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EDITOR INTRODUCTION

Editors' Introduction: Fall 2025

Evren M. Dinçer, Deniz Yükseker and Biray Kolluoğlu

[1]Abdullah Gul Universitesi, Türkiye, [2]Izmir Ekonomi Universitesi, Türkiye and [3]Boğaziçi University, Türkiye
Corresponding author: Evren M. Dinçer; Email: evren.m.dincer@gmail.com

The Fall 2025 issue (no. 73) of *New Perspectives on Turkey* brings together eight research articles from diverse disciplines using a broad array of innovative methodologies employing archival sources, household budget surveys, gas emissions data, statistics on income and living conditions, qualitative interviews, quantitative analysis of parliamentary speeches, and a unique dataset generated through computational social science techniques. This issue also includes a commentary on one of the most pressing issues in the Middle East, that is, refugees, and how Turkey has "governed" the arrival of millions of Syrians.

Our first feature article, by Eren Gürer, Bingül Satıoğlu, Ebru Voyvoda, and A. Erinç Yeldan, tackles the pressing issue of climate change through the lens of social inequality. Analyzing the household carbon footprint in Turkey, bringing together data from household budget surveys and gas emissions data, they reveal a stark disparity: the wealthiest 10 percent of households are responsible for nearly 20 percent of total emissions, while the poorest decile's emissions are overwhelmingly tied to essential needs like food and housing. Their work underscores that effective climate policy must address socio-economic factors and income distribution, not just technological solutions.

Continuing the theme of inequality, Yavuz Selim Kaçmaz, Tolga Umut Kuzubaş, Islam Tarlacı, and Orhan Torul examine the distributional consequences of Turkey's recent unorthodox economic policies. Their analysis of microdata spanning 2002 to 2023, incorporating household budget surveys and the Survey on Income and Living Conditions, presents a nuanced landscape: wage inequality has diminished; income inequality has likewise decreased, although recent years indicate a reversal of this trend; and consumption inequality has surged, primarily fueled by higher spending among top-decile households. The article highlights the importance of looking at multiple dimensions of inequality to understand policy impacts.

The third article takes a historical turn, as Behlül Özkan delves into the Cold War collaboration between Turkey and the Federal Republic of Germany, exploiting sources from both East and West German archives. Applying the concept of ontological security, Özkan argues that a shared existential fear of communism led both states to empower Turkish far-right networks in Germany, a strategy that

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produced long-term radicalization and blowback, complicating contemporary efforts to address extremism.

Akın Sefer's study offers another historical perspective, focusing on labor coercion and migration in late Ottoman İstanbul. By examining the lives of shipbuilding workers at the Imperial Arsenal (*Tersane-i Amire*) through an analysis of population and wage records in Ottoman archives, the article illuminates the deep connections between state labor practices, migration networks, and urban settlement patterns, showing how workplace relations profoundly shaped the city's social fabric.

Shifting to the contemporary digital sphere, M. Fuat Kına maps the ideological landscape of X/Twitter users in Turkey by utilizing the Politus database generated through computational social science methods. His analysis distills two fundamental axes of public ideology – a political left–right spectrum and a cultural secular–religious spectrum – and identifies three distinct ideological clusters, offering a novel, data-driven understanding of Turkey's current political climate.

The subsequent article by Ezgi Elçi, Deniz Şenol Sert, and Evren Balta analyzes how established political parties respond to the rise of anti-immigrant challengers, specifically the far-right Victory Party. Using a mixed-methods framework including elite interviews and quantitative analysis of parliamentary speeches, they identify five distinct strategies, arguing that in competitive authoritarian settings, access to political power – not just voter competition – plays a crucial role in shaping mainstream parties' responses to niche party pressures.

Ayşem Biriz Karaçay's article examines a different facet of migration, exploring the uncertain lives of Russian citizens who arrived in Turkey following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Through Russian relocants' narratives that she collected through interviews in several cities, Karaçay explores how they navigate legal, economic, and social precarity by forming physical and virtual "bubbles" that function as temporary, in-between spaces for coping and adaptation.

In the final research article, Seray Bircan Afsin provides a look into the occupational experiences of retired nurses within Turkey's changing healthcare system. The study, based on interviews with retired female nurses, reveals how they engage in covert forms of resistance against managerial control and the "hotelization" of hospitals, manipulating information and resources in their efforts to maintain what they define as "good care."

This issue also features a timely commentary by Cenk Saraçoğlu and Danièle Bélanger on how Turkey has governed Syrian refugees over the past decade. Their three-tiered class analysis offers a critical framework for understanding how Turkey managed one of the world's largest refugee populations by integrating them into the labor market as a surplus population. The authors underline the importance of not only the production of Syrians as a segment of the working class, but also the sphere of ideological reproduction, namely, racism, which ensures that Syrians remain at the bottom of the employment ladder.

Complementing these articles are seven comprehensive book reviews. Furkan Elmas reviews Choon Hwee Koh's *The Sublime Post: How the Ottoman Imperial Post Became a Public Service*, and Varak Ketsemanian evaluates İlkay Yılmaz's *Ottoman Passports: Security and Geographic Mobility, 1876–1908*. Kadir Sarp Sök analyzes Ella Fratantuono's *Governing Migration in the Late Ottoman Empire*. Ebrar Begüm Üstün reviews Sevgi Adak's *Anti-Veiling Campaigns in Turkey: State, Society and Gender in the Early Republic*, while

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Samuel Dolbee examines Emine Evered's *Prohibition in Turkey: Alcohol and the Politics of Identity*. Elifcan Çelebi reviews two books on charity and welfare: Hilal Alkan's *Welfare as Gift: Local Charity, Politics of Redistribution, and Religion in Turkey* and Gizem Zencirci's *The Muslim Social: Neoliberalism, Charity, and Poverty in Turkey*. Finally, Cihan Tuğal reviews Kaan Ağartan's *Gezi: The Making of a New Political Community in Turkey*.

We are pleased to present our readers with this collection of articles, commentary, and book reviews that collectively illuminates the complex interplay of economic policy, social inequality, historical forces, and contemporary political dynamics shaping Turkey.

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