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**THE IMPACT OF TURKEY-EU RELATIONS ON PUBLIC OPINION
ABOUT SYRIANS IN TURKEY: AN ANALYSIS OF PERCEPTION
THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA**

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THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA**

by
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ÖZET

TÜRKİYE-AB'NİN İLİŞKİSİ TÜRKİYE'DEKİ SURİYELİLER HAKKINDA KAMUOYUNA ETKİSİ: SOSYAL MEDYA'DAN ANLAYIŞIN ANALİZİ

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Sosyal Medya dünya çapında önemli bir araç haline geliyor. Sosyal medya Farklı platformlarda çeşitli bilgi ve içerik kaynaklarına erişilebilen yaşamımızda çok önemli bir rol yarattı. Sosyal Medya, zaman ve mekan kısıtlaması olmadan çeşitli nedenlerle kullanılabilir, bu nedenle haber bültenleri ve ajansları, Sosyal Medya'nın avantajlarını fark etti ve daha geniş kitlelere ulaşmak için haberlerini geleneksel Multimedya platformlarıyla birlikte Sosyal Medya platformlarında yayınladı. Bu çalışma, sosyal medya platformlarının türkiye'deki haber bültenleri tarafından kullanılmasının önemi ve kamuoyunda etki açısından olabilecekleri beya olamayacakaları üzerine odaklanmaktadır . Politik spektrumda (cumhuriyet, hürriyet, sabah ve sözcü) çok sayıda takibe sahip ve farklı çizgilere giren bu araştırmada dört haber bülteni facebook sayfası seçildi. Ankara anlaşmasının türkiye ile Avrupa birliği arasında gerçekleştiği çok önemli bir ay olduğu için Mart 2016, bu araştırmayı yürütmek üzere seçilmiştir. Bu araştırma, haber bültenleri tarafından oluşturulan Ankara anlaşmasından önce ve sonra çıkan haber parçalarının (facebook gonderilerinin) içerik ve söylem analizini gerçekleştirmeye çalışacam ve türkiye'de ikamet eden

suriyelilere kamuoyununun bu yayınlardan gelen tepkilerden nasıl etkileyebileceğini yorumlar bölümünde olan tepkileri analiz edilecektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Sosyal Medya, Suriyeli mülteciler, Kamuoyu, algı değişikliği, Türkiye-AB ilişkileri



ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF TURKEY-EU RELATIONS ON PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT SYRIANS IN TURKEY: AN ANALYSIS OF PERCEPTION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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Social Media is becoming a tool of significant importance throughout the world. It has created a very important role in our lives where one could access various sources of information and contents through different platforms. Social Media could be used for various reasons without time or space limitations therefore news outlets have noticed the advantages of Social Media, so they post their news on Social Media platforms-along with the traditional Multimedia platforms-in order to reach wider audiences.

This research aims to seek out if the change in the EU-Turkey relations and the way it was portrayed in the media has affected the people's perceptions regarding the Syrians living in Turkey and if the large number of discussions made by the political actors and parties in the parliament, the government and NGOs has caused a significant change in the way people express their attitude towards both Syrians and Europe. This would be done by analyzing comments made on news outlets on social media (Facebook) platforms of four major news agencies in Turkey. The news outlets' Facebook pages have been chosen in this research which have large number of followings and fall under different lines in the political spectrum (Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü). The month of March, 2016 have been chosen to conduct this

research since it was a very significant month when the Ankara agreement took place between Turkey and the European Union. This research will attempt to perform a content and discourse analysis of news pieces (facebook posts) before and after the Ankara agreement created by the news outlets and how the public opinion towards Syrians residing in Turkey could be affected by these posts through the reactions of the host community in the comments section.

Keywords: Social Media, Syrian refugees, Public opinion, perception change, Turkey-EU relations



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFAD	Afet ve acil durum yonetimi (English Translation: Disaster and Emergency Management Authority)
AB	Avrupa Birligi (English Translation: European Union)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
EC	European Council
EU	European Union
IR	International Relations
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
LET	Language Expectancy Theory
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PKK	Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (English Translation: The Kurdistan Workers' Party)
RTL	Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines
TTIP	Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations Commission of Human Rights
US	United States
WFP	World Food Program
WWII	World War Two

1. INTRODUCTION

In addition to being platforms that allow people to share content and engage in social networking, Social Media has proven to be a great tool that could be used to start campaigns and plan political uprisings in addition to its importance in influencing the public opinion. Social Media has played a vital role in 2011 in affecting the perceptions of people towards the Syrian Crisis and the Syrian refugees in particular. It could be difficult or even impossible for one to have an opinion independent of Social Media and Media in general.

The global impact Social Media has on lives of people and their perceptions has encouraged me to research about this topic and focus on the role of Social Media by analyzing and trying to answer the questions: How has Social Media (Facebook) reflected public opinion of the host community in Turkey caused by the Media, regarding the Syrian Refugees before and after the Ankara agreement¹ that was signed on March² 18th 2016? How has Social Media been used to reinforce existing ideas and beliefs about Syrian Refugees in Turkey and why? Could Social media be considered as an outlet for discrimination against Syrian Refugees? How have significant events perceived and reflected upon by the locals once they were presented in the Media? How has these events effected the attitude change in the locals? How have Media outlets and the reflections of locals through social media take a stance toward international organizations and other countries? How do they represent the EU in all this? How has the Ankara agreement between Turkey and the EU affected public opinion regarding Syrians?

Facebook, as a Social Media Platform, has been chosen to conduct this research since it could be considered as the most used and well-known platform that people usually go on to share their thoughts and opinions. In this research, focus would be placed on determining the change in people's perceptions as a result of the Media and how has that reflected on Social Media using an interdisciplinary research method. Facebook provides a search engine in their platform where you could do a deep dive in their history list and check posts and comments created on the platform.

¹ The Ankara Agreement is also known as Turkey-EU refugee agreement, the Visa liberalisation agreement, Turkey-EU statement, and the readmission agreement between the EU and Turkey. Here on, in this research, the agreement will be referred to as the Ankara agreement.

² The month of March is significant in this research because the Ankara agreement took place in the middle of the month. Hence, March was chosen to conduct this work

In this study, qualitative and quantitative research methods would be used to perform a discourse analysis and content analysis of four major news agencies on Facebook will take place by examining what types of posts they have made about Syrians on their Social Media accounts in addition to the comment section of those post and the reaction of the locals towards the posts. For this reason, a series of news Media outlets would be chosen to examine that are; Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü have been chosen as outlets since they contain a variety of sources who claim to hold different views about the issue of Refugees. These Media outlets have high ratings, a large audience and their content is shared the most which means that they could reach a large portion of the society; hence they could have a larger influence and impact on perception change. Sabah could be counted as one of the most well-known news outlets. Among its content is news about the Syrians residing in Turkey and the held that is provided by the Turkish government. Sözcü on the other hand, would be counted as one of the news outlets that have opposing views against the Syrian Refugees existence in Turkey. Hürriyet, could be seen to represent kind of mainstream audiences who have no particular ideological leanings. Lastly, Cumhuriyet could be stated to be a secular, anti-government and nationalist news outlet.

Looking at the media, how Syrians would be represented before and after the event would be studied and if there was a change, how has this change reflected on Social media would be considered. Giving the limited time and resources at hand, it would not be possible to look at every event on social media that has a link to Syrians in Turkey. In addition to that, if attempt is made to look at every single event on Social Media, the analysis of this research would turn out to be very shallow. Hence, to be able to do an in-depth analysis, one incident that could be stated to be important and significant considering Syrian Refugees' history in Turkey has been chosen. Focus would be placed on how this incident was perceived and reflected upon by the locals once they were presented in the media and how did the Media use these facts using discourse and content analysis.

In research, the change in the EU-Turkey relations and the way it was portrayed in the media would be analyzed to see how it has affected the people's perceptions regarding the Syrians living in Turkey and if the large number of discussions made by the political actors and parties in the parliament, the government and NGOs has caused a significant change in the way people express their attitude towards both Syrians and Europe. This would be done by analyzing

comments made on news outlets on social media (Facebook) platforms of the mentioned four news outlets.

In this research, focus will be placed on the change in attitude towards Syrian Refugees as a result of Media. This change in attitude will be inspected throughout Social Media. In order to inspect change, an incident should take place that causes the change and to categorize change in attitude and explain them, for that reason The Ankara Agreement has been chosen, aiming to focus on the way this incident was portrayed on Media and the way these portrayals have reflected on Social Media. Through this, change in attitude 15 days before and after this event would be inspected and the reaction of people on social media on these moments of change would be studied and seen. One of the reasons for choosing 15 days prior and after an event could be the fact that the effect of events in Turkey tend to be short lived.

1.1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND:

1.1.1 Constructivism:

Constructivism offers an account for the politics of identity. Like liberalism, constructivism also runs on ideology. It takes the notion of ideology and applies the ways in which states perceive other states to be based on criteria of nationalism, race, ethnicity, gender and religion, which are all involved in global politics (Wendt, 1992).

Constructivism could be used to explain how states interact with each other and why. Constructivism explains how one state could see another state as an ally, enemy, neutral, peaceful, terrorist or democratic. Constructivism considers historical subjectivity rather than “all states are states debate” (Wendt, 2003).

Constructivism explains many aspects of this research. Since constructivism implies that states are not only states but they have different identities, it could explain the way relations between a state and another state is formed. For instance, a state could be an ally with one state and an enemy with another, depending on the identities of the states. It could also explain how one state’s relationship with another state could change, depending on the change in identity of that

state (Risse, 2000). Not to mention, the gradual evolution of foreign policy relations a state will take with another state depending on the degree of cooperation and trust.

For instance, the relationship between Turkey and the EU could merely depend on the identities of the two states. The Ankara agreement between Turkey and the European Union, decisions to be made regarding the case of Syrian refugees, and 6 billion to be given to Turkey to support with the Syrians in Turkey, all came to be agreed upon when the two states saw each other as allies. Constructivism also explains why the relations between the same two states changed because of identity change. Constructivism focuses on perceptions of a state towards another state and how perceptions form policies and the methods a state engages with another state.

Constructivism also suggests that the way which perceptions are made helps us to bring domestic politics into IR studies (Wendt, 1992). This theory could help us identify and focus on the domestic politics, in this case, Syrians in Turkey into IR studies and identify the ideology of Turks towards Syrians before and after the Ankara agreement between the Turkey and the EU, which is why this research focuses on perception and public opinion of Turks regarding Syrian refugees.

1.1.2 Realism:

Realists believe that security and power are the two most important factors in the international system (Waltz, 1979). They would pay little to no attention to non-state actors (Halliday and Rosenberg, 1998). For these reasons, realism could not explain the power and significance of non-state actors, which would be the Syrian Refugees in this case. For this reason, realism would not be used in this research to explain the Syrian refugee crisis and large number of Syrians residing in Turkey and how this large group of people could lead to instability of a state in terms of security and economy. In addition to this, for the same reason, realism does not explain the power of another non-state actor that has been focused on in this research, which is social media and the affects it could have on public opinion regarding Syrians residing in Turkey.

To realists, hard power should be used (Snyder, 2002) however, this research focuses on using of soft power and how it has left large impacts. There are many instances to mention; one example could be the use of soft power (Social media) in Turkey to impact the public opinion regarding

Syrian refugees. Another example could be claimed to be Turkey using Syrian refugees as a tool towards the E.U. to gain several benefits including visa-free agreement, and re-opening the accession agreement between Turkey and the E.U.

Nevertheless, according to modern realist theory, the ordering principle of the international system is anarchic, meaning that there is no central authority to govern interactions between states. Each state must act as a self-help unit to ensure its survival and secure its interests (Rose,1998). This could clearly be noticed with the case of Turkey and the E.U, where the two states were trying to protect their own borders and acting like a self-help unit to ensure their own security in 2016. This also lead to the Ankara agreement between Turkey and the E.U, to make sure both sides had certain interests and controlled the flood of Syrians fleeing to Europe from turkey. Realists believe that states would support each other if they had a common interest (Walt, 1985), which explains the visa liberalization and Ankara agreement between the EU and Turkey.

1.2 METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS:

1.2.1 Language Expectancy Theory:

Certain guidelines and rules should be followed and taken into consideration when trying to define and analyze the characteristics of the language used during political communication- in the case of this thesis, political communication of news outlets and the type of persuasion theorem that could be used through their Facebook pages. For that reason, the Language Expectancy theory would be discussed as a part of the theoretical background in this research. In addition to being the only communication theory that examines the language characteristics of the message published, The Language expectancy theory assists in defining the essential standards to evaluate political communication attempt. A part of this research intends to examine the use of social media by Turkish news outlets as a tool for political communication. Online communication has witnessed a dramatic increase since the development of online technologies from early 2000's. Using Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter for communication by news outlets have become very vital. This research looks into content and language characteristics that Turkish news outlets use in their Facebook platforms in addition to the feedback and reaction that the followers (audience) have. This gives social media its unique position since it is an interactive platform. In this research, the characteristics and norms that the

Turkish social media users see as important would also be studied and analyzed. Data will be collected using quantitative and qualitative research methods by analyzing content posted by news outlets and feedback given by the audience and followers of these news outlets.

Language Expectancy theory would be used to examine the social media platforms of Turkish news outlets from the perspective of political communication. Language Expectancy theory is one of the main academic research theories in the field of political communication and persuasion developed by Michael Burgoon in 1970 (Burgoon, Jones & Stewart, 1975:240-256).

However, since it is not possible to define the persuasion rate of the audience and followers of these news outlets, in this research the Language Expectancy theory would only be used as an explanatory mechanism in order to define the message and language characteristics of the posts and comments created by the news outlets and their audiences respectively.

The Language Expectancy theory assumes language to be a system that is rule-governed through which people create expectations regarding the language or content created with the attempt to persuade. Cultural values and standards of communication create expectations regarding norms (Burgoon, 1995:29-52). These values and norms could be considered as social forces that impact language and perception of the audience (receiver) to which creates different opinions through the source message (Burgoon & Miller, 1985:199- 229).

A group of people's social climate and their expectations along with the source that spread the information could determine typical language behavior of normative of expectations as stated by LET.

Within this context, communication expectancies are derived from;

- The communicator such as their features, reliability and social status.
- The relationship between the communicator and the audience for instance; their desirability, resemblance and status equality.
- and the message from where we could analyze communication formality and structure (Burgoon, Hunsacker & Dawson, 1994).

The LET theory studies the strategies in which language is used and the affect of this on public opinion and perception. The message strategies- in this case, the posts created by the news outlets- could contain verbal hostility such as fear appeal, precise sentiments and language

intensity (Burgoon, 1995:29-52). Burgoon states that his theory could be applied effectively in the research fields of management, media, politics and communication (Burgoon & Miller, 1985).

The content created by the news outlets and posted through social media platforms are mostly in the form of texts accompanied by videos or photos. In this research, the texts would be focused on and analyzed with LET. LET creates a connection between the posts created by the news outlets and the comments to the posts and analyses the role of socio-cultural norms within the posts and the language attributes of the comments.

1.2.2 Agenda Setting theory:

Bernard Cohen, former politician and Democratic member of the Virginia House of Delegates, states that mass media arranges, regulates, constitutes and sets up daily agenda. This could mean that the media regulates the vitality of news and makes the choice of publishing which certain information to the society (Temizel et al, 2014).

Hence, news published by the media would be considered as vital and those that are not published through media would be seen as irrelevant.

Bernard Cohn, an American political scientist states that the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about. The world will look different to different people, depending on the map that is drawn for them by writers, editors, and publishers of the paper they read” (Kopan, 2009).

Agenda setting theory could be traced back to Walter Lippman in 1922 where Lippman claimed that agenda-building was strongly affected by the media.

Agenda Setting theory depicts the capability of news media to impact the significance placed on a specific topic of the public agenda. Agenda setting theory claims that a piece of information would seem to have more importance in the eyes of the audience if it was covered frequently and prominently (Terkan, 2005).

This theory was previously established by Max McCombs and Donald Shaw where they did a study on the presidential election of 1968 in the United States. McCombs and Donald Shaw showed a linear correlation between what 100 residents of an area in North Carolina found to be the most important election issue in relation to what was reported by news outlets to be the most important issue. McCombs and Shaw compared the most noticeable news content with the

perception of the locals on the most important election issue to establish their theory of the degree of affect of the media on public opinion. Other studies on Agenda setting theory show that what the news outlets show in their platforms is directly related to their views on things such as politics, economy and culture. In his book, *Public opinion*, Lippmann argues that the images of events in the minds of people are directly connected to what has been shown through the media. However, some critiques have been presented by several researchers on the Agenda Setting theory. One example of these critiques could be the dependent variable that was conceptualized as the perceived issue by the public “salience”, however following studies has shown the dependent variable to be awareness, attention or concern which lead to different outcomes. In addition to this, theorist John Fiske has challenged the agenda setting theory and stated that the theory claims to imply that the audience have a passive position yet, the public is claimed to be not as passive as suggested by the theory (John, 1986).

McQuail and Windahl who are two theorists of mass communication criticize agenda setting theory and state that the theory excludes change of opinion. In addition to that, they state that different agendas work differently. For example, there exists a substantial difference between the agenda of individuals and groups versus agenda of institutions and different news outlets. Another critique could be the uncertainty level that is associated with the purpose of the media. Orderly and cognizant orientation could serve as carriers whereas there is a level of uncertainty to which agenda is based on mass media, the local public and their desires (McQuail et al, 2005).

1.2.3 Silence Coiling Theory:

This theory focuses on values of any particular group or society as opposed to individual's agreement to those values and statements. The theory suggests that people who do not follow those values would be in risk to be excluded in the society. Developed by Elisabeth Noelle Neumann, it suggests that fear of exclusion could create a set of attitudes that are consistent with beliefs and behaviors that are accepted by the majority (Tekinalp ve Uzun, 2009: 152).

The theory suggests that if people think that their opinion would be publicly shared, they would not be open to explaining their ideas, and if they believe their thoughts is a part of the minority, “they would refrain from sharing and expressing their thoughts”.

Neumann suggests that the mass media has a great effect on beliefs and opinions and states that in case the majority opinion is supported by mass media, it would be more prone to explaining their ideas than the minority. However, if the minority is supported by the media, the majority would prefer to remain silent (Kalender, 2005: 113). People gradually learn how the public distribution is taking place and how their ideas and beliefs are distributed and supported in the media. An example of that could be the fact that the media discusses issues that represent the dominant view of the society, and those who might fall under the minority groups might not have the necessary means to defend the opposing views (Yaylagül, 2010: 80 - 81).

