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### Development as a determinant of non-migration: case of Turkey

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## Development as a determinant of non-migration: case of Turkey

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Focusing on the related literature over the questions of ‘why do people migrate’ and ‘why do they not migrate’, this article intends to analyse non-migration in Turkey and evaluate the influence of the country’s development on people’s decreasing aspirations of migrating abroad. While debating these questions and their answers, this article examines the assumptions in the literature that there is need for a careful assessment of development–migration linkage, which tackles the threshold of development in the countries of origin that leads to non-migration as well as migration. The aims of this study were threefold: *first*, it looks at an under-studied issue of the relationship between development and non-migration; *second*, it approaches this relationship from a comprehensive and analytical perspective; and *third*, it focuses on the persistent empirical importance of development as a determinant of non-migration in Turkey with its rising implications for Turkey’s affairs with the European Union at the background.

**Keywords:** migration; non-migration; remittance; Turkey; development

### Introduction

Studies of international migration have traditionally focused on arguments concerning people’s movement from one place to another emphasizing the role of income differences as the basic motivation for migration (Faist, 1997). Such arguments in the prevailing theories of migration literature lead us to expect migratory flows of huge magnitudes in the contemporary world (Arango, 2000; Tassinopoulos & Werner, 1999). However, in spite of the massive differences between locations in terms of living conditions, 97% of the world population<sup>1</sup> have not left their country of birth or have returned to their country of origin after the experience of migration, in fact, making immobility the current norm today (Castles, 2000; Hammar & Tamas, 1997). Despite the fact that the migrant population is only 3% of the global population, almost all attention given to international migration studies have been paid to those who migrate rather than stay (Castles, 2000; Hammar, 1995). Thorough attention given to the theoretical determinants of international migration such as economic incentives, demographic explanations, distance and network effects has overshadowed the underlying reasons behind the majority’s decision not to migrate (Hammar, 1995). Moreover, even the studies concerning non-migrants have focused on the impacts of international migration on the individuals and households ‘left behind’ by migrant family or community members (Barcus &

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Werner, 2007). Consequently, the incentives to remain immobile, the individual values, meanings, and experiences of non-migration are rarely studied. As a result, an individual's preference to stay in the home country is not thoroughly researched (Hammar, 1995; Jónsson, 2011). Accordingly, existing studies neither fully explore the absence of migration nor answer the question of why people prefer to stay despite the comparative advantages of migration, such as higher wages or better life conditions in the destination countries (Barcus & Werner, 2007; Fischer, Martin, & Straubhaar, 1997). In this light, a more integrated understanding of migration requires the dynamics of immobility to be taken into consideration (Hammar & Tamas, 1997; Jónsson, 2008).

Focusing on the related literature over the questions of 'why do people migrate' and 'why do they not migrate', this article analyses non-migration in Turkey and evaluates the influence of the country's development on people's decreasing aspirations for migrating abroad. While debating these questions and their answers, we examine the assumptions in the current literature that there is need for a careful assessment of development–migration linkage, which tackles the threshold of development in the countries of origin, leading to non-migration as well as migration. The aims of this study were threefold: *first*, it looks at an under-studied issue of the relationship between development and non-migration; *second*, it approaches this relationship from a comprehensive and analytical perspective; and *third*, it focuses on the persistent empirical importance of development as a determinant of non-migration in Turkey with its rising implications for Turkey's affairs with the European Union (EU) at the background.

The empirical data used in this study come from the *Imagining Europe from the Outside* (EUMAGINE) Project,<sup>2</sup> which was a three-year collaborative European FP7 research project aimed at investigating the impact of the perceptions of human rights and democracy on migration aspirations and decisions in four migrant-sending countries: Morocco, Senegal, Turkey and Ukraine. The field research was conducted between 2010 and 2012, and followed a mixed-method approach of a large-scale quantitative surveys and semi-structured, qualitative interviews. In each country, fieldwork was undertaken in four diverse regions of an area characterized by high emigration rates; a second, comparable socio-economic area with low emigration; a comparable area with a strong immigration history; and a location with a specific human rights situation. The focus in this study is on the data from Turkey, which consist of a total number of 2000 survey and 80 semi-structured interviews, presenting individuals' decision-making process over migration on a micro-level.

Accordingly, the article consists of four main sections. The *first* part displays the theoretical discussion on mobility, immobility and development. On the one hand, the literature on non-migration is presented, which largely focuses on micro-level explanations of why people do not migrate. On the other hand, the literature on the relationship between migration and development is revisited in which the 'migration hub' approach is utilized to understand the context of Turkey on a macro-level. The *second* section explains the context of Turkey's path of development and migration history, presenting it as a typical example of the 'migration hump' approach where the first upsurge of emigration with economic development is followed by the decline of emigration due to closing opportunity gaps, which is transforming to a migrant receiving country. Following this macro-level presentation of the country case, the *third* section analyses the empirical findings of the EUMAGINE Project, focusing on the micro-level decision-making process over migration. The objective here is not to argue for a strong linkage between the macro-level development in Turkey and the micro-level decision-making process over migration, but to explain the larger context that has been changing over

time, and where people are making decisions. The *final* section discusses not only the possible impact of development on immobility, but some structural factors in the changing migratory regimes between Turkey and Europe, such as restrictive immigration policies of the latter, presence of other destinations, and internal migration alternatives.

