



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of Anthropology

**DYNAMICS OF HIGHLY SKILLED EMIGRATION FROM TURKEY
AFTER YEAR 2000**

Evrin Anıl EVİRGEN

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2024

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KABUL VE ONAY

Evrin Anıl Evirgen tarafından hazırlanan "Dynamics of Highly Skilled Emigration from Turkey after Year 2000" başlıklı bu çalışma, 19.09.2024 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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ETİK BEYAN

Bu alıřmadaki bütn bilgi ve belgeleri akademik kurallar erevesinde elde ettiđimi, grsel, iřitsel ve yazılı tm bilgi ve sonuları bilimsel ahlak kurallarına uygun olarak sunduđumu, kullandıđım verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapmadıđımı, yararlandıđım kaynaklara bilimsel normlara uygun olarak atıfta bulunduđumu, tezimin kaynak gsterilen durumlar dıřında zgn olduđunu, **Prof. Dr. Ali AĐLAR** danıřmanlıđında tarafımdan retildiđini ve Hacettepe niversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstits Tez Yazım Ynergesine gre yazıldıđını beyan ederim.

[İmza]
Evrım Anıl EVİRGEN

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ABSTRACT

EVİRGEN, Evrim Anıl. *Dynamics of Highly Skilled Emigration from Turkey after Year 2000* Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2024.

Migration has been one of the important features of human communities in every period of history. Turkey has similarly had its share of historical changes. The industrial revolution and the increasingly important technology-oriented changes have caused migration dynamics to vary. The political, economic, demographic and social structure of Turkey after year 2000 offers a unique example from this perspective. It is observed that a culture of migration has emerged, nourished by historical changes in Turkey and global events, as well as individual and family decisions focused on economy, lifestyles, and opportunities. In this context, the influence of networks formed during and after migration is increasing day by day, surpassing and alleviating the negative effects of migration. In this study, Turkey's highly skilled human emigration will be examined from the perspective of anthropology and the change in migration dynamics and culture will be studied. First of all, existing migration theories in the literature and other potentially related theories will be examined in terms of highly skilled emigration. It will be determined to what extent wide spectrum of data obtained from open sources through digital ethnography supports these theories. In ethnographic interviews, individuals associated with the technology sector migrated to North America and Europe after year 2000 will be focused and examined. The reason for choosing this group is the assumption that migration dynamics of this group are also changing rapidly due to technological developments. As a result of the study, it is aimed to create a framework for understanding the change in migration dynamics of highly skilled Turkish emigrants.

Keywords

Migration Dynamics, Highly Skilled Migration, Digital Ethnography, Diaspora, Technology Sector, Turkey

ÖZET

EVİRGEN, Evrim Anıl. *Türkiye'den Yüksek Nitelikli Göçün 2000 Yılı Sonrasındaki Dinamikleri*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2024.

Göç tarihin her döneminde insan topluluklarının önemli özelliklerinden biri olmuştur. Türkiye de benzer şekilde tarihsel değişimlerden payını almıştır. Endüstri devrimi ve sonrasında giderek önemi artan teknoloji odaklı değişimler göç dinamiklerinin de çeşitlilik göstermesine neden olmuştur. 2000 yılı sonrası Türkiye'sinin politik, ekonomik, demografik ve sosyal yapısı bu açıdan bakıldığında kendine özgü bir örnek sunmaktadır. Ekonomi, yaşam tercihleri, fırsatları değerlendirme odaklı bireysel ve ailevi kararların yanında Türkiye ve küresel anlamdaki tarihsel değişimlerden ve olaylardan beslenen bir göç kültürünün oluştuğu gözlemlenmektedir. Bu bağlamda, göç sırasında ve sonrası oluşan ağların etkisi de gün geçtikçe artarak göçün olumsuz etkilerini azaltmaktadır. Bu çalışmada Türkiye'nin yüksek nitelikli insan göçü antropoloji perspektifinden incelenerek göç dinamiklerinin ve kültürünün değişimi değerlendirilecektir. Öncelikle literatürdeki mevcut göç kuramları ve ilişkili olabilecek diğer kuramlar yüksek nitelikli göç açısından incelenecektir. Dijital etnografi yoluyla açık kaynaklardan edinilen geniş yelpazedeki yüksek nitelikli göçmenlere ilişkin podcast verilerin bu kuramları hangi ölçüde desteklediği belirlenecektir. Etnografik görüşmelerde ise 2000 sonrası Kuzey Amerika ve Avrupa'ya göçen teknoloji sektörü ile ilişkili bireyler odaklanılarak incelenecektir. Bu grubun seçilmesinin nedeni teknolojik gelişmelere bağlı olarak göç dinamiklerinin de hızlı değişim gösterdiği tahminidir. Çalışmanın sonucunda Türkiye'den göç eden yüksek nitelikli göçmenlerin göç dinamiklerinin değişimini anlama yolunda bir çatinın oluşturulması hedeflenmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Göç Dinamikleri, Yüksek Nitelikli Göç, Dijital Etnografi, Diaspora, Teknoloji Sektörü, Türkiye

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KABUL VE ONAY	i
YAYIMLAMA VE FİKRİ MÜLKİYET HAKLARI BEYANI	ii
ETİK BEYAN	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ÖZET	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
TABLE OF TABLES	x
INTRODUCTION	1
1.CHAPTER: RESEARCH CONTEXT	7
1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM	7
1.2 RESEARCH METHOD	7
2.CHAPTER: CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	9
2.1 LEADING MIGRATION THEORIES	9
2.1.1 Early Migration Theories	10
2.1.2 Theories about Causes of Migration Flows	13
2.1.3 Theories about the Continuity of Migration Movements	15
2.1.4 Migration Transition Theories	21
2.2 CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORIES	23
2.3 MYTHS ABOUT MIGRATION AND REALITY	29
2.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF MIGRATION AND IDENTITY	35
2.5 CULTURAL DISTANCE AND MIGRATION	41
2.5.1 Lewis Cultural Model	41
2.5.2 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions	43
2.6 DIASPORAS	45
2.7 IMPORTANT HISTORICAL EVENTS AFTER YEAR 2000	54
2.8 MAIN MIGRATION STUDIES OF TURKEY	60

3.CHAPTER: METHOD AND RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	68
3.1 QUANTITATIVE BACKGROUND.....	70
3.2 DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY	84
3.2.1 Before Migration	88
3.2.1.1 Contact and Experience of Foreign Cultures	88
3.2.1.2 Partner, Family and Network Factor	89
3.2.1.3 Country Specific Factors	89
3.2.1.4 Socioeconomic Factors	91
3.2.1.5 Combination of Factors	92
3.2.2 Abroad	93
3.2.2.1 Expectations and Initial Phase.....	93
3.2.2.2 Adaptation and Cultural Dimension	94
3.2.2.3 Migrant Social Networks and Diaspora.....	95
3.2.2.4 Career, Job, Workplace and Daily Routines	97
3.2.2.5 Migrant Social Networks and Diasporas	97
3.2.2.6 Return Migration and Circular Migration	98
3.2.2.7 Identity	100
3.2.2.8 Migration Culture	101
3.3 SEMI-STRUCTURED ONLINE INTERVIEWS AND OFFLINE SURVEYS.....	102
3.3.1 Before migration	107
3.3.1.1 Early Formed Ideals and Adventurous Character	108
3.3.1.2 Migration Flows and Cumulative Causation.....	109
3.3.1.3 Contact and Experience of Foreign Cultures	109
3.3.1.4 Partner and Family Factor	109
3.3.1.5 Unexpected and Unplanned Factors	110
3.3.1.6 Lack of Career Opportunities in Turkey and Self-Actualization	110
3.3.1.7 Network Effects	112
3.3.1.8 Socioeconomic Factors	112
3.3.1.9 Combination of Factors	113
3.3.1.10 Migration Culture	114
3.3.2 Abroad	115
3.3.2.1 Expectations and Initial Phase.....	115
3.3.2.2 Adaptation and Cultural Dimension	117

3.3.2.3 Partner, Family and Turkish Social Circle	122
3.3.2.4 Gender	123
3.3.2.5 Career, Job, Workplace and Daily Routines	125
3.3.2.6 Transnational Lives	128
3.3.2.7 Identity	129
3.3.2.8 Migrant Social Networks and Diaspora.....	134
3.3.2.9 Return Migration and Circular Migration	141
3.3.2.10 Cultures of Migrants	149
3.3.3 Highly Skilled Migration Unique Characteristics and Entrepreneurship	154
3.3.4 Major Changes in Highly Skilled Emigration Profile After Year 2000	158
CONCLUSION	164
REFERENCES	169
EK 1. ORJİNALLİK FORMU	181
EK 2. ETİK KOMİSYON İZİNİ.....	183
ÖZGEÇMİŞ	184

