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By Özge Bilgili & Melissa Siegel

Maastricht Economic and social Research institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT)

email: info@merit.unu.edu | website: <http://www.merit.unu.edu>

Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSoG)

email: info-governance@maastrichtuniversity.nl | website: <http://mgsog.merit.unu.edu>

Keizer Karelplein 19, 6211 TC Maastricht, The Netherlands

Tel: (31) (43) 388 4400, Fax: (31) (43) 388 4499

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Understanding the Changing Role of the Turkish Diaspora

Özge BILGILI & Melissa SIEGEL

Maastricht Graduate School of Governance

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Abstract

Migration dynamics from Turkey have considerably changed over the last 60 years, which has produced a vast diaspora of around 5 million people. The diaspora's role in the early years of Turkish (labour) migration was characterized in economic terms (remittances and return migration), with the idea that the diaspora would contribute to the country's economic development and welfare. By the time Turkey witnessed economic liberalization in the 1980s, and a transition from temporary migration to permanent settlement of its migrant citizens abroad, the diaspora's obligations toward Turkey did not decline, but changed strategically in favour of the country's political objectives. Turkey now sees its diaspora as a lobbying power both for internal and external relations of the country, and more specifically as its representatives in Europe legitimizing Turkey's claim to EU citizenship. Accordingly, today the policies and Turkish institutions concerned with the diaspora focus not on financial engagement, but on the successful integration of the diaspora in the destination countries, which is expected to consequently benefit the country's image and political claims.

Keywords: Turkey, Diapora, Diaspora Engagement, Migration and Development

1. Introduction

In the past, Turkey was a key emigration country for Europe, supplying countries like Germany and the Netherlands with a wealth of low skilled labour. The picture today has changed. The flow of migrants from (the middle income) Turkey to Europe has subsided, and there is now a large Turkish diaspora, particularly in Germany. Migration dynamics in/from Turkey have vastly changed over the last 60 years, which has produced a vast diaspora that could be engaged to a greater extent in Turkey. There are currently an estimated 3 million Turkish nationals living in the European Union (Hecker 2005), with a majority of these (2 million) residing in Germany. While other countries are doing their best to court their diaspora and see what their migrants abroad (or even second generation abroad) can contribute back home, Turkey has taken a different approach, and has a particularly different mindset with regard to their migrants abroad. The early years of Turkish migration policy were characterized in economic terms (remittances and return migration). Today, Turkey has a well established diaspora. The way Turkey now sees its diaspora is as citizens in Europe legitimizing Turkey's claim to EU citizenship. Through the analysis of policies and institutions that we make in this paper, we are able to see this change.

We map the history of Turkish migration and policy shifts in migration and development and diaspora engagement. We then go on to outline the institutions and policies related to migration issues in Turkey and explain the debates on the role of the diaspora. To better map how these institutions were initially developed, and are currently functioning and interacting, we have made in-depth interviews with policy makers, bureaucrats and academics. More specifically, we interviewed people from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security of the Republic of Turkey, External Relations and Services for Workers Abroad, the Ministry of State of Turkey, Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department, a former Turkish attaché in the Netherlands, a political scientist and an expert on international relations and migration. In addition, a literature review and online analysis of the organization websites have been made to support the report.

2. History and Geography of Emigration from Turkey

2.1 Early years of the Turkish Republic

The Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923 and in the early years of the Turkish republic, migration was used as a way of nation building (Hecker 2006). There were many waves

of forced migration as well as population exchanged between the Balkans and what in now Turkey with Muslim communities moving to Anatolia and Christian communities moving to the Balkans (İçduygu, Toktas and Soner 2008). In the nation building process, non-Muslim communities were seen as a threat to the state and were driven out of Anatolia. There were official exchanges of population between Turkey and Greece with the Treaty of Lausanne, where an estimated 1.3 million Greeks were resettled and 400,000 to 500,000 Turks were resettled to Turkey (Hecker 2006). These population exchanges were made based on religion. Muslims were considered Turks and Christians Greek with the exception of the Greek-Orthodox community in Istanbul and the Muslim population in the Western Thrace (Kirisci 2000). Immigration of Muslims from the Balkans also continued. When treaties were signed with their Balkan neighbours between 1925 and 1950, there was always a provision for migration (Hecker 2006). Until the 1950s, migration in Turkey was mainly characterized by the nation building process and the exchange of populations. The early years of migration are not seen as part of the modern immigration story of today.

2.2 60s characterized by the “Guest Worker” programmes

In the post WWII period, migration changed. Emigration from Turkey was seen as part of a migration strategy. The booming economies of many European countries after the recovery WWII, left countries like Germany, The Netherlands and France with labour shortages that were supplied by Turkey, Morocco and Southern Europe, while the rapidly growing population in Turkey looked to immigration as a way of reducing demographic and labour market pressure (Paine 1974; İçduygu 1991; Hecker 2006). Before any official labour agreements were signed, the labour market or Western Europe was already started to draw workers mainly through worker recruitment by firms and general job availability (İçduygu 2008a). The first official labour agreement was signed with Germany in 1961, and other agreements follow shortly behind with Austria, Belgium and The Netherlands in 1964, France in 1965, and Sweden and Australia in 1967 (Hecker 2006; İçduygu 2008a). Other agreements were signed with the United Kingdom in 1961, with Switzerland in 1971, with Denmark in 1973, and Norway in 1981 (Franz 1994). The outflow of workers reached its height in the 1970s and by the end of 1973, the Turkish Employment Services had sent more than 780,000 workers to Western Europe (80 percent of which were sent to Germany) (Hecker 2006). By 1974, labour recruitment had stopped due mainly to the oil crisis, and the economic downturn that resulted, but labour migrants in Europe were mainly granted permanent residence permits and the right to family reunification.

Originally “guest workers” from Turkey (and other countries) were meant to be temporary labour migration to specific countries in Europe, which changed with the economic downturn in the 1970s. It is important to note here that there was circularity in this guest worker migration also (which is often under reported). It was only when immigrants did not see a chance to come back to Europe, that migration became more permanent. This “guest worker” period of migration was characterized mainly by the emigration of low skilled rural population mainly for economic development (Penninx 1982).

