

Routledge Global Cooperation Series

# REFUGEE GOVERNANCE, STATE AND POLITICS IN THE **MIDDLE EAST**

Zeynep Şahin Mencütek



# Refugee Governance, State and Politics in the Middle East

The movement of displaced people, migrants and refugees has become increasingly important around the world, leading to a need for increased scrutiny of global responses and policies towards migration. This book focuses on the Middle East, where many nations are part of this global phenomenon as both home, transit and/or host country.

Refugee Governance, State and Politics in the Middle East examines the patterns of legal, political and institutional responses to large-scale Syrian forced migration. It analyses the motivations behind neighbouring countries' policy responses, how their responses change over time and how they have an impact on regional and global cooperation. Looking in particular at Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, three of the world's top refugee hosting countries, this book explores how refugee governance differs across countries and why they diverge. To theorize variations, the book introduces multipattern and multi-stage refugee governance models as two complementary analytical frameworks. The book further argues that each of these three states' refugee responses is constructed based on three main factors: internal political interests, economic-development related concerns, and foreign policy objectives as well as interactions among them. The book's categorizations and models (on policy fields, actors, stages, patterns and driving forces) provide analytical tools to researchers for comparative analyses.

Scholars and students of Comparative Politics, International Relations, Refugee Studies, Global Governance and Middle Eastern Studies will find this book a useful contribution to their fields.

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Zeynep Şahin Mencütek







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## Contents

	List of illustrations	vii
	Acknowledgements	viii
	List of abbreviations	X
1	Introduction	1
	RT I	
Lit	erature, categorizations and models	21
2	The literature on state responses to mass migration in the	
	Global South	23
2		
3	Categorizations and models for comparative analysis of refugee migration governance	43
	refugee inigration governance	73
PA	RT II	
Γu	rkey	71
1	Patterns and stages of refugee governance in Turkey	73
7	ratterns and stages of refugee governance in Turkey	13
5	Understanding the shifts in refugee governance and refugee	
	politics of Turkey	101
	RT III banon	127
Le	valivii	121
6	Lebanon's responses to Syrian mass migration	129

vi	Contents	
7	Forces behind Lebanese governance patterns and refugee politics	165
	RT IV rdan	181
8	Jordanian national refugee governance and its responses to Syrian mass migration	183
9	Drivers of Jordanian refugee governance and refugee politics	214
PART V Comparison and conclusions		
10	Comparison of refugee governance in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan	243
11	Conclusion	267
	Index	276

## Illustrations

Figu	ires	
3.1 4.1	A multi-stage governance model Number of Syrians under temporary protection by year	54 74
Tab	les	
1.1	Basic statistics on Syrian refugees in Turkey, Lebanon and	
	Jordan	11
3.1	Actors involved in refugee governance	46
3.2	A multi-pattern refugee governance model	50
8.1	Major forced migration movements to Jordan	188
10.1	Multi-stage and multi-pattern governance in Turkey,	
	Lebanon and Jordan	245
10.2	Timeline of events in Syria, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan	
	from March 2011–July 2018 in relation to refugee	
	governance	246
10.3	Factors influencing the governance of Syrian mass	
	migration in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan	258

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## **Abbreviations**

AFAD The Disaster and Emergency Management Authority

(Turkey)

ASCs Asylum Seeking Certificate

DGMM Directorate General of Migration Management

(Turkey)

EU European Union
GoJ Government of Jordan
GoL Government of Lebanon
GoT Government of Turkey

GSO General Security Office (Jordan)

HCSP Host Community Support Platform (Jordan)

IAF Islamic Action Front (Jordan)
IDP Internally displaced person

IDs Identity document

INGOs International non-governmental organizations

IOsInternational OrganizationsIMFInternational Monetary FundISISIslamic State of Iraq and SyriaJAPJoint Action Plan (Turkey)

JDP Justice and Development Party (Turkey)

JRP Jordan Response Plan

JRPSC Jordan Response Platform for the Syria Crisis

LCRP Lebanon Crisis Response Plan

LFIP Law on Foreigners and International Protection

(Turkey)

MoE Ministry of Education
MoH Ministry of Health
MoI Ministry of Interior

MoPIC Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation

MoU Memorandum of Understanding
NGOs Non-governmental organizations
NRP National Resilience Plan (Jordan)
PKK Kurdistan Workers' Party (Turkey)

PLO Palestinian Liberation Organization PRS Palestinian refugees fleeing from Syria PYD Democratic Union Party (Syria)

The Refugee Convention of 1951 and its additional Refugee Convention

Protocol of 1967

RSD Refugee status determination

SEZ Special Development Zones (Jordan) Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (Jordan) SRAD SRCD Syrian Refugee Camp Directorate (Jordan) **TPR** Temporary Protection Regulation (Turkey)

UN United Nations

United Nations Development Programme UNDP **UNHCR** United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees United Nations Relief and Works Agency for UNRWA