TABLE OF TABLES

Table 1: Merton's Paradigm of Deviant Behavior (Merton, 1968, p. 230)	26
Table 2: Myths and reality about migration (de Haas, 2005, p. 1269).....	30
Table 3: Profiles of Podcast Guests	86
Table 4: Semi-Structured Online Interview Participant Profiles (created by researcher).....	104
Table 5: Semi-Structured Online Interview Participants' Motives for Migration (created by researcher using thematic analysis)	106

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Interdisciplinary Nature of Migration.....	2
Figure 2: Demographic window of opportunity of Turkey compared with Japan and Brazil (Can & Avci, 2019, p. 213).....	3
Figure 3: Pull – push factors in migration (https://northofeu.wordpress.com/home/part-2/push-and-pull-factors/ . Accessed: 2.8.2024).....	13
Figure 4: Conceptual framework of endogenous and contextual feedback mechanisms of migration process (de Haas, 2010, p. 1592).	17
Figure 5: Expanded aspirations-capabilities framework for conceptualizing migration agency (de Haas, 2021, p. 25).....	21
Figure 6: The U-curve of cross-cultural adjustment (Black & Mendenhall, 1991).....	28
Figure 7: W-Adjustment Curve (Młynarczyk-Sokołowska, 2017, p. 185).....	29
Figure 8: International Migrants and Registered Refugees, as a Percentage of World Population (1960 - 2017) (de Haas et al., 2019).	29
Figure 9: Association between Levels of Development and Migration Patterns, 2000 data.	30
Figure 10: Brain Gain – Brain Drain Relation	32
Figure 11: Brain-Drain Balance Sheet (Wickramasekara, 2023, p. 7).	35
Figure 12: Lewis Cultural Model.....	42
Figure 13: Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions for Turkey, Germany, Netherlands and the USA.....	44
Figure 14: GDP growth (annual %) – Germany (https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=DE , Accessed: 2.8.2024)	59
Figure 15: The three phases of Turkish migration policy in the NDPs and the weight given to highly skilled labor policies (Kilic & Biffi, 2022, p. 2051).....	63
Figure 16: An Overview of the International Migration Transition of Turkey (İçduygu, 2014, p.10).	64
Figure 17: Various Stages of the Migration Transition in Turkey, 1923 - 2013 (İçduygu, 2014, p. 10).	64
Figure 18: Immigration and Emigration of Turkey (2016 - 2023) (https://www.statista.com/statistics/1484002/turkey-net-migration/ Accessed: 13.08.2024)	65
Figure 19: Age Distribution of Turkish Emigrants for 2022 (https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=International-Migration-Statistics-2022-49457&dil=2 Accessed: 13.08.2024)	66
Figure 20: Migration Destination Choice Drivers (Dudu & Rojo, 2022, p. 142).	67
Figure 21: Happiness and Income Curve (https://www.chartr.co/stories/2023-11-26-3-happiness-and-income-a-global-lens Accessed: 13.08.2024)	70
Figure 22: Turkey’s ranking according to the WJP Rule of Law Index (https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/global . Accessed: 2.8.2024).....	71
Figure 23: Turkey WJP decomposition	72
Figure 24: Corruption Perceptions Index history of Turkey for the last 30 years.....	72

Figure 25: Gini Coefficient of Turkey between 1987 – 2019 (https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Turkey/gini_inequality_index/ . Accessed: 2.8.2024)	73
Figure 26: Gini Coefficient of Turkey between 2014 - 2023.....	73
Figure 27: IMD World Talent Ranking 2023	74
Figure 28: OECD Talent Attractiveness Score of Turkey for Highly Educated Workers (https://www.oecd.org/migration/talent-attractiveness/ . Accessed: 2.8.2024)	75
Figure 29: OECD Talent Attractiveness Score of Turkey for University Students	76
Figure 30: OECD Talent Attractiveness Score of Turkey for Entrepreneurs	76
Figure 31: Potential Net Migration Index Survey	77
Figure 32: Digital Information and Communication Technologies Share in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (McKinsey, 2020, p. 11)	78
Figure 33: Hanke Misery Index 2020	79
Figure 34: World Happiness Index of Turkey (https://worldhappiness.report/data/ . Accessed: 2.8.2024)	80
Figure 35: Distribution of Emigration to Provinces.....	83
Figure 36: Global Flow of Tertiary Level Students (https://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow . Accessed: 2.8.2024).	90
Figure 37: Gender Pay Gap in Europe (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender_pay_gap_statistics#:~:text=For%20the%20economy%20as%20a,in%20Estonia%20(Figure%201) . Accessed: 14.08.2024)	124

INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this research is to examine the unique character of highly skilled emigration dynamics of Turkey after the year 2000. In order to reach the aim, the research is designed into three main chapters. Firstly, the research problem is given. In this chapter, the main aim, the limitation of the research, the main arguments and questions, and the methodology of the study are explained. Secondly, the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study is discussed. Thirdly, the main findings of the research are presented and analyzed using the podcast digital ethnography data and ethnographical interviews. Lastly, a conclusion is drawn.

As known, migration is an interdisciplinary and multi-layered concept where researchers from different fields such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, politics, demography, law, history, geography, and economy meet due to the extent of its effects on the individual and social level. This phenomenon, which is also essential for many countries, has always kept its place in the debates due to Turkey's unique character and the changes it underwent after the year 2000. Although Turkey's migration story goes back many years, its character has changed recently. It has become a place where the phenomenon of highly skilled migration is a significant item of almost everyone's agenda.

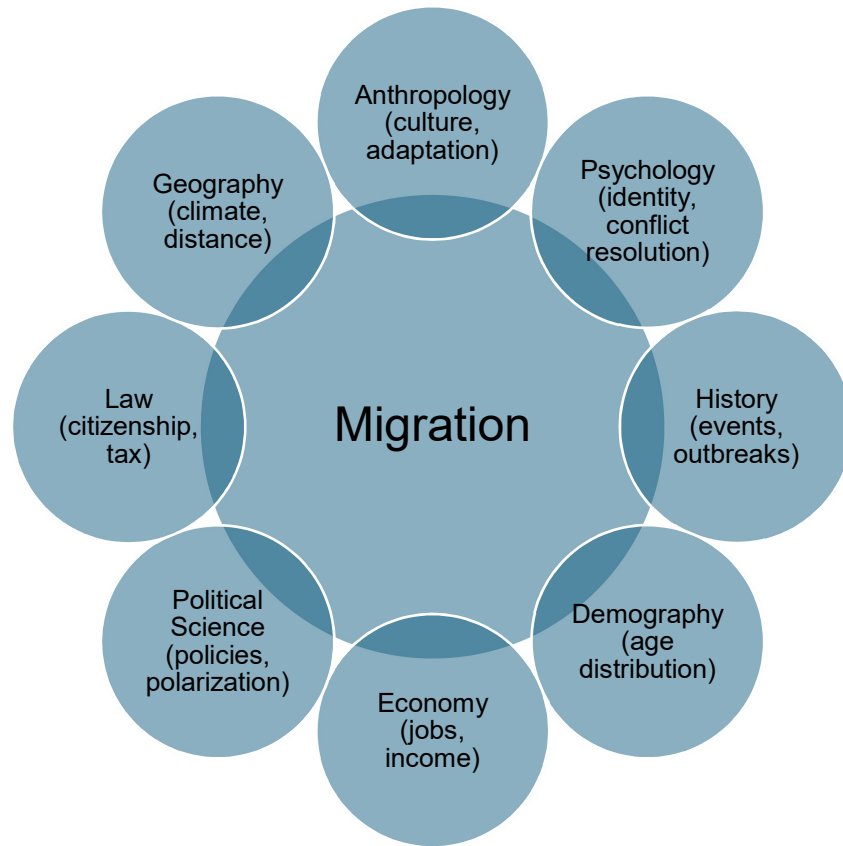


Figure 1: Interdisciplinary Nature of Migration

The importance of highly skilled migrants is the belief that they will lead positive societal changes and economic developments. According to an OECD report, highly skilled migrants are generally from the middle class (Salt, 1997, p. 4). For the destination countries, the aim of choosing highly educated and highly skilled immigrants, irrespective of their diverse backgrounds, is to address skill shortages, create jobs, enhance tax revenues, support public healthcare, rejuvenate aging populations, and replenish the declining native-born educated middle class. Furthermore, urban and middle class backgrounds of these individuals are expected to ensure smooth sociocultural integration (Winter, 2024, p. 1628). Since Turkey is in a demographic window of opportunity (defined as a temporary period in which a country's population experiences age structures that are quite suitable for development), it is an expected situation that this issue is on the headlines.

A demographic window of opportunity occurs when the working-age population surpasses the combined numbers of younger and older demographics. These periods, lasting around 30 to 40 years, are crucial for national and regional development. Efficiently utilizing resources and generating ample employment during these times

offer substantial benefits. Decreased birth rates primarily trigger the opening of such windows, which close as the proportion of the elderly population increases. Effective management is paramount; otherwise, the age structure may pose challenges, leading to a demographic crisis. While developed countries experience this differently, many developing nations struggle to capitalize on these opportunities, often leading to crisis scenarios. Turkey entered a demographic window of opportunity in 2015, albeit with indications of a relatively short duration (2015 – 2035, 20 years) due to its population structure. To leverage this window effectively, enhancing education quality, channeling more resources into investments and productivity are imperative. Failure to do so risks Turkey's demographic opportunity evolving into a crisis (Can & Avci, 2019, p. 213).

