

# CfP | movements 3(2): Turkey's changing migration regime and its global and regional dynamics

Redaktion movements

With more and more people from war-torn countries of the Middle East, Asia and Africa coming to Turkey or crossing it *en route* to Western Europe, the country has become a focal point of (governing) migration. The movements of nearly 800,000 refugees, who crossed the Aegean Sea during the “summer of migration” of 2015, have not only undermined the pillars of the border regime that the EU member states have long sought to construct but also transformed Turkey into the largest refugee hosting country in the world.

Focusing on Turkey, the issue 3(2) of the journal *movements* seeks to open up a common intellectual space to critically assess Turkey's role and positionality within international migration movements and to elaborate on institutional, political, economic and social aspects of the migration regime that the Turkish state has taken steps to build over the last decade.

The debates on the so-called EU-Turkey deal have indicated that Turkey, from the standpoint of the European governments and international institutions, has gained an increasingly significant role in regional governance of migration. However, journalistic discourses that highlight Turkey's geographical location and consider it as a “bridge” between the West and the East, or academic accounts that tend to reduce Turkey's role to an extension of the EU's paradigm of “Fortress Europe” would be insufficient. The recent history of the construction of Turkey's migration regime has been rather entangled with multi-layered and multi-scalar dynamics that require the deconstruction of well-established dualities in the fields of migration and border studies.

While Turkey's legal and institutional structure through which public discourses, policies and practices in regard to governance of migration are constructed has



Figure 1: Banner during the #crossingnomore march to Edirne. Photo: Mathias Fiedler

developed in tandem with the EU membership negotiations since the early 2000s, the Syrian migration to Turkey after 2011 has deeply complicated the lines of this process. In close interaction with geopolitical dynamics at work in the Middle East, Turkey's migration regime implicates concurrent rigidities and flexibilities, continuities and ruptures, shifting spatialities and temporalities. They cannot be analyzed comprehensively within a Eurocentric conceptual framework based on the notion of externalization.

Furthermore, the nature of the legal, institutional and political discourses and practices developed in Turkey in the wake of the Syrian migration cannot be comprehended through binary conceptualizations such as a humanitarian versus a securitarian approach. Although the Turkish state has initially adopted an "open door" policy, the configuration of the migration regime has been formed in a manner that seeks to control refugees' movements. Humanitarian discourses and practices are engaged through well-established networks of quasi-official NGOs to contain refugees' negotiations and struggles in their daily lives within a charity-oriented social aid approach that is deeply embedded in the recent history of neoliberal authoritarian populism in Turkey.

Therefore, understanding Turkey's positionality within the crisis of the European border regime necessitates rethinking existing approaches,

conceptual frameworks and methodologies, and eventually expanding the boundaries of the migration and border studies beyond the European gaze. This *movements* issue will be published in collaboration with academics from Turkey in order to decentralize the border studies debate. We want to add and express academic and political concepts based in the Middle Eastern context and thus question some of the central concepts within border studies such as externalization.

Accordingly, in this issue we want to examine complex dynamics that characterize Turkey's migration regime, the implications of the European border regimes with Turkey and the interactions between these structural dynamics and migrants' experiences at different scales: local, regional, national and transnational. We are interested in contributions from different disciplines and methodologies, dealing with all aspects of the so-called refugee crisis in Turkey.

We are particularly interested in contributions that tackle with the following questions:

1. How and "where" can we situate Turkey within the larger context of migration and border studies after the beginning of the Syrian conflict in 2011?
2. What are the implications of the European border regime's formation in the case of Turkey and vice versa?
3. How do international institutions attempt to govern migrant mobilities in the Southeastern European regions and the Middle East? How do border rationalities change in the context of different borders? What is the role of UNHCR?
4. What is the impact of border politics on the lives of migrants and refugees? How do the global and regional governance of migration policies affect migrant groups in Turkey, who in return challenge, contest and negotiate the current migration and border regimes?
5. What are the consequences of legal and institutional ambiguities with regard to refugee protection in Turkey?
6. What role do national and international NGOs play in sustaining the current migration and refugee regime in Turkey? What is the connection between civil society organizations and the rights-based politics in Turkey?
7. How can we describe the Turkish camp regime?
8. How are public political discourses and practices developed in relation to migration and refugees in Turkey? What categorizations of migration do emerge

and what effects do they have on migrants' lives?

9. What role do power relations along the lines of gender, race, sexuality, religion, nationality etc. play in the Turkish migration regime?

10. What effects does the recent neoliberal authoritarian populism in Turkey have on the social, political and economic dynamics that characterize the nature of Turkey's migration regime in response to migration movements?

### **Submission of abstracts – deadlines:**

We are looking forward to receiving **abstracts of no more than 500 words by 16 October 2016**. We welcome abstracts for all the different formats of movements: academic articles, political interventions in essay format, research reports as well as interviews and book reviews. We also seek contributions from activists and political movements. Academic articles should be no longer than 50.000 characters (including spaces) and must be written in English. The final contributions will be due by 15 January 2017.

All submissions will pass through a collaborative review process conducted by the editorial board. Academic articles are reviewed additionally by at least two anonymous experts. In any case, the editorial team will discuss comments and suggestions with the authors in a transparent process. Final decisions on the acceptance of contributions are made by the board. **The issue will be published in September 2017.**

For further questions and submissions of abstracts: [submit@movements-journal.org](mailto:submit@movements-journal.org)

For more information on the journal and the review process: <http://movements-journal.org/issues/01.grenzregime/01.editorial~en.html>

Since *movements* is committed to promoting critical research, the editorial team strongly and in deep solidarity supports the protests by *Academics for Peace* against the persecution of critical scholars by the Turkish government. The group comprising of more than 2,000 academics has been awarded the Aachen Peace Prize for their call for peace and their condemnation of human rights violations during the ongoing attacks of Turkish armed forces on Kurdish populations in the East of the country. Please find more information about the protests on <http://harekact.bordermonitoring.eu/category/documents/>.