

# 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The European Union is home to more than 500 million inhabitants<sup>2</sup> identifying with a very diverse range of religions, habits, conditions and backgrounds. The EU has been an immigration destination for the past decades and the integration of these immigrants from different geographical, ethnic and cultural backgrounds is a daunting challenge for the continent's politics and society. The United Kingdom, with Pakistanis and Indians; France, with Algerians; and Germany, with Turks, are the countries with the longest traditions of regularly massive influxes of foreign workers. Therefore, Germany's *Gastarbeiter* (guest-workers) agreements in the 60s and 70s paved the way to Turks becoming the most important migrant group in Germany.

This study will assess the state of integration of the Turkish minority in Germany, under the working hypothesis that deficits in political, cultural and economic integration reduces the likeliness of equal opportunities for citizens with Turkish immigration backgrounds vis-à-vis the native German population. By attending to this affirmation, this study will seek to verify the above-mentioned hypothesis by assessing the lack of integration of Turks in Germany in its political, cultural and economic dimensions.

In doing so, the study will use the term "Turks" or "Turkish minority" to denominate all permanent residents of Turkish origin in Germany, including all holders of German and Turkish citizenship, born in Turkey or in Germany.

In order to develop its argument, the present study will first provide an overview of the presence of Turkish immigrants in Germany, and then proceed to define the concept of a "good integration." It will then systematically assess the three dimensions of integration: political, cultural and economic. The primary questions answered will be as follows: firstly, up to what point are Turks politically integrated in the German society through both citizenship and active political participation? Secondly, how do language and religion influence the degree of integration of Turks in Germany? Thirdly, in what way does the economic factor influence in the level of integration of Turks in the German society?

The first level of integration, "Political Integration," is divided into two sections. These sections will be focused on the opportunities that Turkish immigrants have to be granted German citizenship and how the fact of possessing or lacking the German nationality can affect German politics. The second level of integration, "Cultural Integration," is also divided into two chapters, focusing on the impact of Islam in German society and the language deficits of immigrants of Turkish origin. Finally, the last level of integration, "Economic Integration," will expose how a good education and employment improve the economic integration.

In the final section, the study will revisit the working hypothesis and draw a number of conclusions regarding the state of integration of Turkish minorities in Germany and how it could be improved.

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<sup>1</sup> Most literature used in this study is written by non-Turkish scholars and very little written by German citizens of Turkish origin. Therefore, it must be taken into account that the portrait sketched by most of the examined literature expresses objectively the poor level of integration of Turks in Germany. The goal of this dissertation is not to compare the points of view of German natives and German citizens of Turkish origin with respect to Turkish integration in Germany, but rather to study the integration from the Turkish side.

<sup>2</sup> European Commission. Eurostat. "Population at 1 January 2012".

## 2. The Turkish minority and the integration debates in Germany

### 2.1. The Turkish Minority in Germany

The Turkish community in Germany has been developing substantially since a series of recruitment agreements for temporary workers (*Gastarbeiter* or “guest-workers”) between the German and the Turkish governments were concluded in the 1960s. These agreements were reached against the background of the pronounced workforce shortage Germany was experiencing in the 1950s due to its huge losses after the Second World War. During the subsequent years of rapid economic growth (*Wirtschaftswunder* or “economic miracle”), a large working force was needed to sustain growth. For this reason, Germany signed different economic contracts with Mediterranean countries such as Italy, Spain and Turkey.

The agreement with the latter was signed in a period in which Turkey was undergoing a difficult episode in providing employment opportunities domestically, hence the two countries’ needs matched. However, as the term “guest worker” implied, Germans at the time did not imagine that those immigrating Turks, who were expected to stay in the country for a short period, would end up settling permanently in Germany<sup>3</sup>, and that the issue of the integration of those immigrants would hence become an increasingly relevant domestic matter in German politics.

It is therefore still difficult for Turks to adapt to everyday life in the German society, not just because of differences in cultural and religious background, but also due to Germany’s longstanding unwillingness to acknowledge its character as a primary destination for immigrants for 50 years<sup>4</sup>. This notion, until the late 1990s, formed the backbone of a collective rejection of permanent mass immigration, which led to numerous social tensions and fuelled a continuing social and political debate on integration and its criteria.

The following table shows figures on the total number of foreigners residing in Germany, as well as their country of origin:

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<sup>3</sup> The so-called “family-reunification” policy was a contributor to the decision of staying in Germany as well as the education of their children, the lack of economic opportunities in Turkey, and the development of technology connecting Germany with Turkey.

<sup>4</sup> In public debates, this attitude was often expressed by the formula: *Deutschland is kein Einwanderungsland* (“Germany is not an immigration country”).

Table 1: Foreigners in Germany: Top 30 countries and EU Member States<sup>5</sup>

Total		6,753,620
EU citizens (EU-27)		2,443,202
– of which: New EU Member States		819,942
Third-country nationals		4,310,418
Main countries of origin		
1	Turkey	1,629,480
2	Italy	517,546
3	Poland	419,435
4	Serbia*	335,332
5	Greece	276,685
6	Croatia	220,199
7	Russian Federation	191,270
8	Austria	175,244
9	Bosnia and Herzegovina	152,444
10	Netherlands	136,274
11	Romania	126,536
12	Ukraine	124,293
13	Portugal	113,208
14	Kosovo	108,797
15	France	108,675
16	Spain	105,401
17	United States of America	97,732
18	United Kingdom	96,016
19	Vietnam	84,301
20	China	81,331
21	Iraq	81,272
22	Bulgaria	74,869
23	Hungary	68,891
24	Macedonia	65,998
25	Morocco	63,570
26	Thailand	56,153
27	Iran	51,885
28	Afghanistan	51,305
29	Kazakhstan	51,007
30	India	48,280

\*Including persons recorded under the former country names “Yugoslavia”, “Serbia-Montenegro” and “Serbia or Kosovo”.

Source: Federal Ministry of Interior, 2011

Since the late 50s and early 60s, three generations of Turks have now been living in Germany, and the differences between first-, second- and third-generation migrants are pronounced. Ayça Kılıçlı distinguishes two major groups: the so-called *Gastarbeiter*, on the one hand, and their children and grandchildren born in Germany, or second- and third-generation Turks<sup>6</sup>. Graph 1, below, shows the percentage of Turks residing in Germany by age, which also shows how many of them belong to each of the generations mentioned.

<sup>5</sup> Federal Ministry of Interior (2011). “Migration and Integration. Residence law and policy on migration and integration in Germany”.

<sup>6</sup> Kılıçlı, Ayça (2003). “Turkish Migrants in Germany, Prospects of Integration”. *EU-Turkish Relations Dossier*. Observatory of European Foreign Policy. 2.