

## **Different Periods of Internal Migration in Turkey from the Perspective of Development**

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### **Abstract**

*Patterns of and motives behind both internal and international migratory movements naturally alter in line with the development processes, urbanization and modernization. As the degree of disparity in terms of socioeconomic and industrial development increases between the urban and the rural areas, individuals become more likely to migrate. Historical evolution of the internal migratory movements in Turkey suitably illustrates this fact. Application of the theory of push and pull factors brings a perceptive and knowledgeable explanation to different periods of the internal migration movements in Turkey. This paper evaluates three distinct periods of internal migration in Turkey from the perspective of development, while outlining the theoretical framework of the stimulating role of the push and pull factors on migration. The researcher argues that theoretical explanations of push and pulls factors on migration provide a comprehensive explanation for demonstrating the effects of the development process on initiating and regulating internal migration movements in Turkey, which has a characteristic pattern in itself. In conclusion, the paper refers to new trends of migratory movements as suggestions for further research on the area.*

**Keywords:** internal migration, development process, push and pull factors, Turkey

### **1. Introduction**

Understanding the causes and effects of migration requires an in depth, multidimensional study of the phenomenon, since it brings about significant transformation of social, economic and even political structures of populations. The nature of migration movements is inherently linked to development through urbanization, modernization and industrialization paradigms. The role of development on stimulating internal migration can be better evaluated through demonstrating both causes and effects of movements at both ends, which are the places of origin and destination.

Theoretical perspectives on push and pull factors hold an advantageous position in explaining the positive and negative determinants of migration for both places of origin and destination when supported by empirical and historical evidence from cases, such as Turkey. I argue that theoretical explanations of push and pulls factors on migration provide a comprehensive explanation for demonstrating the effects of the development process on initiating and regulating internal migration movements in Turkey, which has a characteristic pattern in itself. Therefore, I provide an analysis of the historical background of the movements in Turkey in distinct periods of time to demonstrate the pertinence of studying the theoretical relationship between development and migration. In this paper, I first focus on describing the theoretical background for studying migration decisions from the perspective of development processes. Second, I apply this theoretical explanation to distinct periods of internal migration movements in Turkey from 1950s to late 1990s. Then, I conclude with reflections on the changing patterns of internal migration in Turkey after 2000s.

### **2. Theoretical Background**

Migration takes place when an individual decides that it is preferable to move rather than to stay and where the difficulties of moving seem to be more than offset by the expected rewards (Pryor, 1975). Population movements are responses to distinct conditions and relating incidents, which people encounter both in places of origin and destination. There are actual and perceived effects of these circumstances, dilemmas and opportunities on individual decision making processes, which create the basis for their motive to move at the end (Parnwell, 1993).

Thus, migration starts due to varying reasons, yet become a process carried out by a decision-making system, in which advantages and disadvantages are closely calculated with possible off-sets and opportunities of moving or staying.

It is necessary to distinguish between different levels of analysis for appropriate explanations of peculiar causes, motives and patterns of migration. The relevance of understanding the causal mechanisms that operate at divergent levels of analysis is appraised in the existing literature (Parnwell, 1993, Massey et al., 1993, Portes, 1994). There are three interdependent levels of research: Micro, meso and macro. Factors driving individual migrants' and their households' decisions to move are described at the macro level. At the meso-level, the focus is on patterns and regularities in the migration process in terms of prevailing social and economic conditions in major places of origin and destination. At the macro level, I will analyze developments and transformations at a larger scale, which have an influence on patterns and processes of decision-making for the community.

Furthermore, it is impossible to individualize factors that affect the decision to migrate at none of the underlined levels of analysis within a complex and composite cause and effect relationship (Lee, 1966; Parnwell, 1993). Lee (1966) is one of the first scholars, who mark positive, negative and neutral factors concerning a decision to move that is available at both places of origin and destination to rational calculations of individuals. Yet, identifying general factors influencing the motives behind migrants' decisions to move does not change the fact that there are always unique perceptions and interpretations of these factors in the decision-making process. The perceived effect of the relationship between development and its influence on migration patterns varies because generalizable factors and principles do not affect everyone to the same extent.

The push and pull theories of migration provide the basis for a multi-level analysis by going beyond simple calculations of positive and negative factors, when built on Lee's model of positive, negative and neutral factors. At the macro-level, migration can be seen as a process of allocating the labor within the country, especially for sectors requiring manual and semi-skilled workers. Movements are channeled from relatively underdeveloped rural and peripheral areas, where labor is abundant, to rapidly developing urban sites in order to sustain the level of development and growth. This perspective focuses on the structure of the economic development within a country. Hence, government strategies to concentrate development in particular areas and sectors through investments, incentives and deliberate support play a decisive role on the migration process by openly encouraging people to move.