### Theoretical discussion

The first line of literature to be considered in this study explores non-migration. The few studies on the absence of migration demonstrate that non-migration may depend on a wide array of factors, which include risk aversion, the alternative of internal migration, loyalty to homeland, values of place attachment, self adjustment to environment, location-specific assets and abilities non-transferable to other locations, lack of language skills necessary for living abroad, access to clear information through frequent contact with migrant relatives and friends about the experience of migration, strict migration control and discrimination against immigrants in the destination countries (Barcus & Werner, 2007; Faist, 1997; Fischer et al., 1997). Migration may also be constrained by poverty, the lack of education and the absence of long-term planning because of hard life conditions (Carling, 2002). However, non-migrants who choose to remain in their countries should be distinguished from those who have unfulfilled aspirations of migration. As the choice to remain in place differs substantively from the inability to move due to economic, political, financial or physical conditions, an analytical distinction is required between the voluntary and involuntary immobile-non-migrants who choose to remain and those who are unable to migrate in spite of their migration aspirations (Barcus & Werner, 2007; Carling, 2002). In contrast to Castles' approach to today's migration order as the 'age of migration', Carling sees the current times as the 'age of involuntary immobility' in which many people with migration aspirations are unable to migrate due to the current restrictive immigration policies and barriers imposed on migration (Carling, 2002). The strict migration policies of receiving countries cause involuntary immobility in localities where a long tradition of emigration to Western countries has created a 'culture of emigration', which feeds migration aspirations (Carling, 2002). In such localities, where many migrated to Europe before the restrictive immigration policies, non-migrants with migration aspirations not matched by any ability to migrate may be frustrated by the difficulties of constructing meaningful livelihoods and social identities (Jónsson, 2007).

In contrast to the involuntary immobile, the voluntary immobile see non-migration as preferable to migration (Cohen, 2005). This preference for non-migration at a certain point in an individual's life may be linked to the 'option value of waiting' in which postponing migration to a later period in life may reduce the risks involved in the decision to migrate and make immobility more advantageous for a certain period of time (Burda, 1995; Tassinopoulos & Werner, 1999). In addition to the option value of waiting, which implies a fine line between voluntary and involuntary non-migration, risk adversity, access to clear information about the destination through migrants, the existence of household resources, local assets and opportunities may make non-migration a better option for some non-migrants. A crucial element involved in the decision-making process concerning non-migration may be place attachment, defined by Milligan (1998) as the individual's emotional bond to a locality through interactional processes (Barcus & Werner, 2007). Accordingly, an individual's past memories of interactions associated with the locality or expectations of possible future experiences to occur in the physical site can explain the sense behind the preference to stay (Milligan, 1998). The concept

of place attachment also implies that higher rates of voluntary non-migration may be expected in cultures identified closely with a particular place (Barcus & Werner, 2007; Fielding, 1992). By the same token, the in-depth analysis concerning the value of immobility conducted by Fischer, Holm, Malmberg, and Straubhaar (2000) demonstrates the ways place attachment and the insider advantages that build up through immobility make non-migration more valuable than migration.

The theory of value of immobility depends on the idea that some abilities and assets related to work or leisure, such as cultural, linguistic, social, political and economic advantages are obtained through time and effort in a specific location through immobility (Fischer et al., 2000). According to this theory, strong ties to places, people and projects are constraints to migration, and non-migrants settled and tied to a specific locality are likely to remain due to the insider advantages of work and leisure (Fischer et al., 2000; Malmberg, 1997). On the one hand, the work-oriented advantages of immobility may be firm specific, such as knowledge and ability non-transferable to another firm; space specific, such as expertise in regional preferences and locational know-how; and society specific, arising from social relations and political activities built up in the home society (Tassinopoulos & Werner, 1999). On the other hand, leisure-related advantages of non-migration may be society-specific stemming from a wide range of human contacts, such as family and friends, being socially integrated and accepted, and space specific, such as being used to the culture and market of a location (Fischer et al., 2000; Tassinopoulos & Werner, 1999). Furthermore, as economies become more developed, the leisure-oriented insider advantages play a more substantial role in the decision of non-migration (Fischer et al., 2000). As these insider advantages concerning work and leisure are gained through immobility, they are lost in the act of migration and to regain them in the destination country becomes costly and time-consuming (Fischer et al., 2000; Tassinopoulos & Werner, 1999). Since the location-specific insider advantages are acquired through time, the tendency to migrate decreases as the duration spent immobile increases (Fischer et al., 2000; Tassinopoulos & Werner, 1999).

