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Shaping Borders: The Evolution and Future of EU Migration Policies

Sınırların Şekillendirilmesi: AB Göç Politikalarının Evrimi ve Geleceği

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Shaping borders: the evolution and future of EU migration policies

Abstract

The existence of approximately 281 million international migrants in today's world, corresponding to 3.6% of the world's population, emphasizes the importance of the issue of migration in the eyes of states. As a result of the modern world, such an increase in human mobility has transformed the universe we live in into a global village, while expanding the sphere of influence of migration on states. The phenomenon of migration, which has affected states and societies throughout history, has created an effect that has shaped interstate economic and political relations, questioning their power, especially in the last thirty years. The geography of Europe has also faced many migration movements from the past to the present. While the European continent was a region of emigration until the First World War, it has become a region of immigration from the post-war period to the present. In the 2000s, the regional and global economic and political developments that were the driving factors for international migration increased the migration movement towards Europe in the same way. Therefore, Europe is an important region that needs to be examined in terms of migration movements in terms of international political and economic developments. Since its inception, the European Union has drawn the interest of individuals from various nations. Through its developmental phases, the European Union has evolved into a model not only in economic, social, and political aspects but also in terms of democracy. This level of advancement has led to continuous migration from other countries, driven by both appealing and unappealing factors. Following the 1960s, a significant number of migrants who moved to EU countries for economic opportunities have acquired citizenship in those nations. Nonetheless, new waves of migration continue to occur for economic and political reasons. Each member state of the European Union maintains its own laws and practices concerning migration and the integration of immigrants, while common regulations and practices have gradually developed across the Union. This study examines the inclusion policies for immigrants living in the European Union and those still coming to the region, and the extent of their effects.

Keywords: EU, migration policies, future implications

Sınırların şekillendirilmesi: AB göç politikalarının evrimi ve geleceği

Öz

Günümüz dünyasında uluslararası göç, küresel gündemin en önemli başlıklarından biri haline gelmiştir. Birleşmiş Milletler verilerine göre, dünya nüfusunun yaklaşık %3,6'sına denk gelen 281 milyon kişi, doğduğu ülke dışında yaşamaktadır. Bu durum, göç olgusunun yalnızca bireysel tercih ya da ekonomik zorunluluklardan ibaret olmadığını; aynı zamanda devletlerin güvenlik, ekonomi, sosyal yapılar ve dış politikaları üzerinde doğrudan etkiler doğuran çok boyutlu bir olgu olduğunu göstermektedir. Modernleşme, küreselleşme ve ulaşım teknolojilerindeki gelişmelerle birlikte insan hareketliliği hız kazanmış; bu da özellikle son otuz yılda göçün hem sayısal hem de niteliksel olarak farklılaşmasına neden olmuştur. Göç olgusu tarih boyunca birçok toplumun siyasal ve kültürel yapısının şekillenmesinde önemli rol oynamıştır. Ancak günümüzde bu etki daha karmaşık ve yönetilmesi güç bir hal almıştır. Bu bağlamda Avrupa kıtası, göç hareketlerinden doğrudan etkilenen başlıca bölgelerden biridir. Tarihsel olarak 20. yüzyılın başlarına kadar dışa göç veren Avrupa, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında hızla göç alan bir kıta konumuna gelmiştir. Özellikle 2000'li yıllardan itibaren Ortadoğu ve Afrika başta olmak üzere birçok bölgedeki siyasi istikrarsızlıklar, ekonomik krizler ve silahlı çatışmalar, Avrupa'ya yönelen göç akınlarını daha da yoğunlaştırmıştır. Avrupa Birliği, bu süreçte hem ekonomik kalkınma modeli hem de demokratik değerleri nedeniyle birçok göçmen için cazip bir hedef haline gelmiştir. 1960'lardan itibaren yaşanan iş gücü temelli göç hareketleri zamanla kalıcı yerleşimlere ve vatandaşlık kazanımlarına dönüşmüştür; bu durum, Avrupa toplumlarının sosyo-kültürel yapılarında köklü değişimlere yol açmıştır. Günümüzde ise göç yalnızca ekonomik saiklerle değil, savaş, çevresel krizler, otoriter rejimlerden kaçış gibi pek çok faktörle birlikte gerçekleşmektedir. Avrupa Birliği'ne üye devletler, göç ve entegrasyon politikalarında ulusal egemenliklerini sürdürürken, aynı zamanda ortak göç politikaları oluşturma konusunda çeşitli girişimlerde bulunmuştur. Bu doğrultuda, AB genelinde sosyal kapsayıcılığı arttırmaya ve göçmenlerin toplumsal yaşama uyumunu sağlamaya yönelik birçok strateji geliştirilmiştir. Bu çalışma, Avrupa Birliği'ne yönelik göç hareketlerini tarihsel gelişimiyle birlikte ele almakta; AB'nin göçmen politikalarını, entegrasyon sürecini ve sosyal kapsayıcılık yaklaşımını çok boyutlu bir perspektiften analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca bu politikaların, hem ev sahibi toplumlar hem de göçmen toplulukları üzerindeki sosyo-politik etkilerini incelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: AB, göç politikaları, gelecekteki etkileri

Introduction

The rapid development of information technologies and media; the ability to travel at lower costs but faster, as a result of globalization, has turned the world into a "global village", as Dalglish puts it (Dalglish, 2006). The term began to take on its contemporary meaning from an economic perspective in the 1960s, and more specifically in the realms of media and culture around 1964. Marshall McLuhan's famous assertion that "the world has become a global village" represents a significant milestone in the conceptualization of globalization. This statement highlights the role of media in spanning the globe and linking societies by facilitating widespread communication and mutual awareness (McLuhan, 1964).