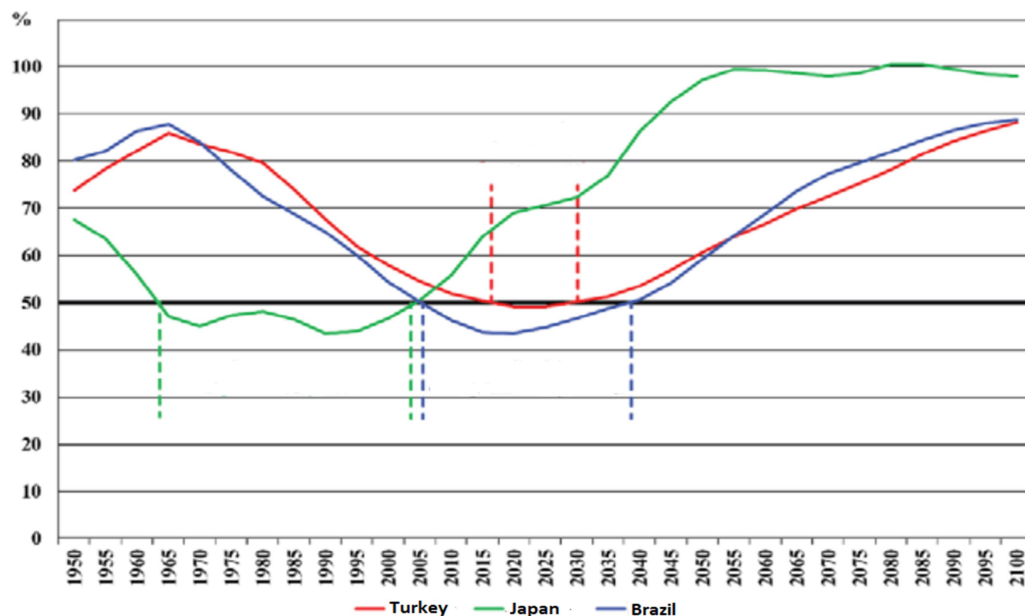


Figure 2: Demographic window of opportunity of Turkey compared with Japan and Brazil (Can & Avci, 2019, p. 213).

As stated in the OECD's "Under Pressure: The Squeezed Middle Class" report, societies with a strong middle class experience higher social security, better education opportunities, lower crime rates, better healthcare, and higher life satisfaction (OECD, 2019, p. 17). Turkey's skilled people loss means that the social crisis associated with the decline of the middle class worldwide will be a more significant issue for the country.

Various studies have historically underscored the significance of a strong middle class in upholding democratic principles and institutions. Robert J. Barro, a macroeconomist at Harvard University, has demonstrated that countries are more likely to be democratic

when a more significant portion of the national income is allocated to the middle class. Additionally, Barro has revealed that the established connection between democracy and income inequality is primarily influenced by the size of the middle class rather than solely by the level of income inequality within a society. This stems from the middle class's profound regard for democratic institutions and values. In light of this theory, it is logical to anticipate a decline in democracy as the middle class within those countries diminishes (Nerman, 2021, p. 13).

The OECD echoes a similar sentiment in their report titled "The Shrinking Middle Class," emphasizing the significance of reforms that support the middle class. Without such reforms, there is a heightened risk that middle-income groups may gravitate towards political parties espousing populist or extremist ideologies as their incomes diminish. Göran Therborn, in his interpretation of the OECD findings, characterizes the middle class dilemma as a negative cycle: mainstream parties fail to adequately address the needs of the middle class, leading them to abandon traditional parties and support populist politicians whose policies often adversely affect the middle class. Consequently, this cycle perpetuates, resulting in a continual decline in middle-income groups (Nerman, 2021, p. 14).

The growing adoption of merit-based and skill-based immigration policies worldwide aims to rejuvenate aging populations and stimulate national economies. This trend reveals the concept of 'middle class nation building through immigration' to describe this evolution (Winter, 2024, p. 1627). Moreover, Massey, Goldring, and Durand proposed a Cumulative Theory of Migration, observing that the favored migrants typically belong to the middle socioeconomic classes. These individuals possess sufficient resources to handle the expenses and risks associated with migration but are not wealthy enough to find working in another country unappealing (Docquier & Rapoport, 2007, p. 20). These arguments reflect the strong correlation between middle classes and highly skilled migrants.

Traditionally, 'brain drain' refers to a country's net depletion of skilled workers. The term was first introduced in 1963 by the Evening Standard, a London-based newspaper, in response to a report by the Royal Society regarding the significant emigration of British scientists and engineers to the United States and Canada during the 1950s and 1960s (Jons & Cranston, 2019, p. 385). During the definition of the title of this thesis, the 'highly skilled migration' term is used deliberately because the 'brain drain' term refers to a negative opinion about the migration of this group.

Although governments and non-governmental organizations have different definitions for highly skilled migrants, this term shapes the visa regimes of different countries as the global talent race becomes more competitive.

It is hard to define a highly skilled migrant because of its variance depending on the context, and the definition is dependent mainly on the needs of the receiving community:

International Migration Law - Migration Glossary defines 'highly skilled migrant worker' as "A migrant worker who has earned, by higher level education or occupational experience, the level of skill or qualifications typically needed to practice a highly skilled occupation. Note: At the national level, States adopt differing criteria for the determination of migrant's skillset. Typically, the skillset of a migrant is delineated by level of education, occupation, income, or a combination thereof" (IOM, 2019, p. 91).

OECD defines a highly skilled migrant in Talent Attractiveness Tool as one of the following and having vocational skills (<https://www.oecd.org/migration/talent-attractiveness/>. Accessed: 27.06.2024):

- Highly educated worker with a university degree or higher
- An entrepreneur
- A university student
- A start-up founder

Different countries or foundations, like the European Union (EU), United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA), and Canada, define some prerequisites, point systems or company proofs to select, filter, and accept people outside of their borders. The quest for highly skilled workers remains a top priority for policymakers aiming to foster socioeconomic growth and cultural diversity, particularly in knowledge-intensive and creative sectors identified as crucial for sustainable knowledge economies.

In the 21st century, globalization facilitated by enhanced transportation, advanced information technologies, and instantaneous communication has led to more complex and diverse movements of highly skilled workers across space and time. Consequently, there has been a shift in research focus from traditional brain drain and brain gain paradigms to encompass brain circulation, which involves multidirectional

and often temporary international movements of skilled workers. Additionally, related phenomena such as transnationalism and mobility have garnered increased attention within academic discourse (Jons & Cranston, 2019, p. 385).

In the following chapter, the research context of the thesis is explained.

1.CHAPTER

RESEARCH CONTEXT

1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Migration studies and theories have a broad literature in other World countries. For Turkey, although migration studies date back to the 1960s and 1970s, it is clear that there is a need for up-to-date studies due to its constantly changing character. This situation is also reflected in the increase in the number of research, studies, publications and institutions/associations actively working on this subject. This study aims to analyze the highly skilled emigrant groups of Turkey related to the technology sector to understand the impact of technology. The research question is as follows: In an age where the speed and impact of technology change are continuously increasing, how are the migration characteristics and dynamics of highly skilled emigrants of Turkey changing?

National and global historical breakpoints are supposed to be crucial for Turkey's migration character. This thesis aims to find and explain the main factors underlying highly skilled migration from Turkey to developed countries, mostly to West Europe and North America.

1.2 RESEARCH METHOD

At the beginning of the thesis, a theoretical basis is established by reviewing existing theories of migration and other theories that are related to the concept of migration. Different phenomena of migration are also mentioned from the perspectives of anthropology, sociology, psychology, economics, demography, politics, law, geography and history. The relationship between theories and quantitative information is presented.

In the next stage, qualitative digital ethnography analysis is performed using digital data obtained from open-source audio podcast recordings of emigrants. "Bi' Gidene Soralım" podcast is selected for analysis for being a source including a broad spectrum of emigrants ranging from university students, highly educated graduates, engineers, and managers to entrepreneurs, journalists, writers, and artists coming from different

backgrounds and cities, migrating alone or with family to various locations of the World. This podcast has more than 150 episodes and has been used by other social researchers, as it was declared in episodes of Elif Aktaş Ç. (Season 4 Episode 21) and Ceyda A. (Season 4 Episode 22). The program host posed the same questions like “What is your migration story?”, “How do you adapt to your new life?”, “What are the difficulties of migrating?”, “What are the differences between two countries?”, “What do you miss most about Turkey?”, and “Do you consider returning to Turkey?” which makes the podcast resembling to a semi-structured interview.