In a different light, the insider-advantage approach employs the existing tools to understand the act of migration to shed light on non-migration (Fischer et al., 2000). First, instead of focusing on the costs of migration to a new location, the theory of value of immobility takes reference the losses of the act of leaving a particular location. Second, in contrast to the human capital approach, which concentrates on skills and abilities as investments acquired through the migration experience, the insider advantage theory concentrates on the work and leisure advantages as forms of investment acquired by immobility. Even though the theory of value of immobility presents some understanding as to why there is not much more migration today (Carling, 2002), the study of non-migration requires more in-depth research on the obstacles to departure and traditions, habitual manners, economic ties and loyalties that make non-migration the preference despite the higher wages and better life standards that could be attained through the migration experience (Hammar, 1995). More, the complex realities and the thin line between voluntary and involuntary immobility (Jónsson, 2011) is difficult, even for the non-migrant, to analyse. The level of desire behind non-migration should be taken into consideration in the study of immobility.

The second line of literature, following the topic of non-migration is the relationship between migration and development. Research on migration has paid great interest to the controversial relationship between international migration and development to explore the extent and intimate nature of their linkages (Raghuram, 2009). However, opinion has been somewhat unsettled on the direction of causality between migration

and development. In the unresolved debates concerning the issue, migration has either been theorized as an outcome of underdevelopment or development as an outcome of migration (de Haas, 2008; İçduygu, Sirkeci, & Muradoğlu, 2001). More specifically, the approach to migration as an outcome of development has been rooted in the push and pull and neo-classical models, which assume that migration emerges as a response to spatial wage and opportunity gaps, and stems from the motivation to maximize income or well-being (de Haas, 2013). The understanding of underdevelopment as the root cause of migration is challenged by the idea of 'migration hump' and the empirical evidence on the non-linear relation between development and emigration. In the second approach towards the relationship between development and migration, the concentration is on the developmental outcomes of migration, such as remittances, brain drain/gain, and diaspora initiatives (Raghuram, 2009). The literature on the developmental consequences of migration has been dominated by two opposing approaches between migration optimists and pessimists (de Haas, 2008). The first group, influenced by neo-classical migration economy and developmentalist modernization theories, considers migration to have a positive impact on the balanced growth of origin areas, while the second group, drawing on the structuralist approaches towards migration and development, highlights the asymmetric growth in the migrant-sending areas (de Haas, 2008). Current debates on the developmental impacts of migration have grown disconnected from the debates on developmental causes of migration (de Haas, 2011). This article focuses on the first line of research between migration and development, which highlights the role of development as a cause of international migration rather than as an outcome of migration.

The traditional models that attempt to understand the role of development in emigration have interpreted the act of migration as a response to disequilibria between origin and destination countries, emerging as a result of impoverishment (de Haas, 2011). This thinking does not conform to the current migration patterns (de Haas, 2011). According to human and economic development indicators of migrant-sending countries and their emigration rates, the poorest countries tend to have lower emigration rates than middle-income and wealthy countries. In other words, instead of a linear function of spatial income and opportunity differentials, migration is a reaction to relative rather than absolute deprivation (de Haas, 2008). This finding of the non-linear relationship between emigration and the level of a country's development reflects the initial stage of the 'migration hump' (Martin & Taylor, 1996). The term 'migration hump' reflects the shape of a curve describing migration in rapidly growing economies over time (Dadush & Shaw, 2011). Hence, according to the 'migration hump' approach, any form of development in the poorest countries, especially in the economies, which are restructured by privatizing and opening themselves to the world economy rather than in the countries with protectionist policies, is likely to lead to increasing emigration (de Haas, 2013; Zolberg & Benda, 2001). According to this theory, while there is little emigration at low levels of development, the process of human and economic development raises the ability to migrate through the expansion of access to material resources, social networks and knowledge (de Haas, 2011). Therefore, the consequences of development, such as the growth of wealth, the establishment of networks, and an increase in the number of those able to migrate, cause a decrease in the selectivity of migration, thus leading to high rates of emigration (de Haas, 2010).

