

## The European Refugee Crisis and Its Effects on the Relationships between Turkey and the European Union

**Authors :** Ebru Nergiz

**Abstract :** The world is facing one of the biggest refugee crisis' in history as hundred thousands of refugees who run away from the battle and genocide in the Middle East are travelling illegally to reach Europe over the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. The number of refugees has reached huge numbers due to the civil war that was caused by the Arab Spring. The number of asylum applications to the European Union has also increased in parallel with the increase in the number of refugees. The conflict in Syria between the government of Bashar Al-Assad and various other forces, which started in the spring of 2011, continues to cause displacement within the country and across the region. The refugee situation caused by the Syrian conflict has placed enormous strain on neighboring countries Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and especially Turkey. Turkey hosts massive numbers of Syrian refugees, almost 3 million and Syrians have been seeking protection in increasing numbers. The refugee crisis has affected the relationships between Turkey and the European Union deeply. President of the European Council Donald Tusk chaired a meeting of EU heads of state or government with Turkey on 29 November 2015. The meeting opened a new era in the relationships between Turkey and the European Union in terms of the migration crisis. The EU and Turkey agreed to negotiate Turkey's accession process to the European Union and to hold regular summits on Turkey-EU relations and discuss these issues. This paper looks at the reasons and consequences of the European refugee crisis and its effects on Turkey- European Union relationships. This paper also argues that the European Union has not sufficiently contributed toward alleviating the burden caused by the refugee influx, in terms of both financial assistance and refugee resettlement. The European Union's priority is to guarantee that the lowest possible number of refugees reach Europe rather than to ensure the security of the refugees.

**Keywords :** European Union, human rights, refugee crisis, Turkey-European union relationships

**Conference Title :** ICPSIR 2016 : International Conference on Political Science and International Relations

**Conference Location :** Copenhagen, Denmark

**Conference Dates :** June 27-28, 2016