

Syrian Refugees, Politics and Attitudes: The Case of Turkish Twitter

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Motivation

Refugees from Syria one of the most salient topics in Turkey:

- Domestic and International Politics
- Shapes Turkish Foreign Policy thru both domestic and int'l mandates
- Gov't constrained by / inclined to manipulate public's sentiments toward Syrian refugees.

What are the prevalent attitudes and sentiments on Turkish twitter?

- How do these attitudes and sentiments associate with each other?

Before we move further...

...let's put the issue of Syrian refugees in perspective

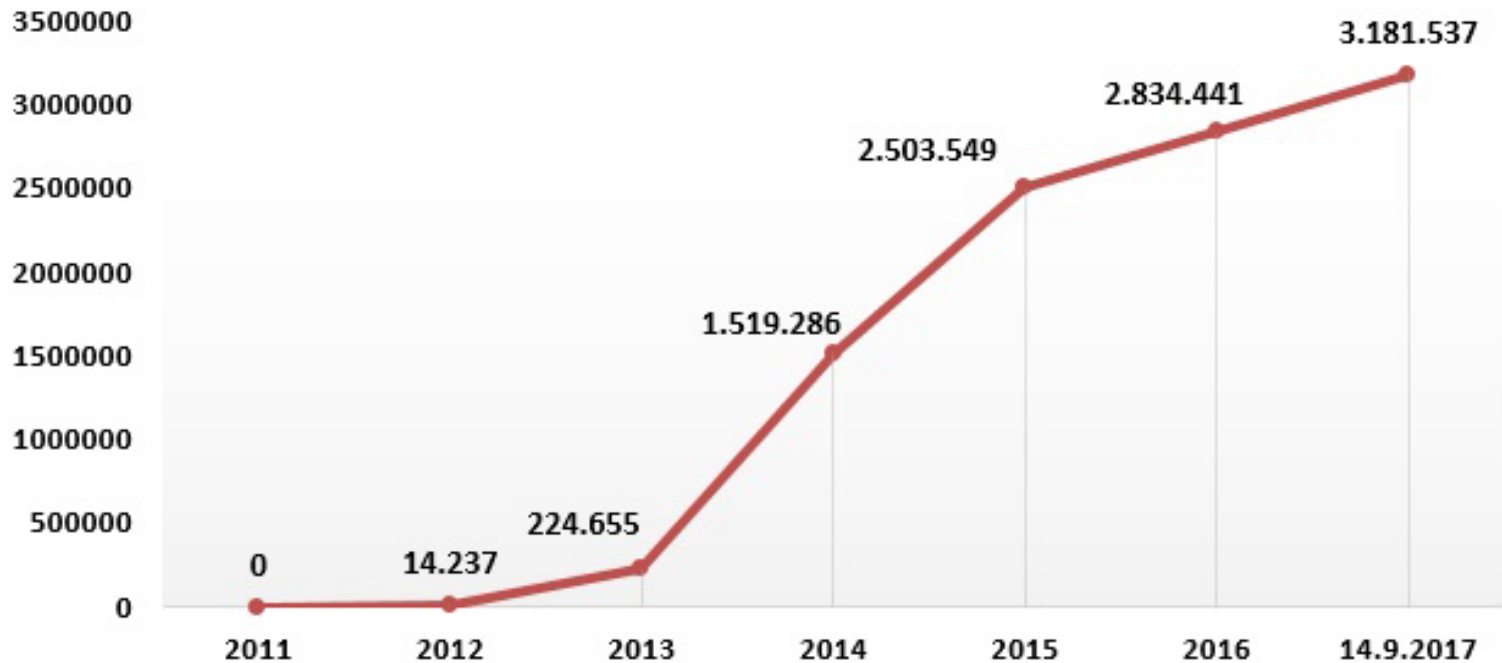
Before we move further...