The meso-level analysis accommodates an insightful interpretation of the role of development processes on a decision to move. Apart from emphasizing positive, negative and neutral factors in both places of origin and destination within the development process, there are also 'intervening obstacles' for migrants (Lee, 1966). These obstacles are potential barriers to migrate such as costs of travelling, distance, cultural differentiation, family attachments and lack of information (Parnwell, 1993).

On the other hand, the emergence of rural 'push' and urban 'pull' factors are determinants of migration decisions within development and modernization process at the meso-level (Portes, 1978, Parnwell, 1993, Chen et al., 1996). Generally, rural push factors are identified as rapid and uncontrolled population growth, upcoming land shortages, and low levels of agricultural productivity due to primitive techniques and lack of mechanization, relatively weak and inefficient non-agricultural sector that generates low-income for rural families. An uncontrolled and rapid increase in the population growth affects decisions to migrate both directly and indirectly, since this uneven increase also influence land distribution and sub-division of plots, agricultural productivity and per capita income. The slow and generally unplanned patterns in technological expansion and generating labor demand within the rural and agricultural sector, when combined with the limited scope of development in the rural areas increase the likelihood of out migration.

On the contrary, urban pull factors present cities as centers of attraction which promise high income levels for individuals through industrial and service sectors, generate more opportunity for employment within these rising sectors, and provide more facilities for education, health and investment. Although conditions have been changing over years, the literature suggests that migratory movements are primarily dominated by economic motives and expectations (Connell, 1976; Rhoda, 1983, Parnwell, 1993, Massey et al., 1993, Portes, 1994). There are more prospects of economic flourishing in urban cities compared to rural villages. Aside from direct effect on the income levels, migrants also enjoy social services like education, healthcare, housing, and other related public facilities which are broader in scope and better in quality.

However, the paradox of migration in pursuit of higher wages and better employment prospects on the one hand and urban deprivation on the other is at the foundation for the motives for decision to migrate (Todaro, 1969, Harris and Todaro, 1970). Costs of living and supporting themselves in urban sites are considerably high for migrants from rural areas. Yet, migrants are concerned with long-term opportunities and gains from their movement, rather than immediate consequences of the migration. Thus, migrants tend to tolerate short-run problems and obstacles for a larger return in the long-run by obtaining better jobs with considerably higher income, alongside with increased living standards.

The micro-level analysis can be seen as a critique of both macro and meso-level interpretations which consider motives behind migratory movements as passive responses to different external factors. On the other hand, the micro-level analysis puts the emphasis on the influence of diverse contextual differences like level of income, age and level of education, individuals' and households' decision to migrate. None of the factors marked under the macro and the meso-level analysis is perceived and interpreted as the same by all individuals in the rural areas.

The determining factors at this level of analysis are both economic and non-economic. Economic factors dwell on income levels, land holdings and production levels of individuals and households, which indirectly affects the level of education and skills. They constitute the origins of intervening obstacles by directly linking to migrants' willingness to bear transportation costs to migrate, opportunity costs to be employed and other immediate financial requirements for supporting themselves in urban centers. There are also non-economic factors which mainly converge with household constraints. Family ties and commitments have an impact on choosing who will be the migrant and his/her ability to move. Additionally, age, marital status and gender are at the heart of non-economic determinants. Generally young, unmarried and male migrants are favored by their households to take the responsibility to migrate (Parnwell, 1996).

Furthermore, the emergence of migration networks in urban areas increases the likelihood of migration through individual cost-benefit analysis and triggers chain-migration (Massey et al., 2002). The information sent back to the rural areas by migrants in the urban sites holds the central position for decision making processes to migrate. Plus, migrant communities in the urban sites provide financial and social assistance to newcomers by initiating contracts for employment or offering them a permanent place to stay until they become integrated into urban society.

### ***3. Development and Internal Migration in Turkey***

Push and pull theories of migration are extensively applied to cases on international migratory movements in evaluating the relationship between development and migratory structures. However, this approach has broader explanatory power to present the same relationship within the context of internal migration. As an empirical analysis, internal migratory movements in Turkey, which clearly have distinct patterns, suit the push and pull framework to demonstrate the relevance of emphasizing the effect of development on migration patterns. The literature also realizes that economic development, industrialization and modernization are the core initiators of internal migration in Turkey (Akşit, 1997, İçduygu and Ünalın; 1997; İçduygu and Sirkeci, 1999; Köymen, 1999; Peker, 1999 and Tekeli, 2008).