In the last stage of data collection, 20 semi-structured online interviews were held with the technology sector employees, students, and entrepreneurs within the scope of field research, and they were compared with other groups. An additional 6 participants preferred to respond with offline written answers. At this stage of the qualitative analysis, responses to open-ended questions are deciphered and associated with theoretical background. In the final stage of qualitative analysis, evidence is presented to support or challenge the most prominent theories in the previous stages.

In the conclusion, the theories are combined with critical findings to form a consistent framework for Turkey’s case, and the problems deemed beneficial to study in the future are determined.

2.CHAPTER

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter, firstly, the migration theories are explained. Later, the contemporary social theories related to migration, myths about migration and reality, psychological and cultural aspects of migration, diasporas, important historical events and main migration studies of Turkey are discussed.

2.1 LEADING MIGRATION THEORIES

The concept of migration is a field that brings together different theories due to the interest of various disciplines. From this point of view, a holistic study in anthropology should also consider the explanations and perspectives that may be useful from other disciplines. These sources will also be used in the literature so that the theoretical basis combines sociology, demography, economics, geography, history, law, and political sciences to form anthropology's unique holistic, comparative, historical, and ethnographic characteristics. From here, different perspectives of different disciplines on migration can be given as follows:

Table 1: Different Perspectives of Different Disciplines on Migration (Brettell, 2000, p. 4)

Discipline	Research Questions	Level/Units of Analysis	Dominant Theories	Sample Hypothesis
Anthropology	How does migration affect cultural change and affect ethnic identity?	More at the micro level: Individual, household, or groups	Relational or structuralist and transnational	Social networks help maintain cultural differences
Demography	How does migration affect population change?	Macro/populations	Rationalist (borrows heavily from economics)	Migration has a significant impact on size but a small impact on age structure
Economy	What accounts for the inclination to migrate and its impacts?	Micro/individuals	Rationalist: cost-benefit and utility-maximizing behavior	Incorporation varies with the level of human capital of immigrants

Discipline	Research Questions	Level/Units of Analysis	Dominant Theories	Sample Hypothesis
Geography	What explains the spatial patterns of migration?	Macro, meso, micro/individuals, households, and groups	Relational, structural, and transnational	Incorporation depends on ethnic networks and residential patterns
History	How do we understand the migrant experience?	Micro/individuals and groups	Eschews theory and hypothesis testing	Not applicable
Law	How does the law influence migration?	Macro and micro factors, encompassing the political and legal framework	Institutionalist and rationalist perspectives borrowed from various social sciences	Rights establish a system of incentives for migration and integration
Political Science	Why do states have difficulty controlling migration?	More macro / political and international systems	Institutionalist and rationalist	Immigrant interests often capture state discussions
Sociology	What explains incorporation and exclusion?	Macro/ ethnic groups and social classes	Structuralist or institutionalist	Incorporation varies with social and human capital

Social scientists theorized five fundamental aspects in their efforts to explain migration. These include: factors within sending regions that promote emigration; factors within recipient societies that attract immigrants; individuals who choose to immigrate due to their motivations, objectives, and ambitions; developing social and economic frameworks linking emigration and immigration areas; and efforts by states to shape the quantity and traits of immigrants. (Massey, 2015, p. 466). First, it will be helpful to explain the early migration theories, in short, to have a general idea concerning the migration phenomenon.

2.1.1 Early Migration Theories

European geographer Ernst Georg Ravenstein sought answers about migration by analyzing census data. According to Ravenstein, the essential element of migration is the desire to reach better economic conditions. Other factors are of secondary importance. Ravenstein's laws made the most significant contribution to the

phenomenon of migration by paving the way for the emergence of new migration theories in the next century (Ravenstein, 1885, p. 286). Ten laws of migration, according to Ravenstein, are:

1. Most migrants travel only short distances.
2. Migration occurs in steps, with multiple destinations along the way.
3. Long-distance migrants tend to move to large cities.
4. Migration flows create counter-flows.
5. Urban residents migrate less frequently than rural residents.
6. Women migrate more within countries, while men migrate more internationally.
7. Migrants are typically adults rather than families.
8. Urban growth is primarily due to in-migration rather than natural population increase.
9. Migration rises with improvements in transportation and economic opportunities.
10. Most migration occurs from rural to urban areas.
11. Economic reasons are the primary motivation for migration.

Although the character of migration has changed over centuries, some fundamental drivers mentioned by Ravenstein are still valid. For highly skilled migrants, economic motivations are complemented by other drivers.

According to the “Theory of Intervening Opportunities”, which tries to explain the phenomenon of migration with a mathematical approach, the quantity of individuals relocating to a specific location is directly linked to the availability of employment opportunities within that vicinity (Stouffer, 1940, p. 867). Employment opportunities are likely to be another factor in highly skilled migration.

Everett S. Lee's model, which examines human migration, categorizes reasons for moving into two main groups: push and pull factors. Push factors represent negative aspects of one's current location, while pull factors denote positive aspects that draw individuals to new destinations. According to Lee, who introduced the “Push-Pull Theory” in 1966, there are four primary factors in the migration. These factors are listed as follows: residential factors, destination factors, barriers to work, and individual factors (Lee, 1966, p. 56).

Push factors can be given as follows:

- Insufficient employment prospects
- Famine or drought

- Political persecution
- Inadequate healthcare
- Financial decline
- Natural disasters
- Threats to life
- Aspiration for greater political or religious liberties
- Environmental pollution
- Poor housing
- Harassment
- Prejudice
- Limited marriage prospects
- Pollution
- Armed conflict
- Illness

Pull factors are;

- Employment prospects
- Increased benefits
- Improved living standards
- Enhanced political or religious freedoms
- Satisfaction, education
- Superior healthcare
- Appealing climates
- Safety
- Familial connections
- Improved prospects for marriage

According to the Pull-Push Theory, all these factors play a major role in migration, which explains the migration as a unique personal experience. Qualitative analysis is used as a framework to capture these unique stories and motives of migrants in the scope of this thesis.

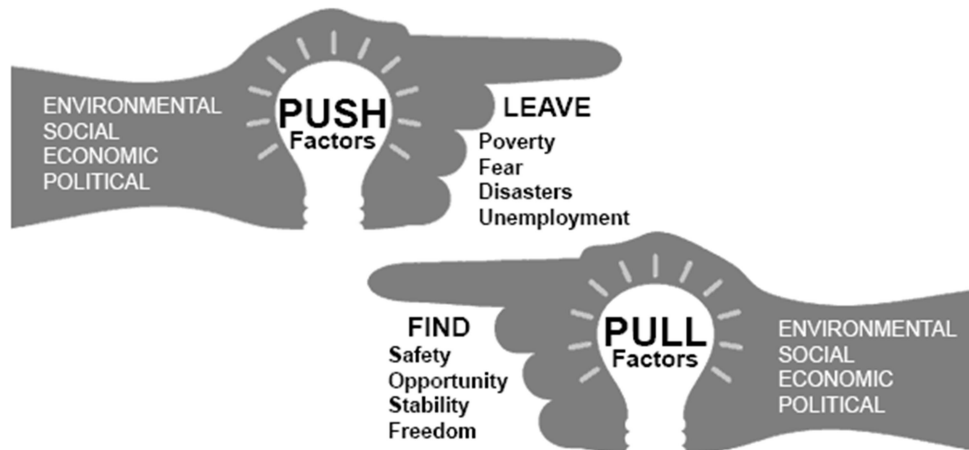


Figure 3: Pull–push factors in migration (<https://northofeu.wordpress.com/home/part-2/push-and-pull-factors/>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

According to Petersen, not only push-pull factors but also individual and social factors are influential in pushing people to migrate. There is a heterogeneous array of factors, ranging from the agricultural crisis to the spirit of adventure or from maritime development to overpopulation. Petersen briefly explains the five types of migration he created by taking into account individual and class differences: “primitive migration”, “impelled migration”, “forced migration”, “free migration”, and “mass migration”. Petersen's classification of migration enables more than one migration factor to be analyzed. In addition, this classification is seen as successful in analyzing today's migrations, as it successfully distinguishes "impelled" and "forced migration" (Petersen, 1958, p. 261). The highly skilled individuals have the power to decide on migration mostly, whether it is an impelled or free migration. This factor distinguishes them from other migrants.

2.1.2 Theories about Causes of Migration Flows

Theories to explain the causes of migration flows are the “Macro Theory of Neo-classical Economics”, “Micro Theory of Neo-classical Economics”, “New Economic Theory of Labor Migration”, “Dual Labor Market Theory” and “Center-Periphery Migration Theory” (Massey, 2015, p. 466).

The diversity of theoretical models that try to explain the reasons why migration movements begin is because they take into account different focal points and different assumptions. The fact that these theories use different levels of analysis, such as individual, household, national, and international markets, while explaining the causality processes does not indicate any incompatibility between them.

