

Re-spatialising migration governance: From ‘multi-level’ to ‘entangled’

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Funding information

European Commission

Abstract

Policy actors engaged in migration governance operate in complex environments characterised by spatial entanglements that bring together different levels and jurisdictions. While “levels-of-analysis” and multi-level governance (MLG) frameworks capture some of this complexity, they undertheorise the extent to which migration and mobility are both causes and consequences of other forms of spatial entanglement. This article sets forth an “entangled” approach to migration governance and applies it to the Turkish case. It discusses how historical legacies and regional ties produce enduring cross-border connections, examining diaspora engagement policies; migration diplomacy; and conflict and security in Turkey through the lens of entangled migration governance.

INTRODUCTION

Migration is inherently a trans-spatial phenomenon that connects different geographical contexts via human mobility. Yet the political institutions that manage migration are often highly spatialised, operating within particular geographical and territorial jurisdictions – whether local, national or regional. The inherent spatial complexity of migration governance is increasingly being recognised via models that examine the multiple actors, venues and levels in which migration policy-making takes place (Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019; Triandafyllidou, 2022a, 2022b). Contemporary migration policy-making goes far beyond questions that have traditionally dominated the migration policy-making literature – such as state border control, citizenship policy and migrant or refugee integration – but increasingly extends to include the management of policy complexities that emerge from the ways in which cross-border mobility connects different political spaces and jurisdictions (Hooghe & Marks, 2003).

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Contemporary examples of migration management that involve complex forms of spatial entanglements include: state-led diaspora engagement policies that affect populations living in the jurisdiction of other states (e.g. Abramson, 2023; Gamlen, 2019; Ragazzi, 2014); forms of migration diplomacy such as the trans-state externalisation of migration controls (e.g. Adamson & Tsourapas, 2019; Lavenex, 2006); and the impacts of transnational migration networks on regional and cross-border conflicts (Gleditsch & Salehyan, 2006). Yet, whereas multi-level governance (MLG) approaches can identify how migration policies take place at different scales and are shaped by a range of actors and interests, they are often insufficient for understanding the full range of linkages, dependencies and blow-back effects that emerge from trans-local forms of migratory entanglement.¹

The case of Turkey is particularly illustrative of this dynamic, as it involves all of the above-mentioned forms of spatial entanglements. Turkey's location at the intersection of multiple regions and migration routes makes it a key player in regional migration governance but also subjects it to numerous forms of geo-political entanglements. Turkey is connected to Europe via historical migration patterns and interests in "diasporic" populations abroad, as well as being deeply entangled with neighbouring countries, both as a result of its historical relationships, but also via complex transnational networks, trade patterns and conflict configurations. Some of the most significant migration management issues that Turkey has faced in the past years – such as the hosting of more than 3 million Syrian refugees who fled the civil war in neighbouring Syria, or its negotiations with the European Union on issues of border control and migration management – are illustrative of the extent to which cross-border mobility issues are trans-locally "entangled" in ways that stretch across multiple political jurisdictions and are entwined with multiple other concerns and dynamics linked to Turkey's history, geographic location, domestic politics, security concerns and foreign relations.

All states arguably have to manage dynamics of spatial entanglement that arise in relationship to migration, yet the form and extent of entanglements will vary according to any state's history, positionality vis-à-vis broader migration systems and its geopolitics (Adamson & Tsourapas, 2019, 2020; Mencütek, 2019, 31ff). In this regard, the entanglements that Turkey faces with regard to migration are particularly pronounced, and provide an illustrative case for analysis from which broader lessons can be drawn. Existing migration scholarship on Turkey abounds with examples of entangled migration dynamics but, with few exceptions (e.g. Gökarişel & Secor, 2020), has not proposed an overarching conceptual framework that aggregates and accounts for these dynamics and linkages. Moreover, due to the different policy fields and agencies related to immigration; emigration and diaspora engagement; refugee hosting; and foreign policy and security; the connections *across* various policy areas are not always clearly drawn out in the existing literature, which often mirrors existing policy silos.²

This article makes a case for a more comprehensive framework, by examining some of these complex dynamics and arguing for the utility of moving from a "multi-level" to an "entangled" approach to analysing migration governance. Such an approach highlights the spatial complexity that accompanies migration-related processes. Building on recent work on entanglement in international relations (e.g. Adamson & Greenhill, 2021), it suggests the need to explicitly theorise migration governance as the management of complex and enduring cross-border and trans-local policy entanglements.