The role of development on stimulating, as well as sustaining, internal migration over time is further crucial for projections of population movements. There are three distinct periods of internal population movements in Turkey, which co-evolve with the development process. These periods reflect specific patterns and problems within economic, political and social structures of the society.

I evaluate the period from the 1950 to the 1960s, which is characterized by swift industrialization in Turkey, through applying the macro-level analysis. The following period of the 1960s to the early-1980s represents the importance of the development process in altering economic, political and social practices of Turkish people, which inherently affects migratory movements. The meso-level analysis of push and pull factors is applied to explain the evolution in the population movements. From the 1980s onwards, a significant level of transformation of the society is reflected in the migration patterns. Micro level analysis of individual decision making through transmitting factors became more important after the 1990s within the period of globalization.

### 3.1. The 1950s-1960s Period

Before the mid-1940s, there were no mass internal migration flows in Turkey for two major reasons. First, there was no demand within the labor market to make people start moving from the rural villages to newly establishing urban cities. The efforts of industrialization and the volume of economic activity within the country were too weak to trigger such movements. Furthermore, the presence of intervening obstacles was significant on individual decision to move. Transportation facilities and information provision was relatively underdeveloped in Turkey before 1950s.

After the 1950s, patterns of internal migration in Turkey started to change along with increasing growth rates through restructuring of economic policies. The Turkish economy was consolidated into the new world system through relatively liberal economic policies to bring about growth and modernization (İçduygu and Sirkeci, 1999). This has strong implications on the development and transformation of both villages in the rural regions and towns in the urban provinces.

The fundamental change in the rural areas, which naturally contributed to stimulating internal migration, was the introduction of the modern capitalist production system in traditionally feudal villages of Turkey (Keyder, 1982, 1987; Akşit, 1997). Distribution of state-owned lands along with increased government spending on importing agricultural machinery brought about the agricultural boom of the 1950s (Pamuk, 2007). Concentration of land in the hands of big landowners, creation of large farms and rapid mechanization of agriculture, despite generating efficiency in production and overall income, lead to the emergence of landless people in the rural areas.

State efforts to give a new phase to industrialization and modernization in the urban areas of Turkey via emphasizing private entrepreneurship was another mark of the 1950s (Zürcher, 1993). State domination of the industrial sector was replaced with facilitation of the rise of private/individual entrepreneurs by the state through liberal economic policies in this era. However, industrialization efforts were channeled into specific regions by the state. Cities like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir were deliberately favored in the industrialization process. The development of manufacturing and industrial sectors in these regions brought out an increasing demand from the labor market for manual or semi-skilled workers to sustain its growth.

Significance of development of new transportation and infrastructure facilities in Turkey as an effort by the state to connect the rural and the urban areas of the country is critical. Compared to the prior period of the 1940s, the 1950s and the 1960s illustrated great exertion of constructing new roads and increasing use of motor vehicles in cities, which connected not only inter-regional movements and transportation, but also international trade to newly rising urban areas (Zürcher 1993).

In this context, booming urban cities like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir naturally became the place of destination for landless rural dwellers of the 1950s and the 1960s. Internal migration served as a solution to problems at both ends. First, it re-allocated the labor supply in industrializing urban areas to increase production and promote growth. Additionally, it provided an opportunity for relatively higher levels of income for migrants. The state support for improving conditions of emerging 'gecekondu' neighborhoods<sup>1</sup> in cities (Zürcher, 1993) contributed to the persistence of internal migration.

Statistics demonstrate that until the 1950s, the rural population in Turkey constituted more than 80 percent of the total population. The growth rate of the population is 22.2 per mille for the rural areas, whereas it is only 17.5 per mille for the urban sites (DİE, 1991). However, in the 1950s, there was significant increase in the growth rate of population in the urban areas to 55.7 per mille, yet a relative decrease in the growth rate of population in the rural areas with to 17.4 per mille. Moreover, there was visible decrease in the rural population ratio from 82 percent to 74 percent of the total population in this period (DİE, 1991). This implies the stimulation of internal migration through transformations in the rural structures en route to developing urban sites of Turkey.

### 3.2. The 1960s-1980s Period

The period between the 1960 and the 1980s is significant for its distinct urbanization dilemmas, which further influenced patterns of mass migration from the rural areas to the urban centers. İçduygu and Sirkeci (1999) argue Turkish society has not transformed itself to an industrial society as fast as the level of industrialization in the economic activities, which has produced a problematic urbanization process with persistent effects.