1.3 OUTLINE OF THESIS:

In the first chapter of this research, a general description of the topic in addition to defining the research problem would be focused on. Additionally, a general background of the topic will be argued, followed by discussing the theoretical framework chosen for this study.

to the terminologies used –such as refugee, immigrant and asylum seeker- would take place in addition to a historical background of the Syrian Crisis, the situation of Syrians and how they became Refugees in Turkey.

The second Chapter of this work would include different sides in Turkey and their relations to the Syrians living in Turkey, starting with Turkey-EU relations since 1959, focusing on euroscepticism.

The second chapter also focuses on the role of the government of Turkey and the support given by the national state funded NGOs such as Kızılay and Afet ve Acil Durum Yönetimi (AFAD) in addition to the host community and their perceptions on Syrians in Turkey and their concerns regarding security, culture and economy.

The third chapter focuses on what is meant by the Media and Social Media, putting emphasis on how social media could act as an agent to affect communities in addition to the important role Media plays in affecting, forming or re-enforcing opinions and perceptions of people and how these perceptions could be mirrored in social media platforms such as Facebook.

In Chapter four of this research work, the Methodology and research design would be discussed. In addition to that the data collection method in this work would be discussed.

Chapter fifth of this research focuses on interpretation of the collected data and it is composed of two parts; Part one uses discourse analysis and content analysis to study the posts created on Facebook platform of Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü news channels fifteen days before The Ankara Agreement and fifteen days after. Part two uses content and discourse analysis to investigate the comments made in part 1- the posts that Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü have created on their Facebook platforms fifteen days before The Ankara Agreement and fifteen days after. The two keywords that have been chosen in order to perform discourse and content analysis are Europe “Avrupa” and Syrian “Suriyeli”. Essentially, this analysis is made to analyze the possibility of change in public opinion of the host community in Turkey towards the EU and Syrians before and after the event of The Ankara Agreement.

The last chapter of this research concludes what has been discussed in the previous chapters and stresses on the significance of media and social media in affecting perceptions and presents several suggestions for future research.

It is important to mention that during this study the term “Syrian Refugees” would be used to talk about the Syrians residing in Turkey. The use of this term is in accordance with the 1951 Geneva Convention of the United Nations. However, it should be noted that the Syrians residing in Turkey are not given refugee status and are referred to as “conditional refugees” or “guests”.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 TURKEY-EU RELATIONS

Turkey applied for membership in the European Economic Community in 1959. In 1963, the Ankara agreement, also known for the Association Agreement, was signed by both parties. However, the economic and political situation of Turkey saw a downhill in the 1970s and the beginning of 1980s. After the second half of 1980s, Turkey started to work on improving in politics and economy through liberalizing the economy and strengthening democracy. The EU-Turkey customs union agreement came into force in 1996. Followed by this, Turkey received official candidacy at the Helsinki Summit in December 1999 (Yilmaz, 2009). Negotiations to adopt the EU-Turkey readmission agreement was commenced by the Council on 28th of November 2002 and they were formally opened on May 2005 (Yilmaz, 2009). Accession negotiations were opened to Turkey on the 3rd of October 2006 after meeting the Copenhagen Criteria in 2004 (Carkoglu, 2004). 2006 marks the year when the first chapter for negotiations was opened. On the same day, the chapter was temporarily closed (Aybet, 2006). The relations between Turkey and the EU turned downhill in this new era. One of the reasons for this downhill could go back to the not so good relations between Cyprus and Turkey. The additional protocol that would update Ankara Agreement was asked to be put into force. This agreement included the ten new members of the EU during its enlargement in 2004 (Carkoglu, 2004). However, Turkey was not satisfied with this and refused to put the additional protocol into force since Southern Cyprus was one of the ten members that had newly become a part of the EU- keeping in mind the negative relations between Turkey and Cyprus and the fact that Southern Cyprus is not recognized by Turkey. Turkey was warned by the EU council in 2005 to implement the protocol and acknowledge its responsibilities towards the protocol by opening the Turkish ports and airports to the ships and planes of Southern Cyprus. In December 2006, eight chapters in the accession negotiations were blocked by the EU council due to Turkey not taking any steps towards Southern Cyprus. The eight chapters were stated to remain blocked until Turkey recognizes its responsibilities under the Protocol and that the chapters would not be provisionally closed (Onis and Yilmaz, 2009). This would mean that by implementing the Additional Protocol, the EU would open negotiations for the eight chapters while if Turkey did

not implement the Additional protocol, the EU would not open any additional chapters for negotiation.

The French president of that time, Nicolas Sarkozy opposed to the full membership of Turkey to the EU (Lagro, 2008). Instead of full membership the President Sarkozy proposed ‘privileged partnership’ title for Turkey. For that matter, in 2007 France blocked five additional chapters that were related to full membership, from being opened (Bilefsky, 2007). Additionally, Southern Cyprus blocked six more chapters in 2009 (Müftüler-Baç, & Çiçek, 2017). The EU became very busy with financial crisis between 2010 and 2013 which led to stalling of the negotiations (Graeme Wearden, 2014). 2013 witnessed improvement in the relations between Turkey and the EU. It was possible to open one of the chapters blocked by the president Sarkozy with the new President of France, Francois Hollande (Aydın-Düzgit, 2013). Coming to 2013, Turkey and the EU signed a Readmission Agreement between them in return of Visa liberalization for the Turkish citizens (Kirişci, 2014). December 2013 marks the time when the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement was signed after several rounds of negotiations. The visa liberalization Dialogues also took place at the same time (European Commission, 2013a), (European Commission, 2013b). The Visa Liberalization dialogue started on 2013 even though it was a part of Justice Freedom and Security, chapter 24, which was closed since it was vetoed by Southern Cyprus (Müftüler-Baç & Çiçek, 2017). Furthermore, the process of visa-free regime with Turkey was prepared through a roadmap based on the dialogues between the two parties. According to the roadmap, Turkey was to implement a list of reforms in addition to areas that needed to be developed and certain policies to be implemented. Consequently, Turkey’s performance related to the benchmarks would be evaluated every six months through publishing Progress Reports by the Commission and the Justice and Home Affairs Council will assess this progress. The commission would present the progress made by Turkey to the European Parliament and the council and the visa obligation for Turkish citizens (who hold biometric travel documents) would be lifted once Turkey fulfills the requirements of the roadmap (European Commission, 2015e). Turkey should achieve the administrative and legislation reforms that are acknowledged in the roadmap so that a secure environment is created for the Visa-free travel to Schengen area. The benchmarks are composed of four major parts; Documents Security, Migration Border management, public order and security and fundamental rights (Brussels, 2016). In addition to that, the readmission of illegal

migrants is one of the points in the benchmark. Turkey's performance in implementing the readmission agreement finalizes the visa-agreement hence a specific date was not placed for the visa-liberalization (Brussels, 2013).

However, the relations between the two sides slowed down again after a couple of months. The slowdown of the pace of the following events gave the locals in Turkey a sense of Euroscepticism (Gulmez, 2013).

2.1.1 The Role of Readmission Agreement within the Migration Policy of the EU:

One of the most important parts of migration policy could be stated to be an effective return policy. In the process of managing returns, the national efforts and the return directive should be parallel. Under Schengen regulations, standard procedures for the return of irregular migrants should be established by the return directive. For this reason, the EU cooperates with non-EU countries through readmission agreements (European Commission, 2015a). Through the readmission agreement, third country nationals who are illegal refugees could be returned and readmitted to their original countries. However, the refugees who are under national protection or those whom have been given asylum cannot be returned. The member states in the EU have signed readmission agreements with third countries in 1994 and in 1995 the guiding principles to implement the agreement was adopted. The European country nationals would have to also be readmitted to the country of their own nationals if they were illegally residing in the territory of the third country nationals, this is according to the readmission agreement (European Commission, 2015b)

During agreements such as the readmission agreement, the third countries usually ask for something in return. An example of this could be when the negotiations were able to be accelerated only when the European Union agreed to negotiate visa facilitation agreements in parallel with readmission agreements in the case of the negotiations between the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Similarly, both China and Algeria has requested for visa measures, however due to different reasons, the European Union has not accepted their request. In order to convince third countries to sign readmission agreements, the EU, recommended by the

commission, develops various things such as visa related tools, financial assistance, global approach to migration tool box, legal migration in addition to trade related measures (European Commission, 2011).

It might be fair to think that the readmission agreements and visa liberalization contradict one another. For example, visa liberalization and opening borders for the Turkish citizens into EU would increase the number of illegal migrants to Europe, contradicting the aim of the negotiations in the first place, which was to decrease the number of illegal migrants entering the EU territory from the Turkish borders, in addition to that, illegal migration could increase immensely if the borders are opened for visa free travel. Nevertheless, by implementing the visa facilitation agreements of the EU, irregular migration from these countries do not increase, according to an official Commission Document (Commission Staff Working document, 2009). This is due to the control that the government still has over who has visa and who does not. An advantage of the visa liberalization agreement could be that it would help to standardize the visa policies of that country with the policies of the EU, improve cooperation at the borders, not to mention the great help it would provide the intelligence service in order to trace smugglers and cooperatively be able to fight them. For that reason, the EU obtains the capacity to decrease irregular migration by accepting visa liberalization agreements and providing incentive for readmission agreements (European Commission, 2011). Visa liberalization dialogues create huge impact on the rule of law and the justice reform of countries, helping them achieve tough reforms in the justice and home affairs area. According to Pinar the Visa liberalization action plans help countries achieve document security, integrated border management including migration and asylum management, security and public order, in addition to fundamental rights and external relations (Pinar, 2016). Based on these standards, the most important phase for the EU would be to adopt legislative, policy and institutional frameworks. Another priority that would come after that would be to ensure effective and sustainable implementation (European Commission, 2015c).

In case a non-EU country does not obtain the appropriate conditions to have visa liberalization, due to different reasons such political stability or the absence of technical structure, the EU would provide that country with EU visa facilitation only for a certain part of the society such as businessmen and academic people (European Commission, 2019).

Countries such as Turkey, Morocco, Ukraine and some of the western Balkan countries have requested financial assistance from the EU. Thematic Programs for cooperation in migration and asylum areas could be the only way through which these countries could be financially assisted (European commission, 2011). Turkey is among twenty-one countries which has gone through negotiation of EU readmission agreements with the EU. Among those countries, seventeen of them have finalized the negotiations. These negotiations of the EU are a part of the plans to secure its external borders to ensure securing the Schengen area (Delors et al, 2016).

The emergence of the refugee crisis and the influx of Syrian refugees fleeing to Europe has caused the EU to think of different ways to protect its borders with the aim to continue prosper peacefully. For that reason, the neighbors of the EU are of vital importance (Delors et al, 2016).

2.1.2 Syrian Refugees Flea to the EU:

Nurtured by the Arab Spring, Syrians decided to topple down their government and the president Bashar Al-Asad (bbc, 2018). However, the uprisings turned into an ongoing civil war that has lasted for about 8 years (Ryan, 2012). Large numbers of Syrians fled the conflict in Syria and try to make shelter in other countries. Most of the Syrians seek refuge in the neighboring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey (Chatty, 2017). This has created a Syrian refugee crisis since the hosting countries lack the necessary tools and resources to help the Syrians whose numbers increase every day. The capacities of the neighboring countries are limited; hence the Syrians have begun to seek refuge beyond these countries, searching for a better life in Europe, jeopardizing their lives (Ostrand, 2015).

In 2015, Europe saw a sudden and unexpected increase in the number of refugees trying to reach its borders (Bayrakli and Keskin, 2015:9) The Syrian Refugee crisis could be counted as the largest one so far ever since WWII and the influx of refugees fleeing to Europe in 2015 have created concern for several of the European countries (Mercy Corps, 2019). With the large influx of Syrian Refugees fleeing to the European Union, managing migrants and securing the borders became top priority for the EU. Events such as the terrorist attack in Paris in November 2015 aggravated European Union's concern. The EU started to think of alternative ways to secure its borders (bbc, 2015).

The Dublin Convention governs and handles the refugees in the EU (European Commission, 2019). According to the convention, any individual who is an asylum seeker would be eligible to apply for asylum in the first country they have stepped in. Hence, the refugees whom have entered Europe from the southern borders by passing over the Mediterranean was on a rapid increase that had created hard conditions for those countries to handle their large numbers. This created a reaction from countries such as Greece and Italy (Carrera, 2015). It became clear that the EU had to create new policies of migration, different than the Dublin Convention to control and manage the large number of refugees. For this reason, different countries within the EU responded differently and took different approaches and the EU did not have a coherent initial response. Denmark for example, introduced border control with its border with Germany (Crouch, 2016) while Hungary's approach to stop refugees was to build a wall (BAYER, 2016). On the other hand, Poland refused to take in Refugees (BBC, 2017).

According to many of the EU politicians, the EU does not have the capacity to handle more refugees since the EU is not economically stable and more numbers of refugees could lead to destroying the EU (Gotev, 2015)

The EU also saw an increase in xenophobia and Islamo-phobia took place and an increase in support to nationalism and far-right parties started to be shown (Brennan, 2018).

The EU could see the refugee issue as a crisis since it gave it priority and concentrated on the security concerns in the EU to improve border control, return and readmission, and issues of smuggling. As a result, what came as a second step was ensuring full submission to the fundamentals human rights standards and principals (Carrera et al, 2015)

The EU has initiated policy changes and within its internal borders it has made new decisions to cope with the crisis. An example of this could be the relocation of refugees and new financial support in addition to fighting illegal migration through readmission agreements (Carrera, 2015).

The consequences of the poor management of the crisis will be domestically and externally vital for the EU and Turkey (European Commission, 2019). The EU's short-term strategy was to come up with certain policies that would help to manage the refugees inside Europe, in addition to that, the EU tries to decrease the number of refugees trying to enter the countries in the European Union illegally (European Commission, 2019). For this reason, it tries to cooperate with its neighbors and come up with policies that would help in controlling its borders from illegal migration. This could be counted as one of the vital reasons that renewed relations

between the European Union and Turkey which has always witnessed ups and downs and led to the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement, dialogue of Visa-free access, financial support to the Turkish government with regards to the Syrians residing inside Turkey in addition to opening a new chapter in negotiations for accession of Turkey.

The relations between Turkey and the EU started a new period. It could be stated that the reconciliation in the relations between the EU and Turkey took place as a result of the EU's recognized to the importance of its relations with Turkey. Turkey restored the accession negotiations talks with the EU in response to agreeing to stop the flow of refugees to the EU (European Commission, 2019).

Due to the refugee crisis, the geographical location of Turkey has been shown to be of vital importance in regards to the European Union (Nugent, 2007). This was one of the reasons that led the EU led by Germany to negotiate talks with Turkey about the readmission agreement (European Commission, 2019). In return, the EU offered financial support regarding the Syrians residing in Turkey in addition to visa liberization to Turkish citizens as well as opening new chapters in accession negotiations (DW, 2019).

Suleyman Soyly, the minister of interior, states that Turkey has benefited and become stronger by hosting 3.5 million Syrian refugees (Turkiye Cumhuriyeti Icisleri bakanligi, 2017).

The Syrian refugee crisis could be stated to have had a very important role in the rapprochement and the continuation of negotiations since Turkey was seen as a vital actor to assist the EU with the refugee crisis. The EU-Turkey readmission plan was very significant since Turkey was hosting more than 2 million Syrians who had fled conflict in their own countries, of which 750.000 of them-including asylum seekers and economic migrants- have fled to the EU through Turkey in 2015 (European Commission Press Release, 2015b). The visa-free accession was of vital importance to Turkey which led Turkey agreed to EU's offer. In addition to that Turkey was promised financial support to assist with the Syrians living in Turkey (DW, 2019).

2.1.3 The EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan:

The Turkey-EU action plan aimed to financially assist Turkey with the Syrian refugees who were under temporary protection by the government of Turkey. The action plan was signed on 15th of

November 2015 and the EU intended to “share the burden” with Turkey (European commission press releases, 2015c). To help Turkey deal with the refugees, the EU’s aim was to mobilize new funds apart from the IPA funds which are already allocated to Turkey, through the EU trust fund for the Syrian crisis (Hertog, 2016)

In attempt to implement the benchmarks set by the EU, Turkey adopted Secondary legislation, registration process of migrants, provide access for public services such as education and health for free to the Syrians, hence implementing the law on foreigners and international protection. In addition to that, Turkey aimed to prevent irregular migration of refugees into the EU (European Commission Press Release, 2015c).

The joint action plan that was presented by the commission was activated by the EU-Turkey summit on 29 November 2015. This summit strengthened the relations between the EU and Turkey and the EU intended to politically engage with Turkey more through providing incentives and financial support, visa liberalization roadmap and re-energizing of the accession process (European Council, 2015). Additionally, the EU gave 3 billion euros to Turkey to financially assist the readmission activities regarding the Syrians and the Turkish citizens.

It could be stated that the Syrian Refugees could have been used as a card to reopen the accession negotiations and visa free access into the EU (Weise and Foster, 2016). On December 4th 2015, the Economic and Monetary Policy- chapter 17- was opened as a result of the negotiations (Avrupa Birliği Baskanligi, 2018). This chapter was one of the chapters that were previously blocked by France. Out of 35 chapters in the EU-Turkey accretion negotiations, 15 of them have been opened to negotiations by the beginning of 2016. There are negotiations to open 9 chapters in the European Council. Chapter 24 is among those chapters to be opened. This chapter is on justice, freedom and security which also covers migration, asylum, visa policy, external borders, Schengen, judicial cooperation in criminal and civil matters, police cooperation, fight against organized crime, terrorism, drugs, customs cooperation and counterfeiting of the euro. Through the annual progress reports the EU monitors Turkey’s achievements even though the accession negotiations have not started on this chapter (Morelli, 2010). Through the pre-Accession Assistance, the EU supports Turkey’s actions related to this chapter. Chapter 24 is directly related to the recent migration issues, however due to it being vetoed by Southern Cyprus, it seems like it could not be opened (Müftüler-Baç, & Çiçek, 2017)

Another important incident that took place during the summit would be the opening of a new chapter that was previously blocked by France (Avrupa Birliği Başkanlığı, 2018).

