

Greece's Migrant Crisis Has Further Exposed Turkish Fake News

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*Turkish **President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan**'s attempt to intimidate the Syrian Army and force them to withdraw to the Sochi Agreement lines in Idlib utterly failed, resulting in the Turkish leader having to embarrassingly accept large swathes of liberated territory will remain under Syrian sovereignty despite his attempts to occupy it. This was especially embarrassing as Erdoğan's end of February ultimatum came and went with no grand Turkish military offensive to push back the Syrian Army as he had promised. This embarrassment comes as Erdoğan's approval has reached as low as 41.1% according to data published by the Ankara-based [pollster MetroPoll](#) last Friday. As Erdoğan's foreign policy is largely driven by a desire for a neo-Ottoman ambitions and to serve as a distraction from Turkey's [currency nosedive](#), he was quick to create issues against the "Old Enemy," Greece.*

In a tantrum and frustrated that his power projections of aggression against both Libya and Syria failed, Erdoğan unleashed tens of thousands of illegal immigrants against Greece and utilized English-speaking Turkish media to discredit the Balkan country's border protection units for human rights violations. Although many commentators claim that Erdoğan's unleashing of illegal immigrants is an attack against the European Union (EU), we cannot ignore that the second and only other EU state that Turkey borders is Bulgaria, a country that [Ankara assured](#) would not send illegal migrants to, a promise that has not yet been broken. Erdoğan is not only punishing [Greece for vetoing a NATO communique](#) in support of Turkish operations in Idlib, he is pushing ahead with his imperial ambitions to not only steal Syrian territory, but Greece's eastern island and northern mainland territories, as outlined on published [government-funded maps of "Greater Turkey."](#)

Erdoğan wasted no time after the Idlib ceasefire deal was made with Russian **President Vladimir Putin** on Thursday after the latter embarrassed the Turkish leader by meeting him in a room with a statue of Catherine the Great, the liberator of Crimea who defeated the Ottoman Empire in many wars. On the very same day as meeting, Erdoğan announced that Turkey will deploy 1000 special forces police to the Greek border to fight back against Greek security forces who have successfully ensured that thousands of illegal immigrants have not entered EU territory. It's an odd choice that Turkey deployed special forces police considering it is not their borders that have breach attempts and rather it has been an aggressor as they continually [shoot tear gas at Greek border security](#) and attempt to [pull down the border fence](#) so migrants can illegally enter Greece. Although it may seem like an exaggeration to some, Athens is treating this latest migrant crisis as a Turkish asymmetric invasion, as they remember the words of former Turkish President Turgut Özal, [who said](#) "We do not need to make war with Greece. We just need to send them a few million immigrants and finish with them."

To assist in distracting the Turkish population of his failures in Syria and the economy, Erdoğan has fully utilized Turkish media to assist in the propaganda campaign. Turkey is [one of the lowest ranked countries](#) for media freedoms in the world, is the second most susceptible country surveyed on the European continent [to fake news](#), has the [most journalists jailed](#) in the whole world, and [90% of media is government controlled](#). It is fair to be sceptical of Turkey and its coverage of the latest migrant crisis, and here is why.

On Saturday, Bosnian Muslim reporter Semir Sejfovic of Turkish state-owned TRT World made such a comical performance that Twitter users are mocking him to be an Oscar nominee after his elaborate attempts to accuse Greek police of firing live ammunition into Turkey. It is one comical performance that [has to be seen](#) to be believed. The ridiculousness of the performance was so much so that [several screen grabs](#) show even the illegal immigrants surrounding Sejfovic laughing during the “intense firing” of live ammunition by the Greek police. Other users questioned why illegal immigrants much closer to the border fence and seen in the background of the video never took cover and continued standing as usual during the alleged shooting, something Sejfovic has refused to answer.

In another incident on Saturday, TRT World [published photos](#) claiming Greek soldiers stripped and robbed illegal immigrants of their clothes, mobiles and money. The problem? In other photos not published by TRT World, [the same illegal immigrants are seen](#) in front of a camera phone preparing to take the propaganda photos, while [in another photo](#) a mobile phone is clearly seen inside the pocket of a “robbed” illegal immigrant.

In another incident on Sunday, TRT World [made a tweet on Sunday publishing photos](#) of immigrants in hospital wounded “when Greek forces opened fire” over the weekend. However, a quick search found that [the fourth photo](#) is from at least November 2019.

These are just some of the many allegations made by English-speaking Turkish media that have been debunked. It demonstrates that Turkey is not interested in objective reporting the migrant crisis but are serving a critical role as Erdoğan’s propaganda wing to discredit Greece in front of international audiences. However, if we use social media responses, European responses and other media republications of Turkish media claims as indicators, it all points that TRT World has only served to reinforce Turkish media’s bad reputation rather than discredit Greek border security and catastrophically failed in their objective.

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