2.3 Diversification of emigration patterns from Turkey: Facts and figures

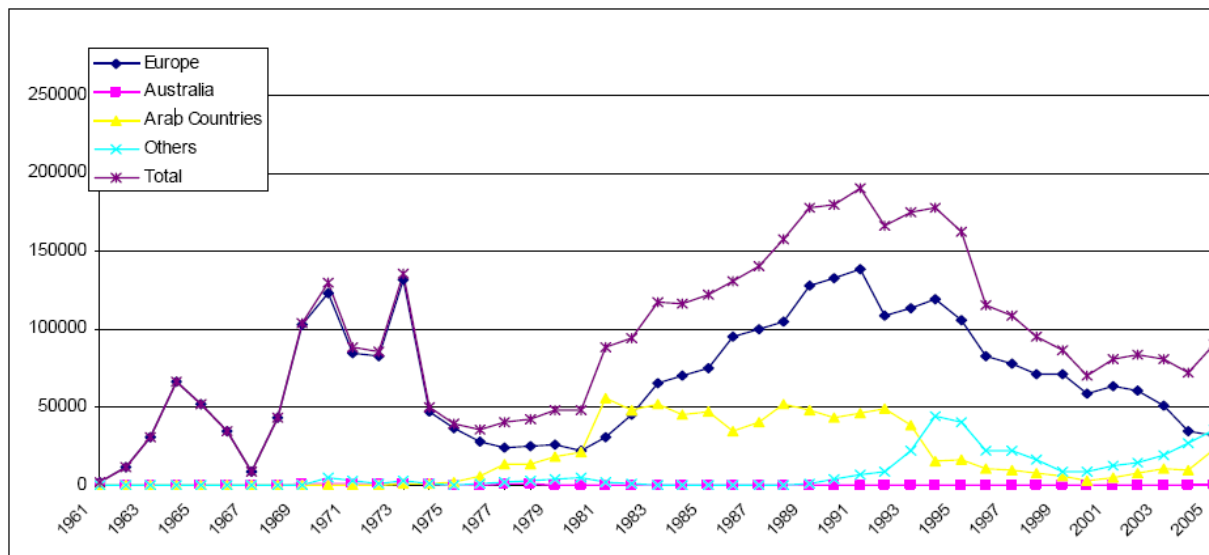
Some of the “temporary” migration of the 60s and 70s turned into permanent migration. After the oil crisis in the 1970s, labour recruitment in Europe was halted, which spurred a new type of migration to these countries, namely family reunification and formation (Unver 2010). With recruitment to Western Europe halted and the economic and political situation in Turkey not ideal for returning, many labour migrants decided to stay in their new homes due mainly to low chances for readmission to Western Europe. Since many migrants had gained permanent residence and the right to family reunification in their new European homes, many began to send for their families in Turkey to join them, those characterizing the main wave of Turkish migration to Europe in the 80s and 90s (Hecker 2006). Women and children joined the mainly male workers changing the demographic makeup of migration from Turkey.

There was also a diversification of migrants in the period between the 80s and 90s in other ways. Besides the increased migration through family reunification and family formation, there was also a flow of mainly Kurdish refugees and asylum seekers from the eastern provinces of Turkey (Hecker 2006). The 1980s saw military clashed between the Turkish security forces and the Partiya Kareren Kurdistan (PKK) in Turkey’s eastern, predominantly Kurdish, provinces (Hecker 2006).

When the labour market of Western Europe was officially cut off to low-skilled Turks, other labour markets were sought out in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (İçduygu 2008a). Now, low skilled migration turned more to the Middle East as new destinations for low skilled work opened up in the oil rich states (mainly Saudi Arabia, Libya and Kuwait). From the early 1990s on, workers also started to move to neighbouring former communist countries like Russia and Ukraine (İçduygu 2008a). During this period, minority populations of Christians (Greek Orthodox and Armenian Orthodox), Jews and continued to move out of Turkey (Hecker 2006).

Already in the 1980s, Turkey started to become not only an emigration country but also an immigration country (İçduygu 2008a), which will be discussed in more detail later. Since the 1980s, there has also been increased migration of the highly skilled and student migration mainly to the United States, Canada and Australia (Akçapar 2009).

Figure 1. Turkish Emigration by Destination



Source: İçduygu A. (2006b), based on various official sources¹

2.4 Turkey: From a country of emigration to immigration

Today, the face of migration in Turkey has changed. The new face of migration in Turkey is mainly comprised of asylum seekers, refugees, irregular labour migrants to Turkey and transit migrants on their way through Turkey to the EU (Kaya 2008b; İçduygu 2008b). Flows from Turkey have vastly decreased and now Turkey has become an immigration state. Besides the increased number of irregular labour migrants and transit migrants to Turkey, there has also been a growing number of non-European refugee and asylum seekers particularly from the Middle East and Gulf regions (Hecker, 2006).

¹ International migration data in Turkey is not collected by a single organization. As in many other countries, migration data in Turkey has its limitations. In many cases, to map the overall migration flows, one has to bring together various official sources. The official sources from which international migration related data can be extracted in Turkey are the State Statistics Organization, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, and Ministry of Interior. In addition, censuses, border statistics, administrative records (residence permissions, work permissions, asylum seeker and refugee records, citizenship information, visa registers), registers of other countries and extensive surveys (TURKSTAT, HUIPS, NIDI, EUROSTAT, TDHS) provide valuable information on migration flows (Coskun and Turkylmaz 2009).

Turkey currently has 4,402,914 abroad in mainly Germany, France, Netherlands, Austria, United States, Saudi Arabia, Bulgaria, Greece, Switzerland, United Kingdom (Ratha and Xu 2008). At the same time, the stock of immigrants is 1,328,405, coming mainly from Bulgaria, Germany, Serbia and Montenegro, Greece, Macedonia FYR, Netherlands, Romania, Russia, United Kingdom, Azerbaijan (Ratha and Xu 2008).

Today, generally, lower skilled Turks are found in Europe whereas the highly skilled (or elite) are found particularly in the United States and to a lesser extent in Canada. According to Köser-Akçapar (2006), since the 1980s, Turkish immigration to the United States has taken on many forms. This period has been characterized by increasing student migration, migration of professionals and some unskilled and semi-skilled labour. According to the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), approximately 465,771 Turkish immigrants have come to the US between 1820 and 2004. According to the OECD's estimates (İçduygu 2004), there were 220,000 Turks in the US as of 2003. On the other hand, Turkish consular offices in Washington DC, New York City, Los Angeles, Houston and Chicago estimate that there are 350,000 Turkish Americans (Köser-Akçapar 2006). In short, today we are talking about a considerably big, dispersed Turkish diaspora with a diverse background.

3. Institutions and Policies Related to Migration Issues in Turkey

Research on the role of origin country states in engaging and forming diaspora communities brings in two important debates in migration literature together: migration management and transnationalism from above. However, these debates have been dominated by the immigration country perspective, and have ignored the emigration country perspective in spite of its significance (Senay 2010). It is indeed quite new that researchers look at emigration management, and explore how emigration states engage with their nationals abroad (Gamlen 2006). Moreover, the significant role that the emigration countries play in reproducing the transnational social field has only recently been recognized (Massey 1999). In this section, we aim to contribute to the debate with an emigration country perspective, and understand how Turkey currently deals with diaspora communities.

Emigration occupies an important place in Turkey's historical nation building, as well as its socio-economic development. Accordingly, there are quite a few institutions and organizations which deal with migration related issues in Turkey. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see that despite emigration's significance for the country and the considerable number of citizens living abroad, there is no umbrella institution which deals with migration, but there are

various institutions which intervene in migration related issues according to their field of expertise. This fragmentation of institutions, and the lack of an overarching institution regarding migration make it difficult to have good coordination between different organizations.² Therefore, in the recent years new initiatives have been taken by politicians to overcome this problem. Accordingly, in the coming section we will portray not only the existing institutions, but also the newly established ones.