A significant point that needs to be mentioned would be that according to the EU-Turkey Customs union agreement, Turkey could not intervene in any way in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) that is between the EU and the United States to establish a huge free market. On the other hand, under the mandate of the TTIP, Turkey would have to allow the United States to have access to its customs due to the nature of the existing Customs Union, but it is not required for the US to do the same thing. Due to this, Turkey's aim was to revise the existing Customs Union Agreement since it was seen as a disadvantage for Turkey (Bal, 2014). Both parties recognition of their importance for each other was reassured after the economic and political developments that took place globally and regionally. The changes that took place due to the Syrian refugee crisis, the threats of spread of terrorists across the EU and the increase in illegal migration, the developments in Syria, Russia's more assertive position, new energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean and Africa, EU's energy security concerns and Turkey's strategic location in this matter, the economic crisis in the EU and EU's rising competitions with the rising economies of the world are examples of the fact that both parties need each other.

The relations between Turkey and the EU has been seeing a decrease in the last years, as a result, the public in Turkey had lost hope or trust in the EU, since, the visa liberalization was not seen as a promise that the EU will keep by some of the Turkish citizens and the government in Turkey (Yılmaz, 2016).

The minister of interior stated that Turkey could no longer use the European Union card and that the European Union has lost its popularity ever since it has lost the ability to keep its unity, currency along with other things. He adds to state that perhaps it could have been a wrong idea for Turkey to try to nurture the western world with all of the experience and knowledge it has and that it could use its strong leadership and guidance in the Middle East and the process of establishment of peace (İçişleri Bakanlığı, 2017).

In another press conference given by the Interior Minister, Suleyman Soyulu, he mentions that one of the reasons for the disagreements that took place between the EU and Turkey could have resulted from incidents that took place before the readmission agreement with Europe in which 6,800 irregular migrants went to the west even though Turkey had signed an agreement with the EU to restrict the passage of migrants (İçişleri Bakanlığı, 2017).

On December 2015, Dr. Fuat Oktay, Chairman of Prime Ministry Disaster And Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) stated that “Turkey as a safe zone is a security for the globe and Europe but international society could not recognize it yet and when it is recognized it may be too late.” In Ankara during a meeting with the United Nations assistant under Secretary General while discussing the humanitarian crisis in Syria (AFAD, 2015).

2.2 THE SYRIAN CRISIS AND THE STATE OF SYRIAN REFUGEES IN TURKEY:

Many of the social and regime changes in the MENA region could be stated to have taken place as a result of the Arab Uprisings in 2011 (Bhardwaj, 2012). Although the uprisings were interconnected, it could be indicated that the affects they had on each country were different (Bhardwaj, 2012). The Arab uprisings in 2011 could be a clear example of the fact that social media has had a large influence on different aspects of the lives of people in this century whether it be social, cultural or political (Phoon, 2017). The Arab Uprisings started from Tunisia and Egypt (Ekaterina, 2011) followed by a bandwagoning of a series of other revolutions in other countries in the middle east. The massive protests in Egypt and Tunisia resulted in overthrow of the rulers of the country (Ekaterina, 2011). However, the protests in Syria, in addition to attacks on the leaders and government did not conclude with overthrowing the government as in the case of Egypt and Tunisia but resulted in causing a civil war to take place in Syria (Bhardwaj, 2012). Syrians faced unemployment and corruption under their president, Bashar al-Assad and were not able to express their political freedom These reasons, along with being inspired and influenced by the Arab uprisings resulted in demonstrations in March of 2011 to throw down the government. The demonstrations started from the southern city of Deraa and spread across the country. The escalation of these protests resulted in creation of many sides of opposition and rebel which turned into a civil war (Ulutas, 2011).

Spring of 2011 was the starting point of the conflict in Syria which led to the biggest refugee Crisis after the Second World War. A huge number of Syrian refugees fled from conflict in Syria to many neighboring countries such as Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq (Ozden, S 2013). The conflict turned into an unexpected long lasting crisis which made Turkey host to more than three million Syrians within the past eight years making Turkey the receiver of the largest number of

Syrian Refugees (UNHCR, 2017). Other countries, such as the European countries, US and Canada have selectively received a few number of refugees (Ozden, S 2013).

The conflict in Syria has been continuing and the Syrians whom had fled have already started a new life in their host countries (Ahmet İçduygu & Doğuş Şimşek, 2016). This makes a very small possibility for the likelihood of their return to Syria (Ahmet İçduygu & Doğuş Şimşek, 2016). Turkey, for this reason, has been trying to develop policies which would ensure a peaceful coexistence of the host community and the Syrian Refugees (Ahmet İçduygu & Doğuş Şimşek, 2016).

The change of the political tension into armed conflict in Syria enforced most Syrians to flee to Turkey (UNHCR, 2017). This event was predictable since Turkey has a long border with Syria. The Ankara government offered to temporarily protect the Syrians by developing an “open door” policy (Koca, 2015). For this reason, in 2011, five camps were planned to be built to receive the refugees in Antakya (Koca, 2015). Conversely, it was clear that the number of Syrians largely exceeded the expected amount.

Suleyman Soylu, the Interior Minister, claims that the current Syrian residents in refugee camps are about 300.000 whom are spread in different cities throughout Turkey. It is estimated that the total number of Syrians in Turkey is more than 3 million. Among those 586,596 legally reside in cities inside Turkey. In addition to that 227,332 of them are in 23 refugee camps in 10 provinces inside turkey (Icislari Baskanligi, 2017). Accordingly, about 3.4 million Syrians are refugees in Turkey municipally, struggling and trying to survive the challenging life outside the camps. Most of the Syrian Refugees are living in Hatay, Antep, Kilis, Urfa and Mardin in search for work and to develop their families. Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Mersin and Adana could also be counted amongst the cities which contain one of the largest numbers of Syrian Refugees (IOM, 2019).

2.3 THE STANDPOINT OF DIFFERENT SIDES TOWARDS THE SYRIAN REFUGEES:

2.3.1 The Turkish government position toward the Syrian Refugees:

Many refugees fled violence from Syria in 2011 as a result of the Syrian crisis and the rapid increase in human rights violations (Iciseri Bakanligi goc dairesi mudurlugu, 2016). They sought refuge in neighboring countries such as Iraq, Jordan and Turkey and a number of them fled to Europe, Canada or America (Ozden, S 2013). Due to the historical and cultural ties, in addition to the geographical location and sharing borders with Syria, most of the Syrians fled to Turkey (Iciseri Bakanligi goc dairesi mudurlugu, 2016).

Previously before 2011 and the Syrian Crisis, Turkey did not have as many refugees however, after March of 2011, a growing number of Syrian refugees turned to Turkey (Iciseri Bakanligi goc dairesi mudurlugu, 2016) which made Turkey contain the largest number of refugees in the world. About 3 million Syrian Refugees live in camps or host communities in Turkey in addition to this Turkey hosts other nationalities from Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and other countries (European Commission, 2019).

The Turkish government have tried to show that they accept the Syrians with open arms, hence, in a press release, the minister of internal affairs reminded the local people in Turkey that there has been a time where Turkish people have had to leave the place they were living for different reasons, hence they should also understand the situation of the Syrians and the problems they face. He added that Turkey welcomes the Syrians and migrants in general (Iciseri Bakanligi Goc Dairesi Genel Mudurlugu, 2014). Social assistance is provided for both groups of people with international protection status or those with temporary protection by the government (Iciseri Bakanligi Goc Idaresi Genel Mudurlugu, 2016). Nevertheless, in an attempt to decrease the already created rage or anger from the local community due to thinking that the resources of Turkey are being used on the Syrians and not on the Turkish citizens themselves, the government of Turkey assures the locals that their rights would be protected. The Minister of interior stated that no foreigner- including those who are holding with international protection status or those with temporary protection could have any rights that would exceed the rights of national Turks (Iciseri Bakanligi Goc Idaresi Genel Mudurlugu, 2016).

The former Minister of Interior Mr. Muammer Guler mentions that Turkey has implemented the Open door policy and has given a huge number of Syrian “guests” a chance to live in Turkey under temporary protection (Iciseri Bakanligi, 2013). It has been about eight years since the start of the Syrian influx to Turkey. Since then, Syrians have resided in more than 23 temporary shelters in 10 of the cities in Turkey (IOM, 2019). In addition to that, Syrians who live outside

the camps or temporary shelters are provided with educational and health support in addition to food aid (Ozden, 2013). Most of the Syrians who flee to Turkey come from areas in Syria that are close to the Turkey-Syrian border, hence they are provided with temporary shelters in the cities close to the border with Syria (İçduygu, 2015).

The government of Turkey and the civil society face many challenges in registering and providing the necessary services to the refugees due to their large number. Managements different from those of other nationalities have been placed for Syrians due to their large number. A large portion of the Syrian refugee population is youth which is estimated to be 40-45 percent. A number of assistance and help is provided to the Syrian Refugees by the Turkish government. Syrians are guaranteed their basic rights of education, and healthcare by the Turkish government in the same way it costs a national (Ozden, 2013). A refugee could have access to free education in primary and Secondary schools and could use the health facilities at the same cost a national would use it (Ozden, 2013). As for higher education, if accepted, a refugee would pay the same amount of tuition as a national Turk. Yet, due to the large influx of Syrians living inside Turkey, there is a very large pressure put on the Turkish government and it has made managing this large number difficult (Ozdogan, 2014). The pressure placed on health-care providers inside the hospitals include the increasing number of patients and the difficulty in communication due to language barriers. This has caused a potential negative effect on the health-care system in Turkey and its resources (Ozdogan, 2014). As for education, the government of Turkey has emphasized on its importance and the necessity of making sure that Syrian children continue their education to ensure a brighter future for them. However, similar challenges are faced as to the ministry of health since the number of students has doubled due to the large influx of Syrian students in addition to the already existing Turkish students (Kirişci, 2014).

The Turkish government manages the registration process of the Syrians who have fled to Turkey, but this process is a very difficult one since the numbers of Syrians entering the country are increasing and more Syrians enter Turkey in addition to that some Syrians reside in rural areas and have not registered their names (Kirişci, 2014). In addition to that, non-governmental organizations such as UNHCR support the maintenance of the Syrians by providing support in terms of cash, or health assistance to vulnerable groups and those who are in need on a limited basis (Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan, 2018).

Former minister of Interior Mr. Muammer Guler stresses on the low level of support from the international community that have been given to Turkey to assist the living situation of the Syrian Refugees (Icisleri Bakanligi, 2013), on the other hand, according to multeciler dernegi, the European Union has committed to funding the Syrians until the end of 2017 and it states that 3 billion euros were sent to Turkey in the form of supporting the projects that the Turkish government has. An example of the support provided from the EU, UN and other international organization is the Kizilay cards (Multeciler Dernegi, 2018) that are distributed to the Syrian Refugees in Turkey in order to handle their needs by themselves.

Conditional refugees are allowed to work legally under the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, taking the view of the Directorate general of Migration Management into consideration and have the right to apply for a work permit after six months of applying for status of conditional refugee (Icisleri Bakanligi Goc Idaresi Genel Mudurlugu, 2015). However, due to language barrier and additional costs regarding education and healthcare, a Syrian Refugee would often not be able to gain work permit and would face difficulties in finding a job and making an income.

Among the assistance provided by the government could be the foreigners' communication center, which is a call center for foreigners and is available in many languages including Arabic (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). The foreigners' communication center is provided by the directorate general of Migration management of Turkey.

Turkey is among the countries that have signed the UN convention regarding refugees, however, it has reserved this condition for the European countries only and would not recognize people coming from other countries outside of Europe as refugees. Hence, Turkey provides temporary protection for the Syrian Refugees (Icisleri Bakanligi Goc Idaresi Genel Mudurlugu, 2015). Temporary protection was introduced by the General Directorate on October 13th 2014 which allowed the Syrians to stay in Turkey. Syrians were given temporary protection identity Certificate instead of residence permit. According to the Directorate General of migration management, the temporary protection identification certificate contains foreign identification number which allows the Syrians to have access to assistance and services- in addition to having the choice to live inside a camp or in the urban settings in Turkey (LAW ON FOREIGNERS AND INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION, 2014)- however, it does not allow for the right to

long-term residence permit or Turkish citizenship (Iciseri Bakanligi Goc Idaresi Genel Mudurlugu, 2016).

The government facilitates the families who have granted resettlement into the third country from Turkey (Iciseri Bakanligi Goc Idaresi Genel Mudurlugu, 2016). Syrian refugees whom have been given temporary protection by the government of turkey could be allowed to apply for resettlement in a third country as a result of family reunification, residence permit due to treatment purposes or other reasons (Iciseri Bakanligi Goc Idaresi Genel Mudurlugu, 2016). In summer of 2015, an influx of Syrians travelled to Greek islands through Turkey. This created complications for the government of turkey and the UNHCR. It could be stated that feelings of pity and sympathy was created for the Syrian refugees by the Turkish community. This incident could have also left many questions with the Turkish community as to why a large influx of Syrians would decide to leave Turkey, risking their lives.

Having mentioned the assistance provided by the Turkish government towards the Syrians, several other sources claim the condition of Syrians in Turkey not to be great and the services provided not to be efficient. In addition to that, the tension and stress that the host community has towards the Syrians living in Turkey could create uncomfortable living situations for the Syrians.

The legal status of Syrians in Turkey could be stated to be unclear. The worldwide reference text of asylum seekers and refugees is stated to be the 1951 Geneva Convention of the UN and the New York Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1967 (UNHCR, 2004). In the article 1 of this convention, a refugee is defined as a person who “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.” (UNHCR, 2004)

Turkey is claimed to be amongst the countries who have signed the Convention and the protocol. However, with several conditions stated as reservations. One of the points mentioned in the reservation given could be that not every person would meet refugee status. The refugee status would be limited for those people who sought refuge from Europe to Turkey. This point would clearly show the difference between asylum seekers and refugees. According to Refugee council

organization, an Asylum seeker is the term used for persons who have not yet completed their application for refugee status (Refugee Council, 2019).

The term Asylum seeker could be used in Turkey to refer to people coming to Turkey from places outside Europe and the term Refugee would be used only for the people who have come from Europe to Turkish lands (Kavakli et al, 2017). This division creates several rights for the refugees by law that an asylum seeker might lack. In other words, Asylum seekers might be provided with temporary protection until they would be located in a different country (İçduygu, 2016).

On April, 2013 the Turkish Parliament implemented the law No.6458 (İçişleri Bakanlığı Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü, 2015) on foreigners and international protection. This law increased the possibility of transfer of rights and responsibilities arising from the international agreement to domestic law (Law on Foreigners and International Protection, 2014). In addition to that, this law conquers limitation to the UN convention geographically (Law on Foreigners and International Protection, 2014). “Conditional Refugee” is a term referred to in article 62 that mentions the people who have moved from their country to Turkey due to different reasons are allowed to stay in Turkey only up to the time when they are placed in a third country. This law excludes people from Europe who live in Turkey, hence they would not be called as “conditional Refugees” (Law on Foreigners and International Protection, 2014). These legal frameworks would be implemented on Syrians who live in and outside the camps. It could be stated that this article shows a clear variance between European people and the rest of the world when it comes to Turkey. However, Turkey’s stance on this matter could show the unanimity of opinion of different political parties in Turkey since the alignment of the legislative body in Turkey has changed ever since 1961 until 2013.

Another important point to be mentioned regarding the geographical restrictions could be stated to be the discourses of the government. It could be stated that the word “guest” has been used to describe the Syrians whom had fled to Turkey since April, 2011. According to Oxford dictionary, a guest refers to “a person who is invited to visit someone’s home temporarily or to participate in a certain event” (Oxford). A guest would not be counted as a member of the country and would not share the same resources and rights that other citizens would share. Hence it could be claimed that the term “guest” does not best describe the large influx of people whom

have fled to Turkey, since they have been living inside Turkey for more than seven years (Baban, Ilcan and Rygiel, 2017).

Referring back to the international agreement and law no. 6458, Syrians are eligible to use hospital services for free, and are also entitled to education in public schools in addition to the right to work under the “conditional refugee status” (Ozden, 2013). Accordingly, those Syrians who live outside the camps usually look for education and public hospitals for free. This could increase the possibility of host community’s awareness of the advantages the Syrian people are provided with which could mean that the guests are more than guests (Kirisici, 2014). The local population could experience a sense of discontent when they witness the usage of social services by the Syrians. The media is also continuously promoting for the services in the hands of Syrians on one side and the decrease in opportunities in front of the Turkish locals from unemployment among the citizens of Turkey to the rise of rent payment on the other side (Ozden, 2013).

2.3.2 Humanitarian Organizations in Turkey/ Government Based Organizations:

In this sub-chapter, some of the state related organizations that are led by the government of Turkey will be mentioned and light would be shed on what has been done by these organizations regarding the Syrian Refugee crisis in Turkey.

The NGOs mentioned in this sub-chapter would be chosen on the basis of several criteria’s. They are the NGOs that would not limit themselves to only cash distribution or cash assistance but they are those who have a social media presence and try to influence the public opinion and have impact on policy making. In addition to that, they are involved with the state regarding the Syrian situation in Turkey and are involved in coexistence and integration and have a say in the future of Turkey with both Syrians and Turkish citizens living together. For this regard, organizations such as AFAD and Turkish Red Crescent would mostly be focused on.

2.3.2.1 Turkish Red Crescent:

The Turkish Red Crescent organization provides community centers throughout Turkey for Syrians who have been forced to flee their homes. In the community centers, psychosocial support, Turkish language learning classes, educational programs and therapy sessions take place for the Syrian children, women and men. In addition to that, the community centers offer vocational trainings which allow adults to develop new skills and give them a higher chance to

find jobs. Examples of courses given in the vocational trainings include language classes, handicrafts, IT and computer development skills, sewing, hairdressing and first aid (Jones, 2016).

The Turkish Red Crescent organizations provides medical services and carry out health assessments for children in addition to offering information regarding nutrition. Alongside these, the Turkish Red Crescent develops teams that help people know more about their rights as Syrians in Turkey with temporary protection (Jones, 2016). As of February 2017, more than 73000 people have received support from the community centers of Turkish Red Crescent (Timurhan, 2017). Through a program run by the Turkish Red Crescent, AFAD, UNHCR and WFP, each Syrian refugee living in the camps would be able to get debit cards that contain monthly incentives so as they could buy food and other items that could be necessary for them. Through such programs, the Syrian refugees could choose the necessary items to buy for themselves, this could be a way to respect the dignity of the refugees and allow them to have control over the amount of money by themselves (Longa, 2014).

2.3.2.2 Disaster and emergency management authority (AFAD):

Being a module of authority which is concerned with disasters and emergencies, AFAD works along with the Turkish General staff, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of health in addition to non-governmental organizations (AFAD, 2014). In the beginning of the Refugee crisis and the influx of Syrians fleeing to Turkey to seek refuge in April of 2011, organizations like AFAD took big roles of creating camps for the Syrians to stay at throughout Turkey (AFAD, 2013).