The formula of development, migration and increasing capabilities to migrate is not complete without the impact of development on the aspiration to move. Development not only increases the capabilities to migrate, it also increases people's aspirations to

migrate (de Haas, 2010). Improved access to information through education, mass media, internet, and social networks introduce new images and lifestyles that expand awareness of social, economic, and political opportunities elsewhere and people's mental horizons on their material aspirations and quality of life (de Haas, 2010). Accordingly, widespread literacy, basic education, professional skills and a certain threshold of financial wealth are required to enable people to plan ahead and migrate for the aim of reaching a better life (Hammar, 1995). When people's mental horizons of material aspirations and quality of life grow faster than the social, political and economic opportunities that the homeland has to offer, aspirations to migrate abroad are high (de Haas, 2010). In the later stages of development, according to the 'migration hump' approach to emigration and development, emigration starts declining as incomes in source and destination countries converge and decreasing opportunity gaps diminish people's incentives to migrate (de Haas, 2013). While the impact of development on the ability to migrate is linear due to growing economic opportunities, the impact of development on people's aspirations resembles an inverted U curve; first, increasing with the ability to migrate and then, decreasing with further development and closing opportunity gaps between origin and destination countries (Haas, 2011). Overall, according to the 'migration hump' approach, the first increase of emigration with economic development is followed by the decrease of emigration due to closing opportunity gaps, which may then continue with transformation to an immigrant receiving country (Dadush & Shaw, 2011; Martin, 1992; Martin & Taylor, 1996).

### **Context: Turkey's path of development and migration history**

Turkey is a typical illustration of the 'migration hump' approach, where the first expansion of emigration with economic development is followed by the drop of emigration due to closing opportunity gaps, which is continuing with transformation to an immigrant receiving country. Turkey's migration history is linked to its First Five-year Development Plan (1962–1967), which aimed to export the surplus labour force in order to reduce unemployment in Turkey and benefit from in-flow remittances (İçduygu, 2006). As a consequence of bilateral labour agreements signed with many European states starting from 1961, Turkey saw mass emigration to Europe, reaching to 100,000 workers leaving Turkey annually until the Oil Crisis in 1973 (İçduygu, 1999). Within the period between 1961 and 1974, approximately 800,000 migrant workers were sent to Europe through the intermediary of the Turkish Employment Office. Despite the termination of Europe's labour demand in 1975, emigration to European countries continued within established migration culture and networks and through asylum applications, family reunification, marriage migration and clandestine labour migration (İçduygu, 1999). The number of Turkish citizens living in Europe reached almost two million in 1980s and approximately three million in mid-1990s. This number decreased in the year 2000, yet remained stable throughout the 2000s when many immigrants of Turkish origin were naturalized in their host countries (İçduygu, 2006).

In the post-1974 period, the emigration movement from Turkey shifted to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) as the labour demand of oil exporting countries coincided with Turkey's aim to find new destinations to export its surplus labour (İçduygu, 2006). Through this contract-dependent labour migration, approximately 500,000 workers were sent to Arab countries until the Gulf Crisis (İçduygu, 1999). The recent annual figures of those sent to MENA countries by the Turkish Employment Office were 34,000 in 2010 and 28,000 in 2011 (İçduygu, Göker, Tokuzlu, & Elitok, 2013). Another wave of

contract-dependent labour migration in the post-1974 period was due to the involvement of Turkish companies in the reconstruction programmes of the newly emerging countries following the collapse of the Soviet Union (İçduygu, 1999). Approximately 50,000 migrants in 1995, 75,000 migrants in 2000 and 100,000 migrants in 2010 lived in the Commonwealth of Independent States (İçduygu et al., 2013).

Today, in spite of the fact that mass migration has ended and the out-flow of migration has decreased greatly compared to the past, Turks are the largest community in Europe with an approximate population of three million people (İçduygu & Kirişçi, 2009) and a total of almost four million people of Turkish origin live abroad (İçduygu et al., 2013). These migration trends coincide with the transformation of Turkey from an agriculture-based economy to an industry-based one (Pamuk, 2008). More, with an economy that has performed generally well in the last thirty years, today Turkey is classified within the G-20 and is the 18th largest economy in the world due to a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$786 billion. According to World Bank indicators, Turkey has advanced in competitiveness over the past decade, moving ahead 16 spots to number 43 in the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index. In the past five years, foreign direct investment has grown from over \$1 billion to an average of \$13 billion (İçduygu et al., 2013). Furthermore, fundamental reforms carried out after 2001 have allowed Turkey's financial sector to remain relatively strong during the global economic crisis.<sup>3</sup> In addition to an economic outlook that remains favourable compared to the rest of Europe or the MENA region, according to the Human Development Report (UNDP) of 2013, Turkish state encouraged all industries with a high capacity to absorb labour, such as construction and manufacture of furniture, textiles, food, and automobiles and its export basket moved towards products involving more processing, higher technology and skilled labour.<sup>4</sup> Based on demographic, economic and social indicators, Turkey is clustered as an upper middle-income country by the World Bank with its GDP per capita that had an average of \$10,524 in the period of 2008–2012.<sup>5</sup> A view of the GDP per capita for Turkey over the years demonstrates that there has been a general increase in Turkey's GDP since 1972 and a more steady increase since the year 2000. Turkey's Human Development Index (HDI) value is in the high human development category, and it has increased steadily over the years.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Turkey's life expectancy at birth increased by 17.7 years, mean years of schooling increased by 3.6 years, and expected years of schooling increased by 5.5 years.<sup>7</sup>

