THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS IN THE EU AND TURKEY: BACKGROUND AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Master Thesis | Development and International Relations

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Abstract

This thesis tries to shed light into the Syrian refugee crisis as this was created as a result of the Syrian Civil War. It tries to do that in the following problem formulation: "How does the international regime on handling the Syrian refugee crisis work between the EU and Turkey? Is it effective and is there room for improvement?" This thesis uses a qualitative research method under the international regimes theory. What this basically means is that the situations created in the EU and Turkey as a result of the Syrian refugee crisis create an international regime with its actors being the EU and Turkey. The thesis' main goals are to find how this international regime work and to understand whether it is effective or not. The reason why this topic is chosen is its contemporary nature and its interesting foundations. The Syrian Refugee Crisis is something very real which affects us even today. I find it interesting because the actors of the international regime created are really different from each other, that is historically, culturally and in terms of ideologies. These facts make the effectiveness of this international regime interesting to explore because the actors' interest converge.

The way that this thesis approaches the problem formulation is threefold. The first way, which has an informative nature, is to give a background of the Syrian Civil War, so to bring things into context. This part has an informative nature because it aims to provide the necessary tools for the reader to understand why this issue is so important, and why it is worth this thesis' exploration.

Then, the thesis moves forward to analyzing the situation of the Syrian Refugee Crisis in the EU. In this part, different EU Member States can be seen and how they have reacted to this crisis. It becomes really interesting to explore the EU as an actor of the international regime on handling the Syrian refugees because of the continent's complexity. If we are to take the EU as one single actors of the international regime, then it needs to be understood that this actor is really different among its members. In this part it can be seen how different EU Member States face problems as a result of certain behaviors of other EU Member States as a result of the Syria refugee crisis. This shows the complexity of this international regime.

In the next part of the thesis we see how Turkey has reacted to the crisis. It can be seen from the very beginning of this part that Turkey has decided to act really differently from the EU. The motives of the country for this course of action are tried to be understood. In this part it can also be seen how Turkey's decision to act unilaterally has created the wrong foundations for an effective international regime since one of its main attributes is the ability for the same decisions to be taken by all actors.

Then the thesis discusses why we see so different reactions from these geographical areas in regard to the Syrian refugee crisis, which reaches the conclusion that the international regime created is indeed not as effective as it should be, and then suggests ways for it to be more effective like paying more heed to international organizations such as the United Nations.

Introduction

One should justifiably acknowledge the fact that during the last 2 centuries, the world has come a long way into becoming a better place, with less wars, and less injustices. Humanitarian crises do still develop, but in a non-so-frequent way. This thesis will seek to explore the humanitarian crisis that has been created as a result of the civil war in Syria, following the events of the Arab Spring of 2011. The reason why this humanitarian crisis is chosen, and not for example the one in Myanmar, is geographical. Syria is located in an area, that countries with very different mindsets and standards can be found. If one is to compare Syria with, for example, Greece, which is a part of the EU, will soon realize that they are two immensely different countries. Nevertheless, they are nearby. If one is to compare Greece with Turkey, which also is a neighbor to Syria, will soon realize that they are different in mindsets. The EU, Turkey and Syria have created this international regime for handling the refugee crisis, and it is so interesting because this triangle is so different within itself, but nevertheless, it is called upon to act collectively for the good of the people involved. The case of Myanmar is different on this front. The countries nearby do not offer this immensely different way of approaching the issue. This is why, for this thesis, the Syrian issue is more interesting to be explored.

The Syrian refugee crisis is not something new in the world we live today. The EU and Turkey have been dealing with this crisis for more than five years now. It has, sadly, reached a phase during which many people (Syrians, people from EU countries and Turkish) have come to believe that this is the new norm. It most definitely should not be treated as such. The Syrian refugee crisis can be solved, and it is the moral duty of both the geographical areas involved to help.

This thesis wants to explore facts. How these two geographical areas have acted on this crisis within the temporal boundaries of the issue. This thesis also wants to explore whether these geographical areas have been helpful enough for solving this humanitarian crisis. Whether they should have acted differently, whether the refugees are treated as deserved.

It will seek to explore whether the international regime between the EU and Turkey have taken the responsibilities that should be taken. With a bit of common sense, it becomes understandable enough, that this crisis requires the collaboration between the two geographical areas for an effective solution to the humanitarian crisis, while maintaining the parties' interests satisfied, as much as possible. It is also known that the collaboration between the EU and Turkey has many times become questionable since conflicting interests, more often than not, get in the way. Exploring these can be quite interesting and will definitely shed some light on the issue at hand.

The prospects between an effective collaboration between these two geographical areas are indeed promising. If pride, interests and grievances are to be left behind, and if the good of the people, both the people of the communities receiving the refugees, and the refugees themselves, become a priority, then surely the crisis will be dealt with in a better way

Research Question

How does the international regime on handling the Syrian refugee crisis work between the EU and Turkey? Is it effective and is there room for improvement?

The chosen research question can bring to the surface some interesting points for investigation. The reason why the topic of this thesis will be looked from an international regime perspective is based on the theory's potential. By investigating it, one can understand and highlight the reasons why the EU and Turkey form their preferences and their chosen courses of action regarding the refugee crisis. In such a complicated matter, such as the Syrian refugee crisis, which forms an international matter, it would be naïve to believe that only these two geographical areas are the ones solely involved. International organizations, such as the United Nations, are also, to some extent, involved. They will be seen many times throughout the thesis.

The necessity of investigating the current system's effectiveness connects with the matter's contemporary nature. It is common sense that the refugee crisis should be solved in the best way possible, satisfying both the refugees and the countries' interests. In this way, realizing the effectiveness of the current international regime, may lead to possible routes for more improvement, getting closer to the goal.

Before shedding light into the research question per se, the developments in the Syrian country will be briefly looked upon since the Arab Spring of 2011. In this way, one will be able to understand the reasons why so many people have fled the country, and, thus, why it is so important that the issue should be dealt with effectively. It should be noted that the events that have occurred in Syria since the Arab Spring of 2011 will be presented in order to form a basis of understanding the reasons behind the resettlement of the refugees. In no way is the background of the Syrian refugee crisis the main goal of this thesis.

Qualitative Research

This thesis will use a qualitative approach. It was decided based on the analysis intended to be done with the material obtained as well as the type of the material that is obtained. The qualitative research approach can simply be defined as categorizing the data obtained using words whereas quantitative research uses numbers (Maxwell and Reybold 2015, 685). It can also be seen as the type of research that "emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data" (Bryman 2012, 714). The data gathered for this thesis include policies, articles, observations, etc. Such types of data cannot be analyzed quantitatively. They are intended to be analyzed as ways of leading to the reasons why a phenomenon is perceived in the way it is. "Qualitative researchers seek to understand lived experiences in context and the meanings associated with these experiences, usually from the perspective of participants" (Maxwell and Reybold 2015, 685).

When it comes to the data collection under qualitative research, it has a goal of categorizing it chronologically and, many times, spatially through events that have been witnessed over time (Maxwell and Reybold 2015, 685). It is only fitting that this property of the research is a fit with our case. The effects of the refugee crisis are intended to be analyzed spatially in the two geographical regions and

chronologically, beginning from the Arab Spring of 2011 in Syria. Most importantly though, when one is to look into qualitative research's properties, he should look into the data analysis. Qualitative research uses "inductive, holistic, and narrative strategies rather than through quantification and statistical methods. Although numbers may be used in qualitative research, qualitative analysis does not begin with converting the data to numerical form (Maxwell and Reybold 2015, 685).

The qualitative approach, as with the quantitative one, has both advantages and disadvantages. A considerable advantage that is considered really important for this thesis, is the relative abundancy of the data that can be collected. Another fact that is positive when looking at material qualitatively is that there is a larger interpretation space than using a quantitative method. It gives space to interpreting experiences and phenomena based on observations and not just sheer numbers. Since we are looking at phenomena that are put spatially and temporarily in context, it becomes difficult to generalize the findings in a wider range of situations, diminishing to a certain extent the value of the research. In our case, this purely means that even if a viable and lasting solution was to be found in the Syrian refugee crisis, that does not mean that the solution can be applicable to other potential humanitarian crises that may arise in the future. It purely means, that based on the background of this humanitarian crisis, and having considered the actors involved, a given solution seem to be viable. One also has to think that not all available data is used in qualitative contexts. The researcher chooses based on personal observations, thus, restricting the objectivity of the conclusions of the research. The researcher's personal choosing of data cannot be avoided, thus, restricting the objectivity. The advantages though of choosing a qualitative research trumps the possible negative aspects of it for its abundancy in the literature that can be found.

Methodology – Comparative Case Study

This thesis will try to explore how the EU and Turkey have reacted to the Syrian refugee crisis that has been created since the Arab Spring in Syria in 2011. Since the two areas of exploration can be defined both temporally and spatially, the comparative case study method is going to be used in this thesis. The cases will be two; the EU and Turkey. They are going to be explored in terms of their reaction to the humanitarian crisis created, their policies regarding the matter, and their steps for collaboration to ensure a good solution for the people dislocated.

The reason why the case study method is going to be explored, is because it analyzes contemporary phenomena in ways that can be easily understood by wide audiences. Case studies are "to be carried out so that certain audiences will benefit – not just to swell the archives, but to help persons toward further understandings. […[if we are to help them (persons) understand social problems and social programmes, we must perceive and communicate in a way that accommodates their present understandings (Gomm, Hammersley, and Foster 2009, 3). Case studies can also be viewed as a way of reaching the information needed to form an opinion that can be considered valid and true. They can be seen as journeys to the truth of a phenomenon. They reach their destination by particularizing. "Truth lies in particulars. William Blake (2008) offered these intemperate words: To generalize is to be an idiot. To particularize is the lone distinction of merit. General knowledges are those that idiots possess (Gomm, Hammersley, and Foster 2009, 10). We are not to believe that generalizations are worthless. The thing that needs to be understood is that particularizations deserve merit. Our particular cases, as it will be seen, are defined in terms of their boundaries.