3.1 Institutions

“The state shall take the necessary measures to ensure family unity, the education of the children, the cultural needs and the social security of Turkish nationals working abroad, and shall take the necessary measures to safeguard their ties with the home country, and to help them in their return home.” (Article 62 of the Turkish Constitution)

3.1.A. Ministries

As already mentioned, in Turkey the ministerial level agency regarding migration is fragmented. There are various ministries involved in migration related issues in Turkey. The major ministries are the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of State, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These ministries are involved not only in emigration processes, but also in how emigrants’ settlement in the destination countries takes place, and in their integration processes. These three ministries are concerned with the Turkish citizens living abroad at different levels.

The general approach of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to manage and take a position concerning the integration processes of Turkish citizens living abroad. The ministry’s current focus regarding the Turkish diaspora living abroad is to assist them in overcoming integration problems with regard to political participation, education, employment and cultural maintenance.³ The Ministry of Labour and Social Security is mainly responsible for migrant workers living abroad and the social security agreements which protect their rights. The ministry has consultancy and attaché offices in 17 countries and 40 cities.⁴ The government office of Foreign Relations and Abroad Worker Services General Directorate (FRAWSGD) is linked to this ministry. The Ministry of State with the motto “wherever there is a citizen or descendent of

² This argument is based on the common opinion of all the respondents interviewed for this report.

³ See the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-expatriate-turkish-citizens.en.mfa>

⁴ See the Ministry of Labor and Social Security website: <http://www.csgeb.gov.tr/csgebPortal/csgeb.portal>

ours, we are there”⁵ is the superior institution to the Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department and the Consultancy Board for Citizens Living Abroad. The Directorate of Religious Affairs is also linked to the Office of Prime Minister, and is an influential actor in the Turkish context in engaging the migrants living abroad.⁶

The ministries’ overall understanding of integration incorporates adapting to the destination country’s economic, social and political life while maintaining strong linkages with the origin country, the mother tongue and cultural heritage.⁷ According to the State’s discourse in general, Turkish migrants living abroad are highly encouraged to form their non-governmental organizations which could lead them to have a better public recognition, and communication with the residence country government. The official declarations indicate that a high level importance is given to dialogue with the migrants themselves, as well as the destination country institutions.⁸ For instance, in 2003, the Turkish Grand National Assembly constituted a commission to visit immigrant communities in Europe and investigate their problems (Kirisci 2008). The parliament members with a migration background were influential for this initiative, and this report published by the commission is seen as an important product showing Turkey’s interest in *its* diaspora.⁹

3.1. B Government centres / offices

Dis İlişkiler ve Yurtdışı İsci Hizmetleri Genel Müdürlüğü - Foreign Relations and Abroad Worker Services General Directorate (FRAWSGD)

Foreign Relations and Abroad Worker Services General Directorate (FRAWSGD) is the first governmental organization (established in 1967) to deal with Turkish migrant workers abroad, with a special focus of those in Europe.¹⁰ FRAWSGD consists of two sections, the first one being the Department of Services for Citizens Abroad and the second one being the Department of International Relations. A deputy under secretary within the Ministry of Labour and Social Security is the head of FRAWSGD, and responsible for counsellors and attachés abroad. At the same time, the Social Security Agency, which is linked to an undersecretary of the

⁵ “Nerede bir vatandaşımız, soydasımız varsa, biz oradayız”: according to Faruk Celik, the minister of the State responsible of Turks living abroad and it is considered to be the motto of the ministry (<http://www.devlet.gov.tr/Forms/cv.aspx>).

⁶ The organizations mentioned here will be discussed more in detail below.

⁷ See the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-expatriate-turkish-citizens.en.mfa>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ For further information on the report, see <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss335m.htm>

¹⁰ See the FRAWSGD website: <http://www.csqb.gov.tr/csqbPortal/diyih.portal?page=genelmudurluk&id=2>

Ministry of Labour and Social Security has played an important role in its establishment and has authority over the department (Kaya 2008a).

As its structure suggests, the organization has two main responsibilities. Firstly, it manages the international relations of the Ministry of Labour and Security, and secondly it is responsible for protecting and enhancing the rights and interests of Turkish citizens working abroad (Kaya 2008a). More specifically, at an institutional level, the organization coordinates the social security agreements signed between the Turkish and foreign governments. At an individual level, the directorate provides assistance to Turkish workers in the country of residence and upon their return to Turkey for problems they encounter (Article 10, Law no. 3146, Official Gazette 09.01.1985). In particular, the directorate is in constant relation with the foreign counsellors and attachés responsible for the professional and social life of Turkish citizens living abroad.

Looking at the services provided by FRAWSGD, we see that the directorate accepts written and oral complaints and suggestions, assists citizens with their payment and employment related problems, and informs the citizens on the policies and services of the Turkish government. More specifically, the *Homeland-Advice Bureau (Yurt-Danis Burosu)* was founded in 2001 within the constitution of FRAWSGD for Turkish citizens living permanently or temporarily abroad, or those who return permanently to Turkey and their families.¹¹ This bureau provides direct services for the citizens who contact the bureau regarding their legal rights and obligations (İçduygu, 2008a). The staff of the bureau consists of multilingual employees who are also responsible of assisting the citizens with filling out forms and writing official letters in the residence country languages.

In the definition of its tasks, the directorate especially emphasizes its loyalty to Turkey's relationship with the European Union and the international judiciary. Within the frame of this perspective, the directorate states that it encourages the citizens and younger generations in professional education, supports employment opportunities and assists them with their legal issues.¹²

Yurtdisi Turkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Baskanligi – Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department

¹¹ <http://www.csqb.gov.tr/csqbPortal/diyih.portal?page=yurtdanis>

¹² Ibid.

Recently, it has been recognized that the lack of an institution in charge of the Turkish diaspora may lead to coordination problems, and cause trouble in the decision making processes and the efficient assistance of the Turkish citizens living abroad.¹³ In line with this, a new law was approved in March 2010, for the formation of the organization entitled *Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department*. The organization is linked to the Ministry of State, but works in coordination with other ministries and governmental organizations that are involved with Turks abroad.

According to the first section of law number 5978 declaring the formation of the department, the main objective of the organization is to work with Turkish citizens living abroad and to help solve their problems.¹⁴ The second section of the law gives detailed information about the services and the activities of the department. The organization manages new social, cultural and economic activities with the Turkish citizens and descendants living abroad according to their needs and demands. It is mentioned that the activities of the organization are directed at not only Turkish citizens and descendants abroad, but also migrant organizations, non-governmental organizations abroad and professional organizations. In addition, it is worthwhile to mention that the department targets foreign students coming to study in Turkey as well, however the main focus is the Turkish diaspora. The sub-departments of the organization are as follows: Citizens Abroad (Yurtdisi vatandaslar), Cultural and Social Relations (Kulturel ve sosyal iliskiler), Institutional Relations and Communication (Kurumsal iliskiler ve iletisim), Foreign Students (Yabanci ogrenciler), Strategy Planning (Strateji gelistirme), Legal Advisory (Hukuk musavirligi), and Human Resources and Support Departments (Insan kaynaklari ve destek hizmetleri).

