU due to unrealized articles of the Statement. On the other hand, FRIT cooperation mechanism, which was created by the Statement and has been operating in Turkey since then, initiated comprehensive coordination among several actors from the EU and Turkey in national and sub-national layers of governance. The next chapter continues to analyze the EU-Turkey Statement, this time looking into FRIT cooperation mechanism. The aim is to examine the cooperation between 2016 and 2020 in more detail, both in inter-state relations and among various actors at different levels of governance in the EU and Turkey.

CHAPTER VII: OUTCOMES OF THE EU-TURKEY COOPERATION

I. Introduction

This chapter continues analyzing the EU-Turkey cooperation and looks into the outcomes of this cooperation in two main aspects. First, the bilateral relations are examined where Turkey had gradually gained leverage over the years and later started to exercise this influence on the EU. Second, implementing FRIT in the policy fields of humanitarian assistance, migration management, education, health, municipal infrastructure, and socio-economic support created a multi-level and multi-actor cooperation network between the EU, Turkish state, and national and international non-state actors. This uncommon and multifaceted EU-Turkey relationship between cooperation and conflict requires comprehensive exploration.

II. The Deterioration of Bilateral Relations

Müftüler-Baç (2022) states that the Syrian refugee crisis altered Turkey's already highly ambivalent relationship with the EU, emphasizing its transactional character. Before the start of the crisis, the EU-Turkey relations were in a conflictual phase, and the accession negotiations were frozen, primarily due to Turkey's degrading human rights score and decline in the rule of law and democracy in the past decades, which can be observed in the EU's yearly progress reports on Turkey.[38] Turkey's worsening score on human rights was overlooked to an extent by the EU to reach an agreement with the Turkish government.

Secondly, some instruments of the accession negotiations were carried into the EU-Turkey Statement to create a win-win situation for both sides. The proceedings of a private meeting between Erdoğan and the former president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker and former president of the European Council, Donald Tusk, during the 2015 G-20 summit was leaked to the press. In the records, Juncker stated, "*We need to remind you that the EU postponed publishing Turkey's progress report until after Turkey's general elections. We have been criticized a lot for doing this. Yes, Turkey holds the keys to solving the refugee crisis. But*

[38] If interested, please see all the progress reports of Turkey here: https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/regular-reports-turkiye-744

it would help if you were careful. If Schengen fails, Turkey can also not benefit from it. We are doing all we can to speed up the visa facilitation process and collect considerable financial aid. These are not easy decisions (Cumhuriyet, 2016b)." Considering the moral setback the EU found itself against Turkey, it is argued that Turkey is not a passive recipient of EU externalization and in negotiating with the EU over migration-related topics (İçduygu and Üstübici, 2014; Karadağ, 2019; Üstübici, 2019).

Progress reports, which had always included severe criticisms of the violation of human rights and the rule of law in Turkey, have been annually published by the European Commission since 1998. Postponing the publishing of it, considering Erdoğan could benefit from it, laid out a severe setback in the EU's respect for the norms and values it has been standing for. Examining the contemporary EU-Turkey relations and the membership aspect are beyond this study's scope, as the focus is on the cooperation between 2015 and 2020 following the Syrian refugee crisis. Nevertheless, Turkey's accession to the EU is still relevant in some parts, while the bilateral cooperation framework in migration management is discussed. An EU expert from Turkey's Interior Ministry stated that cooperation in the field of migration became an area where progress was seen in contrast to the degenerated bilateral relations:

> "*The field of migration suddenly became a key cooperation area between the EU and Turkey. In contrast to the degenerating relations in other fields like the economy, the fight against terrorism, human rights and so on, the Statement and the area of migration had been a ˊsecurity blanketˊ for both sides, where they see the progress in positive terms* (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara)."

Turkey's start of a bargaining process with the EU right before the EU-Turkey Statement came into play illustrated Turkey's active role in determining the EU's external migration policy. This proves the approaches of 'reversed conditionality' and 'migration of power' discussed under the concept of migration diplomacy in Chapter III (Paoletti, 2010; Tittel-Mosser, 2018, 2019). Turkey found itself in a position where it reversed the principle of conditionality (Dagi, 2020), a role traditionally expected of the EU in determining the conditions for Turkey's accession process. With its leverage, the Turkish government could easily blame Europe for not keeping its promises and stop committing to the 'plan' for keeping the refugees in Turkey (Camino Mortera-Martinez, 2016). This study argues that migration has become a bargaining chip for Turkey to use to increase its leverage versus the EU.

i. Bargaining over financial aid and visa facilitation

At the 2015 G-20 meeting, Turkish President Erdoğan expressed his disappointment with the EU's financial aid. He stated that Turkey does not see a reason to negotiate over a deal if the EU only gives 3 billion € for two years. He said the EU channeled 400 billion € to Greece during the economic crisis. With the same amount of money, a safe zone in Northern Syria could have been created, which could have solved the issue of the Syrian refugee crisis altogether. This proves the fact that funding is much more than a money transfer; it is a political instrument that creates opportunities for cooperation (El Qadim, 2019) as well as room for conflict. Erdoğan added, "*We might have to open the borders to Greece and Bulgaria, put the refugees in buses and send them to Europe* (Cumhuriyet, 2016a, 2016b)."

Erdoğan continued blackmailing the EU, this time in a national congress in Turkey, calling out to the public. "*We are not fools. We have been very patient, but from now on, we will do whatever is necessary. Buses and planes are waiting to send the refugees to Europe after opening our doors. Does the EU also give the same advice to other Member States? Let us send these refugees to those Member States….We have defended the rights of our citizens and Syrian refugees since the beginning of the crisis, but it is enough. We only want the EU to be sincere and keep its promises to us* (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2016)." This is an example that proves the hypothesis that if the EU cannot convert its promises into practice, Turkey's expectations from the EU will be lower, and this will negatively affect its perceptions. It might lead to less willingness to cooperate and more conflict in bilateral relations.

Examples of Turkey using leverage against the EU continued after the EU-Turkey Statement was signed. Former prime minister Ahmet Davutoğlu started to negotiate visa facilitation by linking it to implementing the readmission agreement, which was signed in 2013. "*We will apply the readmission agreement only if visa facilitation for Turkish citizens is established. If the EU does not do its part to make it happen, readmission will never take effect* (BBC News TR, 2016a)*."* Erdoğan took the bargaining a step further and asserted that " the *EU should not come up with more criteria on the matters of visa facilitation and readmission agreement. You are speaking to Turkey; we do not want any more measures* (BBC News TR, 2016c)."

The former foreign minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu put it differently and claimed that their insistence on visa facilitation is not a threat. Instead, Turkey sees it as a part of the successful

implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement. "*We will have to leave the readmission agreement if the visa facilitation is not realized. As one cannot happen without the other* (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı, 2016)." It can be argued that Turkey used both its contextual and behavioral power, as mentioned in Chapter III, to instrumentalize the issue and use it against the EU, meaning it is a tactical approach adopted by Turkey to reach its preferred outcomes. Turkey realized its importance and leverage, and the EU's dependence on Turkey in migration management during the crisis, and enforced this leverage to reach visa facilitation.[39]

In response to Turkey's bargaining efforts and threats, the EU took a significantly weaker position. Turkey did not receive any backlash or sanction from the EU for instrumentalizing the Syrian refugees as a tool. In contrast, former German Chancellor Angela Merkel informed Erdoğan that she would work to speed up the delivery of the promised financial aid (Anadolu Ajansı, 2017). While the EU held a weaker position against Turkey's coercive behavior, the 2016 coup-attempt in Turkey raised concerns over respect for human-rights and the rule of law a step further. Following the state of emergency in Turkey, the European Parliament adopted a resolution that suggested the accession negotiations with Turkey should be frozen (European Parliament, 2016).

President Erdoğan responded to the resolution by saying, *"You (the EU) panicked when 50 thousand refugees stood at the border. If you go a step further, I will open all the doors at the borders. Neither my people nor I will be affected by your threats about freezing the negotiations* (BBC News TR, 2016b)." It is questionable whether Turkey still has a strong EU membership aspiration. Yet, Erdoğan used the issue-linkage strategy to connect EU-Turkey relations and accession negotiations with his foreign policy agenda, threatening the EU once again with opening Turkey's borders.

President Erdoğan further stressed that the number of irregular migrants on the Eastern Mediterranean Route has dropped to almost zero thanks to Turkey. "*The EU has not only failed to keep its promises in return for this but also took a hostile attitude against Turkey's accession to the EU. I do not expect the EU to keep its promises to share the burden of Syrian refugees anymore* (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2017)." Once again, this continuous hostile rhetoric and open disappointment regarding the unkept promises supports the hypothesis that when the EU cannot convert its promises into practice, it will negatively affect Turkey's

[39] Turkey could not fulfill five of the requirements outlined in the Visa Facilitation Roadmap (see p.112). Despite this fact, the issue was viewed as the EU's 'unkept promise'.

perceptions, leading to more conflict in bilateral relations. The bilateral relations between the EU and Turkey continued to worsen gradually, and creating a safe zone in Syria had become the next significant issue that would potentially put the relationship into a conflictual state.

ii. Creating a safe zone in Syria

In 2019, the foreign policy shifted more deliberately into forming a safe zone in Syria where the refugees can voluntarily repatriate. President Erdoğan stated, "*The most practical way to deal with the issue of the refugee crisis is to create an area where they can go back voluntarily. I believe the EU would also support our decision to create this safe zone. If we cannot help the Syrian refugees return voluntarily, the refugees will eventually be at the door of Europe….Supporting Turkey in the creation of a safe zone means supporting the fight against terrorism and helping keep the EU's internal security* (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2019a)." In his foreign policy campaign, Erdoğan successfully linked the issue of voluntary return to creating a safe zone and fighting against terrorism in and outside the region.

Erdoğan continued to justify the cross-border operations in Syria, particularly in the city of Idlib, by saying Turkey is working to prevent a second refugee crisis. *"Turkey has carried out all its duties to solve the refugee crisis in the last eight years. However, keeping all the refugees in Turkey cannot be the only solution to the crisis; we cannot take this heavy responsibility. Let me be clear: in case of a new migration wave, Turkey will not deal with it. If we had not intervened in Idlib, around 200-400 thousand people from that region could have entered Turkey. We prevented it…..Now, if we cannot find a solution for the refugees living in Turkey, they will eventually be at the doors of Europe. I want to underline that supporting Turkey in its operations and fight against terrorism in Syria would also contribute to helping the EU protect its internal security* (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı İletişim Başkanlığı, 2019)."

Erdoğan could not find the support he expected from the EU MS for Turkey's operations in Syria. French President Emmanuel Macron saw Turkey's cross-border operation as an invasion (Reuters, 2018). Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated it was a humanitarian drama and that Turkey would not be supported in its military operation in northern Syria (Reuters, 2019). By the end of 2019, President Erdoğan increased threats against the EU with growing disappointment. During a conference of his ruling party, the Justice and Development Party, he

drew attention to the ongoing conflict with the EU and Turkey's legitimate right to protect itself from the occupying forces in Syria. He asked the EU, *" When did you ever keep your promises? If you continue to see our operation as occupation, we would easily open our borders and send 3,6 million refugees at your borders* (Euronews TR, 2019; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı, 2019b)."

Turkey continuously pursued migration-driven coercion to reach its domestic and foreign policy goals by instrumentalizing refugees as an enforcement tool. As discussed in Chapter V, Turkey had 'zero problems with neighbors' foreign policy in the 2000s that pursued good relations with the neighboring countries and the EU. Later, with the start of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2011, it implemented an 'open door policy', welcoming the refugees as 'guests'. By 2019, Turkey's changing national and foreign policy interests and political discourse had become coercive. Turkey began to build up its leverage over the EU and started a series of threats to 'open the doors to Europe'. Greenhill (2010, 2016) describes this strategy as migration-driven coercion in Chapter III, meaning that Turkey's manipulative actions could induce political, military, and economic concessions from the EU.

iii. Conflict in bilateral relations

On the 27th of February, 2020, after the killing of thirty-four Turkish soldiers in Syria's Idlib province, President Erdoğan declared that Turkey was opening its borders to Europe and stopping its prevention duties. This suddenly prompted the movement of refugees to the Turkey-Greece border. After years-long accusations and threats concerning the lack of adequate financial assistance, failed attempts at securing visa facilitation, and receiving no support for the cross-border operations in Syria, Turkey decided to exercise its leverage and send the refugees to Turkey's western border to the EU. The former minister of the Interior, Süleyman Soylu, noted that Turkey had been calling on the EU to take solid measures for over a year, but "*its calls have fallen on deaf ears* (TRT World, 2020)." Similarly, the Communications Director of the Turkish Presidency, Fahrettin Altun, defended the suspension of the Statement with more threats. *"Those who fight over what to do with a few thousand refugees dare criticize a country with 3.7 million refugees for saying "enough is enough" (*Fahrettin Altun on X (formerly known as Twitter) cited in (TRT World, 2020)."