This argument is made in the following manner: the first section of the article defines and makes the case for an "entangled" approach to migration governance, including the potential it brings for researchers and policymakers to incorporate a broader range of factors, such as the influence of enduring historical legacies and geographical ties, into migration governance frameworks. The second section provides examples of three broad areas of complex and spatially entangled policy-making in Turkey: the relationship between migration, security and conflict; diaspora engagement policies; and migration diplomacy. The article concludes by summarising the argument and drawing out its implications.

FROM 'MULTI-LEVEL' TO 'ENTANGLED' MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

There is a growing recognition of the complexity of migration governance and the multiple actors, levels and players that shape the dynamics of migration management. In the field of European Public Policy, for example, migration

management is increasingly viewed as a problem of multi-level governance (MLG) which takes place at local, national and regional levels, involving multiple policy actors at these different scales (Caponio & Jones-Correa, 2018; Scholten & Penninx, 2016; Zincone & Caponio, 2006). While states may set national migration policies, these policies are often shaped by regional-level EU processes and directives, and implemented or interpreted at federal and local levels, in conjunction with a variety of local actors ranging from civil society organisations to networked cities. Moreover, national policy-making is shaped and constrained by numerous factors above and beyond the state, including regional dynamics and systemic level factors, such as where the state sits in the international system; as well as the extent to which it is a migration-sending, receiving or transit state (Adamson, 2006; Adamson & Tsourapas, 2019; Lavenex, 2016).

Within this context, international relations (IR) theories and methods can be helpful in providing analytical leverage in understanding some of the geopolitical dynamics of migration governance, but often fall short (Mencütek, 2019, p. 4). Traditional “levels-of-analysis” frameworks used in IR can provide a starting point for analysing the relationship between international-systemic level factors (such as linkages between migration, security, aid and foreign policy alliances); domestic political factors (such as bureaucratic politics, political parties, domestic interests, electoral politics and public opinion) and individual level factors (such as the preferences and viewpoints of particular leaders and policymakers).³

However, levels-of-analysis approaches rely on a particular conceptualisation of spatial relations that are nested, and which do not capture the deep forms of interconnectivity that cut across and connect multiple scales (see, e.g. MacKinnon, 2010). They can miss many of the cross-cutting aspects and spatial complexities of migration governance, such as the ways in which migration and mobility dynamics create enduring historical interdependencies and connections that cross state borders. For example, drawing on work in feminist political geography, Gökariksel and Secor (2020) have shown that “presumptive spatial and scalar relations of power” are called into question when one examines the affective dimensions of individual-level encounters with migrants. In individual encounters, larger geopolitical imaginaries often become “embodied.” Yet, such spatial entanglements and dynamics also extend to spheres beyond the level of the individual body, into broader forms and instances of politics and policy-making: migrants to one state may retain transnational links and ties with actors and networks in their state of origin, thus contributing to the emergence of transnational social fields (Lubbers et al., 2020); state interests in migration are often bound up with other economic, political and foreign policy preferences and interests (Adamson & Greenhill, 2023; Greenhill, 2010; Tsourapas, 2017, 2019); and migration flows can be both cause and consequence of regional or international events that have repercussions that transcend domestic-international divides (Adamson & Greenhill, 2022).

