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**THE IMPACT OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS ON THE LGBTI+ ORGANIZATIONS IN
TURKEY**

Funda KARABACAK

117608005

DR. ÖĞR. ÜYESİ BÜKE BOŞNAK

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The Impact of the Refugee Crisis on the LGBTI+ Organizations in Turkey

Mülteci Krizinin Türkiye'deki LGBTİ+ Derneklerine Etkisi

Funda Karabacak

117608005

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Büke Boşnak (İmza):
İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi

Jüri Üyesi: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Özge Onursal-Beşgül (İmza):
İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi

Doç. Dr. Gözde Yılmaz (İmza):
Atılım Üniversitesi

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ABSTRACT

When peaceful demonstrations escalated into bloody conflicts in 2011, mass flows of people started to flee Syria and sought asylum in neighbouring countries. Hosting the largest refugee population, Turkey, plays a critical role in the so-called refugee crisis¹ both as a neighbouring state and a strategic partner in the Syrian Civil War. Furthermore, turbulent political climate that curbs human rights and freedom of speech along with the growing Islam-based politics leads into targeting of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey. This research, therefore, aims to give insight into the intersection of two groups, LGBTI+ and refugee communities to provide a distinctive approach in the literature.

This research intends to understand the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. Three main points form the basis of the research: understanding the relationship between refugee crisis and organizational structure within the LGBTI+ organizations, assessing the changes in relation to organizational structure and agenda-setting and lastly the result of this change based on temporal dimension.

Based on Wong's conceptualization, this research defines organizational structure as distribution of agenda-setting power and analyses this concept through three components: proposal power, enforcement power and lastly implementation. It intends to contribute to the literature within empirical setting in Turkey-context. Turkey is an interesting case in terms of LGBTI+ organizations due to the male-dominated and Islam-based values of the society and diminishing importance given to the human rights.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted as the method of data collection since they provide both more planned and flexible environment. Similarly, snowball sampling was used in order to contact the interviewees. Lastly, thematic analysis was used to evaluate the collected data.

The results suggest that LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey are likely to have decentralized structure and have not gone through structural change following the so-called refugee crisis. On this basis, capacity of the organizations, dominant informal relations and political climate should be taken into consideration when analysing the structure of the organizations.

¹ The term "so-called refugee crisis" is used to avoid claiming the refugees as the cause of the current political crisis.

ÖZET

2011 yılında barışçıl gösterilerin iç çatışmaya dönüşmesiyle birlikte yoğun bir insan grubu Suriye'den kaçarak komşu ülkelere sığınmaya başlamıştır. En büyük mülteci popülasyonuna sahip olan Türkiye, hem komşu ülke olduğu hem de Suriye İç Savaşı'nda stratejik partner olduğu için mülteci krizinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Bununla birlikte, Türkiye'de İslami bakış açısıyla şekillenen politikaların artmasıyla azalan insan hakları ve ifade özgürlüğünün hakim olduğu siyasi iklim LGBTİ+ hareketinin hedef gösterilmesine sebep olmaktadır. Bu sebeple, bu araştırma LGBTİ+lar ve mülteciler olmak üzere iki grubun kesişim noktasına ilişkin bilgi vererek literatürde farklı bir bakış açısı sağlamayı hedeflemektedir.

Bu araştırma mülteci krizinin Türkiye'deki LGBTİ+ derneklerinin örgütsel yapısını nasıl etkilediğini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmanın temeli üç ana unsurdan oluşmaktadır: mülteci krizi ve LGBTİ+ dernekleri arasındaki ilişkiyi anlamak, derneklerin örgütsel yapıları ve gündem belirleme süreçlerine ilişkin değişiklikleri değerlendirmek ve son olarak zamansal boyutta bu değişimin sonuçlarını ortaya koymaktır.

Wong'un teorisi üzerine kurulan bu araştırma, örgütsel yapıyı gündem belirleme gücünün dağılımı olarak tanımlamakta ve bu kavramı teklif gücü, veto gücü ve son olarak uygulama olmak üzere üç öge üzerinden incelemektedir. Bu araştırma, Türkiye bağlamında literatüre katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Türkiye'de toplumsal değerlerin erkek egemen ve İslami bakış açısıyla şekillenmesi ve insan haklarına verilen önemin gittikçe azalması sebebiyle, Türkiye'nin LGBTİ+ dernekleri hususunda önemli bir örnek teşkil ettiği düşünülmektedir.

Veri toplamak amacıyla yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler tercih edilmiştir. Bunun sebebi, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerin araştırma için hem daha planlı hem daha rahat bir ortam sağlamasıdır. Benzer bir şekilde, görüşmecilerle bağlantı kurmak için kartopu örnekleme kullanılmış ve son olarak toplanılan veri tematik analiz yöntemiyle değerlendirilmiştir.

Araştırma sonuçları Türkiye'deki LGBTİ+ derneklerinin merkezi olmayan bir yapıya eğilimli olduğunu ve mülteci krizinden sonra örgütsel yapılarında bir değişim gözlemlenmediğini tespit etmiştir. Bu bağlamda, derneklerin kapasitesi, dernek içindeki resmi olmayan ilişkiler ve siyasi iklimin örgütsel yapıda önemli faktörler olduğu değerlendirilmiştir.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)
CAT	Campaign Against Torture
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHP	Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)
EU	European Union
HDP	People's Democratic Party (Halkın Demokratik Partisi)
LGBTI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex
LGBTTQQIAAP	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Ally, Pansexual
METU	Middle East Technical University
SPOD	Social Policies, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association (Sosyal Politikalar Cinsiyet Kimliği ve Cinsel Yönelim Çalışmaları Derneği)
USA	United States of America

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives introductory information about the framework of the research. The aim of this chapter is to provide background on the research topic to explain why it is important and which concepts are discussed to achieve research objectives. It is composed of six sections: topic and context, research question and objectives, terms and concepts and overview of the structure. First, topic and context of the research will be discussed to give insight into the empirical setting.

1.1 Topic and Context

Over the last decades, the LGBTI+ movement has become prominent in the literature. In line with increasing LGBTI+ inclusion in politics, there is a growing body of literature that recognises the importance of broader changes in human rights and equality. As the LGBTI+ movement has gradually broadened in time, it has shaped dozens of states all around the world in many different ways. The movement dates back to the late 1960s in the USA when the well-known Stonewall Uprising marked a significant turning point for LGBTI+ equality. Stonewall Inn, which was a haven for the LGBTI+ community in New York suddenly became the place where a series of demonstrations were held to protest police raid. Since then, the LGBTI+ movement has been known as an inseparable part of human rights and equality. Today, the human rights of LGBTI+ individuals are protected under international human rights law. However, the far-reaching efforts to end the discrimination against LGBTI+ individuals are not the consequence of the butterfly effect. The transnational dynamics of the movement allows for an extensive mobilization reaching across national borders. As Clavin (2005) states, it is “a structure that shapes both international and local institutions and particular and geographic space”. Hence, it can be understood that the LGBTI+ movement is beyond the national borders today and creates a common sense of solidarity among hundreds of civil society actors all over the world. Nevertheless, the achievement in the work of LGBTI+ equality is not parallel to common aims. The reason for this stems from the differences in the political, social and cultural context of the states. In this view, it can be said that the states where cultural and social factors predominantly play an important role in politics are less likely to move the LGBTI+ movement forward.

Turkey is an interesting case in terms of the LGBTI+ movement. On the one hand, it has an expanding LGBTI+ community that strives to engage in a challenging struggle confronting social and cultural values at the societal level. On the other hand, the increasingly repressive political atmosphere curbs human rights and freedom of speech, thus enhancing the vulnerability of the LGBTI+ community. As distinct from the other Muslim-majority states, different sexual

orientations and identities are not criminalized in Turkey. However, it neither guarantees the basic human rights of LGBTI+ individuals nor reduces smear campaigns to demonize their identities. LGBTI+ movement in Turkey is directly related to the political atmosphere both on a domestic and international level. Strong state tradition shaped with dominant Islamic values restrains the sphere of civil society, therefore leading to inevitable human rights violations on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (Arat 1999) (Heper 1985) (Keyder 1997).

According to an online survey held between December 2015 and January 2016, 22 per cent of respondents in Turkey strongly believes that being LGBTI+ should be a crime (Statista 2016). It is not a coincidence when anti-LGBTI+ discourse is taken into consideration. Rising conservatism which coincides with increasing visibility on LGBTI+ rights has caused a remarkable change in terms of human rights and freedom of speech in Turkey (Yılmaz and Göçmen 2016). It is seen that the LGBTI+ community is constantly targeted by political actors and threatened with smear campaigns. The prevailing climate of fear and intimidation hampers the efforts of the LGBTI+ movement as activists and civil society actors are likely to face charges (Amnesty International 2018). Having LGBTI+ identity is seen as a threat to the unity of the Turkish state since it is associated with deviance and degeneration of the society. Politicizing the advancement of LGBTI+ rights, the Turkish government increasingly attacks the LGBTI+ community in the hope of gaining the votes of the conservatives and maintaining its power (Yuksel 2020). Nevertheless, the LGBTI+ movement pays a lot of efforts to deal with peaking discrimination and hate speech. Despite all forms of hate speech and discrimination, the LGBTI+ movement plays an active role in the politics and spreads its norms. This can be seen in the case of the recent protests at Bogazici University, one of the most prestigious universities in Turkey. The protests which began following President Erdogan's appointment of a new rector grew violent after four students were arrested on the ground that they undermined national and religious values with an image combining the LGBTI+ flag with Islamic site (BBC News 2021). Also, Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu referred to protesting students as "deviants" by justifying the police violence and unlawful arrests (Euronews 2021). As a result of smear campaigns, Bogazici University LGBTI+ Studies Club was shut down.

Another important factor that plays an important role in the sphere of civil society in Turkey is the mass migration of refugees from Syria. When peaceful demonstrations escalated into deadly conflicts in 2011, mass flows of people started to flee Syria and sought asylum in neighbouring countries. However, there is no end in sight after the 10th year of the civil war which left more than 380,000 people dead (France 24 2020). Moreover, Turkey plays a crucial role as both a

neighbouring country hosting the largest number of the refugee population and a strategic partner in the Syrian Civil War. Nevertheless, this unprecedented situation led to a crisis due to the lack of responsibility sharing among the states and the legal loophole regarding refugees and migrants in Turkey. The geographical limitation in the Refugee Convention of 1951 along with Protocol 1967 leads to ambiguity concerning the full protection of the refugees in Turkey. According to this limitation, only those coming from Europe are considered refugees and asylum seekers. Even though Syrian refugees were eventually granted temporary protection following the adaptation of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection Act in 2013, it is not sufficient to meet the needs of the refugee population. Therefore, civil society actors have taken actions to provide assistance and “fill the vacuum in the field” stemming from inadequate governmental support for those out of the camps (Mackreath and Sağnıç 2017). Responding to the so-called crisis in a challenging environment, civil society has encountered many issues such as language barrier, ambiguous legal procedures, and a massive number of people in need. However, the local and international networks enable them to provide funding and assistance to meet the needs of the refugees.

How are these different concepts, LGBTI+ community and refugee crisis, mutually intertwined in the Turkey context? The answer also reveals one of the research contributions to the literature. Despite the restrained sphere of civil society and widespread anti-LGBTI+ discourse in domestic politics, LGBTI+ organizations endeavour to raise awareness and strengthen the LGBTI+ community. In this regard, it is significant to find out how they survive amid a lot of concerns. On the other hand, the mass migration of refugees has remarkably influenced the civil society in Turkey owing to the lack of governmental support. Besides, having both LGBTI+ and refugee identities increases the vulnerability of the groups since there are critical legal limitations regarding sexual orientation and gender identity which paves the way for unequal treatment and discrimination. Civil society actors also lack the comprehensive and broad approach to meet the specific needs of LGBTI+ individuals. Hence, it can be stated that the intersection of these groups creates a noteworthy approach in the literature since both groups have limited access to basic human rights in the Turkey context. In this vein, it is crucial to comprehend the key role of the LGBTI+ organizations in the so-called refugee crisis to address the needs of the LGBTI+ refugees in the meantime of an unstable political atmosphere.

Intersectionality is an important concept to link two groups, LGBTI+s and refugees, and create a better understanding by including experience of those from various backgrounds in the research topic. Intersectionality is “a form of critical praxis that refers to the ways in which people are part

of an intersectional framework in their daily lives” (Collins and Sirma, Intersectionality 2016). Coined by Crenshaw (1989), it aims to understand different dynamics of power and privilege, therefore expanding the definition of gender (Hawkesworth and Disch 2016). Establishing a more inclusive approach in the literature, it provides a wider perspective by taking multidimensional factors such as race, social class, age, sexual orientation and ableness into account (Shields 2008). It also plays an vital role in addressing the problems LGBTI+ refugees face because of the intertwined identities increasing their vulnerability. Similarly, this research seeks to use the concept of the intersectionality in terms of the power relations incorporated into different identities (Collins 1990).

This research intends to focus on LGBTI+ organizations and find out how their organizational structure functions after the so-called refugee crisis. The reason why organizational structure is chosen as a unit of analysis can be explained threefold. First, there is no previous research on the organizational structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey although the LGBTI+ movement has been gradually adopted in the literature. However, it is possible to understand how the LGBTI+ organizations have grown over the last decades only when there is sufficient information about organizational structure. Second, the organizational structure gives insights into the relationship between organizational aims and organizational efforts to understand how they gain visibility and accomplishment. Therefore, it is an effective approach to explore the roots of the LGBTI+ movement. Third, it is intriguing to learn how environmental factors can involve in the organizational structure, therefore bringing about a great change in the agenda of the organizations. The organizations are not autonomous entities, they represent the mingled aspects of politics at both domestic and international level. Hence, they can be easily influenced by the environment and grow into bigger or smaller structures. Similarly, it greatly contributes to the literature to perceive the intersection of the so-called refugee crisis which is regarded as a highly critical stage in the recent history and LGBTI+ movement as they suffer from the ambiguous political atmosphere.

In the next section, the discussion will be extended to find out the basis of the research question and find out the objectives of the research.

1.2 Research Question and Objectives

One of the major political controversies to be investigated in Turkey is the growth of the LGBTI+ movement and conservative domestic politics concurrently. Anti-LGBTI+ discourse has increasingly been used by local political actors, not only from the ruling AKP party but also from

opposition parties. Despite the rising authoritarian and repressive local politics threatening all forms of human rights, especially on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, LGBTI+ organizations have succeeded in raising their voice and increasing their visibility. However, it does not change the fact that the LGBTI+ community is at great risk today due to the mounting hostile attitude. In this regard, it is of importance to examine the relationship between their organizational structure and achievement. The main reason behind the fulfilment of organizational aims can be only understood by investigating their organizational structure since it forms the basis of the policy-making mechanism.

The emergence of the massive flows of unprotected refugees as a result of wrong policies conducted by both domestic and international political actors has revealed another critical problem. Due to the reluctant and irresponsible attitude at the political level, civil society actors and activists from various areas had to take an active role to help refugees in need. Therefore, it is significant to consider how the mass migration has transformed the organizations, especially LGBTI+ organizations already facing remarkable opposition surge. For this reason, it can be stated that it will present a different perspective concerning the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey.

This research aims to find out the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. Hence, the research question can be formed as “how does mass migration of the refugees affect the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey?” The objectives of the research question can be explained threefold. The first objective is to understand the intersection of two vulnerable groups that are largely ignored by the political actors. It is known that discrimination and harassment against the LGBTI+ community have skyrocketed over the last years because of the Islam-based right politics of the ruling government. Similarly, the same political stance has led to massive human rights violations of refugees who have fled war-town Syria. It should also be stated that legal and political loopholes worsen the vulnerability of refugees due to the lack of protection. The second objective of the research is to find out how the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations affects their politics. To gain strength and fulfil organizational targets in a difficult political environment, LGBTI+ organizations have to design an efficacious structure. Therefore, it is critical to examine how the structure is related to the political success and visibility of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. The third objective serves to describe the importance of the environmental factors on the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations. Even though all the organizations have particular aims to realize, they cannot be separated from the environment. Since anti-LGBTI+ discourse is inherent in domestic politics in Turkey, the agenda of the LGBTI+ organizations is on the continuous change. The limited sphere for activism can be widened or

restricted depending on the current agenda. Hence, it is noteworthy to dwell on the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations.

LGBTI+ organizations have been witnessing difficulty in the aftermath of the mass migration of the refugees because of the inadequate protection policies and legislation in Turkey. Therefore, this research argues that LGBTI+ organizations which have provided support for refugees have experienced structural change. As stated above, the latest rise in hate speech and scapegoating of the LGBTI+ community threaten the basic human rights and freedom of association in Turkey. Despite the serious situation and political threats, they show solidarity with LGBTI+ refugees who are deprived of the most basic human rights. For this reason, how the LGBTI+ organizations adjust their structure to the environment which was stricken by the so-called refugee crisis affects the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations and leads into a change on the agenda.

To develop an analytical frame, a conceptual grounding should be formed. This research is based on Wong's conceptualization of organizational structure to observe the structural change of the LGBTI+ organizations following the so-called refugee crisis. According to Wong, the organizational structure is the distribution of agenda-setting power and analysis of three main components of the organizational structure (Wong 2012).

As Wong describes organizational structure more broadly by intermingling different theoretical perspectives, it can provide a rich understanding of the concept of the organization. Moreover, Wong focuses on organizational aims to understand the success of the organizational policies and mechanism. Today, being the target of the political actors in Turkey, LGBTI+ organizations have grown larger thanks to the consistent policies to realize their organizational aims. Another reason why Wong's conceptualization fits in this research is the emphasis on the political context. In Turkey where the concern of human rights is highly politized, the stance of LGBTI+ organizations can only be understood from a political point of view. Lastly, the importance attributed to the informal relations in the organizational structure also yields a more comprehensive approach, therefore viewing the organizations more than formal institutions. In Turkey, informal relations and solidarity among civil society actors are common due to the lack of governmental support.

It can be inferred from this section that the research question is formed on several objectives and conceptual groundings which reveal the significance of the research topic in Turkey context. The intersection of two groups, the LGBTI+ community and refugees, which are acutely neglected by the political actors creates a distinctive perspective in the literature. In the next section, the relevance and contribution of this research topic will be discussed.

1.3 Relevance and Contribution of the Research

It is known that research topic should be significant in the given context and contribute to the literature in order to advance discussions both at an academic and societal level. Conducting research allows uttering the concerns and issues that are mostly ignored and opens up new space to develop distinctive perspectives. Why is the research question relevant in Turkey context? There are several reasons concerning various issues as the research aims to present an intersectional and interdisciplinary approach.

As mentioned above, scapegoating and targeting of LGBTI+ community have been a predominantly serious problem in Turkey. Different from neighbouring European countries, the situation of the LGBTI+ community is at stake in Turkey owing to the promotion of conservative politics and national values. Considered as important policy-making entities, LGBTI+ organizations face constant threats and discrimination. However, it cannot be only reduced to rising conservatism and Islam-based policies of the ruling government. It also stems from the powerful politics LGBTI+ organizations have developed over the past years. Increasing visibility and dynamic activism have resulted in being the target of the political actors. Therefore, it is of much significance to understand the functioning of the notable policy-making mechanism, which can be described as organizational structure in this research.

Hosting the largest population of refugees in the world, Turkey is inevitably forced to tackle the crisis that leaves thousands unprotected and vulnerable. However, it is important to consider that the vulnerability of the people from the same disadvantaged group differs due to the overlapping identities. LGBTI+ refugees face more challenges since they are easily targeted especially during the time of conflicts. Therefore, an intersectional approach should be used to provide a more comprehensive understanding. In this vein, this research is relevant since it locates the LGBTI+ refugees in the centre of the so-called refugee crisis by denoting solidarity with local LGBTI+ organizations, especially in Turkey which ranks as the second-worst country for LGBTI+s (Bianet 2020).

Another notable aspect concerning the relevance of the research is Turkey's role as a transition country and interim spot for LGBTI+ refugees and asylum-seekers from Middle East countries. Regardless of the restraining political atmosphere, Turkey has been hosting LGBTI+s long before the beginning of the so-called refugee crisis (Leghtas and Sullivan 2016). Therefore, Turkey presents a special case in terms of migration and asylum-seeking of LGBTI+s. This gives a significant advantage because the research yields a noteworthy perspective by investigating the

concept of migration in an intersectional way and prioritizing the experience of LGBTI+ refugees from different backgrounds.

How does the research contribute to the literature? Although the LGBTI+ movement plays a leading role in human rights-based activism, few studies have focused on its transformative power in domestic politics. Since this research examines the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations, it highlights the importance of their role as a policy-making mechanism. As the harsh crackdown on LGBTI+ activism puts the lives of thousands in danger and threatens the existence of the LGBTI+ community, it is more important to figure out how they design their organizational structure to spread their norms and increase their political salience.

The key contribution of this research is the comprehensive and intersectional perspective it provides by linking two groups, LGBTI+s and refugees. There is no previous research on the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the LGBTI+ organizations even though it has been a major problem over the last years due to the lack of durable solutions provided by political actors. For this reason, it is crucial to examine the crisis through the experience of the individuals and give voice to those who are neglected. Despite the political oppression and restrained sphere of activism, the efforts of the LGBTI+ community to fill the vacuum in the field of migration is remarkable to observe. Apart from the literature gap, the question of the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the LGBTI+ organizations also points out the gaps in the field and allows for a better solution and amelioration of the current situation. It is aimed to motivate more discussion by prompting further question in this under-researched topic.

In the light of what is stated above, it can be concluded that this research aims to provide new angles in the literature by filling the gap and asking the relevant questions in the Turkey context. All of these aspects make it particularly valuable in both the literature and the field. It is crucial to associate the problems observed in the field with the literature to enrich discussion and develop well-posed solutions. Particularly in Turkey where the LGBTI+ movement has become the centre of political struggle more strongly than before; it is an empowering act to demonstrate the structural features of the LGBTI+ organizations and the intersection of LGBTI+s and refugees. In the next section, terms and concepts that are widely used in the research will be explained.

1.4 Terms and Concepts

This research tackles a highly controversial topic which is the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. In order to fulfil the research aims, a suitable and inclusive language should be employed. As it is intended to represent the communities

through their own subjective experience, any kind of misunderstanding and exclusive approach should be avoided in this research. For this reason, two sensitive terms, LGBTI+ and refugee crisis, will be thoroughly evaluated with their conceptual grounding.

1.4.1 LGBTI+ Organizations

There are several debates on a politically correct term of gender identity and sexual orientation. It is seen that LGBTI+ studies and queer theory differ in terming this concept even though they both share the aim of liberation from heteronormativity and give an ear to minority suppressed under the hegemony of the socially constructed gender roles (Lovaas, Elia and Yep 2012). Sedgwick postulates that LGBTI+ studies emphasize the distinction between homosexuality and heterosexuality rather than disrupting (Gamson 1995-1998) (Sedgwick 1990). However, queer theorists criticize the rigid categorization of sexual identities. (Jagose 1996) (Parker 2002). In this context, dissimilarity essentially derives from the theoretical standpoint. Queer theory is shaped within post-modernism which inquires essentialism and critical analysis of gender (Lovaas, Elia and Yep 2012). On the other hand, LGBTI+ studies are more aligned with modernism giving importance to the reliable and scientifically approved discourse of the notions related to social identity (Seidman 1993). Given this difference, queer theory is mostly related to humanities; while LGBTI+ studies are analysed under the social sciences (Dean 2008).

Queer theory is seen as insufficient to suggest concrete solutions and integrate the theoretical base into political mobilization despite being radical and challenging (C. Cohen 1997) (Parnaby 1996). Similarly, LGBTI+ studies are criticized as being limited to provide social change (Kirsch 2010). Furthermore, queer theory questions normalization of the difference and cultural barriers; bringing a progressive approach to established notions (Ghosh 2015) while LGBTI+ studies embrace the differences among various gender identities, dividing them into the acronym.

The question marks are raised when it comes to the most inclusive acronym: the ever-expanding acronym LGTBTTQQAAP stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, ally, pansexual (Keilty 2009) (Walsh 2018). Nonetheless, “LGBTI+” is used as an umbrella term to include all identities since it is noticeably impractical to use the former. As Herek states, the expansion of this acronym also broadens the conceptualization and inclusiveness of the theory (Herek 2010). In other words, the term “LGBTI+” is not restrictive but flexible as it prioritizes the visibility of every identity.

In this research, the term “LGBTI+” is preferred as it is predominantly used in an organizational context as a part of social sciences. The concept “queer” is more associated with identity and

radical transformation of the norm of gender. Although this study does not maintain a stance against queer theory and related de-constructivist approaches, it aims to understand how it is mainly tackled in the literature. It must be noted that both of the concepts might be interchangeably used by some scholars (Williams and Giuffre 2011) (Ghosh 2015) (Ward 2008). In reviewing the literature, it is yet concluded that “LGBTI+ organization” is more located in the organizational context (Kenix ve Abikanlu 2016) (Parkin 2018) (Cannon 2019) (Currier 2010) (Holzhacker 2012) (Paternotte 2016). Even though most of the scholars prefer “LGBT”, a more inclusive term “LGBTI+” is used in this thesis. It must be also remembered that scholars should find a middle ground for LGBTI+ and queer theories instead of separating them.