An interviewee from the Foreign Ministry in Ankara summarized the conflict: *"We were expecting more concrete cooperation in the fight with terrorism in Syria, but the EU showed a preventive attitude towards it. Moreover, some articles of the Statement and non-migration-related political incentives were also not implemented by the EU. Hereafter, Turkey declared it could no longer fulfil its prevention commitment. This is not an encouragement policy; it is a non-prevention policy. In a cooperation where the EU does not fulfill several commitments, Turkey cannot be expected to take all the responsibility for the crisis alone (*Interview, Foreign Ministry, Ankara)*."*

The respondent from the Turkish Foreign Ministry stressed that Turkey was not encouraging refugees and migrants to move to the EU. Instead, Turkey stopped preventing their move in case they wanted to. This was decided based on the "unkept promises" of the EU, proving the hypothesis once more. If the EU cannot convert its rhetoric and promises into practice, in this case, these are the fast delivery of financial assistance, failing to realize visa facilitation, and supporting Turkey's foreign policy in Northern Syria, Turkey's expectations from the EU will be lower, negatively affecting its perceptions. This would lead to less willingness to cooperate and more conflict in bilateral relations. After Turkey opened its borders and stopped its prevention duties, the cooperation officially entered a conflictual phase between the EU and Turkey.

Chapter II of this study highlighted the importance of the cost-benefit calculation by third-countries within the context of 'policy conditionality'. According to Reslow (2012), compliance or conflict depends on four main factors: the resonance of the EU policy with national policy objectives, the administrative capacity of the third-state, the domestic costs of adopting the EU policy, and the credibility of the promises. The conflict between the EU and Turkey proves that Turkey's national and foreign policy objectives have changed to a certain extent. The electoral support for the ruling party, AKP, and the request for support for a cross-border operation in Syria became priority areas. The economic cost of hosting around four million Syrian refugees, a growing financial crisis, and the risk of losing the coming elections were becoming more significant than the Statement could offer Turkey in the short term. This proves the other hypothesis, which argues that political actors might change their perceptions of foreign or national policy if there is an emergence or increase in domestic constraints in Turkey. This might lead to a conflictual relationship with the EU.

A day after opening the borders, President Erdoğan was defending the decision. "*The EU did not keep its promise, so we opened the borders…We will not close the borders until the EU remembers to keep its promises* (Sözcü, 2020)." Meanwhile, the state's main media organ, TRT, carried the conflict into its headline: *"Turkey opened its European borders to give a jolt to European leadership that has been sleeping over the Syrian crisis from the get-go* (TRT World, 2020)." Similarly, another government-supported media channel used a headline saying, "*Turkey opened the doors, Europe got frightened: Let us give Turkey more money and keep refugees outside*." The newspaper highlighted Erdoğan's speech: "*I called the German Chancellor and said the money did not reach us. Either you send the money directly to us, or I will send all the refugees to you and send you 100 million €. Turkey cannot accept another wave of refugees* (A Haber, 2020)."

The EU reacted to the decision and agreed that Turkey is under a severe financial burden, which is understandable. However, using Syrian refugees as a political tool for oppression and blackmailing is unacceptable (Deutsche Welle, 2020a; Tokyay, 2020). Former President of the European Council, Tusk, asked Turkey not to weaponize the refugees against the EU (Deutsche Welle, 2019). Moreover, former German foreign minister Heiko Maas added: "*We must not allow refugees to be made the plaything of geopolitical interests. No matter who tries to do so, they must always expect our resistance* (Deutsche Welle, 2020b)." Despite strict underlining that using refugees as a tool is inadmissible, the EU did not develop a deterrent policy against Turkey.

The solution from the EU's side was to offer to start the dialogue and negotiations to discuss further financial aid (T24, 2019a) and update the EU-Turkey Statement. *"The whole architecture of international human rights law is shattered. All lines are being crossed. EU urgently needs another agreement with Turkey to restore respect for fundamental human rights at its borders* (Deutsche Welle, 2020d)*."* President of the European Council, Charles Michel, stressed that the EU would support any political solution which could bring about higher stability. He also expressed concern about the humanitarian situation in the city of Idlib and on the border between Turkey and Syria. He stated the EU is ready to provide support in that area (European Council, 2020). In the end, Turkey's unlawful suspension of the EU-Turkey agreement worsened the bilateral relations at the international level but did not bring negative consequences for Turkey. The tragedy at the Turkey-Greece border instrumentalized the refugees and unfolded Erdoğan's power against the EU. Erdoğan continued his threats:

"After we opened the doors, I received multiple calls saying 'close the doors'. I told them: 'it is done. It is finished. The doors are now open. Now, you (Europe) will have to take your share of the burden' (Deutsche Welle, 2020b)."

The consensus on the EU's side was to offer more financial incentives to Turkey's Erdoğan to renew the EU-Turkey Statement between the two sides (Deutsche Welle, 2020d), which proves the vulnerability of this infamous refugee deal. With this move, Erdoğan consolidated public support in domestic politics and hoped to get more financial assistance from the EU. It looks as if the EU is ready to provide this support. In his domestic and foreign policy agenda, Erdoğan made a rational move, although the mid and long-term consequences remain unknown (Deutsche Welle, 2020c).

Erdoğan's blackmailing and decision to open borders was partly to secure the trust of his electorate in Turkey, as the public opinion on hosting four million Syrian refugees has become highly damaging, which cost the ruling party, AKP, to lose the 2019 local elections. The start of an economic crisis had also been a factor in negative public opinion. "*Turkey is both a powerful and a weak country. It is strong regarding the state tradition, bureaucratical structure, and centralized governance. At the same time, it is weak in terms of economic and political instability* (Interview, UNICEF, Ankara)." Therefore, announcing that Turkey cannot host more refugees and is willing to send them either to a safe zone or the EU was a decision to impact public opinion.

The brief discussion here was used to prove how positive conditionality was turned against the EU; Turkey exercised leverage over the EU using the Syrian refugees and created a conflictual cooperation stage in bilateral relations.[40] *"I make a distinction between the political scene and the technical one. All the speeches from Erdoğan and various ministries and ministers state that the EU is not delivering fast enough and that it is not keeping its promises in the overall EU-Turkey context. Of course, all of our formal relationships fit into this context. Here, of course, I cannot talk about cooperation. The stance here is strongly negative* (Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)."

There had been increasing conflict in bilateral relations due to the change in the power relationship between the two sides. Turkey's use of leverage was partly influenced by political

[40] The discussion on the power relations between the EU and Turkey could continue further; however, it would be beyond the scope of this study to make a foreign policy analysis.

factors affecting its foreign policy decisions, including general mistrust in international actors following the 2016 coup-attempt, and the outcomes of the 2019 local elections. While the political relations between the EU and Turkey constantly worsened since the EU-Turkey Statement and entered into a conflictual phase by February 2020, the cooperation mechanism FRIT, which was initiated with the agreement of the Statement, continued to function at the various levels of governance in Turkey. This is not to say that this conflictual relationship and the crisis environment in bilateral relations did not affect FRIT cooperation. The degenerating political relations brought up many challenges in the field, but sectoral functional cooperation has continued to work, which is worth examining in the next section.

III. Unintended Consequences: Functional Cooperation at the Technical Level

i. FRIT coordination mechanism in Turkey

Cooperation with Turkey is often stated to be a notable example of the EU's external migration policy and operations in Turkey. This is firstly due to the geographical position of Turkey, which made it both a destination and a transit country in the Syrian refugee crisis. Turkey's geographical position and importance are among the strategic contextual factors discussed in Chapter III. As Criekinge (2009) asserted earlier, in times of conflict and crisis management, politically influential third-countries in the region are expected to hold a more favorable position to exercise leverage vis-à-vis the EU due to their geopolitical position. "*Turkey's geographical position plays a huge role; it is at the door of Europe, in contrast to Jordan or Lebanon (*Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels*)*." Turkey is geographically positioned in a critical place not only for the EU's external migration policy but also for international migration governance.*"Turkey is geographically in a very key place, so there has been a need to support cooperation in managing migration. From the perspective of IOM, to materialize the targets in global migration governance, Turkey must be supported* (Interview, IOM, Ankara)."

Turkey, in addition to its geographical position, differs from other countries in the region due to its centralized state structure and prior history with the EU on accession negotiations:

"Turkey is accepted as a special case for the EU under the EU-Turkey cooperation mechanism. First, it is a candidate country for the EU, so it already has had a different relationship. It is

different from the Middle East region and the Balkans. It is different in terms of its size and historical and cultural ties. Everything is interlinked.....We often criticize Turkey on other grounds, but it is still a more developed country with a functioning, well-organised administration, so it faces this crisis better. These features are not even comparable with Jordan and Lebanon. At the beginning of the crisis, we wanted to include Turkey in regional projects with other countries. But because of all these differences I just counted, it had no added value. So we decided to separate Turkey from regional projects for its own needs and differences (Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)."

The EU representatives at the Delegation in Ankara and DG ECHO in Brussels often compare Turkey with two other refugee-hosting countries, Jordan and Lebanon, pointing out that Turkey stands out from these comparisons. "*Turkey is unique because the government is more powerful than Lebanon and Jordan, which also host many Syrian refugees. Turkey's governmental capacity is better, and Turkey has the advantage of having a strong state culture. There is no standardization in every sector and field, but policymaking and implementation are much better structured than in all Neighborhood countries.* (Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara)." The state tradition and its previous ties with the EU regarding standardization and reformation processes have positively impacted cooperation.

The state structure determines the level of relationship between the EU and Turkish counterparts."*While we assist Turkey in migration management, we rely on the Turkish government and its policies. We advocate whenever we can, but we are dealing with an independent state here. For instance, in Kosovo, we have more freedom to act as we wish. In Turkey, however, we have a relationship with the Turkish state at the same level* (Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)." The EU representatives at the Delegation confirm this opinion and state that *"there is stronger ownership of the Turkish side in crisis management. Large interventions are given to Turkish institutions for management. The situation is so unique that perhaps instead of using 'Europeanization of Turkey's migration policy', the term 'Turkization of the EU's external migration policy' might be used in this case. It means projects are formulated following the policies developed by Turkish authorities at first* (Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara)." The term 'Turkization of the EU's external migration policy' mentioned by the interviewee in the EU Delegation might seem like an exaggeration; however, what is emphasized here is that the EU depends on Turkey's approval and permission for all the actions and operations under FRIT mechanism.

This contradicts with the EU's cooperation with Morocco, as discussed in Chapter II under Mobility Partnerships, where the Moroccan government held no responsibility for initiatives carried out in EU projects. As Kerr (1976) cited in (Reslow, 2019c) argues, sometimes the authorizing agent differs from the implementing one. In the case of the EU and Turkey, Turkey has as much authorization and implementation power as the EU as an agent. This makes it different from cases where the EU mainly carries out projects alone, like Morocco or Kosovo. The interviewee from the Turkish ministry was also strict about emphasizing Turkey's independent state culture. "*We only want support from the EU; they cannot govern the process independently. This is not an African country (*Interview, Ministry of Health, Ankara)."

According to the interviews with EU agencies and Turkish ministries, the EU-Turkey cooperation differs from the EU's third-country relations in the Balkans, Middle East and Africa. Turkey's geopolitical location, bureaucratical and centralized state architecture, and the bilateral exchange with the EU shape the relationship between the EU and Turkey in migration management. Furthermore, other interviewees stated that Turkey and FRIT as coordination mechanism are unique and cannot be seen in any other forms of the EU's externalization tools. "*Turkey represents a whole different paradigm in the history of forced displacement and migration. It is a unique paradigm; it is challenging, and this paradigm has to be constantly re-evaluated. Cooperation and the coordination mechanism among these actors, the government of Turkey, the EU, the UN, and NGOs are also unique within this cooperation model* (Interview, GIZ, Ankara)." FRIT model in Turkey has become a unique model of managing forced displacement.

