

# Statement (Turkey): Our Refugee and migration policy in 6 points

Tuesday 17 May 2022, by [Workers' Party of Turkey \(TİP\)](#) (Date first published: 16 May 2022).

## **1. TURKEY WILL BE FREED OF THE QUAGMIRE OF WARS IN THE MIDDLE EAST!**

A significant part of the refugees and asylum seekers living in Turkey had to leave their countries due to wars and conflicts. AKP has made Turkey complicit in these wars and conflicts that displaces masses of people, such as the one in Syria. The fact that Turkey today hosts the largest number of refugees in the world is a result of the deliberate foreign policy choices of the government. By initially making Turkey complicit in the Syrian Civil War as part of its neo-Ottoman fantasies and, later, through the agreements it signed with Western powers, AKP has created a Turkey that manages irregular migration and refugee waves for the benefit of Western powers. These policies only serve global imperialist power struggles and help to enhance the lifespan of the AKP government. As long as these reckless policies, which stand against the common interest of the people in the region, and the AKP government's participation in the Syrian Civil War stay intact, crowds of refugees and asylum seekers will continue to pile up at the Turkish borders. TİP will get Turkey out of the Syrian war and stand against the wars, conflicts, and the imperialist interventions that force the region's residents to migrate.

Research shows that a considerable number of Syrian refugees in Turkey are willing to return to their countries so long as peace and their safety in Syria are established. There is, however, also a growing tendency to stay in Turkey, independent of the situation in Syria. TİP acknowledges that in order for refugees to consider willingly and freely returning to their home countries, peace and prosperity in Syria must be restored. Our foreign policy and relations with Syria will be established to provide these conditions. Indispensable to TİP's perspective on the refugee crisis is the establishment of a foreign policy and diplomacy that can create alternatives to living in Turkey for the immigrants and make voluntary return a viable and desirable option for refugees.

## **2. WE WILL NOT LET AKP CAPITALISE ON BORDER CROSSINGS!**

The border and migration policies, which are designed to benefit AKP's ideological views and political benefits, have resulted in inconsistent and non-transparent border regulations. TİP points out the need for a border policy and admission system that will not allow in the country people who have taken arms during the ongoing conflicts in their countries as well as those who are wanted or tried for crimes against the freedom, life, honour, dignity, and bodily integrity of anyone.

TİP defends the protection of individuals who have a fear for their life or are subjected to discrimination in their countries according to the UN principles. However, capitalist countries, especially the US and those in the EU, break international laws by limiting the labour migration and pushing refugees back away from their borders. Claiming that Turkey should have an "open-door" policy is not realistic in these unequal and unfair circumstances. We need to establish a border and migration policy that benefits not the government's ideological choices but the public interests and safety as well as the refugee rights.

## **3. WE WILL WITHDRAW FROM THE 2016 EU TURKEY DEAL!**

The EU and the US can push the migration waves that have been caused by their policies out of their borders through their imperialist positions. The 2016 Deal between Turkey—a transit country for the refugees of Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan— and the EU is a key element of the EU strategy to keep the migration waves out of its borders. The EU has given Turkey the role of policing the migration waves. This role is not acceptable. When in power, TİP will announce the absolute withdrawal from this agreement at a certain date. We will also call for an international conference in order to discuss the principles of a voluntary relocation of the Syrian refugees in other countries and the planning of international deals and agreements regulating migration waves in accordance with the UNHCR and universal human rights.

#### **4. REFUGEES WILL NO LONGER BE THE SLAVES OF THE CAPITALISTS!**

The AKP government has condemned refugees in Turkey to the brutal conditions of the unregulated labour market by not executing any realistic plan for their integration and therefore creating a segregated population from the Turkish society that is open to exploitation and abuse. The opportunity to provide the capitalists with a large, cheap, and unorganised labour force to exploit is a reason why the AKP government finds the refugees valuable to “govern.” Migrant workers offer the capitalists a “disposable” labour force that they can easily suppress, pay under the poverty line, and use as a “threat” against other workers struggling for better conditions. TİP will create its migrant policy not according to the expectations of the capitalists but in consideration for the migrant rights as well as public interest and peace. Unlike the current government’s unconcerned attitude towards the unregulated migrant employment, TİP will lay the groundwork for a work-life ensuring job security, channels for self-organisation, and proper wages for everyone. TİP will create an economic recovery and employment program that will not let workers fear being “deprived of their jobs” by cheaper labour. Under TİP, no one will work illicitly, uninsured, nor under inhumane conditions.