The usage of the umbrella term, LGBTI+, is highly problematic in Turkey since it is mostly used to demonize LGBTI+s with hateful and discriminative language. One of the most recent examples of the demonization of the LGBTIs can be seen in the arrest of 4 students for undermining religious and national values with an image combining the LGBTI+ flag with the Islamic site. The opposition party leaders stayed silent or avoided using the term LGBTI+ in their statements whereas political actors from the ruling AKP party accused the protestors of being “LGBT youth” (McKernan 2021). This example illustrates that even using the term LGBTI+ in Turkey has political implications. Associated with being “pervert”, “shameful”, “Western puppet”, the term LGBTI+ is used as an insult to change the general perception of the public. Therefore, it has a powerful impact to use this politicized term in this research to improve the discussions in the literature.

In the next section, another term that forms the basis of the research, refugee crisis, will be discussed to relate the conceptual discussions to the empirical setting.

1.4.2 Refugee Crisis

One of the most challenging discussions in the literature is the correct usage of the term describing the humanitarian crisis in the aftermath of bloody conflicts in Syria. The Syrian Civil War did not only result in a massive flow of people seeking a safe place, but also with the confusion of correct language which remains unclarified. 2015 was marked as one of the most catastrophic periods in terms of humanitarian conditions due to the peak of the number of people reaching Mediterranean shores and approximately 3,770 deaths. (IOM UN, 2015). This situation revived a serious debate over the correct naming of the crisis. It is known that several terms are used to refer to this issue such as refugee crisis, migrant crisis, the EU refugee crisis, Mediterranean migrant crisis that may

highlight different frames. (Goodman, Sirriyeh and McMahon 2017) (Chong and Druckman 2007) (Entman 1993)

The difference between “migrant” and “refugee” initiates the discussion related to correct usage of terms. According to UNHCR, “migrants move because of the economic factors as well as education, family reunion or other similar reasons while refugees flee armed conflict or persecution and it is perilous for them to return home” (UNHCR 2016). Moreover, the usage of terms is differentiated as the migrant crisis or the refugee crisis, thus causing various arguments in the literature.

Migration is preferred since it is regarded as an umbrella concept including both voluntary and forcible movement. (Garkisch and Heidingsfelder 2017). The trigger behind movement might be caused by several dimensions, leaving question marks to classify the aim of the people. The migration also refers to general European border policies and everyday practices, highlighting the importance of main reasons leading people to risk their lives (Jeandesboz ve Pallister-Wilkins 2016). Differentiating “refugee” from “migrant” also privileges the former and reinforces negative stereotypes of the latter. This distinction problematizes third-country national migration to Europe, undermining the severe conditions people face. (Kriakides 2016). It should also be noted that individuals have been driven out of their homes by economic desperation which is produced by political forces. The idea of voluntary economic migrant dislodges the economic inequalities that push people to survive (Holmes ve Castaneda 2016). Similarly, Carling articulates that the ambiguous line dividing refugees and migrants involves more details than it is generally stated; he later emphasizes the necessity to embrace a more inclusive meaning of migrants (Carling 2015). Similarly, Memmott claims that migrant fits for all the people coming for various reasons as it is not possible to put the people into categories. (Memmott and Jensen 2015)

A refugee is a person who cannot return home or access rights protected by a state (Long 2013). It is claimed that referring to refugees as migrants leads to negligence of the real situation of the refugees. Former Assistant High Commissioner for Protection at UNHCR Erika Feller states that confusing two groups is detrimental to refugee protection (Feller 2005). The underprivileged refugees cannot fully benefit from their rights given that they are considered migrants who are on the move to seek economic opportunities. Furthermore, many politicians in Europe deliberately prefer to refer to the majority of the people as migrants since countries are free to deport migrants which can result in unfair treatment against refugees (Malone 2015) (Sengupta 2015). Therefore, the “refugee crisis” should be used to legitimize their rights for protection by following more inclusive policies. Even though the concept of migrant may refer to various groups of people under

the same category, it does not invalidate the disadvantaged status of the refugees. Moreover, the crisis followed by the Syrian Civil War is mostly located as the refugee crisis in the literature (Greussing and Boomgaarden 2017) (Van den Berg and Hassink 2015) (Ostrand 2018) (Baban , Rygiel and Ilcan 2016) (Meyer ve Simsa 2018).

Some of the scholars prefer to underline other related factors using the term as “the EU refugee crisis” (Selanec 2015) (van Prooijen, Krouwel and Emmer 2018) (Hadfield and Zwitter 2015) (Niemann and Speyer 2018). However, these articles analyse the crisis in terms of the European context which is not the main focus of this research. Even though the crisis mentioned here is a political crisis that stems from the lack of responsibility sharing among the states, the term “political crisis” cannot be preferred since it is not used as a term in the literature and can be ambiguous to define the current situation in Turkey.

This research aims to employ “refugee crisis” as a term because it directly refers to the group of people who are discussed in this research. The migration does not represent the flow of people fleeing to Turkey due to the Syrian Civil War. Furthermore, using the term “refugee” can also point out the ambiguous status of the refugees in Turkey. Due to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951), Syrians in Turkey cannot be given “refugee” status and can only receive “temporary” protection. However, this situation only causes more vulnerability and human rights violations. Therefore, it is significant to refer them to refugees to reiterate the problems concerning their status in Turkey.

It is also important to notice the difference between groups of people to be the voice of those who cannot speak out. However, it should be stated that alternative terms such as “so-called refugee crisis” or “mass migration of refugees” are also used to avoid claiming the refugees as the cause of the political crisis. It is emphasized in this research that the terms used in literature should be deconstructed to remind who is really in charge of the crisis that left thousands dead.

This section gives an insight into the usage of the terms and their conceptual grounding. Examining a very sensitive topic also brings responsibilities to use correct language. It is concluded that the preferred language should be both inclusive and respectful to give priority to the main groups of the research, LGBTI+s and refugees. This approach is important because using false terms can overshadow the political and social significance of these groups. In the next section, the structure of the research will be viewed.

1.5 Overview of the Structure

The overall goal of this research is to demonstrate the structural change of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. To conduct reliable research, it is crucial to structure the content and avoid any deficiencies. It is also needed to point out the noteworthy stages of the research undertaken based on the theoretical framework. Hence, the outline of the work is provided to summarize the content of the research in this section.

Chapter One involves a brief and informative description of the research question and objectives, relevance and contribution of the research and definition of the main terms. The chapter aims to explain the significance of the research in the Turkey context and maintain the detailed discussion of the argumentation which asserts why LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey have experienced structural change after the so-called refugee crisis.

Chapter Two includes an analytical framework of the research and elaborates on the previous studies and analysis of the gaps in the literature. Furthermore, it relates the conceptual models to the research topic, therefore, explaining the most suitable concept relevant to the research. It also contains the stages of the methodological approach to undertake the research and justification of the preferred methodology. It also covers the evaluation and research limitations to prompt further investigation in the relevant research topic.

Chapter Three consists of the historical background of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey and sheds light on various critical stages in the politics of Turkey. It explains the legal and political reforms that strengthened civil society in Turkey and its impact on the growing LGBTI+ activism. It also dwells on the overview of the current political context in Turkey and its relation with the EU to give a better insight into the research topic. Moreover, it expands on the relationship between the mass migration of Syrian refugees and the LGBTI+ movement and the significance of the intersection of these two groups in the literature.

Chapter Four contains the result of the collected data through semi-structured interviews. The empirical findings are categorized into five relevant sections (organizational aim, political salience, agenda-setting, decision making, the EU factor) to present the empirical findings. Discussions and interpretations of the interviews are included in each section to create a better understanding. The secondary data are also added to enhance the reliability of the findings. The collected data are analysed within the scope of the conceptual background.

Chapter Five includes the last discussion of the research and compares the research objectives and argumentation with the provided data through the case study. It evaluates the content of the research and finalizes it by prompting further questions in the literature.

This research tackles current problems Turkey has been facing lately. Therefore, the research question “how does the so-called refugee crisis affect the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey” is considered noteworthy as it is relevant to the recent political agenda in Turkey. In this research, it is argued that the LGBTI+ organizations have been going through structural change as a result of political and legal loopholes concerning Syrian refugees whose population swiftly increased after the bloody conflicts in Syria.

To undertake reliable research, it is necessary to set the objectives of the research and relate them to the empirical setting. Revision of the literature and identification of the gaps also allow for more elaborate analysis. Similarly, this chapter lays the foundation of the research by outlining the most essential stages of the research and framing the structure in line with the conceptual model. In the next chapter, the theoretical and methodological framework of the research will be established to provide the analytical groundwork.

2. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter focuses on the theoretical and methodological basis of the research to transform the research question into a concrete setting. It consists of two main sections: literature review and methodology. The importance of this chapter can be explained twofold. First, analytical revision of the previous studies and a well-designed methodological approach yield well-structured research. Second, it denotes the distinctiveness of the research and explains how it contributes to the literature. In the following section, the literature review will be conducted in order to elaborate on the previous studies and establish a conceptual foundation for the research question.

2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review sheds light on the previous studies related to the research question, therefore, establishing a connection with the theoretical framework. Furthermore, it enhances the conceptual understanding and deepens the knowledge concerning the research topic. The literature review is fundamentally important to define the focal points of the research aim and find the most salient theory that can be adjusted to the empirical setting. The research question is “how does the so-called refugee crisis affect the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations?”. Three main components form the research question: the organization, organizational structure and how it has been changed following the mass migration of the refugees. Therefore, the literature review is analytically divided into three parts to deeply analyse these concepts: definition of the organization, its relation with the environment and lastly conceptualization of the organizational structure. Additionally, Wong’s conceptualization of the organizational structure which is chosen as the main theoretical approach in the research is discussed in a separate section.

It should be stated why the theoretical perspectives below are particularly involved in the literature review and how they are related to the research question. First, they define the organizations as goal-oriented and rational entities in the pursuit of politically salient aims. Furthermore, they locate the notion of the organization in the environmental framework, thereby, stressing the ability of the environment to change the structure. Moreover, the research mainly investigates the concept of the organization as a political institution and creates a link with environmental factors which is the so-called refugee crisis in this context. Therefore, the theoretical background including the main concepts of the research is remarkably useful as it determines the design to establish the scheme of the empirical setting.

2.1.1 What Is an Organization? A Brief Introduction to Organization Theory

The focus of organization theory is to understand principles, laws, rules and routine that govern organizations and the role of the structure shaped by both internal and external factors (Hatch and Cunliffe 2013). Understanding the concept of the organization through various theoretical perspectives is the main aim of this section as it allows for a comprehensive depiction of the organization, thereby, setting a course for how to understand LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. It is also crucial to highlight the role of the organizations as systemized units aiming to strategically spread their norms other than taking only benevolent actions. In this research, it is fundamentally asserted that organizations primarily need a well-designed structure to realize their aims and they set their priorities accordingly. Therefore, the theories viewing the organizations through this framework creates a bond with the research question.

Considered as a birth of the modern organization theory, Max Weber's conceptualization of bureaucracy dwells on the necessity of bureaucratic organization to ensure stability and more routinized tasks (Anheier 2005) (Weber 1978). Emphasizing three distinctive characteristics of modern bureaucracy (structure, rules and precedents), he wholly shapes the new research on organization studies (Lutzker 1982). Furthermore, Daft (2009) defines the organization as "a social entity which is goal-directed, structured, accordingly operated and linked to the environment". Parallel to this point, Robbins (1990) stresses that the role of the organizations is to realize the goals, with the inseparable help of the people. These perspectives reinforce the main core of the research which examines the organization based on its structure and goals. Additionally, they apply to the empirical setting in Turkey as the LGBTI+ organizations ardently strive for the achievement of their organizational goals.

Turkey presents a specific case in the context of the LGBTI+ movement in line with the definitions above. Despite the positive steps taken at the international level over the last decades, the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey has been increasingly curbed due to the growing Islamic and nationalist values. Nevertheless, it is still preferred as a spot of destination by those coming from other countries where same-sex relations are criminalized. The limited freedom for LGBTI+ people in Turkey stems from the fact that different sexual orientations are not explicitly criminalized within the law (Kara and Çalık 2016). Furthermore, the LGBTI+ movement has gained strength especially in terms of visibility thanks to the vigorous efforts of the organizations in Turkey. Their goal-oriented approach and well-functioning organizational structure have bolstered the LGBTI+ movement despite the political oppression. Therefore, it is significant to understand the role of the organizations to strengthen the LGBTI+ community along with their organizational aims.

Correspondingly, how they manage their structure for such accomplishment is the main concern of the research. Hence, it is ultimately noteworthy to conceive the organization through these perspectives.

Another point emphasized in the research is the political and rational aspect of the organizations. In this respect, the institutionalist approach paves the way for a distinctive viewpoint that focuses on a realistic conceptualization of the organization. Regarded as one of the proponents of organization theory, Selznick explains the importance of values, norms and attitudes as salient cognitive forms for institutionalization (Selznick 1949) (Powell and DiMaggio 1991). He also argues that two factors are frustrating the ideals of the organization: goal displacement and values depletion (Selznick 1949) (Ansar 2017). This approach is associated with political salience and goal-centred organizational structure underlined in the theoretical framework of the research. Contrary to old institutionalism, new institutionalism builds on the argument that modern societies create more rational institutional structures. Furthermore, Meyer and Rowan claim that these rationalized structures arise as a response to the demands of local network, interaction and connection among societal units (Meyer and Rowan 1991). It can also be related to the empirical setting in the research as some of the LGBTI+ organizations seek out ways to help refugees who are not fully protected within the legal framework, therefore, filling the vacuum in the field.

Institutionalism points out the relation between environment and organization as well as their impact on one another. Although the conceptualization of the environment is examined in the following section, it is significant to touch upon environmental aspects in terms of institutionalism. Older institutionalist scholars (Selznick 1949) (Gouldner 1954) (Dalton 1959) (B. R. Clark 1960) postulate that organizations are part of local communities by which they are restrained (Powell and DiMaggio 1991). Put it differently, organizations are co-opted by the environment. The notion of “co-optation” clearly describes the relationship between the organization and the environment which leads to the deflection of the goals and aims within the organization. To survive, the organization needs to adapt to the environment, whereas the necessity to survive could easily turn a different direction of the goals. The “co-optation” stems from strong state tradition in Turkey which dates back to the times of the Ottoman Empire (Heper and Keyman 1998) (Özbudun 1996). In line with this tradition, the Turkish state plays a dominant role in civil society through top-down interventions and narrows down the civil society sphere (Sozen and Shaw 2003). Reinforcing the autonomy over the society as a policy-making mechanism, the Turkish state hinders organizations from realizing their organizational goals. Hence, “co-optation” leads to the “tamed civil society” as a result of the strong state tradition (Yabancı 2019). For instance, the bill allowing to monitor

fundraising activities of the non-governmental organizations was passed on December 19th which will allow for more controlling power over the civil society (Diken 2020). This example serves to portray the current situation of the strong state tradition which has evolved over the last years.

The environment directly “penetrates” the organizations in the new institutionalist approach (Powell and DiMaggio 1991). As Aiken and Hage point out, the organizations are considerably affected by the interaction with the socially constructed environment (Aiken ve Hage 1968) (Boxenbaum and Jonsson 2008). In this context, “environment” does not only refer to the political actors mentioned above but also the current circumstances causing a change in the organizations. The so-called refugee crisis opens a new door into civil society especially when the mass flow of people coming to Turkey is considered. The limited sphere reserved for civil society has been re-organized in a way to be more comprehensive to address the need of the newly emerged community. These theoretical perspectives support the argument that the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations has changed after the so-called refugee crisis, an environmental factor affecting the organizational structure. Since one of the aims is to understand this interplay, both old and new institutionalism enrich the theoretical framework. The notion of the environment will be more elaborately tackled in the following section.

2.1.2 The Relation Between Environment and Organization

As mentioned above, the environment plays an undeniably important role in shaping the structure of the organization. In the same vein, the research question is based on the impact of the mass migration of the refugees on LGBTI+ organization which can be regarded as an example of the relationship between environment and organization. LGBTI+ organizations that have been active for the past decades had to adjust their structure to the current situation which is considered as an environmental factor. In this regard, it is necessary to review various theoretical perspectives relevant to environmental factors to contribute to the analytically conducted research. Therefore, contingency theory is chosen to enrich the conceptual background in the literature review. Contingency theory proposes that structure and organizational process fit environmental factors surrounding the organization itself such as culture, size or problems (Van de Ven and Drazin 1985). As it explores the notion of the organization in line with its environment, contingency theory supports the theoretical framework which forms the basis of the research question. As an inseparable environmental factor, the mass migration of the refugees has been included in the close surrounding of the LGBTI+ organizations and the strategies and actions have appeared to fulfil the new demands and needs. For this reason, contingency theory will be employed in the conceptual understanding of the research topic to associate the notion of the organization with the frame of an

environment. Creating a bond between the so-called refugee crisis and LGBTI+ organizations in the context of the restricted civil society sphere will help analyse and interpret the empirical findings.

The 1950s and 1960s coincided with significant developments in organization theory with great contribution from contingency theorists such as Burns and Stalker (1961), Lawrence and Lorsch (1967a, 1967b) and Woodward (1958). The concept of environment and fit forms the main core of contingency theory. According to this theory, contingencies play an important role in the effective performance of the organization, thus enhancing the necessity to fit into the environment. Furthermore, the strong bond between contingent and organization results in change within the structure (Donaldson 2001) (A. J. Chandler 1962). Embodying a functional approach, contingency theory underlines the fact that each organization's way of management differs since the organizational structure is particularly related with the environmental factors.

Burns and Stalker (1961) introduce two different types of organizations: mechanistic and organic. The mechanistic structure represents a stable environment and hierarchical management while the organic structure displays the opposite: it is more unstable, flexible and characterised by inconsistency due to the rapidly changing environmental factors (Freeman 1969) (Daft 2001). Similarly, Lawrence and Lorsch stress Burns and Stalker's conceptualization of structures adding that efficiency of the organization is observed in the more organic structures that can adapt to the dynamic external environment easily (Lawrence and Lorsch 1967a, 1967b). Similarly, this research aims to understand how the LGBTI+ organizations adapt their structure to the contingents. Stability and instability can also be related to the research topic as the emergence of the contingents can lead LGBTI+ organizations to adopt more stable or unstable features. The balance between stability and instability can be maintained through more centralized or decentralized tendencies within the organizations. At this point, it can be claimed that these theoretical perspectives contribute to a general understanding of the main concepts of the research such as centralization and decentralization.

Depending on the organization, the adaptability to the environment leads to structural changes which might alter the aims and agenda priorities. Similarly, the relationship between the environment and organization is mostly observed in both the theoretical and empirical part of the research. In the next section, the organizational structure will be thoroughly analysed and in terms of the relation between the organization and the environment.

2.1.3 Conceptualization of Organizational Structure

The change of the organizational structure is one of the focal points of the research question. Therefore, the conceptualization of organizational structure is needed to understand what it implies within the framework of organization theory. It should be also stated that organizational structure is profoundly associated with organization theory. As an inseparable part of the organization, the structure is the main element enabling the organization to strategically follow its aims. As highlighted above, the organization is considered as a political and rational entity in this research, therefore, underlining the strong bond between both concepts. What is more, the conceptualization of the organizational structure provides a basis for empirical research as it determines the measurement of the notion of the structure. To understand how to measure the organizational structure of LGBTI+ organizations, the theoretical perspectives explaining determinants of the structure are included in this section.

One of the main components of an organization, organization structure, has been studied by different scholars. According to Duncan, it is a model of interactions and coordination encompassing technology, task environment and human participation to realize the goals of the organization (Duncan 1979). Mintzberg defines the structure of an organization as the sum of the division of labour and coordination of the tasks (Mintzberg 1979). On the other hand, Daft claims that organization structure is comprised of formal relationship, units of departments and finally the design of systems (Daft 2001). Hatch and Cunliffe shortly define the organizational structure as the relationships among units of a system (Hatch and Cunliffe 2013). Taken together all the definitions from different approaches, it can be stated that the structure consists of the core components which enable the organization to work towards its targets.

To understand what lies beyond the organizational structure, it is of much importance to find out the determinants of it. Besides the definitions above, a more elaborative approach is strongly needed to observe the change through the determinants of the organizational structure. In this context, Wong's conceptualization of organizational structure sheds light on the ways through which the organizational structure is examined and forms the basis of this research. She defines the organizational structure as the distribution of agenda-setting power and analyses it through proposal power, enforcement power and implementation (Wong 2012).

The reason why Wong's conceptualization fits in the research better than others is threefold. First, different from other scholars, Wong does not divide the concept of organizations into two as non-profit or for-profit but blends these two concepts to create a more realistic understanding. These

organizations' struggle for survival cannot be reduced to benevolent humanitarian actions without mentioning their organizational aims. These organizations intend to gain strength in civil society with strategically planned organizational targets. Second, previous studies lack the emphasis on politics in the framework of the organizational structure. It should be highlighted that LGBTI+ organizations cannot be separated from the political context in Turkey since they constantly face ever-growing intolerance and smear campaigns from the political actors. The idea of civil society promoting rights on the basis of sexual orientation contradicts with the state aiming to enforce Islam-based politics in Turkey. Third, Wong also gives importance to informal relations which bolster the sense of solidarity among organizations in Turkey. As distinct from the other conceptualizations viewing the organizations as formal entities, Wong's conceptualization of organizational structure emphasizes the horizontal relations which are efficient in the empirical setting. Friendship among the activists plays a significant role in the structural dimensions of the organizations. Conceptualization will be thoroughly reviewed along with its applicability to empirical settings. But the various conceptualizations of organizational structure which have contributed to the development of various approaches will be first viewed.

The 1960s and 1970s are known as golden years of the organization theory with regards to commensuration (Stinchcombe 2015) (Lomi and Harrison 2012). Commensurable dimensions such as standardization, specialization, formalization and centralization come into dialogue, redefining the concept of organization. In *Dimensions of Organization Structure*, five dimensions are introduced to figure out the structures of the organizations (Pugh, et al. 1968).

Inspired by the characteristics of Weber's ideal bureaucracy, these five dimensions are operationalized to measure the structure of the organizations. These dimensions are laid out as specialization, standardization, formalization, centralization and lastly configuration. Specialization refers to the division of labour; various tasks assigned to the personnel. Standardization consists of repeating parts that are integrating into the program and eventually the communication lessens (March ve Simon 1958). Another basic dimension of organizational structure is formalization which set written rules and procedures to govern the organization. The dimension linked with the decision-making unit is centralization, denoting the extent of autonomy within the organization. Being discussed in numerous organizational structure conceptualizations, centralization represents who retains the authority. Lastly, configuration shows the specified organizational roles within the same organization.

Dimensions of the organizational structure are remarkably significant since they assert how to measure the organizational structure. Regarded as one of the most essential conceptualizations of

the organizational structure, it also inspires Wong's theoretical perspective. Dimensions of centralization and decentralization are defined as the main aspects to determine the structure of the organization in this research.

Another important determinant of the organizational structure is defined with the concept of the task environment. The notion of the task environment is defined as "the stimuli that organization reacts to" (Dill 1958). It indicates how the surrounding of the organization affects its progress. The organizational task environment is operated in line with the factors such as uncertainty, stability, complexity and dynamism with which the structure is designed and configured. Once the task environment is determined, characteristics of the environment should be understood for better decision-making.

How does the task environment influence the organizational structure? The structure is designed along with characteristics of the task environment. Duncan (1979) points to the relevance between structure and the environment specifying the concepts of functional and decentralized organization. It is also related to the research question since it indicates the impact of the environment on the organizational structure as it is seen in the empirical setting. The environment which is considered as the refugee crisis in this research plays an important role in the structural change. Therefore, it can be concluded that this interrelation enhances the analytical aspect of the research.

Drawing from mainly for-profit centric theories, Mintzberg's theoretical approach sets forth a particular way to determine the organizational structure. He divides the stages of the organizational structures into five: craft structure, entrepreneurial structure, bureaucratic structure, divisionalized structure and matrix structure (Mintzberg 1979). Stating the probability of applying these stages to non-profit organizations other than for-profits, Mintzberg sees the organizations as growing entities. The organizations come into existence and transform into more complex structures. Not necessarily passing through all of the stages mentioned, the organizations mostly experience similar needs of change, therefore, expanding their frame.

Mintzberg's conceptualization of structures observes the organization through various stages, bringing a realistic point of view into prominence. The structure does not remain stable; it adopts new forms and patterns as it develops. In this respect, this approach creates a tie with the empirical setting. It is also stated in the research that the LGBTI+ organizations go through a structural change that promotes Mintzberg's point of view. In terms of the interaction with an external factor which is the refugee crisis in this context, the LGBTI+ organizations grow into different structural

forms. In the next section, the main theoretical perspective which forms the main core of the research will be analysed.

2.2.4. Wendy Wong's Definition of Organizational Structure

There are divergent approaches to analyse the structural elements of the organizations as discussed above. Preferred approaches and methods might depend on the content and aim of the research, that is, accurate information is only reached out given the research method is elaborately correlated with the question. Similarly, Wong's conceptualization of organizational structure is chosen in this research to evaluate the structural change following the refugee crisis. Accordingly, each organization is observed whether its structure develops into centralized or decentralized forms following the refugee crisis in the framework of political salience. In the methodology section, it will be clarified in more detail.