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- According to UNHCR, of the 235 million displaced people in the world today, 60 million are forced to leave their countries
- About 80% of this forced migration is destined to arrive in other developing countries

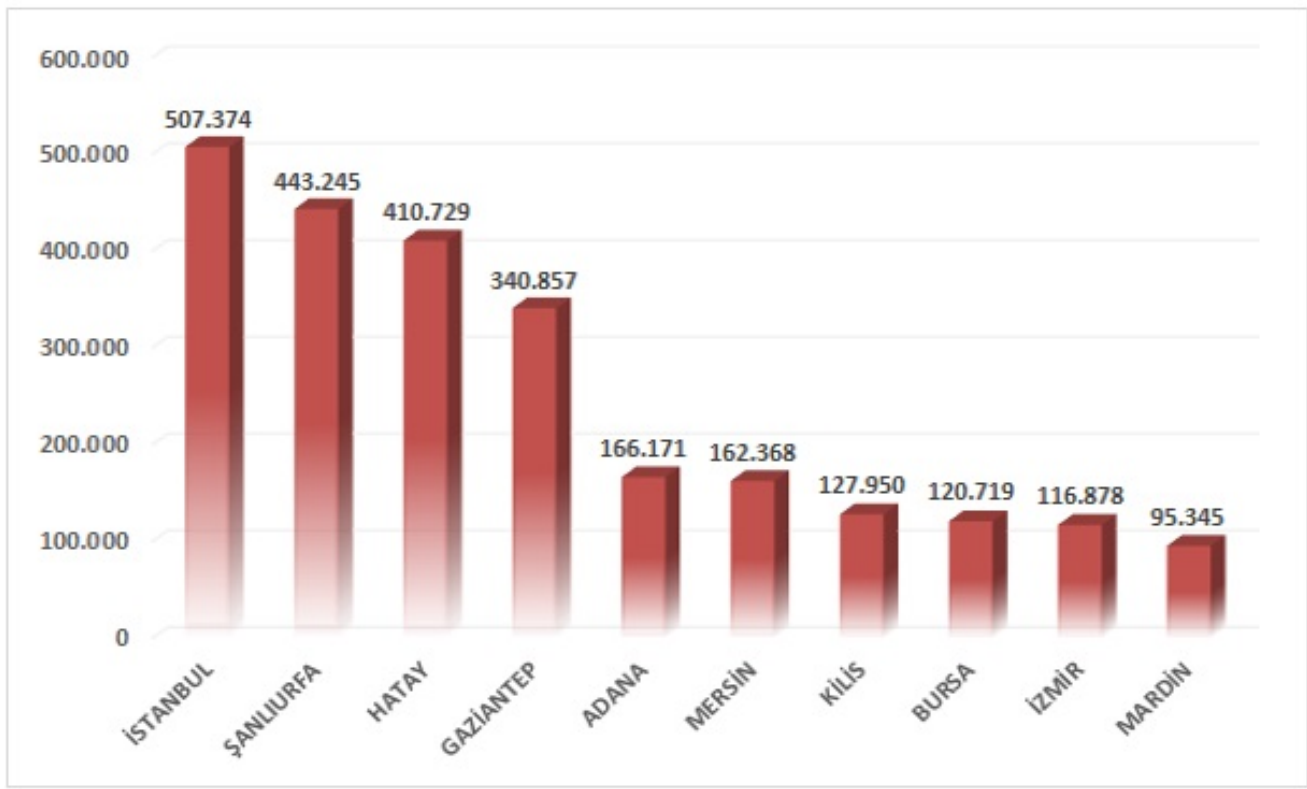
	SYRIAN REFUGEES	HOST POPULATION	RATIO
JORDAN	657,704	6,459,000	1:9
LEBANON	1,067,785	4,467,000	1:4
TURKEY	3,181,789	74,930,000	1:24
EU	1.000,000	508,191,000	1:508

Syrians under Temporary Protection



Distribution of Syrian Population

GEÇİCİ KORUMA KAPSAMINDA BULUNAN SURİYELİLERİN İLK 10 İLE GÖRE DAĞILIMI



Data on refugee numbers is courtesy of: Başak Yavçan, [TOBB University, Ankara](#)

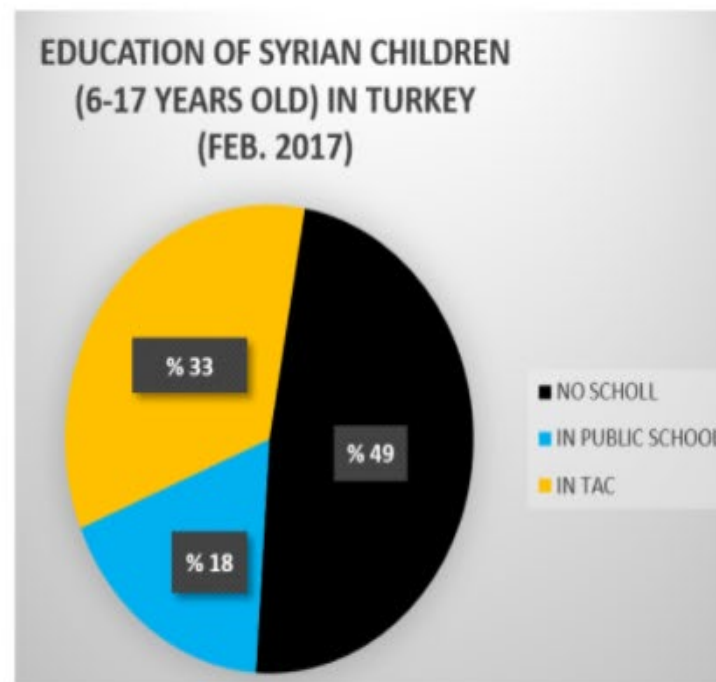
Age and Gender Breakdown (9/14/2017)