The “Macro Theory of Neoclassical Economics” is accepted as the beginning of contemporary migration theories. According to this theory, migration occurs as a result of the earnings differentials faced by the labor force in various markets.

According to the “Micro Theory of Neoclassical Economics”, the rational individual is decisive in migration. The individual makes a migration decision by comparing the earnings and migration costs in the target country.

According to the “New Economic Theory of Labor Migration”, households, unlike individuals, can diversify the family's productive income sources more effectively. This is an approach to managing risks and diversifying economic opportunities (Stark & Bloom, 1985, p. 173).

“Dual Labor Market Theory” (also referred to as the segmented labor market) is a theory with characteristics that are used to explain issues such as unemployment, discrimination, unions, income distribution, and poverty. The dual labor market theory underscores the significance of institutional elements alongside race and gender in creating segmentation within the labor market. Simultaneously, the most vibrant "global cities" exhibit economic polarization, characterized by an increasing disparity between well-compensated core professionals in finance, management, and research, and the lower-paid workers who cater to their requirements. Workers in the primary labor market are typically chosen based on their human capital, and often belong to the dominant ethnic group, male gender, and, for migrants, possess regular legal status. On the other side, those in the secondary labor market encounter challenges due to insufficient education and vocational training, along with factors like gender, race, minority status, and irregular legal standing. Neoliberal policies and the subsequent deregulation of labor markets have fueled the growth of the secondary sector. The four essential characteristics of industrial societies and economies cause these societies to need a constant demand for migrant labor. These basic features can be considered as structural inflation, motivation problems, economic dualism, and the structure of labor supply (de Haas et al., 2020, p. 28). The experiences of highly skilled migrants belonging to the primary labor market and other migrants belonging to the secondary labor market are differentiated in that respect.

According to the “Center-Periphery Migration Theory” (also known as “World Systems Theory”), the influence of capitalist economies in the core into non-capitalist periphery

societies and the spread of capitalist relations creates a mobile population ready to migrate from the periphery (Wallerstein, 1974, p. 347).

Although theories about the causes of migration flows mainly focus on economic parameters, the main idea is that asymmetry or differences between different locations can induce migration, not only economic conditions.

2.1.3 Theories about the Continuity of Migration Movements

Maximizing income, reducing household risks, and eliminating the need for cheap labor can be adequate reasons for starting migration movements. However, the reasons that started the migration and ensured its continuity may differ.

Theories regarding the continuation of migration generally posit that migration results in further migration. They propose a core idea wherein once a specific critical mass (threshold level) of migrants has gathered, migration experiences acceleration. Beyond this threshold, migration becomes self-sustaining as it establishes the necessary social, economic, and cultural frameworks to perpetuate the process. These models integrate sending and receiving context feedback mechanisms into the migration analysis. This analysis has a different approach than the micro (individual motivations such as economic, social, psychological, and self-actualization) and macro (changes occurring at both national and global levels encompass social, economic, political, and cultural processes), bringing in the meso-level.

“Immigrant Relations Network Theory” proposes the concept of ‘network’, which explains interpersonal relations in sociology in the 1990s and the phenomenon of migration. Massey (1993) defined the migration network as the whole of the mutual relations of migrants with their families, friends, and relatives who are staying in their countries. These networks facilitate the establishment of migration pathways by diminishing the expenses and uncertainties associated with the migration journey. As the routes of migration increase, more destination countries and activity areas for immigrants emerge. Migrant networks refer to interconnected relationships among migrants, past migrants, and individuals who have not migrated, linking origin and destination regions through familial, friendly, and communal affiliations (Massey, 1993, p. 448). Bourdieu defined ‘social capital’ as ‘the aggregate of the actual or potential resources linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition or, in other words, membership in a group’ (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241). Migrant networks can be seen

as a type of localized social capital that individuals utilize to access resources in other locations (Massey, 1993, p. 448). Migrant networks typically reduce migration's financial, social, and emotional burdens. Therefore, Massey developed the idea of migration as a spreading process, where growing networks decrease the costs of moving and increase the likelihood of migration; these developments reinforce each other, eventually becoming widespread across all societal sectors. The networks formed through migration fuel this cycle. When network connections within a particular area of origin reach a critical level, migration becomes self-perpetuating as the migration process itself creates the social infrastructure required to sustain it (Massey, 1990, p. 4). Highly skilled migrants have social connections and the means to maintain these connections. So, it is expected that the impact of networks is dominant in migration decisions.

To bridge the gap between theories concerning the initiation and perpetuation of migration, it is essential to perceive migration as (1) an intrinsic component of contextual evolution and alteration while also recognizing it as (2) a phenomenon with its inherent dynamics that can either sustain or undermine itself, and (3) simultaneously influence contextual change processes. Furthermore, (4) such contextual changes affected by migration reciprocally influence migration patterns. Here, (2) pertains to the direct (endogenous) internal dynamics, while (4) relates to the indirect (contextual) internal dynamics of migration processes (Castles, 2010, p. 1565). These various feedback mechanisms are depicted in Figure 4.

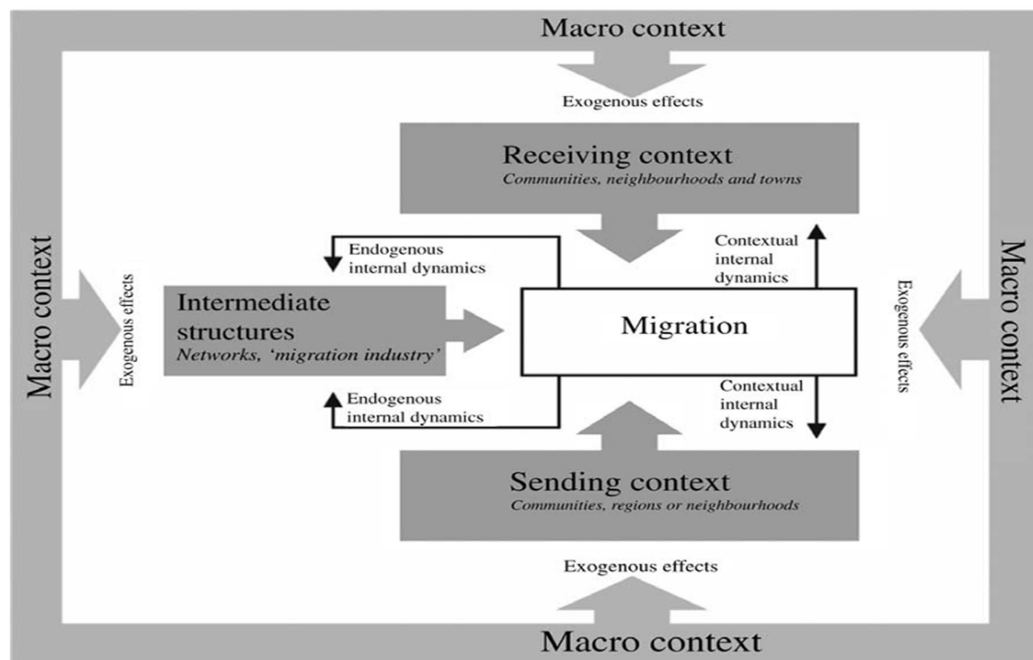


Figure 4: Conceptual framework of endogenous and contextual feedback mechanisms of the migration process (de Haas, 2010, p. 1592).

The basic assumption of the “Cumulative Causality Theory” is that it became more common over time and continued to do so following the beginning of migration. This theory starts from the point that every migration breakthrough changes the social framework for the subsequent migration decision.

Cumulative causation establishes a significant reciprocal and dynamic relationship between migration and broader developmental processes in sending and receiving areas. Massey (1990) noted that when the number of network connections in an origin location reaches a crucial level, migration becomes self-perpetuating as it establishes the social infrastructure required to sustain itself. Migration modifies social, cultural, and economic frameworks at both the places of origin and destination through feedback mechanisms; thus, migration alters the initial conditions that give rise to migration (Massey, 1990, p. 9).

The interplay between relative deprivation and network effects can reinforce each other: the former escalates migration aspirations while the latter reduces migration costs and risks. Although pioneer migrants are frequently relatively affluent, such

feedback mechanisms can render migration more accessible for less affluent groups, leading to a diffusion of migration experiences within and across communities.

Masse's conceptual framework exhibits striking resemblances to neo-Marxist theories regarding migration and development, which assert that migration undermines the economies of sending communities by depleting their human and material resources and heightening their reliance on external sources (de Haas, 2010, p. 10). Frank (1966) noted that this resultant "underdevelopment of development" is perceived as fueling further emigration. According to the hypothesis of the 'migrant syndrome,' this cycle engenders a vicious circle of migration, exacerbating underdevelopment, prompting more migration, and so forth (Reichert, 1981, p. 56).