Today, the international movement of people has become an indispensable part of modern life, or in a sense, a necessity. While accessibility naturally causes an increase in human mobility, wars and conflicts have also formed another leg of this mobility. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Affairs Council, the world population today is 8.2 billion (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2024). Approximately 281 million of these people, corresponding to 3.6% of the world population, are international migrants. In 2020, the number of displaced people was 89.4 million. Of this number, 26.4 million are refugees and 4.1 million are asylum seekers. The total number of internally displaced people is 55 million, of which 48 million are people fleeing conflict and violence, while 7 million are refugees fleeing disasters (McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou, 2021).

The determination of appropriate integration policies by countries depends on the final result they want to achieve, and this situation varies from country to country. Since the topic to be discussed specifically targets integration policies implemented for immigrants, considering the popularity of migration, integration and integration issues in public discourse, an attempt will be made to outline the socio-political aspects of basic topics such as education, health and labor market, which shape integration policies, in order to clarify the complexity of the issue.

The theoretical information that constitutes the basic information of the study is based on academic literature, articles and internet publications. The theoretical part of the research aims to discuss important terminologies by explaining the general definitions and ideas of these terms. In addition, the study pays special attention to the historical and current developments of migration.

The first section includes basic information on the subject under discussion in order to provide a basic understanding of the subject in question. This section, which is the theoretical background of the study, provides an understanding of frequently used terms and terms necessary for the purpose of the study. While the concepts of migration and integration are explained in this section, the main goal is to avoid possible misconceptions and increase the comprehensibility of the study.

The study consists of four main sections; the first section, as mentioned above, consists of theoretical explanations including terms and definitions on migration. In this section, basic information on migration and integration is emphasized. The concept of integration is particularly focused on, and different dimensions and definitions of integration are examined. The second section first explains the European Union, the concept of Europe and the policies of the Union on migration starting from the early periods. Then, the situation of immigrants

in the Union, the Union's perspective on migration and integration, and the integration policies drawn for the member States are discussed in general terms.

The current situation of immigrants is examined by looking at demographic, socioeconomic and sociopolitical dimensions. In the third section, the integration policies of various European countries are explained by first mentioning the country's migration history and perspective on immigrants. In the fourth section, data on the future of EU migration policies are given and detailed analysis is made. In the conclusion, a general assessment is made.

1. Conceptual Framework of Migration and Integration

In this section, the phenomenon of migration, which has a momentum that reshapes the structure of societies by affecting them culturally, politically, economically and socially and can deeply affect the population components of countries, and the basic concepts related to migration will be defined, and then the concept of integration will be explained.

1.1. Conceptual Framework of Migration

In the 20th century, which Castles and Miller defined as the "Age of Migration", due to the increase in population mobility, the concept of migration has become a popular concept and has not actually entered the literature as a concept invented by modernism. Migration has been a part of human history from the earliest times to the present (Castles and Miller, 2008). According to those who believe in Abrahamic religions, human history began with the migration of Adam and Eve from heaven to earth, and the concept of migration first took its place in the minds of human beings in this way. Under this heading, first, the concept of migration will be explained, and then the basic concepts related to migration will be explained.

1.1.1. The Concept of Migration

The concept of migration, which is not seen as a new concept, is based on the need to escape from centuries of conflict and persecution, and the desire to find new and better opportunities elsewhere. Especially in the years following World War II, migration began to take on a global character, encompassing many parts of the world. The facilitation of movement between countries thanks to technological developments has been the main driving force of this transformation. While cross-border human movements have shaped people and communities since ancient times, the reason they have been accepted as a distinctive element in recent years is, as Castles and Miller have stated, the global scope of these movements, their centrality in local and international policies, and their economic and social consequences. In addition, another reason is that these movements can rapidly affect the lives of millions of people and inexorably shape the fate of states and societies together (Castles and Miller, 2008).

The first scientific article on migration in the literature is known as the "Laws of Migration" and was written by the English geographer Ernst Georg Ravenstein (1843-1913). (Yalçın, 2004). In this article dated 1885, Ravenstein explained migration patterns both within nations and between countries while also drawing the outlines of today's migration laws. Ravenstein's basic laws and additional laws derived from his work have been the precursors to many serious migration models today. Ravenstein was inspired by the English epidemiologist Dr. William Farr (1807-1883), who said, in his own words, "Migration continues without a specific law" (Ravenstein, 1885). The basis of his migration model is formed by two concepts he called "absorption" and "dispersion". Ravenstein stated that the regions that absorb

migration are the main centers of trade and industry; He emphasized that the regions that dispersed due to migration were generally agricultural regions. (Ravenstein, 1885). In this sense, according to Ravenstein, the main factors affecting migration are economic reasons and distance. In addition, although migration is caused by different reasons such as adverse climatic conditions, high taxes, and environmental pressure, the main factor affecting migration is the desire of individuals to increase their financial well-being and the demand for paid labor by employers in places that have become central in industrial and commercial areas. (Dedeoğlu and Ekiz Gökmen, 2020).