Wong's conceptualization is chosen to provide a conceptual basis of the research since it makes an original contribution through a political approach. As distinct from traditional approaches of organizational structures setting the political context apart, Wong highlights the political features of the organizations. It is also known that LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey actively participate in political struggles since their existence is threatened due to the restricted civil society sphere. Wong's proposition denotes the fact that organizations intend to be politically salient. However only the ones which can efficiently coordinate their organizational structure become more influential in terms of political salience (Wong, 2012). Accordingly, the balance between centralization and decentralization is of much significance to determine the organizational structure through decision-making mechanism. Albeit limited financial sources and political support, LGBTI+ organizations put in the effort to become salient through their organizational structure in the turbulent political context in Turkey.

Another reason why Wong's conceptualization is preferred as she uses both for-profit and non-profit concepts to distinctively analyse the notion of the organization as a rational entity. Contrary to the common distinction between non-profit and for-profit organizations in the literature, Wong enriches her conceptualization with both approaches. Harmonization of both approaches provides a unique understanding in the literature. Furthermore, Wong stresses the importance of informal relations in effective political salience (Wong 2012). Informal relations gain even more importance in Turkey where the sense of solidarity is bolstered within communication and networking among the organizations. It should be stressed that most of the organizations included in the empirical research are relatively small and do not operate as fully formal entities. Hence, Wong's

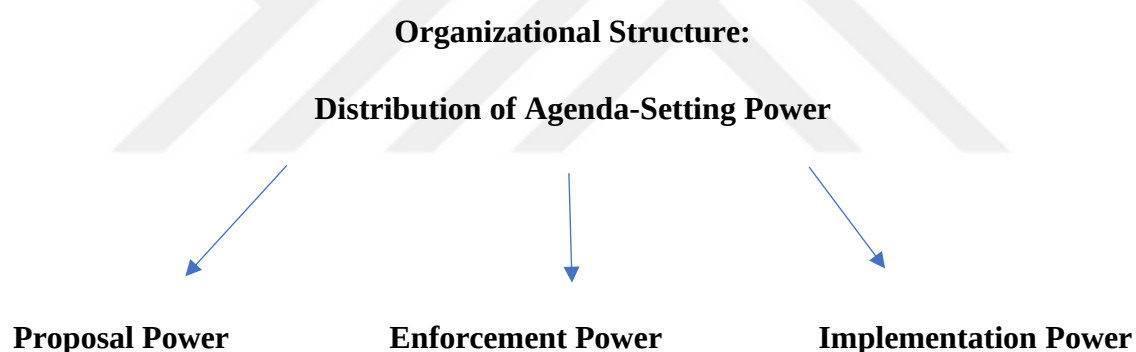
conceptualization fits better in the empirical setting which sets a special example in the LGBTI+ movement.

Wong claims that organizations maintain their activities through not only humanitarian reasons but also organizational aims and targets. They also compete in the world in which their survival might be at stake or they might not realize the organizational targets by way of influencing specific target groups if the right strategies are not pursued. To put it simply, Wong touches upon the similarity between non-profit and for-profit organizations, thereby, contradicting with idea of organization established with “purely humanitarian intentions”. This viewpoint undermines the hard and effective work executed in line with detailed and future-oriented plans of the organization.

Another concept reviewed by Wong is known as “political salience” which means “the degree of importance attributed to political matters” (Koop 2011). It denotes the accountability of the norms promoted through the organizational mechanisms. Previous studies lack the approach to relate political salience with organizational structure. However, Wong goes beyond the traditional definitions of organizational structure based on technical clarification, constructing her theory in a realistic context. She postulates that the success of the organization affecting the political salience of their norms derives from well-designed organizational structures (Wong 2012). To spread their politically salient norms, the organizations should design a functional structure that could fit into their targets and goals efficiently. Political salience is mostly seen through legalization. Thus, the organizations seek for legal instruments to claim their rights and respond to violations of the government. However, Wong comes up with some criticism regarding legalization as it grants the government the only authority to make the decisions although the rights and norms could exceed what is stated in the legal documents (Wong 2012). The same implementation has also been commonly observed in Turkey, as the organizations legitimize their rights to spread their norms through legal ways as a reaction to the violations of the government. On this basis, the most recent legal cases serve to denote the importance of legalization in terms of political salience. This has been seen in the case of the Pride Parade ban in Middle East Technical University (METU). The ban on the 9th Pride Parade to be held in METU in 2019 was overturned by the Ankara 7th Administrative Court in 2020 as a result of campaigns of METU LGBTI+ Solidarity (Bia News Desk 2020). However, 19 students who joined the 9th LGBTI+ Pride Parade still face the charges of “attending unlawful marches” (Orman 2019). Therefore, this example stresses that legalization is an important tool for organizations to stand up for their rights and increase their visibility contrary to the restrictions and unlawful acts.

This research is mainly based on Wong’s conceptualization of organizational structure. Wong’s basic theory holds that organizational structure is split into three main components: proposal power, enforcement power and lastly implementation power. Proposal power is the first step in which the specific agenda item is brought forward. Enforcement power is the following step where the proposed item is accepted or declined by chosen organizational unit. Lastly, implementation power is the final step in which the execution is completed. Generating agenda-setting power, these three components imply the extent of centralization or decentralization that are predominant in the organization. Unlike other scholars, Wong addresses organizational structure in terms of both formal and informal relations among organizational units. Formality represents a shallow perspective on the structure as what shown in the documents is not fully sufficient to understand how the ties are formed within the organization. Taking complex relations among organizational units into consideration, formality alone does not truly identify agenda-setting power.

Table 1: The definition of the organizational structure



*(Adapted from “Internal Affairs: How the Structure of NGOs Transforms Human Rights”,
Cornell University Press, 2012)*

With political salience being the crucial part of her theory, Wong mainly draws on the role of the organizations as distributors of their norms. Hence, their success remarkably depends on the promotion of their politically salient messages. Furthermore, it is significant to add that the organizations can lead to change when only they follow the “right” structural features. Analysing the structure through the proposal, enforcement and implementation power gives an idea of how centralized or decentralized different components of agenda-setting can be and entails more detailed and specific implication.

Centralization and decentralization have been predominantly examined to flesh out the organizational structure. A variety of aspects should be considered to determine which one is more

dominant in the structural features. Centralization occurs where a decision is made through “the head or centre of the organization” whereas decentralization refers to the division of the centre into various parts (Cummings 1995). Moreover, Wong clarifies the difference between the two terms as the former minimizing the number of participants affecting the agenda and the latter allowing for more (Wong 2012). The organizational structure is not always strictly polarized into two distinct categories; fluctuation of the structural change can be observed due to internal and external factors. Thus, it is quite preliminary to understand the dynamics within the same organizations and how they are linked with components of the agenda-setting power.

Agenda-setting is a process in which the topics are either chosen or eliminated depending on the level of importance related to organizational aims. Having a strong impact on the performance of the organization, the agenda-setting power determines the main concerns to put forward (Abhinay and Shepsle 2003). It plays the main role to design the organizational structure, leading to centralized or decentralized tendencies. The distribution of agenda-setting which consists of proposal, enforcement and implementation power denotes the steps towards the decision-making mechanism. The outcome can be determined depending on the centralized or decentralized structure of the organization.

Proposal power is the process in which the participants bring items into the agenda. The limitation of the facility to join the proposal discussion implies the degree of centralization or decentralization prevailing the organizational structure. Allowing more participants to express their opinions weakens the centralized structure. On the contrary, restricting the number of the participants in proposal stage reduces the decentralized structure.

Enforcement power is considered the backbone of agenda-setting. More precisely, it defines whether the proposed item is blocked or not. A decentralized organizational structure allows the ability to veto the proposal while a centralized one particularly restrains any type of responses that are not aligned with the decisions from the centre. In this respect, one of the most common aspects of a centralized structure is that a specific unit from the entire organization is responsible for the decision-making. Providing appropriate conditions for more innovative and practical decisions, a decentralized structure allows for a pluralistic way of enforcement.

Implementation is the stage in which the process is finalized. Following the vetoes which can be result-changing or ineffective for the last step, the implementation is eventually executed. The significant aspect of implementation is the fact that it denotes the organization’s responsiveness to

internal and external factors as well as the ability to make changes to spread politically salient norms.

The reason why Wong's conceptualization is preferred in this research is threefold. First, it positions the concept of the organization in a political context. In Turkey where being LGBTI+ is political itself, LGBTI+ organizations pose threats to the Islam-based moral and national values of the Turkish state. The current government of Turkey has been increasingly blocking the activities and events of these organizations. For instance, Istanbul Pride March has been banned since 2015 due to security concerns. Following that, Ankara Governor banned all LGBTI+ related events (Human Rights Watch 2019). Even though Ankara Court lifted the ban on LGBTI+ events in 2019, the Pride Parade to be held in METU located in Ankara was again cancelled by the rectorate in the same year (Reid 2019). These examples denote the turbulent political atmosphere in Turkey which renders Wong's concept of political salience even more important. According to this concept, organizations aim to become politically salient and make a change through well-planned agenda correlated with the organizational structure. To illustrate, Wong includes different campaigns of Amnesty International to touch upon the importance of political salience gained through its organizational structure (Wong 2012). Amnesty's success at running a politically salient campaign resulted in ground-breaking changes in the 1970s. The Campaign Against Torture (CAT) led to the passing of new international law whereas the campaign against the death penalty established international standards in terms of human rights. Wong asserts that Amnesty's success stems from its organizational structure (Wong, 2012).

The second reason why Wong's conceptualization is chosen is because of her ability to blend two different concepts of organizations which are traditionally divided as non-profit or for-profit in the literature. Organizations are rational entities that need organizational aims and priorities to realize their goals rather than humanitarian intentions. In other words, organizations take actions following their agenda to raise their voice and become influential in the political context. Viewing organizations without considering their aims presents a deficient perspective that undermines the role of the organization as a policy-changer.

The third important point regarding Wong's conceptualization is the informal relations within the organizations. Wong highlights the significance of informal relations by stating that "they are no less important than the formal ones" (Wong, 2012). They both influence the agenda-setting process to a certain extent. It is also known that informal relations are especially important in LGBTI+ organizations as they mostly support one another. Due to the lack of support, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey are considerably small which leads to heightened solidarity. Therefore, examining the

organization through both formal and informal aspects reinforces the research since informal relations have an obvious impact on the agenda-setting process.

Wong's conceptualization perfectly fits in Turkey where the research is conducted. Facing challenges even to survive, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey struggle with rising hate speech, pronatalism and intolerance in a state where polarization indisputably expands. Rights to freedom of assembly and association are at stake as many violation cases have been continuously reported (Kaos GL; IGLHRC; LGBTI News Turkey 2015). In addition to tension on account of restriction of human rights, the organizations have encountered new challenges following new flocks of people seeking help after the Syrian Civil War. To survive and render their norms politically salient, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey need a well-established organizational structure more than ever needed. In this respect, it can be added that the structure of some LGBTI+ organizations might change which leads to an increase in centralization or decentralization. Consequently, applying Wong's conceptualization to the Turkey context will allow for an elaborate analysis and comparison of organizational structure with a realistic approach.

It is important to bear in mind that Wong mostly dwells on transnational organizations in her book, nonetheless, does not touch on the theoretically differentiated definition of local and transnational organizations, thus broadening the context of the notion. Additionally, the elements forming the structure can also be applied to local organizations as many claims that international and local organizations hold for each other (Zald and Denton 1963), (Young 1989), (L. L. Wong 2008). Moreover, it should be noted that strictly defined lines among the organizations do not realistically clarify the situation because globalization today influences all forms of political constructions, even the smallest ones. It is an undeniable fact that the local and international organizations are in touch with each other influencing the agenda since LGBTI+ rights advocacy has taken root everywhere (Thoreson 2014). The local organizations work in collaboration with the international ones because of projects funded by the central headquarters. Similarly, the so-called refugee crisis is an issue that is beyond the national boundaries, affecting organizations from various regions.

To sum up, the reason why transnational framework can be adjected to the local framework in Turkey can be covered threefold. First, Wong's conceptualization of the organization fits in the local context in Turkey in terms of different aspects such as politics and emphasis on informal relationships. It is much of importance to associate local challenge with the transnational context in Turkey as transnational interaction largely enriches the local movement especially in Turkey where the civil society is restricted. Second, the LGBTI+ movement today is beyond a local categorization. Even though the local challenges depend on each country, it has become a unifying

movement affecting even the smallest chain in the whole link. Third, the interaction between local and transnational organizations in an empirical setting profoundly contributes to the literature since it dwells on the notion of organizational structure from different points of view. Establishing a linkage between local and transnational organizations presents new angles and original perspectives. Additionally, it is considerably prominent to adjust different theories into the empirical settings in order to improve and extend the framework of the literature and make an original contribution. By developing new outlooks concerning the empirical setting, this research has been broadened to draw a different conclusion hinged on Wong's conceptualization.

The research which is essentially modelled on Wong's conceptualization of organizational structure intends to answer the question "how does the so-called refugee crisis affect the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey?". There are several reasons why this question is specially chosen. The existing literature fails to present a case linking the LGBTI+ movement and large flocks of refugees which sparked debates between the EU and Turkey. The intersection of these two vulnerable groups makes this research even more important due to the political atmosphere targeting LGBTI+ rights and inadequate policies responding to the needs of the refugees. It is known that LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey both struggle to survive and help refugees who are mostly invisible in the stormy political context.

Wong's conceptualization provides a distinctive point of view that remarkably fits in an empirical setting. Wong's theory is preferred in this research since it highlights the importance of political salience, the combination of for-profit and non-profit features of the organizations and informal relationships among the organizational units. Wong claims that organizations attempt to be politically salient in order to realize their organizational aims. In this context, the well-designed organizational structure plays a fundamental role in this achievement. Three components of the organizational structure are known as proposal power (the first step in which the agenda is proposed), enforcement power (the second step in which the proposed item is accepted or declined) and implementation power (the last step in which the proposed item is executed) form the basis of agenda-setting process and define whether the organization is centralized or decentralized. In other words, the organizations can become influential only through a well-functioning organizational structure. Furthermore, Wong's theoretical framework mostly dwells on the transnational context. Locating this theoretical framework in the Turkey context creates a comprehensive perspective since it both addresses local and transnational context. It should be reiterated that the LGBTI+ movement is beyond the national borders of Turkey since the local organizations interact with transnational networks. Therefore, understanding the structure of the organizations in the

“aftermath of the so-called refugee crisis makes an original contribution to the literature, thus emphasizing the local and transnational interaction.

In the next section, the methodological background of the research will be elaborated to link the theoretical framework to the empirical setting.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

This section has two objectives. First, it aims to establish the method of empirical research in line with the theoretical framework. Second, it uncovers the importance of research in the Turkey context. Moreover, it consists of five sections: methodological approach, data collection, sampling methods, temporal dimension and lastly the evaluation of methodological approach and its limitations. Dwelling on the research question, every section is elaboratively and analytically described.

2.2.1 Methodological Approach

The most accurate data can be collected only when a systematic methodological approach is established in line with the research question. The research question aims to investigate how the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations is affected by the so-called refugee crisis. In order to answer this question within Wong’s theoretical framework, it is needed to conduct a qualitative case study. It is known that “case study focuses on experiential knowledge of the case and explores the social and political influence” (Stake 2005). In this research, a qualitative case study is preferred since the research questions intend to find out the impact of a political crisis on LGBTI+ organizations which are also considered political entities in Turkey.

The reason why qualitative case study is the best methodological approach in this research is threefold. First, the research question represents various intertwined aspects, that is, the in-depth data is necessary to sort out relevant information. In other words, data expressed in words is needed other than numerical data (Rudestam and Newton 2015). Therefore, a detailed description of people can allow for salient interpretation of the organizational structure, thus providing a clear evaluation on whether it becomes more centralized or decentralized during the process. Second, the informal aspect of the organizational structure is highlighted in the theoretical framework. Informal aspect can be only understood through the experience of those who partook in the activities of the organizations. Hence, the required data can only be provided with the qualitative case study as the emphasis is on the experience of the people and their relationships with others. Third, each organization has experienced the process differently. In-depth interviews provide these

differences clearly. The small details that can be acquired from the qualitative case study allow for a comprehensive analysis since it presents elaborate and precise data the quantitative method cannot provide. Short answers or numerical data cannot provide enough information to find out the answer to the research question. It should also be noted that related previous studies have been examined to create a link with the literature. Therefore, Wong's methodological approach has inspired this research as she also conducted semi-structured interviews to collect data for her research.

Unlike the quantitative method, which is more deductive and statistical, the qualitative method intends to use descriptive data to acquire in-depth interpretation about particular events or experience (Rudestam and Newton 2015). Furthermore, qualitative research generally does not seek to denote quantitative data or asserts a hypothesis before data collection. As applied in this research, the qualitative method includes a more inductive approach, that is, the gathered data forms hypotheses and theories with clear analysis and interpretation (Merriam 2009). In this regard, it should be noted that the result of this research is formed in accordance with the in-depth data provided.

2.2.2 Data Collection

As stated above, the qualitative case study is chosen as the best methodological approach to answer the research question. Details and comprehensive remarks provided by the participants are significant to reflect on the experience of the organizations and understand how its structure has been affected during the process. The preliminary step to determine the data collection method is to understand what type of data is needed in the research. It should be noted that primary data is predominantly used in this research as it ensures a depth level of insight. Primary data is defined as the particular data gathered to fulfil research aims (Hox and Boeijs 2004). Therefore, a specific method should be designed to seek for data to answer the research question other than the data previously gathered for another purpose. However, secondary data such as reports, newspaper articles and tables are also useful to enhance the validity of this research since they enrich the content of the research.

A qualitative case study deals with “a phenomenon within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin 2003). It is known that the research case which investigates the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the LGBTI+ organizations displays an unknown and undiscovered fact that will be clarified only when the data is meticulously gathered. As data of analysis is determined as organizations, the clear description

and precise interpretation can be only obtained through analysis of the experience and observation of people from organizations. For this reason, semi-structured interviews are chosen as a method of data collection to sort out the relevant data in this research.

A semi-structured interview is the type of interview which is both planned and can be adjusted to the participant. It holds features of structured and unstructured interviews, therefore, maximizing the efficiency of the empirical research since it presents advantages of both types of interviews. An unstructured interview is a free-flowing and unorganised interview that does not address a specific topic. On the other hand, structured interviews are strictly planned and each of the participants is asked the predetermined identical questions. The reason why the semi-structured interview is used as a data collection other than structured or unstructured is covered in the next paragraph.

The semi-structured interview provides both a more planned and flexible environment for the research with the help of prompts and well-constructed questions, therefore, enabling more accurate information. Unlike the unstructured interview, it guides the interviewee to answer the questions designed in line with the research aim. Different from the structured interview, it enables the interviewee to express their personal remarks and opinions concerning the topic which puts forth more a realistic point of view. Furthermore, it allows for an understanding of the informal aspects of the organizational structure which is highlighted in the research as it provides a wide range of discovery whilst facilitating a rigorous analysis. Furthermore, follow-up questions can be used to ensure the topic focus which minimizes misunderstandings (Gillham 2005). Moreover, it is crucial to understand the role of the interviewee during the interview. Instead of asking sequencing questions strictly, the interviewer should provide an environment in which the interviewee can feel comfortable. The semi-structured interview prioritizes the role of the interviewer and values their contribution to the research. Simply put, it can be concluded that the semi-structured interview increases the reliability of the empirical research as it includes well-structured questions to gather the required data while maintaining flexibility to learn about the personal opinions of the interviewee. Besides, it lessens the likely misunderstandings with backup and supplementary questions.

How were semi-structured interviews conducted for this research? The interviews were conducted with 10 informants from 7 LGBTI+ organizations working with refugees and asylum-seekers across Turkey. As the sample size was limited due to the lack of organizations working in the relevant area, representation of various cities was prioritized. LGBTI+ organizations from Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir and Mersin were included in the research in order to give a comprehensive

and elaborative insight. The reason why the LGBTI+ organizations from these cities were contacted is because of the fact that they include organizational activities pertaining to refugees and migrants in their agendas. However, it should be stressed that the aim of this research is to investigate how the mass migration of refugees in the aftermath of the Syrian Civil War affected LGBTI+ organizations. Therefore, organizations that went into action after such a crisis were chosen to have an interview with. Another critical point related to these cities is that they are migration-receiving cities providing more opportunities for those coming from Syria. It is known that many districts in these cities are densely populated by Syrians which increase the demands on the LGBTI+ organizations and present a specific case. Furthermore, Mersin provides a specific empirical context when compared to other cities since it is considerably small. The reason why Mersin was included in this research is because of the fact that the organization located in Mersin works on a significant project on the representation of the LGBTI+ refugees with one of the organizations in Istanbul. It also plays an important role in terms of activism at the domestic level as it is the only organization working in this field in Mersin. In this regard, it was crucial to include it to gain a wider perspective and enrich the empirical findings. However, the situation varies in the cities by changing the content of the unit of analysis. For instance, an organization located in Antalya was contacted to have an interview. Nevertheless, it was later understood that the organization did not carry out any activities or projects about refugees due to the sparse refugee population in Antalya. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the dynamics of the cities should be seriously taken into consideration before contacting the LGBTI+ organizations. The number of the participants and the location of the organizations are presented in the following table.

Table 2: The number of the participants and location of the organizations

Group	Number of the Participants	Location of the Organizations
1	2	Ankara
2	1	Istanbul
3	1	Ankara
4	2	Istanbul
5	2	İzmir
6	1	Ankara
7	1	Mersin

The interviews were held over 9 months between June 2020 and February 2021. Due to the pandemic, all of the interviews were held online despite the intention of face-to-face meetings at the beginning of the research. However, online meetings held via Zoom did not cause technical difficulties as the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the daily routines concerning social interactions. To avoid any misunderstanding, the follow-up questions were asked and remarkable points were written down. If permission given by the interviewee, the interview was recorded via mobile phone. Subsequently, the interview recordings were transcribed using an audio speed changing tool. After it was done, the proofreading of the transcripts was completed.



Table 3: Interview length and dates

Group	Participants	Interview Date	Length
1	1	08.07.2020	approx. 45 minutes
	2	03.02.2021	approx. 60 minutes
2	1	08.07.2020	approx. 40 minutes
3	1	22.09.2020	approx. 48 minutes
4	1	04.09.2020	approx. 54 minutes
	2	17.12.2020 (with an informant from Group 7)	approx. 80 minutes
5	1	24.07.2020	approx. 38 minutes
	2	30.01.2021	approx. 25 minutes
6	1	25.08.2020	approx. 38 minutes
7	1	17.12.2020 (with an informant from Group 4)	approx. 80 minutes

The last but the most important part of the interviews is an analysis of the collected data. As stated above, the qualitative case study is preferred in this research. Qualitative research is mostly based on interpretation and observation, therefore, yielding well-grounded findings supported with additional data obtained from news, reports, questionnaires or first-hand observations. In this regard, thematic analysis which is known as data analysis used to identify relevant themes within findings was used to analyse collected data. (Braun and Clarke 2006) (Castleberry and Nolen 2018). The process of thematic analysis was divided into three parts. First, the transcripts of the interviews were meticulously examined to extract the themes relevant to the research topic. Second, in line with the theoretical framework, the thematic categories were generated. The organizational aim, political salience, agenda-setting, decision-making and finally EU factor were chosen as themes pertaining to the research question. In this vein, Wong's conceptualization which examines the structure of the organization was taken into consideration. As stated in the previous sections, Wong describes the organizational structure as "distribution of agenda-setting power" with the components of proposal, enforcement and implementation power. Therefore, it was crucial to analyse the collected data through such themes to answer the research question. Third, the interviews were analysed and placed under every theme stated above in order to give a broad perspective and rich description. It should be noted that temporality was also used to understand the structural change following the so-called refugee crisis.

In this research semi-structured interview was preferred to collect relevant data. Therefore, a total number of 7 organizations were contacted to have an interview. Interviews were examined with thematic analysis and findings were presented in line with themes. In the next section, details concerning sampling methods will be clarified.

2.2.3 Sampling Methods

A sampling method determines the subset of the empirical research. In other words, it sets out the purpose to define the criteria to select the interviewees and how to contact them in line with the research aim and characteristics of the empirical setting. Snowball sampling is chosen as the best method to gather data in this research. It is regarded as the process in which the individuals are asked to provide contact information to find more interviewees (Babbie 2007). The metaphor "snowball" refers to the growing and evolving number of people, highlighting the depiction of accumulation (Noy 2008).

Snowballing sampling is preferred especially when the interviewees are hard to access for several reasons. These reasons may include security concerns or distinctiveness of the unit of analysis.

When considering threatening conditions LGBTI+ individuals encounter, it is necessary to clarify the aim of the research and the role of the researcher while accessing the informants through the contacts. Moreover, the number of LGBTI+ organizations working with refugees is quite limited, therefore, snowball sampling facilitates the stage to access the interviewees.