AFAD is one of the organizations that assist in providing Syrian Refugees in Turkey the opportunity to have free education, health care and hygiene kits and several different trainings (AFAD, 2017). One of the examples could be an agreement signed between AFAD and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in order to distribute family hygiene kits to 20 thousand Syrian families who are staying in Turkey. In order to make this distribution possible, preparing the kits would be done through UNPFA and AFAD would be the coordinator and distributor of the kits through the help of the Turkish Red Crescent (AFAD, 2017). Humanitarian relief supplies such as electrical radiators, blankets, beds and sanitary products was provided to some of the Syrian Refugees who are living outside the camp settings in several occasions in

Akcakale and Ceylanli neighbourhoods in Turkey by help and assistance from AFAD (AFAD, 2012).

2.3.2.3 Other NGOs in the field:

NGOs such as the UN high commissioner for Refugees focus their work on the issues of people around the world who have been enforced to flee, with the aim of improving their lives. The Roots of this rule goes back to 1967 New York protocol and law no. 6458 on foreigners and International Protection (Iciseri Bakanligi Goc Idaresi Genel Mudurlugu, 2018). Many other NGOs work with the Syrians in Turkey such as WFP, UNICEF, Oxfam ...etc. However, this research does not focus on analyzing the work of NGOs on the Syrian case rather than the work of the government, and government based organizations.

2.3.3 The Turkish locals position toward the Syrian Refugees:

How does Turkey's decision to let refugees cross the border and enter Turkey affected Turkish local community? Leaving one's own home and seeking refuge in another country could cause a rapid increase in the population number of that country and hence placing a significant amount of stress on the natural and local resources, services and the people of that country (UN, 1995). An example of this case could be explained by the fact that refugees would not be provided with construction materials of fuel for cooking except in very rare cases, hence they would have to obtain them from the local community or nature. It has been stated that refugees could be perceived as having an impact that is much more than their numbers, and hence they could be called 'exceptional resource users' (Martin, 2005). This accumulation of people from diverse backgrounds in a certain area forces them to share the descending local resources and hence could result in crisis (Martin, 2005). Shortage created as a result of insecurities of a certain group could create significant ethnic differences and inequalities resulting in conflict creation. An example of this is mentioned by Ek & Karadawi (1991) in which they state that there was an increase in perceiving of the refugees in Sudan as burdens, in addition to the perception of agencies prioritizing the refugees' situation over the host community which had resulted in an economic decline (Karadawi, 1991).

These reasons could create different sorts of of discrimination towards refugees in the countries they reside. Comparison on the living conditions of immigrants in other countries and the type of discriminations they face have been previously studied and surveyed. Some of the important factors; that are very vital for migration literature and that should be taken into consideration, could be conducted and behavior of locals towards asylum seekers and migrants in regard to economic opportunities, personal involvement and familiarity in addition to how the media portrays all above could be perceived. These factors could have high effect on changing the minds of people and creating perspectives for them that could ultimately result in influencing their decisions and behavior towards immigrants.

According to a research done by Boamah-Gyau on Liberian Refugees in Ghana, it is studied that economy, security and culture could be the three major aspects which would usually concern the locals of a country toward immigrants (Boamah-Gyau, 2008).

If focus could be placed on the attitude of locals towards Syrian refugees in a similar way, it could be noticed that a large number of locals live together with Syrian refugees, whether it is in the same neighborhood, or working together or sending their children to the same school. During a survey made by Kavakli et al., 94% of the survey takers believe that the number of Syrians in Turkey is too many and 72% of them felt bothered when they encountered Syrians (Kavakli et al, 2017). When it comes to Syrian's cleanliness, oriental diseases, sicknesses and hygiene, which could be seen as cultural aspects according to Boamah-Gyau's research, 83% of the people had negative perceptions. Looking at the economy and security aspects of Boamah-Gyau's research, the workspace could be seen as the place where the most negative opinion is received. It has been stated that Syrians are taking most of the jobs and that it is hard to compete with such a large group. Regarding housing, locals have a similar believe that the Syrians have had a negative impact and have resulted in the increase in the amount of rent of houses. Regarding the hospitals too, the impression that the locals have received have not been a positive one. Crime has also seen an increase since the Syrian influx in the eyes 86% of locals who were interviewed (Kavakli et al, 2017).

In a research made by Woods et al., another concern rising from the locals is towards the increase of beggars on the streets of which most of them are Syrian children. These children would mostly be from families who live outside the refugee camps in Turkey (Woods et al., 2016: 12). Accordingly, the locals believe that the Syrian Asylum seekers could be a reason for

the disturbance of the social structure of the society. These concerns could make the relations between locals and the asylum seekers sensitive. It could also be stated that these perceptions and prejudices are highly affected by the media as explained in chapter 3.

A study by Steban et al. focuses on the behavior against immigrant groups in Spain and Israel (Stephan et al, 1998) in which four types of threats could be identified. Symbolic difference in standards and morals could be counted for as one of the main threats facing two groups. Issues of power and sharing of resources could be seen as the second type of threat (realistic threat). The third source of threat could be the outside relationships established with external groups. The final source of concern could be claimed to be the stereotypical biases (Stephan et al, 1998). Implementing Steban et al's research on the Syrian-Turkish case in terms of standards and morals, locals believe that the quality and standards of education in Turkey have decreased because of the Syrian children who have started to study there (Kavakli et al, 2017). On the other hand, the locals are discomforted by the lifestyle of the Syrians such as the large number of family members in one household, which results in noise and unrest (Woods et al., 2016: 12). Another worry that could also be placed under Stephan et al's standards and morals and stereotypical biases could be the belief that male and female asylum seekers are not as developed as the locals in Turkey. It is also thought that the asylum seeker males make the streets more unsafe for females (Kavakli et al, 2017). However, according to the ministry of Interior, the rate of crime and suicide committed by Syrians are very low when compared with the numbers that were reflected throughout the local community and the public. It also stated that between the years 2014 and 2017 the ratio of the total number of incidents that involved Syrians were 1.32% annually in which a large portion of this number has taken place when arguments took place between Syrians themselves. In addition to this, the number of crimes committed by a Syrian in the first six months of 2017 has decreased by 5% when compared with the number of crimes committed in the first six months of 2016. According to the ministry of interior, the exaggeration in numbers and fear in the public is purposeful (Iciserli Bakanligi, 2017).

When it comes to implementing Steban et al's research on the Syrian-Turkish case in terms of issues of power and sharing resources, one of the most negative approaches toward the Syrians would be the locals' belief of being forced to compete for the limited resources and divide them between themselves and the Syrians in the communities. Wood also mentions the thought of the

locals who believe that the poor local Turkish citizens whom might be going through a similar situation are not been paid attention to by the state and NGOs. (Woods et al., 2016: 12).

In terms of establishing outside relationships mentioned in Stephan et al's study, the locals concern would be the illegal marriage incidents that have taken place between Syrian women and Turkish men which has mostly taken place in the municipality centers neighboring the border with Syria (Woods et al., 2016: 12). As a result of all these, fear, disgust, anger, hatred and pity could be some of the feelings that could be noticed among the locals in Turkey.

The research completed about stereotyped prejudices in Japan, North Korea and South Korea done by Myers et al. also has a holistic threat methodology along with realistic conflict theory and social justification based legitimization (Myers et al., 2013). Myers states that the thought and idea of the availability of military threat between countries would in turn help the realistic conflict theory to consolidate stereotypes of prejudices.

Other research completed by researchers like Guimond in different nations clearly focus on the pluralistic approach that is conducted by governments toward ethnic groups, which could also be referred to as 'digestive approach', which could be seen as a vital way to stand in the way of immigrants' discrimination. (Guimond et al., 2013)

Proof to discrimination and stereotyped biases could be noticed in the studies of social psychology fields. Hate speech or even death could be caused by these types of biases as the numbers of refugees inclines. Hate speech could be defined as "discourses that intend to humiliate, intimidate and provoke violence or prejudice against a person or a group of persons because of their race, gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, moral or political views, socioeconomic status, occupation, physical appearance, mental capacities or similar features" (Pankowski, 2007).

The future of asylum seekers could be dependent on the perceptions of locals towards the living conditions of the Syrians in Turkey. An incident that took place in Torbali is a good example of how perception of the locals towards the Syrian Refugees could have a large effect on their lives. An accident in which two children- one Turkish and the other Syrian- fought had resulted in the Syrians being forced out of Torbali. The Syrians's houses were burnt down and their lives would be in danger if they had stayed in that area, hence they were forced to be displaced for a second time (Askin, 2017).

Several researches have been conducted regarding the local people in Turkey and how they perceive Syrians. An example of this could be the research done by Murat Erdogan's on social acceptance and integration, which was published in the end of 2014 and carried out by HUGO. There is a serious need for social integration between the locals in Turkey and Syrians, however this integration might seem to be difficult to achieve since locals believe to have a great cultural wall with the Syrians (Kavakli et al, 2017).

According to several researches, many diverse areas have shown to contain discrimination towards Syrians. One example of hate speech that may be used against Syrians could be the incidents of August 2014 in Gaziantep in which around 10 Syrians were injured. Regarding the Lynch incidents in Turkey, Tanil Bora states in his book; "lynch is the most obvious loss of civilization. A society where lynch does not create ordinary, collective embarrassment, does not infuriate, loses its ability to become a society" (Bora, 2014).

In a research done by Kavakli et al, the ratio of the locals who would be willing to rally and be a participant in the meetings against the Syrians in Turkey could reach 54%. Due to the large number of Syrian refugees whom have fled to Turkey and the very few number of violent acts that has taken place since then, it is assumed that it could be better for Turkey to make a plan for the future of the coexistence of these two nationalities together in the land of Turkey. However, the locals in turkey do not seem to be sharing an optimistic approach about Syrians to stay in Turkey since the majority of the Turks would believe that the Syrians should return to their countries after the end of the war. There seem to be different opinions regarding the situation of the Syrians residing in Turkey after the war. Some locals believe that the Syrians would not return back to their countries while some others demand the Syrians return back to their countries. At the same time, some of the locals believe that the Syrians should be sent back after Syria is reconstructed, while others believe that they should stay in the buffer zones between Syrian and Turkey on Turkish land near the border and some others believe that they should stay in refugee camps in Turkey. These results show that Turks would prefer to have Syrians "out of sight". On the other side, there are beliefs that state the presence of Syrians in Turkey may cause social, economic and political concerns for Turkey while others would believe that their presence may cause social, economic and political problems for the Syrians themselves (Kavakli et al, 2017). Having mentioned this, the level of acceptance of Syrians is studied to be high regardless of the racism, and xenophobia (Kavakli et al, 2017).

Undoubtedly, the media plays a very important role in decreasing hate speech and any type of discrimination against migrants and refugees. At the same time, the media could be a cause for repetition of discrimination whether symbolic or linguistic (Çelenk, 2010).



3. SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC OPINION

One of the most influential methods in this century that affects almost all individuals could be stated to be the mass media and other forms of communication technology since they could be used as methods to shape the public opinion and underlying sentiment (McCombs, 2018). Different forms of the media such as Newspapers, TV and radio could be seen as sources from which people gain basic information, in return it could create understanding from different perspectives amongst diverse groups of people which would be possible if information is fairly presented to the public (Newman and Fletcher, 2017).

In addition to this, the media could be used as an accountability mechanism since it could raise important concerns that could be very difficult or even impossible to address publicly. One example of this could be corruption. Governments and political parties could be stimulated to take action on social policies by the help from the media. It could be difficult to talk about issues such as the refugee crisis or migrants since such stories could support prejudice in certain areas. However, it could also raise important issues that need to be addressed, such as the poor living conditions of the refugees or limits in access to services in addition to the migrant's citizenship status or the perception of the local communities towards them and so on.

On the other hand, the media could also be used as a tool to spread false information or provocative messages and values which would not encourage respect but high-tempered dialogue and discussion (Vosoughi, 2018). The division of a society or community could be resulted from negative messages. This could also lead to propagate for stereotypes that cultivate violence (Vicario et al, 2016). The media could also be seen as if it portrays narratives of oppositional forces in addition to supporting differences in values and conflicting views. It could not be denied that the media would favor to dwell on conflict since drama would sell and draw in more audience. This fact would encourage newspapers and media agencies to publish more extreme points of view rather than what the majority of the community usually feels (Hamilton, 2004). An example of this could be stated to take place during the Rwandan genocide in 1994. Hate propaganda was broadcasted by the state-supported Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines

(RTLM) against Tutsis, moderate Hutus, Belgians and the United Nations. It could be stated that the propaganda was used to organize the massacres.

At times, a tendency to oversimplify the complexity of the occurring situations and problems could be noticed by some media who claim to be independent (Mazzoleni, 2008). The news could be reduced to catch phrases or sound bites supposing that the audiences are interested in drama and entertainment more so than informed analysis of events. Stressing on the vital role of the media, constructive media should realistically cover news and recognize the problems (Mazzoleni, 2008).

Similarly, the perceptions of people, the way they look at the world, in addition to the way they communicate and connect have drastically changed with the emergence of the internet (Carr, 2010) The web brings people- from family and friends to strangers from different places- together as a means to socially interact and share interests or common objectives. This in return could create an environment that nurtures belonging and creates an identity for individuals. Yet, it could be used as a way to target individuals to guide them to a specific belief or ideology in seeing the world. This occurrence is mainly experienced amongst young people. These platforms create the option of the ability to link like-minded people from different parts of the world and bring them together on one platform – one example of this could be the ‘Youth for a Sustainable Development’ peace group in Ireland who discuss issues affecting their community, eco-system and themselves (ECOUNESCO, 2019). On the other hand, they could also lead to intensification of antagonisms between some groups – the riots in Cronulla, southern Sydney, Australia in 2005 could be illustrated as an example. The incident took place as a result of a growing escalation of hostility between members of the local Anglo-Australian community and the Middle Eastern people at the beach. It is stated that a 36 hour violence was mostly build-up by using text messaging which had resulted in a 24 hour reaction that subjected some people from both sides to violence (Farrell, 2015). Hence, it could be stated that the internet could be used to promote group violence. On the other hand, it could be said that another way that the role of the media could be indicated would be that it could be used as a way to build constructive discussion and dialogue.

Another vital task that the commonwealth members and media professionals perform would be working on developing the critical understanding of international issues. The UN Alliance of Civilizations report talks mainly about this area and mentions that it should be perceived as a

special concern. It also promotes for taking corrective measures to help inform the public in different countries about the international issues in a well-adjusted way. The responsibility in media could be seen as the ethical correlative of freedom of media.

Hence, the public opinion could be highly shaped by the media. The media could guide its audience to have a particular perspective and could focus their attention in a desired direction while choosing which events are news worthy, during placing a particular instance in the forefront and when the news are re-broadcasted. The media could also control the way the news would be outlined such as how news could be distributed or written hence it has a very strong force on the ways people receive their news and create their opinions. These methods allow the media to direct the public to a certain direction. The media could be used to advocate for diversity, peaceful coexistence, and acceptance. On the other hand, it could also be used to create conflict, racism, and prejudice. Like any other media, it could be stated that the Turkish media could be used in both ways to direct the public opinion about the Syrians in Turkey.

Foundations such as Hrant Dink work on writing media reports which would produce opinions, hence creating a solid methodological base. “Monitoring hate speech in media” is one of the annual reports that this organization have been working on since 2009 as a means to track different media outlets. As a result, they have found that hate speech could be caused as a result of racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Locals in turkey feel the necessity to compete for resources and insecurity increases during certain periods in which individuals in several societies stand out for specific reasons, such as the refuge of a large number of Syrians into Turkey due to civil war in their own countries. As a result, in one hand, the amount of hate speech increases and on the other hand, the media has an affective role in intensifying the situation in a certain direction. (Medyada Nefret Söylemi: Ocak-Nisan 2015- Hate speech In Media, January-April 2015). According to the research done on the matter, it could be stated that there are two types of news regarding Syrians. On one side, there are news that focuses on the types of assistance and help that Syrian refugees receive from the state, the local government and non-governmental organizations. The main theme of these types of news could be stated to be how help have been provided to Syrians during the Syrian crisis. Such types of news does not aim to have a negative impact on the public opinion, nevertheless, several sources prove that they could have negative impacts indeed regardless of their aim, as it will be discussed in chapter 6. The second type of news would be the type of news that concentrates on showing Syrians in a negative aspect. One

example of this type of this could be directly associating Syrians with crime. During incidents which take place in neighborhoods, Syrians would usually be thought to be the primary suspects during crimes which take place and could even be unprotected from being assassinated without appropriate analysis (Woods et al., 2016: 12). Another example could be several news propaganda headlines in some media claiming that the government of Turkey has been assisting the Syrians residing in Turkey far too much and that the government was even paying the telephone invoice letters (AFAD, 2013). However, the General Directorate of Immigration Administration falsified the claims stating the claims were in fact intentionally made. In addition to that, the General Directorate of Immigration Administration clarified an incident in which a telephone call card purchasing tender was made to a limited number of people who were kept in Turkey with the aim to be sent back to their countries. In that specific case, in order to fasten the process of deporting those people and confirm that their consular offices and country authorities were aware of them, the purchase was made. However, those people were not of Syrian nationality and the phone card purchase in this incident was not covered by the national Budget of Turkey but by the EU (Icisleri Bakanligi Goc Idaresi Genel Mudurlugu, 2018).

When it comes to Social Media, it could be stated that it could be seen as a platform that allows individuals, groups and institutions to express their feelings and beliefs (Veil et al, 2011). However, it could not be regarded as the primary source of those feelings and beliefs. In order for something to appear on Social Media, it has to be fed from another source. Social Media could be referred to as a tool that reflects the society and what is taking place at a specific time in a place. It could be used as a tool that lets people express their feelings and thoughts (Croteau et al, 2013). An example of this could clearly be seen in the Iranian presidential elections in June 2009 in which Iranians used Twitter to express their thoughts, talk about occurring protests and other events that took place as a result of the elections (Elson, 2012). Analyzing Social Media could be considered as a very automatic way to evaluate public opinion (Elson, 2012). Social media has shown to have a very high impact on the perspectives of people since it could reach a higher audience. For this reason, the newspaper columns would also try to reach the public using social media. Social media allows columns to be shared several times which would allow it to reach a much wider audience hence it could have a higher impact. Acknowledging the importance Social Media and the affects it could have on the perceptions of people-sourced from

the Media- and the desire to analyze the change in perceptions as a result of Social Media has led this research to be conducted.



4. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This work attempts to conduct a Mixed Methodology research, using qualitative and quantitative research methods in conducting content analysis and discourse analysis. Mixed methodology would provide different kinds of data since it combines the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research methods (Creswell, 2014, pg: 265-266). In addition to this, a mixed methodology would benefit in the process of analyzing data (ibid).

This research aims to seek out if the change in the EU-Turkey relations and the way it was portrayed in the media has affected the people's perceptions regarding the Syrians living in Turkey and if the large number of discussions made by the political actors and parties in the parliament, the government and NGOs has caused a significant change in the way people express their attitude towards both Syrians and Europe. This would be done by analyzing comments made on news outlets on social media (Facebook) platforms of four major news agencies in Turkey.

The comments and posts that were analyzed and studied in this research are public content on Facebook platform that people have willingly posted, hence no permission was taken from the commenters while conducting this research analysis.

This research does not aim to conduct a survey, focus group or an interview to see the way the Turkish society reacts since the aim of this research is not to analyze the Turkish society, nevertheless, the aim of this study is to analyze the affect of social media content (Facebook posts) on the portion of Turkish society who use social media platforms and the affect it could have on their perceptions. Data is collected through social media posts made by news outlets which hold different opinions in the political spectrum. In an attempt to enrich the data in this study, different social media sites and news outlets have been chosen that have different locations in the political spectrum. This study tries to see the most immediate response to the news made about these particular issues, which are comments written by people who have access to social media. They are a quite distinct group of people since they take the time to voice their comments on such sites. This research does not claim that what is presented here is a representative sample of the Turkish society, just by looking at comments expressed on social media and is aware of the fact that a portion of the society in Turkey might not have the means to

use the internet and social media due to different reasons such as, not having access to internet, being illiterate or not liking social media.

I am also not assuming or arguing that these people are politicized rather they are only normal people expressing themselves, in response to a fact or some sort of information, whether bias or not, that they are provided through the social media news outlets. I want to see, if what I observe on the social media news outlets sites, has changed in any way, as a result of the change in the relations between Turkey and the EU. In this research the posts of four different news outlets made on March of 2016, on the Social media platform of Facebook will be analyzed. Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü news outlets have been chosen for this study since they hold different positions in the political spectrum so that the data analyzed in this research could be as rich as possible and so that the audience hold different perspectives to be able to represent the general public in a more accurate way. The posts made by these four different outlets has been divided into two categories, which are posts before The Ankara Agreement and posts that have been made after to see if there is a change in perception and reaction of people regarding the Syrians in Turkey due to the change in relations between the EU and Turkey. The Ankara agreement was an agreement that took place between Turkey and the EU and it holds specific importance since Syrians play a very significant role in the agreement, hence it was used to conduct this research. This research looks at the effects of a particular incident and hence the Ankara agreement was chosen and used to set the theme of my thesis and focus on how change in the EU-Turkey relations affect public opinion.

Two Keywords have been chosen in this study that are Syrian (Suriyeli) and Europe (Avrupa). Any post with the keywords (Suriyeli and Avrupa) will provide this research with information regarding the sentiments and the comments of the comment makers. Using the search engine provided by Facebook site, it was possible to scroll through the archive section of the posts made on all four news outlets (Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü) and find the posts that contained the keywords (Suriyeli) and (Avrupa). These two keywords were chosen since they were estimated to be the best keywords that would allow an archive search about the particular topic that was chosen for this study. In addition to that, these two keyword would help in narrowing down the search since the chosen news outlets posts nearly fifty to a hundred posts on their facebook channels per day and not all the posts would be related to the Turkey-EU relations and its relations with regards to the Syrians living in Turkey.

One of the obstacles I faced while doing this research was a technical one, during loading content that was created about three years ago on social media. Another problem could be the fact that people could comment more when they are not happy about an incident, which could increase the total ratio of negative comments. This fact has to be taken into consideration while viewing this research.

During conducting this research, no one involved was harmed. This research cannot be used to discriminate against gender, ethnic, racial or religious groups. This research won't use any discriminatory language against women, children, immigrants, people living inside camps in Turkey, Europe, Turkish government, Turkish society, institutions and non-governmental organizations. In the end of this study, the data and information collected from this research would be examined, analyzed and evaluated by using content and discourse analysis. The findings of this research could be generalized to learning about the affect of social media on locals and it is not specific to or limited only to Syrian refugees and the relations between the EU-Turkey.

5. INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The tables below show categorizations of the posts made by all four news outlets (Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü) separated by the date they were posted on the media outlet's social media accounts to; content posted before The Ankara Agreement or after. The total number of posts, the post itself that contains the keywords (Suriyeli) or (Avrupa), and the number of attention/comments the posts has received have been shown in the tables below

5.1 ANALYZING THE POST SECTION:

Syrian (Suriyeli) as keyword:

No. of posts	Posts before The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of Comments
1	Erdoğan'dan Obama'ya sitem! Erdoğan, Suriyeli mülteciler için Obama ile formül hazırladıklarını ancak hala uygulanmadığını söyledi	86	154
2	Birleşmiş Milletler'den Avrupa Birliği'ne 'Suriyeli mülteci' tepkisi	8	
3	Türkiye'nin konuştuğu o çocuk bulundu!	60	
No. of posts	Posts after The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of Comments
1	Ertelenen Galatasaray - F.Bahçe maçı... Suriyeli mülteciler... Taksim saldırısı... Numan Kurtulmuş'tan çarpıcı açıklamalar	15	625
2	TRT Belgesel'de yayınlanan Suriyeli kız belgeseline sosyal medyada tepki!	57	
3	Emine Erdoğan, SETA'nın Washington	553	

D.C temsilciliği tarafından düzenlenen 'Suriyeli Mülteciler Krizi Paneli'ne konuşmacı olarak katıldı, bakın neler söyledi?		
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Table 1 Posts made by Sözcü official Facebook account before and after The Ankara Agreement

As it could be seen from the table above, Sözcü's official Facebook account has made six posts on March that contains the word Syrian (Suriyeli). Three of the posts have been made before The Ankara Agreement and three of them have been created after. Before The Ankara Agreement, out of three posts, one of them "*Erdoğan'dan³ Obama'ya sitem! Erdoğan, Suriyeli mülteciler için Obama ile formül hazırladıklarını ancak hala uygulanmadığını söyledi*" could seem to have a negative tone in the sense that it mentions that the promises that were made to Turkey in the summit has not yet been fulfilled, creating or affirming a sense of Euro-skepticism in the mind of the reader, which could create doubt in the minds of the locals regarding the seriousness of the West in helping Turkey with the Syrian "Burden". The response and interaction the comments section obtained on that single post is a lot more than the comments on the other two posts combined, which could be seen as an indicator of how effective the negative tone that post could be if compared with the other posts that have a neutral tone.

After The Ankara Agreement, one out of three of the posted comments had a negative tone. Mentioning the phrase "Syrian Refugees" between a delayed match and the Taksim attack, as it can be seen in this post "*Ertelenen Galatasaray - F.Bahçe maçı... Suriyeli mülteciler... Taksim saldırısı... Numan Kurtulmuş'tan çarpıcı açıklamalar*", could make the Syrians be viewed negatively or they could even be thought to have caused those events. The number of comments on the posts made before and after The Ankara Agreement have drastically increased from 154 to 625 comments which is something that could be stated to be expected due to the conditions of that time and the reaction people had towards Syrians after The Ankara Agreement

³ This study acknowledges that certain words or phrases that are mentioned in posts could trigger different feelings in the mind of the reader in a negative or positive way towards Syrians. The word Erdogan could be counted as an example of such trigger words that could trigger negative or positive sentiments regardless of Syrian people.

no. of posts	Posts before The Ankara Agreement	no. of Comments	Total no. of comments
1	Türkiye'deki Suriyeli sayısı kaç?	37	2500
2	Bir Suriyeli, İstanbul'da kollarını açıp "Bana sarılın" derse ne olur?	447	
3	AB, Türklere vizeyi kaldırıyor. İşte tarihi	129	
4	Avrupa'nın göbeğinde insanlık ayıbı	230	
5	Alman yetkililer, göçmenlere cinsellik eğitimi vermeye başladı. Ancak eğitimler hiç beklenmedik bir yöne kaydı	58	
6	Özrü kabahatinden büyük.	94	
7	O anlaşma dünya medyasında geniş yankı buldu	36	
8	Almaya'dan flaş Türkiye açıklaması	27	
9	Merkel'e Türkiye tepkisi yağıyor	21	
10	AB-Türkiye Zirvesi'nin sonuç bildirgesi Alman basınına sızdı	27	
11	Kılıçdaroğlu'ndan sığınmacı önerisi.	23	
12	İngiltere'den Türkiye'yi kızdıracak yorum!	39	
13	Erdoğan: "Bir yılı bulmadan yeni bir Güneydoğu inşa edilecek"	70	
14	Saldırı sonrasında Erdoğan'dan ilk açıklama	242	
15	HDP'den Ankara patlaması sonrasında açıklama	88	
16	O, Suriye'nin 'Neil Armstrong'uydu, şimdi ise Türkiye'de zor koşullarda yaşayan bir mülteci	28	
17	Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'ı kızdıran görüntüler	77	
18	Yarımdan itibaren 100 bin lira	12	
19	PSV'lilerin alay ettiği kadınlar İstanbullu çıktı!	88	
20	Mersin'de konuştuğum bir kadın-doğum uzmanı ağzımı açıkta bırakan şeyler anlattı	29	

no. of posts	Posts after The Ankara Agreement	no. of Comments	Total no. of comments
1	Suriyeli 9 yaşındaki kıza yaptıklarından sonra az kalsın linç ediliyordu	40	1126
2	Demirtaş: "AB vizeleri kaldırırrsa Kürtler	311	
3	Ve resmen açıklandı: Türkiye ile AB anlaştı	96	

Table 2 Posts made by Hürriyet official Facebook account before and after The Ankara Agreement

As it could be seen from the tables above, Hürriyet’s official Facebook account has made 23 posts on March that contains the word Syrian (Suriyeli). 20 of the posts have been made before The Ankara Agreement and only 3 of them have been created after. Before The Ankara Agreement, out of 20 posts, none of them seem to have a negative tone towards Syrians. After The Ankara Agreement, zero out of 3 of the posted comments had a negative tone. The number of comments on the posts made before and after The Ankara Agreement have drastically decreased from 2500 to 1126 comments which is something that could be expected due to the low number of posts created by Hürriyet after The Ankara Agreement. The posts that gained more than a hundred attention/comments would be: “Bir Suriyeli, İstanbul'da kollarını açıp "Bana sarılın" derse ne olur?”, “AB, Türklere vizeyi kaldırıyor. İşte tarihi”, “Avrupa'nın göbeğinde insanlık ayıbı”, “Saldırı sonrasında Erdoğan'dan ilk açıklama” and “Demirtaş: "AB vizeleri kaldırırrsa Kürtler” which are mostly regarding Syrians in Turkey, Visa liberalization for Turks, and Euroscepticism.

No. of posts	Posts before The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of Comments
1	Yabancı gelinler arasında Suriyeli gelinler ilk sırada	5	96

2	Şişli'de Suriyeli kadınlara kapkaç şoku kamerada	2
3	AB, Davutoğlu'na dayatıyor... Suriyeli olmayan göçmenleri de gönderecekler	8
4	Avrupa Birliği'nden açıklama: İşte Brüksel'deki görüşmede Türkiye'nin verdiği vaatler	9
5	Suriyeli kadını bıçaklayıp, altın dişini söküp çaldılar	7
6	Çocukları böyle pazarlamışlar! '12-16 yaş "fıstıklar" 17-20 yaş aralığı 'kiraz'.	3
7	Suriyeli çocukları meyve ismine göre pazarlamışlar	1
8	Türkiye'deki Suriyeli sığınmacıların sayısı belli oldu	10
9	Bombardımanda gözünü kaybeden Suriyeli genç: Tek isteğim onu görmek	1
10	82 Suriyeli mülteciyi kamyon kasasında taşıyan sürücü tutuklandı	2
11	Suriyeli çocukları meyve ismine göre pazarlamışlar	1
12	İŞİD, Suriyeli şair ve oğlunu öldürdü	0
13	Seyyar satıcının Suriyeli çocuğu dövmesinde yeni görüntüler!	1
14	Suriyeli çocuğu döven seyyar satıcı serbest bırakıldı	8
15	Suriyeli çocuğu yere vuran esnaf: Çok pişmanım	36
16	Suriyeli çocuğa dayağın yeni görüntüleri ortaya çıktı	2

No. of posts	Posts after The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of Comments
1	Reuters duyurdu: Suriyeli Kürtler bugün ilan edecek	2	26
2	Bir sonraki seçimde 'dengeleri değiştirecek' Suriyeli detayı	22	
3	Hurda toplayarak ailesine yardım eden 13 yaşındaki Suriyeli çocuğun boğazını keserek öldürdü	2	

Table 3 Posts made by Cumhuriyet official Facebook account

When the Cumhuriyet's official Facebook account is analyzed, a very big change could be noticed in the number of posts made before and after The Ankara Agreement. As it could be seen from the table above, Cumhuriyet's official Facebook account has made sixteen posts before The Ankara Agreement that contain the word Syrian (Suriyeli) and only three posts after The Ankara Agreement. Before The Ankara Agreement, seven posts out of sixteen could seem to have a negative tone.

Posts with titles such as *“Suriyeli çocukları meyve ismine göre pazarlamışlar”* and *“82 Suriyeli mülteciyi kamyon kasasında taşıyan sürücü tutuklandı”*, could have a negative tone since the word Suriyeli is specifically mentioned and the nationality of the person is revealed and specified, even though the news itself does not have a link to the nationality of the person. This post could have mentioned the word “Suriyeli” to give the news more attention, however, it could create a perspective of generalization of an event to a whole group of people holding the same nationality in the mind of the reader. The number of comments on these types of posts has decreased from 96 before The Ankara Agreement to only 26 comments after The Ankara Agreement. This decrease could be due to the low number of posts made after The Ankara Agreement from Cumhuriyet, however on one of the posts made after The Ankara Agreement have received 22 comments, which is a very unusual thing if generally compared with the other reactions/comments a post would normally gain on Cumhuriyet's social media outlet. The Post *“Bir sonraki seçimde 'dengeleri değiştirecek' Suriyeli detayı”* which could be translated as;

Syrians will change the routes in the upcoming elections. This could give the notion that Syrians could control the future and destiny of Turkey and could give out a negative notion or sense of being controlled by people Turkey opened their arms to and welcomed as guests in their land.

No. of posts	Posts before The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of Comments
1	Austin: YPG'nin Suriyeli muhalifleri hedef aldığına dâir kanıtlar var	4	182
2	Suriyeli kadını bıçaklayıp, altın dişini...	5	
3	Suriyeli cocugu yere vuran adam lincten zor kurtuldu	40	
4	Suriyeli çocuğu döven esnaf gözaltına alındı!	122	
5	Suriyeli muhaliflerden flaş Cenevre kararı	1	
6	Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'dan Suriyeli çocuğa hediye	10	
No. of posts	Posts after The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of Comments
1	Suriyeli İslam âlimi Cevdet Said A Haber'e konuştu	9	9

Table 4 Posts made by Sabah official Fa

Analyzing Sabah's official Facebook account, a very large change could be noticed in the number of posts made before and after The Ankara Agreement. As it could be seen from the table above, Sabah's official Facebook account has made six posts before The Ankara Agreement that contain the word Syrian (Suriyeli) and only one post after The Ankara Agreement. It is interesting how the posts do not have negative notions in regards to Syrians, on the contrary, it shows how Turkey is trying its best to protect Syrians who live in Turkey. It is interesting how the most comments are received on the only two posts that talk about one incident when a Turkish man was caught on video hitting and throwing a Syrian boy on the ground. It mentions how the man was taken to custody to take justice, showing a sense of sympathy toward Syrians in their posts in general.

The number of comments on these types of posts has decreased from 182 before The Ankara Agreement to only nine comments after The Ankara Agreement. This decrease could be due to the low number of attention/posts made after The Ankara Agreement from Sabah.

Europe (Avrupa) as keyword:

No. of posts	Posts in Sözcü with (Avrupa) as Keyword before The Ankara Agreement,	No. of comments	Total no. of comments
1	Avrupa'ya geçme hayali kuran mülteciler, kıyıda uzaklaştıktan sonra bindikleri lastik bot batınca büyük can pazarı yaşadı! 25 mülteci boğularak can verdi!	24	561
2	Birleşmiş Milletler'den Avrupa Birliği'ne 'Suriyeli mülteci' tepkisi!	8	
3	Avrupa büyük felaketin eşiğinden dönmüş! Fransa yaşanan nükleer kazayı örtbas etmiş! Gerçek 2 yıl sonra ortaya çıktı...	5	
4	Avrupa Parlamentosu'nda Türk düşmanı Yunan vekil Türklere ağır hakaretler savurdu! Parlamento'da tepki çeken sözler üzerine Yunan vekil Elefterios Sinadinos, AP'den kovuldu	78	

5	Bırakın ‘vizesiz Avrupa’yı, kendi adalarımıza pasaportla giriyoruz	88	
6	Avrupa Birliği Komisyonu Başkan Yardımcısı Frans Timmermans, açıkladı: ‘Vizesiz seyahat mümkün olmayabilir’	20	
7	Avrupa Birliği Komisyonu Başkan Yardımcısı Frans Timmermans, açıkladı: ‘Vizesiz seyahat mümkün olmayabilir’	206	
8	Biri 'Avrupa'da medeniyet var' mı dedi? Suriyelilere böyle para attılar.	123	
9	Avrupa'nın o şehrinde dilenciye para vermek yasaklandı	9	
No. of posts	Posts in Sözcü with (Avrupa) as Keyword after The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of comments
1	Avrupa'dan Amerika'ya bütün dünya diken üstünde! Güvenlik düzeyleri üst düzeye çıkartıldı... Almanya'ya bombalı saldırı tehdidi yapıldı...	29	333
2	Avrupa'da neler oluyor! Belçika'dan sonra şimdi de Hollanda alarm verdi!	43	
3	Ürdün Kralı Abdullah'tan çarpıcı Türkiye iddiası! "Avrupa'ya IŞİD'çileri Türkiye gönderiyor"	172	
4	İngiliz Telegraph gazetesi, Avrupa'nın en ucuz 10 şehir turunu sıraladı	3	
5	Avrupa'nın en büyük şehirleri ile İstanbul arasındaki fark! En az 444 lira en çok 750 lira	4	
6	Vizesiz Avrupa'yla ilgili merak edilen her şey	21	
7	‘Erdoğan’ şarkısı sonrası kriz büyüyor! Almanya’dan sert yanıt...	61	

Table 5 Posts made by Sözcü official Facebook account

As for the posts made from Sözcü Facebook account with the keyword Europe (Avrupa), it could be seen that 9 posts have been made before The Ankara Agreement and 7 after, as in the table above.