It is seen that a significant literature has emerged on the definition of migration, its causes and the management of migration processes from the past to the present. The uninterrupted continuity of migration events and the manifestation of new and unique conditions in each migration event lead to changes in the definition and content of the concept of migration. For this reason, it is possible to come across many definitions of migration in the literature.

In the article "A Theory of Migration", which is one of the frequently cited sources in migration studies, Lee defined migration as the permanent or periodic change of settlement (Lee, 1966). In this definition, there are no distinctions regarding the distance of the migration movement, whether it is voluntary or involuntary. Instead, he preferred to interpret migration in a broad way, stating that it does not matter whether the migration movement is short or long, easy or difficult. What Lee tries to draw attention to in this definition is the fact that every migration action has a starting point and a destination, and that there are obstacles between the starting and destination points. Finally, Lee said that the decision to migrate is determined by "the area at the starting point, that is, the factors at the origin point, the factors at the destination point, the obstacles that will intervene and personal factors" (Lee, 1966). It can be said that these findings of Lee are parallel to Ravenstein's views in defining the characteristics of the centers of immigration and emigration.

Petersen, on the other hand, examined migration by dividing it into five typologies; "Primitive Migration, Forced Migration, Impelled Migration, Free Migration and Mass Migration" (Petersen, 1958). When Petersen's five-way distinction is examined in detail, it is seen that migration can actually be classified under two main concepts. According to Yalçın, these five typologies can be gathered under the headings of "voluntary and forced migration". In line with this classification, in voluntary migration, the will to migrate belongs to the individual from the beginning to the end of the migration. In other words, the freedom to change location or not belongs to the individual. In forced migration, there are two different situations. The first is a controlled change of location under the supervision of an official authority (such as the state). The other is involuntary displacement, which is carried out without the will to migrate in order to escape from the negative situation created by factors such as war, conflict, and violence (Yalçın, 2004). Bartram, Poros, and Monforte define forced migration as "an action that occurs as a result of pressure and threats to the life struggles or welfare levels of individuals, resulting from various situations ranging from economic crises to violent conflicts" (Bartram et al., 2017). The distinguishing element here is the element of coercion.

In fact, before defining the types of migration, Bartram, Poros and Monforte, who saw the concept of migration as a fundamentally geographical phenomenon, defined the phenomenon of migration as "the temporary or permanent settlement of people from one

country to another, or at least the movement of people to a new settlement located further away from their current residence” (Bartram et al., 2017). Similarly, the International Organization for Migration defined the concept of migration geographically as “the crossing of an international border by a person or group or the movement of people within a State; population movements in which people change places, regardless of their duration, structure and reason” (Glossary of Migration Terms, 2022). According to the definition, these population movements also include people requesting family reunification, refugees, those forced to migrate for economic reasons and displaced persons.

Finally, although the concept of migration has been tried to be explained with various definitions in the literature, it would be useful to state the idea put forward by Massey and his colleagues that the theoretical concepts used by social scientists to define international migration were primarily shaped in the industrial age and that it includes its own economic regulations, social institutions, demography and politics (Massey, Arango, Kouaouci, Pellegrino and Hugo, 1998). Because migration, although it is subject to many definitions conceptually, covers all dimensions of social existence and requires an interdisciplinary perspective (Brettell and Hollified, 2014).

1.1.2. The Concept of Immigrant

When defining the phenomenon of migration, the concept of immigrant is simply defined as “a person who migrates”. When discussing migration statistics on the international platform, the concept of immigrant is generally used to encompass all migrants (Erbaş and Alioğlu Türker, 2019). With this calculation, 3.6% of the world's population is considered international migrants today. (McAuliffe and Triandafyllidou, 2021).

The International Organization for Migration defines the concept of migrant as follows: “There is no universally accepted definition of migrant on an international scale. The term migrant is generally understood to cover all situations in which an individual makes the decision to migrate of their own free will and for reasons of ‘personal convenience’, without the intervention of compelling external factors. Therefore, this expression has been accepted as valid for individuals and their family members who move to another country or region in order to improve their material and social conditions and to improve their expectations for themselves and their families. The United Nations defines a migrant as an individual who resides in a foreign country for more than one year, regardless of the reasons, whether it is voluntary or not, the migration route, and whether it is regular or irregular. Within the scope of this definition, individuals who travel for shorter periods with the status of tourist or businessperson are not considered migrants. However, common usage also includes some types of short-term migrants, such as seasonal agricultural workers who travel for short periods for the planting or harvesting of agricultural products” (Glossary of Migration Terms, 2021).

As can be understood from the definition above, although the terms immigrant and refugee are used in the same sense by many people these days, their meanings in the literature are different. Unlike refugees, immigrants are people who move to improve their lives not because of direct persecution or fear of death, but for the purpose of education, family reunification or finding a job. When immigrants want to return home, they do not face obstacles like refugees. If they choose to return home, they continue to be protected by their governments (Edwards, 2022). However, migration is not a static process and the migration

experience can take different forms from the starting point to the migration journey; at one or more destinations (Erbaş and Alioğlu Türker, 2019).