The first permanent sub-department, Citizens Abroad, is responsible for coordinating and advising the activities regarding Turks abroad. Article 8 of law number 5978 indicates that it is this department which decides on how to engage the Turkish diaspora with the government and the obligations of the government towards its diaspora. This department's constitution affirms that the importance of the Turkish diaspora in a globalized world. The interviewee from the Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department argues, in addition, that Turkey is against an assimilationist perspective, and aims at helping the Turks abroad to maintain their social and cultural heritage. For this aim, the department works mainly with non-governmental migrant organizations.

¹³ This is stated by the interviewee from the Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department.

¹⁴ For the details of law number 5978, see the website: <http://www.yok.gov.tr/content/view/868/183/lang,tr/>

The Cultural and Social Relations Department is the second essential sub-department within the organization in terms of its approach towards Turks living abroad. According to the article 9 (law 5978), this department is in charge of relations with Turkish descendents living in Middle Asia, China, the Balkans, and the Middle East in cooperation with the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA)¹⁵ which is the government's development cooperation agency affiliated with the Ministry of the State.¹⁶ TIKA was formed initially to provide development assistance in various domains from economics to education to developing countries where Turkish is spoken and countries that border Turkey. Thus, although TIKA is not directly targeted toward Turkish migrant workers abroad, it takes part in the broader politics which are important for engaging the Turkish diaspora all over the world. With the Cultural and Social Relations department, a new division of tasks will be established to distinguish between those who make the policies and those who execute the projects for a better coordination and auditing.¹⁷

The third permanent sub-department which is essential for understanding how the Turkish states engages with its diaspora abroad, is the Public Relations and Communication Department (Article 10, law no. 5978). This department is constituted based on the fact that there is no government based institutional organization which supports the activities of organizations that are founded and led by the Turkish citizens and descendents living abroad. As mentioned in the report of the *Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department*, the non-governmental organizations are acknowledged as the *forth power*. Based on the same report, we can argue that from a governmental perspective, supporting the non-governmental Turkish organizations abroad positively affects the recognition of Turks living abroad, the resolution of their problems and demands. Moreover, it enhances their abilities and capabilities with regards to integration, and also creates the lobby and cooperation power for Turkey abroad. The department will in accordance, finance, coordinate and support projects which are related to these objectives of diaspora engagement.

This new initiative brings together different parts of an overall all diaspora engagement policy in Turkey for the first time. Since the department has just been launched in the spring of 2010, it is too early to evaluate the activities and added value of such an organization.

¹⁵ TIKA has coordination offices in 20 countries, and operates in many countries across Africa, Asia and Europe, delivering development assistance to partner countries through its projects and activities.

¹⁶ For more information on TIKA: <http://www.tika.gov.tr/>

¹⁷ Mentioned in the report entitled "What does Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department bring?", given by the interviewee from the Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department.

Nevertheless, it is of significance to follow up on this department for future, because it is the first over-arching governmental organization concerned with the Turkish diaspora.

Yurtdisinda Yasayan Vatandaslar Danisma Kurulu - Consultancy Board for Citizens Living Abroad (CBCLA)

Since its foundation in 1998, the main objective of CBCLA is to provide services to Turkish citizens living abroad concerning public related issues.¹⁸ The minister of the State is the president of this consultancy board. The main members of the board are one deputy chosen from each political party which is currently in the parliament, undersecretaries from the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and commissioners from the Department of Religious Affairs. In addition, 25 Turkish citizens living abroad are chosen as representatives of their community in the destination country.¹⁹ Currently the board has 76 members from 15 different countries²⁰.

In addition to the coordination and evaluation of measures taken regarding the Turkish citizens living abroad, the consultancy has several other tasks broadly defined as follows:²¹ 1) if a certain ministry needs to debate on certain issues with the citizens living abroad, the consultancy boards coordinate this, 2) the board discusses and determines the concrete needs of migrants for their better economic and social integration in the destination countries as well as the services that should be provided by the Turkish government, 3) the board takes position against xenophobia, racism and discrimination, and brings public attention to specific events to create awareness, 4) if necessary, sub-committees are established for specific subjects, 5) overall the board is responsible for the information flow between the relevant organizations and the citizens living abroad.

With the foundation of Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department, this consultancy board will act as a board responsible for contributing to determining the general strategy of how to engage and support the Turkish diaspora abroad.

¹⁸ See website: <http://www.devlet.gov.tr/Forms/pYYVDK.aspx>

¹⁹ To be chosen as representative, the person should be residing in the destination country with a minimum duration of 5 years; speak the destination country very well; attained a minimum of secondary education; have work permit in the destination country; not get any social assistance; not have any crime record; have good contacts with the community members in the destination country.

²⁰ The majority of members are from the United States (10) and Germany (35). Other members are from Australia, Canada, The Netherlands, Belgium, France, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Norway and Finland.

²¹ See website: <http://www.devlet.gov.tr/Forms/pYYVDK.aspx>

Tanıtma Fonu Kurulu Başbakanlık Merkez Teşkilatı - The Promotion Fund of the Office of the Turkish Prime Minister

The promotion fund exists to finance projects aiming at promoting Turkey's history, language, culture, art and geographical richness both in Turkey but also abroad. The board of the promotion fund was founded in 1985 within the Prime Ministry.²² The fund is open to migrant organizations whose activities can be of interest for the promotion of Turkey. The Turks Abroad and the Relative Communities Department states that some of the non-governmental organizations abroad are already sponsored by this fund for their activities, and it is argued that this support will only increase in the future.²³

Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı - The Directorate of Religious Affairs

Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (The Directorate of Religious Affairs) founded in March 1924 and attached to the Office of the Prime Minister, is the Turkish national bureaucracy of religious affairs. In a way, Diyanet, regulated by the Turkish government, has the monopoly over religious activities, and is considered to be the representative of official Islam in Turkey (Avcı 2005). In line with Turkey's increasing engagement with its diaspora abroad, Diyanet's scope of responsibility extended to abroad in the 1980s. This extension of Diyanet was initially guided by the religious affairs unit of the Turkish Embassies and the Religious Services Attachés of the Consulates (Avcı 2005). Diyanet built its network and engaged with many religious migrant organizations (Ogelman 2003). As a result, today, it is considered to be the extension of the Turkish state abroad, and one of the most influential instruments in influencing and monitoring the Turkish diaspora (Citak 2010). It is essential to mention that Diyanet abroad works through the Turkish-Islamic Association of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet İşleri Turk-Islam Birliği - DİTİB*)²⁴ or the Diyanet Foundations (*Diyanet Vakıfları*) (Citak 2010). DİTİB is basically a Sunnite religious organization, which is related to the Turkish state with an agreement. Many Turkish Sunnite mosques are under its control abroad (Jonker 2000).

In a way, this directorate has dominated the religious lives of immigrant communities in the previous years through several activities. However, it is important to mention that because Diyanet is the representative of official Islam in Turkey, it does not have the same distance to

²² See website: <http://www.basbakanlik.gov.tr/Forms/pOrganizationDetail.aspx>

²³ Mentioned in the report entitled "What does Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department bring?", given by the interviewee from the Turks Abroad and Relative Communities Department.

