

This article was downloaded by: [KU Leuven Biomedical Library]

On: 28 September 2010

Access details: Access Details: [subscription number 918011597]

Publisher Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Turkish Studies

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713636933>

The Turkish Community in Austria and Belgium: The Challenge of Integration

Johan Wets^a

^a Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (University of Leuven), Belgium and Katholieke Universiteit Brussel (Catholic University of Brussels), Belgium

To cite this Article Wets, Johan(2006) 'The Turkish Community in Austria and Belgium: The Challenge of Integration', Turkish Studies, 7: 1, 85 – 100

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/14683840500520600

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14683840500520600>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf>

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

The Turkish Community in Austria and Belgium: The Challenge of Integration

JOHAN WETS

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (University of Leuven), Belgium and Katholieke Universiteit Brussel (Catholic University of Brussels), Belgium

ABSTRACT *The Turkish migrant community is in many European countries one of the largest minority groups. Although the Turks have lived for many decades in different European countries, they remain rather marginalized in the host societies. This study looks into the socio-economic position of the Turkish population in Austria and Belgium, two relatively small countries. Although there are many differences and similarities between both countries and although many success stories can be found on an individual level, the main conclusion that can be drawn in this contribution is that many Turkish immigrants fail to integrate and/or to find their position in their host societies.*

Introduction

Turkish migrant workers make up a significant proportion of the immigrant population of Austria and Belgium. The first arrivals of Turkish migrant workers in these countries was part of the wave of Turkish immigration that began in the early 1960s in response to a labor shortage in the Federal Republic of Germany, which signed a bilateral agreement with Turkey in October 1961, regulating the short-term immigration of Turkish workers. The economic situation in many other European countries was similar to the German one and shortly after Austria (1964), Belgium (1964), and other European countries (Netherlands, France, Sweden and Switzerland) signed bilateral agreements with Turkey. The immigration that had been meant to be temporary had become long term. The 40th anniversary of the bilateral agreement has been celebrated recently. Turkish immigrants have been part of the scene in various European countries for many years, but does this mean that they fully participate in society? Are they well integrated? This study will try to answer these questions.

Austria and Belgium have a different history and a different geopolitical position. The context in both countries is, however, fairly similar. Austria and Belgium are both highly developed “corporatist welfare states.” Together with the other countries of the so-called “continental regime type,” France, Germany and Luxembourg, they have well-developed social security schemes, but not as universalistic as

Correspondence Address: Johan Wets, K. U. Leuven, HIVA, Parkstraat 47, B-3000 Leuven, Belgium.
Email: johan.wets@hiva.kuleuven.ac.be

in the Nordic countries. In general, there is a strong relationship between previous occupations and entitlement to provisions, and generous income protection for families with children. Employees are well protected against dismissal. The number of special schemes for occupational groups is high, and there is extensive collective coverage for civil servants. Pension benefits in the continental regime are slightly above the European average.¹ The continental welfare system is an expensive system, with a broad coverage that might attract immigrants, and consequently bring about anti-immigrant sentiments. On the other hand, the system might need immigrant labor power to keep it turning in the future.

Austria and Belgium continue to deny that they are officially immigration countries, but in fact the migrant community has gained access to the welfare system and has become very much settled. This has led in both countries, as in many other European countries, to political reaction. Right-wing, anti-immigrant parties are a major force in both countries. The Austrian *FPÖ (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs)* and the Flemish *Vlaams Belang*² are both right-wing parties. While the FPÖ is more of a populist party, and the Vlaams Belang is more a one-issue anti-immigrant party,³ and the profile of the electorate voting for both parties might differ, nevertheless, both parties campaign against immigration. They oppose the entry of new immigrants and demand that settled immigrants must assimilate or leave. These ideas and the political context are far from unique. Similar anti-immigrant parties are on the rise in countries such as Denmark, France, Italy and Switzerland. Similar developments are observed even in countries that traditionally held a more tolerant attitude, such as the Netherlands.

The position of the Turkish population in West European countries is important in the discussion of problems associated with the integration of immigrants since it represents a large share of the (non-EU) foreigners living in these countries, including in Austria and Belgium. The largest groups of non-EU foreigners in Austria are the nationals of the former Yugoslavia and Turkey. The two main non-EU nationalities in Belgium are Moroccans and Turks. In both countries, Turks are often presented as the least integrated group of immigrants.

One of the first questions that arise when addressing the issue of how well Turkish migrants are integrated within their guest societies is what is meant by integration. Integration can be defined as a continuous long-term two-way process. The two-way process implies the involvement of the immigrant (the individuals, institutions and organizations) and individuals, institutions and organizations of the receiving society. Successful integration can be determined by how well migrants participate in the social, economic and political life of the host community. Nonetheless, there is no generally accepted theory of integration. Research approaches differ both between and within disciplines. An often used distinction is the one between social integration, cultural integration and structural integration.⁴ *Social integration* refers to the degree of interaction between immigrant and native population groups. The policy concern here is about segregation versus mixing. *Cultural integration* relates to the degree to which various population groups share the same norms, values and preferences. Examples given here are, for

instance, ideas and attitudes towards gender equality or on the role of religion in the organization of society. *Structural integration* implies here that immigrants and their descendants have equal access to the major institutions of society, such as education, the labor and housing markets, the political system, health care services, and so on. The obvious policy goal here is the elimination of differences between immigrant and native population groups.⁵

The purpose of this contribution is to examine some of the challenges associated with the structural integration of Turkish immigrants in both countries. The primary focus will be on integration into the labor market and in the area of education. Other important issues like access to health care and housing will not be covered. The issue of political participation of Turkish immigrants in Belgium is scrutinized by Dirk Jacobs, Marc Swyngedouw and Karen Phalet, while Christiane Timmerman examines the issue of gender in the context of the integration of Turkish immigrants in Belgium elsewhere in this volume.