2. Methodology

This research is a documentary-type systematic review study. The research conducted with this method examined the effect of immigration on EU countries in the literature. In addition, by examining the existing research questions, it aims to reveal the effect of existing social consequences of immigration in a holistic manner. The research data were obtained by document analysis. Document analysis is a systematic procedure used to review or evaluate both printed and Internet and computer-based materials. Systematic review is a research model in which research findings related to specific topics are identified and synthesised, and it is carried out in stages (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

3. European Union Migration Policies

The European Union is an intergovernmental and multinational organization formed by 27 member states, the majority of which are in the European continent, based on a number of founding treaties. While the Union requires agreement and consensus between states on some issues when making decisions, on some issues, supranational administrative bodies can make decisions without the need for agreement among members. In other words, the Union has "exclusive" authority on some issues and "shared authority" with member states on others. Under this heading, the process of the authority arrangements on asylum and migration, which will be examined, between the Union and member states historically will be explained by examining the founding treaties of the Union.

3.1. Single European Act

The task of the Community is explained in the second paragraph of the Treaty on the European Economic Community as "to ensure the harmonious development of economic activities throughout the Community, continuous and balanced growth, greater stability, a rapid increase in living standards and the establishment of closer relations among the States brought together by the Community, through the establishment of a common market and the gradual approximation of the economic policies of the Member States" (Fundamental Treaties Establishing the European Communities "ECSC, EEC, EAEC", 2022) and a timetable has been presented for the removal of obstacles to free movement within the Community by 1992. Because the cost of not being European causes the Continent to not be able to provide sufficient competitive advantage in the world market against the USA and Japan. Therefore, in this conjuncture, the Single European Act Treaty was signed on 28 February 1986 and entered into force in 1987 (Özcan, 2005).

Article 8 (a) of the Single European Act is particularly important in terms of asylum and immigration policy and should be explained. According to Article 8 (a)/ (2); "The Internal Market covers an area within which the movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured in accordance with the provisions of the treaty and where there are no internal borders" (Fundamental Treaties Establishing the European Communities "ECSC, EEC, EAEC", 2022). As clearly stated in the provision, the Treaty envisages a secure system where there are only external borders and internal borders are eliminated.

In order to achieve the goal of free movement in the system envisaged by the ATS, first of all, the countries in the Union must agree on issues such as asylum, immigration policies, the refugee issue, and the movement of foreign workers. Because the most critical point in

establishing the targeted free market is to ensure the security of the market border to be established.

In 1986, the "Ad Hoc Working Group on Immigration" was formed, comprising the interior and justice ministers from the member countries. This group focused on five key areas: "border control, visa policy, asylum policy, illegal migration, and communication technologies." Their efforts led to significant advancements in aligning the asylum and migration policies among the member states. Consequently, on 15 June 1990, they signed the "Convention on the Determination of the State Responsible for the Examination of Asylum Applications Made in a Member State of the European Community," commonly referred to as the Dublin Convention (Özcan, 2005).

Furthermore, the European Union has sought to establish measures aimed at preserving the integrity of the Union while managing both internal and external migration, reflecting its economic and political changes. In this regard, various agreements have been reached at the Union level during different times.

3.2. Schengen Agreement

In order to create a common European identity, the European Community countries decided to establish the Adonnino Committee in 1984, whose duties included working on the removal of police and customs controls at intra-community borders. During this period, especially because of the protests between Germany and France due to the problems experienced by truck drivers while crossing the border, Germany and France signed the "Saarbrücken Agreement" between themselves on July 13, 1984, which regulated the gradual removal of controls for those traveling between their common borders. After the signing of this agreement, the Schengen Agreement was signed on June 14, 1985, with the recommendations of the Committee and the participation of the Benelux countries, and it was decided that the controls applied to the common borders between the EC countries party to the agreement would be gradually removed (Özcan, 2005).

Although the Schengen Agreement is an important step towards ensuring free movement in the domestic market, security concerns have also increased rapidly for the countries that are party to Schengen. Problems experienced in general regarding issues such as the right to free movement, visas granted to third-country citizens, asylum, migration, terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration and organized crime have increased security concerns. The aim of Schengen is to strengthen external borders by converting internal border controls into external border controls. The greatest threat seen against the realization of this aim is the mass migration flow and illegal migration that may come from neighboring regions to the Schengen free movement area. Therefore, the most important goal of the union has been to combat illegal migration and irregular migration in order to keep its external borders strong and to be able to establish an agreed migration and asylum policy.

3.3. Dublin Convention

The "Convention for the Designation of the State Responsible for Examining Asylum Applications Made in a Member State of the European Community" was signed on 15 June 1990. The agreement, known as the Dublin Convention, entered into force on 1 September 1997. As of 1991, it was signed by all EC countries.

The Dublin Convention aimed to prevent asylum seekers from applying for asylum in the party countries simultaneously or one after the other, because individuals could apply for asylum in several countries at the same time in order to determine the state that would offer them the best international protection conditions (Özcan, 2005).

When assessing an asylum application made to the EU by a third country national in accordance with the Dublin Convention, certain mechanisms have been developed and various measures have been taken to clarify which Member State will be responsible for the application.