In other words, the dynamics that policymakers confront with regard to migration governance extend beyond the management of migration itself. Migration is not just a discrete policy issue that can be managed at multiple levels, it is also a social process that connects different political spaces and policy areas with each other. Enduring transnational ties, social media links, return and circular migration, and diaspora politics all challenge the notion that migration management is simply limited to managing entry, settlement and integration within a given territory. Migration management also involves managing the geopolitical complexities that come with such forms of entanglement, such as the new forms of linkages across domestic and international policy areas; changes in policy actors' interests and bargaining leverage across issue areas; and the transnationalisation and diffusion of domestic political dynamics and conflicts across international borders (Adamson, 2006; Thiollet, 2011; Tsourapas, 2018).

Complex migratory dynamics are often embedded in or interact with enduring historical legacies. In other words, in addition to being *spatially* entangled, the dynamics produced by (or that produce) cross-border migration are also frequently *historically* entangled in that they are affected by enduring connectivities that pre-date contemporary state borders and national migration regimes. The emergence of migration as a central area of contemporary state policy needs to be understood in its broader historical context of state formation and consolidation (Adamson, 2020a; Hollifield, 2004; Klotz, 2013; Torpey, 2000; Vigneswaran, 2013; Vigneswaran & Quirk, 2015). For example, in Europe, colonial and imperial histories have had a profound impact on the development of contemporary migration governance regimes and have shaped migration flows between Europe and the rest of the world (Buettner, 2016; Mayblin & Turner, 2020; Sadiq & Tsourapas, 2021).

The impact of imperial legacies also holds for Turkey, which can be considered as a post-imperial migration state (Adamson, 2022; Adamson & Tsourapas, 2022; Hollifield & Foley, 2022). In the case of Turkey, there are long histories of mobility, shared identities and networks in the region that precede the emergence of modern nation-states. Just as contemporary European migration regimes and patterns cannot be understood without reference to earlier colonial histories and legacies, contemporary governance in Turkey has been shaped and influenced in part by the historical legacies of its predecessor state, the Ottoman Empire, which significantly transcended the geographic space of contemporary Turkey, stretching from the area of modern Algeria in the West, to Hungary, the Balkans and the Black Sea region in the North, to contemporary Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq in the South and East at the height of its power. Modern state borders between Turkey and Syria or Turkey and Iraq, for example, exist side-by-side with long-standing translocal networks, activities and identities that precede the emergence of modern states, such as transborder Kurdish networks, which in some cases continue to resist and contest dominant nation-building projects in the region.

Altogether, Turkey shares land borders with eight countries and is linked to and part of migration systems in Europe, the Mediterranean and the broader Middle East as well as the Caucasus and former Soviet Union. Its geographical location is significant for understanding the entangled nature of the migration dynamics it faces. Simultaneously a country of immigration, emigration and transit migration, Turkey has “sent” both high-skilled and low-skilled workers to Europe, the Middle East and elsewhere. It receives low-skilled workers from neighbouring countries, especially those in the Balkans, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. And it is a major transit state for migrants from countries further afield, such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iran, who are trying to get to Europe (İçduygu & Yürkseker, 2012).

All states must to some extent contend with dynamics of social and political entanglement, but Turkey's migration management challenges are particularly illustrative of these dynamics. With its history as a post-imperial and labour-sending state on the border of Europe, in a neighbourhood that has been marked by multiple violent conflicts over the past decades, Turkey presents a critical and information-rich case for examining how migration networks and relations create enduring spatial entanglements (Patton, 2014). These dynamics have been recognised and explored in the large body of literature on migration governance in Turkey, which has examined the role of migration governance in nation- and state-building (e.g. İçduygu & Aksel, 2021) and the ways in which Turkey's migration governance is linked with its security, diaspora and foreign policy concerns. Yet, the insights gained from examining the spatial and political complexities of Turkey's migration governance can also be more explicitly theorised as forms of spatial entanglements that point to the possibility of a more general framework or orientation for understanding migration governance. Thus, in highlighting the “entangled” aspects of Turkey's migration context, this article aims to stimulate further thinking about the spatial complexities and linkages that define migration management, and to contribute to a broader literature seeking to theorise the structural and policy challenges to nation-states that are illuminated via a focus on the complexities of migration governance.