Palestinian Refugees in the Near East

**UNSC** United Nations Security Council People's Protection Unit (Syria) YPG



## 1 Introduction

As global headlines have underscored in recent years, we have been in the middle of what many call a global migration crisis. Nearly one person is forcibly displaced every two seconds as a result of war or persecution, while the total number of displaced people is around 68.5 million (UNHCR 2018). States' responses to such forced displacement are not only an inherent part of international politics but they are also fundamentally defined by domestic politics and economic relations. One of the striking examples of forced displacement that turned into a crisis for many is the large-scale forced migration originating from Syria since 2011. At the end of 2017, when the Syrian cross-border mass forced migration turned into a protracted refugee situation, the number of registered Syrian refugees peaked at 5.5 million, according to the main global agency for refugee affairs, the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR).1 The UNHCR was able to submit the files of only 77,254 Syrians for resettlement to the third countries. The numbers of refugees departed from main host countries to the resettlement countries were recorded as 19,500 for Lebanon, 19,300 for Jordan and 15,600 for Turkey, in total making less than one per 1,000 refugees in these countries (UNHCR Resettlement 2017). In addition, there appears to be very little opportunity for mass voluntary return as long as the war in Syria in ongoing. It follows that the two durable solutions – namely, the voluntary return and resettlement to third countries - for which the international refugee regime generally advocates, do not hold for the Syrian cases. The majority of the internationally displaced Syrians are likely to remain in their first destination countries, mainly Syria's neighbouring countries, and only a limited number can be expected to make their way illegally to European countries by embarking on deadly journeys.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, a year before, in autumn 2016, the leaders of the major regional host countries – Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan – in which almost 5 million Syrian refugees reside, addressed the world community in the first United Nations (UN) Summit for Refugees and Migrants. The Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, noted that Turkey has been hosting nearly 3 million Syrian refugees. He expressed his disappointment and concern that the

international community had failed to live up to its 'humanitarian values and conscience'. At the same summit, the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Tammam Salam, underlined the 'burden' falling on the shoulders of his country, saying: 'Lebanon is neither able to carry this burden [more than 1 million Syrian refugees], nor does it accept for Syrians to remain out of their country.' He reiterated Lebanon's official stance regarding the country's absolute rejection of naturalization. For Jordanian King Abdullah II, despite the severe impacts of the crisis that were also being felt in Jordan, the commitment and sacrifice of Jordan should not be questioned. He argued that:

in the past five years the Syrian crisis has sent Jordan's burden skyrocketing. Today we are hosting 1.5 million Syrians, one for every five of our own citizens. Across my country, Jordanians are suffering. No one is justified in questioning our commitment and sacrifices.<sup>5</sup>

The leaders of all three countries agreed on the unbearable burden of hosting Syrian refugees. They implicitly or explicitly criticized the international community for not doing enough for the refugees, for imposing unacceptable demands like naturalization and for questioning host countries' actions, including the closure of the borders.

In mid-2011 and 2012, these three countries had welcomed Syrian refugees fleeing from the war in Syria by demonstrating a flexible and humanitarian approach that enables Syrians crossing to the borders of these countries, freedom of mobility within there, as well as access to some services (mainly health and education) and informal employment. All assumed that the crisis would end soon, and therefore there was no problem in providing temporary refuge to Syrians. However, these countries started to change their initial liberal approach towards a restrictive stance in relation with the Syrians' sheer numbers, the longevity of the crisis and the increased security concerns. The refugee governance patterns of Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan evolved from 2013 to 2018, both legally and institutionally. All three closed their borders in different years, preventing new arrivals from Syria. While Turkey and Jordan preferred self-settlement and the encampment of refugees, Lebanon avoided encampment. Their reception and protection policies also differed from each other. The fact that Lebanon and Jordan never signed the 1951 Refugee Convention and that Turkey had signed but has some reservations about the region of origin in granting refugee status has meant that none of these countries granted refugee status to Syrians. Also, in all three countries, institutional ambiguity emerged as to which state institutions would be required to deal with refugee affairs and to control the actions of humanitarian organizations. Turkey introduced its national refugee protection regime in 2014 to grant Syrians temporary protection status, while the central state dominated aid delivery and the provision of central services. Jordan took over all registration services from the UNHCR in 2015, but still externalized service protection to the international humanitarian organizations present. Lebanon also suspended the UNHCR's registration, but state attempts to regulate registration and to gain national leadership of aid delivery remained very limited compared to the other two states.

In the year of the aforementioned Summit, these countries had also been on the global agenda, particularly of the European Union (EU). Although they had been hosting Syrian refugees since 2011, their policies, specifically their flexible regulation of entries and exits of migrants, urged the EU to take action. The number of Syrian refugees, along with other irregular migrants who were arriving at EU borders and seeking asylum reached 1 million in total (both Syrian and non-Syrian migrants) in 2016 (EC Report 2016, 4). Moreover, some 2,964 people in 2015, 4,314 people in 2016, 3,111 in 2017 and 1,508 in 2018 (until 19 June) died while trying to cross the Mediterranean – mainly drowning at sea (Missing Migrants 2018). This situation is called a migration crisis. As a response, the EU issued a statement in early 2016, in collaboration with Turkey, aiming to control the crossings of Syrian refugees, who sought to reach European shores via Turkey's west coast. On the one hand, Turkey started to build a wall on its Syrian border, which had remained open for Syrian refugees in previous years. On the other hand, it granted work permits to Syrians and President Erdogan went as far as mentioning the possibility of granting citizenship to Syrians. In the same year, and against a background of prolonged inaction, Lebanon brought an end to its open-door policy and started to implement regulation attempts towards Syrian refugees on its territory. Lebanese policy makers reacted harshly when the UN's Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voiced the request that Syrians be granted citizenship in Lebanon. Jordan continued its restrictive border controls, but rather unforeseen, also granted working rights to Syrians as an outcome of its deal with the EU and the World Bank - the latter enabling the country to more readily gain access to funds and international markets.

Roughly summarizing the situation in this manner raises a significant question: how have Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon responded to the mass influx of Syrians from 2011 to 2018? Why have they adopted a particular refugee governance pattern and why does it change over time? Although the book acknowledges that national migration governance is context specific, its theoretical presumption is that common patterns may exist across time and space. An examination of refugee governance in three counties located in the same region, and subject to the same forced mass migration from a neighbouring country at war, enables us to identify these patterns, if indeed there are any. Adopting a comparative research design, such an analysis contributes towards answering three important questions of migration studies: what characterizes contemporary refugee governance, more particularly the governance of cross-border forced mass migration, in destination countries? To what extent and in what manner does refugee governance

#### 4 Introduction

show similarities and differences across destination countries, policy areas, policy patterns and over time? What are the internal and external drivers of policies?