Before The Ankara Agreement, two post out of six could seem to have a negative tone; *“Biri 'Avrupa'da medeniyet var' mı dedi? Suriyelilere böyle para attılar.”* meaning; are Europeans civilized? Look at how they throw money at these Syrians. It could indirectly carry along a notion of hate speech toward Europe in general as it could be reflected, analyzed and explained later in this chapter.

Another post put forth the notion that the agreement between Turkey and the EU would not succeed as could be seen in the post *“Bırakın 'vizesiz Avrupa'yı, kendi adalarımıza pasaportla giriyoruz”* claiming that Turks can not enter their own islands (referring to the conflicts taking place with Cyprus), let alone the possibility of entering the EU countries without visa, affirming Euro-skepticism. What is interesting is clear Euro-skepticism that takes place in the last post created as the dates get closer to The Ankara Agreement, reflecting Sözcü outlets' own skepticism onto its audience. As it could be seen, this post has received the highest amount of comments- 88 to be exact, if compared with the other posts created. This means the way the post was written has in fact affected people in a way or another.

“Ürdün Kralı Abdullah'tan çarpıcı Türkiye iddiası! 'Avrupa'ya IŞİD'çileri Türkiye gönderiyor” meaning; There are some shocking allegations from Jordan's King stating that Turkey is sending ISIS members to Europe. This post is made by Sözcü after The Ankara Agreement. It could indirectly carry along a notion of hate speech toward Syrians and Arabs in general as it could be reflected, analyzed and explained later in this chapter.

The number of comments on these posts has decreased from 561 before The Ankara Agreement to 333 comments after The Ankara Agreement, which could clearly show a sense of outrage, disappointment and skepticism that was also noticed from the level of engagement with Sözcü audience while analyzing the posts with the keyword “Suriyeli”. The posts that have gotten the most attention and comments are; *“Avrupa Birliği Komisyonu Başkan Yardımcısı Frans Timmermans, açıkladı: 'Vizesiz seyahat mümkün olmayabilir'”* meaning; It might not be possible to travel to Europe without visa, *“Biri 'Avrupa'da medeniyet var' mı dedi? Suriyelilere böyle para attılar.”* meaning; are Europeans civilized? Look at how they throw money at these Syrians, *“Ürdün Kralı Abdullah'tan çarpıcı Türkiye iddiası! 'Avrupa'ya IŞİD'çileri Türkiye*

gönderiyor”” meaning; There are some shocking allegations from Jordan’s King stating that Turkey is sending ISIS members to Europe, and lastly *“Bırakın ‘vizesiz Avrupa’yı, kendi adalarımıza pasaportla giriyoruz”* meaning; claiming that Turks can not enter their own islands (referring to the conflicts taking place with Cyprus), let alone the possibility of entering the EU countries without visa. These posts are mainly about the visa-free discussions between the EU and Turkey in addition to the post made about the King of Jordan. The posts range from security concern to the Syrian refugee issue, to the visa free agreement disappointment.

no. of posts	Posts before The Ankara Agreement	no. of Comments	Total no. of comments
1	Avrupa'nın göbeğinde insanlık ayıbı!	230	880
2	Türkiye hala sıra beklerken, Avrupa Birliği ülkesi olamayan ülkeye vize muafiyeti yolda	11	
3	Vizesiz Avrupa'da şoke eden gelişme.	49	
4	Merkel'e Türkiye tepkisi yağıyor	21	
5	İngiltere'den Türkiye'yi kızdıracak yorum!	39	
6	Kılıçdaroğlu'ndan sığınmacı önerisi.	23	
7	AB-Türkiye Zirvesi'nin sonuç bildirgesi Alman basınına sızdı	27	
8	Almaya'dan flaş Türkiye açıklaması	27	
9	O anlaşma dünya medyasında geniş yankı buldu	36	
10	Özrü kabahatinden büyük.	94	
11	Müjdeyi basın toplantısında verdi	39	
12	AB, Türklere vizeyi kaldırıyor. İşte tarihi	129	
no. of posts	Posts after The Ankara Agreement	no. of Comments	Total no. of comments
1	Avrupa'da korkutan gelişme	37	683

2	SON DAKİKA: Avrupa'daki büyük havalimanında bomba alarmı, bölgeden patlama sesleri geliyor!	11
3	Avrupa Konseyi'nden uygulama uyarısı	2
4	AB-Türkiye anlaşmasında flaş gelişme	9
5	Ve resmen açıklandı: Türkiye ile AB anlaştı	96

Table 6 Posts made by Hürriyet official Facebook account

As for the posts made from Hürriyet Facebook account with the keyword Europe (Avrupa), it could be seen that 12 posts have been made before The Ankara Agreement and only five after, as in the table above.

From the posts that have been created before The Ankara Agreement, the ones that could have been carrying a bias or negative tone could be the following: “Avrupa'nın göbeğinde insanlık ayıbı” meaning: Inside of Europe; shame to humanity. This post could create a negative perspective in the eyes of locals towards Europe. “Türkiye hala sıra beklerken, Avrupa Birliği ülkesi olamayan ülkeye vize muafiyeti yolda” meaning: The EU is granting visa free entry to other countries while Turkey waits in line, which could clearly create skepticism towards Europe. “İngiltere'den Türkiye'yi kızdıracak yorum!” meaning; News from the UK that would make Turkey mad, again creating or reinforcing a sense of skepticism towards Europe. “AB, Türklere vizeyi kaldırıyor. İşte tarihi” meaning: The European Union removes visa for Turks and “Vizesiz Avrupa'da şoke eden gelişme” meaning: Improvement regarding visa-free agreement. The last two posts could be counted as the only ones with a positive tone before The Ankara Agreement that talks about the Agreements between Turkey and the EU.

Regarding the posts that were created after the Ankara Agreement, this post seems to have a negative tone. “SON DAKİKA: Avrupa'daki büyük havalimanında bomba alarmı, bölgeden patlama sesleri geliyor!” that talks about an explosion that has taken place in Europe. It could create doubts in terms of security for Turks. “AB-Türkiye anlaşmasında flaş gelişme”, “Ve resmen açıklandı: Türkiye ile AB anlaştı” which could be stated to carry a positive tone after the Ankara Agreement that talks about the Agreements between Turkey and the EU.

The posts that gained more than a hundred attention/comments were: “Avrupa'nın göbeğinde insanlık ayıbı!” and “AB, Türklere vizeyi kaldırıyor. İşte tarihi” which are both posts regarding EU and the Ankara Agreement. The first one was created before the Ankara agreement and the second after. It could be seen that the first post (created before The Ankara Agreement) could carry unsettling thoughts regarding security and the second one (created after The Ankara Agreement) could carry a positive tone regarding the Ankara agreement and visa free entry into Europe for Turks.

The number of comments of the posts has decreased from 880 before The Ankara Agreement to 683 after.

No. of posts	Posts in Cumhuriyet with (Avrupa) as Keyword before The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of comments
1	Avrupa Konseyi'nden Zaman gazetesi hakkında açıklama	5	238
2	“Türkiye, Avrupa Birliği ile yakınlaşmada tarihi fırsatı heba ediyor”	11	
3	Avrupa'da utanç verici pazarlık...6 milyar Avro para ve vize serbesitesi	41	
4	Birleşmiş Milletler'den Avrupa Birliği'ne tepki	1	
5	ERDOĞAN'I KIZDIRACAK ANALİZ Avrupa'ya uyarı... Güvenilmez, kindar, sınırlı..	11	
6	ERDOĞAN'I KIZDIRACAK ANALİZ Avrupa'ya uyarı... Güvenilmez, kindar, sınırlı...	28	
7	İki yıl sonra ortaya çıktı... Avrupa facianın eşiğinden dönmüş	0	
8	Türkiye, Avrupa Birliği'nden her şeyi istedi; AB'nin yanıtı 'basın özgürlüğü' oldu	15	
9	"Türkiye Avrupa'nın dostu değil, tavrı şantaj"	4	
10	Avrupa bölündü	5	

11	Avrupa Parlamentosu'nda Türklere hakaret edince başına bunlar geldi	9
12	Avrupa Bolundu	6
13	Türkiye sağıyor Avrupa tüketiyor	4
14	Daily Telegraph: Türkiye Avrupa'nın dostu değil, tavrı şantaj	5
15	Avrupa Bolundu	2
16	Avrupa Merkez Bankası'ndan kritik faiz kararı	0
17	Avrupa'nın ortasında görülmemiş utanç! Mültecilere para atıp eğlendiler	60
18	AB ile zirve öncesinde Ankara'ya bir kötü haber daha	15
19	Avrupa'dan Ankara'ya bir net mesaj daha: Üyelik gündemde değil	6
20	Avrupa'nın en büyük teknoloji holdinglerinden Siemens, İstanbul'daki çalışanlarını uyardı	7
21	Avrupa basını: Anlaşma tehlikede	3

No. of posts	Posts in Cumhuriyet with (Avrupa) as Keyword after The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of comments
1	SON DAKİKA Avrupa Komisyonu binası boşaltıldı	6	412
2	Avrupa'da üst düzey terör alarmı	5	
3	AVRUPA ALARMDA Fransa sınırını kapattı	8	
4	Avrupa'nın kalbinde saldırı... Brüksel İtfaiyesi: 11 ölü, 25 yaralı var	77	
5	VİDEO - Fatih Portakal'dan Avrupa ve Arap ülkelerine büyük tepki! Tek tek sıraladı...	23	
6	FLAŞ! 'İŞİD, Avrupa'yı kana bulamak için 400 militan yetiştirdi'	1	
7	Demirtaş'tan Avrupa'ya açıklama: Türkiye'ye vizeyi	10	

8	kaldırırsanız..	30
9		5
10	Ürdün Kralı: Türkiye bombacıları bilerek Avrupa'ya gönderiyor	44
11	"Türkiye bombacıları bilerek Avrupa'ya gönderiyor"	35
12	Dışişleri, Avrupa'ya vizesiz gidilebilecek tarihi açıkladı	115
13	Paris, Ankara, İstanbul ve Brüksel saldırılarından sonra Avrupa'da 'kirli bomba' alarmı	3
14	Vizesiz Avrupa 'detay'a takıld	3
15	İŞİD Avrupa'ya iki yıl önce kök salmış	2
16	Avrupa'nın tek turnikesiz metrosunda kaçak yolcu oranı sizce yüzde kaç?	45

Table 7 Posts made by Cumhuriyet official Facebook account

The table above shows that Cumhuriyet's official Facebook account has made a total of 37 posts that include the word Europe (Avrupa) in the month of March. 21 of them before and 16 of them after the 18th. Before The Ankara Agreement, out of twenty-one posts, seven of them are directly relevant or in some way link back with the EU- Turkey relations and twelve of them could seem to have a negative tone before The Ankara Agreement and 3 of them after. Two of the posts created after The Ankara Agreement could be stated to have a positive tone regarding better relations with European Union and the visa free agreement.

The number of comments on these types of posts has doubled from 238 to 412 comments after The Ankara Agreement. The posts that received the majority of comments are posts created after The Ankara Agreement; "Avrupa'nın kalbinde saldırı... Brüksel İtfaiyesi: 11 ölü, 25 yaralı var" meaning; Attack in the heart of Europe ... Brussels Fire Brigade: 11 dead, 25 injured, and "Dışişleri, Avrupa'ya vizesiz gidilebilecek tarihi açıkladı" meaning; Foreign Minister announces date for visa-free travel to Europe. These two posts focus on security in Europe since it played a very important role in that period for Turkey since Turkey was carrying the hope of visa-free agreement. In addition to these, another post that received a large number of comments would be "Avrupa'nın ortasında görülmemiş utanç! Mültecilere para atıp eğlendiler" meaning; shameful

act seen in the middle of Europe, they have fun throwing money at refugees, that mentions the Syrian Refugees in Europe and how they are treated. The comments on this post will be analyzed in the following pages.

No. of posts	Posts in Sabah with (Avrupa) as Keyword before The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of comments
1	Avrupa sınırları kapattı, mültecileri Türkiye'ye mi gönderecek?	8	345
2	Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan makam aracılığıyla Avrupa Yakası'na geçti...	20	
3	Avrupa ülkesi başbakanından büyük itiraf	8	
4	'Avrupa'nın anahtarı Erdoğan'a verildi'	79	
5	Avrupa'nın ortasındaki bu kalenin Osmanlı'yla ne ilgisi var?	2	
6	'Vizesiz Avrupa" 300 milyar Euro'nun önünü açacak!	8	
7	Putin'in asıl hedefi Avrupa'yı bölmek	4	
8	Avrupa Merkez Bankası faiz kararını açıkladı!	0	
9	Avrupa'ya bizi anlatıyor! "türkiye olmazsa..."	13	
10	O fotoğrafları Avrupa'da basar mıydı?	47	
11	"Avrupa'ya gitmek için pasaporta bile ihtiyaç kalmayacak"	69	
12	Erdoğan: "Avrupa'nın ortasında bu mazlumları utanç verici şartlara mahkum edenler önce kendilerine baksınlar "	3	
13	"Avrupa'da bir milletvekili canlı bombaya taziye'ye giderse..."	4	
14	Avrupa'da skandal Dilencinin üstüne işediler!	7	
15	Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: "Brüksel ve Avrupa	2	

	teröre teslim olmuştur, mayın tarlasında dans ediyorlar "	
16	Avrupa'da skandal Dilencinin üstüne işediler	71

No. of posts	Posts in Sabah with (Avrupa) as Keyword after The Ankara Agreement	No. of comments	Total no. of comments
1	Brüksel'de vizesiz Avrupa'nın yolu açıldı	60	193
2	Avrupa'nın başkentinde intihar saldırısı!	7	
3	"Terör Brüksel'i vurdu ancak hedef tüm Avrupa'ydı"	14	
4	Avrupa'yı korkutan iddia!	9	
5	FETÖ'den bir ihanet daha...Avrupa'da teröre lanet, Ankara'da ihanet!	11	
6	IŞİD'in Avrupa Başkenti Brüksel çıktı	11	
7	Brüksel'deki saldırı sonrası o Avrupa ülkesinden şok karar!	1	
8	Türkiye düşmanı ihanet medyası görmüyor ama...Avrupa teröre teslim!	16	
9	Avrupa'yı karıştıran 'canlı bomba' açıklaması "Biz yakaladık, onlar salıverdi"	20	
10	Avrupa'nın gaz fiyatı Türkiye'de belirlenecek!	5	
11	Erdoğan'ın açıklaması Avrupa'yı karıştırdı...Hollanda da uyumuş!	15	
12	Bugünkü gazetemizin 1. sayfası ve manşetimiz: AVRUPA DİNLEMEDİ BOMBALAR PATLADI	4	
13	Erdoğan:"Biz bedel ödedik yanlış yapıyorsunuz dedik, onlar Avrupa'da terör çadırı kurdular"	13	
14	Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'dan Avrupa'ya tepki	4	

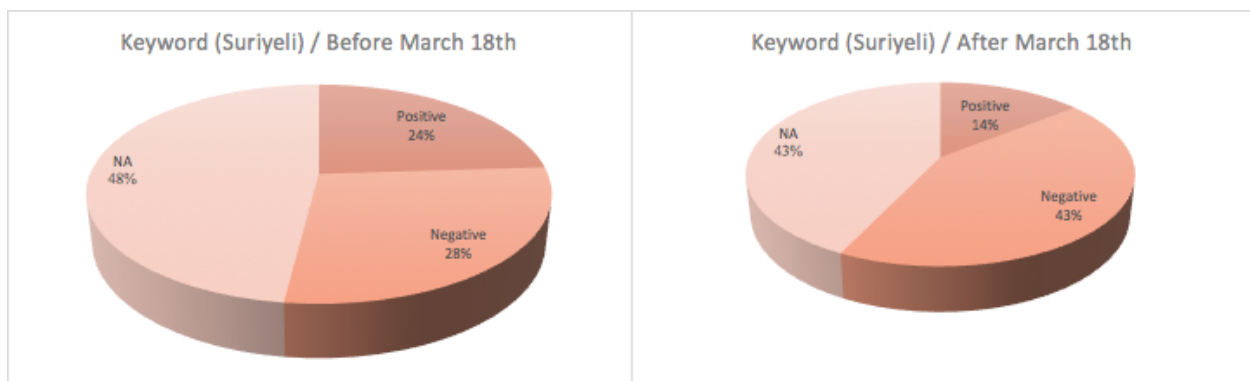
15	Paris'te görülmemiş boyutta cephanelik bulundu	3	
16	Avrupa'ya eleştirisi: Başarısızlar	0	

Table 8 Posts made by Sabah official Facebook account

As it could be seen from the table above, Sabah's official Facebook account has made thirty-six posts on March that contains the keyword Europe (Avrupa). Sixteen of the posts have been made before The Ankara Agreement and sixteen of them have been created after. Before The Ankara Agreement, out of the sixteen posts, only 2 of them could seem to have a negative tone and six posts have a clear positive tone in regards to entering the EU without Visa and gaining financial support from the EU to deal with the Syrians living in Turkey. It could clearly be seen that Sabah has tried to focus on the security side of Europe and created many posts in that regard. This could be due to the hope they had held with the Ankara agreement.

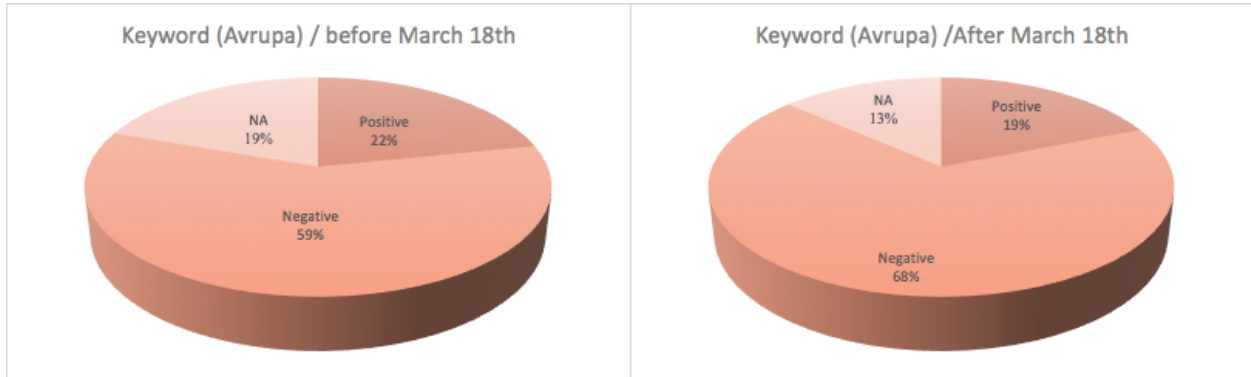
The number of comments on these types of posts has drastically increased from 345 before The Ankara Agreement to 193 comments after The Ankara Agreement.