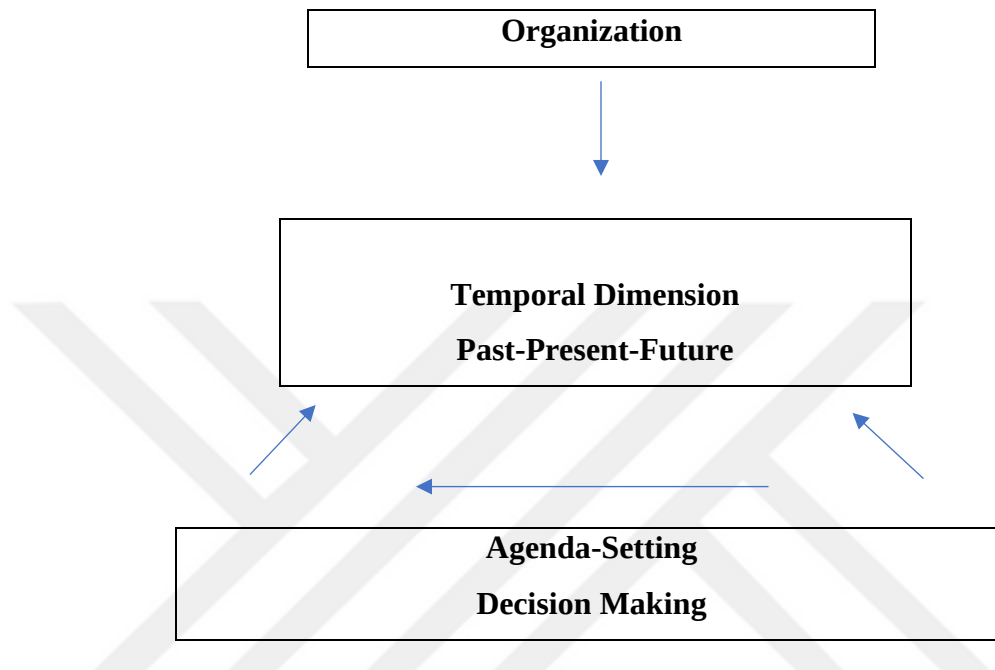
It is of much importance to determine the characteristics of the interviewees in order to gather the relevant data. The interviewees include the representatives, activists and volunteers working for LGBTI+ organizations involving in activities with refugees. The age or gender group of the interviewees does not have any impact on the research since their experience and opinions related to the organizations are the main topic rather than their personal experience. The number of the interviewees is 10 as the number of the LGBTI+ organizations falling into the category of the unit of analysis is low.

The interviews were held with LGBTI+ organizations based in four cities: İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir and Mersin. The reason why these cities are chosen is that they are important migration-receiving cities hosting a dense population of refugees and migrants. They are bigger than other cities in Turkey attracting most of the refugees and migrants by offering more employment and education opportunities when compared to other cities in general. In addition, the research question intends to find out the structural change in LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. Therefore, it portrays a more comprehensive and detailed perspective with the representation of more organizations across Turkey. However, it should be stated that only the organizations which include organizational activities related to refugees and migrants in their agenda are contacted in order to provide consistent information. Furthermore, temporality is also one of the most vital components of the methodological design. In the next section, how the temporal dimension is applied to the research design will be discussed.

2.2.4 Temporal Dimension

The research aims to locate structural change in the organization in terms of temporality. One of the significant concepts in the literature, temporality, is generally ignored. However, time is a fluctuating notion which reveals the impact of the chains of the events on a realistic basis. Neglecting dynamism of the time leads to a false understanding of the change by freezing the temporal length of the event. It clarifies the factors shaping the relations between environment and organization; therefore; enabling the scholars to conduct a more detailed analysis regarding the concept of decision-making. (Gherardi and Strati 1988). Moreover, organizational actions and activities can only be clarified and compared within the framework of temporality. (Whetten

2006). Change does not occur as an independent concept without being connected to the past and future. In other words, temporal awareness contributes to a better understanding of the organizational change as well as yielding starting point for elements to be considered in relation to the structure (Dawson 2014).



(Adapted from “Time in Organizations: “Its Experience, Explanations and Effects”, by Butler Richard, 1995)

Influencing both decision-making and agenda-setting processes, the temporal dimension is interpreted with respect to events in present and past, while taking the future into consideration (Butler 1995). As mentioned by Clark, the perception of time has fairly been changed, it is a necessary approach to alter the measurement provided by the clock. For this reason, he introduced the concept of time “in the events” (P. A. Clark 1985). Similarly, this study accommodates this definition in the centre of the temporal dimension related to Wong’s definition of organizational structure (Wong 2012). The temporality here refers to the chains of events (flow of people following the refugee crisis because of the Syrian Civil War) which shape the structure of the organization. The temporality in the study highlights “the process of becoming” within the organization as for the external elements and reflects on the fluidity of change rather than stability (Quinn 1980) (Augustine 2002). Consequently, the definition of the organization which is closely intertwined with time represents a noteworthy approach in the literature.

How is temporality used in this research? In order to understand the temporal links with organizational structure, the in-depth interviews are prepared in a particular way. The interview questions are created to find out how the structure of the organizations has changed in time. Hence, the temporal factor is highlighted in the questions in order to demonstrate the relation between structure and chain of events that occurred in a specific period. In this vein, questions concerning the change observed from 2015 to the current time are involved in the in-depth interview questions.

The reason why 2015 is marked as the starting point of the temporal dimension stems from the fact that 2015 is regarded as the year when the refugee crisis was officially recognized among the EU member states. However, it is always important to associate the methodological and theoretical framework with the empirical setting. In other words, the design of the temporal dimensions differed from the outcome due to the unexpected details regarding the empirical setting in this research. While conducting the semi-structured interviews, it was found out that the crisis had already begun in Turkey in the wake of the conflict that broke out in 2011. As Turkey presents a particular case in terms of its geographical location and political stance, estimated factors influencing the temporal dimension were re-evaluated after the interviews were completed. Nevertheless, it did not largely change the empirical findings but only the perspective towards the so-called refugee crisis. This connection between temporal and structural factors expound on how important the local agenda is on the organizations by demonstrating that the organizations are related to the environment in terms of many aspects. In the next section, the designed methodological approach and limitations of the research will be evaluated.

2.2.5 Evaluation of Methodological Approach and Research Limitations

The methodological approach in this research is comprised of three important stages: using snowball sampling to contact the interviewees, conducting semi-structured interviews to gather the relevant data and lastly analysis of the data in line with the temporal dimension. This approach primarily aims to adjust the theoretical framework to the empirical setting to ensure a reliable and valid result. Planning each of the stages rigorously allows for consistent and elaborate analysis.

As stated above, the semi-structured interview is significant to gather in-depth data and provide the information needed. Short answers or surveys do not reflect on the perspectives of the interviewees, thereby, lacking wider perspectives and informal aspects concerning the organizational structure. In addition, semi-structured interviews assert more valid data as supplementary questions prevent misunderstandings and the interviewees are less likely to give misleading answers. Moreover, snowball sampling works in a particular way since it is a faster

and more functional mean of contacting individuals as the group of interviewees is hard to access. Furthermore, the temporal dimension is crucial to contribute comprehensively to the literature as it is mostly ignored. Temporality presents a realistic point of view, seeing the events as a part of dynamism rather than stability. Therefore, it depicts the structural change in a more detailed way and opens up new perspectives for the current research.

It is known that limitations are inevitable in qualitative case studies. Similarly, this research has several limitations which can be listed as the measurement of collected data, sample size, language differences, environmental factors such as political atmosphere at the global and local level.

The first limitation of this research is the measurement used to collect the data. It should be reiterated that the qualitative case study is used as the methodological approach in this research. Moreover, semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data from a wider perspective including both insights of the interviewees and objective facts about the LGBTI+ organizations. However, it brings along limitations concerning the reliability, accuracy and validity of the research. The reliability of the in-depth interviews can sometimes be called into questions as the data is acquired through the observation of the interviewees. However, the questions prepared for in-depth interviews are mostly objective which also allow for subjective remarks on the related issue as the purpose of the research is to understand the structural change of the LGBTI+ organizations. Moreover, follow up questions were asked to ensure that the conveyed data was understood correctly. The accuracy of the answers was also supported with additional information from the related resources which reduces the limitations of data collection measurement to the minimum.

Another important point concerning collected data measurement is the analysis of data gathered from the semi-structured interviews. Thus, thematic analysis was applied to examine the interviews in order to obtain consistent results. The reason why this approach is used stems from the fact that the personal statements of the interviewees can only be thoroughly reviewed by splitting the transcripts into relevant themes which are needed to answer the research question. In doing so, the transcript of the interviews was scrutinized in an attempt to immerse in the data. Hence, the important statements in the interviews were highlighted and associated with the themes to obtain reliable findings.

The second limitation of the research is the sample size. Unlike the common understanding of a large sample size in the literature, this research consists of only 10 interviews with informants from various LGBTI+ organizations across Turkey. The interviews were conducted with the total

number of 10 representatives from Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir and Mersin. Although it might be considered as a limitation, it should be highlighted that there are only a few LGBTI+ organizations working in the field of migration which directly narrows down the sample size. Furthermore, some of the organizations refused to have an interview on the grounds that they did not carry out any projects or activities concerning LGBTI+ refugees. As the aim is to understand how the structure of the organizations has been affected by the refugee crisis, it could be misleading to include those ones. However, follow-up interviews with the informants from the same organizations were conducted in order to increase the reliability of the data.

The third limitation is a language difference. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in Turkish whereas the language of the research is English. Therefore, the transcripts of the interviews were translated into English. Therefore, it should be emphasized that translation loss was inevitable even if it has been reduced to the minimum level.

The limitations do not only stem from the methodological aspects. Environmental factors are known as external elements also cause significant shortages. One of the limitations concerning environmental factors is the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in the meantime of the research. It led to a global crisis in terms of many aspects including health, economy and politics. Unmanageable surging cases, increasing death tolls and continual lockdowns became the “new normal” and it radically changed the daily habits of the people. How did this situation affect this research? First, it raised concerns about the timeliness of the research topic since the so-called refugee crisis was removed from the political agenda shortly after the first Covid-19 case was announced (Zorlu 2020). However, escalating political tension between the EU and Turkey over border opening for refugees had occupied the political agenda in Turkey before the pandemic broke out. Turkey had opened its borders to Europe as a response to deadly attacks on Idlib province leaving 33 Turkish soldiers dead (TRT World 2020). The refugees were pushed from both sides and harshly attacked by Greek security forces when attempting to cross the border (Human Rights Watch 2020). After the first Covid-19 case was announced, the situation worsened precarity for refugees and left hundreds of them forgotten and unprotected at the borders (Kirişçi and Yavçan 2020). It also increased the vulnerability of the refugees as most of the active organizations temporarily suspended their activities due to the lockdown. The second limitation concerning the pandemic is communication challenges. Video calls and meetings became a vital part of the communication, thus transforming face-to-face meetings into online ones. It did not cause a big problem in general but still considered challenging to provide a flexible and comfortable environment for the informants.

The last and the most important environmental limitation stems from the political atmosphere at the domestic level. Over the last years, human rights violations have been severely peaked in Turkey. Despite the remarkable progress on LGBTI+ rights all over the world, from the victory of the historic number of LGBTI+ candidates in U.S elections to the legalisation of same-sex marriage in Asian countries, Turkey has taken steps backwards in terms of human rights (Kepenek 2020). According to World Report 2020 prepared by Human Rights Watch, freedom of association, assembly and expression have been immensely restricted, thus affecting LGBTI+ related demonstrations and events negatively throughout the country (Human Rights Watch 2020). Anti-LGBTI+ discourse became a new tool for policy-making as a result of rising political Islam. It is known that political actors often target the LGBTI+ community, thus raising religious hatred and intolerance among the society. For instance, the top religious officer claimed homosexuality brings illnesses and causes generations to decay (Duvar English 2020). Another interesting case can be mentioned to illustrate the extent of the anti-LGBTI discourse in Turkey. An age restriction was imposed on the products containing LGBTI+ symbols (Özturan 2020). Despite harsh debates, the decision was not reversed by the political authorities. Furthermore, the new legislation entitled “Preventing Financing of Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction” raised concerns on right to assembly (Ünker 2020). The worrying situation concerning LGBTI+ rights in Turkey brought about some difficulties and shortcomings for the research as well. The pressure on LGBTI+ organizations increased the difficulty in accessing activists and representatives due to security concerns. One of the LGBTI+ organizations rejected the interview request because of similar reasons as well.

The methodology is the backbone of the research which sets a foundation for well-grounded findings. Therefore, it is important to design it by putting it into a theoretical framework. In order to develop a well-designed methodology, theoretical concepts are amalgamated with an empirical setting. Similarly, this research is based on a qualitative method to conduct a well-detailed and comparative case study. Since the research question is made up of multiple concepts, in-depth data is needed to extract the relevant data. In addition, evaluative observation plays an important role to figure out structural change of the LGBTI+ organizations as each of them presents a unique case. What is more, collected data alone cannot sufficiently give an answer to the research question without being deeply analysed. Hence, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the total number of 10 representatives from 7 organizations located in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir and Mersin. The collected data was analysed using thematic analysis to provide a rich perspective.

Although limitations address the potential weaknesses, it is significant to understand them to point out the gaps in the literature and ask the relevant further questions. The research limitations can be comprised of several factors depending on the research topic. In this research, various limitations are represented to demonstrate what can be improved in future studies. It is seen that methodological limitations such as measurement of collected data, sample size, language differences and environmental limitations linked to the political atmosphere of the empirical setting are the main weaknesses of this research. However, the capability to discern such limitations allows for a better understanding. In the next chapter, the historical background of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey will be discussed to provide better insight into the research topic.



3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As a bridge between Europe and the Middle East, Turkey stands in a different position when compared to the other countries. Shaped with strong heteronormative and religious ties at the societal level, it also maintains significant political and economic relations with international actors that require binding agreements regarding the violations of human rights. Bringing the dilemma of “personal is political” to the fore with its numerous controversial implementations, Turkey has intensified the hostile attitude towards LGBTI+ individuals recently (Hanisch 1969). Although LGBTI+ activism has remarkably consolidated its power over the last decades, the situation in Turkey can be described as “one step forward, two steps back” (Ataman 2011).

Understanding the historical background of the LGBTI+ politics and how it is related to the refugee crisis is important to discern the importance of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. LGBTI+ movement gained momentum in the 2000s and has expanded the working area by including many concerns such as health, migration, psychology, human rights and social life as a result of the common problems faced on a daily basis. Hence, this chapter intends to find out how the LGBTI+ movement has evolved over the last decades and how it is associated with the refugee crisis by concerning the dynamics in local and foreign politics. In order to give a clear and elaborate clarification, this chapter is comprised of three sections: the history of the LGBTI+ politics in Turkey, the impact of Europeanization and de-Europeanization process on the LGBTI+ movement and organizations and lastly the background of the refugee crisis.

3.1 The History of LGBTI+ Politics in Turkey

It is known that the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey was maintained within a relatively small circle in the beginning and metropolitan cities such as Istanbul and Ankara became the centre (Kenis and Tabur 2019). The beginning of the 2000s was a turning point in terms of activism and mobilization since the organizations started to gain legal status and recognition. However, changing atmosphere in the political environment has negatively influenced the movement, thereby affecting the organizations. This section aims to shed light on the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey by linking the past to the present and creates an analytical perspective.

The 1980s are remarked as the term in which LGBTI+ individuals took the initial steps into the bigger movement. Coinciding with the 1980 military coup and the oppressive environment, the LGBTI+ movement was ignited following the anti-humanitarian restrictions and prohibitions due to the reinforced image of masculinity through the militaristic force. The notion of morality was reshaped during this term, thereby, leading to some restrictions and atrocious acts such as exile of

trans women to the suburbs and prohibition of employment of men wearing feminine clothes on the stage (Erdogan and Koten 2014) (Gursu and Elitemiz 2012) (Yilmaz 2013). Along with the strict implementations, especially trans women faced with serious problems concerning access to housing and employment (Gursu and Elitemiz 2012). However, the world had already entered into a change that would spread across many countries, even the most conservative ones. Inspired by the new libertarian movements from the 1960s, LGBTI+ individuals in Turkey started to organize around despite the limited opportunities (Erol 2011). This suggests that transnational politics has been shaping the local LGBTI+ mobilization to some extent and displays the importance of interplay between both transnational and local groups.

The first important step is known as the attempt to establish the Radical Democratic Green Party that supported various minority groups including environmentalists, feminists, antimilitarists and LGBTI+s. When taking the repressive political atmosphere into consideration, it can be noted that it was a daring act in terms of mobilization. Furthermore, it is known that the first protest led by the LGBTI+ community was done in the building of the Radical Democratic Green Party in Taksim (Güner, et al. 2011). Protesting the police brutality against LGBTI+ individuals, 37 trans people staged a hunger strike in 1987, thereby, making their voice heard for the very first time in Turkey (Erdogan and Koten 2014). Even though the establishment of the party could not be finalized, it influenced the LGBTI+ movement and paved the way for autonomous organizing (Gunes 2016) (Alan 2019).

The 1990s became the turning point of the LGBTI+ movement as the first informal organizations came into the stage in Istanbul and Ankara (Erol 2011). Gathering in the private houses, activists came up with ideas to take some initial and concrete steps (Kenis and Tabur 2019). Making an attempt to organize the first international gay event in Turkey, Lambdaistanbul was formed in 1993. Even though many LGBTI+ organization representatives and parliament members from other countries visited Turkey to partake in the event, it was cancelled by the governorship the day before the date of the event. However, this situation set the ground for a transnational collaboration since Lambdaistanbul brought a new dimension to the local movement by stressing the need for solidarity with political actors from other countries. Despite the ban, it was important to attempt to organize an international event in Turkey as they made their voice heard beyond the local context. Additionally, in order to gain visibility and enhance awareness related to the LGBTI+ question, Kaos GL published the first gay and lesbian magazine in 1994. Moreover, it was followed by the establishment of Kaos GL Cultural Centre in 1999. The aim of the establishment

of the centre was to reach out to more people, thereby, creating an environment in which cultural and social activities were encouraged (Kaos GL n.d.).

LGBTI+ activism was considerably intensified through the emergence of fundamental LGBTI+ organizations despite their informal form. Meanwhile, Turkey underwent a drastic change after given the status of membership candidate in the Helsinki European Council in 1999 (Diez, Agnantopoulos and Kaliber 2005). In line with the political criteria and harmonization packages, Turkey made amendments in the constitution to extend the scope of libertarian and pluralist political atmosphere. These developments brought about positive results for the LGBTI+ movement, therefore, leading to the emergence of formal LGBTI+ organizations. In addition, the LGBTI+ organizations had the chance to become more visible through political and legal strategies. More details concerning the Europeanization process will be given in the following section.

Many LGBTI+ organizations established legal identities at the beginning of the 2000s in accordance with the new Law of Associations (İlkkaracan 2014). First, Kaos GL applied for legal status, therefore, sparking a harsh debate among the local authorities. Deputy governor Selahattin Ekremoglu petitioned a court to close the organization on the grounds that it was against the law and general morality (Erol 2011) (Durukan 2005) (Human Rights Watch 2005). However, Ankara prosecutor Kursat Kayral rejected the petition adding that homosexuality is not related to immorality (Human Rights Watch 2008). Therefore, Kaos GL gained legal status in 2005. Subsequently, other organizations started to appear as formal entities, thereby, struggling for legal status. Similarly, Lambdaistanbul acquired legal status in 2006. However, the court decided to shut down the organization for the reason that it promoted immorality (Söyle 2009). The Supreme Court of Appeal decided to overturn the order, therefore, allowing the organization to continue its activities. Despite the constraints and restrictions, the legal registration of the organizations had a positive impact on the course of the LGBTI+ movement. The other organizations such as Pink Life LBTT Solidarity Association (2006), Bursa Rainbow Association (2006), Black Pink Triangle Association (2009) also successively acquired the legal status.

How did the alliance between the feminist and LGBTI+ movement impact the course of LGBTI+ mobility? It is interesting to note that this alliance became noticeable after lesbian and bisexual women involved in the feminist movement (Basaran 2011). Taking part in both LGBTI+ and feminist struggle, they stressed the intersection of two movements that are based on anti-heterosexist discourse. Generating literature on sexual orientation discrimination in the local feminist movement, they also helped heterosexual women understand the notion of heterosexism

(Ersoy 2011). Especially Lambdaistanbul and Amargi in İstanbul and Kaos GL and Ankaralı Feministler (Feminists from Ankara) in Ankara set a good example of collaborative struggle in the intersection of LGBTI+ and the feminist movement. Worthwhile efforts and collaboration of these two groups resulted in remarkable outcomes. Feminist and LGBTI+ organizations carried out a three-year campaign aiming to reform the penal code. The campaign created a tremendous impact across the country and brought about a change in the penal code by ensuring equality on the basis of gender and making CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) superior to national law (Muftuler-Bac 2012). However, achievement remained incomplete for the LGBTI+ movement. Even though the commission included “sexual orientation” in the discrimination clause, it was later removed by AKP representatives (Bianet 2015). This situation denotes that the acceptance of two movements differ greatly due to the visibility problems the LGBTI+ movement face. Even though the alliance is significant in terms of political salience, individuals should be encouraged to take initiatives to represent themselves.

Despite the intersectional aspects, there are a variety of concerns dominating the agenda of these movements differently. LGBTI+ community face problems regarding their essential rights such as housing, education, employment, health care and equal treatment on a daily basis. Therefore, they need to decide upon their own agenda to spread their norms and realize their goals. On the other hand, it is known that the tension has been escalating over the past years especially after 2011 when a heated debate started between cis-gender² and trans women on International Women’s Day demonstration in Taksim, Istanbul (Zengin 2016). A feminist trans-man was asked to leave the demonstration on the grounds that “men are not allowed to join the feminist protest”. Trans exclusionary discussions which question the legitimacy of transgender identities keep fracturing the feminist movement. However, it does not change the fact that the intersectional alliance of feminists is still significant to bolster the movement and empower all identities.

It is noteworthy that the LGBTI+ movement gained remarkable visibility with demonstrations and more importantly pride events. Following the first LGBTI+ protest held as a hunger strike in 1987, the LGBTI+ community started to appear as a block in other demonstrations. Although it is known that they first partook in Labour Day in 2001, they attempted to join it for the first time in 1997 (Erol 2019). The first Gay Pride Event that was organised in 2003 with 30 participants is regarded as a momentous day in the history of the LGBTI+ movement (Mutluer 2019). Moreover, the number of participants increased on a yearly basis. Growing greatly, the number was added up to

² Cisgender: identification of gender which matches assigned sex at birth.

5.000 by 2011 (Mutluer 2019). The same year is also marked as important as the first Trans Pride Parade was organized in Taksim, Beyoğlu (Tahaoğlu 2017). What is more, 2013 Pride Day played an important role in shaping the movement since it became the largest parade in Turkey (BBC 2013).

Considered a turning point, Gezi protests held in 2013 added another dimension to the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey. Starting off with a small group of protestors who were against the urban renewal project, the protest later gained influential momentum. With their presence at the forefront from the very beginning of the uprising, the LGBTI+ Block played an important role in both political transformation and visibility (Kenis and Tabur 2019). Moreover, the protests enabled various groups such as environmentalists, football fans, Kemalists, liberals, anti-capitalist Muslims to get together with the same purpose. Hence, the LGBTI+ community gained more recognition while inventing new slogans and spreading their norms (Birdal 2015). More importantly, Taksim has always been symbolic for the LGBTI+ community and the relevant otherized groups since it is the district where many of them make a living and reside. They also had to struggle to claim their space previously as the police forces carried out several operations in line with gentrification plans. The common approach protestors stand against controversial politics of the government allowed for an environment in which mutual understanding was established. Therefore, Pride March in 2013 overlapping with Gezi protests received vast support from diverse groups of people (Unan 2015). It is known that approximately 50,000 people partook in the parade, making it the largest in southeastern Europe and the Middle East (Hürriyet Daily News 2015). However, the subsequent parades were constrained by the police as a result of the ever-increasing authoritarianism.

The impact of the Gezi protests was clearly seen in different spheres of activism. Following the huge success of Gezi, LGBTI+ activists used a different strategy to enhance visibility, public acceptance and promote human rights. 10 LGBTI+ activists became candidates for the nomination of municipal councils from the opposition parties HDP (People's Democratic Party), BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) and CHP (Republican People's Party) (Goksel 2014). Even though the result of the election was not fully promising for the activists with the only elected candidate, Sedef Cakmak, for CHP municipal council, the step to the political transformation was critically important. It should be noted that embracement of the LGBTI+ rights in terms of local politics was mostly supported after Gezi protests since they indisputably "came out of the closet" (Goksel 2014). Similarly, LGBTI+ rights were increasingly taken into consideration in the 2015 parliamentary elections. Openly LGBTI+ candidates stood for Turkey's Grand National Assembly

(Turkey Gets First Openly Gay Parliamentary Candidate 2015). Furthermore, 61 candidates from different political parties signed the LGBTI Rights Agreement prepared by SPOD (Social Policies, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association) in order to enhance the collaboration with political actors. Correspondingly, 16 candidates who signed the agreement to guarantee LGBTI+ rights were elected as members of the parliament (SPOD n.d.). These steps are considered significant since they expanded the framework of LGBTI+ politics, thus denoting that they are in every sphere including the assembly.