Turkish Immigrants and the Challenges of Integration in Austria

Austria, a country with a population of eight million, has experienced over the last two centuries various forms of international migration: immigration, emigration and transit migration, the latter due to the geopolitical position of the country. In the postwar period there were four waves of immigration in the form of refugees to Austria. These flows occurred as a result of events stemming from Soviet dominance and repression in Eastern European countries. These flows consisted of Hungarians (1956), Czechs (1968), Poles (1981) and Jews from the Soviet Union. Subsequent to the instability and violence after the collapse of the Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia, Austria also experienced a significant flow of refugees into the country in the first half of the 1990s. Additionally, there were Turkish nationals who sought asylum in Austria in the 1980s and 1990s.

However, there was also significant economically motivated immigration into Austria. The economic situation of Austria in the early 1960s was of almost full employment and there was need for extra manpower. From the beginning of the 1960s until the mid-1970s this led to the recruitment of guest workers, mainly from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia, to meet the employment demands of a growing economy. Originally, the goal of most of these “guest workers” was to be employed abroad and to save enough money to take back home. By the early 1970s, it became clear that the presence of the Turkish community changed from temporary to permanent. The reaction to the oil crisis of 1973 was similar in most western countries: to stop further immigration, to encourage those who had arrived previously to return home and to require from those who stay to assimilate into the host society. The Yugoslavs on the whole opted to return home. The Turks chose to stay, which subsequently led to an increase in family reunification. The proportion of Turkish residents in Austria grew from 7.7 percent of all foreigners in 1971 to 22.2 percent in 2001 or 160,000 Turkish citizens.⁶ An economic boom in the late 1980s created renewed labor shortages in some sectors, following which employers looked to

the traditional sources of labor from South-Eastern Europe to fill these slots. The number of Yugoslavs residing in Austria rose due to the crisis and the war in Yugoslavia. In 1990, Austria's policymakers also regularized the employment status of 29,100 foreigners hitherto illegally employed. The number of non-nationals in Austria doubled from 344,000 in 1988 to 690,000 in 1993. The share of foreign workers of all employed people rose from 5.4 percent to 9.1 percent.⁷

Austria's diverse immigrant population has become even more so in recent years. According to the 2001 census, of Austria's eight million inhabitants more than 730,000 (or 9.1 percent) were foreign residents, with 62.8 percent of them coming from the successor states of the former Yugoslavia and from Turkey. Between 1985 and 2001, over 254,000 foreigners were naturalized. Austria's proportion of foreign-born residents in 2001 was even higher than that of the United States, reaching a level of 12.5 percent.⁸

Yet Austria does not consider itself a traditional country of immigration. This is clearly reflected by recent immigration policies. Widespread public discontent over levels of immigration in the early 1990s led to a curtailment of the traditional labor migration and family reunification programs, supporting the official line that Austria is not a traditional country of immigration. On the other hand, this does not mean that Austria wishes to close all possibilities for entering the country legally. The country's accession to the European Union (EU) and the joining of the Schengen Agreement has brought more open borders in a sense that there is free circulation between Schengen countries.⁹ Furthermore, there are quotas for foreign seasonal workers, which enabled the admittance of thousands of temporary workers. Austria has a long tradition of seasonal labor to meet companies' exceptional short-term demand for labor, especially in typically seasonal branches such as tourism and agriculture. The legal status of foreign seasonal workers differs considerably from that of all other resident or foreign workers in Austria. Their employment and residence permits are limited in time, they are prohibited from bringing their family to Austria and their residence permit is linked to their contract with a single employer, to whom they are bound: they are prohibited from moving freely on the labor market and finding another employer. When the employment term is up, the foreign worker must subsequently leave the country, since termination of employment also means the loss of residence permit. These foreign seasonal workers are not looked upon as immigrants but as part of an "international labor supply system" that can be utilized without having to maintain welfare and integration standards in regard to these foreign workers. The foreign workers have to pay unemployment insurance contributions, but are not entitled to unemployment allowances. In recent years, seasonal labor has been playing an increasingly important part in Austria's labor market, since the government has pursued a generous quota policy for foreign seasonal workers and has opened access to this kind of employment to all sectors.¹⁰

Critics have argued that this regulation may initiate a new "guest-worker regime," with thousands of foreign workers coming into Austria—even if interrupted by short periods of absence—for whom all legal paths to consolidate residency are closed. The history of the guest-worker regime in Austria has been similar to that of

many other non-immigration countries of Europe: It is a system where temporary migration has a tendency to become permanent. This has had, of course, long-run repercussions in terms of the size and composition of the immigrant population in Austria. This naturally will continue to keep the issue of integration of especially non-EU immigrants high up on the agenda of Austrian policymaking and politics.