The figures below, are categorized according to time before and after The Ankara Agreement from all four media outlets (Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü). The figure on the left shows 24% of the posts made before The Ankara Agreement have a positive tone, 28% have negative and 48% have a neutral tone. Similarly, the figure on the right shows 14% Of the posts made after The Ankara Agreement to have a positive tone, 43% negative and 43% neutral.



Likewise, posts made before and after The Ankara Agreement from all four media outlets (Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü) with the keyword (Avrupa) are categorized in the below pie charts according to the tone of the posts into three categorizations (positive, negative

and Neutral). The figure on the left shows that 22% of the posts to have positive tone, 59% negative and 19% neutral. The figure on the right shows 19% of the posts to have positive tone, 68% negative and 13% neutral.



5.2 ANALYZING THE COMMENT SECTION:

A total number of 6273 comments have been made on the four chosen news outlets' Facebook pages (Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü) all together, hence are analyzed in this research. The Sözcü audience have commented 779 times in the month of March. 154 of the comments have been made before The Ankara Agreement and 625 of them after. The comments that have a positive tone are 31% , 56% have negative tone and 11% are neutral. The Cumhuriyet audience have commented 117 times in the month of March. 93 of the comments have been made before The Ankara Agreement and 24 of them after. The comments that have a positive tone are 6% , 77% have negative tone and 17% are neutral. The Sabah audience have commented 191 times in the month of March. 182 of the comments have been made before The Ankara Agreement and only 9 of them after. The comments that have a positive tone are 31% , 50% have negative tone and 19% are neutral. Hürriyet audience have commented 5189 times in the month of March. 3380 of the comments have been made before The Ankara Agreement and 1809 of them after. The comments that have a positive tone are 30% , 35% have negative tone and 35% are neutral. In order to do more analyses on the comments section, the types of comments made on these posts are divided into 11 parts. The parts are divided by putting into consideration the EU-Turkey relations and the affect it might have had on the public opinion regarding Syrians living in Turkey.

Negative comments made on the four social media accounts of Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü which were made on posts with the keywords (Suriyeli) and (Avrupa) have been categorized into;

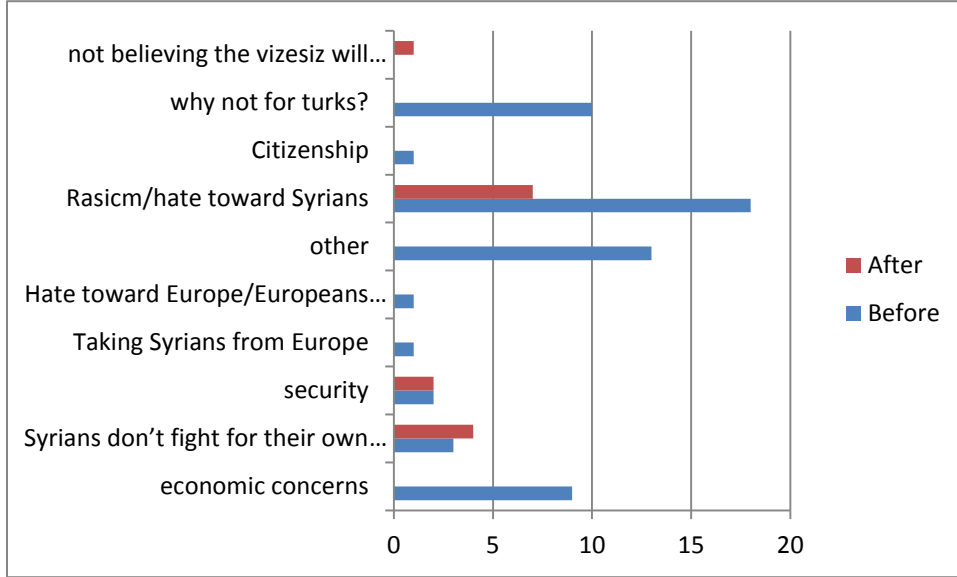
comments made that stem from economic concern of the locals and how they have linked that negatively to the Syrians living in Turkey, to comments that focus on the obligation of every citizen of a country to fight for their country until death otherwise they would be counted as people who have betrayed their country, hence do not deserve an honorable life in another country. Other categorizations include comments that stem from security concerns of the locals in Turkey to the Turkish government's decision to receive back Syrians from Europe, to a feeling of hate towards Europe and European countries and not desiring to join the EU. Other comment categorization include racism towards a specific group (in this case, Syrians) or Arabs in general to concern that relates to granting Turkish citizenship to the Syrians who have live in Turkey, to comments that claim that the government or the sides that take part in this have given more attention to the Syrians and have left their own country's citizens behind without care. Other comments are about the disbelieve in the The Ankara Agreement and the possibility of it happening and consider it to be a dream that will not come true, and lastly, comments that focus on the three billion that Europe sent to Turkey in order to support the Syrians living in Turkey.

By looking at all the comments, it was realized that they concentrate on certain themes such as;

- Economic concerns
- Security Concerns
- Racism/ Hate/ Xenophobia
- Citizenship concern
- Why not for Turks?
- Euro-Skepticism
- 3 billion Euro
- Hate towards Europe

The mentioned categorizations were the topics that were most focused on by the people themselves and as it could be noticed from the below charts, each news outlet has been divided into comments made before The Ankara Agreement and after that date. These charts show which categorization has gotten the most attention and if there is a change in the level of attention given

to a certain topic before or after The Ankara Agreement. The blue lines represent before and the red lines represent after The Ankara Agreement. The below charts are a representative of how many times a comment has mentioned one of the topics in the categorization.



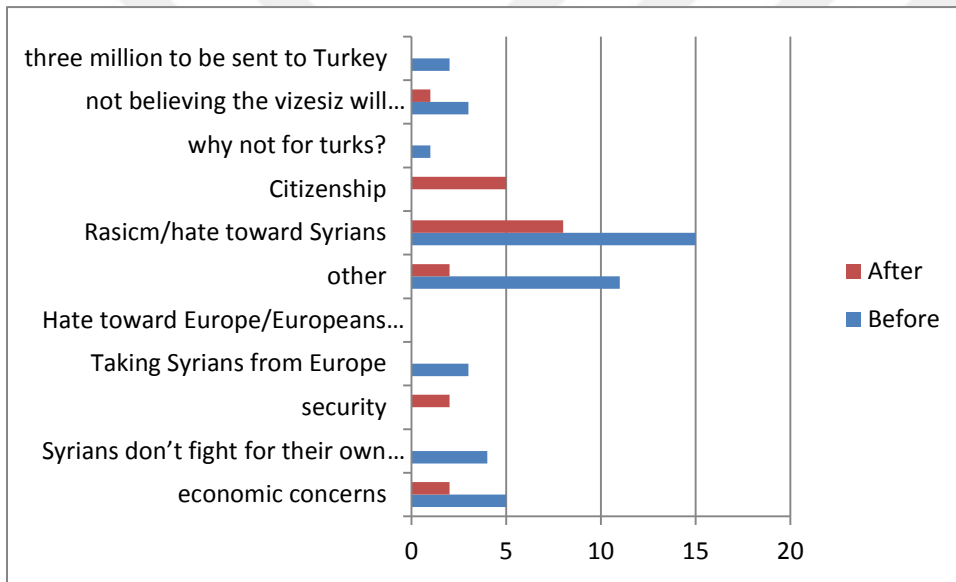
It could be seen that Sözcü audience have made most of their comments that include a racist term or a negative tone before The Ankara Agreement. Comments such as “*Allahın acımadığına sen hiç acımıycan*” “Suriyeli hepsinin Cani cehenneme, ülkemizi cehenneme cevirdiler, kimbilir adamin canini ne cok yakti suriyeli velet hak etmistir..”, “Bence o Suriyeliye az bile yapmıştır onlar saygı sevgi nedir bilmezler hep saygısızlar otobüste metrobüste tramvayda bağrışmalar” and “Suriyelileri istemiyorum kesinlikle , ne olduğu belli olmayan bir dolu insan. ayıdan post araptan dost olmaz.”⁴ are some examples.

In addition to that, coming on the second and third place (after other) comes comments that are about the rights for Turks being ignored and given to Syrians and economic concerns of the locals, respectively. “TÜRK milleti açlıktan ölüyor bu suriyelilerle uğraşiyor,,” “kahvede parasızlıktan iki çay içemeyen soysuzlar suriyelilere her ay 800 tl maaş verilmesine ses çıkarmıyorya la”, and “Suriye adını dahi duymak istemiyorum değil ki halkına ilgi gösterelim

⁴ The original versions of the comments have been kept and no alterations or editing have been made to any of the comments used in this research even if they contain typo mistakes or if they contain strong or inappropriate language since one of the aims of this work would be to see the degree of rudeness people could show on social media. Hence, I would like to apologize beforehand for the strong language one might come across throughout this work.

yetti artık Suriyeli lafi onlara yapılan yardım Türkler yapılmıyor ajitasyon kesin artık ıyyy” would be some of the examples of comments posted about this topic.

However, after The Ankara Agreement, the comments mostly circle around hate or racist comments towards Syrians or Arabs in general, and Syrians betraying their lands and leaving their country, hence not deserving to live on another land. And examples of these comments would be “Yinemi bu gereksiz suriyeliler”, and “pimi çekilmiş el bombası gibisiniz zaten korktunuz vatanınızı koruyamadınız ama hep bize patlayacaksınız suriyelilerden nefret ediyorum onların yanında biz mülteci gibi duruyoruz artık”



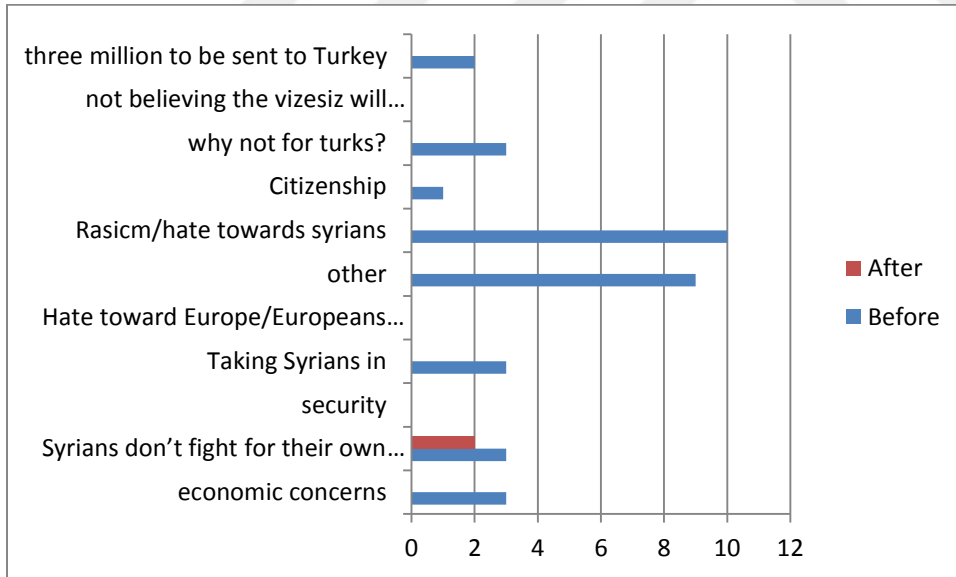
From the above figure, similar to Sözcü, it could be seen that Cumhuriyet audience have made most of their comments that include a racist term or tone to it before The Ankara Agreement. Comments such as “Suriye lilerin ana sini si&%\$”, “Bunlar insan drgil ilkel yaşam formu”, “Oruspu çocuğunu izmir meydenında sikeceksin ibret olsun”and “Suriyeliler bi siktirölup gitmediniz be ülkenize.Türkiye nin ve Türklerin başına bela oldunuz.....”are some examples.

In addition to that, coming on the second and third place (after other) comes comments that are about Syrians betraying their lands and leaving their country, hence not deserving to live on another land and economic concerns of the locals, respectively.

“Türkiye sığınmacılar tarafından işgal altında yaşam kalitesi diye bsy kalmadı ekonomi can güvenliği huzur yerlerde.” and “Zamanla daha iyi anlıyoruz. Meğer bu Suriye'liler ne kıymetli,

insanlar mış da haberimiz yokmuş. Ülkesini bırakıp kaçıyorlar, Dedesi yaşındaki adamla bile dalga geçebiliyorlar. Millet de alkış tutuyor. Helal olsun onlara. Ülkemizin tarihi savaşlar la dolu. Biz hangi ülkeye kaçmışız da hangi ülke bize sahip çıkmış bunu da bize öğretmediler, öğretmediler.”would be some of the examples of comments posted about this topic.

However, after The Ankara Agreement, the comments mostly circle around hate or racist comments towards Syrians or Arabs in general, security concerns and economic concerns. And examples of these comments would be “Pkk nin dağ kadrosu büyük ölçüde Suriyeli dir bunu araştırın lar ben bu pis arap lari ülkemde görmek istemiyorum is vermeyin.sohbet etmeyin yardımcı olmayın belki kendileri defolurlar”, “Ayıdan post Arab dan dost olmaz.defolun qidin pis yobaz kişiliksiz sahtekar Arab lar.”, “Vergileri bizden oylari onlardan alın ne güzel.” and “Savaştan dolayı geldikleri için 5yıl geçerli olmaması gerekir türk vatandaşlığı için.en doğrusu bunların ülkelerine geri gönderilmesi.ya bunlar doğu illerine yerleşince pkk ya katılmayacağı ne malum.”



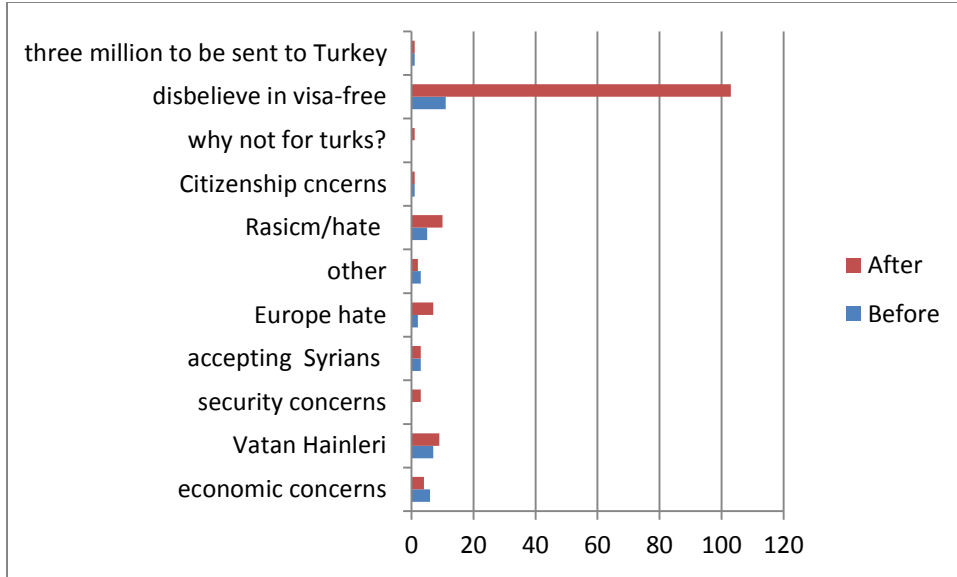
From the above figure, it could be seen that Sabah audience have made most of their comments that include a racist term or tone to it before The Ankara Agreement. Comments such as “İleride bu tip haberler daha fazla Çıkacak çünkü bi kısmı gerçekten mahsumken bi kısmı da şeref namus ne olduğunu bilmeyen insanlar Avrupa'nın neden bize yolladığını gün geçtikçe insanlar daha iyi

anlayacak”, “Avrupa bize boşa para vermiyor bunlarA sınırda bi yer yapılsa. İyi olurdu adamın yaptığı yanlış o bir çocuk ama suriyelilerde 5 para etmez hain bi millet”, “”are some examples.

In addition to that, comments that are about Syrians betraying their lands and leaving their country, hence not deserving to live on another land, economic concerns of the locals, More Syrians being returned from Europe and the accepted by the Turkish government have gained attention . Examples are; “Ulan KEMAL ATATÜRK her kim olursa olsun herdurum vatanını terk eden hayindir onların bu ülkeye verdi ği zararın hesabı yok”, “Asgari ücret zamlarıyla beraber göçmenlere serbest çalışma hakkı tanındı işten çıkartılıp yerimize ucuz Suriyeli işçiler alındı başınıza gelsin ibneler” and “İleride bu tip haberler daha fazla Çıkacak çünkü bi kısmı gerçekten mahsumken bi kısmı da şeref namus ne olduğunu bilmeyen insanlar Avrupa'nın neden bize yolladığını gün geçtikçe insanlar daha iyi anlayacak”.

However, after The Ankara Agreement, the comments mostly circle around Syrians not fighting for their own country. Example are “Gavurdan kaçan islam alimi ? ,Suryede gavura karsi cihad yapacağına gelmiş Turkiyede duygu sorusu yapıyor . Din ticareti için Turkiyeye gelmiş olabilir mi ?” and “alim denen zat ülkesini terk eder mi biz niye tuymedik vatanimizi kurtardık coluk çocuk olduk”

The same process takes place in order to analyze the comments made on posts with the keyword (avrupa). Similarly, the charts below is explained in the following pages. These charts show which categorization has gotten the most attention and if there is a change in the level of attention given to a certain topic before or after The Ankara Agreement. The blue lines represent before and the red lines represent after The Ankara Agreement. The below charts are a representative of how many times a comment has mentioned one of the topics in the categorization.