But what can be considered a case? A general approach to it would be, whatever can spark an interest which is strong enough to lead to an investigation. "The case need not be a person or enterprise. It can be whatever 'bounded system' is of interest. An institution, a programme, a responsibility, a collection or a population can be the case. This is not to trivialize the notion of 'cases' but to note the generality of the case study method in preparation for noting its distinctiveness" (Gomm, Hammersley, and Foster 2009, 13). In our case, the Syrian refugee crisis has been playing an important role in people's lives living in the EU and Turkey, thus, creating an interest to investigate the phenomenon and explore it. A case needs to be distinct, which means that it needs to be able to be clearly defined in all of its properties. This distinctiveness can be explored "in the first place by giving great prominence to what is and what is not 'the case' – the boundaries are kept in focus. What is happening and deemed important within those boundaries is considered vital and usually determines what the study is about, as contrasted with other kinds of studies where hypotheses or issues previously targeted by the investigators usually determine the content of study" (Gomm, Hammersley, and Foster 2009, 13–14). It is important that the case(s) is bounded on all fronts because it helps in its particularizing, which is the most important element of the method.

A case study, as a method, can be defined as the exploration, or intensive study, of one or more cases so to get a better understanding of them on a given subject. In our case, the subject is the Syrian refugee crisis. A case, on the other hand, can be defined as a phenomenon which has a temporal or a spatial boundary. The temporal boundary can refer to a single point in time or a period of time (Gerring 2007, 20–21). It is also possible that the case(s) in point, may have both said boundaries, which is what this case study will be. It is important to note, that in many studies, it is more difficult to define exact temporal boundaries, due to the fact that, it is not easy to track when a phenomenon exactly started in a country. This takes effect on our case as well. Both the cases that will be used can be defined spatially (country borders), but they cannot be defined with absolute certainty in terms of the time that the Syrian refugee crisis was felt in the country, let alone the time of their reaction on the matter. A more general definition of this method would be: "A strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence" (Robson 2002, 146). The latter definition can also be fitting in this case since it involves a more generic approach to case studies.

It is important to note that the method of case studies does not aim to generalizations of the phenomenon in question. It strictly aims to the cases in point. "It is widely believed that case studies are useful in the study of human affairs because they are down-to-earth and attention-holding, but they are not suitable bases for generalization. […] they may be epistemologically in harmony with the reader's experience and thus to that person a natural basis for generalization" (Gomm, Hammersley, and Foster 2009, 3). From this we can understand that whatever said in this thesis reflects the particular case that is being discussed.

Theory – International Regime Theory

This thesis seeks to explain how different actors have dealt with a specific issue differently from one another. This issue is the Syrian refugee crisis. It makes sense that the word regime will come into play. It seems appropriate to explore this under a notion of international regime. The international regime theory seems sufficient enough to help deeply explore the issue at hand.

Before explaining why this theory can work, one should define some key concepts first. A "regime" can be defined as "a set of principles, norms, rules, and procedures around which actors' expectations' converge. These serve to channel political action within a system and give it meaning" (Krasner 1986, 61–62). On the other hand, "Stephen Krasner formulated a now widely used definition of an international regime: principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given issue area" (Verbeek 2011, 2). Using this definition in our given topic, it can be seen that the international regime we are trying to explore is the EU-Turkey one, and the given issue area is the Syrian refugee crisis. "Each regime has a set of elites who are the practical actors within it. Governments of nation-states are the prime official members of most international regimes, although international, transnational, and sometimes subnational organizations may practically and legitimately participate" (Krasner 1986, 63).

It is understood that a regime is made by people and it can undergo changes based on various reasons. Two major categories of changes that Krasner identifies is the evolutionary vs. revolutionary change. When it comes to the evolutionary change, one can think of it as a change in interests. This type of change has the regimes "changing qualitatively because those who participate in them change their minds about interests and aims, usually because changes in information available to elites or new knowledge otherwise attained. We call this evolutionary change, because it occurs within the procedural norms of the regime, usually without major changes in the distribution of power among participants. Such change, undisturbing to the power structure and within the regime's "rules of the game", is rather exceptional and characteristic mainly of functionally specific regimes" (Krasner 1986, 65–66).

On the other hand, revolutionary change is the type of change that happens more often that the first one mentioned. It is easily understood that regimes will have some people being in a more advantageous position than others. The disadvantaged ones accept this situation due to the fact that "the costs of noncompliance are understood to be higher than the costs of compliance. But disadvantaged participants tend to formulate and propagate counterregime norms, which either circulate in the realm of rhetoric or lie dormant as long as those who dominate the existing regime preserve their power and their consequent ability to reward compliance and punish deviance" (Krasner 1986, 66). If, for some reason, the power structure alters, then the prevailing regime fall into danger. In this case, the status can be reversed completely, having the disadvantaged ones becoming the advantaged and vice versa. In our particular case, the Syrian refugees can be considered as the disadvantaged people that get into a country, seeking to build a life from scratch. This flow of people that enters the countries change the dynamic within the country itself, many times leading to different courses of action, whether the actors be the existing citizens or the government.

Another key issue when it comes to regimes is their bias, which plays an important role in many of the regime's aspects such as effectiveness and durability. "" Fairer" regimes are likely to last longer, as are those that call for side payments to the disadvantaged participants. […] Furthermore, it can make a difference whether the norms of a regime permit movement between the ranks of the advantaged and disadvantaged, as with the ascendance of some previously disadvantaged actors toward greater power over current issues in international finance" (Krasner 1986, 66). It seems as a natural progression to move on from these definitions into the international regime theory.

This theory "suggests that power is dispersed among many different agents, including states, international organizations, multi-national companies, and so on, that operate as tacit coalitions under similar understandings of procedures and desirable outcomes" (Verbeek 2011, 2). In our example, the

actors (EU and Turkey) handle the Syrian refugee crisis. It could be also argued that given Turkey's geographical position, it has a bigger say, and thus, more power, in defining the given issue's properties and how it has developed this far. The specific theory does not have a long past, it was developed based on the dissatisfaction of realism over the international relations. "As realist and other paradigms prove too limited for explaining an increasingly complex, interdependent, and dangerous world, scholars are searching for new ways to organize intellectually and understand international activity" (Krasner 1986, 61). The international regime theory was developed by John Gerard Ruggie in the early 1970s (Verbeek 2011, 2).

This theory has also worked as a foundation for a concept which helps us understand on a great extent why such given matters can only be viewed from an international perspective. "In 1977 Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye put forward their framework of *complex interdependence* as the major alternative to realism. International regimes were an essential ingredient to this approach. […] international regimes were the governing structures regulating interdependence (Verbeek 2011, 2). It makes a lot of sense for someone to think that interdependence is one of the major ways for someone to look into the Syrian refugee crisis if a valid solution is to be given. This is because of the great number of people dislocated. It makes sense that all of these people should not end up in only one country. Unions like the European Union should allocate the people accordingly. This is when each particular member of the EU come into play. If some members are to cooperate more willingly than others, then a certain dynamic is created that can create difficulties within the EU itself.

The theory has three main approaches which can all shed some light into our given topic. The first approach is the power-based approach. This approach has the creation of international regimes depending on its actors and whether they are powerful or not. "The power-based approach explains international regimes in terms of the distribution of power between the most salient actors in an international policy domain. A regime is founded, maintained, altered or abolished when this serves the most powerful actors. It is effective to the extent that these powerful actors are prepared to ensure compliance" (Verbeek 2011, 2). It would be interesting for someone to think how much more or less importance the Syrian refugee crisis would have if the immediate actors of dealing with it were players with less or more importance in the international arena.

The second approach that is used in this theory is the interest-based one. Since our actors face the same situation (refugee waves) over a period of time, it makes sense that these actors will seek to cooperate to have their interests met. This approach "argues that rational actors pursuing absolute gains will engage in long-term cooperation. Applying game-theoretical models, they demonstrated that when actors recurrently meet in similar situations, they will be able to develop trust in each other. […] Effective regimes may thus even produce situations in which actors are prepared to forgo short-term advantages in order to preserve long-term cooperation" (Verbeek 2011, 3). One possible application of this approach would have, for example, one of our actors legalizing more refugees if the other actor is to take back some.

The third and final approach to international regimes is the knowledge-based one. This specific approach has the ideas of the main actors on the issue empowering new actors. "The knowledge-based (or cognitivist) approach to international regimes focuses on the preference formation of states. Power- and interest-based approaches, take states' preferences as given and fixed. […] focusing on the impact of actors' ideas allows the power of non-state actors to be taken into account" (Verbeek 2011, 3–4). This specific approach brings non-state actors into play which can prove to be useful for dealing with our issue.

It should also be understood that an international regime occurs and functions within the international system. The term "international system" can be defined as follows: "The international system is made up of individual, constituent units and an ordering principle that arranges the structure of those units, together forming a whole toward an outside environment" (Engelbrekt 2011). Another key characteristic of the international system is the continuous interaction between its units. These interactions form different country interests which call for different actions based on those interests. These agreements, that are sparked by events (such as the Syrian refugee crisis), that are made based on country-interests between countries should be understood as an international regime. The units that comprise an international regime are still members of the international system with the latter expecting certain behaviors of the units of the international regime. In a way, an international regime defines certain actions, while creating duties and obligations, without necessarily having a hierarchical legal system. These actions, which are defined by duties and obligations, many times are different from the a given country's self-interests. This is why international regimes are a really interesting topic for exploration.

It is only natural, as with any other theory of international relations, that some people will have negatively criticized and questioned the theory's validity and soundness. There are some concepts within the theory that suggest that international regimes can provide services and goods by groups of people, who naturally, are in a more "superior" position than others. In our case, when the refugees flow in a country, naturally, the people that are already residents of that country are in a better position. This subgroup has the upper hand and it is considered more privileged. "If a privileged subgroup exists such that each member benefits from providing the good even without the cooperation from other members, the public good will be provided. Individual incentives *not* to contribute will increase as the size of the privileged subgroups increases" (Haggard and Simmons 1987, 503). This could be solved with an effective state, which can impose rules and laws that would help the situation. Nevertheless, it stands as a criticism.

Data Material

This thesis investigates an issue that is ongoing and recent, affecting many countries and many different people and mindsets. For these reasons, a number of qualitative sources will be used.

Stating the developments that have occurred in Syria since the Arab Spring of 2011 will use a combination of sources, from within the Syrian country and outside of it, as seen by other countries. Analyzing the two cases, these of the EU and Turkey will also require a combination of sources. Official documents will be used, in order to shed light into existing policies that affect both official residents and migrants. Journal articles will also be used in order to get a "on the field" approach for different outcomes that the refugee crisis creates. By analyzing these, one will be able to realize each of our cases incentives for cooperation between the parties in order to reach a viable outcome to the crisis.

For the theory and methodology, the sources that are used are academic books explaining the selected theory and methodology, and scientific encyclopedias, for defining some key concepts within them.