²⁴ For more information on DİTİB:

other religious minorities like the Alevis or other alternative Islamic religious movements existing abroad (e.g. Milli Gorus, Suleymancis or Kaplancis).²⁵ Regarding its activities more specifically, Diyanet sends religion officials with knowledge skills, operates the mosques, and works for the establishment of official religious education in the residence countries (Citak 2010). Furthermore, other religious issues such as the construction of mosques, institutional arrangements for religious exercises (hajj, umre, kurban, and burial funds), religious feast celebrations and socio-cultural activities (e.g. Inter-faith dialogues) are of interest for Diyanet.

The *Diyanet* board gets together every five years since the 1990s to decide on its agenda. These meetings give valuable information to better understand the State approach with regards to the religious domain, and what kind of role Diyanet plays for the integration of the Turkish migrants and their descendents abroad. In the Board Meeting in 2004, specific decisions about religion and the European Union nexus have been made.²⁶ For instance, decision 3 states that the Diyanet is the institutional representative of the Turkish citizens living in the European Union. Moreover, the statements imply that Diyanet expands its purview beyond religion, and takes measures about social and cultural life more broadly. The Board Meeting decisions explicitly affirm that Diyanet should take active part in developing an education and culture policy for the Turkish citizens living abroad. Diyanet initiated several projects in cooperation with universities to train the imams to serve Turkish migrant communities abroad in the realms of local languages and culture of the residence country. In a way, Diyanet can be seen as the governmental organization responsible of maintaining the social and cultural sense of belonging of its citizens living abroad (Avcı 2005).

3.1.C. Official organizations

As the migration history of Turkey suggests, Turkish descendents are found in many countries. Moreover, Turks living abroad have distinct backgrounds in terms of their ethnicity, socioeconomic status, as well as their cultural, political and religious affiliation. Given the size and diversity of the Turkish population abroad, there are hundreds of non-governmental (migrant) organizations abroad. These organizations show variation not only with regard to the characteristics of their members, but also concerning their objectives, activities and viewpoints about Turkey. It is beyond the scope of this study to map the differences between these

²⁵ It is beyond the scope of this paper to further analyze these differences, however, it is important to mention that these differences exist, and there is a wide literature on this issue.

²⁶ See website: <http://www.diyamet.gov.tr/dinsurasi/sura/default.asp>

organizations however, the consultancy website of the Turkish government gives a comprehensive list of registered Turkish organizations abroad.²⁷ The organizations are categorized as federations, cultural, female, professional, student, arts and sports organizations and organizations for parents and handicapped Turks.

3.2 Policies

3.2.A. Citizenship

The concept of citizenship in Turkey is strongly linked to national identity. While, constitutionally, the citizenship relies on territory (*jus soli*), the concept of national identity relies heavily on the notion of common culture (Hecker 2006). The 1934 Law on Settlement (Law 2510) gives persons of ‘Turkish decent and culture’ the right to enter the country for the purpose of permanent settlement and the right to Turkish citizenship. Being of Turkish descent and culture, however, are not the only ways to gain citizenship. Due to nation building and the integration of other groups, Turkish citizenship could be acquired on the basis of marriage, residence, birth and intention to settle permanently (Hecker 2006). Officially, the law does allow for dual citizenship in that automatic acquisition of a foreign nationality does not affect Turkish citizenship and Turkish law does not force citizens who were born with dual nationality to choose one when they reach the age of 18 (İçduygu 2008a). According to Turkish citizenship law, if a Turkish national would like to acquire the citizenship of another country, they must get a ‘permission document’ from the Ministry of the Interior and anyone who does acquire another nationality may request to keep their Turkish nationality or may give up their nationality (İçduygu , 2008a.)

3.2.B. Rights and obligations of the Turkish diaspora towards Turkey

Ordinary passports are issued to Turkish citizens who would like to work abroad and they are entitled to a note in their passport stating that they will work abroad making them (and their families) exempt from paying the ‘exit fee’ when leaving Turkey (İçduygu 2008a).

Officially all Turkish citizens have the right to vote but no special arrangements have been made for migrant voting. The only possibility for residents of foreign countries to vote in national elections is to vote at national exit points 30 days prior to the election. It is then

²⁷ http://www.konsolosluk.gov.tr/Organisations/Organisations_Main.aspx

understandable to only an estimated 5 percent of eligible voters abroad actually voted in the 2002 elections (İçduygu 2008a).

While Turkey does allow dual citizenship, it claims a predominant claim on those citizens who are residing in Turkey. For example, those dual citizens residing in Turkey are subject to Turkish tax laws. Males over the age of 18 are also subject to compulsory military service. Dual nationals are also supposed to leave and enter Turkey on a Turkish passport (Kaya 2008b).

3.2.C Rights and obligations of the Turkish diaspora concerning economic engagement

One of the key ways in which government usually like to court or engage their diaspora is in economic affairs in the origin country. In the early days of migration, Turkey was no different in this respect. With time, however, Turkey's focus on the diaspora has changed and less and less emphasis has been placed on the economic contributions migrants can and should make back home.

From the beginning for the guest worker migration, Turks kept in close contact with family and friends in Turkey by mail and phone but also by sending remittances (İçduygu , 2006a). In the early days of labour migration, remittances were seen as an important source of development for the country and households receiving them. Particularly Turkish banks and the Central Bank have played a key role in remittance receipts to Turkey. The Central Bank offers two specific bank accounts to migrants, making it attractive for them to send money back to Turkey and keep savings in accounts with the Central Bank. These two accounts are: (1) Foreign Currency Deposit Accounts and (2) Super FX Accounts (İçduygu 2006a). These accounts offer high interests rates than at other banks and were set up as a way to attract remittances and channel them into savings and investment in Turkey. Remittance deposits at the Central Bank reached €14 million in 2004. However, this way of attracting remittances to Turkey has been seen as a costly way of bringing in remittances, and is considered outside of the scope of the Central Bank making it an element that will be removed in the long-term (İçduygu 2006a).

There are some new financial products being considered to be marketed to the diaspora abroad. One of the ideas is to sell special offer share of Turkish Airlines during privatisation. By and large, though, new financial products for migrants are being largely unexplored in the Turkish context and it is unclear what should be done with the previous €14 million attracted (İçduygu2006a). According to a presentation by the Turkish State Planning Organization, remittances have always helped in pay for imports of the country but have also always remained a small part of GDP (İçduygu 2006a).

Previously, in the 1970s and 80s, more emphasis was put on engaging the diaspora in economic activities and economic development in Turkey, but they mostly ended in failure due to corruption and mismanagement. According to İçduygu (2006a), there was a clear plan in the 1970s to channel remittances into ‘employment-generating’ activities to help maximize economic growth. Three specific programmes were created: (1) worker’s joint stock companies, (2) Village Development Cooperatives and (3) the State Industry and Workers’ Investment Bank.