3.4. Treaty of Maastricht

Although the Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1992, it entered into force in 1993. In addition to economic integration, some headings were added to the Treaty that would also ensure political integration together. These headings are: "Common Foreign and Security Policy" and "Cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs". With the addition of these headings, the Union now took the name "European Union". The Treaty made some changes to the column structures. The European Economic Community, which will include the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Atomic Energy Community and the European Community, was included under the first column. This column operates in the field of economic integration. The second column is organized as "Common Foreign and Security Policy" and the third column is organized as "Cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs". These columns operate in the field of political integration. For example, the first steps were taken to act together by making arrangements in areas such as foreign policy, asylum policies, immigration policies, visa application, and the operations of law enforcement organizations (EU Overview, 2022). The reason for this statement is that decisions on the issues in the first column are made supranationally, while the issues in the second and third columns are made through intergovernmental decisions.

As Özcan explains, the third pillar covers cooperation issues that are considered to be carried out on issues of common interest such as asylum, migration, and border control. However, the member States have added a provision to the agreement that will allow some issues to be transferred to the first pillar (supranational) due to the importance of the issues in terms of economic integration (Özcan, 2005). The point to be noted here is that the issue of migration and asylum was later changed and seen as a security issue in order to create a free market and the decisions to be taken were transferred to supranational authority.

3.5. Treaty of Amsterdam

The Amsterdam Treaty, which entered into force on 1 May 1999, is important in terms of ensuring that the provisions of the Schengen Treaty are incorporated into EU law.

The Amsterdam Treaty has completed many issues in Maastricht and of course has also brought changes. With the Treaty, only cooperation efforts in the police and criminal fields remained in the third pillar and continued to maintain their intergovernmental nature, while the issues regulated in the third pillar in Maastricht were placed under the authority of the European Community. The importance of the third pillar is that the authority regarding the issues regulated here lies in the member states. The most important innovation brought by the Amsterdam Treaty regarding immigration and asylum is that it examines the issue within the framework of Title 4 and that the decisions taken by the Community are not only binding

for the member states, but can also have a direct effect on national legal systems as long as they comply with the criteria of the Court of Justice (Özcan, 2005).

Policies on visa, free movement of persons, asylum and immigration are examined under the fourth heading.

3.6. Tampere Summit

The Tampere Summit was held in Tampere, Finland, with the participation of European Heads of State, to determine a common strategy on freedom, justice and security. The main subject of the Summit, which was held on October 15-16, 1999, was to produce policies to stop illegal immigration on the continent, which had become a target for third-country nationals, and to ensure that external borders were properly controlled. The importance of the Summit in terms of migration was that before Tampere, the issue was being addressed as a temporary and intergovernmental agenda among European states.

3.7. Treaty of Nice

The Nice Treaty was signed on 26 February 2001. The date of entry into force is 1 February 2003. The Treaty has undergone some revisions in order to implement the principle of "enhanced cooperation" in practice. Common Foreign and Security Policy issues other than military and defense issues have been included in the scope of enhanced cooperation. In addition, some regulations have been made regarding the residence and travel rights of EU citizens. Some changes and new additions have been made to the Common Security and Defense Policy and to the issues on which cooperation is planned in the Justice and Home Affairs Area in order to regulate fundamental rights, visas, immigration and the fight against discrimination. In the third pillar, "Eurojust", which is necessary for judicial cooperation, has been established and the "Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union" has been adopted (EU Overview, 2022).

3.8. Treaty of Lisbon

On 13 December 2007, the Lisbon Treaty was signed, and it came into force in 2009 due to the arrangements established by the Member States within their own legal frameworks. This treaty modified the Maastricht Treaty, which serves as the foundational treaty of the European Union, granting the Union a legal personality that it previously lacked. Furthermore, the clarity of the Union's institutional structure was enhanced, and the title of the Treaty on the European Union was revised to "Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union" (Reçber, 2018). The Union's acquisition of legal personality strengthened the binding nature of its decisions on the Member States.

The Lisbon Treaty has explained the issue of migration in detail in paragraphs 77, 78, 79 and 80 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. According to the provisions, the authority in migration management is shared between the Parliament and the Council of the European Union.

With the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, the issue of immigration became a regular legislative procedure, requiring a joint decision between the European Parliament and the Council, or if not, a qualified majority vote. For the EU, immigration is a shared competence, but national governments can decide how many immigrants they will accept from outside the EU.

4. EU Immigration Policies

The European Union's migration policy is characterized by solidarity, forward-thinking, and comprehensive objectives. This policy aims to establish a balanced strategy to address both regular and irregular migration. There are two primary objectives that guide the EU in executing its migration policy. The first objective is to maintain a balanced approach to migration, which involves managing regular migration while also addressing irregular migration. This includes overseeing migration flows in a controlled manner, guaranteeing fair treatment for third-country nationals who are legally present in Member States, enhancing efforts to combat irregular migration—including migrant smuggling and other forms of smuggling like customs violations and drug trafficking—and promoting close collaboration with non-member countries across these areas. The ultimate aim of the EU is to create a framework of rights and responsibilities for regular migrants that aligns with those of EU citizens, facilitating their integration into the Union and its social fabric. The second objective focuses on fostering solidarity among the Union's member states by distributing financial responsibilities related to migration (Schmid-Drüner, 2022).

