

## *Labour Migration from Turkey to Western Europe, 1960-1974. A Multidisciplinary Analysis*

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The book investigates the migration process from Turkey to Western Europe during the period of state-initiated 'guestworker' recruitment from 1960 to 1974. Its examination of migration triggers, migration management, and migrant profiles on both sides of the migratory chain aims to critically respond to some prevailing assumptions in the literature, and to fill gaps in the understanding of this particular example of state-sponsored migration.

The study presents itself as a 'multidisciplinary analysis', however, the quantitative data guide the overall analytical approach. It is based on the evaluation of primary and secondary sources which includes data drawn from the German Federal Labour Office, the Turkish Employment Service and the OECD, as well as from a wide range of Turkish, German and Dutch national statistics information. The author considers a number of receiving states, such as Belgium, Austria, Sweden, France and the Netherlands, but places most emphasis on Germany which received the largest number of Turkish nationals during and after this period. The evaluation of statistical and official data across different national and linguistic contexts represents one of the strengths of this book. It provides key comparative insights into a process that was based on bi-national agreements and therefore part of an attempt of bilateral migration management. Here, the author's examination of the Turkish material in particular offers an invaluable contribution to a field that is often dominated by data solely sourced from host countries. At the same time, the strong focus on statistical data limits the analysis to the officially documented cases, in a situation where undocumented migration was substantial. The author's figures are instructive: while 800,000 workers left Turkey as part of the Turkish employment service's (IIBK) recruitment scheme, 500,000 departed outside the official channels during the same historical period. The consequences of this fact are left rather under-addressed.

The analysis focuses on four main themes discussed in four separate chapters: the 'push factors'; the role of the Turkish state in promoting this process; the recruitment policies of the receiving states; and finally the socio-economic circumstances of the migrants themselves. Against what he sees as widespread assumptions in the literature which locate migration pressure in the three factors of 'slow economic growth', 'unemployment' and 'population growth', Akgündüz's study shows that the Turkish economy was growing in the 1960s, and that the majority of the

migrants who initially left were not the stereotypical 'rural poor' but often skilled, employed and from the more affluent, urban areas of Turkey. From the 1950s onwards, migration pressure stemmed not from an underperforming economy but from high economic growth rates, and the challenges that a 'rapid capitalist transformation' (p. 30) posed to Turkey's socio-economic structure. The pressures of a more pronounced capitalist and mechanised mode of production stimulated rural flight to the cities and threatened small-scale peasants, producers and artisans with proletarianisation. At this juncture emigration to Western Europe was seen as a chance to improve the economic *status quo*, and was actively promoted as such by the Turkish state. The instrumental role of the Turkish government is particularly well explained in chapter 3. It documents very comprehensively how the 'exit of labour' (p. 56) was bureaucratically regulated, the monopolist role of the IIBK (Turkish Employment Service) in channelling workers according to foreign demand and national economic objectives, and the specific aspirations for future economic development resulting from the temporary export of labour. The Turkish government hoped that future returnees would impart skills, modern values, and investment capital to their home communities and boost Turkey's economic modernisation and Westernisation. As the author states this idea was still adhered to in the 1970s, as families began to follow the initial migrants to Europe.

The chapter on receiving countries reiterates the well-known facts that Western European countries sought to manage incoming labour according to their economic needs, and that Germany in particular depended on the labour supply of the guestworker system. It provides useful statistical data on migration volume, trans-European distribution and sectors of the economy that were filled with migrant labour. According to the author the advantages of Turkish labour were perceived to be its ready supply when other sources dried up and the opportunity to import a fair number of skilled labourers, but also the relative geographical proximity (people could be transported by train), together with the migrants' 'racial-cultural' (p. 127) characteristics which were deemed more acceptable than those of 'non-Europeans'. This latter point is not developed though.

The final chapter focuses on the migrants themselves and supports some of the earlier chapters. The chapter shows how those who the Turkish government sought to export abroad, namely people from poorer central and eastern regions, were initially reluctant to leave. Rather than government incentives, growing transnational social networks became instrumental for these populations' journeys abroad, particularly once they really began to take off after 1974 and after the politically motivated exits set in. The author rightly points out how social networks shaped individuals' migration incentives and routes, not only outside but also within the recruitment programme, and often circumvented the intentions of official planning.

The book succeeds in offering a comprehensive picture of the significance of Turkish migrant labour for the post-war economies of the major recruiting countries, and of the importance assigned to it by the Turkish authorities. It provides useful reminders of the very recent history of concerted European efforts in propagating, and exploiting the advantages of economic migration

at a time when present-day governments denounce the economic migration of all but elite migrants. The text is clearly structured and regular summaries provide useful pointers for the reader, though it would have benefited from more rigorous language editing. The strength of this study lies in the comparative macro-analysis of a large range of quantitative data, and it undoubtedly provides a very rich source for those studying the 'guestworker' system and for migration scholars more widely. In addition, the historically entrenched socio-economic West-East divide in Turkey clearly runs through this discussion. It seems though that the established official Turkish discourse, which conventionally associates this divide with categories such as developed/undeveloped, modern/backward, progressive/conservative etc., also runs through the text as accepted truth. A more qualitative approach to class, ethnicity, the Turkish state and nationhood (none of which figure as analytical categories in the text) may have given the statistical data more depth, especially since the author also explains that the majority of those from the 'underdeveloped' eastern provinces (many of whom can be assumed to be Kurds and minority Christians) left through unofficial channels.

While this book sets out to discuss the specifics of the guestworker programme linking Turkey and Western Europe, some of its insights would be valuable to consider in examining other migration movements including those to and from Cyprus. Migrations from Turkey to the island as well as Greek and Turkish Cypriot emigrations post-1963 are clearly bound up with the island's history of conflict. At the same time though, it might prove useful to examine how the political factors interacted with socio-economic, labour market and demographic considerations and how Turkey as a sending and receiving state, but also Greece, Britain, Australia and other destination countries sought to further their own geopolitical and economic interests by shaping migration flows to and from Cyprus

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