While increased development is a factor leading to non-migration, it is necessary to present the reflections of increased development on life satisfaction indicators for a better understanding of the reasons leading to non-migration. The European Value Survey and the survey studies conducted by the Turkish Statistical Institute shed light on life satisfaction, which is helpful to understand the low level of migration aspiration and voluntary immobility in Turkey. According to the European Value Survey, those who are very happy and quite happy with their lives in Turkey were 81% in 1990, 89.8% in 1996, 76.6% in 2001 and 85.7% in 2007. The Life Satisfaction Research conducted by the Turkish Statistical Institute in 2012 demonstrates various positive results regarding life satisfaction in Turkey on the subjects ranging from general happiness, satisfaction with financial situation and feelings of physical security, to opinion on the state services and Turkey's future. In the year 2012, general happiness with life increased to 61% (from 59.6% in 2003), satisfaction with financial situation has increased to 36.1% (from 16.5% in 2003), and feelings of physical security increased to 80.8% (from 71.2 in 2004). Complementing the questions on financial situation, those who believe buying household needs is easy increased from 6 to 16%, those who believe it is of medium

difficulty increased from 36.1 to 40.1%, and those who believe it is difficult to buy household needs fell from 57.9 to 44% between the years 2003 and 2012. Meanwhile, satisfaction with jobs increased from 45.1 to 70.9% with dissatisfaction decreasing from 20.3 to 14.4% in this period. Responses to the survey questions regarding state services in Turkey demonstrated that satisfaction with health services increased to 74.8% (from 39.5% in 2003) and satisfaction with social security services increased to 63.4% (from 40.2% in 2003). Moreover, happiness with security services increased from 57.9 to 79.4% between 2003 and 2012.

In addition to indicators on the present life satisfaction, literature also states that the choice to remain in one's country, voluntary immobility, is closely linked with the possible future opportunities that the homeland is expected to offer. Therefore, indicators on future expectations are significant in explaining voluntary non-migration. According to the results of the Turkish Statistical Institute study of 2012, hopefulness for the future increased from 66.9% in 2003 to 76.6% while hopelessness decreased from 33.1 to 23.4% in the last nine years. Overall, indicators on life satisfaction in Turkey reveal an improvement in the happiness with present conditions and hope for the future. Linked to the increasingly well and steady performance of Turkey in economy and the general increase in human development indicators, the low migration aspirations may be rooted in the overall increases in happiness and life satisfaction in Turkey in the recent years.

### **Empirical findings**

The larger context of Turkey shows that macro-level conditions of development and life satisfaction has passed a threshold of development after which migration aspirations start decreasing. The empirical data from the EUMAGINE Project fill in the micro-foundations of this claim. The 2000 survey and 80 in-depth interviews conducted in Turkey in four research areas, with people aged between 18 and 39, explain the broad preference of non-migration. They target people's opinions on the current standard of living, financial situation, schools and health care in Turkey, and to what extent migration is perceived as a valuable life project.

The *first* research area selected for the EUMAGINE Project was Emirdağ, a research area with high emigration rates. Based on socio-economic indicators, Emirdağ is the 390th sub-province among the 872 sub-provinces in Turkey with an economy fuelled mostly by agriculture and livestock. In the six levels of development, Emirdağ is included in the third class and has an unemployment rate of 4.15% (SPO,<sup>8</sup> 2004). Regarding the level of urbanization, Emirdağ ranks as the 409th among the 872 sub-provinces in Turkey with an urbanization rate of 43.27% (SPO, 2004).

The *second* research area with a similar socio-economic status, but with relatively low emigration rates, was Dinar, the 369th sub-province in Turkey (SPO, 2004). With its economy also based on agriculture, livestock and trade, Dinar is included in the third class in the six levels of development and has an unemployment rate of 6.61% (SPO, 2004). The urbanization rate of Dinar in 2004 was 40.12%, and it ranks as the 469th in the level of urbanization (SPO, 2004).

The *third* research area selected for the EUMAGINE Project, Fatih, is the area with high immigration rates. Located in Istanbul, it is the most developed and urbanized province of Turkey. The economy in Fatih is based on industry and the service sector. Constituting the old quarter of Istanbul as part of the Metropolitan City, tourism plays an essential role in its economy with 100% urbanization rate.<sup>9</sup>

The *fourth* research area selected for the EUMAGINE study was Central Van, in eastern Anatolia for its specific human rights situation. Socio-economically, Central Van is the 149th sub-province among the 872 sub-provinces in Turkey, and it has an unemployment rate of 21.39%. In the six levels of development, Central Van, with its economy based on industry, agriculture and livestock, is included in the second class. With an urbanization rate 79.79%, Central Van is the 37th among 872 sub-provinces in the level of urbanization (SPO, 2004). A large number of the population in Van speak Kurdish. The human rights record concerning the Kurdish question in Van has long continued to attract scrutiny, both internally and externally, and the clashes between the separatist Kurdish militants and the Turkish army have hindered the development of the region. The deadly earthquake that struck Van in 2012 devastated the city and critically worsened the socio-economic situation of the population.