In addition to migration's impacts on social stratification, relative deprivation, and the economic structure within sending communities, the framework of migration systems theory can be expanded to encompass a third contextual system of feedback mechanisms: migration-induced cultural transformations. While Lee and Mabogunje had previously recognized the role of reverse flows of information and ideas, Levitt introduced the concept of 'social remittances' to describe the transmission of ideas, behaviors, identities, and social capital from receiving to sending communities (Lee, 1966, p. 51; Mabogunje, 1970, p. 3; Levitt, 1998, p. 926). Migration, along with exposure to different norms and practices and heightened awareness of opportunities and lifestyles elsewhere, can significantly influence identity formation, norms, and behavior in migrant-sending communities. When migration becomes closely associated with the pursuit of social and material prosperity, it may transition from an exceptional occurrence to a customary practice, while remaining in one's homeland may be perceived as indicative of failure. According to some scholars, this phenomenon may give rise to a 'culture of migration' (Massey et al., 1993, p. 452). Such migration-induced cultural change can reinforce aspirations along established migration pathways in communities and societies that become fixated on migration. It is crucial to differentiate this aspiration-enhancing effect from the more pragmatic role of networks and remittances in facilitating migration.

As we examine the last decades after the year 2000, we can notice a rise in Turkey's highly skilled migration culture built upon network migration effects and a change in the social framework.

According to the "Migration Systems Theory", two or more countries mutually form a migration system and a chain of relations with the exchange of immigrants. Countries in this system do not have to be geographically close. However, if there is a relationship between the sending and receiving countries before migration, the probability of migration is higher. The basis of this relationship can be the colonial period, commercial and financial relations, political and cultural ties, political influence, and military occupations. Migration systems theory emphasizes the significance of reciprocal flows of information and ideas in sustaining migration.

'Gastarbeiter', which translates to "guest worker" in German, refers to foreign or migrant workers, particularly those who migrated to West Germany between 1955 and 1973 under formal guest worker programs ('Gastarbeiterprogramm'). Consequently, guest workers are typically seen as temporary migrants, as their residency in the host country is not yet established as permanent. Similar programs were implemented in other countries, like the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland. Following World War II, continental northern European countries faced severe labor shortages, while southern European nations, including Turkey, experienced high unemployment rates. During the 1950s and 1960s, West Germany entered into bilateral recruitment agreements with several countries, including Italy (1955), Spain (1960), Greece (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), South Korea (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965), and Yugoslavia (1968). These initiatives fostered strong connections between these countries.

As initially developed by the geographer Mabogunje, migration systems theory represents one of the earliest endeavors to conceptualize contextual feedback mechanisms (Mabogunje, 1970, p. 2). A 'migration system' can be defined as a network of interlinked locations facilitated by the movement of people, commodities, services, and information, fostering continuous interactions, including migration, among these locales. Mabogunje concentrated on the impact of feedback, particularly in the form of information dissemination and the introduction of new concepts (such as notions of the 'good life' and evolving consumption patterns), in shaping migration systems.

Information within the system promotes deviations from what would be considered the most likely or random state. The condition of a system at any given moment is influenced less by its starting conditions and more by the characteristics of the process or the parameters of the system, primarily shaped by the interactions and dynamics among them. Additionally, it is worth noting that information not only serves as a tool for enabling additional migration but also the transmission of new ideas and exposure to alternative lifestyles by returning migrants may heighten aspirations to migrate. While migration systems theory extends the conventional emphasis on networks by highlighting the significance of information and idea exchanges, it overlooks numerous additional contextual feedback mechanisms. These mechanisms involve continuously altering initial conditions by ongoing migration, ultimately producing migration with its momentum. Contextual feedback mechanisms operate through the impact of migration on (1) inequality and relative deprivation, (2) economies and labor markets, and (3) cultural change. Migration systems create connections between individuals, families, and communities across distances, forming what we now term transnational communities. Transnational spaces refer to relatively stable, enduring, and dense networks of connections that extend beyond the borders of sovereign states (Bauböck & Faist, 2010, p. 13). These spaces include combinations of ties and their content, positions within networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that span at least two national borders. In migration research, transnationalism highlights the grassroots activities of international migrants across borders, distinguishing them from the extensive and continuous relationships of large entities such as multinational or transnational companies. This situation leads to a structured and concentrated distribution of migration flows, deviating significantly from randomness. The outcome is a series of relatively stable exchanges, establishing a recognizable geographical pattern that endures across space and time (Mabogunje, 1970, p. 10). Migration systems theory explains why migration is a chaotic process, as predicted by the systems theory.

The well-established pathways and transnational networks between Turkey and Western countries (Europe and North America) present a scheme for many potential migrants to follow, making migration relatively less risky.

2.1.4 Migration Transition Theories

Migration transition theories represent crucial steps towards achieving a more comprehensive theoretical grasp of migration by linking migration theories to broader social scientific frameworks. These theories underscore the necessity of reimagining migration as an integral component of overarching processes encompassing economic, political, cultural, technological, and demographic transformations embodied in concepts like social change, development, and globalization. This approach contrasts traditional scientific perspectives that view migration solely as a response to developmental imbalances or as a product of static 'push' and 'pull' factors. It also contrasts with policy perspectives that frame migration as a 'problem' necessitating resolution or a solution to challenges such as population aging. Migration, however, is a social phenomenon inseparable from the broader processes of change, of which it is an integral part (de Haas, 2021, p. 1).

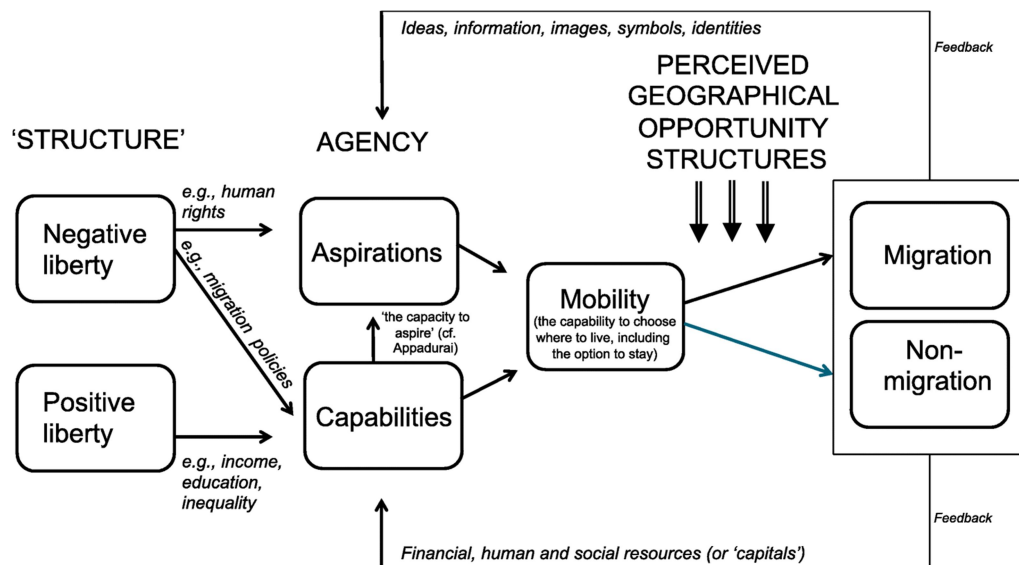


Figure 5: Expanded aspirations-capabilities framework for conceptualizing migration agency (de Haas, 2021, p. 25)

Migration is an intrinsic part of development and globalization rather than a problem to be solved. People in developed countries have relatively few obstacles but may have fewer aspirations to migrate. There is a non-linear relationship between development and migration. Policies to control migration make the migration change its face and diversify migration methods like illegal migration or accepting a job with relatively fewer

advantages. Sedentary people assumption (immobility is typical, mobility is an anomaly) is invalid as we see people migrating in almost every era of human history.

Transition theories conceptualize migration as a constituent part of broader development processes with long-term spatiotemporal development and modernization models and migration hump models, where in the short to medium term, trade liberalization may lead to increased migration. However, in the long term, their relationship becomes more substitutive, as a response to societal changes (de Haas, 2010, p.2).

Transition theory underscores the connection between development and net emigration is not necessarily linear or inversely correlated. Social and economic development typically correlates with heightened mobility and migration as it enhances individuals' capacity and aspirations to migrate. Migration transition theory complements theories on the perpetuation of migration (i.e., migration gains momentum due to internal processes). Increasing capabilities and relative deprivation tend to reinforce each other mutually. Only after income gaps narrow significantly do effects seem to disintegrate; migration tends to decrease. This situation implies that the constant development gap between Turkey and destination countries produces a continuous migration mechanism.

Manuel Castells mentions the role of technology in the redefinition of borders. Castells discusses how technology plays a crucial role in reshaping the concept of borders. The 'space of flows' notion represents a sophisticated cultural interpretation of space, time, and their dynamic relationships within contemporary digital society. This concept, introduced by sociologist and cybernetic culture theorist Manuel Castells, aims to redefine spatial structures within the context of the evolving technological landscape. It represents a novel space facilitating synchronous, real-time interactions across great distances. Castells defines the concepts: "The material arrangements that allow for simultaneity of social practices without territorial contiguity. It is not purely electronic space. It is first made up of a technological infrastructure of information systems, telecommunications, and transportation lines" (Castells, 2004, p. 146).