In the following sections, I illustrate this by briefly identifying three forms of cross-border entanglements in the case of Turkey: (1) the trans-border nature of conflict dynamics in the Syrian refugee, asylum and protection ‘crisis’ (2) the historical effects of earlier labour emigration policies and their resulting “diaspora” populations in Europe and (3) migration control externalisation policies and the dynamics of EU-Turkey ‘migration diplomacy.’ Each of these areas creates complex cross-state spatial and societal entanglements that transcend an MLG “levels-of-analysis” approach based on concentric, nested scales of governance corresponding to particular policy areas or jurisdictions.

ENTANGLED CONFLICT AND SECURITY DYNAMICS

Turkey has a complex geopolitical position and identity as a NATO member, EU-candidate state and, as of October 2022, is host to the largest refugee population in the world.⁴ As in the case of the Ukraine war, the refugee flows which have affected Turkey have been products of broader geopolitical conflicts in the region. Refugee flows

from Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria can all be viewed to some extent as “externalities” and blowback effects of great power politics in the region (Adamson & Greenhill, 2022). Moreover, the Syrian conflict emerged from a context in which the two countries' security interests were already linked via historical conflicts over water politics, energy and the long-standing regional dimensions of Kurdish politics. Thus, when the conflict in Syria led to a massive outflow of refugees and displaced persons beginning in 2011, the situation Turkey faced was not simply a cross-border migration management issue but was also closely entangled with its (and other actors') broader security interests (Müftüler-Baç, 2022).

One of these factors was Turkey's own domestic security situation, including its long-standing conflict with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Kurdish populations are spread out across several states, inhabiting areas of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. There are strong and enduring cross-border links in the region, stemming from the Ottoman era and including family and other ties that transcend state borders. The PKK, a militant political organisation and armed rebel group, has always operated across national borders: in the 1980s and 1990s the leadership of the PKK was based in Damascus; operated training camps in Lebanon; and had mountain bases in parts of Iraqi Kurdistan. The liberalisation of visa policies in the 2000s, which facilitated free movement between Syria and Turkey, combined with the building of new trans-local structures in the Kurdish population, strengthened ties across the borders of Turkey, Syria and the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) a region which obtained increasing autonomy following the 2003–11 Iraq war (Güneş, 2013; Saeed, 2017; White, 2000).

In Syria, Kurdish groups closely affiliated with the PKK became involved in the Syrian civil war, especially in the fight against the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and also established an autonomous quasi-state in the region (Dal, 2017). In Kurdish-dominated areas of Southeastern Turkey, there was also concern that the influx of Syrian Arabs was linked to government policies designed to change the ethnic balance in the region, thus undercutting bids for increased Kurdish regional autonomy (Dogus, 2017). Moreover, the conflict between Kurdish groups and ISIL in Syria was viewed as having the potential to spill over into Turkey, which had a history of Islamist-Kurdish conflict in the Southeast (Kurt, 2017). Syrian Kurdish groups and ISIL both sought recruits from Turkey, raising the spectre of domestic religious radicalisation. At the same time, Turkey hosted the main Syrian opposition groups, which created an additional element of “security entanglement” with the Syrian conflict (Dal, 2017; Donelli, 2018; Kirişçi, 2014).

In addition to Turkey becoming an active participant in the Syrian conflict, Turkey faced contradictory pressures with respect to the management of the Turkish-Syrian border. On the one hand, the Turkish state had an interest in limiting the cross-border mobility of both Kurdish and Islamist fighters in the region. Southeastern Turkey became a gateway for foreign fighters entering the conflict in Syria – both for Islamist fighters supporting the Islamic State and anti-Islamist fighters fighting on the side of Kurdish groups. In addition, the spillover of the Syrian conflict included the spread of ISIL activities in Turkey. Between 2013–16 Turkey suffered numerous suicide bombings and terror attacks across the country, many of which were attributed to ISIL-linked groups. During this time there were contradictory pressures coming from the international community with respect to the Turkish-Syrian border. Keeping the border open potentially facilitated the activities of the Islamic State and other armed groups in the region, allowing for ISIL to bring in new recruits and supplies, sell oil and other commodities, and to receive medical treatment and other assistance in the border regions of Turkey. Yet closing the border prevented refugees fleeing the conflict from crossing into Turkey. In a sense, the Turkish-Syrian border was an extreme example of the dilemmas faced by states in how to simultaneously facilitate the flows of some border-crossers while limiting the access of others (c.f. Andreas, 2003).