As of 2015, the LGBTI+ movement entered a new stage in which the mobilization was constrained through the oppressive political environment. For the first time in 12 years, the 2015 Pride Parade in Istanbul was disrupted by the police (Istanbul Pride 2015: Historic for All the Wrong Reasons 2015). The reason for the disruption was stated as it coincided with the holy month of Ramadan which was interpreted as disrespectful against the general morality (Mutluer 2019). Subsequently, the 2016 Pride Parade was banned by Istanbul Governorship on the grounds of security concerns (Human Rights Watch 2018). In addition, the 15 July 2016 coup attempt and the more authoritarian approach embraced within the declaration of the state of emergency worsened the situation, thus raising difficulties regarding mobilization (Mutluer 2019). In 2017, Ankara Governorship declared that all of the events organised by LGBTI+ organizations were banned until further notice, claiming that they were threatening the public order (Shaheen 2017). Furthermore, Istanbul Governorship prevented Pride Parade for the fifth consecutive year due to the same reasons in 2019 (Yilmaz 2019). Lastly, 2020 Pride events were moved online due to the restrictions concerning the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ever-mounting intolerance towards the LGBTI+ community narrowed the sphere of the struggle along with hate speech and discrimination. It can be stated that the ruling AKP (Justice and Development Party) government has noticeably targeted the LGBTI+ community as a result of the visibility gained through their active role over the last decades. This appears to be a case of gender policies of AKP which heavily rely on motherhood, morality and family unit. Family is considered as a sacred unity which underpins one of the key components of party policy. It is regarded as a microorganism in which the conservative values, customs and traditions are preserved while reproductivity is ensured. Gender-related issues have been shifted to the scope of family policies in order to emphasize the notion of family in line with Islamisation under the AKP government. One of the examples is the establishment of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in 2011 by removing the Ministry of Women. It denotes the elimination of gender equality policies by positioning the concept of the family and pro-natalism in the centre. It should be stressed that

LGBTI+ rights are completely ignored and the level of discrimination even increased due to the pronatalist policies viewing LGBTI+ individuals as detrimental to moral family values.

Gender policies of AKP have become the subject of debate concerning the Istanbul Convention recently. Even though Turkey played an active role in the “Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence” (Istanbul Convention) and became the first country to ratify it, the rapid rise in domestic violence stirred debates across the country and split it into two. Conservative groups claim that Istanbul Convention damages family ties and moral values by supporting withdrawal from the Convention. There is another group carrying out a campaign to protest the government over withdrawal. The main concern of AKP on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention is that it prevents all forms of violence on the grounds of all gender identities and sexual orientations. Article 4 of the Convention asks full implementation without discrimination “on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity by addressing transgenders, transsexuals, cross-dressers, transvestites and other groups of individuals by including non-binary categories” (TGEU 2014). Not surprisingly, Turkey pulled out of Istanbul Convention with a controversial single-paragraph statement on March 20 on the grounds that it attacks on the family values and promotes homosexuality (Gulel and Choukroune 2021). Turkey’s decision shows how LGBTI+ identity is seen as a threat to the unity of the authority and strong state tradition.

Despite the rising discrimination and violence, the LGBTI+ community intrepidly continues to struggle under the oppressive conditions. It continues transforming the heteronormativity by spreading politically salient norms and carrying out significant activities and projects as opposed to the current political atmosphere. In the next section, Turkey’s historical background concerning Europeanization and De-Europeanization will be discussed.

3.2 LGBTI+ Politics in Turkey from Europeanization to De-Europeanization Process

Europeanization is known as “the process reorienting the direction and shape of the politics to the degree that European political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making” (Ladrech 1994). Aiming to maintain harmony among member states, it paves the way for adjustment in order to prevent political and economic gap within the EU. Furthermore, it spreads particular norms and values playing the role of the anchor so as to provide improvement in liberal freedom at the domestic level (Kaliber 2013). On the contrary, de-Europeanization is defined as the decrease in motivation about the EU due to various reasons (Sipahioğlu 2017). Turkey’s long standing negotiations and unlikely achievement of EU

membership along with the increasing authoritarianism led to the lack of enthusiasm concerning Europeanization. Today, none of the parties has expectations about positive developments in Turkey's membership although Europeanization was a dominant factor in politics especially between 1999 and 2004. The importance of the Europeanization and de-Europeanization phase in this research can be explained twofold. First, it creates a link between the political transformation of Turkey and LGBTI+ politics. Second, it expands the frame of the mobilization by creating new areas of activism such as politics and legalization as a way to represent the LGBTI+ community. In order to analyse the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey-context, Europeanization and de-Europeanization stages are significant since they have both transformed the political atmosphere.

The LGBTI+ rights are an inseparable part of human rights and anti-discrimination. The EU sets out an LGBTI+ friendly policy by prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation (European Parliamentary Research Service 2019). The values concerning human rights and anti-discrimination shape not only the internal but also the foreign policies including enlargement and neighbourhood policies. In addition, the EU's enlargement policy necessitates some essential amendments to protect LGBTI+ rights (Slootmaeckers and Touquet 2016). Following the Maastricht Treaty (signed in 1992 and entered into force in 1993) which expanded the human rights and freedom within the EU external policy and Treaty of Amsterdam (signed in 1997 and entered into force in 1999) which broadened the scope of the discrimination adding sexual orientation to the legislative competences (Slootmaeckers and Touquet 2016), LGBTI+ rights became more integrated into the EU policies. Moreover, with Article 13 added to the Treaty Establishing the European Community (EC Treaty), the fight against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation was highlighted (EUR-Lex: Access to European Law n.d.). Similarly, Lisbon Treaty which was entered into force in 2009 gave the Charter of Fundamental Rights the legal status as the founding treaties, thus rendering the discrimination based on sexual orientation binding and necessitating candidate states to adopt the relevant legal measures (Slootmaeckers and Touquet 2016) (Official Journal of the European Union 2012).

It is worthwhile noting that the EU's human rights centric approach has also influenced the enlargement process. Even though Copenhagen criteria which are obligatory to fulfil so as to be accepted as a member state do not particularly mention the problems LGBTI+ individuals face, the candidate states are expected to make amendments such as decriminalisation of homosexual acts in line with the accession negotiations (Kochenov 2007). In this respect, adoption of the 2000/78/EC was an important step in terms of LGBTI+ rights in the context of the EU enlargement as it prohibited discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation which is also obligatory for the

candidate states to implement (European Commission n.d.). Therefore, the EU's *acquis* became more comprehensive concerning LGBTI+ rights. Another important step was the amendment of the enlargement policy in 2005 which positioned the fundamental rights as the main factor to start pre-accession negotiations (Slootmaeckers and Touquet 2016). In other words, it can be understood that the EU has slowly furthered its policies regarding LGBTI+ rights by expanding the scope of the treaties and directives. Consequently, as a candidate state, Turkey has been demanded to take up the responsibility concerning LGBTI+ rights within the scope of accession negotiations. However, Turkey's reluctance and unstable reforms in the fight against discrimination indicate a worrying situation, thus leading to harsh debates among member states. In the following paragraph, why the Europeanization process is important for LGBTI+ rights in Turkey will be discussed.

Within the framework of Turkey, the discussion on Europeanization and de-Europeanization gains even more importance since Turkey sets a unique example regarding the cultural discrepancy and socio-political factors which dominantly shape the approach of the ruling government. It should be noted that Europeanization accelerated in 1999-2004 was resulted in progressive reforms which shaped civil society and human rights activism (Yılmaz, 2016). Nonetheless, it is seen that the impact of Europeanization slowly decreased especially after 2011 when AKP consolidated its power through the third victory in the elections (Sipahioğlu 2017). Similarly, LGBTI+ politics has both directly and indirectly been influenced by the fluctuating political atmosphere at both domestic and international level. The reforms and amendments made in line with harmonization packages bolstered civil society in Turkey, thus providing better LGBTI+ mobility. However, there has been no direct amendment made in order to protect LGBTI+ rights, thus implying that AKP selectively chooses the amendments that can be salient with its politics (Sipahioğlu 2017). Especially lately, the rising tide of conservatism (Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu 2009) and discriminative discourse of the ruling government AKP have targeted the LGBTI+ community. Therefore, it can be noted that the area expanded for civil society and human rights has been shrinking due to the rising authoritarianism in Turkey.

1999 marked a turning point in terms of domestic and foreign policy in Turkey since the relations with the EU acquired a new dimension. After receiving the candidate status in Helsinki Summit, Europeanization penetrated into Turkish politics and played a transformative role in the wide arrays of areas (Kaliber 2013). In order to comply with Copenhagen Criteria, Turkey made amendments in several areas with the aim of strengthened human rights (Yılmaz 2016). In order to initiate the accession negotiations, Turkey was expected to meet the relevant criteria and provide

a more democratized political atmosphere decreasing the impact of the military on politics and boosting human rights. In this period, Turkey went through a noticeably significant transformation on the basis of fundamental rights and freedoms by introducing a new Penal Code reinforcing freedom of expression and association (Aydın-Düzgüt and Keyman 2013). As human rights became a priority in local politics, public officials were trained in order to ensure the stability of the progress made by the government. Additionally, human rights boards were established in several cities to provide the internalization of the new values at the domestic level (Tocci 2005). Therefore, Turkey proceeded to the new stage in the EU membership and accession negotiations started in 2005 as a result of the chains of reforms.

Especially, the new Law of Associations (2004) and the new Law on Foundations (2008) allowed for the emergence of formal organizations with legal status (Boşnak 2016). Despite barriers imposed through the legal and political actors, LGBTI+ organizations acquired legal status, therefore, increasing their visibility and voice. It should be asserted that these amendments eased the progress made in the area of civil society by abolishing restrictions (Boşnak 2016). Moreover, the state's control over the organizations partially diminished. 2004 Law on Association amended the requirement related to interaction and collaboration with foreign organizations. (Law No. 5253 on Associations 2004). However, it is known that there are still rigid restrictions concerning bureaucratic rules and legal regulations, thus hampering the independent activities of the organizations (STGM 2012) .

Another important step taken on the basis of fundamental rights was the constitutional amendment of 2004. A new paragraph added to Article 90 regarding the international agreements guaranteed the precedence of the international agreement in the case of conflict between domestic laws and international agreements (Özbudun 2015). Therefore, human rights centric approach could be taken to reinforce the democratization in Turkey. As stated by Wong, legalization is a salient form of politics that is used as a handy measurement of norms by creating standards for human rights (Wong, 2012). Similarly, the LGBTI+ movement demanded the protection of LGBTI+ individuals from discrimination and exclusion from public rights (Yılmaz 2013). In this respect, the LGBTI+ community issued their demands on the new civilian constitutional amendments whose referendum was held in 2010 in order to guarantee the basic human rights of the LGBTI+ individuals and change the articles referring to “public morality” which causes the restrictions of human rights (Yılmaz 2013). LGBTI+ organizations were involved in several activities to draw the attention of the political actors and clearly state their demands. Despite the efforts, the LGBTI+ rights were not included in the constitution, denoting the approach of the government towards

LGBTI+ individuals. In addition to this, there is still no reference to sexual orientation or identity in the constitution. However, it is known that LGBTI+ organizations resort to legal actions so as to stand against human rights violations.

It should be noted that LGBTI+ mobilization coincided with the AKP era which came to power as a conservative and democratic political party and willing to accelerate the EU membership process (Mutluer 2019). Even though it initially prioritized the enhancement of human rights and democratization, it should be emphasized that there is inconsistency regarding AKP's commitment to the political reforms. Tocci asserts that AKP's enthusiasm for the EU accession was related to political and ideological interests. The EU centric approach allowed for an acceptance among sceptical liberal and secular groups by increasing its legitimacy and control over the state (Tocci 2005). Correspondingly, there is a linear connection between AKP's consolidation and the de-Europeanization process. Especially after the third election victory of AKP in 2011, the de-Europeanization process started although the reform process slowly continued until that term. At that point, AKP selectively adopted the reforms that could easily fit with its ideology rather than the EU expectations (Sipahioğlu 2017).

Replacing its pro-EU policy with the EU-sceptical approach, AKP showed itself as a more conservative and oppressive party with an intolerant attitude towards minorities after successive election victories. In other words, AKP's political discourse changed from mediating to polarizing in line with a more strengthened Islamic and restrictive mindset. However, this attitude mostly affects more vulnerable groups such as the LGBTI+ community whose rights and even presence are ignored through pronatalist and heterosexist policies. Since the very beginning, AKP has been remarkably reluctant to make progress in terms of gender equality although it has undergone significant political shifts in line with the EU accession process. Worse yet, hostility towards LGBTI+ individuals has increased to an unprecedented extent.

The discourse of the AKP is strongly linked with its male-rooted politics which has been forming regulations concerning sex and reproduction (Erhart 2013). Among AKP circles, it has been common to use homophobic language by targeting LGBTI+ individuals. Former minister of Women and Family Selma Aliye Kavaf pronounced the words "Homosexuality is an illness and it should be cured." and sparked a harsh debate among LGBTI+ organizations (Kenis and Tabur 2019) (Bianet 2015). Similarly, former Ankara Mayor Melih Gökçek expressed that "Hopefully, there will be no gay mayors in Turkey." on a TV programme upon the question "When will we have a gay mayor?" (Habertürk 2012). It is evident that the homophobic language targeting LGBTI+ individuals has been noticeably used particularly following Gezi Park protests in 2013 as

a result of the increased visibility of the LGBTI+ movement. Banning the Pride parades and related events from 2015 onwards, political actors from the ruling AKP have been shaping the frame of the politics on the basis of strong Islamic values and general morality which also negatively influences the mindset of the society. To exemplify, the homosexual candidates running for 2015 elections from HDP (People's Democratic Party) were harshly criticized by AKP circles on the grounds of promoting perversion and immorality. Former vice prime minister Yalçın Akdoğan articulated that "Lesbians are mentioned in HDP declaration for nine times. Is it the Turkish society we are talking about?". Bolstering the male-rooted and pronatalist policy of the ruling AKP government, the Directorate of Religious Affairs is also notorious for the hate speech and discrimination against LGBTI+ individuals. Director of Religious Affairs, Ali Erbaş committed a hate crime by complaining about the slogans of gender equality adding that demand for freedom is a perception operation that is detrimental to the concept of the family and moral values (Erol 2019). Again, Erbaş targeted LGBTI+'s and HIV positive people in the Friday sermon stating that homosexuality degenerates society (Bianet 2020). Another example showing the sharp spike of homophobia is the order of the officials from the Ministry of Education to prevent the children from drawing the rainbows which are symbols of "LGBTI+ perversion" (Pink News 2020). The hateful speech against the LGBTI+ individuals from the political actors has a strong impact on society, threatening the presence of them in every walk of life.

It can be understood from the examples above that AKP benefitted from the Europeanization process as a way of instrumentalization in the despise of liberal reforms. However, it dominantly shaped the local politics through authoritarian and Islamic approach along with the mindset of the society after guarantying its lead. In the light of what has been mentioned above, it can be stated that priority given to human rights and democratization through the Europeanization process decreased in time due to the lack of internalization of the reforms. The attitude of the ruling AKP against LGBTI+ individuals shows that its initial intention to play the role of the mediator is wide of the mark when its polarizing and discriminative approach is considered.

De-Europeanization in Turkey slowly started after 2011 due to several reasons. First, the credibility of the EU conditionality lessened as Turkey did not carry out a consistent policy in order to comply with formal criteria. Especially in the post-2005 period, the reforms slowed down and the progress made in the area of human rights became fluctuating (Hale 2011) (Aydın-Düzgit and Keyman 2013). Furthermore, AKP's consolidation following its successive election victories, insufficient level of state capacity and polarization of the society accelerated the de-Europeanization process, leading to the deflated enthusiasm (Boşnak 2016) (Öner 2014). It is also

known that Turkey's fulfilment of the criteria alone may not be sufficient for the EU membership because of Turkey's population, economic, security and military potential (Joseph 2006). Moreover, accession negotiations with Turkey are frozen within the decision of General Affairs Council in 2018 (European Commission n.d.).

Even though Turkey was expected to take concrete steps concerning LGBTI+ rights in the light of EU accession negotiations, it was reluctant to pay attention to the gender-related issues due to its male-rooted politics (G. Yılmaz 2020). In other words, Turkey's inconsistent reforms in terms of human rights did not include LGBTI+ rights. Strikingly, the de-Europeanization process has had a negative impact on the reforms in the area of fundamental rights, therefore, narrowing down the space for the LGBTI+ community. Although homosexuality is not criminalized in Turkey, Turkey does not protect LGBTI+ rights within the constitution. Strengthened male-rooted politics through the discourse of the political actors bolsters the violence and discrimination against LGBTI+ individuals. According to Trans Murder Monitoring, 41 murder of trans and gender diverse people were reported in Turkey between 2008 and 2015 (Trans Murder Monitoring 2016). However, increasing violence did not lead to any measures taken at the political and legal level.

Turkey has been harshly criticized by the EU due to a lack of progress concerning LGBTI+ rights. Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and identity has been mentioned under the title of combating discrimination in the Progress Reports (G. Yılmaz 2020). For instance, it was stated in the 2005 Progress Report that full transposition of the EC directives concerning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is required (European Commission 2005). Similarly, it is reiterated in the 2010 Progress Report that Turkey did not transpose the *acquis* covering discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation (European Commission 2010). Again, it is highlighted in European Commission Turkey Report 2016 that the new Law on the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey is insufficient and does not cover hate offences based on sexual orientation (European Commission 2016). Lastly, it is stated in the 2019 Progress Report that Turkey should urgently adopt a law on combating discrimination in line with European Convention on Human Rights including sexual orientation and identity. The same report also underlines the inadequate hate crime legislation which excludes the concept of sexual orientation (European Commission 2019).

Despite the promising efforts made in line with the Europeanization process, Turkey has been seriously backsliding in terms of fundamental human rights and democratization. In this regard, consolidation of the AKP and lessening credibility of EU conditionality prevailed the efforts made in the matter of human rights. Moving further away from European Union, Turkey's attitude has

also influenced the LGBTI+ community because of the politics shaped through strengthened Islamic and male-rooted values (Aljazeera 2019). It should be underlined that the Europeanization process did not directly affect LGBTI+ rights but it built up hopes with the legal establishment of the LGBTI+ organizations and extended space for civil society. Apart from that, the local LGBTI+ movement gained momentum thanks to its own efforts without any support from the ruling government. Furthermore, the sharpening of anti LGBTI+ discourse has been targeting the community and putting them at risk (Yackley 2020).

In the following section, another dimension concerning the research question will be discussed. The mass migration of the refugees, which indispensably affected foreign and domestic politics in Turkey and how it influenced LGBTI+ organizations will be elaborated.

3.3 Emergence of “New-Comers”: The Beginning of Refugee Crisis

Even though it is regarded as a sending country, Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees and asylum seekers with 3.6 million registered Syrians as of 26 March 2020 and approximately 400,000 refugees and asylum-seekers of other nationalities such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran (Tekin-Koru 2020) (Skribeland-Gürakar 2018). It can be understood that the high number of refugees and asylum seekers is linked with Turkey's location and its neighbours that are currently in conflict. In addition, Turkey's geographical proximity to Europe makes it a transit country through which refugees and asylum seekers can pursue better life conditions. However, making it to Europe by crossing dangerous routes has been harder than before especially when considering the deals and agreements between the EU and Turkey following the Syrian Civil War.

After the pro-democracy protests descended into escalating violence and an armed conflict between government forces and rebel brigades, the civil war officially broke out in Syria in 2011 (Rodgers, et al. 2016). Since then, thousands have fled their homeland as their lives have been in danger. As a result of the tremendous security concerns, more than 6 million Syrians have taken the risk to go through dangerous routes to make it to Europe in order to seek refuge. This situation caused panic across member states as collaboration in terms of responsibility-sharing was not equally provided. Due to its geographical position, Turkey has been largely affected by the massive flow of refugees and asylum seekers.

As a country bearing the most responsibility concerning the so-called refugee crisis, understanding dynamics within Turkey is of much importance. Although it has been a widely discussed topic over the last years, it has been under-explored in the LGBTI+ context, thereby causing a gap in the literature. As they are one of the most vulnerable groups among others, LGBTI+ refugees

consider LGBTI+ organizations as important areas to seek help. Moreover, Turkey does not conduct LGBTI+ inclusive policies concerning any level of regulations, therefore putting the lives of refugees in danger during the registration and implementation processes. More importantly, the transformative impact of the refugee crisis on the LGBTI+ organizations is quite visible when their agenda is taken into consideration. Therefore, it is remarkably noteworthy to examine the migration and refugee policies in Turkey in order to take a closer look at internal and external factors shaping the LGBTI+ organizations. The general framework regarding Turkey's migration and refugee policy, the situation of LGBTI+ refugees and asylum-seekers and the procedures they follow in order to apply for protection and the relation between the so-called refugee crisis following the Syrian Civil war and changing agenda of LGBTI+ organizations will be elaborated in this section.

Following the rising violence, the first refugee camps opened in Turkey (UN Refugees 2020). Pursuing an "open door" policy, Turkey had a more "welcoming" attitude towards the crisis by admitting the entry of Syrian nationals (Okay 2017). However, Turkey was unable to provide full protection for Syrian refugees due to the geographical limitation within the Refugee Convention of 1951 along with Protocol 1967 (Rygiel, Baban and Ilcan 2016). Although Turkey ratified the convention, it still maintains the geographical reservation for refugees and asylum seekers originating from Europe. In this respect, Syrian refugees whose entry was allowed had ambiguous legal status. Even worse, the term "guest" was used to refer to Syrian refugees at the beginning which invalidated their fundamental rights and legal status to receive full protection. In order to address the needs of Syrian refugees and introduce a more systematic and consistent policy, Law on Foreigners and International Protection Act was adopted in 2013 along with the following directive. They clearly define the scope of the social service to provide for Syrian refugees by eventually granting them temporary protection. However, this act is criticized on the grounds that it does not make any references to the implementation of such services (Ineli-Ciger 2015). What is more, the rising death toll on the way to Europe through the Mediterranean Sea in 2015 sparked new discussions among member states in order to take more concrete actions. In this regard, the controversial EU-Turkey Deal was signed in 2016 with the aim of controlling the number of people reaching the Greek islands from Turkey. Despite the emphasis on "humanitarian action" to prevent mass drownings, it can be understood that the main aim was more to prevent the entry of refugees and asylum-seekers to Europe. According to this deal, Turkey was expected to admit the people arriving in Europe irregularly and send Syrian refugees to be resettled in Europe in exchange (Rygiel, Baban and Ilcan 2016). Nevertheless, deteriorating relations between

EU and Turkey have affected the deal leading to risky situations for refugees. In February 2020, Turkey lifted the strict measures and opened its European borders for refugees to Europe over the attacks on Idlib (TRT World 2020). Stuck in the middle of political controversy, refugees were left to die amid freezing cold, starvation, police attack and Covid-19 pandemic (Baladi 2020). The situation still maintains its importance concerning the worrisome and ambiguous status of Syrian refugees.

Apart from the temporary protection Syrian refugees can receive from Turkey, it is remarkable to understand the framework of the protection LGBTI+ refugees and asylum-seekers can apply for. It is known that LGBTI+ refugees and asylum-seekers are the most vulnerable ones in Turkey (Helsinki Citizens' Assembly & ORAM 2011). In accordance with the Temporary Protection Regulation, Syrian refugees are not allowed to apply for international protection. However, Syrian LGBTI+ refugees are placed under the category of “vulnerable”, therefore, their application for UNHCR international protection is allowed despite the scope of the Temporary Protection Regulation (Kıvılcım 2017). The registration and implementation processes are considered controversial as the vulnerability of the applicants is not taken into consideration which causes serious problems. In order to register for international protection and resettlement, LGBTI+ refugees are expected to have temporary protection status and behold identity card. Nevertheless, this requirement is regarded as questionable since temporary protection is granted for those directly coming from Syria which excludes ones coming via other countries (Kıvılcım 2017). Despite the low chance of resettlement when a large number of the applicants are taken into consideration, it can be a ray of hope for those willing to be resettled in a third country which is most commonly the United States or Canada (Simunaniemi 2014). According to the website of the UNHCR, recognition of refugee status does not necessarily guarantee resettlement (UNHCR n.d.). Moreover, the procedure of resettlement is also quite disputable. After registering, the applicant is located in one of the satellite cities which are relatively smaller ones. Correspondingly, the applicants are obliged to remain there until the final decision regarding the resettlement is declared (Simunaniemi 2014). The long duration of waiting has a negative impact on the refugees and asylum-seekers as reported by Kaos GL (Kaos GL 2019). Another problem faced by LGBTI+ refugees and asylum seekers is the lack of a gender-sensitive approach which causes traumatizing experience for them. As the framework of the legal procedure is not thoroughly inclusive, the reception and registration procedure is not conducted by trained personnel who treat the applicants badly (Kıvılcım 2017).

When the obscure situation LGBTI+ refugees involved in is taken into consideration, the role of the LGBTI+ organizations is notably significant. Non-functional and insufficient protection provided for LGBTI+ refugees and asylum-seekers put the lives of hundreds in danger along with the emotional and psychological pressure they face on a daily basis. Due to the limited number of people resettled in a third country, it is not the priority of Syrian LGBTI+ refugees and asylum-seekers to apply for international protection since they do not fully access fundamental services in satellite cities. Even worse, they mostly face discrimination as the satellite cities are conservative and mostly populated by uneducated citizens (Kaos GL 2019). In this respect, support from the LGBTI+ organizations is noteworthy to understand. It should be noted that the so-called refugee crisis has also transformed the LGBTI+ organizations and led to a change in their organizational structure to some extent. In spite of the limited resources, LGBTI+ organizations have been remarkably active supporting LGBTI+ refugees. It can also be noticed in their organizational activities and agenda. For instance, events concerning LGBTI+ refugees have been included in the schedule of the events during Pride Week.