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<sup>1</sup> Shanty towns

The mass influx of people from the rural areas has not been absorbed by either social or economic structures in the urban centers (Akşit, 1997).

The political and economic developments of the period reflect problems of urbanization and migration. The period from the 1960s to the late-1970s was governed by import substitution industrialization (ISI) policies to promote economic growth, to strengthen and consolidate domestic market, and to develop an internationally competitive economy (Zürcher, 1993; Pamuk, 2007). There was a shift of focus from agricultural development to pure industrialization, which had major consequences for migratory movements.

The ISI policy of the period was successful at promoting growth and stimulating development at the expense of growing inter-regional income inequality in Turkey (Zürcher, 1993). The welfare generated in the domestic market via ISI was not distributed in similar terms since agricultural production was disregarded (Pamuk, 2007). Although the demand in the labor market increased in the urban centers, the relative decline in the level of income of the rural population caused more people to migrate for economic reasons. As a result an excess supply in the labor market triggers unemployment for newly arriving migrants (Peker, 1999). The major outcome of this process is the emergence of secondary economy, which operates in line with migratory movements.

Additionally culture, environment and the social structure within which the society lives are altered parallel to economic developments (Tekeli, 2008). Gecekondu neighborhoods are further consolidated and expanded as a secondary economic sector grows. Swift urbanization of cities like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir does not directly correspond to the degree of adaptation to new lifestyle in the urban areas (İçduygu and Ünalán, 1997; İçduygu and Sirkeci, 1999). Although city centers become centers of attraction with new opportunities of employment, education, healthcare and other public services, the income disparity within the society prevents inclusion of new migrants into the urbanized environments of cities.

On the other hand, the migration from the rural areas to urban areas continues incrementally, as Todaro (1969) argues, despite existing urban deprivation. Technological developments in communication and transportation facilities govern new flows of population movements. The emergence of migrant networks after the 1960s contributed to increasing levels of migrants in pursuit of higher levels of income and better employment opportunities, by sending information back to their former places of residence and providing help to new migration flows from the same places of origin in terms of employment, housing and integration into the city (İçduygu and Ünalán, 1997). Better and less costly education opportunities in cities for all children gradually became an important motive for individuals and households to move and stay in the urban centers starting with the late 1970s. Thus, migrants tended to tolerate problems in the urban areas in the short-run in order to live under better conditions in the long-run. Peker (1999) refers to migration movements in the 1960s and 1970s as “hope culture” for prosperity, welfare and flourishing.

Internal migration in the period of the 1960s to the 1980s was obviously dominated by pull factors of the urban centers. Remaining income disparity between the rural and the urban areas, increasing attractiveness of cities in providing economic and social opportunities, advance communication and transportation facilities, and creation of migrant networks in cities are the major pull factors for population movements.

During this period, patterns of internal migration began to change. In the 1940s-1950s, migration movements were directed from villages to town or city centers (rural-to-urban). However, from the 1960s onwards town-to-town, town-to-city and city-to-city routes became new migration patterns. At the end of the 1970s, urban-to-urban migratory flows became the dominant pattern (Gedik, 1996).

There was a significant decrease in the ratio of the rural population from 74 percent to 55 percent between 1960 and 1980, whereas the ratio of the urban population almost doubled from 26 percent to 45 percent in the 1990s (DİE, 1996). This is also visible in the decline of population growth rates in the rural areas from 17 per mille in 1965 to 13 per mille in 1980. Interestingly, there was a slight increase in the urban population growth rates from 40 per mille in 1965 to 50 per mille in 1980, but then the trend reverses and the growth rate decreases to 30 per mille in 1980 (Censuses, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980). This can be interpreted as the effect of waves of international labor migration to Europe.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that from the 1960s onwards, international migratory movements considerably increased in Turkey.

### 3.3. The 1980s-1990s Period

The 1980s and the 1990s indicates a new phase of development and restructuring for Turkish economy and society. The modernization process of Turkey within the context of globalization is critical for the role of development on internal migration. Security, ideology and political concerns emerge as main features of increasing internal, as well as international migratory movements in the context of globalization (İçduygu and Sirkeci, 1999).

During the 1980s, Turkish economy was subjected to rapid liberalization and further privatization of sectors. There was a shift from the previous ISI policies to export-led growth model in the economy. Turkey achieved extensive growth rates through industrial production. Yet, the agricultural sector continues to receive lower subsidization and less support from the state in this period. This sectoral imbalance was also reflected in the patterns of income distribution. As a consequence, the disparity and the gap between different social classes increased substantially (Pamuk, 2007).