These questions can be answered together by drawing empirical findings from cases and turning to the existing literature on immigration studies, refugee/forced migration studies and Middle East studies. The following section first seeks to address the existing lacunae so as to theoretically contextualize the book and to make explicit its theoretical contribution, before then reviewing relevant debates belonging to the respective scholarships in Chapter 2 of the book.

# Lacunae: understanding patterns, stages and forces of refugee governance in the Middle East through comparison

Massive flows of people who are fleeing political and economic breakdown, brought on by war or internal conflict, known as conflict-induced migration or refugee migration, have been an enduring and global issue throughout the twentieth century. Thus, they are neither a recent challenge for states nor are they limited to specific regions (Marrus 1990; Skran 1995; Betts 2009; Chatty 2010; Betts and Collier 2017). The topic of conflict-induced forced migration has been addressed by cross-disciplinary migration and forced migration/refugee studies scholarship. Particularly, scholars from the disciplines of anthropology and sociology have dominated the field, primarily being interested in conducting micro-level analysis. A wide range of other scholarly disciplines, ranging from economics to history, geography, urban planning, social policy, psychology and health, have equally made their contributions, bringing their own methodological and theoretical frameworks to the table in the study of the topic. Focusing on refugees, refugee groups and networks, they have provided crucial insights about reasons for, dynamics and consequences of refugee migration and have suggested solutions for the problems encountered by refugees.

The disciplines of international relations and political science have paid relatively limited attention to the topic – particularly until the late 1980s, when the refugee flows started to be considered a serious challenge to international peace and security as well as to state sovereignty. These two sister fields have since then primarily been interested in explaining state policies that address refugees as well as the development of the international refugee regime and its responses to refugee migration. They have pointed out considerations of domestic politics and national security, characteristics and shortcomings pertaining to the international refugee regime and to international humanitarian assistance. Although these discussions provide valuable insights in explaining the legal, political and institutional responses to refugees, responses to large-scale forced migration have received inadequate attention. Similarly, they have not yet revealed the commonalities and

differences in responses to mass refugee flows. This literature has elaborated on the dynamic character of the responses only to a limited extent and has failed to identify policy shifts, their motivation and timing. Although studies often acknowledge the relevance of political calculations in responding to massive refugee migration, the role of domestic political interests and international politics remains underexposed and undertheorized.

Another crucial gap in the literature is an understanding of the responses of the Global South<sup>6</sup> to refugee migration. Current research has primarily focused on the migration from south to north and, as a consequence, studies have primarily also been limited to an analysis of policies and politics in the Global North.<sup>7</sup> The empirical data proves that various patterns of migration, including mass refugee migration occur through and to the Global South. The majority of the world's displaced people live in the Global South, as the UNHCR figures demonstrate the distribution of these displaced people across regions: Africa (30 per cent), the Middle East and North Africa (26 per cent), Asia and Pacific (11 per cent) and the UNHCR's note that: '85 per cent of world's displaced people are in developing countries' (UNHCR 2018).8 An understanding of how refugee governance is shaped in the Global South is crucial to 'fully encapsulate all human movement across borders', 'to make our theory richer and more inclusive', and to have 'a greater knowledge of how different migration patterns are connected to one another' (Nawyn 2016, 165-166). It has not yet been fully theorized why, how and with what effect destination countries in the Global South develop policies or create governance patterns when responding to immigration in general, and to cross-border mass forced migration in particular. Are there similarities and differences to the Global North or do variations primarily exist among the countries of the Global South? If there are, then the question is how, why and to what extent?

Another gap in the literature is the lack of adequate attention being paid to the Middle East in migration studies. Thus, it is necessary to consult with literature on migration and displacement within Middle Eastern Studies in order to seek answers for state responses to mass refugee flows. Yet, many of the studies in this field focus on refugees or refugee communities and rarely emphasize state policies, their motivations and shifts over time. Although a growing body of research that is based on single case studies has addressed policies for Syrian refugees, comparative studies are still limited (except Coen 2015; Turner 2015; Deardorff Miller 2016; Chatty 2016). For example, Coen (2015) examines the governance structure of refugee protection in the case of Syrian displacement to understand how global structures of authority interact with national and local systems. By comparing the encampment policies of Jordan and Lebanon, Turner argues how a specific refugee policy of these countries on settlement serves specific labour market goals of host states. Both Deardorff Miller (2016) and Chatty (2016) focus on political and humanitarian responses to Syrian displacement in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.

The studies rarely provide causal explanations for state responses (except Turner 2015). They engage only limitedly with theoretical discussions. They are marked by only a limited focus on refugee policies and their impact on regional and global cooperation. Moreover, they treat policies as a single category without disaggregating according to sub-policies, namely, border control, reception/protection and integration. In sum, there have not yet been theoretically informed comparative studies centre-staging the modes and drivers of states' responses to mass refugee flows in the Middle Eastern context.<sup>9</sup>

To fill these gaps in the existing literature, the book first identifies the humanitarian and political responses of Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon to the protracted Syrian mass migration challenge from 2011 to 2018. I argue that their responses, within sub-policies, are marked by considerable variation and that these have changed over time. To reflect the complexity of policy-making and implementation in responses, the study uses the term governance, and particularly makes reference to the meta-governance framework, which will be defined in the subsequent section titled *Key concepts* and further elaborated in Chapter 3 that addresses the theoretical framework. Refugee governance is composed of at least three sub-policy domains: border controls, reception-protection and integration.