Limitations and Literature Review

In order to investigate the research question, the exploration had to be narrowed down in a number of ways. Geographically speaking, the thesis is limited into three areas; Syria, for explaining the developments that have occurred since the Arab Spring of 2011, and the EU and Turkey, for looking into the international regime of the refugee crisis. These areas cover a part of the crisis, but there are more to it. Temporarily speaking, this thesis looks at developments that have occurred from 2011 and onwards.

Regarding the areas chosen, one could argue that by looking into more geographical areas than those, a better understanding of the crisis and its possible solutions will be given. By looking into Syria's neighboring countries and their relations to the issue, one could possibly highlight more reasons and incentives for our cases to adopt certain behaviors for the matter. Regarding the temporal limitations of the thesis, one could say that there may be events that have occurred before 2011 and could shed light into today's situation. One could also argue, that there may be events to come that will drastically change the whole scene of the issue. All of these arguments are true, but there are always temporal and page limits when it comes to a thesis, limiting the possible perspectives that one can look at an issue from.

The literature chosen for this thesis, as stated earlier, is based on qualitative research. There are many aspects and many perspectives on the issue. It would be justifiable for someone to argue that the objectivity of the outcomes can be questioned. This is because quantitative researched offer numbers which are more difficult to argue against. The literature chosen for this thesis in no way present an objective outcome or an objective research. As explained in the "qualitative research" part of the thesis, it is up to the researcher to make the choices regarding the literature that he/she is going to use.

Analysis

The way this thesis is going to approach the issue at hand, is by analyzing the two geographical areas of interest (the EU and Turkey) regarding their stance and actions on the Syrian refugee crisis. After this section, in the discussion part, the collaboration and the prospects of its enhancement regarding the issue is going to be explored. Jumping into the analysis of the EU and Turkey will though make little sense if a background of the situation is not provided. The analysis will start with a brief description of the developments in Syria regarding the crisis since the Arab Spring of 2011, so to understand the basics of why the situation has reached the state it is in now. As mentioned earlier, the Syrian background that is going to be provided so to get a better understanding is by no means a thorough one, and it should in no way be considered as one of the main parts of this thesis.

Syria

If one could describe with two words the beginning of this long-standing humanitarian crisis, these words would be: Arab Spring. The Arab Spring was a series of mostly peaceful protests in different Arab countries like Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria. "The causes for these upheavals were similar:

anger, frustration, and antagonism toward authoritarian, oppressive, and corrupt rulers and regimes. The demands of the rebels were likewise similar: freedom, justice, equal rights, economic opportunities, and – significantly – also democracy" (Ma'oz 2014, 49). In Syria, the protests took place as a reaction to the oppressive policies and actions of the Syrian government with the head being Bashar al-Assad.

The Syrian case represents one of the most complex, and politically significant contemporary civil wars. The clash that has emerged since the Arab Spring between the Syrian government and rebel coalitions has left hundreds of thousands of dead, many more injured, and so many people displaced. "Large areas of the country have been depopulated or carved up into ethnic statelets, suffering from degraded rule of law and severe humanitarian hardship. The war in Syria has destabilized the Middle East, provided a staging group of terrorist organizations, and generated costly externalities, including some of the largest streams since the Second World War" (Lundgren 2016, 273).

In order for someone to understand this uprising, he/she has to look within many debates, some contained within the Syrian borders and others being international. The uprising has roots in "international and Middle East politics […], authoritarian upgrading and resilience, […] democratic transition, […] social movement theory, […] civil resistance, […] "new wars" and civil wars, and the debates over political Islam" (Hinnebusch and Imady 2018, 1).

What started as a peaceful demonstration of citizens for the above-mentioned reasons and demands, it soon became a battlefield since the Syrian government extended to even using live fire. "Syria's brutal dictator, Bashar al-Assad, has prevailed in the face of a mounting resistance by both religious and secular rebels who continue their struggle for a new democratic and pluralistic regime" (Ma'oz 2014, 50). The Arab Spring can be partially attributed to globalization and freedom of information. People in the Arab World naturally wanted to live a freer life like the one in the Western part of the world. What was not amounted for though, was the fact that "Arab and Muslim countries have not experienced, by and large, the evolutionary processes toward democracy seen in the histories of Western Europe and North America" (Ma'oz 2014, 50).

Many people did not expect the Arab Spring to reach Syria in the first place, mainly because the country's performance, especially in the 2000s was considerably satisfying if we are to compare it to other Arab countries. The world financial crisis of 2008 started bringing Syria's relative economic boom to an end, creating economic grievances (Hinnebusch and Imady 2018, 6). This led to an increase of the desire to change the regime. The existing regime though, being authoritarian, was unfriendly to anti-regime mobilization. Meaning that people that were opposed to the government found many difficulties succeeding in professional life.

Even though, there was enough mobilization for a possible democratic transition, that did not happen, mainly because the right circumstances were not met. The demonstrations started as non-violent ones. The numbers were enough to start the democratization process. The regime's use of violence was to be even expected by some people. This could be even used to the advantage of the demonstrators due to the fact that "the violence was expected to inflame opposition and spur large defections from the security forces or lead to foreign intervention" (Hinnebusch and Imady 2018, 8). What was not properly accounted for though, was Syria's "Sultanism". This "Sultanism" had the institutions weak in their autonomy. Much of their function was directly managed by the ruler. This led to the "no abandonment of the president by the military, as in Egypt and Tunisia, where its interests were distinct from the presidential families and where it enjoyed sufficient institutional autonomy to turn against Mubarak and

Ben Ali" (Hinnebusch and Imady 2018, 8). Thus, as a chain of events, the military's support to the ruler and its use of violence, led to the demonstrators' use of violence. The fact that the military never abandoned Assad, is the main reason for the unsuccessfulness of the protests.

The demonstrators took courage by the success of other Arab Spring movements. "Deep-seated economic grievances across the country and encouragement from the United States, Turkey and the Arab Sheikhdoms, the Syrian opposition gathered momentum. But with time, and in response to the brutality of the regime, it too adopted violent tactics"(Akbarzadeh and Conduit 2016, 8). It is the regime's violence in combination with the opposition's violent tactics that has led to the displacement of millions.

The situation that was prominent in the country, after the protests, was one of disarray and disorder. This is when different groups (mostly Militant Islamic Groups) took advantage of this to preach their ideas about radical Islamic ideals. One of these groups is the groups of al-Qaida, which have extended to using violence and have taken control of different areas. This certainly created constant tensions between the government, which strives for control, and the above-mentioned groups. This leads to great uncertainty, and thus, many people started fleeing the country in hope to gain better prospects for their future. "The Syrian government has been locked in a deadly battle with predominantly Sunni rebel opposition. Led by President Bashar al-Assad and his Ba'th party, the Syrian government has both a state and a civilian militia at its disposal" (Ma'oz 2014, 52), thus, constituting a dangerous environment for the whole country.

On the one hand, we have the Syrian government trying to maintain control as much as it can, and at the same time, take back as many areas as it possibly can and on the other hand, we have opposition forces.

> "Syrian opposition forces are comprised of the "National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (NCSROF), including the "Free Syrian Army" (FSA). However, these forces are devoid of heavy weapons; they are largely divided and are supported by different Arab states and Turkey. The more effective opposition forces (linked to al-Qaida) are the Jabhat al-Nusra (Front of Support) and the Islamic State of Iraq and (Greater) Syria (ISIS). They have been able to occupy several areas along Syrian borders with Turkey, Iraq, Israel and Lebanon" (Ma'oz 2014, 52).

One of the main reasons why the Syrian government has managed so far to maintain control is because the opposition is vastly divided, thus, there are outbreaks even between the opposition forces.

The continuing armed resistance was marked in July 2011 with the establishment of the Free Syrian Army. The divided opposition, which had heavy weapons at its disposal, will take the chance to increase fire and violence whenever the government uses violence to citizens. As with the case on the 15th of March 2015. "Protests in the city of Daraa were triggered by the arrest and torture of children held responsible for anti-regime graffiti. The uprising spread across the country and demonstrators called on President Bashar Al-Assad to step down" (Koenig 2017, 32). This, of course, made the regime react with violent repression and torture, thus, increasing violence and the death toll.

A first step of a form of reaction from the international scene is for the United Nations to condemn the violence and ask for actions to reduce it. The way the Security Council is structured though, in the Syrian case, does not operate well. All permanent members in the Security Council have a right (inherited

by the fact that these nations were the ones that created the United Nations) to veto whatever decision the Security Council is to take. The permanent members of this council are countries (France, United Kingdom, United States, Russia and China) that come from very different historical and cultural backgrounds, thus, many times leading to clash of interests and vast ineffectiveness of the council. "The UN veto powers China and Russia, the latter of which a traditional ally of the Syrian regime, refused to go beyond diplomatic condemnations of violence. They rejected attempts to invoke the responsibility to protect as they accused the Western-led coalition in Libya of overstepping their mandate and promoting regime change" (Koenig 2017, 32).

Stronger efforts for a more solid and longer-lasting ceasefire were made when the Islamic State was consolidated as a significant actor in the civil war in 2014 to 2015, thus, leading to more international attention on the Syrian civil war. Many important and leading powers made the counter-terrorism efforts their priority. "These developments paved the way for a re-energized and concerted diplomatic push from October 2015" (Lundgren 2016, 278). The United States of America and the Russian Federation, being co-chairs of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), were determined to provide support to end the conflict and introduce the conditions for a Syrian-led political transition process. This led to the terms, which were then fully supported by the United Nations Security Council, for a ceasefire beginning in February 2016 ("JOINT STATEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AS CO-CHAIRS OF THE ISSG, ON CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES IN SYRIA, FEBRUARY 22, 2016" 2016). In April 2016 "the shaky ceasefire between the Syrian government and opposition forces collapsed, returning Syria to all-out war and representing a significant setback for the chances of peace" (Akbarzadeh and Conduit 2016, 8). This led to even bigger displacements of the people caught in the middle of the conflicts. At the time of the ceasefire stop more than 4.8 million refugees were outside of Syria.

Regarding international regimes, the case of the Syrian Civil War should be seen as the foundation of the creation of the international regime in handling the refugees. As we have already seen in the thesis, the broadly accepted definition of international regime is given by Krasner. "International regimes are principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue-area" (Kamis and Hasenclever 2011). The refugee waves that were created because of the Syrian Civil War created a situation between different countries (namely Turkey and EU Member States). The actors of this international regime should create the principles, rules, norms and decision-making procedures. The actors should respect the agreements made between the actors, while trying to satisfy as much as possible their own interests. As already states in the definition the "actor expectations converge".