Reorganizing the social structure to promote liberal markets, open economy and modernization transforms migration patterns. Individualization of social relations is reflected in the decision making processes of migrants. Decisions are taken at the micro-level after the 1980s as opposed to the prior periods of internal migration (Tekeli, 2008).

Furthermore, transmitting factors of the modern era are definitive on the new patterns of internal migration in Turkey. Continuous development of communication and transportation facilities, further integration to the international system and spreading influence of individualization clearly affect social and political life in Turkey. Individuals have become politically and economically more active, which brings about a critical role for NGOs in the social structure (Zürcher, 1993). Thus, employment and income concerns are not the mere driving forces of population movements after the 1980s. High politicization of the society and increasing security threats in the certain parts of Anatolia are central themes of migration in this period (İçduygu and Ünalın, 1997).

Additionally, the distinction between forced and voluntary migration has emerged after 1980 with rising security concerns as the cause of migration. Social unrest, political uncertainty, declining protection of life and property, and almost-war environment of the Eastern and the South Eastern provinces of Anatolia have triggered new waves of migration to the Western regions of Turkey, especially en route to big cities like Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Mersin, Adana and Bursa. In this context, already existing social, economic and urban problems in cities has been exacerbated in the globalization era.

Statistics demonstrate that the ratio of the urban population supersedes the rural population starting from the mid-1980s. The ratio of the rural population declined to 45 percent in 1985 and to 41 percent in 1990. More than half of the population has been living in the cities or urban areas in general after the 1990s (DİE, 1996). However, the urban population growth rate has not increased substantially after the 1980s with the exception of 1985, and the population growth in general has gradually slowed down in the era of globalization. In 1985, the urban population growth rate was 60 per mille, which can be interpreted through an increasing volume of internal migration due to political and security concerns. Furthermore this year, the average urban population growth rate was 40 per mille for the 1980s and the 1990s. Stabilization of population growth rates can be a result of changing trends in migration from rural-to-urban to urban-to-urban migration, which obviously does not influence the urban population (Censuses, 1980, 1985, 1990).

### 4. Conclusion

There have been significant changes in political, economic and social structures in Turkey throughout history, which inherently affect and are affected by development, urbanization, and modernization processes. The Turkish economy has been totally transformed from traditional agricultural modes of production in the rural areas with protected markets of étatiste policies in the urban areas. Table 1 shows that the urban population ratios have more than doubled from 24 percent in 1927 to 64 percent in 2000.

As intervening obstacles are removed by a more advanced transportation, communication and technological infrastructure, both routes and motives of internal migration are being diversified in the early periods 21<sup>st</sup> century. Although economic concerns dominate the significant portion of the migratory movements, people are more courageous to move for individual appetites.

Education is one of the central themes for both internal and international migration movements, since it is seen as the key to access more employment opportunities, better social conditions/status and individual flourishing. As the quality of education changes across regions, internal migration becomes more persistent on that issue. Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir are common destination points for educational migrants since they provide more opportunities for attaining higher degrees of education.

Similarly, healthcare is a rising trend for stimulating both internal and international migration movements. Especially elderly people prefer 'sun-migration' to improve their life conditions after their retirement. Cities like Antalya and Muğla, which are in the Southern parts of Anatolia, have been attracting more migrants of that type in the 2000s.

Lastly, environmental factors are emerging as motivators of migration. Industrialization, urbanization and climate change affects lives of people detrimentally, so that people are forced to leave their homelands. Like security concerns, destructive environmental change is becoming a critical for forced migration.

### 5. Tables and Figures

**Table 1: The Urban and the Rural Population Ratios in Turkey: 1927-2000**

Census Years	Urban %	Rural %
1927	24,22	75,78
1935	23,53	76,47
1940	24,39	75,61
1945	24,94	75,06
1950	25,04	74,96
1955	28,79	71,21
1960	31,92	68,08
1965	34,42	65,58
1970	38,45	61,55
1975	41,81	58,19
1980	43,91	56,09
1985	53,03	46,97
1990	59,01	40,99
2000	64,90	35,10

*Source: Censuses*

**Table 2: The Urban and the Rural Population Growth Rates in Turkey**

Census Years	Urban %O	Rural %O
1935	0,017	0,022
1940	0,027	0,017
1945	0,015	0,009
1950	0,022	0,021
1955	0,056	0,017
1960	0,049	0,020
1965	0,040	0,017
1970	0,047	0,013
1975	0,042	0,014
1980	0,030	0,013
1985	0,063	-0,011
1990	0,043	-0,006
2000	0,028	0,028

*Source: Censuses*

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