Age	Male	Female	Total
YAŞ	ERKEK	KADIN	TOPLAM
TOPLAM	1.704.806	1.476.731	3.181.537
0-4	213.997	199.289	413.286
5-9	230.300	216.924	447.224
10-14	175.076	160.926	336.002
15-18	148.563	123.763	272.326
19-24	267.560	202.416	469.976
25-29	173.589	134.107	307.696
30-34	144.304	112.848	257.152
35-39	101.606	83.944	185.550
40-44	71.259	66.584	137.843
45-49	55.049	50.658	105.707
50-54	43.926	42.232	86.158
55-59	29.568	29.441	59.009
60-64	20.482	20.965	41.447
65-69	13.576	13.964	27.540
70-74	7.247	8.044	15.291
75-79	4.477	5.338	9.815
80-84	2.359	2.982	5.341
85-89	1.276	1.562	2.838
90+	592	744	1.336

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Enrollment Rates*

EDUCATION OF SYRIAN CHILDREN IN TURKEY FEB. 2017		
	IN SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL
% 100	% 51	% 49
SCHOLL AGE SYRIAN CHILDREN IN TURKEY	IN TURKISH SCHOOLS (TURKISH EDUCATION)	IN TEMPORARY EDUCATION CENTER (ARABIC EDUCATION)
	162.989	293.430
	%18,0	% 32,4
903.143	456.000	447.000



In-/Out of Camp Refugees

- 24 Camps housing housing 220,000.
- Remaining 92 % voluntary urban refugees:
 - much less assistance
 - more freedom of movement



Twitter Data

All tweets between May 2 – Aug 25, 2016, that:

- a) contain the word **Suriye_** and/or **mülteci_**
- b) Twitter API allows to be collected

60146 tweets total (1% of all)

Methodology

Data Collection and Clustering

- 1) Treat each tweet as a separate entry
- 2) Choose a threshold of similarity between two tweets
- 3) Calculate similarity score for one tweet against another
- 4) Cluster tweets under header-tweet

```

C = {};
for i ← 1 to n do
  | ti.isClustered ← false;    ▷ Initially, all tweets are marked as unclustered;
end
for i ← 1 to n do
  | if ti.isClustered = false then
    | c = {i};
    | for j ← (i + 1) to n do
      | if tj.isClustered = false and NormalizedScore(ti, tj) ≥ threshold
        | then
          | | c ← c ∪ j;          ▷ Find first unclustered similar tweet
          | end
        | end
      | end
    | if |c| ≥ k then
      | | C ← C ∪ c;            ▷ Add this cluster to set of clusters
      | | foreach index ∈ c do
        | | | tindex.isClustered ← true;    ▷ Mark these tweets as clustered
        | | end
      | end
    | end
  | end
end

```

Methodology

Calculating Similarity

Longest Common Subsequence (LCS) similarity metric.

- the longest set of characters from two sequences (tweets) that are common between these two sequences in the same order.