Therefore, to identify variations in refugee governance patterns and changes of receiving countries, I introduce two new terms: multi-pattern and multi-stage refugee governance. Multi-pattern governance refers to a process in which the first receiving countries of large numbers of refugees (regardless of whether they define forced migrants as refugees or not) adopt diverging sets of policies with the involvement of multiple actors. These policies fall into the sub-fields of fields of border controls, reception-protection and integration. The assemblage of these policies has followed three patterns: inaction, ad hoc and regulative. The fourth pattern, namely, the adoption of a preventive pattern, did not occur in any of these three countries. These patterns will be elaborated in Chapter 2 drawing from global examples. While the multi-pattern governance model is useful to identify policy variations across host countries in a given period, it is not enough to capture the temporal dimension that is critical for policy changes. Thus, I develop a complementary model called a multi-stage governance model to identify policy changes over time in a certain country. Multi-stage governance emphasizes the fact that the response pattern of a refugee receiving country is not stable and that it is most likely that a country will change its response partially or entirely in the course of time. For example, a response can move from inaction to regulative policies or from an ad hoc to a comprehensive response. To capture changes, it is useful to make a periodization, focusing on the initial emergency stage (crisis-like situation), a critical juncture/transition when existing policies started to change as well as on the protracted stage thereafter when refugees' stay became permanent. Multi-stage and multipattern governance models together allow us to capture policy variation and temporal dimension of the host country's response. Thus, it is possible to understand how governance modes differ from each other and how they change in the period of response. In the following paragraph, a very brief review of how the models together work is presented, while the detailed theoretical model will be presented in Chapter 3 and the comparative examination will be presented in Chapter 10.

In the initial stage, destination countries cope with mass arrivals of displaced people across the border in a similar manner to the way they deal with an emergency disaster situation. They either prevent arrivals of mass flows by closing borders (called refugee preventing response) or by accept them (pursuing inaction or ad hoc response patterns). After the first period - often lasting up to three years - wherein the situation is considered an emergency or a crisis, countries reach a critical juncture or saturation point. The critical juncture is where countries start to change their initial governance pattern and go through a transition. After the critical juncture, countries start to experience a protracted stage in which refugees are believed to be staying longer than expected in the initial stage. The direction of the transition from the policies in the initial stage to the protracted stage is not static. In some cases, in the protracted stage, they also initiate ad hoc policies even though they are regulative in the initial stage. Often it is the case that the protraction of refugees' stay, in other words the stabilization of the refugee crisis, requires the host states to institutionalize their policies by moving to the regulative stage, wherein policies may be either restrictive or comprehensive. Also, it might be the case that a hosting country takes a firm response, such as regulative, both in the initial and protracted stage of refugee governance. A host country can show mainly the characteristics of ad hoc policies, but it can also be regulative in certain policy fields such as reception. In some cases, the inaction pattern of the country might demonstrate some exception like regularizing an issue in a certain sub-field, such as the encampment policies as a part of reception.

The presence of multiple patterns and multiple stages raises a crucial follow up question: why does refugee governance show similarities and differences across destination countries, policy areas, policy patterns and over time? The book develops a factor typology, which contains three main explanations that are imperative in shaping the policies and politics of refugee governance in the host countries. First, the international politics of host countries is central. This has two dimensions: a) foreign policy objectives pertinent to the country of origin of refugees; and b) interactions with allies, donors, international organizations and humanitarian organizations. The second explanation entails domestic characteristics and developments pertaining to national security, stability and identity. The third explanation covers economy/development and related aspects. Absorption capacity and policy legacies/memories about refugees are defined by both the second and third explanation simultaneously. Although all three factor sets explain refugee governance in many

countries, the level of their impact falls along a spectrum ranging from low impact to medium and high impact.

Such a complexity pertaining to the forces driving refugee governance stems from the fact that: a) cross-border (forced) mass migration is considered a highly sensitive political, security and economic policy area, because of close bilateral ties between origin and receiving countries which locate in the same region; b) the crisis impacts on delicate domestic political balances and vulnerable economies in the receiving countries; and c) refugee governance is a transnational policy issue in which the interactions between the agencies of global refugee regime/donors and national governance processes play a role in shaping responses.

The book further argues that despite the plethora of actors involved in refugee governance, the states act as the main actor – particularly, because refugee governance touch on matters of sovereignty, security and public policy. Herein however, the state cannot be treated as a single homogenous entity that is fully autonomous and that cannot be analysed without taking its specific structure into account. A multi-pattern approach helps us to understand how the influence of each actor varies according to policy preferences. It also shows how interactions between national governments and these actors – particularly with humanitarian actors/donors – might in individual cases be detrimental for the content and direction of policies, depending on the political landscape in the host country. In sum, there is a need to illustrate the fragmentation of state interests, changes in interests over time, and states' decision-making processes by analysing agency and structure together.

## Key concepts

This book examines immigration policies, refugee governance and politics in connection with each other. Concerning immigration, the emphasis of the study is on forced migration, which is 'a migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes' (IOM 2018). The threats emerge in conditions ranging from violent conflict to severe economic hardship (Bartram et al. 2014, 69). More specifically, the study focuses on the case of conflict-induced cross-border mass forced migration, considering the magnitude of forcibly displaced Syrians who arrived in the three respective countries: 600,000 in Jordan, 1.1 million in Lebanon and 3.3 million in Turkey as of June 2018 (UNHCR 2018). None of the three countries granted legal refugee status to displaced Syrians who crossed their borders. Despite the lack of a legal reference, the term of refugee is used to name Syrians in these countries. Throughout this book, the term refugee is thus used in its broadest connotation to refer to 'individuals who have left their country in the belief that they cannot or should not return to it in the near future, although they might hope to do so if conditions permit'

(Thielemann 2006, 4). The study claims that the right term to identify what these countries encountered is conflict-induced cross-border mass migration (hereafter mass refugee migration or refugee flow/migration) that refers to the migration of forcibly displaced people crossing the national borders in large numbers and within a short period of time due to the war.<sup>10</sup> It is mass because a large number of people – almost more than 5 million – were crossing from Syria to these countries in search of asylum, in the course of a relatively short time-span (UNHCR 2016).