Generally, the case of Syria presents an amalgamation of things that have gone wrong, causing the ordinary people to be paying the price, whether this price is blood, displacement, or succumbing to inhumane conditions as the new standard. The vast improvement of quality of life, technology and ideas calls for the action of the rest of the humanity to bring the people of Syria who pay the price back to their lives as they were before the civil war, or to offer them new prospects for life outside of Syria. The resolving of the civil war calls for more international action by many actors. Offering a better life for the people of Syria that are displaced, calls for Syria's neighbors to act decisively. The immediate neighbors that would, at least theoretically, be able to help on a high level, are Turkey and the member states of the European Union. The next part of the thesis will try to analyze the European Union's actions for helping the people of Syria throughout the years since the Arab Spring.

European Union

It seems appropriate for someone, who is to look into the migrant waves from Syria, to understand Europe's geography. The continent's geography is a key to connecting many other continents together. From its south, Africa is extremely close. From its southwest one can enter the Arab World. These two neighbors offer some valid explanation as to why the EU is the key connector. The reason is the difference in culture and living standards. Whenever there is a major outbreak, there are many people, who naturally want something better for their lives, thus, making them take the decision to enter Europe in hope for a better future. There are political refugees (as with the case of Syria) and migrants (economic refugees), who are mostly people coming from Africa. "The refugee and migrant crisis has been one of the most important and divisive issues in recent European history, [...] most political refugees come to Europe through Greece" (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 294).

What is a refugee though? According to "the 1951 United Nations Convention, relating to the Status of Refugees, defines a refugee, as a person, outside their state of nationality because of well-grounded fear of persecution because of fear of their religion, race, nationality, belongingness to a particular social group or political opinion" (Fisseha 2017, 34).

As seen earlier in the thesis, the refugee crisis started a little after the Arab Spring took place in Syria in 2011. When the political refugees started entering into the European Union, they were provided with considerable humanitarian assistance, and their needs were prioritized. The main entrance of the political refugees coming into the European Union is through Turkey, which is a geographical immediate neighbor to Syria. "However, after battling with the unprecedented influx, the greatest Europe has seen since the Second World War; the illegal migration into EU territories and failed strategies to stop it; inconclusive conferences on the migration crisis; the EU was forced to change its strategy by striking a deal that prevents further refugee influx from Turkey" (Fisseha 2017, 45). It is important for someone to note that the way through which the refugees seeking asylum enter the European Union is either a really difficult land journey or a really difficult sea journey. When they enter the European Union, they are in extreme need of basic humanitarian assistance. Another important thing is that many of the people entering are children, thus, requiring a different approach including special protection needs. A solution to the way that these refugees enter the EU needs to be given and set as a priority since there are many people who do not make it through the journey, dying before reaching the European Union.

The relations between the EU and Syria, before the Arab Spring were mainly governed by a Cooperation Agreement which was signed in 1977. It should also be noted that Syria was one of the founding members of the Union of the Mediterranean. In 2008, there were attempts by the EU to enhance the cooperation between the two parties with an Association Agreement which was postponed indefinitely by the Syrian side "due to concerns about the impact of trade liberalization on the Syrian economy and the rejection of human rights clause that some Member States were insisting on" (Koenig 2017, 32). The relations between the two were then mostly governed by ENPI (European Neighborhood Instrument).

What was absent in the relationship between Syria and the European Union after the ignition of the Arab Spring was a collective diplomatic approach. The EU, as the years following the Arab Spring has

shown, does not have a fully unified approach to the humanitarian crisis. The Syrian side needed to provide representatives, not only for the people being dislocated to the EU which started sometime after the Arab Spring, but also for the people in the country that sought a regime change, which was the reason the Arab Spring happened in the first place. "On 23 August 2011, the Syrian National Council (SNC) was established and declared itself as representative of the Syrian people. At a meeting on 10 October 2011, the EU cautiously welcomed 'the efforts of the opposition to establish a united platform' and mentioned the SNC's creation as 'positive step forward' (Koenig 2017, 33). The Syrian National Council was recognized for its legitimacy by the EU as a whole on 27 February 2012.

According to Reuters, the first Syrian refugees to enter the European Union was in August 2012, through sea, arriving in Italy. Since then, it was steadily increasing. Countries like Bulgaria in 2013, sought help from the EU and Red Cross to meet the needs for the emergency accommodations needed (Fisseha 2017, 45). The flux was steadily increasing especially for the countries being geographically close to the points of entrance. Reading the signs of the events in Syria, it was easy to understand that the condition in Syria were only to be worsened, and thus, creating even bigger refugee waves going toward the European Union. The feeling that the EU should step up to the challenge imposed by the developments in Syria was becoming stronger and stronger. The 'Towards a comprehensive EU approach to the Syrian crisis" was issued on 24 June 2013 by the HR/VP and the Commission, having four main objectives:

1. Support a sustainable political solution

2. Prevent regional destabilization from spillover to neighboring countries

3. Address the humanitarian situation and

4. Address the consequences of the conflict on and in the EU (Koenig 2017, 34)

"In September (2013), Amnesty International reported that Sweden became the first EU state to grant permanent residency to all asylum seekers, as well as the right to family reunification. […] The decision was internationally commended" (Fisseha 2017, 45). For the year of 2015, and only by August, there were more than 300.000 asylum application across Europe. It got to a point that in September of this year, there were more than 8.000 refugees entering the European Union on a daily basis.

Table: Data as at February 2016; includes estimated cross-border arrivals, UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) registered refugees, asylum applicants, and resettled refugees (Fisseha 2017, 45).

Germany	484,000 (estimated arrivals Dec. 2015) 306,703 (applicants Dec 2015)	Bulgaria	17,527 (applicants to Dec 2015)
Greece	496,119 (arrivals to May 2016) 54,574 (estimated in state May 2016) 5,615 (applicants to Dec 2015)	Belgium	15,744 (applicants to Dec 2015)
Sweden	107,966 (applicants to Dec 2015)	France	11,402 (applicants to Dec 2015)
Hungary	72,505 (applicants to Dec 2015)	United Kingdom	9,292 (applicants to Dec 2015) 5,102 (resettled 2015)
Croatia	55,000 (estimated September 2015) 386 (applicants to Dec 2015)	Spain	8,365 (applicants to Dec 2015)
Austria	88,385 (applicants to Dec 2015)	Italy	2,538 (applicants to Dec 2015)
Netherlands	30,698 (applicants to Dec 2015)	Romania	2,525 (applicants to Dec 2015)
Denmark	19,433 (applicants to Dec 2015)	Finland	1,127 (applicants to Dec 2015)

Source: UNHCR (2015)

The EU Dublin Regulation commands that "an asylum seeker in one state must be retuned back to that state, should they attempt onward migration to another state" (Fisseha 2017, 46). This naturally created many problems, many of them indicating the wrong approach that the European Union had adopted regarding refugees. Many refugees directly sought asylum in the countries in which they entered, creating a big number of applications in countries like Greece, Italy and Hungary. This led to many complaints about the burden-sharing system. Many criticized it because it placed great responsibility to the countries of entry, while other EU member states denied giving assistance. This, in comparison with the economic problems that many countries of entry were facing anyway, created a series of issues. This approach, which was not so well received, led many countries, such as Germany and the Czech Republic, "to suspend the Dublin Regulation for Syrians and start processing their asylum applications directly. In October of the same year, the United Nations human rights chief claimed the Czech Republic is holding migrants in "degrading" and jail-like conditions" (Fisseha 2017, 46).

The year 2016 had more countries reacting in a not so assisting way to the refugees coming from Syria. Austria and Croatia introduced policies on decreasing the number of refugees that would be allowed through their borders. This led the refugees to be stuck mostly in Greece. There were many though, justifiably believing that Greece would not able to cope with the great number of refugees being scattered across its islands due its constantly deteriorating economic conditions. The help that was received by the European Union was not sufficient for providing humane conditions for the refugees while disrupting the citizens' life as little as possible.

As the feeling of the unjust burden-sharing system was becoming stronger there were some attempts to adjust the legal and policy instruments in ways that would help the states that were most in need. An aspect of those attempts was the "new quota system to relocate and resettle asylum seekers among EU states so as to alleviate the burden on states on the outer borders of the Union; deploying

teams in Greece and Italy to joint-process asylum applications; strengthening border security; and establishing a Common Security and Defense" (Fisseha 2017, 46). A system that was put into place had the GDP, population, unemployment of each member state, among other factors, taken into account when the distribution of the refugees was carried out. Unfortunately, though, there were reactions mainly from the Visegrád Group (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic). They "declared in a September meeting in Prague that they would not accept any compulsory long-term quota on redistribution of immigrants" (Fisseha 2017, 46). The economic conditions that were present in many countries of entry, such as Italy and Greece, created even social costs as a cause of the waves of refugees. Citizens of the countries were feeling like the governments had the refugees' priorities higher than the citizens', at the moment when unemployment was rising. By the end of 2015, the EU Member States came into an agreement to relocate about 40.000 people from Italy and Greece.

The dissatisfaction of countries, such as Greece and Italy, is a perfect example showing that the international regime for handling the Syrian refugees has flaws. Within an international regime, as with the international system, the actors expect each other to behave in certain ways. The international regime for handling the Syrian refugees presupposes that the actors within it will indeed help each other and the Syrian people out. Interests will inevitably converge. The best actor would be the actor that satisfies the actors of the international regime and his own interests at the same time. Greece and Italy were unsatisfied because since the EU member states are considered as actors of this international regime, many of them did not help as they were expected, thus, creating disturbances in the international regime.

The years 2015 and 2016 proved to be extremely challenging not only for the entry countries such as Italy and Greece, but also for many others such Austria, Germany, Hungary, France, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. This happened because more than 1.3 million refugees and migrants reached those countries. Even though there was some relief for the entry countries, they were still heavily burdened, "particularly after the closure in March 2016 of the so-called Balkan route from Greece to Germany, previously used by at least 700.000 migrants" and refugees (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 295). The constant increase of the flux surely created feelings of a desire to stop the influx without taking really into consideration the atrocities taking place in the countries of origin. The above reactions can be deemed justifiable. This is the time for the European Union to spark the necessary cooperative spirit and provide solutions and burden-sharing options for dividing the work for the Member States, maintaining at the same time refugees' needs. In 2015, months before the biggest refugee wave entered the European Union, "Italian prime minister Matteo Renzi […] described the refugee crisis as a European challenge, not just an Italian or Greek problem. In August 2016, Renzi renewed the call, stating that Europe's most urgent need is not to hinder arrivals but to 'block departures from the countries of origin'" (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 295).