Similarly, the EU Delegation in Ankara states that the EU Facility does not consider its work in Turkey as part of a general 'migration policy' but a 'refugee policy'. The experience aligns with its external migration policy, yet still differs from any other EU external migration practices *(*Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara)." Relevantly*,* another Delegation respondent referred to FRIT coordination mechanism as ´unique´: "*The operation of the EU Facility in Turkey is unique; it has no guidelines and is not guided by any previous EU experience or model. The Facility has a unique position in Turkey; this practice is beyond pre-accession policies. It is a first-case scenario for the EU and Turkey* (Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara)*."*

As a result, this study argues that FRIT stands out as a unique cooperation mechanism as it is a new cooperation model, which brings a new challenge to the field of forced displacement, and a different relationship between the EU and Turkey has not been observed. This cooperation

has resulted in specific unintended findings within the framework of this study. The following sections discuss the impact of the collaboration on the institutional transformation in Turkey and the multi-level cooperation among different levels of agencies while touching upon challenges and issue areas stemming from the EU's operation and Turkey's domestic difficulties.

ii. The institutional transformation

Chapter II previously stated that the EU started to focus on sector-specific cooperation and its transformative effects on its external relations with third-countries (Lavenex, 2014). Here, the cooperation follows an institutional logic, and the level of analysis is the policy sector. The approach is process-oriented and concerned with rules and practices in specific sectoral areas (Freyburg *et al.*, 2015). In this cooperation framework, the scope of interaction is sectoral, the logic of interaction is functional, and the actors involved in the process are sectoral bureaucracies in the Commission administrations, regulatory agencies, international organizations, and non-state actors (Lavenex, 2004). FRIT cooperation mechanism and its transformative institutional effect on the migration sector in Turkey serve as a fitting example of these arguments.

As stated in the earlier theoretical chapters, institutional factors like the capacity to develop and implement policies, necessary expertise and experience in a policy field, institutional memory, adequate human resources, technical resources, and institutional culture can influence the relationship between the EU and third-country. Third-countries are constrained in cooperation if they lack adequate institutional capacity. FRIT cooperation proves this argument to a certain extent. The cooperation resulted in an institutional and legal transformation in Turkey. First of all, the influence of EU funding can be observed in the transformation of the human resources capacity of institutions, ministries, and non-governmental organizations. Over the years, more staff was recruited in the ministries and trained for migration management and project implementation roles under FRIT, representing a strategic change (Interview, UNICEF, Ankara).

A ministry respondent agrees and states, "*The EU financial assistance and FRIT mechanism greatly affect the training of the staff in the ministries. The key experts from Brussels positively impact the human resources in all Turkish state agencies to a great extent* (Interview, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Ankara)."

The EU funding has notably played a critical role in helping the institutional development of non-governmental organizations, strengthening their accountability. Small associations, like the Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM), a widely-known Turkish NGO, became almost a company through institutional and legal development and an increasing number of employees through the EU cooperation framework (Interview, Turkish University, Izmir). Similarly, a Turkish NGO representative states that migration management became a sector on its own in Turkey after the start of FRIT:

> "*Migration management became a sector in Turkey after the Syrian refugee crisis. The new understanding of developing and implementing migration projects moved the focus from idealism and voluntariness in migration studies to a more industry-understanding based on financial gains.....We learned so much while working with DG-ECHO. For instance, both the EU and United Nations agencies require us to have a code of conduct and a protection guidelines chart with transparency and accountability. These are not complex expectations; however, you must learn and acquire experience to prepare for these necessities. Thanks to the EU and international organisations, Turkish NGOs have evolved into medium-sized organizations. This accumulation of knowledge could even help us to be an international organization in the future* (Interview, IGAM, Ankara)."

The EU funding in migration management contributed to the accumulation of experience and knowledge in human resources, youth employment, and the strengthening of civil society throughout this process. The area of migration in Turkey became a separate sector, almost an industry. The EU has applied a capacity-building approach within this new sector, referred to as institutional change by the Turkish state.*"We have a capacity-building approach; the objective is to bring the sector closer to the EU practices and to cooperate in an aligned and harmonized way with the EU. Capacity-building is a complementary approach; the EU Facility has more actions directly targeting refugees rather than Turkish institutions, but Turkish institutions are also supported along the way* (Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)."

Formerly known as the Directorate General for Migration Affairs (DGMM), the Presidency for Migration Management is now the best result of this 'complementary capacity-building approach'. It was established under the Ministry of Interior with the Law on Foreigners and International Protection in 2013 to deal with migration affairs. IOM Ankara asserts, "*DGMM and the migration management challenges were all new when the crisis started. So, all the human resources in this area were quite inexperienced. General training became essential. It turned into a more focused, tailor-made, advanced level of training over time* (Interview, International Organization for Migration, Ankara)."

The interviewee from DG ECHO stated that when he joined the EU Delegation Ankara in 2014, there was inadequate coordination on the Turkish side. DGMM was officially in the lead, and it was a weak institution. *"We could not cooperate effectively; it was difficult. But of course, this was due to entirely understandable reasons. We cannot, even now in 2019, expect the same from DGMM as we expected from other counterparts in the Member States around 15 years ago.* (Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)." Both the refugee crisis and the institution dealing with migration management were too new to cooperate and coordinate efficiently.

Relevantly, the interviewee from IOM asserted that DGMM, which holds the primary mandate of migration in Turkey, is still very young, both as an institution and with its staff. At the same time, the caseload and workload are huge. *"Now that UNHCR is no longer dealing with the resettlement procedures of Syrian refugees, this is the duty of DGMM's young staff. Even UNHCR had a huge pending caseload; now, DGMM will deal with it. Thus, Turkey needs support in terms of numbers and skills.....The institution's cohesion or commitment may be negatively affected when you consider this young generation with a huge caseload and workload. It is also quite possible that we can see changes in the personnel, depending on the career perspective of the young staff, whether they want to continue to work in this area or not* (Interview, International Organization for Migration, Ankara)." It is essential to support the young personnel in DGMM so that they do not get overwhelmed with the caseload and embrace their positions within the institution for long-term success in migration cooperation and coordination.

The cooperation and FRIT projects have supported the capacity-building of Turkish and non-state institutions. However, this support has to continue for the sustainability of the field and the transfer of experience from current staff to those who will follow them. *"Turkey is now developing a working culture in the field of migration. In the field, many state agencies now*

have a horizontal working platform. There are still some deficiencies in the coordination, but there is a slow and constant growth of this working culture among the line ministries (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara)." Previously, Turkish bureaucracy did not have a culture of accountability and lacked a strategic vision in migration management (Interview, UNICEF, Ankara). This has been improving together with FRIT cooperation mechanism.

Not only DGMM but also other Turkish ministries have benefited from the capacity-building trainings FRIT has been providing. *"Turkish institutions are learning a lot, and there has been continuous support from the EU's side to DGMM. This is also true for other Turkish institutions, such as the Turkish Employment Agency. Thanks to FRIT projects, they now have a more structural system.* (Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara)*."* This also benefits international organizations, especially the UN bodies, that work with Turkish ministries on FRIT projects. "*In terms of international standards, there is now a baseline. All the relevant migration experts now have a standard level of knowledge. Also, the staff can use and refresh their knowledge through trainings and printed or online documents. This is crucial for all capacity-building projects* (Interview, IOM, Ankara)." The standardization in the field of migration management benefits the cooperation between the Turkish ministries and international organizations operating in Turkey.

Last but not least, FRIT is argued to have contributed to youth unemployment in Turkey to a certain extent; university graduates are finding opportunities to work in the field of migration. "*FRIT projects created significant human resources in the area of migration management. Turkey has a problem with youth unemployment, and the projects enabled young graduates to work on projects and gain a lot of experience through them. This group of young people can be influential in policy-making in the future, which is a significant gain for the country* (Interview, Turkish University, Izmir)."

Therefore, FRIT has contributed to the capacity-building of the line-ministries and national NGOs and enabled employment in a developing migration sector with a baseline and standardization to a considerable degree. This confirms the views on the EU's sectoral functional cooperation and sectoral integration, which refers to the institutionalization of cooperation with a third-country through task-specific policy networks and sector-specific institutions (Zeilinger, 2011), which was discussed in Chapter II. FRIT cooperation created an inter-agency cooperation at the operational level. With the complementary capacity-building approach, the EU has helped Turkish ministries and local NGOs build a working culture of

accountability, transparency, and know-how regarding the experience, skills, and practical knowledge of the personnel working in the sector. The figure below summarizes the unintended outcomes of FRIT cooperation mechanism.

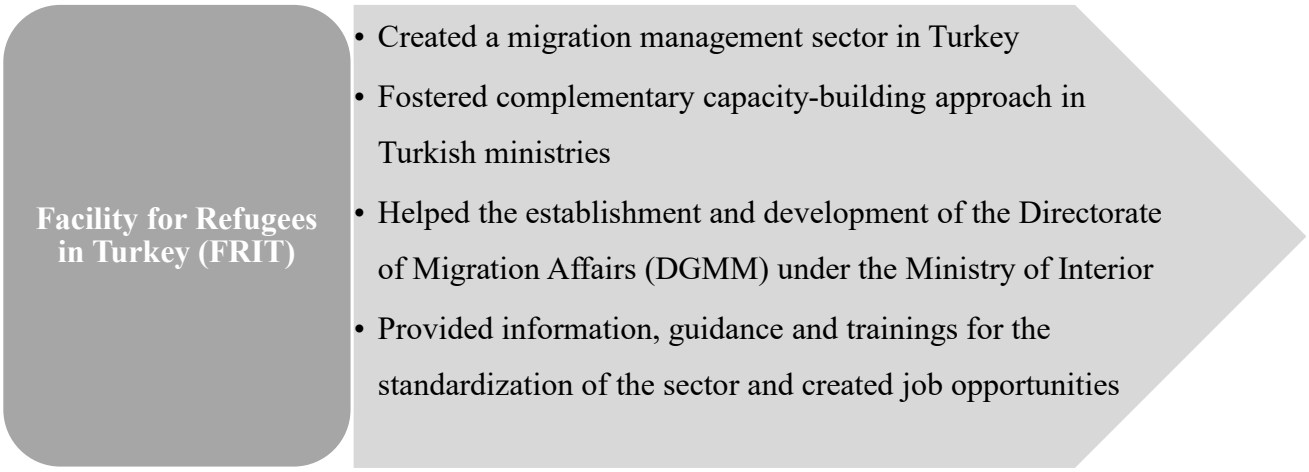

Figure VI: Unintended Outcomes of FRIT in the Migration Sector

The EU-Turkey cooperation and its unintended consequences in the migration sector have become particularly interesting since the EU did not directly target the Turkish institutions with this cooperation framework. FRIT cooperation was created to address the Syrian refugees and affected host communities and assist Turkish institutions in migration management. This assistance has turned into an inter-agency complementary capacity-building approach, where the cooperation followed an institutional logic, and the process was concerned with rules and practices in specific sectoral areas. The following section goes into more detail, explores the institutional relationship in these specific sectoral areas and different layers of governance, and looks into the extent of multi-level cooperation among agencies.

iii. FRIT and multi-level cooperation

There is a consensus that FRIT funds have supported the creation of a vibrant migration sector in Turkey (Sert and Alparslan, 2022). As mentioned earlier in Chapter II, the implementation of FRIT has created a constructive public space of cooperation between European actors, Turkish stakeholders, and international organizations (Kirişçi, 2021). Due to the centralized

system in Turkey that the interviewees emphasized in the previous section, each actor, the EU, UN agencies, or NGOs, has to contact Turkey's central government to get permission to operate in the field. This created numerous links between the central government and other actors at different governance layers while implementing FRIT projects.

This cooperation in public space resembles multi-level governance, where power is distributed among the actors. Reslow (2019b) stated that the diffusion of power mainly attributed the power to the supranational and subnational actors like EU institutions, Member State governments, and regional and local authorities. In this picture of a multi-level governance system, third-countries have been missing. As a non-EU country, this study finds that Turkey has become an essential actor in migration management, collaborating with the European Commission, member states (MS), and international and local authorities. However, a diffusion or shift of power among actors was not observed, mainly due to the nature of the EU's relations with non-EU countries and Turkey's centralized state structure, which does not allow for authority transfer and power distribution.

For this reason, the study agrees with the view of Stephenson (2013) cited in (Panizzon, 2019b), who asserts that not every single terminology of 'multi-policy, multi-actor, or multi-level' implies governance. There can be multi-level cooperation frameworks and multi-actor schemes that lack the transfer of power and authority associated with governance. The term multi-level cooperation can be used to describe the interaction among different actors instead of the term 'governance'. The EU Delegation in Ankara also highlighted the fact that their presence as a Facility operating in Turkey is only for assistance purposes and not governance (Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara).

a) Cooperation among EU, Turkish and international state and non-state actors

Among the links between EU and Turkish actors in a multi-level setting, cooperation between the EU and Turkish line ministries is perceived as positive. *"Turkish authorities are doing a good job. In our official dialogue as the EU, we always stress that Turkey has made commendable efforts. We have good examples of cooperation and good practices.....We cooperate well, depending on the field and personal relations...The EU Delegation has a good place in this coordination mechanism* (Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)."