Overall, there are different levels of development in these regions. Within this context, the next subsections serve two objectives. *First*, against the macro-level analysis presented above, the findings of the EUMAGINE Project show that different levels of development in each region, in fact and as perceived by the respondents, may have an impact over migration aspirations on the micro-level. *Second*, the findings are also related to the first line of literature in the theoretical discussion that reveal the reasons of voluntary immobility as place attachment, loyalty to homeland and the alternative of internal migration. Accordingly, the next subsections detail the differences on migration aspirations and intentions, living standards, perceptions of education and health services in Turkey, and alternative choice of internal migration in each region.

### **Migration aspirations and intentions**

In the EUMAGINE Survey, migration aspirations in Dinar, Emirdağ, Fatih and Central Van are measured by means of answers to the following question: *Ideally, if you had the opportunity, would you like to go abroad to live or work some time during the next five years, or would you prefer staying in Turkey?* The results for the analysis on migration aspirations demonstrate the distinction between the voluntary and involuntary immobile. The voluntary non-migrants, in other words, people who state that they would prefer to stay in Turkey even if they had the opportunity to migrate are 58% in Dinar, 60% in Emirdağ, 60% in Fatih and 62% in Central Van (see Table 1). Accordingly, in each of the four research areas more people would prefer staying in Turkey than going abroad. Among the four research areas, Central Van presents the highest rates of voluntary non-migrants despite its weak record of human rights and difficult living conditions. This finding is in line with the literature on voluntary immobility and place attachment according to which localities identified with a certain culture may have high rates of voluntary immobility (Milligan, 1998) because Central Van is in Turkey's Kurdish region and is home to a high Kurdish population.

Table 1. Migration aspirations.

Ideally, if you had the opportunity, would you like to go abroad to live or work some time during the next five years, or would you prefer staying in Turkey? (%)					
Research Area	Dinar	Emirdağ	Fatih	Central Van	Total
Stay in Turkey	58	60	60	62	60
Go abroad	42	40	40	38	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100

According to qualitative interviews from the EUMAGINE Project, values pointing at place attachment and loyalty to homeland are strong elements leading to low migration aspirations in all four research areas in Turkey.

There is no place like one's homeland. It is better to live here. But sometimes, things do not work, you may have to go. [Still] no place like homeland. (H. from Central Van, female, 32)

Loyalty to homeland is frequently mentioned in relation to family members.

My mother is here. I have another sibling here. I do not want to leave them here. At least, here I live in my own country. I like my homeland. Of course a person loves the soil he is born to, that he lives on. (V. from Emirdağ, male, 32)

It would be very difficult to leave your loved ones here. (N. From Fatih, female, 29)

Another reason for voluntary immobility that goes hand in hand with loyalty to homeland is the emphasis on traditions and religion.

I wouldn't [want to go], I need to hear the call for prayer or live Republic Day ... I am proud to be Turkish first. That's why I wouldn't be able to do outside my country. It's another culture and tradition [abroad], I would cry during the bayram or religious holidays till morning. I would miss hearing the call for prayer. (P. from Dinar, female, 29)

Turkey is better. We have traditions here. If you go there [abroad], you will even forget your religion. Turkey has traditions. I would not give up on my race; a person cannot remember his traditions if he goes there ... One must hear the call for prayer. Those who go there will lose themselves little by little. They will adapt everyday slowly, little by little. Then they will lose themselves. In a while, nothing will remain from them. I do not envy Europe. (K. from Central Van, female, 20)

A young woman in Emirdağ would like to visit her family in France; however, she is not willing to migrate due to her perception of the European life style that contradicts the lifestyle in the homeland.

We hear the life there [in Europe] and there are bad habits. Some of them [men] take care of their families, some don't. There are single and married women who try to seduce a married man ... women work a lot there, they wear explicit clothes, to keep a married man home you need a very good man. Women work there at the cafès and pubs, I don't know, I would like to go and see it there. I wouldn't like to stay but to have a tour there ... I love our Turkey. I like its people, life conditions and everything about including the beautiful and ugly things. (D. from Emirdağ, female, 34)