Turkey joined the global trend of trying to manage its border issues by building walls. In 2017 Turkey completed a 700-km wall along most of its 900-km border with Syria at a cost of 400 million US dollars. A further wall on the Iranian border was started in August 2017 as part of a new Integrated Border Security System. The wall is designed to deter smugglers and disrupt cross-border operations by Kurdish militants, but also has the effect of separating local villages and families, disrupting long-standing trading routes and making circular and seasonal migration more difficult (Akinci, 2017).

A strong geopolitical logic also shapes Turkish policies of repatriating Syrian refugees, which has included the construction of a buffer zone on the Turkish-Syrian border – which also serves Turkey's military and security interests

in preventing Kurdish groups affiliated with the PKK from establishing dominance and gaining direct access to the Mediterranean (Mencütek, 2021, 2022). The overall result is a securitisation of refugee returns in ways that potentially endanger both refugees targeted for return, as well as populations on the ground in northern Syria subject to forced displacement by Turkish operations (Içduygu & Nimer, 2020).

DIASPORIC ENTANGLEMENTS

A Global North bias in migration studies has meant that migration governance is often assumed to focus on the governance of *immigration*. Yet, for states such as Turkey, the governance of *emigration* has been as significant an aspect of migration governance as regulating immigration (Adamson & Tsourapas, 2020). Labour migration patterns between Turkey and Europe have led to the formation of diaspora populations and diasporic entanglements between the Turkish state and Turkish citizens (and their descendants) who reside outside the borders of Turkey. These diasporic connections have come to the fore as factors in Turkey's bilateral relations with European states – and have also been instrumentalised as a means of pursuing its foreign policy interests.

Starting from the 1960s and 1970s, Turkey encouraged the export of labour as part of its overall economic development strategy, sending migrant workers to Germany and other states in Western Europe in the 1960s as part of a managed labour recruitment and “guestworker” policy (Kirişçi, 2007; Martin, 1991). Turkey signed a bilateral labour agreement with Germany in 1961, thus making organised labour migration an aspect of its foreign relations. Similar agreements were signed with Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands (1964) followed by agreements with France (1965), and Australia and Sweden (1967) (Akgündüz, 1993, 155). These arrangements were a common feature of labour migration during the period – in addition to Turkey, European countries such as Greece, Spain, Portugal and Italy sent labour migrants to Germany and other European countries, just as former colonies such as Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco; and India, Pakistan and Bangladesh during this same period were sources of labour migration to France and Britain respectively. Labour remittances came to play a significant role in Turkey's economy. Between 1973 and 1975, for example, official labour remittances equalled between 93.7 and 99.8% of exports in Turkey (Richards & Waterbury, 1990, 390–91).

Along with subsequent migration of high-skilled workers, political exiles and others, this period of labour migration produced a considerable population of Turkish (and Kurdish) origin people in Europe (approx. 5 million) which, in line with global trends, are increasingly seen by the Turkish state as a diaspora to be engaged with (Adamson, 2019; Délano & Gamlen, 2014; Gamlen, 2014; Kaya, 2011; Ragazzi, 2014; Varadarajan, 2010). From the onset, Turkey treated emigrants to Germany and elsewhere in Europe as temporary labour migrants who would remain citizens of Turkey and eventually return. During this period Turkey was involved in the governance and management of its citizens abroad via the provision of state religious, educational and consular services in Europe (Baser, 2015; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003). Turkey's policies towards its citizens abroad resembled the type of governance mechanisms that have been used in Europe by other emigration states such as those of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco in France (Brand, 2006).