How these conflicting policies are to be reconciled remains an unanswered question.¹¹ The immigrant himself/herself has become involved directly through the so-called 2002 “Integration Contract” (*Integrationsvertrag*), which is a recent political measure of Austrian integration policy. It is, according to Böse and others, a one-sided obligation on the part of the immigrants, who have to deliver specified evidence of being “integrated” as defined in the regulations, such as passing a German-language proficiency exam. In case of failure the immigrants can lose their residency permits.¹²

Due to Austria’s conservative political culture and the special form of its postwar nation-state building, the integration and naturalization of these immigrants and their descendants is, according to Fabian Georgi, even more problematic than in most of the other European countries.¹³ The Austrian nation-building process stems from that of the Austro-Hungarian period, contending on the one hand with a heterogeneous population and on the other hand with the formation of German nationalism. Austria’s assimilation or “nationalization” policy towards cultural minorities was a clear and conscious strategy implemented by the ruling elite of the time. This policy has led to an almost complete assimilation of most of the non-German groups in the Republic of Austria by the mid-twentieth century. The Austrian conception of the integration of migrant communities is a continuation of the strategy adopted towards the national minorities: integration is understood as a form of assimilation. According to Georgi, there is wide-ranging social and political exclusion in comparison with other Western European countries towards migrants. Moreover, the legal situation concerning political rights, security of residence and naturalization is one of the most restrictive in Europe.¹⁴

This situation is reflected in the new Naturalization Act that was passed in 1998, which retained the principle of *jus sanguinis*¹⁵ and a regular waiting period of ten years for naturalization. According to the new law, the individual immigrant who wishes to acquire Austrian nationality has to show that he or she is integrated into Austrian society and has to give proof that he or she is economically self-sufficient—that is, not in need of social assistance—and sufficiently proficient in German. Minor criminal offences now constitute reasons for denial of citizenship.¹⁶ A migrant may now acquire citizenship based on a legal claim after a period of 15 years on grounds of good integration. Still, in the majority of cases, Austrian citizenship is awarded to people without a legal claim on a discretionary basis after 10 years of continuous residence.¹⁷ Since 1998, the number of naturalizations has continued to increase from 17,786 in 1998 (of whom 5,683 were Turks) to 31,731 in 2001 (of whom almost one-third were Turks). According to the Essen-based Center for Studies on Turkey, 53 percent of Turks living in Austria are naturalized.¹⁸ This is largely due to demographic reasons: most migrants who entered Austria in

the period of renewed immigration between 1988 and 1993 are now eligible for citizenship on a discretionary basis.¹⁹ The Austrian Labor Force survey,²⁰ which provides information on both place of birth and citizenship of individuals surveyed, shows that around 40,000 Austrians have their place of birth in Turkey. Adding these people to the number of Turkish citizens residing in Austria gives a total of 200,000 Turks living in the country.²¹

Immigration policy until 1987 was seen purely as a function of labor-market policy and was mainly under the responsibility of the Ministry for Social Affairs. The Ministry of the Interior, after having played only a minor role in the past, joined the former as an actor from 1991 onwards, when immigration policy was influenced by factors other than solely the labor market policy.²² The political landscape had changed in Austria and immigration issues began to emerge on the political agenda. At the beginning of the 1990s, the considerable influx of immigrants and the rising unemployment rates caused heated discussions in the media and in the political arena about immigration into Austria.

At first, the legal framework that regulated residence and labor-market access for non-Austrians was not altered (apart from some minor changes to the existing regulations). The approach to “guest-worker” schemes was maintained. A national quota system (*Bundeshöchstzahl*) was introduced for work permits. The yearly-fixed quotas varied from 8 percent to 10 percent of the total workforce. However, the political atmosphere eventually led to more restrictive regulations concerning labor market access and immigration which were modified several times in recent years.²³ In 2002, for instance, the immigration quota for less skilled labor was abolished completely, with the result that poorly qualified “third-country nationals” seeking to enter the Austrian labor market have had little chance of success since then. The government is expected to maintain its restrictive policy line regarding immigration.

The Foreigners’ Employment Act (*Ausländerbeschäftigungsgesetz*) from 1975 states that after eight years of permanent employment a foreigner can obtain the so-called “Befreiungsschein” (exemption document)—limited to two years, but renewable—which allows the employee to change employer.²⁴ The Foreigners’ Employment Act remains one of the primary control mechanisms of foreign employment. This type of regulation has been an important factor in causing ethnic segmentation of the labor market, curtailing the integration of immigrants in general. Also, as migrant workers cannot change jobs as a rule, they become heavily dependent on their employers and are open to abuse or exploitation.²⁵ These developments have put the migrant population in Austria in an uncertain position. The regulations were adapted in 1997. In that year, the new Aliens Act merged two previous Acts, the 1992 Aliens Act and the 1993 Residence Act, into a single law aiming at the promotion of integration of aliens already present in Austria. The 1992 Aliens Act tightened up regulations on the entry and residence of foreigners and the 1993 Residence Act, established *contingents* for different categories of migrants. In contrast to the quota used for the issuing of work permits, the contingents for residence permits defined the absolute number of permits that would be issued in any single year.²⁶ A major feature of this 1997 reform included an improvement of the

legal position of immigrants residing in Austria for at least eight years and children born in Austria, by removing the possibility of expulsion in their case. The Act weakened, however, the position of immigrants residing in Austria for less than eight years, for whom expulsions have become a more realistic threat. To be in employment and obtain sufficient income is still a vital requirement for non-Austrian citizens. Extended periods of unemployment can cost immigrants the legal base of their stay.²⁷ These factors constitute additional challenges to ensuring a better integration of immigrants.