In this study, policies are analysed using the governance terminology, 11 more specifically with reference to the meta-governance<sup>12</sup> framework. Governance is a contested and vague concept with multiple meanings, 'whether as a mere description of world politics, as a theoretical perspective to explain it, or as a normative notion to be realised through global policy' (Hofferberth 2015, 598). It can be basically defined as 'global political/policy space fragmented into myriad issue-areas where actors are located at different administrative levels' (Tutumlu and Güngör 2016, 13). To describe such a complexity, as it pertains to the formulation and implementation of policies addressing a new policy area as well as the relations among actors and the shifts over time, the term governance appears most suitable for it enables one to capture the inherent flexibility. It serves as an umbrella term, providing useful analytical tools to capture multiple models or types of immigration policies and politics as well as to understand the role of agency, structure and their interdependencies. More specifically, the analytical tools of meta-governance are chosen in order to advance the discussion, for these enable one to recognize how complex policy issues, such as refugee issues, are formulated and implemented at the global, regional, national and subnational levels with the involvement of a wide range of actors (Kjaer 2004; Rhodes 1997; Scholten 2013). A meta-governance framework will be introduced in Chapter 3.

In this context, this study defines refugee governance as the amalgamation of a more or less formal set of policies, programmes and structures that states formulate and implement in cooperation and interaction with multiple actors in order to manage entry, reception/protection, integration and exit of cross-border forced migrants. The term of policy-shaping, instead of policy-making, is used to point out this interactional and co-constitutive process. To understand the shaping of policies, political dimension should also be taken into account. As Zolberg et al. note, 'implementation of refugee policy is unavoidably influenced by political considerations' (1989, 272). The politicization and mystification of issues related to refugees is particularly evident. Thus, I need to also define refugee politics. Here, I take it to mean the ways in which refugees are presented on the public sphere and how this presentation is institutionalized through language and symbols, in both international political and domestic public debates (Mulvey 2010).

### Case selection

Refugee governance across countries can ideally be understood through comparative research. As Bloemraad puts it: 'our ability to study migration is significantly enhanced by carefully conceived comparative research design that involves a decision over what to compare and how to compare. This decision becomes part and parcel of theory-building and theory evaluation' (2013, 27).

In this section, to answer the question of what can be compared, I will first explain the logic of case selection. This will be followed by an analysis of how it can be compared between the selected countries. The study aims to look at the current refugee policies – those of the last decade. From 2011 to 2018, according to the UNHCR, ten refugee emergencies and situations have occurred/are occurring across the globe. The UNHCR webpage lists them quite interestingly without differentiating origin and receiving country. While Central African Republic, Burundi, Europe (migrants and refugees illegally arriving there from Mediterranean Sea to Greece and Italy) are described as a refugee situation, others including Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Nigeria, South Sudan, Yemen, Syria and Rohingya (fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh) are called refugee emergencies (UNHCR Emergencies 2018). It is mainly the neighbouring countries of these cases where displaced people seek refuge. Thus, Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Chad and Uganda have been in every list of top refugee hosting countries from 2013 to 2018, hosting more than half of the world's refugees (UNHCR 2018).

As becomes evident with these figures, two regions seem particularly salient for refugee situations, namely, the Middle East and Africa. An examination of countries located in the same region, whereby these countries are subject to the same forced mass migration situation during the same time period, is advantageous for comparative analysis. This allows for some variables (refugee group, region, timescale) to be held constant, while focusing on some other variables.

The regional focus of this study is on the Middle East<sup>13</sup> as the region, if we count Turkey as being part of it, has hosted more refugees than any other region from 2015 to 2018, more than 30 per cent (UNHCR 2016; UNHCR 2018). The 2018 statistics of the UNHCR demonstrate that 55 per cent of world refugees come from three countries: Syria (5.5 million), Afghanistan (2.5 million) and Iraq (1.3 million) (UNHCR 2018). According to the UNHCR, among the at least 15 conflicts that broke out or restarted between 2011 and 2015,<sup>14</sup> the war in Syria became the largest driver of the forced internal and international displacement (UNHCR 2016). Although the Iraqi and Yemeni refugee situations are two other cases that took place in the Middle East, the scale of Syrian refugee migration made it more pertinent. In sum, these figures indicate that the Middle East, and the case of displacement from the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) in particular, are

central for efforts aimed at gaining a better understanding of refugee governance.

As the topical emphasis of this book is on the refugee governance in the host countries, it is also important to decide which countries may provide which insights. The majority of Syrians fleeing the civil war in their country are located in the neighbouring three countries: Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. More than 5 million internationally displaced Syrians found a temporary refuge in these countries, while 4.9 million of them are registered with UNHCR or respective state authorities.

As seen in Table 1.1, these countries together host around 93 per cent of all internationally displaced Syrians. The Syrian refugee movement makes evident that at present (as of mid-2018), Turkey has hosted the largest number of refugees worldwide, namely, 3.3 million people over the period of five consecutive years (2013–2018). Furthermore, the same movement made it clear that Lebanon has hosted the largest number of refugees relative to its national population – in this case, one in every six people being a refugee. Jordan (1 in 11) and Turkey (1 in 28) ranked second and third (UNHCR 2016). With these figures and the protraction of the refugee situation for more than seven years, it becomes clear that these three frontline countries are central for a better understanding of the main patterns of mass refugee governance in the Middle East.