In 2010, a formal Office for the Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) was established in Turkey. The YTB is completely separate from the Presidency of Migration Management (DGMM) office that was founded in 2013 to manage immigration, asylum and refugee issues. The office combined elements of earlier policies that had been aimed at Turkish citizens abroad in Europe as well as Turkic “ethnic kin” in the Balkans or Former Soviet Union (Öktem, 2014, 13–16). Part of the government's diaspora strategy has included leveraging the diaspora as a means of increasing Turkey's presence and influence in Europe (Aksel, 2014, 205). Turkey has turned to “its” diaspora as a source of soft power – at the same time as it has been drawing on its imperial past and its identity as a majority Muslim country as a means of projecting a more expansive national identity both at home and abroad (Adamson, 2019; Mügge, 2012). This use of Islamic identity as a form of soft power has been combined with an explicit strategy of leveraging the diaspora as a tool of state economic and lobbying power – to make (in the words of a member of the TYB Advisory

Committee) “the Turkish diaspora among the most influential diasporas in the world” and to engage in forms of “diaspora diplomacy” (Aksel, 2014, 205; Arkilic, 2022; Bruce, 2020).

This leads to a spatial entanglement of Turkish and European state interests that also places pressure on Turkish citizens and their descendants in Europe (Arkilic, 2021; Ünver, 2022). It has also complicated the bilateral and foreign policy relations between Turkey and some European states, leading to some diplomatic tensions. Additionally, there has been a security dimension to some of the Turkish state's diaspora policies. In May 2022, for example, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan suggested that Turkey would not support Finnish and Swedish membership in NATO due to their approach to Kurdish diaspora organisations operating in Sweden (Toksabay & Lehto, 2022).

Like many other states, Turkey has engaged in forms of transnational repression vis-à-vis some members of its diaspora, seeking to monitor and police opposition groups that operate in diaspora communities beyond the borders of the state (Moss, 2016). The Turkish state has for many years engaged in the surveillance and long-distance policing of opposition political activists in Germany, France and elsewhere. The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has been involved in an armed conflict with the Turkish state since 1984, has been the main target of Turkish state activities, although the state has also targeted other leftist organisations, dissident Islamist organisations and – since an attempted coup in July 2016 – members of a broader Islamic movement linked to Fethullah Gülen – a cleric residing in Pennsylvania, USA whom Erdoğan has accused of being behind the coup attempt (Adamson, 2020b).

Historical migrations from Turkey to Europe add to the spatial complexities of entangled migration governance. The case of Turkey challenges the idea, found in much of the literature on Europe and North America, that “migration management” mainly involves immigration policy and border control or, alternatively, policies of integration, naturalisation and citizenship. Migration-sending states have an additional layer of migration governance policies that can be conceptualised as the management of emigration and the governance of citizens and diasporas abroad. It points to the ways in which the management of migration can at times lead not just to the governance of flows of people across state borders, but also to the transnationalisation and de-territorialisation of some functions of the state as it adapts to a situation in which increasing numbers of its citizens live beyond its territorial borders (Adamson & Demetriou, 2007; Collyer & King, 2015; Lacroix, 2022). Moreover, in the case of Turkey, its diaspora engagement policies interact in numerous ways with its conflict and security entanglements – via transnational political networks and mobilisations – but also with its broader foreign policy and diplomatic interests, such as its bargaining with European states around issues of migration diplomacy.

MIGRATION DIPLOMACY AS ENTANGLEMENT

Migration diplomacy can be defined as “the use of diplomatic tools, processes, and procedures to manage cross-border population mobility” including “both the strategic use of migration flows as a means to obtain other aims, and the use of diplomatic methods to achieve goals related to migration.” (Adamson & Tsourapas, 2019; Tsourapas, 2017). Just as Turkey's diaspora engagement policies create spatial entanglements with states in Europe, so too do dynamics of migration diplomacy between the European Union and Turkey (Içduygu & Aksel, 2014; Içduygu & Ustübcü, 2014). The migration and asylum policies of European states, the border control policies of the European Union, and the external pressures that Europe exercises on Turkey as a candidate country to join the European Union all have significant effects on Turkey's approach to migration and its formulation of domestic migration policy.