In January 2000, the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ), which ran an anti-immigrant campaign, formed a coalition government with the People's Party (ÖVP). In July 2002, parliament adopted major amendments to the Aliens Act and the Asylum Law. The reforms introduced new regulations in three important areas. Jandl and Kraler summarize them as follows.²⁸ First, labor immigration has been restricted mainly to key personnel, with a minimum wage requirement of around 2,000 per month for prospective migrants. Second, and in stark contrast to the first category of migrants, the employment of seasonal workers will be greatly facilitated by allowing such laborers in areas outside agriculture and tourism and extending the employment period to up to one year. Third, all new immigrants from non-EU third countries (plus those who have been living in Austria since 1998) are required to attend "integration courses" consisting mainly of language instruction and a basic introduction to the law, history and politics of Austria. Non-participation will lead to sanctions, both financial and legal, for instance the denial of more secure residence titles. The ultimate fate of non-compliant foreigners could be expulsion from Austria.

Another major challenge that Turkish immigrants face in respect of structural integration is in the area of education. Schooling is compulsory in Austria for all children between the ages of 6 and 15, regardless of their nationality and whether they have a residence permit or not. The situation of children with an immigrant background is marked in the Austrian education system by inequality. The segregation of migrant children in the education system is to a large extent due to the social position of the parents. The first Turkish "guest workers" had a rural background and a fairly low level of education. These unfavorable conditions were to a large extent inherited by the following generations. Three-quarters of the Turkish migrant population have attained only primary education. Another 15 percent has completed an apprenticeship. In terms of education, no other migrant group has fared as poorly as the Turks.²⁹

A direct effect of the low educational qualifications is a poor position in the labor market. The Turkish laborers work mainly as blue-collar workers, earning less than their Austrian counterparts. They are employed as unskilled or semi-skilled workers. Only a minority is employed as white-collar workers. Turkish laborers are overrepresented in a number of sectors of the Austrian labor market. Their niches are mainly industry and the service sectors. Employment in the manufacturing industries has decreased during the last few decades while the service sector showed a rising share of employment.³⁰ The sectors with the largest shares of immigrant workers are construction, catering, and cleaning, which are also the sectors with the

highest concentration of unskilled labor and very limited chances for upward mobility.³¹ The first-generation migrants worked in these “ethnic niches,” but so did a large part of the second generation. The next generations are not significantly better educated than the generation of their parents, and thus take up similar positions in the labor market. A glance at the statistics presented in the Austrian Labor Force Survey shows that Turks with an Austrian nationality do only slightly better than Turkish nationals working in Austria. According to the same Labor Force survey, Turks are significantly less often self-employed than the Austrian population or other migrants. Compared to the 12.5 percent of self-employed among the Austrian population and 7.6 percent among the (non-Turkish) migrant population, only 1.4 percent of the Turkish residents are self-employed. According to the survey, Turks with an Austrian nationality fare almost as well as the group called “other foreigners.” This is due to the legislation: A basic requirement for obtaining a trade license is to be an Austrian or to have an Austrian partner.³² Ethnic entrepreneurs can be found in the areas of Vienna with a high concentration of foreigners.

Male Turks have a higher employment rate than the average Austrian (male) population. The Turkish women, however, are less present on the labor market. As extended periods of unemployment can cost immigrants the legal base of their stay, there is more pressure on foreign workers to find a new job as soon as possible than there is for unemployed Austrians. Therefore they are much more likely to accept even low-paid or low-quality jobs. This tends to enforce the segmentation of the labor market. The economic and political pressure on immigrants leads to a situation in which, contrary to many other countries, activity rates for foreign women and men are considerably higher than those of Austrians.³³ Also the average unemployment rate of immigrants in Austria exceeds the overall unemployment rate only by 1–2 percent.³⁴

Georgi observes that since the beginning of the twentieth century, assimilation has been the major strategy for integrating cultural and linguistic minorities in Austria. He describes Austria as an apparently homogeneous society that still experiences conflict with and discrimination against its “old minority groups”³⁵ while “new” immigrant minorities (mainly Turks and people from the former Yugoslavia), pose new problems and challenges. Georgi concludes that on the one hand new minorities still experience pressure to assimilate and that on the other hand, as a result of Austrian society’s hostility towards them, they nevertheless experience structural social segregation and political exclusion.³⁶ As a result, these groups, including the Turks, remain marginalized and segregated, and even the third-generation descendants of the former guest workers in Austria tend to have higher unemployment rates, lower wages, less educational success and poorer housing conditions than that of the Austrian host society.³⁷

Turkish Immigrants and the Challenges of Integration in Belgium

Belgium, a country with a population of 10 million, is home to many immigrants and asylum seekers. Immigration into Belgium was and is mainly European due to

its strong attraction for many EU citizens, especially the French and the Dutch. Approximately 63 percent of foreigners in Belgium are EU nationals. Non-EU immigration to Belgium began first with Southern European migrants and later with Moroccans and Turks who were recruited in the 1960s to work in the coal mines. The Belgian government signed up several bilateral agreements to bring in foreign labor to compensate for the declining domestic workforce. These agreements were first signed with Italy in 1946, followed by Spain in 1956, Greece in 1957, Morocco and Turkey in 1964, Tunisia in 1969, Algeria in 1970, and Yugoslavia in 1970. The Moroccan and Turkish communities are the most numerous migrant communities among non-EU citizens. More than 8.8 percent of Belgium's population is of foreign origin. However, if one considers the total number of persons who at birth did not have Belgian nationality, it is found that the population of foreign origin is much higher, reaching almost 13 percent of the Belgian population. Thirty-six percent of the 202,786 persons who received Belgian nationality between 1995 and 2000 were Moroccans; 24 percent of them had a Turkish background and 6 percent were Italian.³⁸