The EU expert in a Turkish ministry agrees with the good relations at the technical level. "*One of the complementary working examples has been among DG ECHO, DG NEAR, and the Ministry of Health. The ´SIHHAT Project´*[41] *is the outcome of this collaboration; it is an example of good cooperation* (Interview, Ministry of Health, Ankara)."

When it comes to the relationship between the Turkish state and leading international organizations, like the United Nations and its bodies, the relationship has become more functional and less bureaucratic over time. The IOM representative states*, "Whatever we do, we do it with the central government. In the beginning, our relationship was very bureaucratic. After five or six years, the government built some thrust on us....When dealing with the municipality over the governor, you do not always need to go to the central level for a small project. You must keep the government informed about what is happening; the bureaucracy is much less than before* (Interview, IOM, Ankara)." This increased the interaction between IOs and central government and led to a more rapid and effective project implementation phase.

The impact of FRIT on the relationship between NGOs and other actors was also positive. FRIT helped NGOs build cooperation frameworks with other actors.*"Together with the migration cooperation framework, we have developed good relations with Turkish authorities, the EU, local and foreign non-state actors, and municipalities* (Interview, Support to Life/Hayata Destek, Istanbul)." International organizations like IOM and GIZ started cooperating with local governments and civil society and supporting them:

"In the cities of Istanbul and Kilis, we partner with civil society. These are places where we did not have a presence before but were highly needed. Our main partners are local authorities and municipalities. Since 2015, we have worked with local authorities in any project we implement, either at the municipality or community stabilization levels. We collaborate with the governor and sub-governor in the municipality, as they are the first respondents in the field....With our approach, we support municipalities and teach them how to manage the situation in the future. (Interview, IOM, Ankara)."

Another migration expert from IOM confirms the previous argument and adds on the inclusive aspect of FRIT mechanism, *"As long as we have active projects, there is regular communication with all state and non-state actors. Previously, when a law was drafted in*

[41] SIHHAT is the name of the EU-funded project aimed at improving Syrian refugees' access to healthcare services and supporting the employment of Syrian healthcare workers in the Turkish healthcare system. For details, please see: *http://www.sihhatproject.org/*

Turkey, it was unlikely to include non-state actors. However, NGOs, civil society, and academia became very much involved in the law-making process after the refugee crisis. They started to get invited to all the meetings in the ministries (Interview, IOM, Ankara)."

Regarding the financial aspect, the Turkish NGOs stress that EU funding became vital to their survival: *"The EU has become the biggest economic source for us. It plays a vital role in improving right-based non-governmental organizations working in the migration field. Suppose you take the EU out of the migration management in Turkey. In that case, most NGOs will collapse because Turkey does not have a system of developing and supporting NGOs through these projects* (Interview, IGAM, Ankara)." Thus, FRIT also supported the survival of local NGOs and cooperation with other actors.

To conclude, FRIT cooperation and collaboration mechanism enabled a system of multi-level cooperation in Turkey to a certain extent. Despite the degenerating EU-Turkey relations and the conflict at the international level of politics, which was discussed earlier in this Chapter, FRIT cooperation tool and the projects in different fields set up good relations and an inclusive working environment between the EU and Turkish ministries, Turkish ministries and NGOs, the EU and local actors, the international organizations and municipalities. This multi-level relationship would not have been feasible without an umbrella cooperation structure to support Syrian refugees and host societies in Turkey. FRIT united all different actors at the technical and operational levels in the sector. In this sense, the operationalization of FRIT cooperation is a unique practice in EU-Turkey relations.

"The field of migration is of key importance in our relationship. Suppose you look at the EU's progress reports. In that case, the only area where Turkey shows progress is the field of migration, while the relationship in all the other fields of security, fight with terrorism, and the economy constantly goes bad. The EU and Turkey focus on maintaining a good relationship in migration management (Interview, Presidency of Migration Management, Ankara*)*." Finding out that good relations are observed among actors at the operational level while there is a conflict and deadlock at the international level between the EU and Turkey proves the hypothesis that when the relationship between the EU and Turkey at the bilateral level is in conflict, the cooperation between the EU and Turkish counterparts, international and non-governmental organizations, would continue to function (*H3*). This does not mean that the cooperation and the relations among different actors in this field are impeccable. There have

been many challenges, and some remain relevant to this date. The following section discusses the main challenges in cooperation.

iv. The challenges hindering cooperation

a) Turkey's centralized and bureaucratic state structure

The first factor affecting cooperation negatively, especially with IOs and NGOs, has been the policy-making process in Turkey, which is very centralized. *"Turkish bureaucracy cannot decide and take action very quickly; it cannot take the initiative. This makes the process slower.* (Interview, UNICEF, Ankara)." Another issue related to the bureaucratic limitations is that it is hard to see the reflections of policies determined at the local level and later at the state level of policy-making. Due to this high level of bureaucracy, sometimes the needs at the local level keep waiting for a long time for a response (Interview, IOM, Ankara). The NGOs further mention the limiting role of the bureaucratic state tradition: *"The state always has a crucial role. Even as a successful NGO, you have limits in authority and enforcement. We need a holistic understanding of working together in Turkey to allow sustainability in the projects' achievements (*Interview, Support to Life/Hayata Destek, Istanbul)."

Turkey's central state structure and the high-level bureaucracy were once again mentioned as a challenge for the cooperation to function effectively:

> *"If you have to do an intervention in the city of Hatay, you should not ideally wait six months for permission at the national level; there should have been a channel. In humanitarian response, this is generally called the 'anticipated decision', where you set up channels and mechanisms that allow these big interventions in time...Local actors and municipalities are political entities in a centralized political system, which could enable these channels. The city of Urfa, for example, had a massive response mechanism, but the central structure constrained it. Other cities like Kilis, Hatay, and Gaziantep have the same story. The power of local actors had been minimal due to Turkey's centralized system* (Interview, GIZ, Ankara)."

b) The emergency of the setting of forced displacement

The second challenge was the sudden emergence of the refugee crisis in Turkey, where there was no prior experience of forced displacement of this size. *"It has been difficult to support institutions without understanding the forced displacement response. In any country like Turkey, forced displacement is a new setting. The knowledge of it was very limited. All state agencies had limited work experience in forced displacement. Local and international staff capacity development and training in dealing with the Turkish response set-up have been very time-consuming. Internally, human resources investment has been immense at the community and local levels to overcome this* (Interview, GIZ, Ankara)."

Moreover, the state institutions were not equipped with the capacity to deal with the requirements of migration management at the beginning of FRIT mechanism. "*There has been a capacity issue at the ministries in general. The staff was unaware of the implementation and monitoring parts of the EU projects in migration management. There has been a functional problem in ministries, where the staff cannot lead or coordinate the projects* (Interview, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Ankara)." Relevantly, the real challenge has been the large volume of money and the limited capacity of institutions to absorb these funds. There was little understanding among the Turkish, EU, UN, and other bilateral actors on the effective implementation of the funds. There were so many layers in the Turkish political context, which were not very reliable in transparency and accountability, and there was no set-up for the short-term needs and responses (Interview, GIZ, Ankara).

c) Working culture of the Turkish and EU institutions

Another criticism of the Turkish ministries' institutional culture suggests that these institutions do not share any experience and information with each other, although they operate in the same political system and sometimes deal with somewhat similar projects. *"Proper communication and dialogue between Turkish state institutions are missing in the cooperation. They fail to determine a standard method, do not learn from each other, and forget to share experiences. Although different institutions operate in various fields and sectors, migration management operations and processes are similar* (Interview, Ministry of Health, Ankara)*."* The lack of communication among Turkish line- ministries prevents lesson learning, causes the repeating of the projects, and lowers efficiency. Similarly, an expert from the Ministry of Labor and

Social Security states that *"there needs to be a systematic coordination structure within and among Turkish ministries, which has been lacking so far* (Interview, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Ankara)."

Unlike the previous criticisms of Turkish institutions' working culture, it is argued that the EU sometimes fails to understand or acknowledge the Turkish socio-political context. *"Turkey is no longer in an emergency situation nor a regular developing country. We are talking about an emerging economy that went through several shocks, especially in the last decade. And here is where I think it is essential to understand the context better* (Interview, GIZ, Ankara)." The Ministry respondent adds to this and states, "*The EU Delegation, DG ECHO, and Brussels do not have a comprehensive knowledge of the Turkish context, particularly the context of the Turkish health system. This is why there are sometimes problems in project implementation (*Interview, Ministry of Health, Ankara)." The interviewee from DG ECHO acknowledges this criticism and states:

> "*Most of our cooperation is at the central level in Ankara since Turkey is a highly centralized state. Because of this structure, it is sometimes difficult to work with local authorities, municipalities, etc., in the Turkish national context, but this is a frame we all need to understand (*Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)."

Another EU expert from GIZ similarly stated that the EU sometimes fails to acknowledge the contextual characteristics of countries they are operating in:

"The EU prefers a remote-management structure, with a function called 'country focal point'. This kind of organizational structure creates problems. Within the Turkish context, it is hard to reach out to staff at Turkish institutions who can speak fluent English. As the country focal point cannot communicate due to this capacity problem, the implementation process slows down.... Another example is the QUDRA project. Turkey was included in this project with other countries in the region. However, since Turkey's state structure is highly different than Jordan's and Lebanon's, the efficiency of the project remained very low (Interview, GIZ, Ankara)."

On the one hand, continuing capacity-building efforts, lack of information, and experience sharing with each other constitute the biggest challenges for Turkish institutions in FRIT project management. On the other hand, the EU is having problems when it disregards the Turkish political context, bureaucratic procedures, relations, historical context, cultural sensitivities,

and so on and structure because, in project implementation, Turkey's own working culture is more determinative than the rules and regulations written on the projects. It is an area where the EU can learn how different the third-country characteristics are and that 'one size does not fit all', meaning the EU has to make an effort to understand better contextual particularities of each country it is cooperating with.

d) Domestic developments in Turkey

Last but not least, one severe other challenge affecting EU-Turkey cooperation in the field has been Turkey's political developments and volatile environment, especially the 2016 coup attempt and the aftermath. The 2016 coup-attempt, the subsequent modifications in the ministries, and the changes in the political system have been the primary sources of instability in the post-2015 era, which were briefly discussed in Chapter V (p.86) under the heading of domestic constraints and developments.

> "*The coup attempt negatively affected our cooperation, especially with the line Ministries. We had to start from scratch after the coup attempt and the reshuffling in the Ministries last summer. We have to build trust again and show we are reliable and trustworthy. This is achieved only after several exchanges* (Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)."

In the aftermath of the coup-attempt, numerous changes took place within Turkey's political climate, and new institutions were established. An interviewee from GIZ states that these institutional changes created a blurred understanding of roles, responsibilities, principles, standards, and procedures. "*All these started a lot of confusion because there was no leading mechanism. There is now finally a set-up, which is a central coordination mechanism. It is a reset, a reboot. The Syrian response in Turkey had several reboots. First, various international partners were pulled in, and then, there was more national, Turkish-based ownership. Turkish institutions underwent such a significant change, and together with the people that changed, the institutional memory disappeared* (Interview, GIZ, Ankara)."

This time, an EU expert from the Turkish Ministry points out the sustainability problem due to the political changes: "*The projects we have been conducting are directly affected by domestic politics, general and local elections, changes in the system, and so on. Even the name of the Ministry where I work has changed after recent developments. Maybe it will change again in*

*the near future. How would it be possible to develop a long-term perspective in this uncertainty? (*Interview, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Ankara)."

NGOs have been complaining about a similar problem: losing the contacts they have been building trust with since the start of the Syrian refugee crisis. *"After the coup attempt, we lost many contacts with whom we have developed good communication and understanding. There is extensive circulation at the state institutions. All our work was on hold while we tried to develop new ties with the new staff* (Interview, Support to Life/Hayata Destek, Istanbul)."

*"The coup-attempt and the fear and suspicion afterwards harmed the working of international NGOs, especially the unregistered ones. The state's trust towards bigger international organizations like UN or GIZ is much higher than that of smaller NGOs (*Interview, GIZ, Ankara)." Similarly, the respondent from the EU Delegation confirmed that working with NGOs became a challenge after the coup-attempt. "*The post-coup environment made it harder for civil society to engage in Turkey. The amount of funding is huge, so the big projects are for bigger NGOs to manage. Other NGOs are targeted more through the UN Agencies. Direct cooperation has become more difficult. Therefore, the cooperation with the NGOs has been affected by the general situation in Turkey* (Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara)."