The cases of Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan are each quite unique and yet, still highly similar to each other. The cases enable us to adopt the most similar research design. They are all upper middle-income countries with upward development trajectories holding close ranks in the Human Development Index (World Bank 2016; UNDP 2016). Considering their

	Numbers of registered Syrian refugees <sup>1</sup>	Country's population <sup>2</sup>	Ratio to total Syrian refugees (%) <sup>3</sup>	Ranking at the major refugee hosting country <sup>4</sup>
Turkey Lebanon Jordan	3,320,814 1,001,051 655,056	81,188,088 6,086,600 9,778,286	62 19 12	1 3 7
Total	4,976,921		93	

Table 1.1 Basic statistics on Syrian refugees in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan

Source: Information in Table 1.1. has been compiled from the following reliable data sources.

<sup>1</sup> The data on numbers of registered Syrian refugees is retrieved from Regional Strategic Overview (2018, 29) that reflects the figures of December 2017.

<sup>2</sup> The country's population estimates is retrieved from Worldometers' RTS algorithm, which processes data collected from the United Nations Population Division (Worldometers 2018).

<sup>3</sup> The ratios are calculated according to the numbers of registered Syrians and the total registered Syrian refugees in the region, which is 5,379,644 as of 1 December 2017, according to the Regional Strategic Overview (2018).

<sup>4</sup> The figures on rankings retrieved from 'Figures at a Glance' (UNHCR, 2018).

positions in the international system, Turkey is a middle-sized state, while Jordan and Lebanon are considered small states with respect to their size, population and military and economic power. The capacities of Jordan and Lebanon are more limited than that of Turkey. These two countries rely on the humanitarian aid of the international community to cover the expenses of refugees — like many other countries in the Global South that have encountered refugee movements in recent years. Still, all three are able to develop and implement independent policies as well as, to some extent, make respective shifts in their policies over time.

These three cases are suitable for examining the influence of a particular set of factors, namely, international politics, security/domestic politics and economy/development in mass migration governance. The countries are neighbouring states of Syria, marked by a history of close but strained bilateral relations. Although all had a short-lived rapprochement centred on economic relations with Syria in the 2000s, the outbreak of the armed conflict in the country in 2011 weakened the relations once again. Due to their geographical proximity, the war had a significant impact on all three countries – spilling over due to shared borders, intense ethnic, religious, sectarian, kinship, tribal and business ties among their population and, more generally, also due to disruptions in the regional trade and balance of power.

All three countries have been involved in the Syrian war since 2011, but to different degrees. The Syrian war began as a civil war but turned into a many-sided proxy war over the course of a few years. Accordingly, the stances of the neighbouring countries not only showed sharp turns but also came to have an increasing impact on the war. The manner in which the war unfolded did not allow them to fully detach themselves, and both Jordan and Lebanon got involved in the conflict but not to the same extent as Turkey. All three countries have faced severe challenges through the loss of border security, the infiltration of jihadist fighters (also Kurdish fighters in the case of Turkey) and bombings in border towns. Such challenges have salient and complex domestic components (Chatty 2016; Karon 2013). Not only national security, but also national regime security that is defined as the internal stability maintenance with the survival of ruler and supporting coalitions appear to be the main concerns for the Lebanese and Jordanian governments. Furthermore, improving the power of Iran, balancingblocking acts towards Iran, the growing power of non-state actors and involvement of non-regional powers as well as heavy militarization in the region have made all these three countries anxious about the regional power changes and their geostrategic positions. Overall, refugees fleeing from Syria have been approached as a highly politically sensitive issue during the Syrian crisis. Due to the high numbers of refugees, these countries have been required to respond to the mass migration challenge by devising policies in relevant domains.

## Methodology and data collection

The methodological approach used is that of a structured, focused comparison (George and Bennett 2005, 75). The book mainly concentrates on the policies and political dimensions of migration, partially on the economic and sociological dimension. Political claim analysis and interview analysis enable process-tracing in policies and the identification of the main political discourses on the topic. These analyses aim to ascertain the extent to which the responses of three countries are similar and different.

The case-oriented comparison between the three countries builds on multi-sited fieldwork. I obtain much of the data through online research and fieldwork. There are a number of excellent resources already available, which have focused on Syrian displacement, humanitarian work in the neighbouring countries, current issues in reception, protection and integration policies, and host communities' perceptions. The reports prepared by UN organizations, research institutions, universities, humanitarian-development organizations, media articles, blogs and policy briefs provide rich data for the descriptive parts of the book.

I examine the migration legislation of each country; by-laws and regulations that are specifically enacted for Syrian refugees, parliamentary proceedings and official declarations; reports, strategy papers and policy briefs published by several ministries and relevant directorates. The existing books and articles addressing issues about current and historical refugee situations in these countries are also studied. Hundreds of news reports (in Turkish, English and Arabic) about Syrian refugees have been made available through the national and international media, from 2012 to 2017. Media reports and daily news in particular reveal how Syrian refugee migration has been treated in the public domain and capture the responses of the main political actors. Lastly, extensive reading of ethnographies and surveys about refugees provides significant insights that are helpful for tracing relevant policies.

From April 2016 to August 2018, I conducted more than 80 semi-structured interviews mainly in four three provinces of Turkey, namely, Istanbul, Izmir, Şanlıurfa and Gaziantep. For participatory observation, I also visited a few camps, refugee settlements, schools, health clinics, community centres, art exhibitions and courses that are all organized by or serve Syrian refugees. In Lebanon and Jordan, I conducted around 30 interviews and a few focus group studies in main refugee hosting provinces such as Beirut, Amman and Irbid. In three countries, key informants included officers working for state migration agencies, those working for relevant ministries and municipalities as well as representatives of UN agencies, national and international humanitarian organizations, researchers, migration scholars, service providers to refugees (such as lawyers, social workers, doctors, teachers, security officers, camp workers, translators). In addition to face-to-face interviews, Skype and telephone were used as alternative or

complementary data collection tools for accessing key informants in Jordan and Lebanon (Iacono et al. 2016). Moreover, I conducted interviews with Syrian refugees and key individuals from host communities. All interviews were recorded after getting the permission of respondents. Interviews took from half an hour to three hours. All interviews were audiotaped or recorded with handwritten notes, transcribed, translated into English (from Turkish or Arabic), coded and analysed thematically, based on the objectives of the study. As the interviews were conducted in confidentiality and the names of interviewees have been withheld by mutual agreement, when they are cited in the relevant chapters.