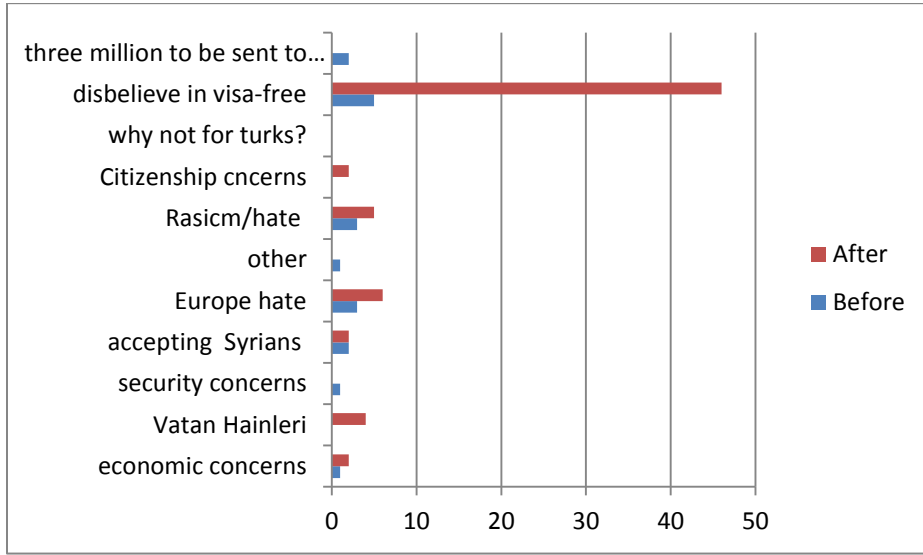


It could be seen that most of the comments made by Sözcü audience before The Ankara Agreement is about the people's dis-believe in the process of visa-free agreement between Turkey and the EU, and state it to be a dream that would stay as a dream. In addition to that, linking the Turkey-EU relations to the Syrians living in Turkey. Comments such as "Vizeleri batsın,Suriyelileri alsınlar bize yeter.Bize ülkemiz yeter ,gitsek ne olur gitmesek ne olur.", "Hepsi yalan vizesiz avrupa multecilerden kurtulup islerini gordurene kadar soylenmis yalan yigini kinse inanmasin akp ne zaman dogru soylediki" and "Vizesiz Avrupa komik olmayın böyle olacak olsa mültecileri neden çıkarsın neyi anlaştılarsa mülteciler bu ülkeye girecek onlar biz vizesiz geçişten vazgeçtik diyecek bizimkiler biz aldatıldık diyecek olan bizim milletimize olacak görünen buda hesapları ne" are some examples.

Economic concerns and racism/hate towards Syrians and Arabs in general seem to also appear in the chart as in the previous ones. Examples of comments made regarding these two categories would be "Bunların derdi savaştan kaçmak değil avrupaya gidip bir an önce zengin olup köşeyi dönmek o yüzden gebermiş yada gebermemiş hiç bir şey ifade etmiyor türk insanı adeta suriyelilerin rahatı için çalıştırılıyor ama kendi halkımız 1 kuruşu arar oldu..." and "Almayın artık bunları bunlarla uğraşmaktan başka işimiz yokmuşgibi bide besliyoruz topraklarını işgal edenler baksın yeter artık"

Similarly, after The Ankara Agreement, the trend continues to be on the same category. However, a very large peak on this issue is seen, where more than a hundred comments are made

on the Turkey-EU relations, the visa free talks and their link to the Syrians living in Turkey. And examples of these comments would be “Vize mize istemiyoruz kardeşim... Açın kapıları ne kadar arap hain terörist sapık mülteci var gitsin avrupaya... Bak bakalım neler olur avrupada” and “Bayağı bayağı inanıyorlar ya,,,geçç kendileri bile inanmıyor,,,başlarına ne geleceğini çok iyi bilirlerrr”.

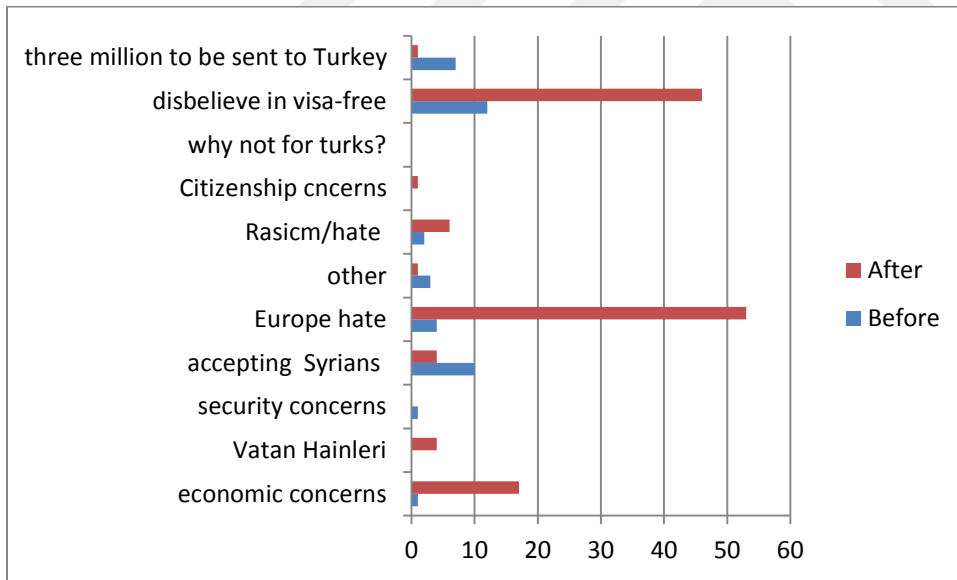


From the above figure, the Cumhuriyet audience have commented mostly on disbelieve in the visa free talks that was talking place between Turkey and the EU and its relations with the Syrian refugees. One of many examples of comments that show this perspective could be “Hiç bir zaman almayacaklar oyalma var yıllardır bir parmak bal çal yolla ama haklılar tam kapı açılıyor Türkiyede kadınlar yerde sürükleniyor sokakta cenazeler kim alır bizi evlat olsak seilmeyiz o kadar yani.”.

Another category that has seen more attention would be the hate/rasism of the locals toward Syrians and Arabs in general and an example of comment that shows this perspective would be “Yemin ederim kendimi Suriye'de hissediyorum etrafıMDA birsürü arapça konuşan insanlar biz gidelim Suriyeli ler yerleşsin ne olacakki onlarla çok güzel anlaşılır”. Hate towards Europe and talks about the three billion that Europe has given to Turkey are other catagories that have gained attention and more comments. Examples of these perspectives in the comment section would be “Alın birliğinizi..”, “Biz kişi başı ayda 6.25 tl verelim (3 senede 6 milyar Avro eder) tüm suriyelileri ve diğer mültecileri Avrupa alsın”

After The Ankara Agreement, there is a very high peak of comments made on disbelief in the visa free talks that was talking place between Turkey and the EU and its relations with the Syrian refugees. The difference between the comments on that category before and after The Ankara Agreement is about 40 more comments. Examples of these types of comments would be “”türkiye ye vizeyi kaldırmazlar.avrupa daki mültecileri türkiye ye gönderip ,başından atmak istiyorlar.Türkiye de 7 milyon işsiz var.işsizler önce ab ye gider...”

Other comment peaks could be seen on the racism, hate towards Europe and the disloyalty of Syrians towards their country by not staying in Syria and fighting for their land, hence them being not-deserving of living in any other country. Examples on these would be “Helal olsun cok dogru hele bu arap pislikleri asirlardir bizim en büyük düşmanlarımızdir”, “Medeni!çağdaş! Avrupa” and “Dilencilik yapacağına vatanına sahip çıksaydı kukla olmasaydı hiç acımıyorum insanlar” respectively.



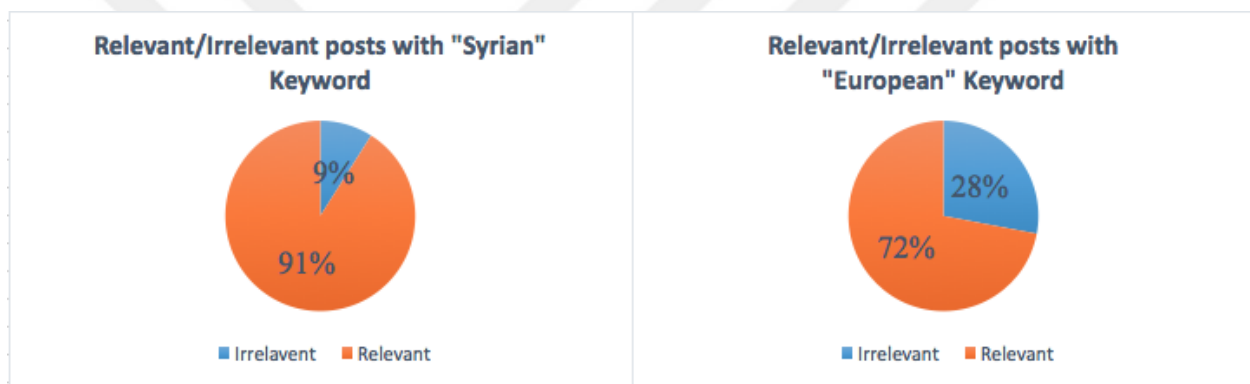
The figure above shows the comments done on the official Facebook page of Sabah. As it could be noticed with the blue bars, most of the comments made before The Ankara Agreement are focusing on the three billion that Europe has given to Turkey, the disbelief in the visa free talks that was taking place between Turkey and the EU and its relations with the Syrian refugees, and accepting of Syrians from the European countries into Turkish land. Below are some of the examples of comments that show these perspectives. “Ne anahtari be 6 milyar euro sadaka

ustune birde multecileri verdiler yunana 100 milyarlarca euro verdiler”, “Avrupa çocuđuna 18 tařından sonra bir tabak yenek vermez vatanının anahtarını asla kimseye vermez anahtar veriyorum deyip bizim evlerimizi almasınlarda sonra kadırdılar bizi deyip ağlamayalım” and “Plan zaten turkiyeyi multecilerle bogmak hala dah anlamadiniz mi? Avrupalıların emniyeti önemli ama turkiyenin emniyeti onemsiz. Bu kadar basit. Turkiyenin acıma hislerini kullanıyorlar ve eger turkiye uyanıp multecileri geriye göndermezse tuzaga dustu anlamına gelir. Tam batının istediđi satranc oyunu. Turkiyeyi zorla Check mate yapmak istiyorlar.”

When we look at the comments made after The Ankara Agreement, we could clearly see a three large peaks on the categories of the disbelieve in the visa free talks that was taking place between Turkey and the EU and its relations with the Syrian refugees, economic concerns, and hate towards Europe and not liking to be a part of the European Union. Examples are “Sabah gazetesi sen salakmısın? Adamlar 72 tane řart kořtular bunun için. Üstelik daha dün AB ye 10 yıldan önce giremezsiniz dediler. Tamam koyun hepside , haberi okuyan koyunların bile vizesiz Avrupa'nın zaten imkansız olduđunu bilirler. Kimi uyutmaya çalışıyorsun yalanlarla.”, “vizesiz avruoaya gitmek türk halkı için bu kadar önemli??kendi ülkemizde turist haline gelmeyelim bu daha önemli...ama suda varki bu multeciler ekonomimizi nasıl etkileyecek iste asil sorunumuz bu!” and “Avrupanın Allah belasını versin” respectively.

It is worth to mention that the below figures show the percentage of the relevant posts which were made in March that includes the two mentioned keywords. As it could be noticed, 91% of the posts made with the keyword Syrian (Suriyeli) are relevant to the Syrians living in Turkey, while 72% of the posts made that include the keyword Europe (Avrupa) are relevant to the relations between Turkey and EU and its relevance to the Syrians living in Turkey.

Chart 1 Relevance of the social media posts made with the two keywords “Syrian” and “European”



From the findings above, it could be stated that according to the social media news-outlets comment sections, after the Ankara Agreement; there was an increase level of concern seen in the public opinion regarding the economy situation in Turkey. Additionally, there has been an increase in the sentiments in regards to hate, racism and xenophobia being used against Syrians and locals have repeatedly asked the Turkish public and government to pay more attention to the case of Turks in poverty instead of Syrians, claiming that there are many Turks in need.

Moreover, the local population in Turkey- who had access to the internet- had more security concerns regarding the situation in Turkey and were also very concerned about Syrians gaining access and right to Turkish citizenship. Furthermore, the locals expressed a higher level of feelings of euroscepticism or even hate towards Europe after the Ankara agreement.

6. CONCLUSION

Social Media has proven to be of vital importance in the 21st century to a degree that life could be very difficult without it. They are platforms that could bring people together and be used for various purposes such as sharing content, communicating, starting campaigns and even political demonstrations, hence they are said to have a high influence on perceptions in a way that it could be difficult or even impossible for one to have an opinion independent of Social Media and Media in general. The Arab Uprisings could be a clear example of this case. Social Media has also played a vital role during the Syrian war in 2011 in affecting perceptions and public opinion regarding Syrian refugees.

This research aims to seek out if the change in the EU-Turkey relations and the way it was portrayed in the media has affected the people's perceptions regarding the Syrians living in Turkey and if the large number of discussions made by the political actors and parties in the parliament, the government and NGOs has caused a significant change in the way people express their attitude towards both Syrians and Europe. This would be done by analyzing comments made on news outlets on social media (Facebook) platforms of four major news agencies (Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sabah and Sözcü) in Turkey regarding one issue: The Syrian Crisis and Syrians in general. In order to do that, this research focuses on a very significant event that took place in Turkey and attempts to analyze the public opinion (regarding Syrians) reflected in social media before and after that specific event. The event chosen for this research would be the Ankara agreement which is also called the EU-Turkey refugee agreement. In research, efforts are taken to see how social media could be used to reinforce existing ideas and beliefs about Syrian Refugees in Turkey and to analyze if Social media could be considered as an outlet for discrimination against Syrian Refugees. The mentioned news-outlets Facebook pages have been taken in this research to be analyzed since Facebook could be considered as the most used and well-known platform that people usually go on to share their thoughts and opinions hence, it was chosen in this research. The types of posts created by each chosen news-outlet in the Month of March, 2016- those of which have the keywords; Syrian and Europe- has been studied and analyzed. Furthermore, each comment on those chosen posts have also been examined. In that way, this research was able to get a clear view on the public opinion and their reactions as a result of a particular post created by a news-outlet.

During the analysis part, I was able to answer these parts of this research question:

In regards to the research questions (How has Social Media (Facebook) reflected public opinion in Turkey, regarding the Syrian Refugees before and after the Ankara agreement?), (How do the Media outlets and reflection of the public through social media represent the EU?), and (How has the Ankara agreement between Turkey and the EU affected public opinion regarding Syrians?) the reflection of public opinion was concentrated in eight themes:

- Economic concerns
- Security Concerns
- Racism/ Hate/ Xenophobia
- Citizenship concern
- Why not for Turks?
- Euro-Skepticism
- 3 billion Euro
- Hate towards Europe

From the above themes it could be noticed that the sentiment writers could be divided in to two groups. A group that think about the issue from a realist perspective and see this issue as a materialistic concept where they understand cost-benefit calculations such as security and economy as their main concerns. On the other hand, another group of sentiment writers who could be seen as constructivist thinkers see the issues from citizenship concerns, identity, norms, and human rights point of view.

The analysis in this work showed a significant effect related to the Ankara agreement when it comes to public opinion regarding the Syrians before and after the Ankara Agreement, showing a significantly higher degree of racism, hate and xenophobia. Additionally, there has been a significant increase in the negative comments towards the EU, showing that the public opinion regarding the European Union has spiraled down after the Ankara agreement in addition to clear increase in the sentiments in regards to euro-skepticism. Due to the limitations faced during this research due to the internet and the fact that it is not available for every single individual in Turkey, the findings could be generalized to learning about the affect of social media on public

opinion in general and it is not specific to or limited only to Syrian refugees and the relations between the EU-Turkey.

Here, due to the Ankara agreement, an example of identity change could be perceived causing a change in the relations between Turkey and the EU as predicted by constructivists. At a later stage, euro-skepticism could be noticed in the public opinion. This is also due to the change in identity of the states that caused them to be further apart from each other, as predicted by constructivism as well. Here, domestic issues and public opinion is mentioned since according to Alexander Wendt, domestic politics could be brought into IR due to the way in which perceptions are made.

Regarding the research questions; (How has Social Media been used to reinforce existing ideas and beliefs about Syrian Refugees in Turkey?) and (Could Social media be considered as an outlet for discrimination against Syrian Refugees?), during examining and analyzing the comments in relation with the posts, a positive correlation between how a news post is constructed with the overall sentiment, how it was reflected from the comments section was noticed. According to Burgon's theory of Language expectancy, this would show the significance of social media and how the language and tone could be used as a tool by news-outlets to reinforce the public opinion during political communication. The Agenda-Setting theory also reinforces this statement and depicts the capability of news to impact the significance placed on a topic to reinforce the public opinion. This particular research question and topic is significantly useful in showing the importance of non-state actors (social media). However, realism approach can't be used in this regard, since this research focuses on non-state actors.

In regards to the last research question presented in this thesis; (How have significant events perceived and reflected upon by the locals once they were presented in the Media?), it could not be entirely answered in this work, since this research uses content and discourse analysis to study the sentiments of the people on social media platforms and no surveys, interviews or focus groups were conducted. For that reason, further study in this regard is encouraged.

In conclusion, it could be stated that during analysis of the data from all the four news outlet's Social Media pages, it was found that:

- There was an increase seen in the level of concern regarding the economic and security situation in Turkey after the Ankara agreement.

- There was also an increase seen in the level of concern towards Syrians in regards to gaining the right and access to Turkish citizenship in Turkey after the Ankara agreement.
- The analysis in this work showed a significant effect related to the Ankara agreement when it comes to public opinion regarding the Syrians before and after the Ankara Agreement. Additionally, there has been a significant increase in the negative comments towards the EU, showing that the public opinion regarding the European Union has spiraled down after the Ankara agreement in addition to clear increase in the sentiments in regards to euro-skepticism.
- During examining and analyzing the comments in relation with the posts, a positive correlation between how a news post is constructed with the overall sentiment, how it was reflected from the comments section was noticed.
- The sentiments that were reflected in the comments section are not always based on objective data but mostly on wrong common sense notions.
- The Ankara agreement was signed between Turkey and the EU to stop irregular migrants from drowning in the sea since it was an alarming humanitarian issue. However, it was not covered as a humanitarian, moral, ethical issue in the Turkish Media. None of the news pieces referred to the agreement's humanitarian side, rather it provoked nationalist and racist feeling in society and focus was placed on economic situation of Turkey, 3 billion euros to be given to Turkey by the EU to assist with the Syrian refugee crisis, and the visa-free travel.

These findings could be generalized to learning about the affect of social media on public opinion and it is not specific to or limited only to Syrian refugees and the relations between the EU-Turkey.

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