In the light of what is stated above, it can be understood that Turkey has gone through serious changes in terms of both foreign and domestic politics. In addition to the so-called refugee crisis, a more oppressive and intolerant approach of the government has led to a political crisis that caused controversy across the country. From the beginning of the Europeanization to the de-Europeanization, the AKP government shifted the democratic and EU-centred reforms made in line with the harmonization packages into regressive ones conducive to human rights violations. In this regard, it is important to understand the dynamics of the LGBTI+ movement due to the increasing hostility against them in line with the Islam-based policies of the ruling government. More importantly, the emergence of the mass migration of the people from war-torn Syria led to another political crisis among EU members states and Turkey. Moreover, the solidarity among civil society actors to support vulnerable groups has increased as both local and international efforts have been insufficient. Therefore, the role of the LGBTI+ organizations is highly important since they already struggle in the domestic context to carry out efficient organizational policies. In addition, how their organizational structure has been affected by the turbulent political atmosphere in the aftermath of the Syrian Civil War gains importance due to the visibility problems of these two groups. It can be concluded that the political atmosphere has been full of ebbs and flows in Turkey. However, the LGBTI+ movement has been effectively raising its voice despite the worrying situation concerning human rights. In the next chapter, the result of the empirical findings

will be presented to understand the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the LGBTI+ movement more clearly.



4. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The research question which forms the basis of the research is “How does the so-called refugee crisis affect the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey?”. In line with Wong’s theory, the empirical part of the research was designed to investigate the structural features of the LGBTI+ organizations based on the temporal dimension. In line with the argumentation, this chapter intends to investigate the structural change of the LGBTI+ organizations through the collected data. It consists of five sections which are categorized as relevant to Wong’s theoretical framework: organizational aim, political salience, agenda-setting, decision making and finally EU factor.

Different from the main components of Wong’s conceptualization (organizational aim, political salience, agenda setting and decision making) the EU factor has also been added to the main sections. The EU factor is relevant to analyse as it plays a central role in both the field of migration and LGBTI+ rights in Turkey. Despite Turkey’s unlikely accession to the EU as a member state, strategic partnership between the two sides has been revived on the issue of “massive refugee flows” (Saatçioğlu 2020). Since member states are not willing to accept refugees, they aim to stop the migration via Turkey to Europe. According to the EU-Turkey Statement, all the irregular migrants and refugees arriving in Greek islands should be returned to Turkey which gives the main responsibility to Turkey (European Council 2016). This functional partnership has failed to manage the real problems of the refugees. Even worse, it enables both sides to use refugees as bargaining chips over the conflict of interest. As an illustration, Turkey opened its borders on February 27, 2020 after the military attack in Syria. However, thousands of refugees trying to cross into Greece were confronted by police forces who attacked them with canisters of tear gas (Stevig-Gridneff and Gall 2020). Today, refugees are stuck in limbo as there is no light at the end of the tunnel because of the ongoing political conflict. Lack of protection increases the responsibility of the organizations from civil society since there is no durable solution offered by political actors at both domestic and international level. Therefore, it is crucial to evaluate the tense relations between the EU and Turkey while understanding the impact of the flows of refugees on the LGBTI+ organizations. Without the EU factor, the research question cannot be broadly answered.

Another important reason why examining the EU factor is significant is the political context of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey. One of the most essential elements on the EU’s agenda, LGBTI+ rights seriously affect the fragile relationship between the EU and Turkey due to the growing anti-LGBTI+ discourse in the political sphere. The LGBTI+ community, which is neglected by all units of the government has been facing numerous bans and restrictions since the beginning of the 2010s. According to the EU Turkey Report, LGBTI+ people are sometimes detained without

indictment and face smear campaigns by the local politicians. Moreover, organizations working on fundamental rights have more limited conditions due to administrative restrictions (European Commission 2019). Additionally, worsening circumstances of the LGBTI+ community have increased the tension between the EU and Turkey which is vehemently brought into question by the EU side. For instance, the protests against the appointment of the new rector at Boğaziçi University grew more and the LGBTI+ students were targeted by political actors. Four students were arrested over artwork depicting a rainbow symbol alongside an image of Islamic site (BBC 2021). LGBTI+ Students Club was also shut down. In response, the EU warned Turkey of hate speech against the LGBTI+ community and the closing of the LGBTI+ club of Boğaziçi University (EEAS Press Team 2021). The worsening EU-Turkey relationship is also affected by human rights violations and discrimination against the LGBTI+ community in Turkey. Therefore, it is necessary to include this aspect to broaden the scope of the research and gain a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

It is argued in this research that LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey have gone through structural changes following the so-called refugee crisis. Why is this research question relevant? As stated above, the current political atmosphere makes it harder for the local LGBTI+ organizations to focus on their own agenda. They struggle in an ambiguous environment where their existence is susceptible to intensified anti-LGBTI rhetoric. Hence, this situation directly impacts the structure of the organizations as well as organizational activities and agenda due to the never-ending targeting and scapegoating. In addition to this, the flow of people fleeing to Turkey following the beginning of the bloody conflict that broke out in Syria added a different perspective to the situation of LGBTI+ organizations. In a country where their vulnerability is already terrifically high, the local LGBTI+ community came across a new group of people whose existence is not even recognized: LGBTI+ refugees. The intersection of these two vulnerable groups is noteworthy since it is a serious concern to consider in terms of organization theory. For LGBTI+ organizations which struggle in the harsh political climate, the emergence of the refugees who are pushed back from the EU borders has been critical. Local LGBTI+ organizations have shown solidarity by taking a more refugee-inclusive approach to the agenda and played the role of the facilitator. In short, it should be stated that this case is very significant to undertake research, especially in Turkey where the intersection of two important groups is seen.

It is a specific case in Turkey where the largest number of refugees are located and anti-LGBTI+ rhetoric is intensified. Therefore, it initiates a very critical discussion in the literature. It is asserted

that more studies on this topic are needed in the literature to find concrete solutions for the current problems. In the next section, the methodological aspects of the research will be reviewed.

4.1 Organizational Aim

The organizational aim is one of the most crucial elements carving out the structure of the organization as it determines what kind of activities the organization engages with. There is a linear relationship between the organizational aim and the structure, therefore, setting the agenda accordingly. In the light of what has been mentioned in the previous chapters, it can be stated that the rational and goal-oriented characteristics of the organization are highly emphasized in this research. Contrary to what has been discussed in the literature, non-profit organizations do not only work on the basis of humanitarian reasons as Wong asserts (Wong 2012). Similar to for-profit organizations, they also have aims in order to become politically salient and spread out the norms they promote. This point of view concerning the organizations allows for a more realistic understanding of how the structure has been affected following the crisis.

Although identified as LGBTI+ organizations, their aims differ due to their priorities and founding purpose. While some of them intend to involve all sexual orientation identities; the others are willing to work on specific ones. Again, the organizations represented here work on different fields and activities to respond to the particular needs of the people.

Table 4: Primary aim of the organizations

Group	Primary Aim of the Organization
1	Developing policies on human rights of LGBTI+ persons, increasing the visibility of the LGBTI+ identities
2	Providing consulting service on HIV and sexual health and supporting the treatment of HIV-infected persons
3	Working on discrimination, hate crimes and violence against trans community, creating projects relating to the problems transgenders encounter, providing advocacy service in the related area
4	Working on the fields of gender, sexual orientation and identity, especially refugees and migrants, Kurdish identities and HIV
5	Developing policies to solve the problems of LGBTI+ youth and opening up political space for them
6	Bringing the issues concerning the sexual health and human rights of the sex workers to the agenda, developing social policies and providing advocacy service in the related areas
7	LGBTI+ human rights activism at the local level

(Created in line with the content of the interviews and websites of the organizations)

In view of the table above, it can be said that each organization has a specific aim to plan the activities and projects. However, it should be taken into consideration that they can work on the related areas that were not mentioned in the scope of their organizational aims so as to strengthen the LGBTI+ community. For instance, some of the organizations above work on social media to enhance the visibility of LGBTI+ identities and create a space to discuss their issues. Again, some organizations above engage in miscellaneous projects and activities in line with the needs of the LGBTI+ identities.

An important aspect defining the organizational aims is the year in which the organizations were officially established since the field they work on can expand depending on the particular needs of the community. The intention of the research was to analyse the organizations that were founded before the refugee crisis which was at the peak in Europe in 2015. Nevertheless, it was understood from the interviews that the temporal dimension functioned differently in Turkey due to its proximity and other related political reasons. Therefore, it was concluded that some of the

organizations above which were officially established after 2015 were still affected by the so-called refugee crisis including their organizational aims or agendas.

Of all the LGBTI+ organizations, Group 4 specifically includes activities concerning the refugees and migrants in their primary organizational aims although the others draw a more general outline even if they work with refugees and migrants as a part of their projects and activities. The informant representing the organisation was asked if this idea was shaped during the so-called refugee crisis since they first started to informally organize around 2013.

Interviewer: You mostly work with refugees and migrants. The idea to establish the organization was first brought forward in 2013.

Did you have any intention to work with them in the first place?

Interviewee: We didn't have any refugee policies. It is obvious that being against discrimination means supporting the refugees, but we did not want to partake in refugee activities only. It is because of the fact that our organization mostly consists of Kurdish LGBTI+ persons who are multilingual, those coming from the Middle East such as Arabs or Iranians. There were so many people fleeing to Turkey after 2013. The conflict broke out in 2011 but 2013-2014 was the worst and most bloody period. We realized that we were surrounded by a lot of LGBTI+ refugees who were already our friends. Eventually, we decided to work with them.

(Interview with an informant from Group 4, September 4, 2020)

This statement shows that the inclusion of refugees in the organizational aims was affected by environmental factors. Even though the main aim of the organization was not the refugee inclusive approach at the beginning, it became more necessary in time, therefore creating a bond with divergent identities. As noted earlier, environmental factors can dominate organizations as they lead to fundamental shifts pertaining to the priorities of the organizations. Similarly, Group 4 centred its organizational aims around refugee identity because of the changing environment. In this view, it can be understood how salient the environmental factors are, especially after the outbreak of the conflict.

It is concluded that Group 1 also mentions refugees and migrants while describing the array of their activities. Working with the refugees and migrants since 2008, the organization has expanded

the scope of the activities and projects over time adding an organizational unit solely specializing in the refugees and migrants (Interview with a representer from Group 1, 8 July 2020). However, it should be noted that Group 1 had started working with the refugees and migrants earlier than the so-called refugee crisis itself due to the demands of the persons coming from other Middle East countries.

Interviewee: Especially as of 2011, we became much busier. First, the priority of those coming from Syria was not their sexual orientation, maybe because of the cultural situation or their essential problems. The number of Syrian LGBTI+ refugees applying to us is less than the others. 70 or 75 % of counselees are from Iran. However, those coming in 2015 were mostly Syrians and the number of the applications was much higher. The countries from which the refugees come are mostly Iran, Iraq, Syria, Tunisia and Lebanon.

(Interview with an informant from Group 1, July 8, 2020)

It should be stated that the demands of LGBTI+ refugees can necessitate a change in the scope of the organizational aims since the activities cannot particularly respond to their demands. In this respect, three organizations asserted that they did not adjust their primary aims to the needs of the refugees in order not to contradict their missions and principles. As mentioned above, this approach confirms what Wong claims about the role of an organization. As a politically salient concept, it should focus on its aims to spread out the organizational norms.

Interviewee: Just like in Turkey, there is a different perspective towards civil society in organizations in the Middle East. Assuming we give humanitarian aid, people asked “I don’t have any place to stay”, “I am unemployed, can you please help me find a job”, “Do you send food packages to your volunteers?”. Then, we realized that we should tell more about ourselves rather than refusing them. Therefore, we published a leaflet and translated it into (if I am not wrong) 7 different languages... We wrote something to simply answer “who is Group 4 and what it is doing, why did we establish it”. Because we were supposed to inform the people and we are an

organization working on the field of human rights rather than humanitarian aid.

(Interview with an informant from Group 4, September 4, 2020)

This statement proves Wong's theory on political salience true in terms of the general misconception of the organization. As politically salient entities, organizations need to take strategic actions in correlation with their organizational aims. Against the backdrop of the benevolent approach of the non-profit organizations, LGBTI+ organizations purposely function as policy-making mechanisms in the Turkey context. For this reason, their existence cannot be simply reduced to humanitarian aid. However, the informant from Group 4 later claimed that they delivered humanitarian aid for the first time due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It seems worthwhile for those who have been living under worsening conditions due to the limited employment opportunities and access to medical care and social service (Grungras, Levitan and Slotek 2011). Therefore, it can be said that various environmental factors can also bring about minor changes in organizational activities, but strategic aims remain of utmost importance.

In consideration of all the aspects related to the organizational aims, it can be concluded that organizational aim was remarkably affected through the so-called refugee crisis. Due to the mismatching demands of LGBTI+ refugees and LGBTI+s holding Turkish citizenship, the organizations ran into difficulty responding to their particular needs. However, none of the organizations above did change their organizational aims following the mass migration of the refugees. Instead, they extended the scope of the organizational activities, but their aims mostly remained unchanged. In this view, Group 4 sets an interesting case as it decided upon its organizational aim prioritizing refugees and migrants within the beginning of the crisis. Nevertheless, it can be considered as the process of shaping rather than changing. As a consequence, none of the organizations changed their organizational aims but they extended the scope of the activities to support the refugees in need.

In the face of a challenging situation, LGBTI+ organizations are indispensably involved in the political context in Turkey. How is their political stance related to the so-called refugee crisis? To respond to this question, the next section will evaluate the political aspect of the organizations which is considered as one of the main concepts of the theoretical framework of this research.

4.2 Political Salience of the Organizations

As stated in Chapter 2, Wong defines the organizations as politically salient entities. According to this conceptualization, political salience is the relevance of organizational activities in the political context. It justifies the existence of the organizations, by arranging the relationship between the organization and environment. Wong emphasizes that political salience highly affects the agenda-setting of the organizations (Wong 2012). The organizational goals are closely related to political salience since they denote the degree of importance given to particular concerns. In order to ensure political salience, legalization and organization networks are commonly used by the organizations (Wong 2012).

In order to understand how the organizations function to become politically salient, it is noteworthy to learn about the activities they engage in. Turkey is a country where LGBTI+ rights are strikingly politicized, thereby, leading to violations of the essential human rights and restrictions of events. According to ILGA-Europe's annual report, the human rights of LGBTI+ people are mostly ignored by the authorities along with bias-motivated speech and violence, curbed freedom of expression and increased level of discrimination (ILGA Europe, Kaos GL 2015). Inherent in this problem, the legal struggle is remarkably common among organizations. Therefore, it is also known that they are in cooperation with one another, creating a sense of solidarity in order to promote their politically salient norms. In Turkey where gender roles are dominantly shaped within Islamic values and cultural norms, having an LGBTI+ identity is political itself. Therefore, how they cope with constant discrimination and violation represents political salience.

It should be reiterated that organizations in this research widely use legalization and organization networks in terms of political salience. Therefore, the level of political salience can be measured through legalization and organization networks in line with Wong's conceptualization of political salience. Even though she mentions the factor of international economic sanctions in terms of political salience, it is not included in this research due to the irrelevance in the local context. It should be highlighted that Wong's conceptualization has been adapted to local context which necessitates an interpretation pertaining to the empirical setting.

Table 5: Political salience of the organizations

Group	Legalization	Organization Network
1	Providing legal consultancy	In collaboration with both local and international organizations
2	Providing legal consultancy	In collaboration with both local and international organizations
3	Providing legal consultancy	In collaboration with both local and international organizations
4	Providing legal consultancy (based on voluntarism)	In collaboration with both local and international organizations
5	Providing legal consultancy (more informal)	In collaboration with both local and international organizations (more informal)
6	Providing legal consultancy	In collaboration with both local and international organizations
7	Providing legal consultancy	In collaboration with both local and international organizations

(Created in line with the interviews)

As the table above shows, all the organizations use legalization and maintain relations with both local and international actors. Therefore, it can be understood that political salience plays an important role in terms of organizational activities. On the other side, the collaboration with other organizations strengthens the relations under arduous conditions. It should be elucidated that the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey ardently support one another, therefore, creating unprecedented solidarity. For instance, a group of LGBTI+ organizations made a joint statement against the hate campaigns targeting the LGBTI+ community and shutting down of Boğaziçi University's LGBTI+ Studies Club (Kaos GL 2021). Amid unlawful arrests and detainments, this act of solidarity was noticeably courageous, therefore, denoting the strong organizational network at the local level. In this view, ILGA Europe, one of the biggest international LGBTI+ organizations, also supported this statement and voiced concerns over the escalating tension (ILGA Europe 2021). This situation

generally gives an insight into the collaboration among the local and international organizations in Turkey.

Legalization is also used as an effective policy-making tool to foster political salience. Local LGBTI+ organizations take legal actions to stand up for their rights and fight against hate crime and violence. For instance, Hande Buse Şeker case is a noteworthy example of legalization in terms of political salience. The police officer who brutally killed trans woman Hande Buse Şeker was sentenced to life imprisonment and his request for a sentence reduction was rejected (Bianet 2020). This court decision was an important development regarding legalization since attorneys from LGBTI+ organizations collaborated to follow the case. Moreover, the political authorities who are aware of the positive impact of the legalization, took actions to undermine the legitimacy of the LGBTI+ movement. Turkey pulled out of Istanbul Convention in late March on the grounds that it weakens family ties and promotes homosexuality. (BBC 2021) The reference to the sexual orientation in the convention has been argued among conservative circles, thereby putting the lives of millions of people in danger with the decision. It can be interpreted that legalization which is an effective policy-making tool for the LGBTI+ community was undermined to weaken the community, by strengthening the social conservatism.

How is political salience related to the so-called refugee crisis and does it affect the political salience of the LGBTI+ organizations? The involvement of the refugees in LGBTI+ organizations has added a new dimension to the political stance of LGBTI+ organizations. They have opened up a new space for refugees who are almost invisible in the political context. By addressing their needs and increasing their visibility, LGBTI+ organizations have developed a more comprehensive approach to empower the refugee community and enable them to pronounce their own problems.

Interviewee: We develop our activities and projects to prevent human rights violations and eliminate obstacles in the system. For example, there had been major challenges to access to healthcare for a very long time when our organization was first established. So, our projects focused on health awareness, but employee rights violations have been on the increase lately. Then, we have started to work on awareness activities and projects on right to work. After determining the needs in the field of migration (humanitarian aid), we have also become a part of projects on refugees.

(Interview with an informant from Group 2, July 8, 2020)

The remarks of the representative on human rights violations should be highlighted to understand the role of the organizations in the political context. All the problems mentioned above are the result of the political preferences which promote nationalist and heteronormative values. Inclusion of various perspectives and development of new projects are acts of political salience in an attempt to make a change. Similarly, helping the refugees who are left unprotected as a result of the political crisis between Turkey and the EU states indicates how LGBTI+ organizations have extended their scope of the political salience.

Interviewer: You are working on three projects now. One of them is on the LGBTI+ refugees which Group 4 collaborates as a project partner. Can you please give more detail about this project?

Interviewee (informant from Group 4): Let me talk about the project. Group 7 prepared everything and then we got involved in the project. The thing is that refugee LGBTI+s don't represent themselves... Individuals should be able to state their own problems (...) As Group 4, this is what we have been arguing for years. However, we had to represent them for some years because our friends (LGBTI+ refugees) have been dealing with visibility problems. On the other hand, they can't easily express themselves because of the language barrier... Our essential aim is to empower LGBTI+ refugees.

(Interview with informants from Group 4 and Group 7, December 17, 2020)

It became clear from the interview with Group 4 and Group 7 that they have spotted the problems concerning the self-representation of the LGBTI+ refugees and started to work on a common project to increase their visibility. On this basis, they have opened a space for LGBTI+ refugees in the political context while dealing with anti-LGBTI+ discourse at the domestic level. Within the scope of the project, they held series of online meetings to discuss the possibilities and needs of self-organization from LGBTI+ refugees. They also shared more details on how to conduct this project.

Interviewer: How do you plan to conduct the project?

Interviewee (informant from Group 7): We have decided upon four meetings. Needless to say, we are all aware that four meetings will not be enough. However, in my opinion, it will be helpful to form a basis

for the issue. We made a swot analysis in the first meeting. An attorney joined the second meeting and talked about legal barriers to the self-organization of the LGBTI+ refugees. We will hold the third meeting on Sunday to discuss the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey and the involvement of the LGBTI+ refugees at the domestic level. We will ask organization representatives to define their roles in the movement. (...) In the end, we will develop a strategic plan with the LGBTI+ refugees.

(Interview with informants from Group 4 and Group 7, December 17, 2020)

It is of utmost importance to understand the collective efforts to tackle a serious problem of self-representation and organization of the LGBTI+ refugees. This statement made by the Group 7 representative indicates the role of the organizations as policy-making entities which have extended their scope after the involvement of the LGBTI+ refugees in the movement. Moreover, it should be highlighted that the legal aspect of the political salience is crucial to enable refugees to represent themselves. Therefore, they strive for removing the legal barriers to the self-organization of the LGBTI+ refugees lacking the basic protection.

Another important conclusion that can be drawn from the interviews is that LGBTI+ organizations take the demands and needs of the LGBTI+ refugees into account before planning and developing new activities. A representative from Group 1 claimed that they run focus groups to determine the needs of the LGBTI+ refugees and shape the refugee programme accordingly.

Interviewee: Within the Refugee Rights Programme, we determine the content in line with the conclusion of the field research. The main activity of the Refugee Rights Programme is to maintain consultancy activities such as legal consultancy and psycho-social consultancy throughout the year. (...) We conduct focus group meetings with the refugees from the cities we provide consultancy service with. We set the meetings to receive notifications and remarks about the activities by the end of the year. Then, we evaluate the results and find out what they are expecting from us.

(Interview with the second informant from Group 1, February 3, 2021)

It can be understood from this statement that Group 1 also provides legal consultancy service to the LGBTI+ refugees within the scope of their programme. Furthermore, their approach prioritizing the demands of the refugees while determining the content of the programme denotes that they aim to strengthen the LGBTI+ refugee community. It should also be reiterated that establishing a programme specific to the LGBTI+ refugees creates a particular space in terms of policy-making thereby, enabling them to voice their own concerns to find durable solutions in the long term. As mentioned above, the basic human rights of the LGBTI+s are considered as a threat to the public order and Islam-based moral values in Turkey. For this reason, meeting the demands of the LGBTI+ refugees in an attempt to protect their rights is certainly a politically salient action.

According to Wong's conceptualization, the collaboration among local organizations is significant to intensify the political salience. Similarly, the collective efforts of the local LGBTI+ organizations to find durable solutions for the main problems LGBTI+ refugees face are great examples of such a collaboration. Even when an organization cannot provide support for LGBTI+ refugees, they consult other LGBTI+ organizations that are more experienced in the particular area. Especially Group 3 and Group 5 informants claimed that they helped LGBTI+ refugees through their connections even though they did not conduct particular projects or activities about them.

Interviewee: Group 3 had the first interview and advised the applicants to reach out to the relevant organizations unless there was a language barrier. For example, when someone sought help, we asked them to get in touch with Organization X or Y. Our aim was to receive the application, forward it and check on with the organizations to ensure that they contacted them. Because our capacity was not sufficient to work with the refugees. For this reason, we served as a bridge in this crisis. We didn't particularly work on the area of migration.

(Interview with an informant from Group 3, September 22, 2020)

Even though Group 3 did not develop any specific activities or projects, they guided the LGBTI+ refugees along to access non-governmental bodies and networks. This suggests a strong link between local collaboration and political salience as the problems the refugees face generally stem from the political vacuum due to the lack of responsibility-sharing of the political actors. The informant later touched upon the political aspect of the crisis which leads to turmoil in the civil society.

Interviewee: Civil society organizations had to take initiative in the areas in which the government didn't take any measures. Due to the weak ties between the government and civil society, they cannot work together. Civil society has all responsibility, and nothing has been yet done to make things easier for us.

(Interview with an informant from Group 3, September 22, 2020)

Due to the insufficient support from the governmental bodies, the LGBTI+ organizations have to help LGBTI+ refugees by using their limited capacity which is already at stake. More importantly, “weak ties” mentioned by the Group 3 informant indicates the unwillingness of the political authorities to bear responsibility to protect the vulnerable identities. However, this attitude worsens the situation of the LGBTI+ refugees, which leaves them fully unprotected. For instance, Muhammed Wisam Sankari, a gay Syrian refugee, was beheaded in a conservative district of Istanbul in 2016. Even though there was no confirmed information on whether he was killed for being gay, it is noteworthy to state that his brutal death did not seem to draw the media's attention (BBC 2016). This case clearly shows the political aspect of bearing these identities in Turkey where the political agenda is shaped through the male-rooted perspective. Therefore, the collective efforts of the LGBTI+ organizations to counsel the refugees on access to basic needs is an example of local collaboration within the scope of the political salience.

The capacity of the local organizations is an important factor to develop policies for the LGBTI+ refugees. Different from other organizations, Group 5 has considerably more limited capacity to work on activities or projects about the LGBTI+ refugees. Therefore, they helped them through the local network to be able to meet their demands.