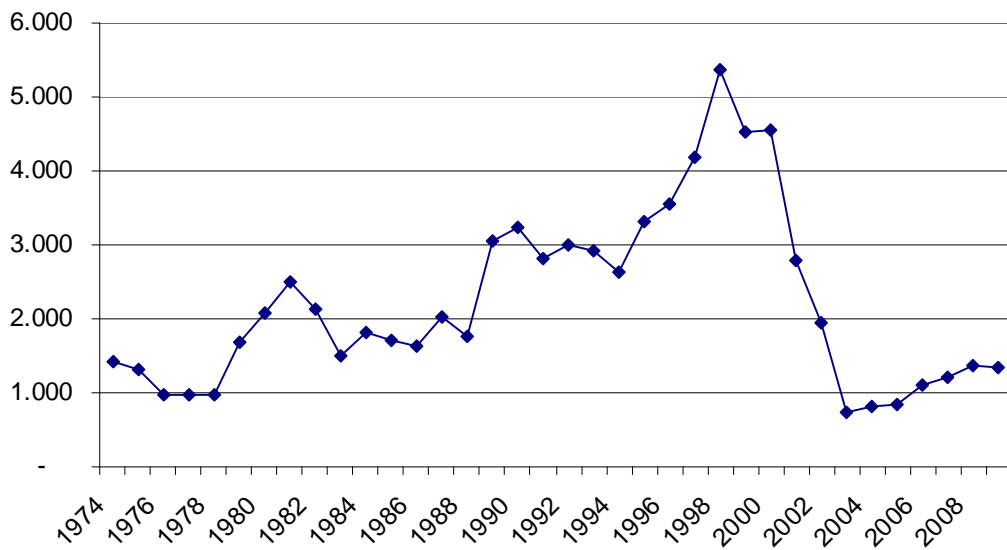
Worker’s joint stock companies were created to channel money to less developed areas. It was believed that this would help create job opportunities in the less developed areas for return migrants and an economic outlet for their savings. More than 600 worker’s companies were created in an attempted to industrialise under developed regions. These companies ran into several problems from management to communication making their numbers dwindle to 20 or 30 functioning companies that are themselves not well run.

The Village Development Cooperatives were seen as another way to integrate return migrant savings into the local rural economy but many of them focused only on securing jobs for their members rather than making productive investments in the villages. They were mainly used as a way to facilitate more migration making it difficult to sustain the original goal of the project. Similarly, the State Industry and Workers’ Investment Bank was formed to facilitate mixed enterprises through both state and private funds (particularly remittances) but was also unsuccessful.

İçduygu (2006a) goes on to explain that in the 50 year history of Turkish emigration, several policy measures, objectives and practices have been utilized to help enhance the developmental impact of remittances including: (1) enabling transfers via formal channels through foreign exchange accounts, premium interest rate accounts and remittance bonds; (2) giving to migrant collectives/associations through matched funding, public-private ventures and competitive bidding for development projects; (3) setting up special banks and (4) trying to secure future remittances by promoting future migration and engaging the diaspora.

As illustrated in the figure below, remittances have drastically decreased in the last ten years. This decline has been partly attributed to the seeming lack of government interest in further securing remittance flows to Turkey (İçduygu 2006a). At the moment, there are no governmental attempts to promote the flows of remittances to Turkey and there does not seem to be any likelihood of an uptake in the future (İçduygu 2006a).

Figure 2. Remittances to Turkey



Source: World Bank 2009

3.2.D Communication strategy regarding the European Union

The communication strategy of the Turkish General Secretary of the European Union (attached to the Office of Prime Ministry) gives valuable information to better evaluate the Turkish government's perspective regarding its diaspora living abroad. The communication strategy regarding the European Union is not necessarily about a governmental organization working for the diaspora. It is the strategy of the prime ministry. This, however, is important for influencing policy and future measures on migrants abroad.

The following topics are found in the strategy report, and shows which subjects are prioritized by the government for policy making. The report's 15th section refers to the cooperation with the Turkish community in the EU member states. Firstly, cooperation with the migrant organizations is mentioned. More specifically, the report suggests that migrant organizations should be listed, more contact should be established with the European city municipalities, and the Turkish migrant organizations should be made aware of the importance of EU integration. Secondly, the report gives importance to cooperation with Turkish origin individuals in the European country parliaments. Finally, the report aims at better relations with both the existing Turkish community and the new emigrants leaving for job opportunities in Europe. In this respect, especially information sharing and mutual understanding is put forward.²⁸

²⁸ See website for more information: <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/abis/index.php?p=20&l=1>

4. From Temporary to Permanent Migration: Evaluating the Role of Emigrants in Turkey

Looking at Turkey's history since its foundation in the early 1920s, one can argue that Turkey has strategically made use of immigration and emigration for different objectives. The different trends in emigration flows from Turkey reflect well the changes in the perception of the role of emigrants. The historical analysis of Turkish emigration provides a good basis to develop the debate on the role of emigrants in the eyes of the Turkish state, and how it has evolved in the last a few decades. What is interesting about the Turkish case is that the expectations from Turkish emigrants and their descendents who are born and raised in the residence countries, the so called second- and third-generation migrants, are not lessened *just because* they become permanent populations abroad. In other words, transition from temporary to permanent migration from Turkey has *not* caused a decline in the obligations of Turkish citizens living abroad, but a conceptual change in their role. In this section, we aim to discuss these changes with a historical perspective and evaluate the economic, political and socio-cultural role of Turkish diaspora for Turkey.

4.1 The Role of diaspora regarding Turkish Economy

4.1.A Turkish labour migration and economic development: From the 1960s till Today

In the 1950s, Turkey introduced a Five-Year Development Plan, which proposed that Turkey could ease the employment pressure on the labour market by *exporting* the surplus of labour power to the major European countries (Icduygu 2001; Unver 2010). This trend, initiated by the first bilateral agreements signed between Turkey and Germany in 1961, led to a huge inflow of less-skilled Turkish workers to several European countries. Till the 1973 Oil Crisis when emigration from Turkey to Europe faced a period of stagnation, Turkish migration policies regarding *its* citizens living abroad were dominated by “homeland policies” (Smith 1997) defined as an approach aiming at orienting migrants towards return, by creating institutions and taking measures facilitating migrants' strong economic linkages with their origin country. In other words, Turkey introduced various measures to channel remittances in such a way that migrant earnings could positively affect the country's economic development (see section 3).

Using Gamlen's (2006) words, we can say the diaspora engagement policies in Turkey were used to manage *the scale of its economic manoeuvres*. Compared to other forms of financing (eg. foreign aid and loans with high interest rates), remittances were seen as one of the efficient ways to solve Turkey's economic problems, especially those regarding foreign debts and interest payments (Martin 1991). In a way, for a developing country going through economic

liberalization, the huge amount of remittances was seen to be an important revenue and source of hard currency (Icduygu 2008). With the inflow of hard currency, Turkey could import the inputs and the technology that are crucial for industrialization and international trade (Penninx 1982). Hence, Turkish citizens living abroad, especially those living within the EU, were expected to provide economic support through financial remittances, and investments back in Turkey.