In the struggle of adjusting to the new realities, there have been European bodies that have helped in providing humanitarian assistance through the years since the Arab Spring, for the people of Syria being displaced. The European body that has helped since then is the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department, which has provided help for the refugees in many ways. Among other thigs, the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department helps refugees when they are in the transit states outside of the European Union's borders. It provides the necessary initial assistance to the refugees in EU Member States. It places the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism at the disposal of EU Member States so for them to find the most efficient ways to use it. The department also provides humanitarian assistance to all the key states from which refugees arrive in the EU (Fisseha

2017, 47). Besides these functions, it also provides emergency funding to the Member States that are overwhelmed by sudden influx of refugees. This emergency funding is used for the provision of the refugees' basic first needs, such as medicine, food and shelter. It should be noted that "the Commission also supports refugees in Turkey who have fled violence in both Syria and Iraq, with particular concentration on vulnerable refugees living outside of camps" (Fisseha 2017, 47). That is not to say of course that the European Union is alone in this overwhelming need of providing humanitarian assistance. Both individual EU Member States and the EU as a whole has partnered with many international humanitarian agencies. Some of those agencies would be the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WPF), Red Cross and others. These EU bodies and international organizations can be considered as tools for making the international regime. They are extra layers that have the actors of the international regime more in check, ensuring on a higher level that their behavior in regard to the Syrian refugee crisis will be indeed the one that is expected of them.

Germany, under the leadership of Angela Merkel, has proven to be the Member State that has really tried to establish a just burden-sharing approach for all the EU Member States regarding the refugee crisis. In 2015, there were many refugees being stuck in Hungary. Germany opened its borders to those refugees, welcoming more than 1 million since then. Angela Merkel "declared at the end of August 2015 that there are no limits to the number of refugees Germany can accept, coining her most famous phrase, 'We can do it', or 'We can cope'" (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 295). Even though, Merkel's announcements were welcoming and warmhearted, they created some issues. Firstly, Merkel seemed to partially defy the Dublin conventions, which declared that the first country that a refugee enters, it is going to be the country in which this specific refugee can seek asylum and no other country. Besides that, by unilaterally saying something like that, Merkel, on some level, created EU immigration and refugee policy. "By inviting large numbers of migrants and refugees to travel 'now or never' without consultation among the EU-28, she put considerable burdens on other EU nations such as Italy and Greece, given that most migrants from the African continent cannot reach Germany directly but have to enter the EU in Italy or Greece (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 296). Merkel's policy was both commended and criticized. There were people that welcomed this policy and greeted it as great humanitarian gesture. On the other hand, others saw it as a policy serving German interests "given the German labor force shortages, historically low unemployment, historically low interest rates, rising tax revenues" (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 296).

Accepting large numbers of refugees that come from immensely culturally different countries, can create some other issues too. Germany has also been receiving growing criticism, both from within the country and other EU countries. There have been talks about Germany's level of cultural preparedness for receiving such a large number of Muslim refugees and the impacts that this would have on the society. According to the 2006 Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung's report, right-wing extremism was "neither a problem at the margins of the German society nor was it mainly a phenomenon of Eastern Germany, since it could be found in the very middle of German society" (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 296). Unfortunately, the political developments that have taken place in the latest years seem to verify these findings. Asylum seeker homes were attacked in Germany more than 1.000 times in 2015 alone. These attacks are complemented by the fact that "an anti-migration party, the AfD (Alternative for Germany), rose to new levels of popularity, winning seats both in Eastern German and Western German regional parliaments in 2016" (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 296). After all these political developments and attacks that took

place in Germany, Merkel admitted errors regarding the refugee policy. Her famous saying did not stand any longer because of the right-wing rise in the EU. Angela Markel still insists though, that the right way of dealing with this humanitarian crisis, is to accommodate the people in need.

One cannot really describe the response cycle of the European Union in regard to the refugee crisis without, at some point, stumbling on the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). It was stated, in 2006, from the European Commission that "if the ENP cannot contribute to addressing conflicts in the region, it will have failed in one of its key purposes" (Koenig 2017, 19). The unprecedented migratory flows though, has left eleven out of the sixteen ENP partners with some form "of frozen, intra or inter-state conflict". The European Neighborhood Policy has had different focuses throughout different times. It is widely believed that ENP as a concept has failed many more times than it has been successful. It was, of course, expected that the ENP would have some form of reaction with the ignition of the Arab Spring in Syria. As it was indeed mentioned in the 2011 ENP review:

> "rising to the challenge requires that EU and Member State policies be much more closely aligned than in the past, in order to deliver the common message and the coherence that will me our actions effective. EU instruments and policies will be effective only if properly backed by Member State policies. Business as usual is no longer an option if we want to make our neighborhood a safer place and protect our interests" (Koenig 2017, 24).

It is widely understood though that the Syrian situation calls for more than just a solution to this particular humanitarian crisis. A plan needs to be developed so that the European Union can be ready to cope with such phenomena. From all the tools that the EU has now at its disposal, the European Neighborhood Policy is the one that can, through serious tuning, provide the framework of the way of working on such cases. The 2015 ENP review called "for horizontal and vertical coherence […] which identified comprehensive stabilization as a key overarching objective for the short- to medium-term. […] There was a clear parallel to the EU's Global Strategy published in June 2016, which made fostering resilience in neighboring countries one of its main priorities "(Koenig 2017, 25). Both documents, that is the ENP and the EU's Global Strategy, have many things in common and many times they complement each other. One of the main things is the highlighting of the need for the EU to be more flexible regarding the use of the Union's financial instruments. This necessity of this new approach would surely help the countries that are the entry points for the refugees, allocating more resources in order to help the countries and the people being dislocated. Generally, the Syrian case regarding the EU and ENP has called for more horizontal and institutional coherence. The Syrian crisis has "gradually inserted the ENP in the EU's crisis response cycle by using European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) funds for security-related aims and as a bridge between short-term humanitarian and longer-term development aid" (Koenig 2017, 36).

The influx of the refugees has changed many things in the European Union. There are many countries that have been more welcoming than others. That was though, to be expected. Past experiences have revealed that in the case of Europe, it is increasingly difficult to find a truly unified consensus to many issues, because of the vastly different backgrounds of the countries comprising it. The idea is, though, that consensus comes through compromise. It has been understood that Germany has tried to be the country that will lead the efforts for integration of the Syrian refugees into a fair European reality. Sweden can be claimed that is on the same page with Germany. Both of these countries have been migrant-targets. Both countries have invested heavily into the migrants' integration. At least superficially,

it seems as if both countries have truly welcomed all the applicants. Many times, though, what is not accounted for, is the fact that both countries rely heavily to Turkey for their plans. They are politically relied "on the EU's so-called 'refugee pact' with Turkey that foresees Turkey de facto closing of its borders to migrants and that for every Syrian refugee sent back one can legally immigrate to the EU" (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 301). What can be, thus, consequently understood is that welcoming approaches of those countries have also as a target to manage the size of the influx. One of the steps that Germany has taken to integrate the refugees new laws (such as the one in May 2016) that would oblige the refugees to participate in compulsory job training and German language courses. What is really interesting to consider is the fact that Germany has created measures to "prevent the creation of so-called "ethnic colonies", refugees will not have the right to leave their designated place of residency, as most of the refuges tend to move to places where their compatriots already live – a trend that, according to British government sources, may have been co-responsible for the Brexit vote in June 2016"(Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 301).

Other EU countries on the other hand, has chosen to be stricter with the refugees allowed (if any) to cross their borders. The examples of Austria and Hungary have showed that they chose to increase border controls and raise fences. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has chosen too to fund a wall at its border to France. Other countries such as the Netherlands have chosen to rely more on the EU. The Netherlands "put their hopes in the European 'Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees' pact that was stipulated in March 2016, formalized in May of the same year as Pact of Amsterdam" (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 301). Italy and Greece have been the EU countries that have been affected the most by the refugee waves. Both countries have been trying since 2015 to establish a possible European refugee treaty to ensure that the redistribution of refugees arriving at their shores to the other European Nations will be 'fair'. This approach though is yet to take full effect. "Until fall 2016, barely 1.000 of the 100.000s of refugees and migrants have been 'distributed', while many have disappeared before their 'distribution', choosing to go underground"(Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 302). There also countries within the EU, that are almost completely unaffected by the Syrian humanitarian crisis. Examples of such countries would be Portugal and Estonia. There are also countries, that even though remain largely unaffected by the refugee waves, they try to create policies that heavily control the influx. Such an instance would be Romania, which has asked "for a strong position to secure Europe's borders and to fight against the origins of the migration wave. On that occasion Romania's prime minister, Dacian Ciolos said: "We must secure the outer EU borders effectively and completely control them, in order to avoid any uncontrolled immigration" – despite the fact that Romania is the second-poorest country in the EU and thus is serving mainly as a transit ground for refugees on their way to Western Europe, thus, recording few asylum applications" (Karolewski and Benedikter 2017, 302).

In conclusion of the ways that the European Union has reacted to the Syrian refugee crisis throughout the years since the Arab Spring of 2011, one can mainly divide these ways into two big categories. The first one would be the actions that the EU has taken within the country of Syria, that is, to support the -uncoordinated- efforts of the people for a democratic change and provide humanitarian assistance for the people within the country in need. The other category is the actions that the EU has taken within the EU itself to facilitate both the needs of the countries affected by the influx and the refugees themselves. This is where the theory of international regimes is more visible. The EU tries to regulate the behaviors of the actors of the international regime for handling the Syrian refugee crisis. The difficult part for the EU is to accomplish that by trying to satisfy, as much as possible, the interests of the

countries involved as well. Other than that, through the analysis that has been given, it can be seen that there are many countries that have unilaterally decided and created policies as to how these countries independently will react to the refugee waves. These unilateral decisions hinder and make the international regime misfunctioning For the biggest part of these unilateral decisions, the policies subsequently created, are mostly on the conservative side, limiting the amount of assistance that these countries should provide to the refugees. There are European countries that have led the efforts of creating more welcoming environments for the refuges. There are countries that have been striving to create European policies to facility fairer distribution of the refugees across all the European nations. There are also countries that have been trying to reduce the assistance that should be given from Europe as a whole.