Turkish migrants mainly originate from a cluster of central Anatolian provinces. Nearly 60 percent of first-generation Turkish migrants living in Belgium were born in the countryside or in a small village.³⁹ According to data on migrants from the State Institute of Statistics in Ankara, the three provinces that provided the most Turkish immigrants are Afyon, Eskisehir and Kayseri. Almost one-third of the Turkish immigrants in Belgium originate from Afyon, in particular Emirdağ.⁴⁰ Contrary to some other immigrant groups, Turks settled just about everywhere and are distributed equally over the urban areas of the country, in Brussels and in Antwerp, but especially in Ghent and Limburg. The Turkish community in Belgium is composed of persons of diverse ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds, including Turks of Kurdish origin, Christians, Sunnis, and Alevis.

Economic recession and the crisis that struck the coal industry (leading to increased unemployment), in the early 1970s, led to a restrictive migration policy and left many of the guest workers who were already in the country unemployed. It was difficult for the Turkish miners to adapt to the labor market after the mines closed down for they were unable to speak Flemish or French. However, despite the fact that work opportunities ceased to exist and there seemed to be no future prospects due to the new restrictive policy, immigration was not brought to a halt. The Moroccans and Turks stayed in the country and, although there was a "migration stop" for labor migration, new immigrants from Morocco and Turkey kept on entering the country through the process of family reunification and family formation.

In the mid-1980s, the Belgian government accepted the fact that the planned temporary migration seemed to have a more permanent character and began to develop policies to encourage immigrants to settle in the country and to integrate into society. The law on the entrance, residence, settlement, and return of foreigners, which is still in force, was passed in December 1980. This law provided more legal security regarding residence and it introduced a legal process for foreigners to contest measures questioning the legality of their stay. In 1981 an anti-racism law

was passed. At that time, the political class still refused to grant voting rights at the local level to foreigners.⁴¹

In the mid-1980s the country suffered from a high and persistent level of unemployment. The immigrant population became easy scapegoats. The government implemented, with not too much success, a policy to encourage immigrants to return home. Simultaneously, an integration policy was established. In 1984, the Nationality Code, which was almost 50 years old, was replaced by a new one. The new Nationality Code introduced the principle of *jus soli*⁴² and simplified the procedure for naturalization. Children born on Belgian soil to foreign parents who themselves were born in Belgium became Belgian citizens. Although simplified, the naturalization process still required individuals to demonstrate a “desire to integrate” measured arbitrarily by the administration. The right to political participation of the migrant communities was heavily debated. The government decided not to grant political rights, but to relax the conditions for acquiring Belgian nationality. This had a significant impact during this period. The number of applications more than doubled the year after the adoption of the new law. The Nationality Code was revised again and passed in its new form on March 1, 2000. Since then, any foreigner legally residing for at least seven years in Belgium who has a permanent residence permit can become Belgian with a simple declaration without a check on his or her “desire to integrate.” Between 1990 and 2002, over 400,000 foreigners have become Belgians under this provision.⁴³

The so-called “new Belgians”—foreigners who acquired Belgian citizenship—participated in all social activities and could join political parties. Since 1994, many cities and regions have elected “new Belgians” to political office, at the local, regional, as well as national level. Some even hold posts in executive functions, thus giving evidence of their integration into Belgian society. While successful by many accounts, the Belgian government’s policies for integrating immigrants, like those of neighboring countries, have been accompanied by restrictive policies on newcomers.⁴⁴

The impressive electoral success of the *Vlaams Blok* in the city of Antwerp in the 1989 elections (the first in a series of electoral victories) led to the creation of a government service that would monitor the position of the immigrant population called the Royal Commissioner for the Policy on Immigrants. This task has been taken up since 1990 by the successor organization, the Center for Equal Opportunities and the Fight against Racism.

Of the first wave of Turkish immigrants, 30 percent were illiterate. The profile is slowly changing. The number of Turkish students has doubled since the 1970s. Technical and vocational schools are not popular among Belgian students: approximately 10 percent attend these schools. In comparison, 70 percent of Turkish students prefer to attend technical and vocational schools. Second-generation students show a stronger preference for these schools and they often leave after completing higher secondary education.⁴⁵ Data on the qualifications of newcomers are hard to find and are often incomplete, but ongoing research shows that the Turkish newcomers in Flanders are still lower skilled than the people arriving from other countries.⁴⁶

Education among the second generation, especially compared to other groups, is still quite limited and many of them have turned to trade.⁴⁷ The third generation deviates from the previous ones with a higher rate of university graduates. The numbers of Turkish students who attend university have increased over the decades even if in real terms their numbers still remain low in comparison to natives and other immigrant youth. Approximately 40 percent of them are female. Even though they are concentrated in Flemish regions, success rates are higher in French-speaking universities. Nearly half of the Turkish females who study at this level prefer to study medicine while the male population who reach this level prefer economics, international trade, political science, and the like. Seventy percent of those who begin university are able to graduate.⁴⁸

One reason for the poor level of education among Turkish migrants is the fact that the children do not master the language of education sufficiently. Preschool attendance is still quite low amongst Turkish children, and this directly affects school performance later on. Children are not able to grasp the language or socialize with the Belgian children, thus causing frustration and learning problems once they start primary school. However, the situation seems to be changing in the third generation. The role education plays in the integration process is further elaborated in the piece by Veysel Özcan and Janina Söhn, elsewhere in this volume.