Looking at the numbers, we observe that migrant remittances were \$93 million in 1967, and reached \$1.4 billion in 1978 (Icduygu, 2006). Between 1979 and 1988, the level of annual remittances transferred to Turkey was around \$1.5 – 2.0 billion, and in 1995, remittances increased to \$3.4 billion (Icduygu, 2006). By this time Turkey witnessed economic liberalization and development. So, if we are to discuss the extent to which the diaspora money played a role in this, it is important to mention that it is difficult to talk about a causal relationship between diaspora's economic engagement with Turkey and the country's economic development. It is argued that the institutional (structural) and contextual circumstances in the country of origin are important factors that influence migrant remittances (De Haas 2005). In the case of Turkey as well, Sayan (2006) states that Turkish workers in Europe followed the economic and political actuality in Turkey, and adapted their remittances sending behaviour according to the origin country conditions. As a result of this, although one cannot deny the economic input of the Turkish diaspora in the early years of labour migration for the country's economic development, it is of importance to bear in mind the ambiguous relationship between migration and development.

Today, remittances make only around two per cent of the deficit whereas it was almost half of the trade deficit in the previous decades (Icduygu 2009). Consequently, we can argue that the relative size of remittances have declined over the years, and lost its significance at least in quantitative terms (Icduygu 2009). However, from a human development perspective, most of the studies have shown that migrant households are better off than the non-migrant households (eg. Bogazliyan 1976, Turkish International Migration Survey 1996). Hence, although from a State standpoint, the economic role of the Turkish diaspora might have decreased, on a household level, its significance continues to be persistent.

4.1.B The Turkish diaspora and economic development: Mission accomplished or unfinished business?

Currently, the debate on the economic role of the Turkish diaspora has changed considerably. Icduygu (2009) argues that the decline in the importance of remittances is mainly

due to the fact that Turkey has become a country which is well-integrated with the global economy. In parallel, the discourse on the importance of Turkish migrants living abroad for sending remittances has lost its priority. This idea is well stated by one of our interviewers from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security: *“Before, it was very important that the migrants would send money back to Turkey, but now this has lost its importance. Remittances are equal to endorsement of a mid-sized company in Turkey.”* Moreover, another interviewee from the Ministry of State affirms that *“We do not see our migrants living abroad as “currency exchange point”, since Turkey is one of the biggest countries in the world. We have become the 17th biggest economy. Turkey is not a country which is in need of remittances to survive.”*

However, one could argue that remittances to Turkey could even increase due to better economic conditions in Turkey. Then, why does Turkey has changed its discourse about the economic contribution of the diaspora when their added value has not necessarily decreased?

Firstly, some of the policies and programmes aimed at mobilizing migrant remittances in the past failed due to lack of coordination and corruption problems (Icduygu, 2009). These past experiences have decreased the likelihood of Turkey to depend on migrant remittances and investments. The following quote from the former attaché that we interviewed is exemplary to illustrate this point of view: *“Turkey’s record on benefiting from remittances is not very positive. Many of the initiatives have failed in the past. It would be hard to mobilize people for similar projects.”* Secondly, today the Turkish diaspora abroad is well established. After the 1980s, there was a transition from temporary to permanent migration observed through family reunification and formation (Icduygu 2008). This is argued to decrease the likelihood of return and incentives for sending remittances. Thirdly, one can argue that the well established diaspora’s role towards Turkey has changed in essence, and diminished its economic relevance. It is interesting to look into these arguments more in detail, and debate if Turkey *does not need* remittances sent by the Turkish diaspora, or *cannot mobilize its* diaspora abroad to receive more remittances. Such questions are valuable to better understand the dynamics between the State and the diaspora, and to better evaluate the actual way of perceiving the Turkish diaspora in Turkey.

4.2 Establishment of a Permanent Turkish diaspora Abroad: Transition from Economic to Political Role of the diaspora

4.2.A Turkey’s internal and external relations and the role of the diaspora

Permanent settlement of the Turkish citizens in the destination countries led to changes in the way the Turkish State approached its citizens. While temporary migration implied return

migration, transition to permanent migration caused the establishment of a strong Turkish diaspora in the Western immigration countries (Icduygu 2008). In accordance with this change, the country's expectations and its obligations towards its citizens permanently living abroad has changed. During this transition period, Turkish migrants begin to demand to express their socio-cultural identities more explicitly, and they get mobilized politically through migrant organizations (Ogelman 2003). Another factor influencing this change is the new emigration flows of various groups abroad after the 1980s. The Turkish diaspora became much more heterogeneous when Turkey generated refugees and asylum seekers coming from politically active ethnic or religious minority groups in Turkey (Icduygu and Kirisci 2009). Finally, the Turkish economic liberalization which created new dynamics for Turkey became more prominent around this time. Given all these different factors, the focus on the role of Turkish emigrants changed drastically from economic to political.

As the history of Turkish emigration suggests, the Turkish diaspora is not a homogeneous one, and the distance and attitude of the Turkish government towards the diaspora differs among groups. When interpreting Turkey's attitude towards its diaspora, one should always consider this fact. There is an ongoing debate as to which groups' demands are taken more *seriously* by the Turkish government than the others. The diversity among the Turkish diaspora, and their competing demands and varying links with the State is an interesting issue to focus more on, when discussing how the role of the diaspora is determined to be by the government.

The Turkish State recently puts more emphasis on the lobbying power of the Turkish diaspora in Turkey. For instance, political parties refer to the Turkish diaspora for votes during the election times. Although Turkish citizens living abroad should return to Turkey to vote, which means that the institutional barriers towards full political participation are not eliminated, in the national discourse, there is emphasis on the power that the Turkish citizens living abroad have for Turkey (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003). Not only for internal relations, but also for external relations, the Turkish diaspora is an important actor and the Turkish state makes use of this. For instance, Turkey assigned academic positions abroad according to the scholars' views on the massacres on Armenians in the beginning of the century (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003). In short, the Turkish diaspora is becoming a legitimate political actor that Turkey makes use of when necessary.

4.2.B Global nation policies, the European Union and the Turkish diaspora

Global nation policies best define the Turkish state's attitude towards its diaspora after the 1980s. According to these policies, states seek to encourage migrants to stay abroad but stay in touch (Smith 1997). One of the main agenda points for which it is essential that the migrants stay abroad but maintain their contact with Turkey is Turkey's well-known plan to join the European Union. As Ostergaard-Nielsen (2003) would agree, we develop on the idea that Turkey legitimizes its presence in the European context through its diaspora in Europe. In spite of all the criticism that the Turkish descendents get about integration in the residence countries, Turkey puts the emphasis on the economic success, the upward social mobility and multicultural contribution of the Turkish citizens in Europe.²⁹

From the State perspective, the Turkish discourse implies that it is of great importance that the Turkish population in Europe integrates because, their successful integration is a proof of Turkey's compatibility with Europe, and suggests that Turkey should be considered as an integral part of Europe. In accordance with this argument, we observe that Turkey's diaspora engagement policies aim at supporting the well-being of Turkish migrants and their descendents. In other words, today Turkey sees the Turkish diaspora as the representatives of the Turkish nation abroad, although a considerable part of this population ever even lived in Turkey as the so called second- or third-generation migrants. We can conclude that Turkey supports the Turkish diaspora for them to be active actors in demanding to enhance their economic, social, cultural and legal rights in the residence countries. The institutional development that we have discussed in this article supports this view of the Turkish state with regards to its diaspora.