Following the explanation of the legal framework that underpins the EU's migration policy through its provisions, it can be concluded that the Union has consolidated its powers into four primary categories. The first category is "Regular Migration." The EU holds the authority to establish the criteria for entry and legal residency within a Member State, which includes provisions for family reunification for third-country nationals. Member States maintain the right to set acceptance rates for individuals from third countries seeking employment. The second category is "Combating Irregular Migration." The European Union is obligated to mitigate and prevent irregular migration, particularly through a robust return policy that aligns with fundamental rights. The third area of jurisdiction is "Readmission Agreements." The EU is empowered to enter into agreements with third countries regarding the readmission of third-country nationals who fail to meet the entry, presence, or residency requirements upon entering the country or who do not comply after their arrival. The final area of authority is "Integration." The EU is able to promote and assist the initiatives implemented by Member States aimed at facilitating the integration of legally residing third-country nationals. Nevertheless, there are no provisions within EU law for the harmonization of national laws and regulations (Schmid-Drüner, 2022).

When explaining the powers of the European Union regarding migration, it should be noted that the Union has a supranational authority in the first three headings, while in the integration section, it remains in a position that encourages countries more and that intergovernmental authority is at the forefront.

The migration policy of the Union has evolved alongside the institutional changes initiated by the Lisbon Treaty. As previously mentioned, this Treaty has made significant advancements in the management of migration. Enforced in December 2009, it established a new legal foundation for qualified majority voting and integration measures concerning regular migration. Now, the Union's ordinary legislative procedure applies to both irregular and regular migration policies, with the Parliament positioned as a co-legislator on equal terms with the Council. Additionally, paragraph 78(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union stipulates that provisional measures in response to a sudden influx of third-country nationals into any Member State can only be implemented by the Council following consultation with the Parliament. Furthermore, the Lisbon Treaty clarified that the EU shares

its competences in this domain with member States, particularly regarding the number of immigrants a member State may permit to enter for work purposes (Article 79(5) TFEU). Lastly, the Court of Justice has been granted comprehensive jurisdiction over immigration and asylum matters (Schmid-Drüner, 2022).

According to Geddes, the architecture of the European Union's migration management after Lisbon is more intricate than contemporary, with the Schengen Agreement being the primary element shaping this management. Incorporated into EU law through the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty, it allows for free movement among member states without passport or customs checks at internal borders. The second key element is the Dublin Regulation, which has seen considerable reforms since 2007, alongside the Asylum Directives and the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), which encompasses the European Refugee Fund and the European Asylum Support Office (Hampshire, 2015).

While the founding treaties of the European Union are being explained, it is not explained in detail in this section, since it is examined how the perspective on migration management has changed in parallel. However, it is necessary to say that Schengen, in particular, represents a pool of sovereignty on the Continent and is one of the most visible and striking achievements of the EU, along with the monetary union.

When the "recent policy developments" regarding the Union's migration management are examined, it is seen that the Commission first published the report titled "Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)" in 2011 in order to draw a general framework for relations with third countries. The report made evaluations in four different sections. These sections are; "regular migration and mobility, irregular migration and human trafficking, international protection and asylum policy, and the impact of migration and mobility on development". Then, in June 2014, a Strategic Directive was published for the period 2014-2020, focusing on the goal of "applicability of existing tools and measures for legislative and operational planning in the areas of freedom, security and justice to domestic law". The report emphasizes the need to ensure that regular migration is used in the best possible way, to provide protection to those in need, to combat irregular migration and to effectively manage borders (Schmid-Drüner, 2022). Thirdly, the European Agenda on Migration was published in May 2015, which will lead to the publication of guidelines on regular migration and asylum. Finally, the New Pact on Migration and Asylum was adopted in the 2020 work programme (New Pact on the Migration and Asylum, 2022).

Upon reviewing the "recent legal developments" concerning the Union's management of migration, it becomes evident that significant legislative changes have been enacted regarding irregular migration. The European Union has established legal frameworks in four distinct areas related to this issue. The first area is the "Facilitators Package," which encompasses the Commission Directives and has developed comprehensive laws addressing unauthorized entry into the country, transit entry, residency, and various forms of smuggling. Additionally, the EU Action Plan Against Migrant Smuggling for the years 2021-2025 has been adopted. The second area is the "Returns Directive," which outlines the common standards and procedures for the return of third-country nationals who are residing irregularly within the Union's territory. The third area is the Employers Sanctions Directive, which details the sanctions and measures that should be imposed on employers of third-country nationals living illegally in the Member States. Lastly, the fourth regulation pertains to expulsion, a

framework that has been in effect since 2001 and is adhered to by the Member States (Schmid-Drüner, 2022).

Regarding integration, the 2021-2027 integration and social inclusion action plan has been published. This plan will be discussed in detail under the heading where integration policies will be explained. In addition to providing funding support to integration policies, the EU also supports this policy with technology-based formations such as the European Migration Forum, the European Integration Website, the European Integration Network and the Expert Groups it established in 2002.