On the one hand, Turkey has faced pressure from the European Union to liberalise its migration and asylum policies in order to bring it into line with EU asylum laws as part of the overall process of accession, and in the broader context of EU harmonisation of its asylum laws (Abdelaaty, 2020, 2021; Kirişçi, 1996; Norman, 2020a, 2020b; Müftüler-Baç, 2022). Following Turkey's acceptance as an official candidate for membership in the European Union it began the process of negotiation and accession, which included the adoption of sets of laws and constitutional amendments to bring it into line with the requirements for EU membership, known as the *Acquis Communautaire* or the *acquis*. In 2005 Turkey produced a plan to modernise and update its migration and asylum laws to bring them into

harmony with EU requirements. This eventually led to the 2013 Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP), which was officially adopted in 2014 and which replaced the earlier Law on Settlement (İçduygu & Üstübcü, 2014).

At the same time, Turkey has faced equally strong pressure from Europe to control its borders and limit migration flows. The EU has often treated Turkey as a buffer zone between Europe and migration source countries to the south and east, especially the war-torn states of Syria and Iraq. This has occurred both within the overall accession process of strengthening the external borders of the European Union, but also within the larger policy of the externalisation of EU migration control and its delegation of border control responsibilities to third-party states (Lavenex, 2006, 2016). The EU's externalisation policies have therefore directly affected domestic policy-making in Turkey, producing new institutions, such as the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), as well as new forms of differentiated legal statuses (Müftüler-Baç, 2022; Üstübcü, 2019).

The conflict in Syria and the subsequent refugee crisis further entrenched EU-Turkey's migration diplomacy, leading to intensified cooperation via the 2013 Readmission Agreement, the 2015 Joint Action Plan and the 2016 Refugee Statement (Müftüler-Baç, 2022). In November 2015, Turkey signed a Joint Action Plan with the European Union in which the EU committed to giving Turkey EUR 3 billion to assist with managing the refugee crisis. In return, Turkey committed to using sea patrols and border restrictions to prevent the exit of migrants and refugees to Europe, as well as to crack down on passport forgeries and human trafficking and return those who failed to meet refugee determination criteria to their countries of origin. The Joint Action Plan was supplemented by the March 2016 EU-Turkey Deal, in which Europe agreed to take one registered Syrian refugee in Turkey for every Syrian asylum-seeker crossing the Turkish border into Greece who was subsequently returned – the so-called “one-in, one-out” deal. In exchange, Europe committed to speeding up the liberalisation of visas for Turkish citizens and committed an additional EUR 3 billion in assistance to Turkey – bringing the total assistance package to EUR 6 billion (Niemann & Zaun, 2018, 8–10).

The European Union's policy of externalising its migration controls has had a number of re-spatialising effects that create further linkages and entanglements between foreign policy, security interests, the EU accession process and migration governance. This has occurred via the shifting and outsourcing of border control practices to third-party states, but also by their broader geopolitical effects reshaping regional interests around migration (Fakhoury, 2019, 2021; Norman & Micinski, 2022; Zardo, 2022). Processes of externalisation lead to shifts in the relationship between the EU and bordering states – creating constraints and pressures, but also new sources of contention and opportunities to use migration issues as sources of leverage, bargaining and issue linkage in their diplomatic relations with the EU (Adamson & Tsourapas, 2019; Greenhill, 2016; Karadağ, 2019; Micinski, 2022; Tsourapas, 2019). Turkey's migration governance is thus embedded in the larger geopolitics of European migration control and externalisation policies, which in turn affect its foreign, security, economic and diaspora policies.