A restrictive research environment existed in all three countries, whereby particular difficulties were experienced in tracing policy-making processes. I was able to access the open sources and gained insights through what was said to me during interviews with key informants. My access to perspectives of national and international NGOs was easier and better than to government agencies and UN agencies, particularly because of growing suspicions on the part of the latter when it came to researchers studying policy domains. Despite hearing some anecdotal notes, being allowed to learn fully what was discussed in the official policy circles on specific issues such as border closures or granting a particular right was not always possible. The UNHCR and international humanitarian organizations were very reluctant to give information about these discussions even in personal meetings, due to the high level of privacy and the overall security dimension dominating research in these countries.

The collected data allows for explanatory, descriptive and causal analyses of governance patterns pertaining to mass refugee flows in the receiving countries (the dependent variable). The legal and policy analyses are used to provide a better understanding of each target country's policies and to describe the respective characteristics and their consequences in the empirical chapters. To make an analysis about why the identified characteristics occurred and why they changed over time, the relevance of proposed drivers (interdependent variables) are studied in each chapter. These drivers are examined by conducting the process-tracing of each policy, political claim analysis and interview analyses. The findings in this book, namely, Part II on Turkey, Part III on Lebanon and Part IV on Jordan, provide insights about similarities and differences, regarding policies and politics.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy to mention the challenges and obstacles about knowledge production faced by scholars of the region who are focusing on refugee issues in the Middle East, as I have also encountered them – for these create serious limitations for this kind of comparative research. The field of refugee studies and state policies are considered very sensitive issues, making it difficult for researchers to gain access to first-hand data. Where data is successfully collected, challenges again arise in the process of writing, as the content of particular publications may be considered a 'national security issue' – the definition of the latter being very broad and

arbitrary for nation states in the region. Many researchers adopt a self-censoring perspective to escape surveillance and being labelled as foreign spy. Also, with a shortage of funding, it is almost impossible for researchers in these countries to receive institutional support for carrying out long-term research that targets more than one country if there is no external funding being provided, such as from the EU. In cases where external funding has been granted, the funder's image – as it is a foreigner funder – may raise further suspicions about the researcher. Travel bans or the closure of national institutions, such as universities, that provide funding for field research are not exceptional situations. In response to the challenges, several resistance and coping strategies have been adopted.

## Mapping of the book

The governance of the large-scale refugee migration by the host countries is the central focus of this book. Part I – Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 – engages the literature, models and categorizations, which provide a theoretical framework for the study. Chapter 2 overviews the literature on immigration, refugee/forced migration and the Middle East with an eye to insights relevant to state responses to mass migration in the Global South - a phenomenon that has previously not been theoretically and comparatively addressed. This chapter highlights the issues pertinent to paradoxes of global refugee regime; dilemmas between international protection and state sovereignty; discussions on the current state of international cooperation; differences and similarities between refugee governance in Global South and Global North; and lastly, the Middle East region in the comparative migration literature. Chapter 3 proposes categorizations and models for comparative analysis of refugee migration governance, based on examples globally. It first categorizes policy fields and actors of refugee governance, and then it introduces meta-governance theory to analyse fields and actors in a unified manner and also focuses on changes. This chapter then proceeds to propose two original independent (but complementary) models: a multi-pattern and multi-stage model, a central contribution of this work. The multi-pattern model theorizes variations within and across the national refugee governance(s), while the multi-stage model theorizes temporal changes within national refugee governance. Two models are explained by drawing examples mainly from governance in the countries hosting large number of refugees. Chapter 3 also proposes an explanatory typology of the drivers of refugee governance in a new section. Such a typology is absolutely essential given the fact that factors shaping refugee governance are complex and manifold. The section examines international politics, national security/politics and economy-development explanation, based on examples across the world.

Part II of the book – Chapters 4 and 5 – focuses on the case of Turkey. Chapter 4 describes refugee policies addressing Syrian refugees in Turkey by

adopting the introduced multi-stage and multi-pattern governance model. Chapter 5 examines the drivers of Turkey's refugee governance as well as the respective changes. The chapter focuses on refugee politics and drivers of governance simultaneously and highlights their interconnectedness.

Part III of the book – Chapters 6 and 7 – examines the case of Lebanon. Chapter 6 identifies Lebanon's policy responses to the Syrian mass refugee migration, the changes over time and the consequences of these changes on the lives of refugees. The chapter shows how the Lebanese case can be systematically explained by multi-pattern and multi-stage governance models. Chapter 7 delves into factors which shape initial policy actions and shifts over the course time.

Part IV – Chapters 8 and 9 – focuses on Jordan's refugee policies and politics. Chapter 8 explores Jordan's responses to mass refugee migration from Syria. Chapter 9 traces the driving forces behind Jordan's refugee governance. The chapter focuses on several issues including Jordan's relations with Syria in the pre-crisis period and the stance of Jordan during the Syrian war, the reasons behind Jordan's initial policies, and the critical junctures and shifts over time; Jordan's relations with humanitarian actors; and framing in international negotiations.