EXAMPLE

- thisisatest
- testing123testing

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$$\text{NormalizedScore}(t_i, t_j) = \frac{2 * \text{LCS}(t_i, t_j)}{\text{Length}(t_i) + \text{Length}(t_j)}$$

Methodology - Advantages

- Applicable to all alphabetical languages
- Scalable
- Substantially reduces the burden of coding

Methodology - Advantages

Threshold Set	Number of Clusters	Number of Unclustered Tweets	Reduction in Coding Burden (%)
0.7	3553	7301	82.0
0.6	3378	6622	83.4
0.5	2748	3609	89.4

Methodology - Issues

- Does Twitter render data for collection at random?
- Each tweet correlates with *only* the cluster header, not necessarily with each other.
 - Initial random seeding?
 - Intracluster similarity: 0.93
- Arbitrary threshold figures
- Time-specific events may crowd out other issues

Results

Issue Prevalence

	Unweighted			Weighted			Average Tweets per Cluster Header
	Frequency	Percentage	TOTAL	Frequency	Percentage	TOTAL	
TR Security	3,925	36.10	10,874	22,102	34.91	63,312	5.6
Security Abroad	775	7.13	10,874	2,931	4.63	63,312	3.8
Immigrants' Safety	1,753	16.12	10,874	13,327	21.05	63,312	7.6
Economy	1,580	14.53	10,874	8,775	13.86	63,312	5.6
Social Aid	636	5.85	10,874	4,614	7.29	63,312	7.3
Identity/Ethnicity	1,344	12.36	10,874	5,116	8.08	63,312	3.8
TR Citizenship	1,622	14.92	10,874	10,104	15.96	63,312	6.2
Demography	484	4.45	10,874	758	1.2	63,312	1.6
General	1,904	17.51	10,874	9,703	15.33	63,312	5.1
Other	693	6.37	10,874	4,947	7.81	63,312	7.1

Results

Issue Overlaps

	<i>TR Security</i>	<i>Security Abroad</i>	<i>Immigrants' Safety</i>	<i>Economy</i>	<i>Social Aid</i>	<i>Identity /Ethnicity</i>	<i>TR Citizenship</i>
<i>TR Security</i>							
<i>Security Abroad</i>	212						
<i>Immigrants' Safety</i>	267	188					
<i>Economy</i>	237	48	205				
<i>Social Aid</i>	82	8	75	238			
<i>Identity/ Ethnicity</i>	374	46	117	68	27		
<i>Citizenship</i>	552	17	39	142	57	129	
<i>Demography</i>	118	4	26	42	16	53	51

Results

Party Prevalence and Perception

	Weighted		
	Frequency	Percentage	TOTAL
AKP (Government)	25,625	86.83	29,511
CHP (MainOpp'n,SocDem)	4,101	13.9	29,511
HDP (Pro-Kurd,Left)	2,012	6.82	29,511
MHP (Natslt,FarRght)	258	0.87	29,511

Results

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Weighted

	Positive		Negative		Neutral		TOTAL
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
AKP (Government)	1,822	7.11	21,241	82.89	2,562	10	25,625
CHP (Main Opp'n)	1,975	48.16	1,406	34.28	679	16.56	4,101
HDP (Pro-Kurd/Left)	596	29.62	1,219	60.59	197	9.79	2,012
MHP (Natslt,FarRght)	69	26.74	111	43.02	78	30.23	258

Results

Party – Issue Association

	TR Security		
AKP Attitude	NO	YES	TOTAL
NEGATIVE	15,333 72.19	5,908 27.81	21,241 100.00
POSITIVE	1,612 88.47	210 11.53	1,822 100.00
TOTAL	16,945 73.47	6,111 26.53	23,063 100.00
Pearson chi2(1) = 228.4239 Pr = 0.000			

(A)

	TR Citizenship		
AKP Attitude	NO	YES	TOTAL
NEGATIVE	16,200 76.27	5,041 23.73	21,241 100.00
POSITIVE	1,421 77.99	401 22.01	1,822 100.00
TOTAL	17,621 76.40	5,442 23.6	23,063 100.00
Pearson chi2(1) = 2.7653 Pr = 0.096			

(B)

	Economy		
AKP Attitude	NO	YES	TOTAL
NEGATIVE	16,063 75.62	5,178 24.38	21,241 100.00
POSITIVE	1,521 83.48	301 16.52	1,822 100.00
TOTAL	17,584 76.24	5,479 23.76	23,063 100.00
Pearson chi2(1) = 57.1929 Pr = 0.000			

	Social Aid		
AKP Attitude	NO	YES	TOTAL
NEGATIVE	18,983 89.37	2,258 10.63	21,241 100.00
POSITIVE	1,405 77.11	417 22.89	1,822 100.00
TOTAL	20,388 88.40	2,675 11.60	23,063 100.00
Pearson chi2(1) = 245.8541 Pr = 0.000			

Concluding Remarks

- Concerns with domestic security trump all over others.
- Inaccurate to infer relevant agenda items from conventional popular discourse
- Further Analysis: AKP supporters more concerned with international dimension