Overall, it is crucial to say that all actors taking part in the cooperation framework mentioned the coup-attempt in Turkey, especially its aftermath, starting with the state of emergency as the most significant challenge hindering the cooperation. The coup-attempt was an unexpected development in which the Turkish state had to take measures in an urgent matter, and it caused mistrust, re-shuffling, and miscommunication among European and Turkish counterparts in ministries, international organizations, and civil society. After the coup attempt, the presidential system in 2018 has also brought a change, but this time more positively, according to certain interview partners:

> *"The state structure in Turkey has changed a lot after 2015. I have worked in this position for four years, and I do not know how many coordinators have changed during this time. First, the main coordinator of migration management was The Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), and then DGMM took over. Then, the coordination moved to the Prime Minister's Office when former foreign-minister Davutoğlu was still in office. They had a more coordinated approach, and having one counterpart helped us. Our job/role was not to mingle in internal fights that can occur*

between the Ministries. Then, of course, change in the Presidential system had consequences. We had new people, a new set-up, and new teams. We had a new system every six months in the last four years, which was pretty difficult. We are now working with Fuat Oktay at the Presidency and his team, which we knew before from AFAD. It is helpful to have a single counterpart (Interview, DG ECHO, Brussels)."

The regime change was found positive among the EU agencies and IOs to a certain degree, as it brought some version of stability to the system, through which actors found it easier to cooperate. *"The start of the presidential system and the establishment of the Presidency was a relief for us in an administrative sense. Finally, there was a mechanism above all line ministries that could grant us the right to start what we want to do with the projects (*Interview, GIZ, Ankara)". Or, as the interviewee from the Delegation in Ankara suggests, *"Political changes in the structure affect our practices. Contacting the Vice Presidency has become easier and more effective with the presidential system. It speeded up the process. However, it also caused delays in policy implementation, mostly due to permissions. There have been coordination delays in the transition process (*Interview, EU Delegation, Ankara)." The reason why the Presidential system was perceived positively was merely because it brought some form of institutional stability in cooperation.

The overall consensus on the challenges impacting the cooperation progress can be summed as three main issue areas: the bureaucratic state structure that slows down the policy-making and implementation, the capacity insufficiency together with lack of experience and knowledge in state agencies, the EU's failure of acknowledging the Turkish context in its relationship, and the reshuffling of state institutions, losing the institutional memory after the coup-attempt, and lacking an institutional leading mechanism in the aftermath. The consequences of the coup-attempt were the most mentioned issue, damaging FRIT cooperation among EU institutions, IOs, and NGOs. The Turkish ministries partly refrained from commenting on the consequences of the coup-attempt. The regime change was perceived as a relief to an extent, providing a constant and stable counterpart, the Presidency, for all international and national non-state actors.

IV. Causal Mechanisms of Conflictual Cooperation

Chapter VI and VII analyzed the EU-Turkey cooperation in two different aspects. It first examined the degeneration of bilateral relations. It found out that Turkey used its leverage over the EU, taking advantage of the issues of financial aid and visa facilitation for Turkish citizens and creating a safe zone in Syria with the support of the EU. The conflict encountered in February 2020, when Turkey suspended its prevention duties, resulted from Turkey's growing contextual and perceptional influence over the EU. Turkey used the tools of migration diplomacy, namely migration-driven coercion, to reach its broader foreign policy goals in its bilateral relations and the region, using the vulnerabilities of the situation created by the Syrian refugee crisis. Hence, the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis empowered Turkey against the EU in its cooperation in migration management, and the cooperation achieved a deadlock in February 2020.

Secondly, the same instrumentalization and the cooperation framework, FRIT, initiated a multi-level inter-agency cooperation between the EU and Turkey, operating in many policy fields and attempting to assist Syrian refugees and affected host communities. The chapter concluded that the operation of the Facility in Turkey is considered unique as a first-ever institutional engagement and interaction developed among the EU Delegation, Turkish ministries, international organizations, and civil society. The institutional interaction created operational cooperation (Dimitriadi *et al.*, 2018), which refers to sectoral functional cooperation that was discussed in Chapter II. An inter-agency cooperation was established through networks and institutions developed between the EU and Turkey at the operational level. This points out a degree for multi-level collaboration in EU-Turkey relations.

The main finding of the analysis is, therefore, the following: while the bilateral relations were deteriorating, FRIT cooperation mechanism has continued to function effectively to a certain extent among EU agencies, Turkish counterparts, international organizations, and civil society. Ultimately, the causal mechanism points out the concurrent existence of conflict (*Outcome I*) and cooperation (*Outcome II*) in EU-Turkey relations. Figure VII below presents the causality followed to explore the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement and its impact on EU-Turkey relations. It offers a sufficient explanation of two different outcomes happening simultaneously within the EU-Turkey cooperation framework.

After reviewing the relevant literature on the externalization and securitization of the EU's external migration policy and EU-Turkey cooperation, categorizing and interpreting the primary and secondary data on MAXQDA and analyzing the frequently discussed issue areas in the data set, this study comes up with a causal mechanism of the EU-Turkey cooperation between 2011 and 2020 based on the explaining-outcome process-tracing explained in the methodology Chapter IV. Bennett and Elman (2009) stated that process-tracing is a within-case analysis that closely looks at the observable implications of explanations over time for a historical event or outcome. Likewise, Collier (2011) asserted that it is the systemic examination of the selected outcome, an analysis, and an analytic tool for drawing descriptive and causal inferences from this evidence.

Taking into the basic premises of the process-tracing account, this dissertation explores the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis by the EU and Turkey, which refers to the attempts to use Syrian refugees to persuade or constrain the other actors to realize domestic or foreign policy, as a starting point, and the conflictual cooperation reached in February 2020 in EU-Turkey relations as an outcome. Explaining outcome process-tracing is employed to fill out the causal mechanisms between these two main phenomena. Congruent with the research question of this dissertation, *"How does the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis affect EU-Turkey cooperation*?" the following causal design is generated.

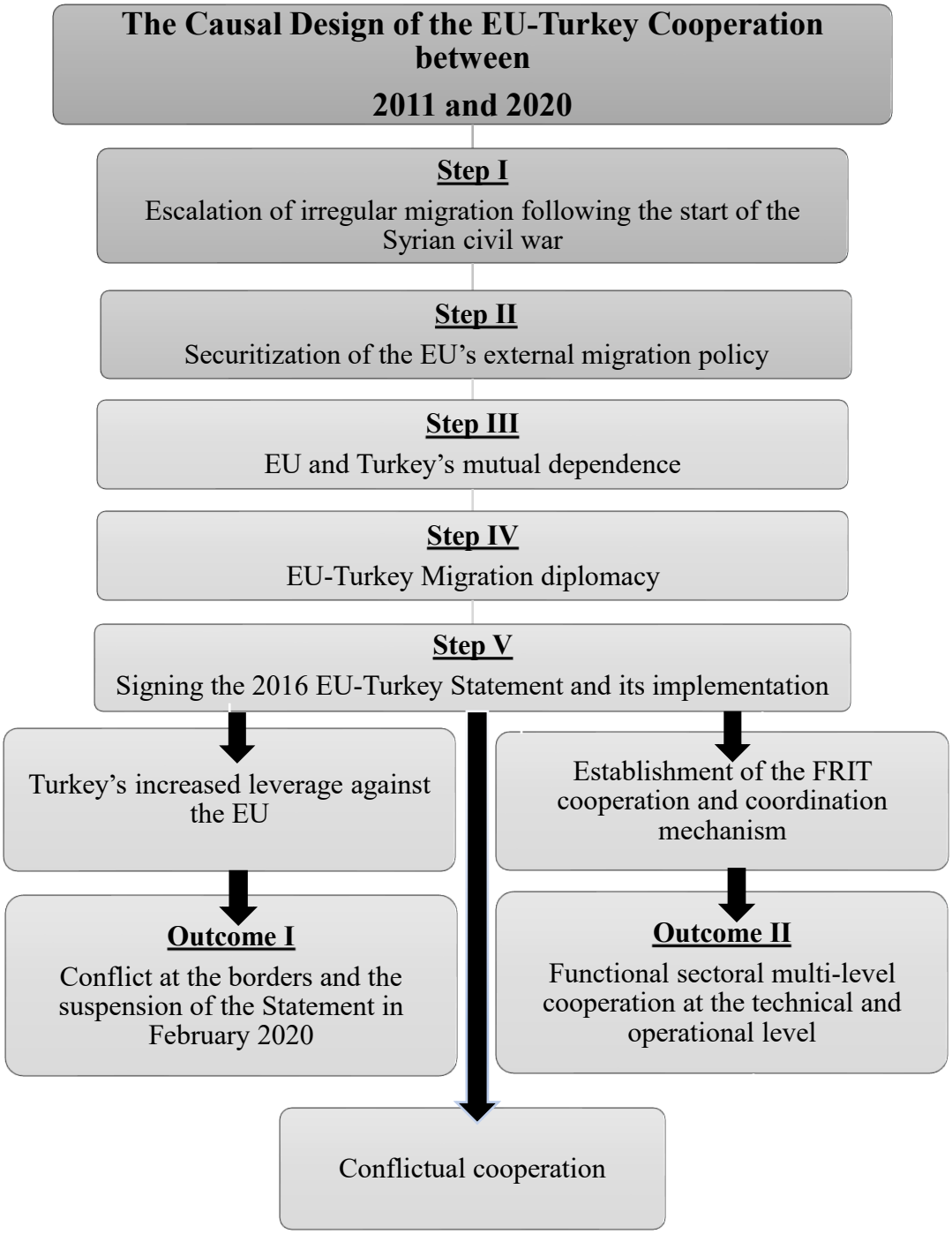

Figure VII: The Causal Design of EU-Turkey Cooperation between 2011 and 2020[42]

According to this figure on the causal mechanisms, the start of the Syrian civil war and the following forced displacement and irregular migration constitute the first step leading to

[42] It should be noted that more causal mechanisms could be potentially added to the causal model; however, including more possible explanations is beyond this study's scope. Only the common key explanatory features are chosen here to present a minimally sufficient explanation. These features are analyzed in the empirical chapters as key elements that constitute the causal pathway revealing how EU-Turkey cooperation emerged into conflict and cooperation.

instrumentalization *(Step I).* With the peak of the irregular crossings to the EU in 2015, the EU securitized its external migration policy and transferred part of its international protection duties to Turkey as a transit country for Syrian refugees *(Step II).* At the same time, the number of irregular arrivals to Turkey started acting as a burden at the receiving cities at the Syrian border. The Turkish state decided to accept the offers for international cooperation. This showed the growing mutual dependency of both the EU and Turkey on each other in managing the Syrian refugee crisis *(Step III).*

While the EU needed Turkey to secure the Schengen area and curb irregular migration, Turkey needed the EU primarily for financial and technical assistance. Acknowledging the mutual dependence established a dialogue between both sides, which is explained by the term migration diplomacy *(Step IV)*. Migration diplomacy described the migration-foreign policy nexus between the EU and Turkey. It explored the link between the Syrian refugee crisis, the diplomatic aims of the two sides, and their actions. It looked at the negotiation process between the two actors and how they managed the refugee crisis by strategically using diplomatic means to obtain their interests. Within the scope of migration diplomacy, the EU and Turkey, after several diplomatic visits and negotiations, agreed on the EU-Turkey Statement, which materialized the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis. With this 'refugee deal', the EU demanded a stricter border regime from Turkey to stop the movement of the refugees to Europe, while Turkey required the EU to provide financial and technical assistance, together with the promises of realizing visa facilitation, updating the Customs Union and re-energizing the accession negotiations *(Step V).*[43]

The agreement on the EU-Turkey Statement combined various issue areas that provided a win-win situation for both parties according to their interests in this cooperation framework. The implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement came to two different conclusions simultaneously: conflict at the international level and multi-level, functional cooperation at the technical level (*Outcome I and II).* Both outcomes, conflict and functional cooperation, occur concurrently, meaning this study observed conflict and cooperation at the same time within the same timeframe among various actors and different levels of governance. The study calls this occurrence conflictual cooperation.

[43] Please see p.107 and p.108 of the dissertation for the complete list of articles on the EU-Turkey Statement.

Outcome I results from Turkey's increased leverage due to its gatekeeper role. Turkey blackmailed and used migration-driven coercion as a tool of migration diplomacy to convince the EU for the faster disbursement of financial aid, the realization of visa facilitation for Turkish citizens, and, in the end, support for its cross-border military operations in Northern Syria. When the EU did not meet these expectations, Turkey announced the suspension of its prevention duties depending on the EU-Turkey Statement and the readmission agreement signed in 2013 *(H1).* The relations at the international level entered into a conflictual phase with this decision.