Following the analysis of these cases in detail, the subsequent Chapter 10 provides a comparison of refugee governance in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. It builds links between the models and categorizations developed in Chapter 3 and the empirical data presented in the case study chapters from Chapters 4 to 9. It tests the validity of the multi-pattern and multi-stage governance model. It also compares the drivers of policies with an emphasis on identification and analysis of the weight of each factor. It examines counterclaims as well as issues for future research.

The Conclusion, Chapter 11, summarizes the main findings about state responses to mass migration and its implications to the international refugee regime. It shows how the proposed models – multi-pattern and multi-stage refugee governance – have contributed to a more nuanced theorization of refugee policy-making. The Conclusion argues that large-scale and protracted Syrian displacement, like many others, shows that mounting problems about refugee affairs and the ongoing crisis cannot be addressed without sustainable local, national, intergovernmental, regional and global cooperation. Thus, it outlines principles for global cooperation and policy recommendations.

#### Notes

1 See UNHCR 2018. A general note on refugee statistics: statistics about the number of refugees in each country are largely retrieved from the UNHCR and the official data sources of the respective governments. If the exact data is not available in these sources, then data presented in mass media and in reports of non-governmental organizations was consulted. The book acknowledges the fact that considering the mobility of refugees, it is almost impossible for the UNHCR and governments to acquire exact numbers on refugees. Also, the issue of

refugee numbers is a politically loaded issue. Population numbers throughout the book are intended to give the reader as accurate a range of estimates as possible. Also, if the numbers are very controversial, as in the case of Jordan, a discussion is provided to give further insights about their plausibility.

- 2 See UNHCR 2016.
- 3 See Refugees and Migrants 2016.
- 4 See Asswsat 2016.
- 5 See Jordan Embassy 2016.
- 6 Although it is not fully clear who is part of the Global South and who is not, in most cases the United States, Canada and European countries are considered to constitute the Global North, while the remaining countries are considered to belong to the Global South. The Global South basically refers to countries which are located south of the 30th northern parallel. In order to group together a large variety of countries and regions into one category (mainly referring to wealth differences and development), historically several terms have been used in academic and policy circles. These include the third world, developing world, non-developed, poor, non-industrialized and non-Western world. Almost all of them are products of global socio-economic and political structures, and as a consequence, many became unfashionable over time. The Global South and the Global North represent an updated perspective on the post-1991 world. They have been contested terms due to the political weight that they carry and the consequences that follow. Compared to its predecessors, the concept of Global South denotes less hierarchical and more equal relations, offering more flexibility, although also entailing a certain degree of ambivalence. There is no general agreement about various aspects of the term, including its meanings and shifts over time. The UNDP also widely uses the term of Global South, referring to countries which have a high Human Development Index (most of which are located north of the 30th northern parallel). Countries like Turkey have also adopted the terminology of Global South in their official policies.
- 7 This is the case not only a bulk of scholarly books and articles, but also large datasets on migration governance often cover countries of the Global North. Examples include Migration Governance Index (MGI), Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), Commitment to Development Index, The Immigration Policies in Comparison (IMPIC) project, International Migration Policy and Law Analysis (IMPALA) Database, and Determinants of International Migration (DEMIG) database.
- 8 The UNHCR takes two other regions: Europe and Americas. However, it counts Turkey as being a part of Europe, and Latin America as being a part of the Americas. Both Turkey and the countries of Latin America are, in other contexts, often referred to as being part of the Global South. Thus, when the number of displaced people in these locations is added to the aforementioned figure (Turkey hosts 3.3 million), then the statistics suggest that the Global South hosts more than 80 per cent of the current displaced population worldwide.
- 9 There are recently published theoretically informed comparative articles examining some other Middle Eastern countries comparatively such as Norman (2018) which focuses on the policies of Turkey, Morocco and Egypt.
- 10 There is no agreed upon definition concerning what constitutes mass influx/ migration. The factors raised in the process of defining this term include: the number of the displaced people; the time-span of crossing the border; the capacity of the destination state to respond to the needs of the influx; the emergency aspect; and the expected time it will take for the situation that is driving migration to be resolved. The UNHCR states that: 'what amounts to large-scale or mass influx will necessarily differ from country to country and/or region to region, and must be decided on a case-by-case basis' (UNHCR 2001).

- 11 Another alternative terminology which could be used in this study is regime terminology which has become rather popular in migration studies during the last decade. However, the four different strands of regime theory do not meet the needs of theory building attempted in this study. The four strands are:
  - (i) notions of regimes are used to refer to international regulatory frameworks, in the field of international relations (ii) conceptualizations informed by welfare regime theories in the field of social policy, (iii) regime notions that stem from the French regulation school, and (iv) regime theories inspired by governmentality studies.

(Horvath et al. 2017, 301)

Usually, the concept of regime is used to refer to national models or types of immigration and international control. Neither these strands nor this common regime concept is adequate to capture the policy complexity of the cases under question in this book. On the other hand, the terminology of governance provides more useful analytical tools to capture multiple models or types of immigration policies and politics by going beyond the issues pertinent to control. Also, the meta-governance framework enables one to acknowledge the imperative command of states in migration affairs while also considering the involvement and the power of other actors playing at the sub-state, international level.

- 12 I am grateful to Soner Barthoma who directed my attention to meta-governance theory and discussed the adoptability of it with me in the context of my research.
- 13 The UNHCR Global Trend 2016 report takes the Middle East and North Africa together as a single region category, while it locates Turkey under Europe region. I have aggregated the numbers in Turkey with the numbers in the Middle East and North Africa (UNHCR 2016, 14).
- 14 The pool of refugee crisis contains eight in Africa (Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, north-eastern Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Burundi); three in the Middle East (Syria, Iraq and Yemen); one in Europe (Ukraine) and three in Asia (Kyrgyzstan, and in several areas of Myanmar and Pakistan).

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### Introduction

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#### Conclusion

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