As the question regarding migration aspirations is a general indicator of the attitude towards migration, the participants who answered the migration aspiration question in the survey positively expressed their aspiration to migrate if given the opportunity. They were asked: *Will you try to go to that country within the next five years?* The answers to this survey question provide a more realistic picture of migration intentions. Among the total population in the research areas, those who stated that they would not try to migrate in the next five years despite their migration aspirations constitute 22% in Dinar, 15% in Emirdağ, 16% in Fatih, and 21% in Central Van. While the distinction between voluntary and involuntary immobility is sometimes blurry and the reason behind the lack of intention to migrate can be personal, such as having the

responsibility to take care of family members or lack of financial resources to leave, this category may be viewed as the involuntary non-migrants who do not have the required abilities to migrate. Therefore, some of the people in this group may not migrate even if provided with the necessary resources to migrate. Still, this category of involuntary immobile people is much lower compared to the voluntary non-migrants. To state it differently, those who have intentions to migrate are 19% in Dinar, 25% in Emirdağ, 23% in Fatih, and 16% in Central Van making the overall average 21% for those who will try to migrate in the next five years in the whole population (see Table 2). On the one hand, similar to the results regarding migration aspirations, the lowest migration intentions are found in Central Van. On the other hand, the highest migration intentions are found in Emirdağ where the high emigration history has created a culture of emigration. According to the literature on involuntary non-migrants, the culture of emigration in the localities with a history of emigration feeds migration aspirations, which clash with today's strict migration policies of migrant receiving countries (Carling, 2002).

### ***Living standards***

The EUMAGINE survey involved several questions regarding the level of development in the research areas, which are based on the standards of living. The first of these questions was *when your parents were the same age as you are now, do you think that their standard of living was ... much worse, worse, same with, better, much better than theirs today?* In all four regions, participants who believed their parents' living standards were worse or much worse than their own standards of living were the majority (see Table 3). When the current living standards of the participants were asked, *do you feel your standard of living is ... getting much worse, getting worse, staying the same, getting better or getting much better?*, a majority of respondents in all four regions stated that their standard of living was getting better (see Table 4). These findings on the attitudes towards living conditions of the past and today are in line with the secondary data presented above, which provide detailed information on the opinions regarding living standards on the macro-level. Overall, the empirical data support the optimistic and hopeful perspectives towards living standards of today and of the future and may be perceived as strengthening the place attachment that decreases migration aspirations. According to the literature, positive expectations from the future of a locality may increase place attachment, leading to an increase in voluntary non-migration (Milligan, 1998).

### ***Perception of education and health services in Turkey***

Participants were asked about their perception of schools in Turkey through the question: *The schools in Turkey are very bad, bad, neither good nor bad, good and very good.* Overall, 31% of the population in these areas believe the schools are bad, 27%

Table 2. Migration intentions.

Will you try to go to that country within the next five years? (%)					
Research Area	Dinar	Emirdağ	Fatih	Central Van	Total
No	81	75	77	84	79
Yes	19	25	23	16	21
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Table 3. Living standards compared with the past.

When your parents were the same age as you are now, do you think that their standard of living was ... (%)					
Research Area	Dinar	Emirdağ	Fatih	Central Van	Total
Much worse than yours is now	33	24	11	39	27
Worse than yours is now	41	45	53	39	44
About same as yours is now	15	16	14	10	13
Better than yours is now	9	13	18	10	13
Much better than yours is now	2	2	4	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4. Current living standards.

Do you feel your standard of living is ...					
Research Area	Dinar	Emirdağ	Fatih	Central Van	Total
Getting much worse	7	3	2	3	4
Getting worse	20	23	30	23	24
Staying the same	22	18	17	35	23
Getting better	50	53	50	37	47
Getting much better	1	3	1	1	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100

believe they are neither good nor bad, and 42% believe they are good (see Table 5). Thus, despite the overall satisfaction in life, education seems to be the one area that people still consider further development is needed. Similarly, looking at the macro-level data of HDI education indicators, there is no change in this area since 2010, where it remains 0.608 with a very slight improvement to 0.604 in 2009.<sup>10</sup>

Participants were asked about their perception of health care in Turkey through the question: *The health care in Turkey is very bad, bad, neither good nor bad, good and very good.* Overall, 27% of the population in these areas believe the health care system to be bad, 20% believe it is neither good nor bad, and 53% believe it is good (see Table 6). Thus, compared to education, people seem to be more satisfied with the health care in Turkey. Macro-level data also support these perceptions, where the HDI health indicators, unlike education, show a steady improvement in this area from 0.78 in 2000 to 0.855 in 2012.<sup>11</sup>

Table 5. Perception of schools in Turkey.

The schools in Turkey are ... (%)					
Research Area	Dinar	Emirdağ	Fatih	Central Van	Total
Very bad	4	7	10	7	7
Bad	20	18	27	29	24
Neither good nor bad	29	28	31	21	27
Good	44	42	29	39	39
Very good	3	5	2	3	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Table 6. Perception of health care in Turkey.