The process of enhancing the EU's prominent position in asylum and migration has proven to be quite challenging. The gradual development of a unified migration policy faced opposition from several member states, leading to a slow consolidation of the Union's asylum and migration framework over the years. While it is challenging to make broad generalizations about the various countries that joined the Union and their respective policies, it can be noted that during the 1950s and 1960s, there was a significant demand for immigrants in many Western European nations due to labor shortages. In the aftermath of World War II, which left Europe in ruins, countries sought to recruit inexpensive and adaptable labor from abroad to aid in their reconstruction and economic recovery. Unlike current attitudes and policies regarding migration, nations like France, Germany, and the Netherlands previously adopted measures to attract immigrants in order to fulfill their labor requirements. Following the World Economic Crisis of 1973, political discussions shifted due to the economic turmoil and the halt in labor recruitment, leading to a negative perception of immigration that contributed to an increasingly unstable public order rather than fostering supportive policies. Initially, as noted by Huysmans, immigration was assessed solely within the framework of social and economic rights for EC countries, aiming to establish an integrated labor market that allowed workers to move freely among member states. However, after the mid-1980s, economic migration to the EU started to be viewed as an alternative route, and the issues surrounding immigration and asylum began to blur together (Huysmans, 2006). Consequently, as Smith also pointed out, the European Union's motivation for developing a unified immigration policy became linked to its aspiration for a cohesive security policy (Smith, 2004).

5. An Economic-Political Assessment of EU Migration Policies

The EU's protection and security-oriented approach towards refugees affects asylum applications to EU countries. Number of people who applied for asylum in EU countries between 2013-22 shows that asylum applications to EU countries were at their highest levels in 2015 and 2016. Asylum applications exceeded 1 million for the first time as a result of the refugee crisis originating from the Middle East that the EU faced in 2015 and 2016 (European Commission, 2023a). However, it is seen that asylum applications decreased in the period after 2016 and remained stable until 2020. In 2020, it is noticeable that asylum applications decreased due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Asylum applications, which increased in 2021 compared to the previous year, increased significantly in 2022. In April 2023, 72,630 people applied for asylum in EU countries (European Commission, 2023a). In the same period of the previous year, that is, in April 2022, this figure was 54,350. Thus, there was a 34 percent increase compared to the previous year (European Commission, 2023a).

Top 8 EU countries with the highest number of asylum applications in 2022 shows that EU country with the highest number of asylum applications in 2022 was Germany, with approximately 244 thousand asylum applications (European Commission, 2023a). Germany is followed by France, with approximately 157 thousand asylum applications (European Commission, 2023a). In 2022, approximately 118 thousand asylum applications were made to Spain and approximately 113 thousand to Austria (European Commission, 2023a). When the first quarter of 2016, when migration to the EU was intense, is examined, similarly, 61 percent of first-time asylum applicants, with approximately 175 thousand applications, went to Germany (European Commission, 2023a). As can be seen from the data on asylum applications, Germany has become the primary destination country for asylum seekers in Europe.

In 2022, a total of 881,220 asylum applications were made by citizens of non-EU countries (European Commission, 2023a). The highest number of asylum applications was made by Syrian nationals with 131,970 (European Commission, 2023a). Syrian nationals were followed by Afghan nationals with 113,495 asylum applications (European Commission, 2023a). The third highest number of asylum applications was made by Venezuelan citizens with 50,050 (European Commission, 2023a).

Syria was undoubtedly the country where the war was most severe during the Arab Spring. A significant portion of the Syrian population was forced to migrate to many countries as refugees. Again, Germany stands out as the EU country with the highest number of asylum applications from the Syrian population. In 2016, when migration to the EU reached its highest level, 90 percent of Syrian nationals who applied for asylum in the EU appeared to be registered in Germany (Eurostat, 2023a).

If we look at the numerical data on the top ten countries where the population is concentrated in the EU countries, as of 2022, the EU countries have a population of 446.7 million. This figure constitutes 5.6 percent of the world population (European Commission, 2023b). With a population of 83.2 million, Germany constitutes almost two-thirds (66 percent) of the EU population (European Commission, 2023b). Germany is the country with the largest population among EU countries. Germany is followed by France with 67.9 million, and Italy with 59 million (European Commission, 2023b). There are 37.7 million foreigners in the EU in 2022. While 13.7 million of the foreign population in the EU are citizens of EU member states, 23.8 million are citizens of non-EU countries. The foreign population constitutes 8.4 percent of the total EU population (European Commission, 2023b).

According to the European Commission (2023b) data, if we look at the changing trend of the EU population between 1960 and 2100; if the general trend is taken into account, the change in the EU population over the years is thought-provoking. The EU population increased by 6.2 million due to migration movements towards the EU from 2012 to 2022 (European Commission, 2023b). However, in recent years, population aging has been observed in most of Europe. While the ratio of the population aged 20-64, which represents the working age population in the EU, to the elderly population aged 65 and over was 3.8 in 2002, it decreased to 2.8 in 2022 (European Commission Eurostat, 2023b). In fact, this ratio is expected to decrease to 1.5 by 2100 (European Commission, 2023b). In such a scenario, the change in the population structure will have serious effects and consequences in the socio-economic context. According to Eurostat estimates, the EU population will grow slowly by 2026 (453.3

million people), and will fall to 419.5 million by 2100 (European Commission, 2023b). Considering the faster population growth in the rest of the world, these developments will affect approximately 25 people worldwide each year, or 4.1 percent of the global population (European Commission, 2023b).