Turkey

Along with the European Union, Turkey has been the largest recipient of Syrian refugees, mainly because of their geographical position, which places the country as the recipient place from the northern Syrian border. Turkey has been mainly used from the refugees as the middle ground for crossing and making their way into the European Union. Besides that, though, there are many thousands of refugees that stay in Turkey, trying to make a new life there. As it can be seen by the website of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are more than 3.5 million registered refugees in Turkey:

Source: UNHCR for refugees in Turkey ("Situation Syria Regional Refugee Response" n.d.)
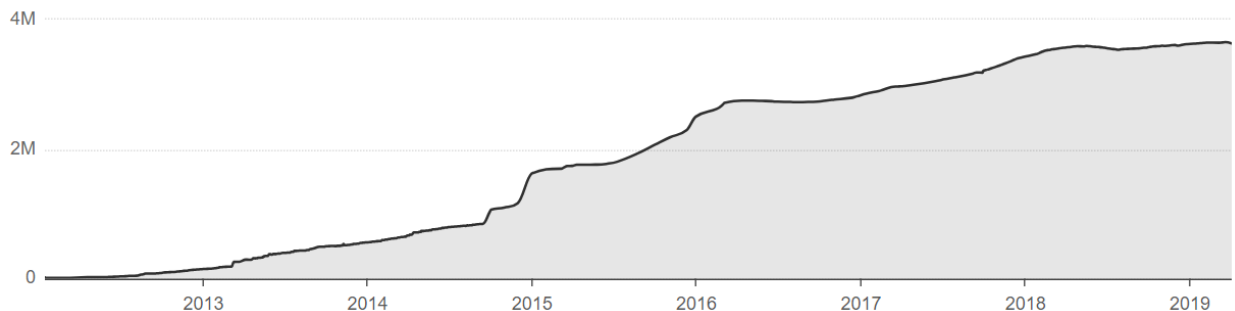
It is also worth noticing, just to get the idea of the people relocated after the events of the Arab Spring that the registered refugees in Syria in January 2012, were less than 10.000. The close to 4 million refugees that were reported in Turkey by August 2018, are mainly distributed in four key provinces: Gaziantep, Hatay, Istanbul and Saniurfa (UN High Commissioner for Refugees 2018, 1). It easily becomes understandable that such a big number of people distributed in only four provinces will definitely create a lot of changes in the areas affected. Turkey is no exception to that. With Turkey's national population amounting to roughly 75 million, the current number of refugees make more than 5% of the total population in the country. "For a country that has never experiences such a large-scale, sudden flow of foreigners, demographic changes in the composition of the population and labor force will yield unprecedented implications" (Azevedo, Yang, and Inan 2015, 2).

When Syria's civil war started, the condition of Turkey should be noted. It was in the process of amending and developing its reception and asylum systems to conform to international and, most

importantly, to European standards, by creating a new *Law on Foreigners and International Protection* in 2013. This new law had the Turkish authorities restricted in the ways it can handle the Syrian refugee crisis. "Instead, management of the crisis was left in the hands of national organizations working on the ground, in camps, without larger strategic and policy guidance" (Icduygu 2015, 1). What also should be mentioned is the fact that this new law did not alter older policies, creating confusion and leaving channels of aid unavailable to the refugees. Older policies favored people that had Turkish descend and culture. The asylum seeker procedures favored Europeans since they "are eligible for recognition as refugees, while non-Europeans receive temporary protection status and are expected at some point to resettle in a third country" (Icduygu 2015, 1). Turkey's efforts to handle the Syrian refugee crisis can be deemed as unilateral. It asked for little or no help by international organizations. Such behaviors can be understood as being contrary to the international regime created by the Syrian refugee crisis. It is to be expected that unilateral actions can create problems to the collaboration between the actors of the international regime.

There are many differences between the inflow of Syrians and other kind of flows entering countries, such as economic migrants. "First, the sheer volume of Syrian refugees and the short time-frame in which they entered Turkey is unprecedented. For the case of Syrians in Turkey, or displaced populations in general, large movements of refugees are not restricted due to humanitarian reasons. Second, formal immigration processes are controlled, limited, and regulated by destination countries" (Azevedo, Yang, and Inan 2015, 2). This makes the focus and the approach needed to study the issue very different from the approach that someone would have in studying normal flows of migrants.

The government of Turkey has been setting a global precedent by using two distinct features in the approach it adopts. "(i) A non-camp approach. Only 12 percent of the total number of SuTPs (Syrians under Temporary Protection) are living in tents and temporary shelters; the rest are settled in urban areas, where they seek their own accommodation and work opportunities. (ii) A government-financed approach. By September 2015, the GoT (Government of Turkey) has spent an estimated $7.6 billion on its response to the Syrian refugees" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 2). The non-camp approach that Turkey has adopted has vast majority of the displaced Syrian refugees resettled in Turkish urban areas. Giving them the responsibility of getting their own accommodation and looking for work opportunities on their own. "Experience shows that when refugees are supported in becoming socially and economically self-reliant, and given freedom of movement and protection, they are more likely to contribute economically to their host country. They are also more likely to be able to undertake a successful return process" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 2).

In 2013 the government of Turkey created the policy around which much of Turkey's response was based. This policy got the name: 6458: Law on Foreigners and International Protection, which subsequently created a Temporary Protection (TP) regime for the Syrian refugees.

> "The TP Regulation was prepared pursuant to Article 91 and put into force on 22 October 2014. It sets out how TP status is issued and the specific provisions for admission, registration and exit while under temporary protection in Turkey. It also outlines the rights and responsibilities of those under temporary protection; regulates the TP identification process; services to be provided to persons under TP; and outlines the coordination between national, local and

   international agencies involved in the response" ("Turkey's Response to the
   Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 3).

It should be noted that this policy regarded both registered and not registered refugees. Meaning that every Syrian refugee that crossed the Turkish border was to be enlisted under the Temporary Protection. Besides this government-led legal framework there are other parameters that have aided and defined the Turkish response to the Syrian refugee crisis. These parameters include "many acts of individual kindness [...] One survey across a large sample of 18 provinces indicates that 31 percent of Turkish respondents had made a personal financial contribution in support of Syrian refugees"("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 3). It should also be noted that the status of Temporary Protection has a temporary nature. The plan that Turkey had was to help by providing high level of services to the refugees, believing though, that they were to return soon back home and that the number that was to enter the country would be limited and generally manageable.

   That is, though, not to say that there are not Syrian refugees living in camps in Turkey. The number though that lives under camp condition is a lot smaller than the one expected. "The camps are all managed and financed by Turkey through AFAD (Disaster and Emergency Management Authority). While AFAD utilized UNHCR camp guidelines, the GoT (Government of Turkey) designed its own approach"("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 4). The people working in those camps are a mixture of Turkish government employees along with some NGO involvement. What started as a first emergency camp with 24 hours of the first Syrian refugee wave that crossed the border, has evolved to be 25 camps across the Syrian-Turkish border. Those camps have received praise for their cleanliness and high standards. "UNHCR has declared the Turkish-led and Turkish-financed camp management as "emergency response of a consistently high standard" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 5). Due to the high number of people though that continues to insert the Turkey by the day, there are increasing concerns of the future financial capabilities, with many people feeling that the quality standards and services are doomed to substantially be decreased.

   The non-camp approach that Turkey has adopted for the vast majority of the refugees cannot be praised enough. It sets the country apart from many other countries (many of them within the European Union). The approach of placing the refugees into camps which are supported by external humanitarian agencies has proved to be ineffective with serious limitations, especially in the longer-term regarding the refugees' fully integration within the host country society. "Integrating support for refugees into mainstream government service provision can be more cost effective than setting up large-scale camps and parallel humanitarian service delivery channels." ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 5). The approach that Turkey has adopted has led many Syrian refugees entering Turkey with assets to invest in the country in many ways. Preliminary observations that have been noted regarding SuTPs (Syrians under Temporary Protection) show that there are some positive trends on the Turkish economy. The gist of the above is that when refugees are welcomed in a host country while given the chances to truly integrate there are substantially more chances that the refugee will provide for the host country, while on the other hands, when refugees are placed in camps with no true chances of integration, the cost for the host country becomes more difficult to bear because the refugees are not truly given the chance to contribute.

   Even though the Turkish approach is to be praised, it does not come without problems. Tensions have been noted down by local communities regarding competition over jobs, cultural differences and constantly rising rent prices. "Turkish families recognize the humanitarian imperative to respond to SuTPs and show much generosity toward them; yet they are also deeply concerned about the social

consequences of the presence of SuTPs in their communities" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 5).

The Turkish government allowed for additional guidelines to be introduced so Syrians under Temporary Protection to be able to enter the labor market. For the Syrian refugees to do that though, they need to have obtained a work permit, which is far from easy to obtain. Thus, this has led many refugees to seek employment in the informal sector, with low skill jobs providing less than enough income. As a natural progression of things, this has led the Syrians in Turkey to rely on savings and selling assets (mainly jewelry) to be able to sustain themselves, while increasing the refugees' demands for job opportunities.

Regarding the education that the Syrian refugees receive in Turkey, some important efforts have been made. "The Turkish approach to school provision for SuTPs (Syrians under Temporary Protection) has taken three main forms: (i) Integrating Syrian children into the Turkish education system; (ii) allowing community-based education (CBE) programs to run from within the Syrian community, […] (iii) facilitating Syrian children to attend SuTP-designated temporary education centers (TIECs), which are supervised by the Ministry of Education" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 7). The enrollment rates of the Syrian refugees within the camps is higher than that outside of the camps. Recent enrollment rates data show an increase which can be attributed to the Turkish government leading more efforts to open up more spaces for Syrian children within the Turkish education system.

As mentioned earlier, there have been social tensions in Turkey regarding the integration of the Syrians living outside of camps. Those tensions are considered to be increased in the southeast of Turkey. "These tensions seem to be most commonly articulated in concerns over increasing rents, decreasing wages, increasing job competition, longer waiting times for hospital services, and the rise of polygamy and crime" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 9). There have been surveys regarding the locals' opinion on the policies regarding the SuTPs. Specifically the German Marshall Fund conducted a survey in October 2015 which indicated that "68 percent of respondents wanted more restrictive policies; 73 percent said the existing SuTPs should be asked to go home, whereas 17 percent said it depended on the circumstances, and only 8 percent said they should be offered legal status in Turkey" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 9). What is many times misunderstood though is the fact that the benefits the refugees receive under SuTP vary very much depending on the province and whether the refugees live in the host community or in camps. The services many times do not extend to host communities. "There is a need for a transparent framework and plan on SuTPs' rights and entitlements that is coordinated with and communicated to the host communities" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 10).