Outcome II, the multi-level functional cooperation, results from the unique cooperation mechanism FRIT. FRIT established a coordination framework among the EU Commission, the EU Delegation in Ankara, Turkish line-ministries like the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Directorate General for Migration Affairs, international organizations like IOM, UN, GIZ and civil society such as Support to Life and IGAM. Despite the turbulent relations at the international level, the cooperation in assisting Syrian refugees and affected host societies functioned successfully to a certain extent (*H3*). The success of the cooperation was hindered due to other intervening variables, namely Turkey's national constraints and developments between 2015 and 2020.

i. Domestic constraints as intervening variables

Domestic constraints have affected functional cooperation, which is not listed on the causal design, as they stemmed from Turkey's national issues, not directly from its relationship with the EU. However, they also acted as important intervening variables, affecting the EU-Turkey cooperation at various levels of governance. In relation to this, studies showed that public opinion against Syrian refugees turned considerably negative following the rise in the number of arrivals in 2015. Informal employment increased, posing a risk to the Turkish labor market during an economic crisis, along with security concerns. The negative public opinion was reflected in the results of the 2019 local elections, where AKP faced losing a considerable vote in big cities like Istanbul and Ankara.

The election results became an alarming message to Turkey's government. Shortly after, the refugees were no longer 'guests' and had to be returned to Syria once a safe zone was created. Following this, President Tayyip Erdoğan, as the leading political figure behind all decisions in Turkey, turned his foreign policy towards military operations in Northern Syria and increased

his threats against the EU *(H2).* The cross-border operations to Syria in 2018 and 2019 demonstrated to the Turkish public that the Turkish government is working on returning Syrian refugees. This situation showed that keeping the power in the hands became a priority for Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his government, more than implementing the EU-Turkey Statement.

Last but not least, the 2016 coup-attempt and its aftermath, with the start of the state of emergency, was another significant factor hindering the cooperation efforts. The coup-attempt created mistrust between the Turkish government and European and international organisations operating in Turkey. Moreover, the progress in completing the requirements for visa facilitation got lost in the way, while Turkey focused more on sustaining political order within borders. The rapid expulsions under the state of emergency caused re-shuffling in the ministries, where the personnel in contact with the EU and other state and non-state actors were withdrawn. This caused the loss of institutional memory and experience in project management and the absence of a leading authority in particular institutions, which slowed project implementation at the operational level.

Therefore, developments such as growing negative public opinion, the economic crisis, the coup-attempt and the state of emergency urged Turkey's President and the government, to a certain extent, to change their perceptions of Turkey's foreign and domestic politics into a coercive one. This had a negative impact on the cooperation among European, Turkish and international organizations and NGOs.

Last but not least, some interviewees raised and criticized the EU's lack of contextual knowledge about Turkey. The implementation and operation of projects are hindered by EU personnel's lack of awareness and understanding of Turkey's political and cultural characteristics. This criticism confirms Reslow's (2019b) argument that the EU should stop black-boxing third-countries and applying a one-size-fits-all approach (Wolff, 2014; Reslow and Vink, 2015; Reslow, 2019c).

V. Conclusion

This chapter analyzed the EU-Turkey cooperation from different levels of interaction: bilateral political relations between the EU and Turkey and later multi-level engagement among several actors under FRIT coordination mechanism. First, it looked at the EU-Turkey relations at the

international level. Internally, Turkey was going through certain domestic challenges at home, particularly in the aftermath of the 2016 coup-attempt, including an economic recession. The unsettled political environment and increasing financial instability highly damaged the public opinion of Syrian refugees. The Turkish government had to secure the votes of its electorate while fulfilling its foreign policy agenda. Simultaneously, Turkey had repeatedly threatened the EU with coercive rhetoric and expressed its intention to 'open the doors to Europe'. Syrian refugees have become a tool for instrumentalization and were used to fulfill Turkey's changing domestic and foreign policy interests.

In the end, Turkey argued that the EU's financial support had been inadequate and slow, and the visa facilitation was regarded as an unkept promise. The lack of support for cross-border operations in Syria became the last disappointment for Turkey. Meanwhile, the EU failed to respond to Turkey's threats reciprocally and put on a weaker position against Turkey's blackmailing over the refugees, remaining relatively silent as long as the refugees were hosted in Turkey. Turkey's increasing leverage and the EU's indifference ended in a tragedy in February 2020, a conflict at the Greece-Turkey border, where refugees and migrants suffered consequences.

With the suspension of the migration management part of the Statement in bilateral relations, the EU and Turkey entered a conflictual relationship. Turkey's opening the borders and stopping the prevention duties shocked the EU, and Erdoğan was strictly criticized for using refugees as a political weapon. Shortly after, the Turkish-Greek border had to be closed again, not because of a successful negotiation process between the two parties but because of the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the EU and Turkey dialogue did not end entirely in migration management after this conflict, the bilateral relations have degenerated considerably. Nonetheless, there has been an ongoing discussion on how to continue or update the Statement ever since.

This chapter's second important finding shows that while the relationship and the political discourse gradually became highly negative at the international level, FRIT cooperation mechanism had functioned well to a considerable degree between the EU and the national and local actors in Turkey. This is due to the specific characteristics of FRIT cooperation, which has continued to function despite the conflictual phase. As mentioned, FRIT stands out from all previous cooperation mechanisms between the EU and Turkey. It contributed to a complementary capacity-building approach in Turkey, where Turkish ministries and NGOs

found the opportunity to undergo an institutional transformation and develop know-how, experience, and standardization in migration management. A positive relationship has been observed between the EU institutions, mainly the DG ECHO and EU Delegation, with Turkish counterparts, the line ministries, and IOs and NGOs like IOM, UNHCR, GIZ, and Turkish national non-state organizations. The cooperation among these actors was reported to function well. Lastly, FRIT created a migration sector where human resources in this field found a chance to develop with young migration experts who could potentially have a role in policy-making in the future.

The cooperation also came with challenges, mainly because of particular domestic challenges. The 2016 coup-attempt and its aftermath caused disorder in most Turkish ministries. Due to the reshuffling in Ministries, institutional memory was lost, and the EU and NGOs had to start over to build trust and have networks to work on FRIT projects together. This caused delays in project implementation. Unlike these challenges, some interviewees reported the 2018 regime change in Turkey, when a centralized system for FRIT coordination was established under the Presidency, as positive. It was regarded as positive as it brought stability at the bureaucratic and technical levels, which was lost during the state of emergency after the coup-attempt. Importantly, a consensus has been reached among most actors at various institutions on the need for future FRIT continuity.

As a result of the analysis, this chapter found that FRIT created a multi-level functional cooperation setting in migration management in Turkey to a certain extent. A new functional sector was built where the EU, state and non-state actors interacted and made various links during project implementation. This multi-level cooperation happened simultaneously with the highly volatile environment at the international level, where Turkey was constantly blackmailing the EU with the Syrian refugees. It proves that a relationship at a certain level of governance with the EU does not determine the status of other layers of governance within the same country. The EU and Turkey cooperate well at the technical level, as opposed to the conflict at the international level. It can be argued that EU-Turkey cooperation is characterized by conflictual cooperation, where both conflict and cooperation are observed simultaneously. Hence, this chapter outlines the concurrence of conflict and cooperation, namely the conflictual cooperation, between the EU and Turkey in migration management.

CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSION

I. Executive Summary of the Dissertation

This dissertation looked at the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis by the EU and Turkey, which referred to both actors' attempts to use Syrian refugees and the crisis situation to persuade or constrain the other to realize their own foreign and national policy goals. For this purpose, Chapter II examined the EU's external migration policy to understand the materialization of instrumentalization. It started with a discussion on the notion of securitization of migration and how it led to the institutional and legal framework of the EU's externalization policy. Accordingly, the JHA was established, where intergovernmentalism was quite strong. Later, the decision-making related to migration, asylum, immigration, and external border controls was communitarized at the supranational level. As a result of the series of structural changes, the EU started to use externalization tools in the form of international agreements and non-binding instruments, such as memoranda of understanding, joint declarations, and joint action plans.

Among the tools of the EU's external migration policy, mobility partnerships, readmission agreements, and the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement were considered. These tools enhanced the EU's security-oriented remote-control approach, which depends on eliminating the push factors of migration by offering financial assistance, trade agreements or political incentives to the countries of origin or transit. The remote-control approach required third-country cooperation mechanisms through which institutional interaction was observed among EU institutions, third-country counterparts, international organizations and civil society, which pointed out the principles of multi-level governance based on inter-agency interaction.

Chapter III introduced the second theoretical chapter on the instrumentalization of migration from a foreign policy perspective. First, it explained different forms of power, whether material, contextual or perceptional, and later discussed the use of power as leverage in IR. Accordingly, if there is a high level of contextual or perceptional power asymmetry between actors, the relationship becomes dependent, which could empower one actor against the other. Leverage refers here to the ability of an actor to reach its interests using this power asymmetry vis-à-vis

another actor by getting the other actor to consider them seriously. It is the bargaining or negotiating power and can be instrumentalized through persuasion and coercion.

Later, different theoretical approaches, like realism, constructivism and neoclassical realism, explained the link between power and foreign policy formation. Neoclassical realism found it essential to investigate the intervening factors, constrained choice, and historical context that impact policy choices. A country's cultural context, political structure, and elite perceptions are vital in foreign policy formation. Actors' use of contextual and material power, along with these intervening variables to shape their foreign policy and exert leverage over the other actor, is part of migration diplomacy, an overarching term discussed in Chapter III. This chapter investigates the connection between cross-border population mobility, actors' diplomatic aims, the bargaining process, and actors' actions.

Among the tools of migration diplomacy, Chapter III listed issue-linkage strategy, blackmailing, and migration-driven coercion as the most frequently used ones. Issue-linkage is a straightforward approach linking multiple issues and policy areas together to pursue domestic or foreign policy goals. The latter two methods can be used interchangeably, and they refer to threatening and using the migrant or refugee population as a tool to exercise leverage on the target actor. Chapter III concluded the conceptual and theoretical background needed for this study to examine the case study in the coming chapters: Turkey and EU-Turkey relations with the start of the Syrian refugee crisis. With an emergency mentality after the beginning of the crisis, the EU focused on developing cooperation frameworks with third-countries in the region. Turkey has been the main case study of this study because of its role as a host and transit country for Syrian refugees and its strategic importance to the EU and its external policy.

After two main theoretical and descriptive chapters on the EU's external migration policy, power and leverage in IR and migration-foreign policy nexus, Chapter IV described the dissertation's methodology and research design. The primary methodological approach used in the dissertation is the case-centric explaining-outcome process-tracing, which aims to provide a sufficient minimum explanation for the puzzling outcome: conflict and cooperation in the EU-Turkey cooperation in migration management. The research design presented the data collection strategy, including semi-structured expert interviews and complementary desk research.

By touching upon the limitations of the study, such as the extreme politicization of the subject and the obstacles like access to data and data quality, Chapter IV continued to explain how the data was categorized on the qualitative analysis software program MAXQDA under the main headings of externalization of the refugee crisis, issue linkage, EU-Turkey migration diplomacy, EU-Turkey Statement, FRIT cooperation mechanism, challenges to the cooperation, multi-level cooperation, and leverage and conflict. According to these headings and the categorization, the following chapters conducted a deductive analysis to understand the factors resulting in cooperation and conflict in EU-Turkey relations in migration management.

Chapter V briefly examined the history of Turkey's migration and asylum policy in a historical context, starting from the establishment of the Turkish Republic to the declaration of Turkey's candidacy to the EU, the reformation process, and lastly, the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis. Later, Turkey's relative power and foreign policy drivers from the 2000s are explained. As intervening factors, changing Turkey's foreign policy decisions, domestic constraints and developments over the years, like the 2016 coup attempt, negative public opinion on Syrian refugees, local election results, and growing economic crisis are discussed. The aim was to understand the possible reasons behind the changes in Turkey's policy decisions before the start of the empirical chapters of this study.

Chapter VI started the first empirical chapter by examining Turkey's responses to the Syrian refugee crisis. Turkey initiated an open-door policy when the crisis first started and welcomed the Syrian refugees with a 'guest' rhetoric. As the number of refugees began to grow considerably and steadily, Turkey realized that it could no longer bear the costs of the arrivals alone and agreed to international cooperation. Likewise, as the irregular crossings from Turkey to the EU increased remarkably, the EU further externalized the issue and rushed into making cooperation agreements with Turkey to sustain security in the Schengen Area. The cooperation turned into a series of negotiations within the framework of migration diplomacy, and the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement materialized the instrumentalization of the crisis.