4.3 The Turkish diaspora and the Brain Drain Debate

In this paper, we mentioned the highly skilled migration from Turkey to the major immigration countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia. As already stated, the migrant profile in these countries is quite different than that of Turkish diaspora in the European context, and their number is not too little to ignore. However, the "brain drain" debate related to the highly skilled migration has not attracted a lot of attention after the 1960s in Turkey. The main reason for this was that the political and academic agenda was dominated by issues such as the labour migration to Europe, Turkey's transition into an immigration country and integration processes (Akcapar 2006). One of the few initiatives to benefit from highly skilled migration in Turkey was the temporary return migration programme entitled TOKTEN (*Transfer of*

²⁹ See website: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-expatriate-turkish-citizens.en.mfa>

Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals)³⁰, developed by the UNDP in 1977. The programme was piloted in Turkey, yet today it does not continue.

Especially after the economic crisis that Turkey faced at the beginning of the Millennium, highly skilled migration was represented as a socio-economic problem (Akcapar 2009). On a rhetorical level, highly skilled migrants' potential contribution to Turkey's development on economic and social level through transfer of knowledge and information, human capital formation and investment is acknowledged (Akcapar 2006). Nevertheless, not many concrete measures are taken to set the conditions for this potential to come about. The lack of investment in research and development is one of the key elements of this problem (Kaya 2003).

From a developmental perspective, the efforts of highly skilled migrants to invest and transfer knowledge back to Turkey are limited to individual level, and dependent on specific cases (Kaya 2002). With regards to this issue, Unver (2010) observes an increasing level of *reverse* brain drain in Turkey. However, he puts the emphasis not on the convenient conditions that the Turkish state presents for the highly skilled citizens living abroad, but the inadequate living conditions abroad due to economic, but also social problems such as xenophobia and discrimination (Unver 2010). Icduygu (2009), in addition, refers to the establishment of private universities and competitive facilities which attract Turkish scholars, scientists, and university graduates living abroad, back to the country. In conclusion, highly skilled migrants, the so-called "crème de la crème" of Turkey symbolizes the part of the Turkish diaspora, which returns to Turkey only under the condition of adequate economic and social circumstances in Turkey. The respondent from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security suggests that Turkey should put more focus on this issue, and develop strategies which enhance human development opportunities.

4.4 The Turkish diaspora Shapes the Social and Cultural Life in Turkey

Debating on the role of diaspora, we cannot ignore how the Turkish diaspora which keeps its strong contact with Turkey, influences the social and cultural life in Turkey. In the current transnational context, the Turkish citizens living abroad have a strong impact on the economic, social and political spheres in Turkey. As Levitt (1999) explains, Turkish emigrants transfer not only money and goods, but also social remittances (knowledge, values, norms and ideas) to their country of origin. In particular, the existing ties between Turkey and the destination countries

³⁰ See website for more information on the programme:
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/migpractice/migmain.showPractice?p_lang=en&p_practice_id=26

have led to new types of clothing and food consumption, and emergence of new diaspora-based art and music (Soysal, 2009). Moreover, civil society activities bring together the actors of the diaspora with the non-migrant Turkish citizens (Icduygu 2009). Accordingly, we can argue that although family and friends of the migrants in Turkey help migrants to maintain their social and cultural heritage, it is obvious that the Turkish migrants abroad also transfer values, ideas and knowledge to their community, and hence have an impact on the social and cultural life in Turkey.

5. Conclusion

From the early years of emigration till today, Turkey has witnessed considerable changes both in socioeconomic and political domains. In accordance with these changes, the country's style of dealing with its citizens living abroad has evolved. In this paper, firstly, we described in detail institutional level arrangements that Turkey has made in order to better engage its diaspora over the years. Secondly, we discussed how these policies and practices have led to different debates regarding the role of the Turkish diaspora for Turkey.

We have seen that the diaspora's role in the 1960s was mainly to contribute to the country's economic development and welfare. By the time Turkey witnessed economic liberalization, as the political scientist that we have interviewed suggests "*The voice of Turkey began to be stronger because today it is more powerful in economic terms and have better international contacts. Naturally, the country's dialogue with its diaspora has changed*". The analysis that we have made illustrated in which way this change has been realized. Today, for Turkey, the Turkish diaspora is a lobbying power both for internal and external relations of the country. In particular, as the former attaché in the Netherlands affirms "*today Turks living abroad are obviously of great importance for Turkey's future about the European Union*". In short, in political terms, permanent settlement of Turks abroad is seen as an important strategic advantage. We also touched upon the effect of the diaspora on the social and cultural life in Turkey. Finally, "the brain drain" debate was mentioned as highly skilled migrants account for a particular group of the diaspora. To conclude, with this paper, we have seen the diversity of the Turkish diaspora's role and agency, and how the politics and practices of transnational citizenship have an influence on Turkey's history and future.

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- Unver C. (2010), Türkiye’nin Goc Siyasetinin Temel İlkelerine İlişkin Yeni Yaklaşımlar (New Approaches Regarding Turkey’s Migration Politics and their Principles), Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Stratejik Analizler Merkezi: <http://www.turksam.org/tr/a2019.html>

Appendix

List of Useful Websites for Further Information

Consular Services Website Website, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey:
http://www.konsolosluk.gov.tr/Organisations/Organisations_Main.aspx

The Council of Higher Education, Turkey: <http://www.yok.gov.tr/content/view/868/183/lang.tr/>

The Department of Religious Affairs, Turkey Website:
<http://www.diyamet.gov.tr/dinsurasi/sura/default.asp>

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-expatriate-turkish-citizens.en.mfa>

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey Website, Information on Turks abroad:
<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-expatriate-turkish-citizens.en.mfa>

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Turkey, FRAWSGD website:
<http://www.csgb.gov.tr/csgbPortal/diyih.portal?page=genelmudurluk&id=2>

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Turkey Website, Information on Homeland-Advice Bureau: <http://www.csgb.gov.tr/csgbPortal/diyih.portal?page=yurtdanis>

The Ministry of State, Turkey Website: <http://www.devlet.gov.tr/Forms/pYYVVK.aspx>

The Office of Prime Ministry, The General Secretary of the European Union, Turkey Website:
<http://www.abgs.gov.tr/abis/index.php?p=20&l=1>

The Office of Prime Ministry, Turkey Website:
<http://www.basbakanlik.gov.tr/Forms/pOrganizationDetail.aspx>

Turkish Grand National Assembly Website, Commission Report on the Problems of Turks Living Abroad: <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss335m.htm>

Turkish-Islamic Association of Religious Affairs (Diyamet Isleri Turk-Islam Birligi – DITIB) website: <http://www.ditib.de/index.php?lang=en>

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