General comments on hosting countries indicate that the displacement crisis poses a threat to procedures of development. The displaced population globally amounts to 1%, and this part of the global population is among the poorest, most vulnerable and most excluded. "They are overwhelmingly hosted in developing countries, where they are often viewed as an additional burden on already stresses national systems and poverty reduction efforts" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 12). What we can draw though from the Turkish example is that there is an alternate approach to how refugees can be handled in the host country. The Turkish approach is by no means a perfect approach, but with refinement and consistency it can be a solution to a problem that becomes more global by the day. This particular approach sets the ground for open markets for refugees where they can be given substantial chances for employment and in return, the host country to see positive

economic trends, leading to a better integrated refugee who gets the feeling that it's up to him/her whether he/she wants to start the return process. The current way of handling the refugees (which is adopted in many EU member states) is one that gives the refugee the feeling that they are not truly welcomed in the host country and that they cannot get true opportunities. What should always be the concerns while undertaking the procedure of integrating refugees in host countries are the following: "Strengthening national and local institutions to respond to displacement crises, […] maximizing refugees' self-reliance, […] undertaking socioeconomic pressures on host communities, […] managing host-refugee tensions" ("Turkey's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Road Ahead" 2015, 12).

Even though someone can easily find sources that praise the approach the Turkey has chosen to follow, there are other sources characterizing this approach as not well thought of. The generous open-door policy that Turkey has chosen to follow has made the country the host of the largest group of Syrian refugees. The big number that is reported does even include the unregistered refugees that are within the country, thus, the true figure really remains a mystery. "These burgeoning numbers are putting Turkey's reception capacity under strain. Turkish reception policies were at the outset predicated on the assumption that the conflict would come to a swift conclusion, allowing the Syrian "guests" (a word chosen over "refugees") to return home, and precluding the need to plan for their long-term or permanent stay in Turkey" (Icduygu 2015, 1). The fact though, that the numbers of Syrian refugees inserting the country steadily increase, calls for a shift in policy so that longer-term solution can be accommodated.

Up until the year 2013, almost all Syrian refugees resided in camps, designed by Turkey, offering a high level of services for the Syrian "guests". The toll on the country's treasury though was high, thus, it gradually started leading to shrinker capacities of the camps. Combine this, with the fact that entry barriers were raised for those entering the country illegally, most of the refugees started taking shelter in cities. "Meanwhile, the Turkish public is expressing increased concern about the Syrian arrivals: their high numbers in cities, the increasing length of their stay in Turkey, their perceived contribution to rising household costs and increased unemployment, and their economic competition with Turkish citizens. The Turkish state, which provides both camp-based services and assistance to urban refugees, finds itself shouldering a significant financial burden" (Icduygu 2015, 1).

The process that has been followed by Turkey regarding the response to the refugee crisis has not come, in any way, without problems. The international aid that was given, especially during the bloom of the number inserting the number, was never considered as adequate by Turkey. As it was said by the Turkish foreign minister: "The international system is failing […] We are suffering as neighboring countries. In Turkey now, there are 700,000 refugees, we don't know when they will go back home. We spent $3 billion […] We are suffering and Syrian people are suffering" (Isa 2014, 218). It should be noted that the generous approach that Turkey adopted during the beginning of the Syrian crisis was characterized by many as a way to promote Turkey's soft power to Syria. When the refugee waves started inserting the country, there were many from within the Turkish government that assumed that the whole thing would soon be resolved, and the refugees would go home before too long. "The approach was that Turkey should assist what it terms its "Syrian refugees" generously; host them well so that Turkish soft power would be enhanced due to their positive experience during the stay. Tent cities were built close to the border – in direct contrast to the standard UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) practice of establishing refugee camps at least 50 kilometers off the border as a basic security precaution" (Isa 2014, 218). So

many people believed that due to this generous approach, the Turkish government believed that the whole issue would be short-term, and the stay would be temporary.

Turkey, as mentioned earlier in the thesis, is one of the major actors of the international regime created for handling refugees. The country's behavior, especially in the beginning of the crisis can be clearly defined as being completely contrary to the what is expected of the country being a member of the international regime. It denied international aid, condemned the "western" ways of handling the refugees as not sufficient, and many accused Turkey as trying to promote its soft power (country's own interests) in Syria. This, of course, creates imbalances to the international regime and makes the whole collaboration process between the actors more difficult.

Up until at least the year 2014, there were twenty-one camps that were built hosting approximately 200.000 refugees. By that time there were another 500.000-800.000 Syrian refugees living in Turkish cities. The government aid that was provided to these people living outside the tents were considered by many as inadequate and the people had to survive by their own means (Isa 2014, 218). It should be noted that Turkey was also helping internally displaced people (IDPs) in Syria. The number of these people being helped by Turkey amounted to 135.000. "The Brookings-USAK report states that the camps offer "five-star services" and look like "well-established towns, with primary and secondary schools, health clinics, community centers, supermarkets, playgrounds and even laundry rooms. Refugees were given refrigerators and stoves; accommodations had hot water and, in some cases, televisions and air conditioning" (Isa 2014, 218). This generous approach that is said by many that it had a target of enhancing Turkey's soft power in Syria, was also strengthened by interviews that were given by many Syrian refugees especially in the beginning of the refugee crisis. The vast majority of those refugees openly reported that it was within their first priorities to return home. No one could then predict that the conflicts would last for so long, thus the option to return home would be less and less possible.

It was not difficult for someone to predict then, that this level of service provision could not be continued given the increasing Syrian refugee waves inserting the country. "Building another 40 to 50 camps would further increase the already huge expenses of the camps; a further strain for the Turkish treasury. This would anyway not be enough to accommodate all the refugees" (Isa 2014, 218–19). As mentioned earlier, the international aid that was given to Turkey was not enough to substantially support the level of accommodation that Turkey set out to provide. Trying to look at the things from a wider angle, even though the refugees that benefited from this generous approach would definitely be pleased with what was offered to them, the approach that was followed was not the most effective one. The level of the services should have been lower so that the Turkish treasury would sustain a substantially higher level of influx. On the other hand, though, no one expected that the numbers would increase so rapidly. Turkey's efforts to promote the said soft power in Syria, led the country to try to display its own capabilities to the rest of the world too. "Turkey initially did not demand international assistance and boasted that it could handle matters alone. As the crisis deepened, Turkey's efforts to mobilize the international community have not kept pace with the number of refugees […] "it will be critical for the Turkish government to switch from an accusatory-shaming language [against other countries, mainly Western] to a narrative that is both much more constructive and more realistic"" (Isa 2014, 219).

While Turkey indeed tried to help people in Syria by providing help to internally displaced people there, it was done in a way that really created problems to how the help was delivered. This was done mainly because did not want to affect in any way Syria's sovereignty. A "zero-point delivery policy" was introduced in Northern Syria. This is where Turkey's aid for the internally displaced people was delivered.

"Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Directorate (AFAD) and the Turkish Red Crescent (Kizilay) transport aid to the "zero point" at the border. The Humanitarian Aid Foundation (IHH) then delivers it to IDP camps in Syria. IHH has become an effective cross-border charity, but more is needed. The report suggests Turkey should diversify its reach into Syria for assistance through the UN agencies and other international charity organizations "to ensure its effectiveness, transparency, and security" (Isa 2014, 219). Many have considered the way that Turkey has chosen to approach the Syrian crisis as one that mainly serve Turkey's interests.

While, as mentioned earlier, there are people who made it in the Turkish cities, got jobs, and even helped the Turkish economy, there are others that face many difficulties. Many people living in the cities have been experiencing conflicts by the local people, mainly based on ethnic, sectarian and cultural differences. These notions are also fed by the belief that the Syrian refugees in Turkey utilize already-dried-up government resources. "What's more, the safety and wellbeing of refugees may also be in jeopardy due to exploitation, discrimination and trafficking particularly among vulnerable segments like women and children" (Isa 2014, 219). On the other hand, the camps, even though they provide a relatively high level of services, their location is considered problematic on many fronts. Some of the camps, are situated directly next to the Syrian border, placing them in direct exposure of stray bullets coming from Syria by opposing groups.

The way that Turkey has chosen to follow regarding the Syrian refugee crisis can show us several things. Firstly, "the Syrian refugee crisis should be treated as a humanitarian crisis, divorced from any foreign policy objectives that Turkey may have with regard to the Assad regime" (Icduygu 2015, 2). The term "guest" as is used by Turkey does neither define the status of the refugees nor take into account the fact that chances are the Syrians' displacement is to be indefinably protracted. What also should be taken into account is the attitude that Turkey had in the beginning regarding international aid and aid from other countries. "As arrivals continue and resources become more limited, greater collaboration with local and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) will be necessary to supplement Turkish authorities' crisis management capacity" (Icduygu 2015, 2).

In conclusion of the ways that Turkey faced the challenge of this vast humanitarian crisis, there are some basic points that someone should underline if he/she is to get a better understanding. Turkey neither did foresee that the Syrian refugee crisis would last so long nor that the numbers of the Syrian people inserting the country would increase this much. The fact that Turkey was thinking this way, it led it to believe that it was in a position to handle the crisis without external help, while enhancing its soft power in Syria. Turkey's approach created wrong foundations for maintaining a healthy international regime for handling the Syrian refugees. By trying to give its own solution to the crisis, while trying to maintain the country's own interests, hinders the functioning and effectiveness of the international regime. In the illusion that the crisis was to be resolved swiftly and that the people would return back home, Turkey created camps near the Syrian border, which was dangerous considering the violence occurring on the Syrian border side. The level of services provided in the camps was high compared to other camps in many western countries. The problem is that it took a high toll on the country's treasury, thus, when the numbers started increasing uncontrollably, Turkey realized that not only it needed extra help, but that the level of services it provided was not sustainable. Not being able to control the influx, most of the refugees started living in Turkish cities, trying to be integrated. That was not easy because the government was not able to help a lot, and the local people, while there are many examples showing affection, for the most part was competitive towards them. The fact that Turkey did not do well as far as

its economy is concerned, led the local people believing that the Syrian people should leave and that they take advantage of the country's already exhausted resources. If Turkey had planned in a better way the way that it was to help the refugees, and if the country was more open to external help in the beginning without using insulting language for the ways that western countries have been dealing with the refugees, then, the whole approach would have been really close to being the best one considering all aspects.

Discussion

It has been seen throughout the analysis that the two geographical areas we are examining in terms of their reaction to the Syrian refugee crisis, the EU and Turkey, have indeed reacted really differently from one another. This can be attributed to a number of factors, such as the level of preparedness of each geographical area regarding the refugee waves, the expectations of the severity of the crisis, the way that the refugees were welcomed by local people, the financial conditions of the areas and many more. The different approaches that have been adopted in these areas, with the EU having tried many different ones due to the background of each of its member states, have safely led everybody to believe that there is not, yet, a perfect approach to how the refugees should be handled in the host countries. That is though not to say that there are not positive aspects in the methodologies adopted. I believe the perfect approach to how the refugees should be handled and be integrated lies in the mixture of the positive aspects of each of the approaches.