The Statement, a political declaration instead of a legally binding agreement, was seen as a win-win deal by the EU and Turkey. The EU maintained its internal security and the Schengen area by supporting the Syrian refugees in Turkey with financial and technical assistance. In return, Turkey agreed to prevent any further irregular crossings and take back all irregular migrants who used Turkey as a transit country from Greece. The EU accepted Turkey as a safe third-country where the refugees could be returned and hosted even though Turkey does not grant

refugee status to those who arrive from the Middle East due to its geographical limitation on the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Additional Protocol. The Statement represented the security and control-oriented understanding of the EU's external migration policy, which was far from representing the EU's core norms and values based on human rights, the rule of law, and democracy.

Chapter VI continued by analyzing each article stated in the EU-Turkey Statement and assessed the articles that the interview respondents most frequently mentioned: articles on fighting irregular migration, the visa facilitation of Turkish citizens, and the voluntary humanitarian admission scheme. The analysis found that the articles on migration management, curbing the number of irregular crossings and readmitting those who crossed the EU border using Turkey as a transit country have been successfully implemented to a certain extent. Additionally, the number of resettlements from Turkey is only symbolic, and the lack of a fair burden-sharing mechanism was criticized. Regarding visa facilitation, despite the effort and progress reached, this article was not realized due to political constraints. The voluntary humanitarian admission scheme became a disappointment as no progress was made in realizing this burden-sharing mechanism in the EU.

The last empirical chapter, Chapter VII, continued with the analysis of the EU-Turkey cooperation. It looked at implementing the EU-Turkey Statement in bilateral state relations between the EU and Turkey and the technical sectoral cooperation among various EU, Turkish, international, and civil society actors working on FRIT projects. The analysis revealed that Turkey started to perceive the cooperation negatively with the unrealized financial and political incentives and the lack of support for Turkey's ambition to create a safe zone in Northern Syria. Over time, Turkey began to threaten the EU about 'opening the borders and sending the refugees to Europe', using blackmailing and migration-driven coercion. In February 2020, Turkey suspended the EU-Turkey Statement and opened its borders to Greece, which caused a drastic conflict.

The analysis in Chapter VII also revealed multi-level inter-agency cooperation among the EU, Turkish line-ministries, international organizations, and civil society under the framework of the FRIT coordination mechanism and the implemented projects. FRIT operation reported some positive unintended consequences in the institutional realm of functional cooperation, like contributing to complementary capacity-building, youth employment, experience, skills and, practical knowledge and standardization in migration management in Turkey. Nonetheless,

FRIT cooperation was not without challenges. The main reported constraints that hindered the cooperation were the 2016 coup-attempt, the aftermath and the state of emergency in Turkey, the confusion and loss of the leading institutional authority and memory and the inadequate contextual knowledge of the EU on Turkey's highly political state culture and structure. The analysis of this dissertation concluded that the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis resulted in conflictual cooperation, conflict and cooperation happening simultaneously between the EU and Turkey in migration management.

Summary of the Milestones of EU-Turkey Cooperation after the Syrian refugee crisis
• December 2013 Readmission Agreement
• October 2015 EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan
• November 2015 EU-Turkey Summit
• March 2016 EU-Turkey Statement
• July 2019 Suspension of the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement by Turkey
• February 2020 Suspension of EU-Turkey Statement

Table VI*:* Milestones in EU-Turkey Cooperation between 2011 and 2020

II. Final Analysis of the Hypotheses and Main Arguments

This dissertation looked for an answer to the following research question, *'How does the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis as a foreign policy tool affect EU-Turkey cooperation*?' In response to the question, the study found that the EU and Turkey's instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis as a foreign policy tool initiated migration diplomacy between the two actors, leading to a mutually dependent emergency cooperation mechanism. Instrumentalization became officially recognized when the EU-Turkey Statement

was signed in 2016. The Statement proved the mutual dependence, where Turkey needed financial and technical assistance from the EU and the EU needed stricter border controls to curb irregular migration. The EU used positive conditionality as a 'bargaining chip' against Turkey, along with financial assistance and political incentives like updating the Customs Union and opening new chapters in accession negotiations with Turkey. Turkey, in return, used reversed conditionality by hosting the Syrian refugees and instrumentalizing them against the EU. The EU-Turkey Statement was more than a migration deal; it represented foreign policies, political strategies and wills of the actors.

a) Reviewing the Hypotheses

The EU-Turkey Statement showed the unsafe and vulnerable side of the instrumentalization of the refugee crisis and EU-third country agreements conducted with an emergency mentality. It signaled that when Turkey is dissatisfied with the EU's promises, its perspective would turn negative, and this would cause conflict in bilateral relations (*H1*). Relevantly, Turkey started implying dissatisfaction with the unkept promises; the EU's financial assistance was found inadequate and political incentives like visa facilitation were not realized. The EU also did not agree to support Turkey's cross-border operations to establish a safe zone in Syria, and this became a turning point in the relations. After a series of attempts of blackmailing and coercive engineered migration to constrain and persuade the EU, Turkey stopped all its prevention duties and terminated the EU-Turkey Statement in February 2020. Following this, refugees started to pile up at the Greek-Turkish border, causing both a humanitarian tragedy and conflict in bilateral relations.

This conflict validates the first hypothesis, which suggests that due to the ongoing instrumentalization of the crisis and shifts in power relations, when the EU failed to translate its rhetoric and promises into action, it reduced Turkey's expectations from the EU and negatively influenced its perceptions, thereby leading to conflict in bilateral relations. By coming to an agreement with Turkey on migration management, the EU opened an opportunity window for President Erdoğan to instrumentalize the refugees and reverse the conditionality back at the EU. Ultimately, the full realization of economic or political articles on the Statement was less significant than Turkey's ability to leverage these articles against the EU to achieve its own economic, military, and political policy objectives.

The study found that Turkey's negative perceptions of the cooperation were partly stemming from Turkey's domestic constraints. The growing negative public opinion on Syrian refugees in Turkish society, the reflection of negative public opinion on the voting behavior in the 2019 local elections, the 2016 coup-attempt and the mistrust and security concerns in the aftermath, and rising economic difficulties urged the Turkish state to have a negative perspective on the long-term stay of the refugees and to take a more hostile attitude against them. The 'guest' rhetoric turned into coercion in national and foreign policy, where Turkey insisted on creating a safe zone in Syria for the refugees. While Turkey did not completely stop cooperating, its coercive national and foreign policies damaged cooperation in migration management (*H2*). To put it differently, Turkey's economic, social, and political domestic constraints resulted in a negative shift in the political actor(s), namely President Erdoğan's perceptions towards foreign and national policy choices, consequently hindering cooperation with the EU.

The domestic constraints of Turkey support the second hypothesis of this study to a certain extent. As process-tracing states, the researcher could only try to 'fill in the blanks' as much as possible in a causal-process story until it is plausible enough to read, and there is a limit to every study in filling all the blanks. There are always other possible intervening variables in the process. Finding out all for one case is not feasible, but it is more likely to complete a story with enough plausible and persuasive arguments (Checkel, 2008 in Klotz and Prakash, 2012). Here, revealing all the factors affecting the changes in President Erdoğan's perceptions and national and foreign policy decisions is not feasible, as one can never fully understand how he makes his decisions. However, within its limits, the study came up with plausible points and possible intervening variables available for a minimum sufficient explanation for Turkey's coercive foreign policy decisions: the coup attempt and the mistrust and security concerns towards international actors during the state of emergency, negative public opinion, local election results, and economic difficulties. Although limited, these factors are significant in understanding the shift in Turkey's foreign policy toward a coercive approach.

In contrast to the conflictual relationship in bilateral relations stemming from the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugees, the Statement and FRIT cooperation and coordination mechanism, facilitated through various projects, have established a successful structure to follow in project implementation. This created a migration sector in Turkey where functional multi-level cooperation is observed (*H3*). The data proved that the cooperation among DG ECHO, EU Delegation in Ankara and Turkish line-ministries have been functioning

well, as well as the collaboration among line-ministries and international organizations and civil society in Turkey. This is a crucial finding of the dissertation, which validates the third hypothesis. The continued instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis by the EU and Turkey resulted in conflicts in bilateral relations. However, cooperation among EU and Turkish counterparts, as well as international and non-governmental organizations, continued to persist and function.

The study highlighted that functional sectoral cooperation at the operational and technical levels resembles inter-agency engagement in multi-level governance. However, this study uses the term multi-level cooperation instead of multi-level governance, as there has been no shift of competency or power among layers of governance. Turkey's highly bureaucratic and centralized state structure leaves no room for competency transfer to lower levels. Also, in FRIT cooperation, the EU Delegation only has an assisting and supporting role in Turkey instead of governance. Still, the cooperation consists of multi-level interaction among various state and non-state actors at different levels.

It is worth mentioning at this point that functional multi-level cooperation has not been without challenges and obstacles. Turkey experienced a coup-attempt in 2016 that changed the institutional structure and personnel working in Turkish ministries. The state of emergency slowed down the implementation of projects since the permissions required to work were delayed or postponed, and the institutional authorities and memory were lost due to the personnel changes. In addition to this, there was a severe mistrust of international stakeholders. Many international interview respondents emphasized that losing relevant authority and contacts in state institutions posed a severe challenge for all actors in EU-Turkey cooperation. As a result, the coup-attempt and its aftermath hindered cooperation to a certain extent, particularly between the Turkish ministries, the EU Delegation and civil society.

b) Main Arguments

This dissertation argues that, on the one hand, the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis and EU-Turkey Statement had negative implications for practices related to forced displacement and migration, where the welfare of refugees in Turkey, designated as a 'safe third-country' despite its inability to grant refugee status, was put at risk. Syrian refugees' access to rights and services has been limited, and their future remains uncertain. The

instrumentalization also strengthened Turkey's influence over the EU, which created a power imbalance in the EU's external migration policy and its relation to a non-EU country.

On the other hand, the unintended consequences of the instrumentalization of the crisis have been regarded more positively at the lower levels of cooperation. The FRIT mechanism and project implementation facilitated complementary capacity-building within Turkish ministries, fostering the development of the migration sector and establishing an institution for migration affairs known as the Presidency for Migration Management. With cooperation and guidance from the EU Delegation, IOM, and UNHCR, migration management and governance in Turkey were standardized. This initiative also enhanced human resources and created job opportunities within the migration sector. These have been some of the primary unintended positive outcomes of the instrumentalization of the crisis at the operational and technical levels.

To sum up the main arguments of this dissertation, it can be said that the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis led to the EU-Turkey cooperation framework, and it functioned as long as it benefited mutual interests and coincided with each actor's foreign policy agenda at the bilateral level. However, Turkey ended up in a deadlock when the financial and political incentives on the Statement were not fully realized in time and when its national and foreign interests followed social, political, and economic domestic constraints and challenges. Turkey's perspective on cooperation with the EU has changed negatively, and the cooperation has entered a conflictual phase. While EU-Turkey relations degenerated at the bilateral level with growing dissatisfaction with undelivered promises and changing interests, resulting in conflict, the cooperation at the operational and technical level has functioned well among the EU counterparts, Turkish ministries, international organizations and civil society to a certain extent. This proves a functional sectoral multi-actor and multi-level cooperation between the EU and Turkey in migration management.

Therefore, the dissertation concludes with the following findings. 'Conflictual cooperation' was observed between the EU and Turkey from 2015 to 2020, indicating that both conflict and cooperation occurred simultaneously between various actors and levels of governance. The instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis initially resulted in negative outcomes for refugee protection and EU-Turkey relations. However, it also unexpectedly led to positive outcomes, notably the development of a migration sector in Turkey. This development included institutionalization, standardization, capacity-building initiatives, and contributions to addressing youth unemployment and enhancing human resources in the field of migration.

III. Contributions of the Dissertation

This study contributed to five main research gaps in the literature within the framework of the instrumentalization of the Syrian refugee crisis by the EU and Turkey between 2011 and 2020. The EU external migration policy is EU-centered, meaning the third-countries are not investigated enough and are seen as passive recipients of EU policies. The first research gap addressed the increasing role of third-countries in migration management as they started to hold more contextual power and leverage.