The direct consequence of poor schooling is the lack of vocational qualifications. Europe's Turks suffer greatly from this. As a result, the majority of Europe's working Turks have insecure low-paid unskilled jobs. In most cases the children follow in their parents' footsteps. The number of young Turks who have university degrees is rather small even if it is growing. These socio-professional characteristics marginalize the Turkish community on the labor market.⁴⁹ Low educational qualifications result in a poor position in the labor market. Turkish immigrants in Belgium are more likely than any other group to be blue-collar workers, earning less than the Belgians or other migrant groups.⁵⁰ They are mainly situated in industry and the service sector, and are heavily represented in agriculture and horticulture, metallurgy and the waste processing industry. Contrary to the Austrian situation, male Turks have a much lower employment rate than the male Belgian population. Also Turkish women are less active in the labor market.⁵¹ And yet research by Martens and others found that Turks with a Belgian nationality do slightly better than Turkish nationals working in Belgium.⁵²

The first-generation unskilled labor force was relatively less affected by unemployment or the problems it incurred. Nevertheless, the second generation was affected by the Belgian market's multiple crises since the 1970s. Hence, they experience higher unemployment rates.⁵³ In the year 2000, nearly half of the active Turks living in the Walloon region were unemployed. In the Flemish region, Turks' unemployment was only 25 percent. It reached 35 percent in Brussels. Turkish women account for 40 percent of the unemployed Turkish population.⁵⁴

The average unemployment rate of Turks in Belgium is much higher than the overall unemployment rate. An analysis of some labor market data for 2003 in Flanders illustrates the poor position of the Turkish population in the labor market.

The Turkish population represents only 0.5 percent of the working population in Flanders, but represents 1.9 percent of the unemployed. The overall unemployment rate was 8 percent. For people with a Belgian nationality it was 7 percent, for non-Belgians 15 percent, for the Moroccan population it was 27 percent and for the Turkish population it was 29 percent.⁵⁵ The pressure of unemployment and the increasing difficulty of getting work have played a critical role in the initiative taken by some immigrants to set up their own businesses. The number of these businesses has doubled in the last 25 years. The preferred businesses are grocery stores, fruit and vegetable stores, bakeries, “doner” takeaway shops, restaurants and cafes. These account for 75 percent of preferred businesses,⁵⁶ in which sector Turkish immigrants are heavily represented.

Conclusion

Austria and Belgium are relatively small countries. A significant proportion of the population residing in both countries consists of immigrants from non-EU countries. Both countries have similar histories of (recent) immigration. In the 1960s and 1970s, guest workers were encouraged to come and settle temporarily. However, the economic downturn that followed the oil crisis in 1973 accompanied by major structural changes in each economy led to the decision to stop the recruitment of labor from abroad. However, guest workers not only stayed on and became immigrants, but immigration has continued through family reunification. Immigrants of both countries have difficulties integrating into the labor market and lag significantly behind the host society in respect of educational performance, which in turn aggravates their employment situation. The difficulties that immigrants face regarding integration have played a critical role in fueling anti-immigrant feelings. The rise of the Right in the domestic politics of both countries impacted on the evolution of immigration policies in each country in respect of employment and especially citizenship rights. Often these policies have caused the challenges of integration that immigrants face to become even greater.

On the labor market, Turkish migrants fare worse than the other migrant communities, both in Austria and Belgium. There are, however, some remarkable differences between the countries regarding unemployment figures. The unemployment rate is much higher in Belgium than in Austria. In Belgium, foreigners in general and Turks in particular are much more frequently unemployed than the Belgians. In comparison, the unemployment rate of foreigners in Austria is only slightly higher than the unemployment rate of the Austrians. The employment rate of the foreigners in Austria is higher than that of the Austrians. The situation in Belgium is the opposite: here, the Turkish population participates less in the labor market than the Belgium population.

Austria sanctions unemployment. An extended period of unemployment can cost immigrants the legal base of their stay. This is not the case in Belgium, where there is no limit to the duration of unemployment benefits for breadwinners and single persons. There is no link between any benefit entitlement and the right to stay in the

country. Belgian unemployment insurance leads to what is called the unemployment trap, since it discourages the labor force from re-entering the labor market. This is one of the factors accounting for the high unemployment rate of the Turkish population in Belgium.

The Turkish population in Austria and Belgium emigrated from Turkey around the same period in history. Forty years later, the socio-economic position of the Turkish migrants in both countries is very similar. The Turkish men, as well as Turkish women, have a low level of education, even when compared with other migrant groups. This is a central factor that leads to a poor labor market position. They are often unemployed or occupy positions in the least favorable sectors and earning less than other laborers. The second generation generally has not done much better than their parents. Turks who naturalized and acquired the nationality of the host country occupy apparently slightly better positions, but it is hard to prove any causality.

Another difference between the countries is their approach to the acquisition of citizenship. Naturalization is difficult to achieve in Austria, even for children of the third generation. The Austrian legislation is based on the principle of *jus sanguinis*; in comparison, the new Belgian Nationality Code introduced the principle of *jus soli* and simplified the procedure for naturalization. The naturalization process is a relatively simple administrative process, open to a large group of foreigners. Acquiring the nationality of the country of residence improves the legal situation of the immigrants. For instance, foreigners enjoy social and civil rights, although no political rights. This is, in the Belgian case, the reason why foreigners remain excluded from national and regional elections. The logic behind it is that if one wishes to integrate and to participate actively in political life, one can easily apply for Belgian citizenship.