Interviewee: When we first established our organization in early 2016, there were satellite cities for LGBTI+ refugees, they are still in place. But they have more extended. The satellite city was Denizli way back then. We also kept in close contact with organizations from there. We considered writing a project for refugees at that time. We needed money for that, nonetheless. This is the main concern. Because we simply don't have Arabic translators. We don't know Arabic either. LGBTI+ refugees we could reach out are mostly from Iran. Syrian refugees under temporary protection live in a different context. Those under

international protection live in a more different context. Languages are also different. Honestly, our professional capacity was not inadequate.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 5, July 24, 2020)

It can be understood from this paragraph that Group 5 could not realize their organizational plans and goals due to inadequate capacity and funding. However, their concern to address the problems the refugees face is critical in terms of policy-making. Furthermore, it is seen that the LGBTI+ organizations are not adequately supported in order to realize their goals. This situation mostly stems from the fact that they are either ignored or targeted by governmental bodies.

Group 6 is an organization mostly working for the human rights and protection of sex workers. They have also been the partner of the project on protection services of the refugees along with Group 2. They initially published a report on the sex work and Syrian refugees under temporary protection in 2017 when the mass flows of people was a hotly debated issue among the EU states (Ördek 2017). The inclusion of the Syrian refugees within the framework of the organizational activities is noteworthy as it indicates the expansion of the policies.

Interviewee: Our target group has been expanded. We have been already working on sexual health and carrying out activities about transsexuals. We have also been working on transitioning process and access to alternative employment area. People with HIV are also our target group. Within this project, we have formally expanded our target group. We are providing service to refugee sex workers, LGBTI+ refugees and refugees with HIV.

(Interview with the informant from Group 6, August 25, 2020)

What the informant from Group 6 mentioned is noteworthy to examine. It is understood that they work with disadvantaged sections of the LGBTI+ community especially when the lack of protection in Turkey is considered. What they do is to improve the conditions in the areas that are mostly neglected at the local level. Therefore, it can be concluded that their service highly contributes to the political salience since they also strive for finding durable solutions for the problems LGBTI+ refugees face.

In the light of the information above, it can be stated that the political salience of the LGBTI+ organizations has gained a new perspective with the inclusion of the LGBTI+ refugees. Despite limited capacity, meeting the demands of them with the help of the local and international network

indicates a more comprehensive and inclusive form of policy-making. Deliberate negligence of the needs is a political act especially when the current atmosphere in which the LGBTI+ community is systematically targeted is considered. Therefore, the initiative of the organizations to create a space for the LGBTI+ refugees in order to respond to their problems is a significant step to expand the framework of the political salience. It can be understood from the interviews that especially Group 1, Group 2, Group 4, Group 6 and Group 7 have been actively working on the area with particular activities and projects. In addition, Group 3 and Group 5 have been providing advice and support to the LGBTI+ refugees through their local links which are undeniably critical to fill the political vacuum. In other words, the importance of political salience has increased in the aftermath of the so-called refugee crisis due to the growing needs and demands in the area.

How is political salience related to the agenda-setting and organizational structure? In the next section, how the agenda is set in the organizations will be discussed to give further information about the structural change.

4.3 Agenda Setting

According to Wong, the distribution of agenda-setting creates organizational structure (Wong 2012). Proposal, enforcement and implementation power are three important elements to analyse how the agenda is set. What is more, analysing the process of agenda-setting through these three elements allows for a detailed understanding of decision making, especially the extent of centralization and decentralization. At the outset, it is critical to figure out the concept of agenda in LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey.

As noted earlier in Chapter 3, the political climate has been generally turbulent in Turkey. Given the unstable circumstances, it is obvious that organizations are not independent of the domestic agenda. Correspondingly, they are largely affected by political events. In Turkey where politics can reach out to every sphere of daily life, organizations also have to adapt their own agenda to the current situation. It is mentioned in Chapter 3 that political discourse targets the LGBTI+ community which leads to major changes at the organizational level. According to a report, 246 news and opinion columns including discrimination and hate speech were published only in one month, August 2020 (Alpar 2020). The aggressive and hateful discourse against the LGBTI+ community exacerbates the tension at the societal level and provokes hate crimes across the country. Therefore, it can be understood that the agenda of the organizations is hugely linked with domestic discourse.

Most of the organizations claim that the domestic agenda greatly influences the organizational agenda. However, it does not mainly alter the main organizational activities. The fast pace of the political agenda might expand the scope of the organizational activities depending on the importance attributed to the topic.

Interviewee: We cannot set the agenda because the agenda comes to Turkey itself. Our agenda has been Covid-19 recently... We keep ourselves updated with the mainstream news. On the other side, the agenda is shaped through the context we have been maintaining since the organization was established, such as the problems of LGBTI+ youth and what can be done about them.

(Interview with an informant from Group 5, July 24 2020)

It should be reiterated that the current political agenda revolving around the anti LGBTI+ discourse in Turkey. As the representative from Group 5 mentioned, it is not probable for the organizations to remain indifferent to smear campaigns. What is more, crucial developments and global crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic cannot be ignored as they have a huge impact at the domestic level.

Interviewee: We determine the agenda according to the words coming out of politicians, discrimination against LGBTI+s and the demands of the individuals.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 1, July 8, 2020)

From this statement, it is clear that the political atmosphere is one of the main factors which influence the local agenda. Since it might pose intertwined problems for the LGBTI+ community, its impact should not be underestimated. Inherent in this discussion, the intersectionality of the identities is also critical as the demands of the individuals might change within the political circumstances. Targeting the LGBTI+ community might impact transsexuals more negatively due to the visibility concerns. Similarly, LGBTI+ refugees who are left out without any protection might encounter more difficulties. This implication is also mentioned by an informant from Group 4.

Interviewee: Even though civil society organizations in Turkey are working on the existing problems, they are greatly impacted by the political atmosphere. In Turkey where anti LGBTI+ discourse has become mainstream; we determine our agenda on the struggle with

targeting and smear campaigns. We also have strategic and communication plans. We are all volunteers in this organization, but we are working with professional manners.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 4, September 4, 2020)

This suggests that LGBTI+ organizations generally deal with multiple challenges simultaneously which continuously expands the framework of the agenda. Although Group 4 is a volunteering-based organization, it tackles the issues which require a professional approach. As stated by Wong, agenda-setting is a prerequisite for the decision-making process which basically addresses the existing problems to find effective solutions with relevant decision-making mechanism. However, the agenda which is constantly changing and expanding can force organizations to take a more professional approach to be able to adapt to environmental needs.

How did the so-called refugee crisis affect the agenda of the organizations? It is worth discussing these interesting facts by the analysis of the interview. It can be understood that the organizations take domestic agenda into consideration along with the main agenda that was determined when the organization was first established. Furthermore, the agenda is also set in line with the needs of the LGBTI+ community. As mentioned above, the organizational activities and political salience are closely linked with agenda setting since the organizations work to accomplish specific goals determined before. Similarly, the organizations respond to political discourse including discrimination and hate speech which strikingly denotes that the organizations cannot be separated from the environmental factors.

Table 6: The impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the agenda-setting.

Group	How did so-called refugee crisis affect agenda-setting?			
	Changed	Unchanged	Expanded	Narrowed
1			+	
2			+	
3		+		
4			+	
5			+	
6			+	
7			+	

(Created in line with the interviews)

This table casts a new light on how organizations responded to the mass migration of the refugees in terms of agenda-setting. The findings demonstrate that 6 of the organizations have expanded the scope of the agenda in order to offer support to the LGBTI+ refugees. However, the extent of the change does seem to depend on the organization itself because of the lack of capacity.

Interviewee: This is an issue that needs to be at the top of the agenda. We are talking about serious human rights violations here. But then things came to a deadlock on what could be done. We should have either written a project or paid efforts into the issue. This is where we got stuck. Our capacity was inadequate. (...) However, we conducted a series of activities on human rights of the refugees, temporary protection, international protection, challenges the refugees to face in Turkey.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 5, July 24, 2020)

This statement is also consistent with what has been found in the previous section. The capacity is critical for the organizations to include different activities and projects within the scope of the agenda. Despite the limited options, Group 5 managed to create a space for the LGBTI+ refugees in their agenda which can be considered as expansion.

Interviewer: Our agenda has not remarkably changed. We continued working on trans rights, but a new group came into place. It was beyond our capacity. We did not specifically work on migration and

refugees. (...) We just advised them to reach out to other organizations where they could get help.

(Interview with an informant from Group 3, September 22, 2020)

It confirms that Group 3's agenda has remained more stable when compared to the other organizations. It also leads to the discussion about capacity which prevents the organizations from expanding the scope of the agenda. Although Group 3's agenda on the refugees is quite limited, it has been collaborating with a local network to come up with durable solutions for them. Therefore, it can be concluded that they have taken the relevant issues and challenges into consideration despite the unchanged agenda. They could have done more if their capacity would have been adequate.

The salience of the rights and priority given to certain concerns determine the agenda-setting. However, the political climate might dramatically change the agenda of the organizations in line with the emerging needs and challenges. In this regard, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey have expanded their agenda in order to deliver service to the disadvantaged community of the LGBTI+ refugees. As the result, as shown in the table above, indicate that 6 of the organizations (Group 1, Group 2, Group 3, Group 4, Group 5, Group 6 and Group 7) have been remarkably affected by the environmental factors and expanded their scope of agenda for the LGBTI+ refugees. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the degree of expansion depends on the organization. To exemplify, Group 5 has changed its agenda to a limited extent while Group 4 engages in several projects and activities centred on the so-called refugee crisis itself. The most striking result to emerge from the collected data is the importance of capacity. Accordingly, Group 3's agenda has remained unchanged and stable due to the inadequate capacity. Even though they have supported the refugees and advised them to reach out to other organizations to seek help, they have not specifically worked on this topic.

A recurrent theme in the interviews is the fast-changing agenda because of the turbulent political context in Turkey. This problem complicates the agenda-setting process since LGBTI+ organizations have to deal with many challenges simultaneously. When considering the inadequate capacity and never-ending targeting, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey pay a lot of effort into the basic human rights achievements. Therefore, this situation forces them to take more responsibility to provide support for those in need.

Agenda is the determinant factor in decision making. It demonstrates the issues to be discussed and handled within the organization. In the next section, decision-making in LGBTI+ organizations along with the concepts of centralization and decentralization will be discussed.

4.4 Decision Making

As stated in the previous chapters, this research argues that the LGBTI+ organizations have been going through structural change due to the political and legal loopholes concerning the so-called refugee crisis. Hinged on Wong's conceptualization of organizational structure, the collected data from the interviews with LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey denotes whether the argumentation is valid. The previous category, agenda-setting, gives an insight into the notion of agenda in LGBTI+ organizations and how it is shaped through the local context. In this vein, it can be understood that the domestic agenda is an important determinant in the agenda-setting of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey as the political atmosphere can predominantly be effective in a wide array of issues. The ever-changing situation regarding human rights and deteriorating discrimination and hate speech against LGBTI+ persons are not independent of local politics. Furthermore, it is substantial to state that the political situation following the refugee crisis is also one of the local agenda items that relatively influences LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. Therefore, it is essential to retain a multidimensional perspective towards agenda setting in a broader setting.

The distribution of agenda-setting is defined as the organizational structure (Wong 2012). In this respect, how the decision concerning the agenda is proposed, enforced and finally implemented is markedly significant to understand the organizational structure as well as the change based on the temporal dimension. In this context, decision making refers to the steps relevant to the items in the agenda taken by the people working at the organizations. Simply put, the people playing the role in the decision-making reveal the structural features of the organization which is described as centralization and decentralization in this research. At the same time, the formal and informal relations among the organizational units are also stressed, which makes Wong's conceptualization more convenient. According to this conceptualization, the number of people partaking in the decision-making process denotes whether the organization is centralized or decentralized. As noted above, centralization refers to the limited number of people actively deciding upon the agenda; while decentralization involves more people in the same mechanism.

Each of the interviewees was asked how the decision-making process was completed in their organizations with a piece of detailed information about proposal, enforcement and implementation stages. Additionally, the temporal change concerning the decision-making

mechanism of the organizations was taken into consideration. However, it should be stated that each organization has a different mechanism. In other words, the theoretical framework cannot apply to each of them as all of them do not have a proposal, enforcement and implementation stages separately. Some can directly shift to implementation from proposal depending on the agenda item.

Interviewee: How do you make the decisions concerning the agenda?

Interviewer: There is no formal structure for the decision-making mechanism. We talk about specific concerns in the balcony or pitch ideas in e-mails and finally approve them.

Interviewee: Can everyone join the decision-making process?

Interviewer: If it is a general issue, everyone can join it. Organizational units have their meetings concerning their agenda. The general coordinator tries to join every meeting. He gives feedback where necessary.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 1, July 8, 2020)

What stands out in this statement is that Group 1 can be regarded as a decentralized organization since the decision is made in an equal environment. The organizational structure is mostly based on informal relations and consensus among employees. The decision is not approved or implemented by the board of directors. If the meetings are about a general issue, all of the organizational personnel join them; however, organizational units mainly set meetings about the internal agenda. However, the decision-making is not a process that is specifically divided into stages of proposal, enforcement and implementation as the consensus among the personnel is more significant for the decision. The same answer was also echoed by the second representative working at Refugee Rights Program from Group 1.

Interviewee: How do you make the decisions concerning the agenda?

Who proposes an idea, who enforces and implements it?

Interviewer: Everyone can do it. There are two translators, one Arabic and one Persian, two social service specialists, an assistant and a project coordinator. Any of us can come up with a proposal in an informal way. We all evaluate the proposal altogether and make a consensus. There is no mechanism.

Interviewee: Can everyone join the decision-making process?

Interviewer: Yes.

(Interview with the second informant from Group 1, February 2, 2021)

This is rather unexpected that decision making is not based on a systematic mechanism which is divided into proposal, enforcement and implementation stages in Group 1 in contrast to the main argument of the research. It can be understood that the informal relations which are dominant in the decision-making process avert a hierarchical and centralized structure in which enforcement and implementation are maintained by the executive units.

Interviewee: Have you observed any difference in the general decision-making mechanism in your organization after the mass migration of the refugees?

Interviewer: If there is a security issue, we make an urgent decision. Apart from that, it has always been the same.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 1, July 8, 2020)

It is apparent from this statement that structural change following the refugee crisis was not observed in Group 1. One of the reasons might be the fact that Group 1 had started to work with LGBTI+ refugees and migrants prior to the refugee crisis. It has been experienced in organizational activities, agenda setting and decision making concerning the refugees and migrants since 2007.

Interviewer: There were nearly 4 million people coming from Syria. When we viewed the report United Nations shared with us, we realized that the number of the Syrian LGBTI+s applying for asylum was approximately 200. It was quite shocking to see that number out of 4 million. This situation shows that people have difficulty in saying that they were the victims of the persecution based on sexual orientation and gender identity (...) They have concerns about reaching out for help.

(Interview with the second informant from Group 1, February 2, 2021)

This statement is quite surprising since the number of Syrian LGBTI+ refugees applying for Group 1 is expected to be more as Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees. Another interesting aspect

concerning this statement is that other organizations did not state that they received a limited number of applications. It might stem from the fact that Group 1 has a larger capacity to provide service for more people when compared to the other organizations.

In summary, it can be concluded that the decentralized structure of Group 1 remains the same even after the so-called refugee crisis due to the informal and horizontal relationships dominant in the decision-making process. As Group 1 has more experience and capacity, it seeks ways to support more LGBTI+ refugees from Syria on the contrary that the other organizations have difficulty in dealing with big numbers.

Interviewee: How do you make the decisions concerning the agenda?

Who proposes an idea, who enforces and implements it?

Interviewer: It depends on what the decision is about. If it is about an activity, the feedback from the counselees is taken into consideration. If it is about a project, the executive team of the project makes the decision in line with the views of the staff working on the project. Everyone does not necessarily have to be a part of the decision.

(Interview with an informant from Group 2, July 8, 2020)

This statement denotes that Group 2 has a centralized and hierarchical system with an emphasis on formal relations. Contrary to most of the organizations above, it does not necessarily include all the staff in the decision-making process. The decision-making process is carried out in a very hierarchical system in Group 2.

Interviewer: Executive board is the final decision-maker in general. The executive board make a decision based on the views and remarks of the project coordinators working under them. Within a project, the executive project team, the project coordinator and the office coordinator is the final decision-makers. However, they also take feedback from the office personnel before deciding upon something (...) There is a hierarchical structure that is based on vertical relationships. If you want to propose an idea, you should develop it with your colleagues first. After developing the proposal, you should present the proposal to the office coordinator. The office coordinator might give some feedback to change some aspects of the proposal. It

is sent to the executive board. The executive board takes the opinion of the implementer partner and revises the proposal with the office coordinator. Finally, they make a decision.

(Interview with an informant from Group 2, July 8, 2020)

To compare the difference between Group 2 and Group 1, it can be highlighted that the decision-making process of the Group 2 is hierarchical. As mentioned in the previous chapters, centralization refers to the inclusion of a limited number of people in the decision-making process. In Group 2, everyone can propose an idea as long as they ask for feedback from the relevant organizational unit. Once proposed, the idea is developed within the feedback of the organizational unit and turned into a project in a very detailed way. Having developed the project, the personnel present it to the office manager. After that, the office manager forwards it to the project manager. Eventually, the project manager and office coordinators consult the personnel from other organizations which are implementing partners donors and decide upon the applicability of the project. However, the executive board is regarded as the ultimate decision-maker. Hence, it can be understood that the enforcement and implementation process is completed by the executive unit of the organization.

Interviewer: How did the so-called refugee crisis affect your organization?

Interviewee: We had to make a new space for the refugees abruptly. We started to work on a project on humanitarian aid even though we normally do not work in this field. Therefore, the refugee crisis in Turkey has directly affected our organization.

(Interview with an informant from Group 2, July 8, 2020)

As it is clear from this statement, Group 2 has highly been affected by the so-called refugee crisis and the organization started to work on a different project on refugees with Group 6. The worsening situation led Group 2 to take action for refugees. Even though Group 2 has been affected by the crisis, the decision-making process has remained the same.

Interviewer: Have you observed any difference in the general decision-making mechanism in your organization?

Interviewee: Group 2 is the implementing partner in the project we are currently working on. For this reason, we take joint actions with our

partners in the decision-making process. It has been a new practice for us. We have started to make all decisions with both donors and other implementing partners.

(Interview with an informant from Group 2, July 8, 2020)

It can be understood from this statement that Group 2 has not completely turned into a decentralized organization. Even though it maintains its centralized structure while working on its own projects, it collaborates with other partners and donors in the decision-making process of the project on the refugees. It stems from the fact that there should be an agreement among the partners to be able to coordinate the project without any problems. It should also be reiterated that Group 2 is one of the implementing partners in this project which necessitates the adjustment to principles of the donor organization. However, the decision-making mechanism in Group 2 is still centralized and hierarchical.

The next group to analyse the data collected from the interviews is Group 3. As can be seen from the previous section, Group 3 does not directly engage in the challenges and problems LGBTI+ refugees face due to the capacity problems. It has not experienced a remarkable structural change as the range of service has been quite limited.

Interviewer: How do you make the decisions concerning the agenda?
Who proposes an idea, who enforces and implements it?

Interviewee: Nobody makes any decisions alone. We set two meetings in a month. Every organizational unit has its own operational system but the personnel from each organizational unit inform the others in monthly meetings. We consult others and make the decisions together. There is no ultimate decision-maker. The opinion of the majority is taken into consideration. We have a hierarchical system based on vertical relations in theory, but we set forth and implement the decisions all together in practice.

(Interview with an informant from Group 3, September 22, 2020)

It shows that Group 3 can be mainly regarded as a decentralized organization. In line with the procedures, the decision-making process is defined as a top-down process. However, organizational personnel do not follow such rules. Instead, they make the decisions together after consulting with one another. In this regard, it can be understood that proposal, enforcement and

implementation stages intermingle. Moreover, decision-making is a process that prioritizes the consensus among the staff. Similarly, the relations among the personnel can be described as informal due to the decentralized structure of the organization.

As stated in the previous sections, Group 3 generally has a problem concerning the capacity in terms of the so-called refugee crisis. Therefore, it does not specifically work in this field to provide help for the LGBTI+ refugees. It only collaborates with relevant organizations to inform the refugees. Consequently, it has not been through a dramatic change in the decision-making process. Simply put, a structural change cannot be discussed in this context. Group 3's decentralized organizational structure has remained the same even after the mass migration of the refugees.

Group 4 is mostly based on volunteering. However, there is a systematic decision-making mechanism in the organization. Group 4 strictly follows legal procedures in order to avoid any negative consequences.

Interviewer: How do you make the decisions concerning the agenda?
Who proposes an idea, who enforces and implements it?

Interviewee: In accordance with the principles of Group 4, any decisions are binding upon the executive board. As the executive board is legally responsible for any cases, they decide upon all of the issues that might cause a problem later. Apart from that, there is a coordination group in our organization. Some of the members from executive boards are also in the coordination group. The coordination group discuss all the proposals and they do not consider the majority of the opinions while setting forth a decision. Instead, they convince those holding different opinions. When everyone agrees upon the proposal, the board of executives evaluates the legal process and approves the proposal. This is how we manage the decision-making process.

(Interview with an informant from Group 4, September 22, 2020)

To compare other organizations above, Group 4 has a distinctive decision-making process. It can be understood from this statement that it is mostly based on informal relations despite the systematic decision-making mechanism. Even though the executive board plays an important role in evaluating and approving the proposal, their main intention is to avoid any legal challenges

rather than maintaining the hierarchical system. The coordination group is the unit that starts the discussion about the proposal. A very interesting aspect concerning these discussions is that decision is not implemented until all the personnel are convinced. For this reason, Group 4 can be regarded as a decentralized organization. As in Group 3, proposal, enforcement and implementation stages intermingle since organizational personnel set forth the decision together. The executive board only evaluate and approve the decision in order to avoid any legal challenges. Another significant aspect concerning the organizational structure of Group 4 is the fact that its decentralized structure has not greatly changed after the so-called refugee crisis. The reason might stem from the temporal aspects as Group 4 was established after the mass migration of the refugees. Therefore, it developed its agenda in line with the environment shaped within the so-called crisis.

Interviewer: Has the decision-making mechanism of your organization changed during this process?

Interviewee: Our decision-making mechanism has always been the same.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 4, September 22, 2020)

This statement proves that Group 4 has not gone through a structural change as it set its agenda and decision-making system along with the so-called refugee crisis. In this regard, the temporal dimension played a crucial role to shape the organizational agenda and structure of Group 4 since they already knew the challenges of the crisis before they gained legal status. Hence, they adjusted their mechanism to the environmental factors rather than changing their structure to take fast action.

Group 5 can be considered a decentralized organization. Similarly, informal relations are a dominant factor in the decision-making process. As in Group 1, Group 3 and Group 4, proposal, enforcement, and implementation stages are not sharply separated.

Interviewee: There used to be volunteer meetings before the pandemic, not less than twice a month, sometimes twice a week. Without any requirements, everyone could join the meetings and mention any problems to discuss. If anyone had an idea or proposal, they could start the discussion and we could make the decision about it. Our system is as direct and simple as possible.

(Interview with the second informant from Group 5, January 30, 2021)

It is important to state that consensus plays an important role in the decision making process in Group 5. Moreover, the volunteers are included in the decision-making process in order to strengthen a more inclusive approach. The role of the executive board is also quite limited in the decision-making process since they do not have a determinant role in shaping the decisions.

Interviewee: We only inform the executive board; they do not have such a decision-making authority. They can only bureaucratically take part in the process if necessary.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 5, July 24, 2020)

As it is clearly seen, the executive board is included in the decision-making process only to complete bureaucratic procedures. However, it is mostly the personnel and volunteers of the organization who actively participate in the decision-making process. As a decentralized organization, Group 5 does not divide the decision-making process into different stages or hold particular organizational units responsible for the final decision. The number of people who can be part of the process is limitless which means centralization is considerably weak in Group 5.

Problems related to capacity are particularly prominent in the interview data. As it is one of the recurring concerns throughout the collected data, it can be claimed that capacity poses an obstacle for the small organizations which are already struggling in the current political context in Turkey. In addition to this, Group 5 has had similar challenges which resulted in a limited contribution to the so-called refugee crisis despite the willingness of the organizational staff.

Interviewee: Our organization was established in 2016. In 2017 and 2018, there were a large number of people crossing from Izmir to the Greek coast. Our organization was not profoundly affected during that term but we were aware that we could not reach out to LGBTI+s in the refugee or migrant population even though Izmir is highly populated by them. (...) However, we could not directly make policy in this field. We could only consider supporting those reaching out to our organization. It is because of both the establishment date of our organization and our capacity.

(Interview with the second informant from Group 5, January 30, 2021)

What is interesting in this statement is that geographical location, temporal dimension and capacity have been highly effective in the role of Group 5 in response to the so-called crisis. Their geographical location allowed them to be more aware of the issue, therefore necessitating the response. However, they were not able to provide adequate support for LGBTI+ refugees due to the lack of capacity which is essential to find durable solutions for such vulnerable community. Another important factor is the temporal dimension. As Group 5 was established around the time when a large number of people crossed the Greek coast, they did not have the organizational experience to respond to the crisis urgently. It can be understood from this data that experience is crucial for organizations to take the initiative to help those in need.