The second research gap referred to the issue of reducing EU-Turkey relations into accession talks and negotiations and degenerating state relations. It became evident that EU-Turkey relations exist outside Turkey's membership talks and that the Syrian refugee crisis and FRIT cooperation mechanism started a new relationship that required a closer look. The EU and Turkey's foreign and migration policies are interconnected and influence each other, especially in the context of migration management. The third research gap was related to the inadequate study of the link between irregular migration and foreign policy formation in IR. Migration diplomacy addresses this gap successfully, showing how actors use several tools, like conditionality, issue-linkage, and blackmailing, to formulate policies in the bargaining and negotiation process.

The last two contributions of this dissertation are, first, to the literature on 'Sectoral Integration beyond EU Member States', namely sectoral functional cooperation. The multi-level and inter-agency cooperation framework emerged as an unintended contribution of the FRIT mechanism in Turkey. Lastly, the EU-Turkey Statement became an example of the external incentives model based on positive conditionality. Financial and political incentives offered to Turkey persuaded it to initiate cooperation. In the literature, the principle of conditionality has not been applied to EU-Turkey relations beyond the membership perspective. All these five research gaps and how this dissertation contributes to them are elaborated in detail below.

To start with, the Syrian refugee crisis has been mainly investigated from an EU point of view. Third-country characteristics and preferences were neglected in research on EU and third-country relations in migration management. This research showed the need for the EU's external migration policy to focus more on third-countries as their compliance with the agreements and cooperation frameworks during the implementation process proved to

determine the success of the EU's externalization efforts. Third-countries should not be black-boxed, and their social, political and economic state structures and domestic developments must be examined independently.

Relevantly, this research contributes to studying the EU's crisis-driven external migration policy, emphasizing Turkey and its agency to determine the operationalization of migration management. After the start of the 2011 Syrian conflict, the EU-Turkey cooperation led to the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement and empowered Turkey over the EU. Turkey instrumentalized the crisis further and increased its contextual power and leverage by hosting four million Syrian refugees and by being the EU's key strategic partner in migration management. Turkey's dependence on the EU was not a new phenomenon, whereas the EU's formal acknowledgement of its dependence on Turkey, demonstrated by signing the Statement, was unprecedented in their historical relationship. It became clear that Turkey became not only an active recipient of the EU external migration policy but also an active constructor and implementer of it.

Herein, neoclassical realism's main premises helped understand Turkey's active agency and role as a third-country in the EU's external migration policy. Accordingly, intervening variables like domestic economic and socio-political constraints and elite perceptions determine a country's foreign policy. Similarly, Turkey's changing political structure, cultural context, and the decisions and perceptions of the leading state actor(s), mainly President Erdoğan's perspective and decisions, have been the intervening variables, resulting in changes in foreign and national policy choices and affecting its cooperation with the EU. Hence, this dissertation contributes particularly to the studies on EU-Turkey relations, asserting that the relationship had been based on mutual dependency between the two sides, the increased power asymmetry outside the area of accession negotiations, and the perceptions of the main state actor in Turkey in the post-2011 era.

The third research gap was related to migration diplomacy. Relevantly, the link between irregular migration and IR from a foreign policy perspective was argued to be very limited in the literature on migration studies. Migration diplomacy is defined for this study as the negotiation process between the EU and Turkey, as well as how they manage the Syrian refugee crisis and strategically use diplomatic means to obtain their interests, demands, and goals. Migration diplomacy narrows the discussion on the migration-foreign policy nexus in IR to the strategic use of the Syrian refugee crisis in bilateral relations. The EU and Turkey instrumentalized the crisis and used it to achieve their interests by concluding a refugee deal;

this was examined under migration diplomacy. The EU and Turkey used the issue-linkage strategy to link the refugee crisis to other issues like security, financial assistance, military operations, etc. At the same time, Turkey used blackmailing and migration-driven coercion to persuade and constrain the EU in its foreign policy objectives. Therefore, this dissertation contributed to the literature on migration diplomacy by proving that the EU-Turkey Statement is a prominent example.

Last but not least, the EU-Turkey cooperation after the start of the Syrian refugee crisis has created a separate sector in migration management that did not exist before, which is regarded as the unintended consequence of externalization. FRIT projects and their implementation enhanced the communication and engagement among Turkish line-ministries, IOM, UNHCR and civil society. This finding contributes to the literature on multi-level governance, a system of continuous negotiations among several levels of authority. It involves shifting spheres of competencies and power across these levels. Here, it is noted that the EU did not take a governance role in its operations in Turkey, and there has not been a shift of competence and power among governance levels in this cooperation model. The EU had a supporting role, not governing, which is an uncommon hierarchal practice in which Turkish authorities work at the same operational level as the EU authorities. The practices at the operational and technical level resemble a multi-level governance approach only with institutional interaction among various layers. Therefore, this study names this contribution 'multi-level cooperation', referring to simultaneous interaction among EU, Turkish and non-state actors in migration management.

The multi-level cooperation in Turkey experienced certain obstacles. These mainly stemmed from Turkey's national developments, such as the coup attempt and the subsequent institutional reshuffling. The study also finds that the EU attempted to include Turkey first in regional projects with other countries like Jordan and Lebanon, which did not end well due to Turkey's different state structure. Similarly, during the implementation of the projects, some of the EU personnel were criticized by their Turkish counterparts in ministries as they were unaware of Turkey's bureaucratic state system and culture. This caused delays and inefficiencies in project implementation. This shows that each country is unique, and the EU should be more aware of the characteristics and contextual factors in its operations in third-countries.

In addition to the multi-level cooperation, the study found a complementary capacity-building approach in the EU's activities in Turkey. This complementary capacity-building approach brought standardization into Turkish ministries, supported legal and institutional development,

created job opportunities for young graduates in the migration sector, and enhanced inter-agency communication and cooperation. These unintentional outcomes of the EU-Turkey cooperation FRIT mechanism and their findings contribute to the literature on functional cooperation and sectoral integration, which refer to the institutionalization of cooperation with a third-country through task-specific policy networks and sector-specific institutions. This model was traditionally studied in the EU's European Neighborhood Policy, and therefore, studying the case of Turkey is a contribution that shows that sectoral institutional cooperation can also be observed as a result of migration deals outside membership objectives. This can also be called an external incentive model where conditionality is defined according to the specific context of the relationship and needs of the third-country.

To sum up, this dissertation contributed to the literature on the EU's external migration policy, within which Turkey is an active participant and a third-country holding leverage against the EU, the literature on EU-Turkey relations outside the membership talks, migration diplomacy by connecting the refugee crisis and foreign policy formation through the diplomatic negotiation and bargaining process between the EU and Turkey, and lastly to the literature on multi-level governance and sectoral cooperation beyond EU MS.

On the one hand, these contributions showed how Turkey has a different relationship with the EU outside its worsened accession negotiations and how powerful it could become against the EU through the constant instrumentalization of the crisis. On the other hand, some of the contributions go beyond Turkey and show that each third-country the EU interacts with within the framework of its external migration policy can have various unintended consequences because each country has its own cultural, economic, social and political characteristics and administrative and governmental complexities that must be investigated. The external incentives model or the positive conditionality can also be applied to any third-country, depending on its relationship with the EU. This has been a more general contribution to the studies on the EU's external migration policy, suggesting the examination of power asymmetries and shifts between the EU and third-countries individually.

IV. Paths for Future Research

This research could illustrate how the EU's migration or refugee deals with other third-countries could empower the political actors in these countries. These political actors could potentially use the deal as a tool for further instrumentalization of migration, blackmailing, and risking the welfare of migrants or refugees and their public by engaging in conflicts with the EU. These deals and their weak moral basis should be reconsidered with a better understanding of international norms and values based on human-rights. Future research in this field could look at other examples of third-countries, in which state leaders gained disproportionate power and leverage over the EU in migration management through crisis-induced agreements, cooperation frameworks or simply by initiating a conflict.

The case of Turkey might inspire other countries in the 'neighbourhood' to attempt to create similar situations of vulnerable dependence on the gatekeeper and to capitalize on these reversed power asymmetries (Okyay and Zaragoza-Cristiani, 2016). An example is the crisis between the EU and Belarus between 2021 and 2022 when Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko threatened the EU to send refugees to their borders. The European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen asserted that the situation was a cruel form of 'hybrid threat' with a state-sponsored instrumentalization of people for political ends (European Commission, 2021b). The EU should be careful not to encourage political leaders who do not represent the universal norms and values and are known for their increasing authoritarianism.

Another point of interest in the future would be to look at FRIT mechanism in Turkey after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic to see how well the cooperation has functioned among different layers of governance. Since the timeframe of this research was until 2020, another field study, including expert interviews with international organizations, civil society and local governments, could look into the impact of the pandemic on the implementation of projects and institutional interactions in different policy fields of education, health, and migration management during the pandemic. This research could also potentially be extended to other EU and third-country cooperation mechanisms that continued during the pandemic.

In addition, the non-Syrian refugees, under international protection in Turkey, have been excluded from FRIT coordination mechanism and, therefore, from scholar and media attention over the years. Although the number of Afghans, Iraqis, Iranians and other nationalities has

grown substantially, little political attention has been shown, and their resettlement chances to the EU remain very low. Future research could look into these groups of different nationalities and their access to rights and services under Turkey's limited legal framework.

Last but not least, the operation of the EU Facility in Turkey has been a unique practice in terms of inter-agency, multi-level cooperation. Future research could also look beyond the case of Turkey to other third-countries that have cooperation agreements with the EU in migration management and see whether direct or indirect institutional changes, such as the formation of new institutions, standardization of the policies, complementary capacity-building, creation of a migration sector, positive impact on youth employment and human resources took place. It would also be interesting to conduct interviews in these countries to assess the extent to which the respondents perceive the EU as aware of the country's cultural and socio-political sensitivities and characteristics in its operations.

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APPENDIX

I. Sample Questionnaire Employed in the Interviews

1. How do you interpret the EU-Turkey cooperation in your field?
2. How do you evaluate the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement?
   a. What is the importance of the Statement for the EU, Turkey, and bilateral relations?
3. What do you think about the incentives of visa liberalization, financial assistance, etc.?
   a. Do you think these incentives are enough for the continuation of the cooperation? If not, what could be improved?
4. What is the impact of the EU-Turkey cooperation that started with the Syrian refugee crisis on your institution and department?
5. What are the main obstacles you face working on FRIT projects?
6. Could you tell me about your team's coordination with the EU Delegation, UN agencies, and state and non-state institutions operating in the field?
7. What was the impact of FRIT projects and the financial assistance on your institution/department?

II. Overview of the Codes Used in MAXQDA for Primary and Secondary Resources

EU NEWS ARCHIVE			
Code	**Cod. seg. (all documents)**	**% Cod. seg. (all documents)**	**Documents**
EU funding	1	1,39	1
EU's externalization of migration	4	5,56	3
Turkey's national structure and domestic issues	5	6,94	3
EU-Turkey Statement	5	6,94	4
Cross-border operation to Syria	7	9,72	5
Turkey's leverage	13	18,06	8
Issue linkage	13	18,06	4
EU-Turkey cooperation, FRIT, and strategic partnership	24	33,33	17

EU REPORTS			
Code	**Cod. seg. (all documents)**	**% Cod. seg. (all documents)**	**Documents**
Issue linkage	1	3,23	1
Cross-border operation to Syria	1	3,23	1
EU-Turkey Statement	1	3,23	1
EU's externalization of migration	1	3,23	1
EU funding	2	6,45	1
Turkey, refugee crisis and stages	2	6,45	1
EU-Turkey cooperation, FRIT, and strategic partnership	5	16,13	2
Multi-level cooperation	8	25,81	2
Turkey's national structure and domestic issues	10	32,26	2

TURKISH NEWS ARCHIVE			
Code	**Cod. seg. (all documents)**	**% Cod. seg. (all documents)**	**Documents**
EU funding	1	0,56	1
EU's externalization of migration	1	0,56	1
Turkey's regional power	2	1,12	2
Turkey's national structure and domestic issues	2	1,12	2
EU-Turkey Statement	11	6,15	5
Cross-border operation to Syria	23	12,85	16
EU-Turkey cooperation, FRIT, and strategic partnership	34	18,99	16
Turkey, refugee crisis and stages	51	28,49	33
Turkey's leverage	54	30,17	25

EXPERT INTERVIEWS			
Code	**Cod. seg. (all documents)**	**% Cod. seg. (all documents)**	**Documents**
Cross-border operation to Syria	1	0,44	1
Turkey, refugee crisis and stages	3	1,33	3
EU-Turkey Statement	21	9,29	5
EU funding	21	9,29	10
EU's externalization of migration	24	10,62	7
Turkey's national structure and domestic issues	26	11,50	12
Multi-level cooperation	41	18,14	8
EU-Turkey cooperation, FRIT, and strategic partnership	89	39,38	15