CONCLUSIONS

Migration processes create trans-spatial connections that cut across local, national and regional levels and challenge existing policy silos. The literature on migration governance is increasingly acknowledging this complexity, with various scholars calling for a radical “de-centring” of our understanding of migration governance in ways that recognise the “blurring” of linear models of governance and that account for the “messiness” of migration governance (see, e.g. Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019; Triandafyllidou, 2022a, 2022b). This article contributes to this ongoing conversation by introducing the concept of “entangled” migration governance. Drawing on recent work in international relations (Adamson & Greenhill, 2021, 2022), it suggests the utility of analysing migration as a process that both responds to, and sets in motion, a range of other foreign policy, security, social and political ties, thereby creating spatial entanglements that cut across existing policy silos and political jurisdictions.

An “entangled” perspective on migration governance also highlights the significance of historical legacies and regional ties, emphasising that cross-border mobility creates enduring social and political ties across different spaces and jurisdictions that have long-lasting policy effects. In the case of Turkey, which can be considered to be a “post-imperial” state, such legacies include trans-local networks and identities that pre-date the creation of

modern nation-states and migration governance regimes, such as the trans-border Kurdish networks and affinities that stretch across Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. But it also includes the legacies of developments in the mid- to late-20th century, such as post-WWII labour migration between Turkey and Europe, which created enduring social ties and resulted in a putative diaspora that Turkey has increasingly attempted to capture, govern, mobilise and engage.

Furthermore, the recent history of Turkey's engagement with the European Union as a candidate for membership has also shaped its migration management, creating a number of domestic pressures and issue linkages. These were further accelerated by the onset of the Syrian civil war, which produced an outflow of Syrian refugees to Turkey. The EU's perceptions of this situation as creating a potential European "refugee crisis" and its policy response, which involved a further strengthening of its external borders, also led to a further externalisation of migration control through the use of various diplomatic tools such as the 2016 EU-Turkey migration "deal." The effects of the February 2023 Turkey-Syria earthquake, which has devastated the border region of Turkey and Syria, are likely to further add to the geopolitical, humanitarian and cross-border challenges already facing the region, leading to further complexities in managing regional migration dynamics.

By examining these various dynamics of migration, conflict and security entanglements; diaspora engagement policies; and migration diplomacy in Turkey, this article has aimed to show how a perspective of diaspora entanglement is useful in laying out the diverse interlinkages between migration governance and other policy areas and state interests. Security entanglements, diasporic ties and issue linkages in migration diplomacy are common features in many cases, but they are not the only form of spatial entanglements associated with migration governance. The forms that such entanglements take will depend on any particular state's history, regional context and geopolitical position within larger migration systems.

Thus, whereas Turkey is a particularly notable example of entangled migration dynamics and their governance effects, the framework also has a more general applicability and broader relevance to a range of contexts and regions. All states are to some extent "entangled" with others through migration flows and dynamics, suggesting the need for new concepts and understandings that better capture this complexity. The challenge for policymakers is to find ways to manage these trans-spatial complexities within a broader governance context characterised by an international order and institutions that are still largely national, siloed and territorial.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by the European Commission's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement number 822806. The author thanks Christiane Fröhlich, Lea Müller-Funk, James F. Hollifield and three anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on earlier versions of the article. The author is also grateful for the guidance and suggestions provided by the journal's editors.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing not applicable - no new data generated.

ORCID

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ For a discussion of the meaning of trans-local see Brickell & Datta, 2011, who note (p. 4) that "spaces and places need to be examined both through their situatedness and their connectedness to a variety of other locales."
- ² For example, the vast academic literature on diasporas and diaspora engagement functions as a separate field of study from refugee studies and forced migration, with its own journals and internal debates. This mirrors the bureaucratic silos between these two policy areas, with states having separate agencies for diaspora engagement policies and asylum and refugee policies.
- ³ On levels of analysis in IR see the classic work by Singer, 1961.
- ⁴ See <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/> (accessed 16 February 2023).

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How to cite this article: Adamson, F. B. (2023) Re-spatialising migration governance: From 'multi-level' to 'entangled'. *International Migration*, 00, 1–12. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.13138>