The first of the two dynamics shaping the EU migration policy is the security-focused migration policy within the scope of combating irregular migration, while the second is the growth-focused migration policy. Economic growth and migration constitute two sides of the coin in the EU's socio-economic policies. According to Hansen (2010), the EU's goal of combating illegal migration and its neo-liberal economic goals contradict each other. In other words, while the EU combats illegal migration, it also serves its neo-liberal economic goals with the profit it makes from the cheap labor of irregular migrants. At this point, the EU does not want refugees on its own territory and strives to keep them out. However, when it is in search of cheap labor, it does not allow borders to prevent this (Hansen, 2010).

When a general assessment is made, the EU has been in a dynamic development process in terms of migration management, both legally and institutionally, since the 1990s. However, as a result of the increasing migration pressure towards the EU, the EU countries have turned to migration policies that prioritize their interests, making it impossible to implement harmonious common migration policies. In addition, the financial burden created by refugees in terms of meeting their basic needs such as food, shelter, education, clothing, etc., and the funds spent for their socio-economic integration have caused EU countries to change their migration policies in line with their economic interests. Indeed, the migration process that started with the Arab Spring and evolved into a crisis has brought about differences of opinion within EU members. Because the EU, which approached the process with a humanitarian approach emphasizing responsibility and solidarity at the beginning of the process, turned to externalization, control and security-oriented policies in the process when migration reached mass dimensions. This contradiction has led to the damage of trust towards the EU, which plays an active role as a global actor in the international community, and to the questioning of its sincerity.

6. Future Implications of EU Migration Policies

The European Union's migration policies are currently undergoing significant transformation, particularly with the development and implementation of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. This framework aims to balance humanitarian responsibilities with security concerns, while addressing the ongoing challenges posed by irregular migration. By revising its approach, the EU seeks to create a more efficient, equitable, and resilient migration system that responds to both internal and external pressures (European Commission, 2025).

One of the primary implications of these evolving policies is the enhancement of solidarity among member states. The New Pact introduces mechanisms that encourage countries to share the responsibility of hosting migrants more equitably, thereby alleviating the burden on frontline states such as Greece, Italy, and Spain. This approach aims to strengthen cohesion within the Union and promote fairer distribution of migration responsibilities (European Council, 2024).

Another key implication involves the streamlining of asylum procedures. The EU is working to standardize application processes and reduce disparities in asylum decisions across member states. By making the system more efficient, the EU intends to accelerate the

processing of claims while ensuring fairness and compliance with international obligations (European Commission, 2025).

In addition to asylum reforms, the EU is emphasizing legal migration channels, such as work permits and student visas, to mitigate irregular migration and human trafficking. By providing structured pathways for migrants, these policies aim to meet labor market demands, foster economic growth, and uphold migrants' rights (Business Europe, 2024).

Integration policies also form a crucial part of the EU's future approach. Measures such as language courses, vocational training, and community engagement programs are designed to promote social and economic inclusion of migrants. Successful integration is expected to enhance social cohesion, reduce marginalization, and contribute to the overall stability of EU societies (European Commission, 2025).

Technological advancements in migration management are another significant development. Digital tools and artificial intelligence are increasingly used for border control, visa processing, and asylum applications. While these technologies enhance efficiency, they also raise concerns regarding data privacy, discrimination, and ethical use of automated decision-making systems (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2024).

Finally, migration policies have important implications for demographics and labor markets. Given the aging populations in many EU countries, migration is viewed as a key tool to address labor shortages and sustain economic growth. By attracting younger and skilled migrants, the EU hopes to ensure the resilience of its workforce and the long-term competitiveness of its economies (European Political Strategy Centre [EPSC], 2024).

In conclusion, the future of EU migration policies is characterized by a complex interplay of humanitarian, economic, and security considerations. Their success will largely depend on effective implementation, cooperation among member states, and the ability to adapt to evolving global and regional migration dynamics.

Conclusion

Migration has deeply affected world history as a phenomenon for thousands of years. All kinds of migration movements that occur on a global scale have become a cross-border phenomenon that not only concerns the sovereignty and security of migrant-receiving and migrant-sending countries, but also affects the political, humanitarian, economic and developmental international relations agenda with its multidimensional dynamics. For this reason, it is natural to discuss international migration waves in terms of both quantity and quality in the countries they originate from, pass through and arrive at. Therefore, it can be considered as a natural result of this situation that countries take political actions and create policies based on these population movements.

Today, states are not content with eliminating threats to their military and political security alone in order to ensure their social security. Because, as a result of the globalizing world, social security today also necessitates the protection of traditions, religious beliefs, culture and identity as well as sociological factors. In terms of social security, as a result of the population movements created by the phenomenon of migration, which is seen as a threat by many countries, the collective identities of societies may interact with each other and intense migration flows may lead to the loss of identities and societies losing their own characteristics. From this perspective, migration is discussed as a risk that threatens the

demographic and social fabric. This situation, which can also be defined as the invasion of one social group by another, underlines that migration is a phenomenon that can trigger existential insecurity. As a result of these reasons, the European Union and Germany have begun to build most of the migration policies they have redeveloped today on this feeling of insecurity.

The absence of a clear common migration policy in the European Union naturally causes the policies and practices developed in this area to constantly change depending on economic, political and social developments. Since the number of its members is increasing and it has a structure that is constantly renewed, efforts are still ongoing today to develop a migration policy that can adapt to changing situations.

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