A single and comprehensive theoretical explanation/theory explaining international migration has yet to exist. There are many migration theories with different basic assumptions and hypotheses. In general, it will be possible to understand and analyze today's migrations in the light of migration theories with different analysis levels and

perspectives. Transnational theories also incorporate the diminishing significance of factors hindered by the expanding network of relations and globalization, such as national borders, which may hinder migration movements. Transnational migration refers to the movement of individuals connected to social networks extending across the borders of different nation-states. Transnational movements not only assume an increasingly transient and networked nature but also link to multiplying virtual flows of knowledge and information that facilitate knowledge transfer without the physical presence of the migrant. Highly skilled migrants are the major users of technology, and actors of knowledge and information flows; thus, they play key roles in transnational migrant networks. Nationalist political discourses that emerged as a reaction to migration have gained importance in migration destination regions.

To fully comprehend contemporary migration processes, more is needed to depend solely on one discipline's methodologies or to concentrate solely on one level of investigation. Instead, their intricate and diverse characteristics necessitate an advanced theory that integrates various perspectives, levels of analysis, and assumptions (Massey et al., 1993, p. 432).

2.2 CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORIES

According to Daniel Bell, migration will be determined by the character of individuals in a post-industrial, knowledge-based, service sector, self-actualization society. The end of ideology has come. The development of the service sector brings about changes in the economy, technology, and social structure (Baran & Suğur, 2022, p. 6). Highly skilled individuals with high education are the predominant producers of this knowledge; thus, the post-industrial society are shaped around the highly skilled individuals and the countries that attract them.

Zygmunt Bauman's theory of liquid modernity states that the developing technology networks in the World force people to consume. Characteristics of this condition are the individual's increased feelings of uncertainty and ambivalence. It represents a chaotic extension of modernity, where individuals have the ability to transition fluidly between different social roles. Nomadism becomes a general feature of the 'fluid modern' person, displacing himself in his own life like a tourist, freeing himself from jobs, spouses, values, and sometimes traditional support networks such as political or sexual orientation, while at the same time freeing himself from the constraints or needs

imposed by these networks. The result is a mindset emphasizing transition rather than permanent and solid commitment. An integral part of globalization processes is the progressive division of space, as well as the separation and exclusion of people. Another worrying situation is the disconnection between the elite, becoming increasingly global and homeless, and the local community that remains behind. Highly skilled individuals have the freedom to move and migrate, but this extreme freedom also complicates attachment and brings volatility (Bauman, 2000, p. 13).

According to Alain Touraine's programmed society, the struggle is no longer between labor and capital but between those who have the power to access knowledge and those who do not. Touraine says, "Post-industrial society acts more globally at the managerial level, i.e., on the overall mechanism of production. This action takes two main forms. Firstly, it is innovation, that is, the capacity to produce new products, particularly as a result of scientific and technological investment; secondly, it is management itself, that is to say, the capacity to use complex information and communication." Highly skilled migrants are positioned at and interact with this technology and information-rich context. Highly skilled migrants also differ from other people in this sense and can select from more life choices. Modern society's biggest problem is maintaining cultural diversity in unity and solidarity (Touraine, 1971, p. 193).

According to François Lyotard, postmodern society produces and consumes knowledge for sale. Knowledge has moved away from being a goal and has lost its functional value. It is the skilled migrants who are the producers of this knowledge, which is greater in value and socially decisive. Therefore, in migration studies, the focus shifts from blue-collar migration to highly skilled white-collar migration (Lyotard, 1984, p. 3).

According to Frederic Jameson's theory of multinational capitalism, multinational companies that have power above the states have come to a situation where they can exploit their own countries alongside other countries. For these reasons, it is unsurprising that they also impose a migration mechanism where they can further exploit labor to obtain the highest profits by focusing on highly skilled migration (Jameson, 1991, p. 57).

According to Jean Baudrillard (1981), consumption is a state of being. The "sign" value of the goods is important. Media consumes constructed reality and signs. For migration studies, the phenomenon of migration and the "sign" power of migrant identities are the

most important. People may choose migration to earn the migrant identity, get an acceptance from a more developed country, or to become citizens of another country, which indicates a higher class in the society (Baudrillard, 1981, p. 1).

All of these social theories strongly emphasize the role of technology in societal changes. Highly skilled knowledge workers are the cornerstone of new migration discussions.

Apart from the primary drivers mentioned in early migration theories and the societal changes mentioned in contemporary social theories, the economic, structural, and political fragmentation of Turkish society causes some conflicts in society. Some participants expressed their discomfort in Turkish society and their disconnection from Turkish society, indicating their conflicts and migration as a potential resolution to this conflict.

Borrowing the definition from Victor Turner, migration can be seen as a “rite of passage” to a different society. In this process, migrants may experience being at the border and stuck in-between (Turner, 1969, p. 95). In addition, one of the reasons pushing individuals to migrate may be that Turkish modernization has not successfully ended the social drama's processes of violation, crisis, liminality, and restructuring, leading to the permanence of the state of being in-between, and as a result, the disintegration of the society (Şahin, 2019, p. 203). Individuals may choose to solve this conflict by emigrating.

According to Robert Merton, ‘anomie’ occurs when society sets specific goals for individuals but cannot provide the necessary opportunities and tools to achieve them. Social success is a general goal that modern society imposes on its members. However, many individuals cannot achieve this goal, depending on the social conditions they are born into. As a result, many types of deviant behavior develop. Conformity involves achieving societal goals through socially accepted methods, whereas innovation refers to reaching these goals through unaccepted means, such as crime and deviance. Innovators create their methods to achieve what they desire, often deemed socially unacceptable and deviant. According to Merton, ritualism involves accepting the means but abandoning the goals. Ritualists adhere to the established means without pursuing the ultimate goals and thus, are not considered deviant. Retreatism involves rejecting both the means and the goals, with retreaters seeking to escape from everything, viewing them as deviant. Rebellion, unlike the other

responses, is a short-term reaction. Rebels, like retreaters, reject societal goals and means, but unlike retreaters, they aim to replace them with new goals and means that reflect different values. Innovation and retreat are the two types of response behaviors to the anomies resulting in migration associated with the lack of opportunities in the homeland (Merton, 1968, p. 230).

Table 1: Merton's Paradigm of Deviant Behavior (Merton, 1968, p. 230)

Attitude to Goals	Attitude to Means	Modes of Adaptation
accept	accept	Conformity
accept	reject	Innovation
reject	accept	Ritualism
reject	reject	Retreatism
reject/accept	reject/accept	Rebellion

Albert O. Hirschman proposed a similar response behavior model named the "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty (EVL) Model". In the EVL framework, a citizen's possible actions are categorized into three options. Exit involves accepting the loss of the benefit and changing behavior to seek the best alternative. Loyalty means enduring the new policy without changing behavior. Voice entails actively expressing dissatisfaction with the new policy and attempting to persuade the Government to reconsider. The exit option corresponds to the migration alternative of discontent citizens (Hirschman, 1970, p. 4).

Turkish theorists, such as Nermin Abadan Unat and Ruşen Keleş (1976), emphasized migration to the city and urbanization. Individuals who see that there are no opportunities and sufficient opportunities for themselves where they are now have to migrate. A similar squeeze situation is valid for cities at present, with the excessive population growth and economic crises after 2000. In this case, along with individuals who intend to migrate from various segments, highly skilled immigrants with higher mobility are more likely to go abroad (Abadan Unat & Keleş, 1976, p. 1).

Research on migrant personality indicates that individuals desiring to relocate to another country tend to prioritize work and display higher levels of achievement and

power motivation, but exhibit lower levels of relationship motivation and family orientation compared to those who prefer to stay in their hometown (Boneva & Frieze, 2002, p. 477). For this reason, it should not be overlooked that there is a race between countries and appropriate policy arrangements to attract immigrants who can be the primary drivers of the quality of countries' human capital.

Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of cultural, social, and economic capital are indispensable parts of migration because they both enable migration and undergo changes during the migration process. Bourdieu (1986) underlines that different forms of capital are convertible to each other. Investments of highly skilled migrants to their own cultural and social capital give them capabilities and networks to migrate, thus allowing them to achieve better cultural, social, and economic conditions (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 242). In this sense, migration is a leverage or catalyst to strengthen different forms of capital and create a new form of capital, namely 'migrant capital', which consists of migration-specific experiences, networks, opportunities and symbols (honor, prestige or recognition) (Ryan et al., 2015, p. 4). Joëlle Moret (2020) has a similar concept named as 'mobility capital', which is defined as the 'accumulation of past experiences of crossing borders; and the potential for future movements' mainly focusing on the individuals' ability to control their (im)mobility (Moret, 2020, p. 235).