In summary, it can be concluded that Group 5 has not experienced structural change following the mass migration of the refugees. The extent of the activities remains quite limited since the organization can partially contribute to the problems refugees and migrants have due to the lack of capacity and experience in the relevant field.

Group 6 which is mostly working on the human rights of sex workers presents striking results in terms of structural change. Considered as a small and decentralized organization that is mainly based on informal relations, it has observed structural change to some extent because of the new project on the refugees they have working as an implementing partner.

Interviewer: How do you make the decisions concerning the agenda?

Who proposes an idea, who enforces and implements it?

Interviewee: We do not have such a decision-making mechanism. There is an executive board they do not make the final decision. Executive board members are not working as organizational personnel, they are neither directly in the field or are dealing with the agenda. The decision is actually based upon the organizational personnel.

(Interview with an informant from Group 6, August 25, 2020)

What stands out in this statement is that decision-making is not basically a top-down process in Group 6. With the weak role of the executive board, the organizational staff that is already actively

working in the field contributes to the whole process. Moreover, those who specialize in the discussed agenda item normally set forth the decisions.

Interviewee: We are currently working on three different programmes. The first one is humanitarian aid, the second is sexual health and the third one is access to the justice programme. Each of them includes a specialist who can make the decisions about the programme. The general coordinator can be informed but they generally do not intervene in what is discussed in the programmes. They only need to approve the decision since they are accountable for bureaucratic procedures, but the decision-maker is the programme manager and those working for that programme.

(Interview with an informant from Group 6, August 25, 2020)

As stated by the informant, the decision-making process is not fully under the control of the executive board since the organizational personnel actively set forth the decisions. Various organizational units undertake the responsibility of decisions related to their own units. In this regard, the general coordinator can manage the enforcement stage by approving the implementation. In addition, the main role of the general coordinator is to remain informed about the changes concerning the agenda.

Group 6 is one of the implementing partners of the project which aims to provide support for the refugee community. With the increasing demands and emerging challenges concerning LGBTI+ refugees, Group 6 started to work in this field which later caused some minor problems related to the organizational structure.

Interviewee: There are 7 people from the central office mainly working on sexual health and access to justice. In addition to this, we are working on a project on the key refugee groups. Their offices are located in three different cities. Their programme manager is different as well. This difference stems from both the target group and the field activities. The central team is working on rights-based activities while the key refugee group project aims to provide service for the refugees.

(Interview with an informant from Group 6, August 25, 2020)

It is clearly understood from this statement that the organizational aims of the Group 6 are not parallel to that of the key refugee group project. In this regard, the project remains a separate item in the agenda of Group 6. Although Group 6 strives to make a change and provide humanitarian aid for the refugee community, it is obvious that the decentralized structure of the organization and lack of experience in the relevant field caused the emergence of the heterogeneous units separately working on different concerns. Furthermore, this situation affects the decision-making process of Group 6 since their structural features differ from that of the key refugee group project.

Interviewee: What organizational personnel working on the key refugee group project is different. The personnel working on the project do not partake in our decision-making process. (...) Their structure is more hierarchical, and their decision-making process is carried out separately.

(Interview with an informant from Group 6, August 25, 2020)

This statement indicates that the structural features of the group project have been fully corresponding with neither the agenda-setting nor decision-making mechanism of Group 6. It, therefore, leads into a new disparate organizational unit that is mostly based on a centralized structure. Contrary to expectations, this project does not cause any structural change for Group 6. Instead, a new and separate organizational unit has emerged to meet the demands pertaining to the LGBTI+ refugees in the field. In reviewing the literature, no data was found on the emergence of the disparate organizational units separately working on different issues as a result of the unexpected environmental factors. Hence, this finding suggests that there might be various structural forms within the same organization without any change in the main structural features. In contrast to what Wong claims, the decision-making mechanism needs to be interpreted within a caution in order to avoid any generalized claims. In this context, several factors including lack of experience and capacity in the relevant field disallow Group 6 to transform its decentralized structure to a centralized one. Therefore, this finding points out that it might be misleading to decide upon the organizational structure without analysing various organizational units in a different context. In other words, what can be understood from the collected data Group 6 presents is that it has remained as a decentralized organization with the same decision-making mechanism. However, following the so-called refugee crisis, it has formed a new organizational unit working on the refugee community which is managed by a centralized group. To sum up, it can be understood that Group 6's project allows for a more centralized environment for the specific

organizational unit even though the main organizational structure of the organization has been the same.

The last organization to discuss the structural change is Group 7 which is basically a decentralized organization with local tendencies. As it is located in Mersin, Group 7 is actively seeking ways to include the refugee community in the organizational activities since Mersin hosts a large Syrian population. For this reason, they started to work on a project on LGBTI+ refugees with Group 4.

Interviewee: (informant from Group 7) Mersin has a considerably lower cost of living when compared to other big cities in Turkey. It is easier to live here. The local community is already diverse. Therefore, it can be a reason for preference. How did we come up with this idea? It was early 2020 when we talked about this project. Our aim was to be as inclusive as we could be as we could not specifically experience the problems the refugees faced. We thought that they should express their own needs and problems.

(Interview with the informants from Group 4 and Group 7, December 17, 2020)

Different from the other organizations, Group 4 and Group 7 are actively working on the refugee activism. Instead of providing humanitarian aid service, they prioritize representation of the refugees which can be considered as an important development in terms of the political impact of the so-called refugee crisis. It can be questioned whether this inclusive approach might cause a different structural change when compared to the other organizations.

How is the decision-making process managed in Group 7 and how has it been affected by the so-called refugee crisis? In order to give an answer to this question, it should be emphasized that Group 7 is considerably a small organization with a decentralized structure. As can be understood from the statements of other informants, small organizations tend to have decentralized structure, thereby maintaining informal relations during the decision-making process. The same implication emerges from the collected data of Group 7.

Interviewee: (informant from Group 7) Group 7 is a horizontal organization. Therefore, there is no hierarchy including an executive board. Similarly, there is no hierarchy on the basis of experience or knowledge. We normally present our ideas to the rest of the team or

they present theirs to us. We make decisions together by discussing all pros and cons.

(Interview with the informants from Group 4 and Group 7, December 17, 2020)

It is apparent from this statement that Group 7 is a decentralized organization that makes decisions without having to obtain executive approval. Contrary to other organizations, Group 7 does not have an executive board even to ask about bureaucratic procedures. Hence, three different stages of proposal, enforcement and implementation are carried out by the same group of people. Despite the new project on LGBTI+ refugees, they have still been maintaining the decision-making process in the same way.

Interviewer: Have you ever changed your decision-making mechanism? Has the large population of refugees caused any difference in the decision-making process?

Interviewee: (informant from Group 7) The large population of refugees has been always a case here. It has not changed our organizational policies. We always need to make decisions fast.

(Interview with the informants from Group 4 and Group 7, December 17, 2020)

As the informant asserted, the location of the organization is regarded as a decisive factor in the decision-making process since they have not experienced the crisis as an unexpected event. In addition, the temporality should also be taken into consideration to come to such a conclusion since it is also a significant aspect affecting the response to the crisis to some extent. Even though Group 7 gained legal status in 2018, the activists were active in the movement beforehand.

Interviewee: Group 7 was established by activists who were active in the LGBTI+ movement for over 10 years. I do not think the so-called refugee crisis led to the gain of legal status. The motivation for the legal status does not stem from the refugees in Mersin. We can be considered as a new organization, but the the organizational personnel have been active over the past ten years in Mersin.

(Interview with the informants from Group 4 and Group 7, December 17, 2020)

Group 7 has maintained the same decision-making mechanism even following the new project on the LGBTI+ refugees. What should be emphasized in this statement is that the temporal dimension

can be misleading contrary to what was stated at the beginning of the research. Considering the establishment date of the organizations as the starting point might lead to false assumptions since the historical background of the organizations is also significant. The mass migration of the refugees has not caused a structural change in Group 7. Instead, they have maintained the same organizational structure based on informal relations. Despite the problems pertaining to the capacity, they manage to conduct a project on the activism of the LGBTI+ refugees without having to make any changes in the organizational structure.

This research argues that LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey have experienced a structural change following the mass migration of the refugees. Contrary to the expectations, none of the organizations above has experienced a structural change even though they have faced challenges stemming from the so-called crisis in the unstable political atmosphere in Turkey. In reviewing the literature, the results indicated inconsistency on the impact of the environmental factors on the organizations. Although environmental factors which can be regarded as the mass migration of the refugees in this context caused challenges along with the emergence of the problems pertaining to the capacity and experience, they did not lead to a structural change in any of the organizations listed above. Reasons for this inconsistency can be explained threefold. First, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey are mostly small scale which includes limited resources. Contrary to the organizational theories in the literature review, these organizations do not have many organizational units to work on various concerns separately. In addition, they are not able to realize some of their organizational aims due to inadequate capacity and professional experience. Second, LGBTI+ organizations tend to have a decentralized structure based on informal relations. As understood from the interviews, organizational personnel are already active in the LGBTI+ movement and they maintain friendships out of the office. Therefore, it makes it harder for them to build formal relations in the organizations. Third, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey have to deal with several concerns simultaneously which may also affect the priority given to some issues. Hence, the so-called refugee crisis could not be the top priority for some of the organizations even though they aimed to take action to provide support for LGBTI+ refugees.

Table 7: Change in the organizational structure

Group	Organizational Structure	Structural Change
1	Decentralized	No
2	Centralized	No
3	Decentralized	No
4	Decentralized	No
5	Decentralized	No
6	Decentralized	No
7	Decentralized	No

The table above illustrates that none of the organizations has encountered a structural change after the so-called refugee crisis which can be considered as a disappointing result in comparison to the theoretical framework. Contrary to theoretical approaches discussing the relation between the environment and organization, it is concluded that LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey have not changed their structural features to adjust to the environmental factors despite serious challenges. Comparing the literature review and with the table above, it can be seen that contingency theory suggesting that organizational structure fits environmental factors (Van de Ven and Drazin 1985) fails to take into account how organizations can manage to adjust to the environment without such a change. Similarly, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey resists any change in the organizational form when in fact institutional approach claims that organizations are prone to be co-opted by the environmental factors, therefore leading to deflection of the organizational goals and aims. In spite of the political pressure and increasing smear campaigns, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey successfully managed to prioritize their organizational aims as a part of political salience. They also worked on the projects and activities to provide support and help for LGBTI+ refugees. Furthermore, the theoretical approach by Burns and Stalker (1961) cannot be applied to the structure of LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey. According to Burns and Stalker (1961), organizational structures can be divided into two types: mechanistic which represents a table environment with centralized tendencies and organic which displays decentralized and unstable organizational features. LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey cannot be placed under any of these categories since they tend to have a decentralized structure based on informal relations despite stability proven after the so-called refugee crisis. These results have proved that decentralized structure does not necessarily mean inconsistency and flexibility in the organizations. Organizations can maintain the same structural features while responding to crisis situations.

As stated in the previous chapters, Wong's theory forms the basis of this thesis. In line with Wong's theoretical framework, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey have a decision-making mechanism that consists of the proposal, enforcement, and implementation stages. However, these stages are mostly maintained by the same organizational units due to the decentralized structure and limited resources. Apart from Group 2 which is the only centralized organization in seven organizations, 6 organizations do not have a separate decision-making stage. Furthermore, all of the decentralized organizations (Group 1, Group 3, Group 4, Group 5, Group 6 and Group 7) are based on informal relations while formal relations are dominant in Group 2 in line with the centralization.

Together these results provide important insights into the decision-making mechanism of the LGBTI+ organizations and their response to the so-called refugee crisis. What can be understood from these results is that LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey provide a special case in terms of the relations between the organizational structure and the environment. Maintaining their organizational structure in an unstable and inconsistent environment, they also managed to take responsibility for fill the vacuum in the field due to the lack of governmental support.

Based on the temporal dimension, how LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey have been affected by the mass migration of the refugees has been discussed in this section. In the next section, the impact of the European Union on the organizations during the crisis will be argued.

4.5 The EU Factor

The EU is known as a big source of funding especially for the nongovernmental organizations in order to enhance democratic values (Ketola 2011). Since the beginning of the accession process, the civil society in Turkey has gained strength thanks to plenty of transformative democratic reforms. Moreover, the so-called refugee crisis has been a sensitive topic that reinforces the collaboration between Turkey and the European Union due to the critical geopolitical position of Turkey. As a transit country, Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees, which necessitates closer links with the EU. Albeit the controversial decisions, it is known that Turkey has the most responsibility which is hard to bear when the worsening economic situation is considered. Therefore, it is important for Turkey to receive financial support from the EU. According to the list of projects prepared by the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey, a total budget of €6 billion has been made for humanitarian and development actions (EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey 2020). Apart from budgeting, the EU also facilitates social and democratic change through numerous projects. However, the acceleration of

the de-Europeanization process has resulted in stagnation and backsliding of the reforms, thus affecting the relations with the EU negatively.

Although it is not the main components of the research question, understanding the role of the EU during the so-called refugee crisis is noteworthy to understand the political context in Turkey. Therefore, the interviewees were asked questions about the role of the EU during the crisis. However, it should be noted that their remarks about the EU do not endorse the general approach of their organizations since the answers remain considerably subjective. Similarly, the relevant collected data will only be used to acquire a general idea on the EU to analyse the thesis argument more effectively.

Interviewer: How do you think the relations between Turkey and the EU affected your organization?

Interviewee: Deteriorating relations with the EU which leads to funding cuts for civil society stresses us out because the organizations are mostly funded by the EU.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 5, July24, 2020)

As understood from the statement, financial support is crucial for organizations. Therefore, this situation might cause fear among civil society actors. However, it can be assumed that it can influence LGBTI+ organizations more negatively due to the lack of governmental support. It should be reiterated that the LGBTI+ community is seen as a threat against public morality which leads to instability.

Interviewer: Do you think the EU has come up with durable solutions for the refugee crisis?

Interviewee: I will give a very optimistic answer. Yes. I think it has been effective despite all the negative impacts.

(Interview with an informant from Group 6, August 25, 2020)

Even though the informant from Group 6 accepts the positive aspects in terms of the financial support from the EU, it is clear from the statement that it is not sufficient for durable solutions. In this regard, the political decisions centring around the interests of the states leave the refugees in limbo, thereby shrinking their options. What is obvious from this data is that there is more need to be done in order to find an effective solution for this humanitarian crisis putting the lives of

millions of people in risk. These political concerns are also uttered by the informants from the other organizations.

Interviewee: We find it problematic that the EU regards everything as financial support in policy development. We all know that our Syrian friends are behind bars, some in closed prisons, in line with the agreements between the EU and Turkey. The approach towards Turkey is “You can do whatever you want as long as you don’t send them here. I have already supported you financially.” This is double-dealing.

(Interview with the first informant from Group 4, September 4, 2020)

What stands out in this statement is that the EU’s strategy to “keep the refugees out of the zone” is detrimental to refugee protection. Due to the political approach aiming to block the way to Europe for the refugees, Turkey is considered an open prison for those wishing to apply for full protection. Furthermore, how Turkey takes a stance against this approach is criticized by those actively working in the field.

Interviewee: Turkey does not follow efficient migration policies. In this term, the relation between Turkey and the EU is on the rocks. EU fears that Turkey might open its borders as it wants to curb the influx of Syrian refugees. Likewise, Turkey has played the refugee card to intimidate the EU. Therefore, this situation has deepened the polarization. However, I don’t think the EU has contributed to solving the refugee crisis because this process was managed by civil society organizations.

(Interview with an informant from Group 3, September 22, 2020)

As stated by the informant from Group 3, weak relations between Turkey and the EU negatively affect the situation of the refugees. The interest-based approach to the so-called refugee crisis does not aim to give a hand to those in need. Instead, it increases the vulnerability of the refugees due to the political deadlock. Marking 10 years of conflict in Syria, it is less likely for them to return home because of the concerns over the economy and security. Therefore, the need for an effective refugee settlement is on the rise.

It can be concluded that the organizations mostly benefit from the financial support the EU provides. However, its policies regarding the refugee crisis are criticized among civil society actors due to controversial acts in terms of responsibility sharing. Since the interviewees expressed their own subjective remarks about the issue, their answers were only mentioned to give a general idea in this section. The common concern pursuant to the relations between the EU and Turkey is the possibility of funding cuts which might lead to shrinking space for the civil society in Turkey. As mentioned above, the local and international network of the organization is crucial to spread their norms and become politically salient. Therefore, it should be emphasized that the relations between two parties, both the EU and Turkey, do not only influence the political and economic aspects but also raises concerns about human rights by leaving the democratic society at stake.

The results in this chapter focus on four organizational aspects: organizational aim, political salience, agenda-setting, decision making and finally the EU factor in order to answer the research question “how does mass migration of the refugees affect the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey?”. Taken together, these results suggest that the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey has remained the same following the so-called refugee crisis. Despite political challenges and problems relevant to the capacity and experience, the organizations managed to maintain the same organizational structure while responding to the crisis. In this regard, organizational aim and political salience are regarded as notable factors to affect the organizational structure. As noted earlier, the organizations, even for-profit ones, function as goal-oriented entities since they are willing to spread their norms. Even though the so-called refugee crisis has expanded the scope of the organizational activities by including different projects and activities into the agenda, the priority of the organizations has remained the same. Hence, they did not transform the structure of the organizations in order to fill the vacuum in the field.

These results also indicate that LGBTI+ organizations work with a strong sense of solidarity in an unstable and backsliding political environment. They support one another where their capacity and organizational experience is inadequate. Similarly, agenda-setting is closely linked with the political environment which causes relevant challenges depending on the agenda item. However, it did not lead to a change in the decision-making mechanism even though the turbulent political atmosphere has increased anti-LGBTI+ discourse, thereby putting their existence at risk. Lastly, the EU factor is of much significance to receive financial support for the organizations despite the concerns regarding the worsening relations between the EU and Turkey. Refugee policies of the EU are also criticized among LGBTI+ actors as it generally avoids sharing the responsibility, thus

leaving Turkey alone in a highly complicated situation. The next chapter, therefore, moves on to discuss the conclusion of the results from a wider perspective.



5. CONCLUSION

This research has argued that the structure of the LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey has changed in the aftermath of the mass migration of refugees. Based on Wong's conceptualization of the organizational structure, the research had three main objectives. The first objective was to gain a better understanding of the intersection of two vulnerable groups, LGBTI+ and refugee communities. The second objective was to examine the relation between the organizational structure and effective policy-making. Lastly, the third objective was to evaluate the structural change of the LGBTI+ organizations while dwelling on the impact of the environmental factors on the structural change.

The most obvious finding to emerge from this research is that none of the organizations has gone through structural change contrary to the argumentation above. In reviewing the literature, it can also be claimed that this finding does not reflect what was stated in the previous studies. The relevance of this finding can be explained threefold. First, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey managed to maintain the same structure while responding to the so-called refugee crisis since their organizational aims have always been at the top of the agenda. Despite the difficulty in providing service for the LGBTI+ refugees and adjusting to the structure of the implementing partners, they have prioritized the main organizational aims, therefore setting the agenda accordingly. None of the organizations has adopted a new structure in order to respond to the crisis. Instead, they have expanded their scope to gain a more inclusive approach. Second, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey are based on informal relations which lead to a decentralized structure. Except for Group 2, all the organizations above have a decentralized structure that includes more people in the decision-making process. It stems from the fact that the organizational personnel share a close bond that is not limited to the organizational environment. Being involved in the LGBTI+ community means continuous threats. It creates a unique sense of solidarity in every sphere of life and shows that it is inevitable to disregard the impact of the political pressure on the organizational structures and relations in Turkey. Third, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey are mostly small-scale due to ever-growing political threats and the lack of support. For this reason, they strive to tackle multiple concerns simultaneously. Most organizations do not have several organizational units to tackle different issues. It also leads to the fact that the proposal, enforcement and implementation stages of the decision-making process mostly intermingle.

In line with Wong's theoretical framework, political salience plays an important role in designing an effective structure. According to Wong, organizations are political entities, aiming to spread their norms with the most efficient organizational structure (Wong, 2012). The research has shown

that LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey are policy-making bodies that actively fight against anti-LGBTI+ discourse. In addition, they set the agenda in accordance with the current political issues and challenges in order to deal with human rights violations and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender. Due to the growing smear campaigns against the LGBTI+ community, their existence is considered as a political threat to Islam based moral and national values. Moreover, the emergence of the LGBTI+ refugees who are almost invisible has improved the inclusive approach of the LGBTI+ organizations. The intersection of two communities has created a unique opportunity for LGBTI+ organizations to expand their scope despite the limited capacity. This research has also indicated that LGBTI+ organizations have a sceptical approach towards the EU and its controversial policies which leave the refugees in danger. Inconsistent and exclusionary policies ignoring the needs of the refugees are harshly criticized by LGBTI+ organizations which have taken the responsibility to fill the vacuum in the field.

Contrary to what has been argued above, structural change was not observed in any of the LGBTI+ organizations. In general, therefore, it seems that LGBTI+ organizations managed to maintain the structural features even though environmental factors have been highly decisive in the agenda-setting process. An implication of this is the possibility of familiarity with the fast-changing agenda along with the effective policy-making mechanism they have set. As stated in the previous chapters, LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey have faced major challenges throughout the years, therefore, they already know how to respond to the crisis by using different strategies. Although their organizational size is considerably small, they are experienced in policy-making in the turbulent political environment. Taken together, the results of this research support Wong's theory which gives importance to the political salience of the organizations. Furthermore, these results have significant implications for the understanding of why Wong's emphasis on informal relations is important. For LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey, informal relations are significant because of the strong solidarity among organizational personnel. They maintain close friendships outside of the organizational environment which also plays an important role in the structural features of the organizations.

This research has provided a deeper insight into the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the structure of LGBTI+ organizations. It contributes to a general understanding of the organization, especially in Turkey where a turbulent political climate puts civil society in danger. The empirical findings of this research have extended our knowledge about the challenges LGBTI+ organizations face in Turkey and tackle the so-called refugee crisis from a different point of view. Prior to this research, it was difficult to make predictions about how the organizational structure was designed

in LGBTI+ organizations and how it was affected in the aftermath of the mass migration of the refugees. This research will be useful to identify the needs of both LGBTI+ and refugee communities with a more comprehensive approach. It also provides a new perspective on the relation between the environment and organization. Different from the current literature, this research has been one of the first attempts to thoroughly examine LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey and the so-called refugee crisis in the light of the organizational theory. Similarly, the findings reveal that political context is an important factor to determine the structural features of the organizations. They lay the groundwork for future research into a more comprehensive understanding of organization which includes political and environmental factors.

The main weakness of this study was the sample size. Despite growing LGBTI+ activism, the number of LGBTI+ organizations is quite limited in Turkey. Therefore, it makes these findings less generalisable to the organizational theory. Another issue that was not addressed in this research was the goals and aims of LGBTI+ organizations concerning LGBTI+ refugees. It is obvious that LGBTI+ refugees are less likely to make it to Europe or return home in the near future due to the deadlock situation. In this regard, it is necessary to set organizational goals to strengthen this community. Further research could assess the long-term effects of the so-called refugee crisis and strategic plans to create a bigger space for LGBTI+ refugees in the local LGBTI+ movement. Similarly, more information on the integration of LGBTI+ refugees into the local LGBTI+ movement would create a better understanding of organizational development.

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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Organizational Features and Agenda-Setting

- 1) Could you please briefly introduce your organization? What are the priorities and aims of your organization?
- 2) How is the agenda set in your organization? What are your priorities in agenda-setting?
- 3) How do you determine the content of the activities and projects in your organization? How do you make decisions about determined content?

Organizational Structure

I define organizational structure as the distribution of agenda-setting power in my research. Proposal, enforcement and implementation stages in decision-making within the organization enable us to analyse this structure.

- 4) How is the decision-making conducted in your organization in line with this definition?
- 5) How are proposal, enforcement and implementation stages conducted in your organization?
- 6) Are the decisions made by one actor or does everyone have a say in the decision making?

Refugee Crisis and Organizational Change

Those fleeing their countries because of the war or similar reasons are called as refugees in the literature. As you know, there have been a great number of refugees entering Turkey as of 2015. High number of refugees in Turkey, unpreparedness of European Union, lack of legal status of those coming from Syria to Turkey resulted with a crisis. I define this crisis as “refugee crisis” in my research and I will ask about it in the next part.

- 7) How has this crisis affected your organization since 2015?
- 8) How did you manage the crisis after the first encounter?
- 9) Have you observed any difference in general decision-making mechanism in your organization after 2015? Is there a change in proposal, enforcement and implementation stages?
- 10) Have you observed any difference in agenda after the crisis? Did your priorities in agenda-setting change?
- 11) Is there any difference in the priorities of your organization since the beginning of the crisis?

Interaction with Environment and Temporal Dimension

12) What could you say about the difference in your organization before and after 2015?

13) Have you ever conducted a common project with other organizations? If yes, how did you make the decision?

European Union

14) Do you think that European Union has taken effective actions to help you handle the crisis?

15) How did the Turkey and European Union relations affect this period?

*Additional follow-up questions will be asked, as appropriate, with each participant.

I. ETHICS BOARD APPROVAL

Ethics Board Approval is available in the printed version of this dissertation.