If *structural integration* implies that immigrants and their descendants have equal access to the major institutions of society, among which are education and the labor market, it can be concluded that the integration of the Turkish population was not a complete success story, either in Austria or in Belgium. Do these findings imply the unmitigated failure of the Austrian and Belgian integration policy? To answer this question, it is useful to go back to the question raised in the introduction: *how can we define integration*. Should we rely on the definition given today or on the definition society used one, two, three or four decades ago? What sort of indicators can measure successful integration? And which sorts of policy measures introduced in different countries have been successful? Why, for which groups and in what domain?

There is a need for further research to answer these questions and question *why*? Why do many *Turkish* immigrants fail to integrate? To answer this, it will be necessary to go beyond the structural elements of integration and also look at social and cultural integration. Structural elements like the integration of immigrants into the labor market are relatively easy to measure and compare. But the other aspects of integration and especially their interplay with structural integration should not be overlooked. Social integration, the level of social interaction between immigrants or

ethnic minorities and the wider society is crucial, as well as cultural integration, the degree of identification with various norms and values of the host country. These dimensions of integration are clearly more difficult to measure than labor market participation and school enrollment.

Regardless of the differences and similarities between the countries studied and the particularities within each country, it can be stated as a general conclusion that both countries—like many other European countries—still have to learn how to handle immigration and how to deal with the question of citizenship. A better integration of the migrant population, however it is defined, can only be achieved within a society that tolerates and respects all groups it is composed of, whatever their ethnic origin, cultural background or religious affiliation. The receiving countries have to offer the structural setting that allows newcomers to find their place in the host society. But integration is a *two-way process* that also implies the involvement of the migrant population and their descendants. Integration is not a matter of adaptation or assimilation, but a matter of respect, mutual acceptance and participation. This also means the willingness of immigrants to accept responsibility for this process, participate actively and take up their roles and responsibilities in a permanent dialogue.

It remains to be seen how it would be possible to break out from the vicious circle of weak immigrant integration, the rise of anti-immigrant feelings and adoption of legislation that is discriminatory against immigrants and immigration, and actually succeed in initiating an integration process that is actually and genuinely two-way.

Acknowledgment

With thanks to Rana Çakırerk.

Notes

1. Arjan Soede, Cok Vrooman, Pier Marco Ferraresi and Giovanna Segre, *Unequal Welfare States: Distributive Consequences of Population Ageing in Six European Countries* (The Hague: Social and Cultural Planning Office, June 2004).
2. *Vlaams Belang* was previously called *Vlaams Blok*, but the party changed its name after a conviction for racism of three associations linked to the *Vlaams Blok*.
3. Yves De Weerd, Hans De Witte, Patrizia Catellani and Patrizia Milesi, *Turning Right? Socio-Economic Changes and the Receptiveness of European Workers to Extreme Right. Report on the Survey Analysis and Results* (Leuven: HIVA, 2004).
4. See for instance Jeannette Schoorl, "Information Needs on Stocks of Migrants for Research on Integration," Paper submitted at the UNECE/Eurostat Seminar on "Migration Statistics," Geneva, March 21–23, 2005.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Heinz Fassmann, "Social Position and Social Mobility of Turkish Immigrants in Austria," Paper presented at the workshop on "Integration of Turkish Immigrants in Austria, France, Holland and Germany," Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, February 27–28, 2004.
7. Michael Jandl and Albert Kraler, "Austria: A Country of Immigration?" *Migration Information*, available at <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=105>, 2003.