Regarding the European Union, the analysis has showed that such a vast variety of cultures and backgrounds within such a small geographical region, will surely lead to different approaches being adopted by different countries. For purely geographical reasons, the refugees firstly arrive in mainly two European countries, Italy and Greece. Both of these countries have already exhausted resources because of the 2008 financial crisis. The steadily increasing number of refugees arriving have an increasingly high toll on those resources. The help that has been received by Brussels, even though it is substantial, is by no means enough. External help, such as the UNHCR, has proven to be really helpful. As the years of the Syrian crisis are getting prolonged, exhausting more and more the resources of those countries, they follow a path of trying to ignite within the European Union the feeling of even burden sharing, not having closed borders to the refugees and a planned displacement of refugees from those countries to other EU countries. It still remains to be seen how this will unfold in the future. The "EU Dublin Regulation" surely did not help the situation at all since it forced the asylum seekers to only seek asylum in the first country they fill the application, naturally leading the majority of application in the countries they first enter such as Italy, Greece and Hungary. Thus, the feeling of the uneven burden sharing was steadily increasing. Regarding the international regime created by the Syrian refugee crisis, it should be understood that the task of the EU to create expected actions and behaviors of its members regarding a matter that greatly affect the countries' own interests, is not, by any means, an easy task.

Germany is definitely a case worthy of mentioning. Merkel's famous "we can do it" or "we can cope" in 2015 led to the opening of the borders, receiving more than 1 million refugees while relieving both those refugees stuck in Hungary and Hungary itself. The fact that Germany supported the idea of no limits to the number of refugees that can be received by Germany surely created problems to other European countries since it increased the influx of refugees coming from Syria and Africa. Many criticized this approach, supporting that it served Germany's private interests since it is known that there is a

shortage in the labor force of the country. What Merkel did not really examine before accepting such a big number of refugees, is the level of cultural preparedness of the country. The time progressing since then showed us that indeed that level was low. The general rising tension of the right wing in the EU did not help the refugees in Germany indeed. Many attacks have been reported against refugees. Merkel's sayings, even though they seem with good intentions, did not manage to be realistic.

The examples of Austria and Hungary show how differently member states have reacted to these issues. The fear of the increasing number of refugees as the time progresses have led those countries to increase the border controls and raise walls. While this approach completely discards the humanitarian aspect of the crisis, it is important that it is understood so better ones can be developed. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Norther Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have also chosen to control more their borders to France to decrease as much as possible the influx of refugees in their lands. It is easily understood that these countries have taken a completely different road from Germany, even if one of the EU's main objectives is to create unified approaches between its member states.

The different approaches that have been adopted in the EU are to be expected on some level. On the other hand, this is one of the biggest problems of the EU as a union. It never had a unified consensus on issues big or small. That is not to say that all the EU member states need to forcefully have the same opinion. This would not be democratic. What the EU should do is ignite the feeling of compromise and make its member states realize its importance. The Syrian refugee crisis is just another example of how ununified approaches lead to deteriorating conditions both for the refugees and the host countries as well.

In my opinion, even though Turkey does not present the abundancy of cultures and background as the EU does, it presents an evenly complicated case regarding its actions with regard to the Syrian refugee crisis. It gets complicated by the wrong estimations that Turkey made in the beginning of the crisis in combination with the efforts to fulfil its own foreign policy objectives. It can be seen clearly seen that Turkey's effort to control the crisis sets the wrong foundations for an effective international regime. In a nutshell, Turkey thought that the Syrian refugee crisis was neither to last so long nor its numbers to be so high. The Turkish government saw an opportunity to increase its soft power in Syria by managing its "guests" in the best way possible while maintaining no interference in Syria's sovereignty. The other opportunity it saw was to handle the whole thing by itself, asking for minimum or even no assistance whatsoever by external bodies and get all the credits. This goes against the fact that within an international regime, the behaviors of the actors should be, to some extent, predefined and expected by the other actors of the international regime. The estimations it made were wrong because the refugees' stay was to be protracted way greater than expected, leading to it not being able to provide the level of accommodation and services it set out to achieve, thus, running the already exhausted Turkish resources even drier, and thus, creating feelings of hostility in the local communities with regard to the Syrian refugees. What is wrong with the efforts to fulfill its own foreign policy agenda through the Syrian crisis is that it misunderstands the foundations of the situation. Treating them as guests to increase its soft power does not reflect the actual needs for finding ways to integrate the refugees in the local communities in ways that can support an indefinite stay rather than a short temporary protection status. By not seeking the assistance it should have sought from international bodies and NGOs, it led to a lot of work needed to be done to restore and create the assistance needed.

The international regime created through this humanitarian crisis, that is the one between the European Union and Turkey, has led the two geographical areal into talks to find better ways to solve the crisis, while having their interests satisfied. One of the problems that should be firstly solved, is the one of the uncontrollable refugee passages from Turkey into the EU through Greece. "In March 2016, the EU made a refugee-swap-deal with Turkey, in which Turkey would take back all new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into Greek islands, while EU resettles refugees from Turkish camps. For each refugee returned to Turkey, EU takes one from the camps" (Fisseha 2017, 48). This constituted an effort to make the whole process of travelling through the borders more legal. This deal created a problem for the Syrian people who wanted to seek asylum in Europe since the number crossing from Turkey to Greece dropped dramatically. For the people that Turkey got back, approximately 2.5 million, it received a financial aid from the EU amounting to €6 billion. This deal has been heavily criticized "by right groups and aid organizations as it breaks the non-refoulment principle of the Geneva Refugee Convention, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the EU Fundamental Rights Charter" (Fisseha 2017, 48). According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the non-refoulment principle states:

> "Under international human rights law, the principle of non-refoulment guarantees that no one should be returned to a country where they would face torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and other irreparable harm. This principle applies to all migrants at all times, irrespective of migration status" ("The Principle of Non-Refoulment under International Human Rights Law," n.d.).

The non-refoulment principle obligates the country that is to send to a third country refugees to make sure that the third country is safe for the people going there. The right groups and aid organizations have made the assumption that Turkey does not constitute a safe country for those people. Even though the deal seems as helpful and toward the right direction, the EU has been heavily criticized since it is believed that the EU tries "to prevent more refugees from entering its territories from Turkey, while putting increasing pressure on the latter, which has already been overstretched (already hosting more than 2.7 million refugees)" (Fisseha 2017, 48).

Even though there have been efforts for an increase collaboration between the EU and Turkey with regard to handling the Syrian refugee crisis together, a lot can be done for taking the whole thing to a more positive direction. The ideal scenario would be a unified approach between the two geographical regions, adding to the EU's plan on Syrian refugees Turkey as well, relieving the country of the great number of refugees, while sending back from the EU refugees to Turkey for a full legal status. The biggest issue that needs to be resolved with the relations of the two geographical areal on the Syrian refugee issue is the uncontrollable influx from the Turkish shores to the European Union. Ways need to be found for this to decrease and put a stop to business that has been created through it, charging refugees tremendous amounts of money for them to pass to the EU in dangerous conditions in the sea which has led to the death of countless of refugees.

Conclusion

This thesis tried to explore the situation regarding the Syrian refugee crisis under this problem formulation:

How does the international regime on handling the Syrian refugee crisis work between the EU and Turkey? Is it effective and is there room for improvement? If so, in which way?

The method that was used in this thesis was the international regime theory. The reason this theory was used was to highlight how problems such as the Syrian refugee situation many times create geographical areas of interest that stretch across border, such with our case the European Union and Turkey. This international regime that was created is consisted of interests and of the need to give a viable and stable solution to the increasing number of people arriving from Syria, looking for a fairer and better future. The international regime created through the crisis is a tool for satisfying the inevitable interests that have been created by the countries involved and for helping effectively the refugees affected. The potential correct relationship that can be created between the EU and Turkey regarding the Syrian refugee crisis is the best way to effectively provide a solution for both the local people of the countries affected and the Syrian refugees.

The international regime created by the Syrian refugee crisis, is by its definition, not an easy one to have it fully functioning and effective. The reason for this is because its actors are really different from each other, that is Turkey with the EU Member States, and even EU Member States with other EU Member States. The different historical backgrounds, languages and cultures create a tough environment for having same courses of actions. The EU and international organizations should pave the way to make this international regime as effective as possible.

Regarding the European Union, it was seen throughout the thesis how such a culturally and historically different geographical region has adopted different methods and approaches when it comes to the Syrian crisis. Some countries developed some more humanitarian approaches than the others. Some countries have shared a heavier burden than others. The European Union has tried to create consensus throughout the member states to find a unified approach and have a fair burden sharing system which, so far, is unsuccessful. The rise of the right wing has many EU member states creating policies and handling the crisis on their own way, creating imbalances. The Syrian refugee crisis is another example of how the EU needs to find the way under which all the member states will have a unified stance in matters such as these. No one should expect that controversies will not occur, but in a union such as the European Union, everybody should expect compromise for the greater good, especially in cases such as the one with Syria, that so many people are dislocated and affected greatly.

When it comes to Turkey, we have seen how this country has adopted a different approach in handling the matter within its borders. Turkey saw the chance to increase its soft power within Syria by initially excluding almost all international help it could get and by providing services to the refugees that were of a high standard. What Turkey did not realize in the beginning was that the crisis was to be continued for many years to come. The services it provided would run its treasury dry since the number of refugees was uncontrollably increasing by the day. The camps it created were so close to the Syrian border that the refugees were not even safe from fire from within Syria. Turkey tried to ignore the international regime created through this Syrian refugee crisis making a mistake because Turkey would

have been helped in handling the situation and, thus, the Syrian people affected would have been helped. The country has started receiving more international aid once it realized that the situation is to be prolonged in the long term.

There have been some efforts for an increased collaboration between the two geographical areas through the international regime that has been created because of the crisis. It has been seen that the biggest effort so far is the refugee-swap-deal, which, even though it has received heavy criticism, it seems to be a step to the right direction. What needs to be done, is the finding of a unified approach for an effective solution to the crisis, integrating the refugees to the states they are to be resettled, while helping financially the states that are to host those people. The Syrian refugee crisis is a great challenge for both geographical areas. Only a few people believed that it would take such a turn. Nonetheless, the situation is real, and the people affected (local and refugees) are in great numbers. It is the duty of the countries affected to find a viable solution that reflects the progress that the human race has made in regard to the human rights. The international regime created as a result of the Syrian refugee crisis has proven to be for its most part and as of now, ineffective.

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