#### **5. WE WILL UNITE IN OUR STRUGGLE!**

There is not even a trace left of the unity of compatriotism that unites the people of Turkey based on social, political, and civil rights and responsibilities as well as common humanitarian values and ethics. Deprived of their social rights, labourers in the country are left to the mercy of the exploitative market; Kurdish people are deprived of their right to elect their own representatives; and the principle of equality before the law, which constitutes the very basis of citizenship, has been destroyed within a jurisdiction that has turned into a mere toy in AKP’s hands. The status to be granted to the refugees in the country can be discussed only within the context of Turkey’s overall transformation and current condition which makes citizenship rights practically void. TİP asserts the necessity that the process of determining the status and future of the Syrian refugees in our country should run simultaneously with a political struggle to obtain equal citizenship rights for all the people living in Turkey. We suggest that an integration program for the refugees and immigrants that wish to continue to live in our country can only be established through such a holistic approach. We underscore that every single person who earns their living with their labour and wishes to live in this country should have equal social, political, and civil rights and responsibilities whatever ethnicity, religion, or country of origin they may have.

Accordingly, TİP will safeguard that the social and political rights that are granted to all the people who wishes to live in this country are also granted to the immigrant/refugee labourers, who, in the face of relentless exploitation, discrimination, and abuse that they have been exposed to, seem to create large and “isolated societies” in different Turkish cities and have withdrawn into their shells. TİP will fight to ensure that they can equally benefit from these rights. We will include immigrant labourers in our common struggle to reform these rights according to the recently emerging needs of our people. Eliminating the disconnection, tension, and distance between the “settled people” and

the immigrants as well as the isolation of the immigrants from the urban life is only possible through the elimination of the widespread poverty in our country. This can only be possible through the participation of all oppressed people living in our country in the fight for equal citizenship, and only once they can all equally benefit from these rights gained through our common struggle. The addressee of our strategy of “uniting for a common struggle” is anyone who cannot see themselves as an equal part of the whole, who has been pushed aside and outside of the AKP regime’s idea of the “nation,” alongside the immigrants.

## **6. WE WILL ESTABLISH A NEW TURKEY NOT OUT OF HATRED BUT OUT OF FRATERNITY!**

The wars ongoing in our region and the irrational foreign policy adopted by AKP have in the last ten years turned Turkey into the country with the highest population of refugees in the world. It is only natural that people in Turkey are concerned against the backdrop of this extraordinary setting, which is practically incomparable to any other in history. Yet, it is but a hoax to hold asylum-seekers/refugees responsible for this process and to offer their expulsion out of the country as a solution. Our people should neither believe the disinformation disseminated by certain groups that seek to “invest in the elections” for the benefit of their own political future, nor the provocative appeals that sow the seeds of hatred among our society against the background of the prevailing apprehension.

Unemployment in Turkey is growing rapidly. However, the reasons for the rising unemployment among the citizens of Turkey are not the immigrants “stealing” available jobs but the increasing spread of arbitrary dismissals and the intentional enfeeblement of trade unions that can stand up for workers’ rights. Public funding in Turkey is no longer used for the benefit of its citizens. Nor is it used in support of the immigrants, a vast majority of whom are workers themselves. Instead, a handful of capitalists are offered the entirety of our country’s wealth to ceaselessly loot it to the desire of their hearts. Even though it may not be experienced to the same degree by all, poverty, unemployment, precarious employment, and inequality in accessing education and health services today are the common problems of all labourers.

We state it once again: What we need to stand against is the political power that plants the seeds of hatred among people and engorges itself in chaos, and the capitalists that exploit our labour and steal our future no matter to which ethnicity, or religion, or linguistic community we belong.

The struggle to ensure that everybody of every origin who earns their living with their labour and has the will to live in this country lives in an equal, free, democratic, and secular country is more urgent than ever. The Workers’ Party of Turkey will work to keep this struggle alive and resilient, prevent partitions among labouring classes, and ensure a socialist republic for every single person living in this country. It is with all the people earning their living with their own labour that we will build the foundations of a peaceful life together and of social justice.

16 May 2022

**Worker’s Party of Turkey (TIP)**

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**P.S.**

- The Refugee and migration policy of the Worker's Party of Turkey (TIP) in 6 points:

<https://tip.org.tr/en/press-releases-statements/the-refugee-and-migration-policy-of-the-workers-party-of-turkey-tip-in-6-points/>