8. Ibid.
9. The Schengen countries are the EU-15 countries minus the UK and Ireland. On March 25, 2001, Norway joined the treaty of Schengen.
10. Georg Adam, "Controversy Over Quota for Foreign Seasonal Workers," *European Industrial Relations Observatory On-Line*, 2004, available at <http://www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int/about/2004/03/feature/at0403202f.html>.
11. Ibid.
12. Martina Böse, Regina Haberfellner and Ayhan Koldaş, *Mapping Minorities and their Media: The National Context—Austria*, Centre for Social Innovation, available online at <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/EMTEL/Minorities/papers/austriareport.pdf>, 2001.
13. Fabian Georgi, "Nation-State Building and Cultural Diversity in Austria," in Jochen Blaschke (ed.), *Nation-State Building Process and Cultural Diversity*, European Migration Centre, http://www.emz-berlin.de/projekte_e/pj50_pdf/Austria.pdf, 2004. Fabian Georgi discusses in this article the history and the specific elements of the Austrian nation-state building process and gives an overview of the tradition and practice of Austrian minority politics, with a focus on the strategy of assimilation for the integration of cultural and linguistic minorities and the continuity of this paradigm when dealing with new immigrants.
14. Ibid., p.22.
15. *Jus sanguinis* ("right of blood") is the Latin concept determining that a child's citizenship is determined by that of his or her parents. This is in contrast to *Jus soli* ("right of the territory" or "right of soil"), which refers to rights which are acquired as a result of one's place of birth.
16. Jandl and Kraler (2003).
17. More information about obtaining citizenship based on a legal claim or on discretionary grounds can be found at <http://www.wien.gv.at/english/citizenship>.
18. *The European Turks: Gross Domestic Product, Working Population, Entrepreneurs and Household Data* (Essen: Centre for Studies on Turkey, 2003), available at <http://www.tusiad.org/haberler/basin/ab/9.pdf>.
19. Ibid.
20. *Austrian Labour Force Survey*, quoted in Fassmann (2004).
21. Fassmann (2004).
22. August Gächter, *Migrants and Ethnic Minorities on the Margins: Report for Austria 2001*, cited in Böse, Haberfellner and Koldas (2001); Karin König and Bernhard Perchinig, "Austrian Country Report on Immigration Management," in Jan Niessen, Yongmi Schibel and Raphaële Magoni (eds.), *EU and US Approaches to the Management of Immigration* (Brussels: MPG, 2003).
23. Böse, Haberfellner and Koldas (2001).
24. Rainer Bauböck, "Migrationspolitik" [Migration Policy], in Herbert Dachs *et al.* (eds.), *Handbuch des politischen Systems Österreichs. Die zweite Republik* [Manual on the Austrian Political System. The Second Republic] (Wien: Manz, 1997).
25. August Gächter, "Integration und Migration" [Integration and Migration], *SWS-Rundschau*, Vol.35, No.4 (1995), pp. 435–8.
26. Jandl and Kraler (2003).
27. König and Perchinig (2003).
28. Jandl and Kraler (2003).
29. Fassman (2004).
30. Böse, Haberfellner and Koldas (2001).
31. Heinz Fassmann, *Arbeitsmarktsegmentation und Berufslaufbahnen. Ein Beitrag zur Arbeitsmarktgeographie Österreichs* [Labor Market Segmentation and Job Careers. A Contribution to the Austrian Labor Market Geography] (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1993).
32. Fassmann (2004).
33. The activity rate (%) is the number of residents who are economically active (this means employed and unemployed) multiplied by 100, divided by the number of residents of working age.

34. Böse, Haberfellner and Koldas (2001).
35. "Ethnic minorities" still living in Austria are mainly groups related to the population in neighboring countries like Hungarians (in Burgenland), Slovenes (in Carinthia and Styria), Croats (in Burgenland), Slovaks, Czechs and Serbs.
36. Georgi (2004).
37. Ibid.
38. Nouria Ouali, *Immigratie in België, aantallen, stromen en arbeidsmarkt: rapport 2001* [Immigration in Belgium, Numbers, Flows and the Labor Market: Report 2001] (Brussels: Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, 2003).
39. George Reniers, "On the Selectivity and Internal Dynamic of Labor Migration Processes: A Cross-cultural Analysis of Turkish and Moroccan Migration to Belgium," *IPD-Working Paper 1997-7*, p.8.
40. Ibid., p.9.
41. Marco Martiniello and Andrea Rea, "Belgium's Immigration Policy Brings Renewal and Challenges, Country profile Belgium," *Migration Information Source*, 2003, available at <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=164>; Sonia Gsir, Marco Martiniello and Johan Wets, "Belgian Country Report on Immigration Management," in Niessen, Schibel and Magoni (eds.) (2003).
42. See note 15.
43. Data National institute of Statistics. Available at http://www.statbel.fgov.be/figures/d22_nl.asp.
44. Martiniello and Rea (2003).
45. Karel Neels and Reinhard Stoop, "Social Mobility and Equal Opportunities: The Case of Turkish and Moroccan Minorities in Belgium," *IPD Working Paper 1998-3*, p.6.
46. These findings stem from an ongoing and not yet published research on Flemish Integration Policy carried out by the higher Institute of Labour Studies (HIVA) of the University of Leuven and OASeS, of the University of Antwerp.
47. Altay Manco, *Sociographie de la population turque et d'origine turque. Quarante ans de présence en Belgique (1960–2000) Dynamiques, problèmes, perspectives* [Sociological Description of the Turkish Population and the Population of Turkish Origin in Belgium (1960–2000). Dynamics, Problems and Perspectives] (Brussels: Centre de Relations Européennes, Ed. Européennes, 2000).
48. Ibid.
49. Ural Manço, "Turcs d'Europe: de l'image tronquée à la complexité d'une réalité sociale immigrée" [The Turks of Europe: From a Truncated Image to the Complexity of an Immigrated Social Reality], *Hommes et Migrations*, No.1226 (July–August 2000), Paris, pp.76–87.
50. Hans Verhoeven, *De vreemde eend in de bijt, arbeidsmarkt en diversiteit* [The Stranger in our Midst: Labor Market and Diversity] (Leuven: Steunpunt WAV, 2000).
51. Ibid.
52. Albert Martens, Nouria Ouali, Marjan Van de Maele, Sara Vertommen, Philippe Dryon and Hans Verhoeven, *Etnische discriminatie op de arbeidsmarkt in het Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest. Onderzoek in het kader van het Sociaal Pact voor de Werkgelegenheid van de Brusselaars* [Ethnic Discrimination on the Labor Market in the Brussels Capital Region. Research in the Framework of the Social Pact for Employment of the Brussels Population] (Brussels/Leuven: ULB/K.U.Leuven, 2005); Verhoeven (2000).
53. Manco (2000).
54. Ibid.
55. Data: Statistics Belgium (Nationaal Instituut voor de statistiek), The National Employment Office (RVA) and the Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB). Calculations by Steunpunt WAV (<http://www.steunpuntwav.be>).
56. Manco (2000).