The health care in Turkey is ... (%)					
Research Area	Dinar	Emirdağ	Fatih	Central Van	Total
Very bad	4	5	10	9	7
Bad	14	18	20	28	20
Neither good nor bad	20	23	22	15	20
Good	52	45	42	44	46
Very good	10	9	6	4	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100

### *The alternative of internal migration*

The alternative of internal migration may be interpreted as a strong factor for decreasing aspirations to migrate abroad. Turkish Statistical Institute data on internal migration in 2012 demonstrate that more than two million people migrated between provinces in Turkey. Therefore, in line with the literature on reasons for immobility, the alternative of internal migration seems to play a great role in future plans of many voluntary non-migrants. Participants who prefer to remain in Turkey frequently mention location names in Turkey.

To live, I would not prefer Europe but I would prefer Karadeniz. I like green very much, here in the rural we do not have much green, so I would like to go to Karadeniz. (G. from Emirdağ, female, 26)

I would prefer to move to a city where the weather is mostly summer. Somewhere in the south ... (N. from Dinar, male, 27)

Everyone [has] wants, everyone has a dream ... to study somewhere else ... Ankara, İstanbul ... (B. from Central Van, male, 18)

Big cities are better. You have everything there; Eskisehir for example. [I would like to live] by the sea, in Antalya or Alanya. (V. from Emirdağ, male, 32).

Based on these quotes from qualitative interviews, the claim can be made that Turkey offers alternative locations for better opportunities and life standards, where the possibility of internal migration decreases migration aspirations abroad.

### **Conclusion**

As stated in the introduction, the relationship between development and non-migration is an under-studied issue. The approach presented here looks at this relationship from a comprehensive and analytical perspective on two levels. On the macro-level, the secondary data cited here demonstrate that Turkey's development indicators are improving, and less people are willing to leave the country. Thus, it is argued, Turkey has passed a threshold of development, reaching a 'migration hump', where emigration starts declining as incomes in source and destination countries converge and decrease the opportunity gaps, which lead to diminish incentives to migrate.

On the micro-level, the data from the EUMAGINE Project display that the majority of respondents are satisfied with their lives and hopeful of Turkey's future with less aspiration and even lesser intention to migrate abroad. Besides the macro-level 'migration hump' approach, the findings presented here also underline the importance of place

attachment and loyalty to homeland in explaining people's decisions for voluntary immobility. Moreover, alternatives for internal migration, existence of family members in the place of residence, traditions, life style and religion associated with homeland are also essential factors in the lack of migration aspiration. These factors further strengthen the existing knowledge on the reasons for immobility. Furthermore, according to the literature, as economies develop, leisure-oriented, insider advantages play a more substantial role in the decision for non-migration, which seems to be in line with the findings of the research. The reasons of non-migration stated in the qualitative interviews emphasize more leisure-oriented advantages than work-oriented advantages.

In addition to contribution to the academic debate on immobility and development, the study presented here also has policy implications. While revisiting the complex nature of this topic in Turkey, it is important to underline its implications for the European migration regime. In the policy circles, international migration has become a matter of high politics since the 1980s (Castles & Miller, 2009; Hollifield, 2000), and it is problematized as a security issue especially for the migrant receiving countries that feel required to guard their borders with tighter security measures against immigrants, turning it to a top priority (Huysmans, 1995). In the EU-Turkey context, as Straubhaar and Elitok (2012) argue, the 'gradual realization of the free flow of workers' from Turkey to Europe that was regarded as a significant and positive aspect of the 1963 Ankara Agreement, has been reframed in a negative context under changing circumstances over the years. Looking at the determinants of non-migration in Turkey, it can be questioned: is it the barriers to international migration that keep Turkey's population from migrating? Or, are people more willing to stay in Turkey due to the socio-economic improvements that generate better living conditions? The qualitative interviews of the EUMAGINE Project hint at the fact that the need to migrate to Europe for a better life is losing its appeal in Turkey as an aspired life project for majority of the young people. Thus, increased development may be a non-cause of migration. Thus, the findings here suggest that Turkey has now reached a new phase in development, which requires a new framework with less politicization of migration and more policy-making based on facts.

### Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

### Notes

1. United Nations Population Fund: <https://www.unfpa.org/pds/migration.html>
2. EUMAGINE Project: <http://www.eumagine.org>
3. World Bank: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/turkey/overview>
4. United Nations Development Programme: [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/14/hdr2013\\_en\\_complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/14/hdr2013_en_complete.pdf)
5. World Bank: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>
6. United Nations Development Programme: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/images/explanations/TUR.pdf>
7. United Nations Development Programme: <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/TUR.pdf>
8. SPO stands for the State Planning Organization, whose functions have passed on to the recently established Ministry of Development, the data are available at <http://www.mod.gov.tr/Pages/index.aspx>
9. Fatih Municipality: <http://www.fatih.bel.tr/>
10. Country Economy: <http://countryeconomy.com/hdi/turkey>
11. Country Economy: <http://countryeconomy.com/hdi/turkey>

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