The theory put forward by Sverre Lysgaard that adaptation progresses according to the U-curve provides clues for understanding the migration process and its aftermath. In the first part, the honeymoon stage, the feelings of excitement and happiness are dominant as everything is new, exciting, and beautiful. This stage usually happens soon after arriving at a new place. In the culture shock stage, the newcomer experiences feelings of anxiety, confusion, and anger as they try to live in a foreign and often strange place. In the adjustment phase, as the newcomer emerges from the culture shock, their feelings calm as they feel more comfortable and confident in the new place. In the mastery stage, a sense of comfort is gained with new life and culture, although sometimes there are still challenging times (Lysgaard, 1955, p. 129). The process after migration has ups and downs, which many interview participants also mentioned. Thus, the interview materials should be carefully analyzed according to the time spent at the destination.

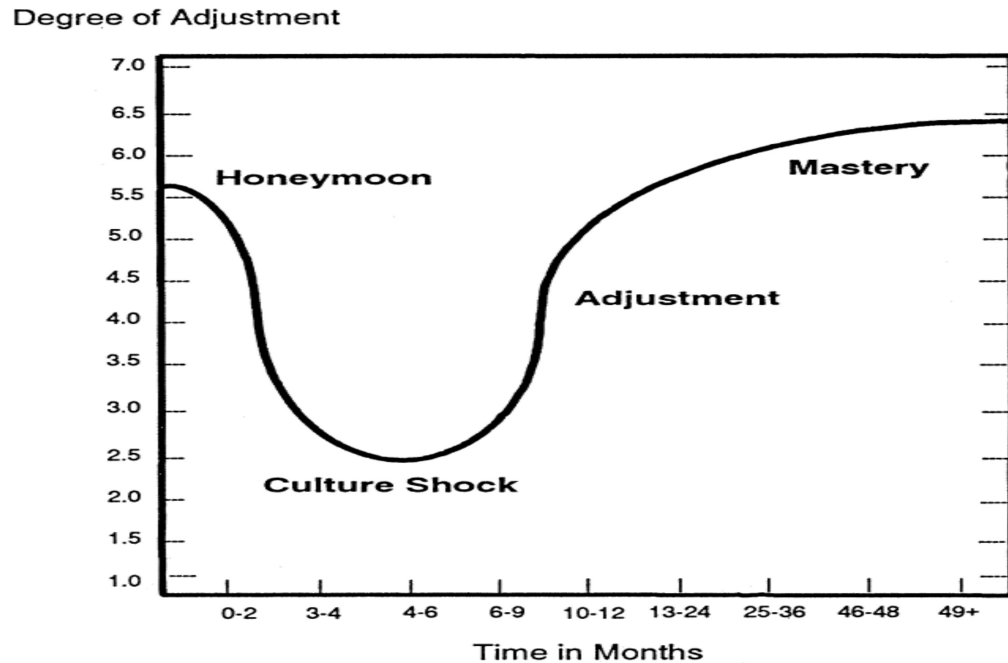


Figure 6: The U-curve of cross-cultural adjustment (Black & Mendenhall, 1991).

When immigrants return to their home country, they frequently undergo a comparable integration process. Scholars describe this phenomenon using a W-curve model, where the second curve illustrates the experience of re-entry shock and readjustment. This process is sometimes even more difficult because people do not expect any culture shocks when they return home. 'Re-entry shock' can be defined as a set of unmet expectations familiar to the immigrant and his environment. While the person was abroad, there may have been changes in their homeland's political situation, social structure, or culture. Friends and family may not be the same anymore, and the immigrant is probably a different person after spending a few years in a different environment, even if people expect him to be the same (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, 2017, p. 185).

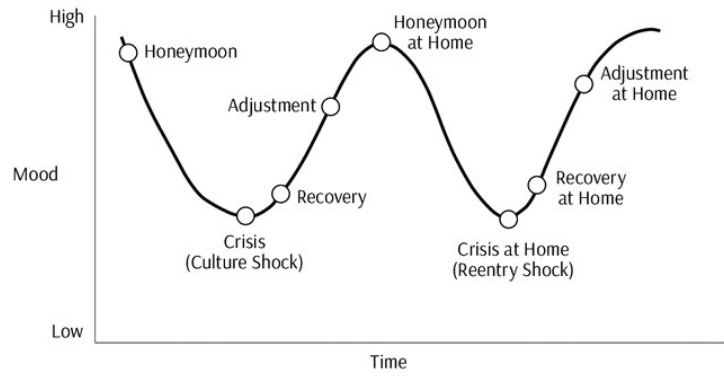


Figure 7: W-Adjustment Curve (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, 2017, p. 185)

These social theories can offer complementary explanations for transition states that can be differentiated as pre-migration, migration process, post-migration, and return migration.

2.3 MYTHS ABOUT MIGRATION AND REALITY

It is believed that we live in an age of unprecedented mass migration. The reality is that the human race has a migratory character throughout the ages. But the effects of migration become more observable since migration’s character is changing faster.

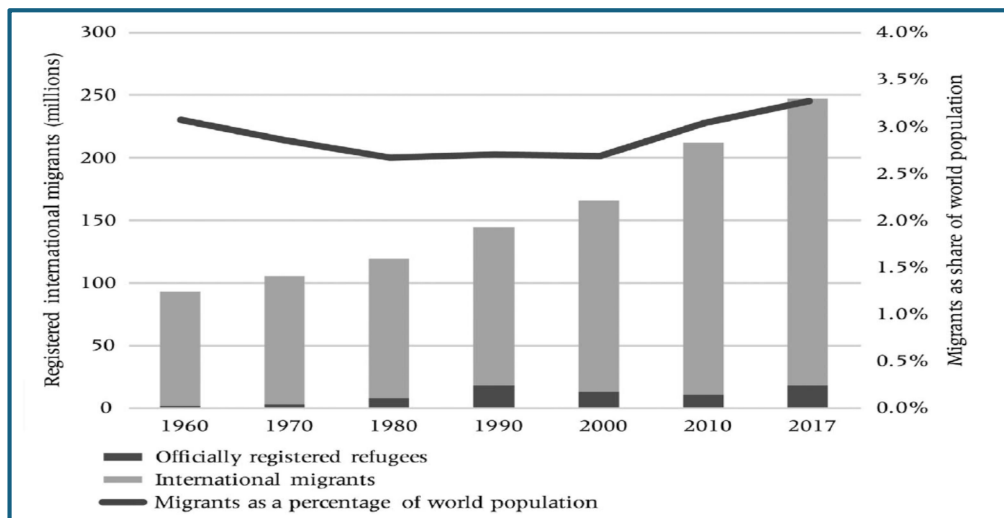


Figure 8: International Migrants and Registered Refugees as a Percentage of the World Population (1960 - 2017) (de Haas et al., 2019).

Poverty is assumed to be the leading cause of migration, so development should reduce migration. However, the migration is mostly between middle-income/developed countries and high-income/developed countries (de Haas et al., 2019; Johnson, 2020).

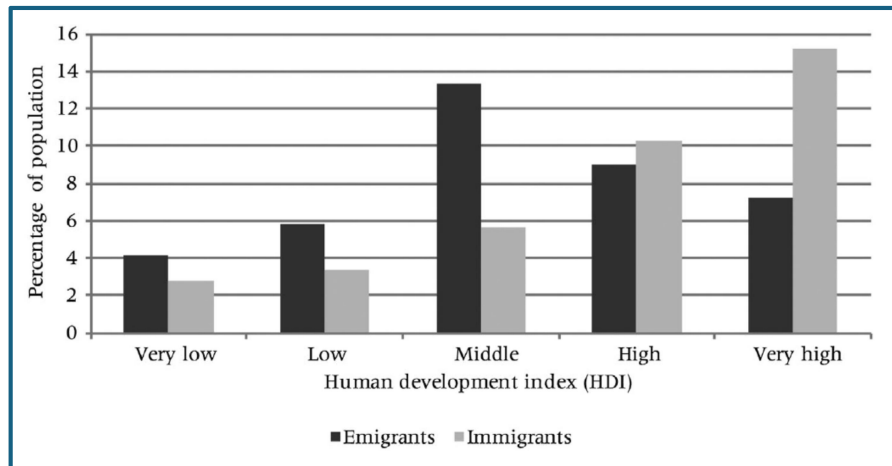


Figure 9: Association between Levels of Development and Migration Patterns, 2000 data.

As the graph shows, 13% of the population migrates from middle HDI countries, and 15% are emigrants to very high HDI countries.

Table 2: Myths and reality about migration (de Haas, 2005, p. 1269)

Migration is increasing	Migration percentages in societies are almost stable. But skilled migration is increasing
Migration is from low HDI countries to high HDI countries	Migration is from middle HDI countries to high HDI countries
Migration is one way	Migration is circular
Migration is detrimental to homeland: win-lose (brain gain, brain drain)	Migration can be beneficial: win-win (transnationalism, diasporas, knowledge spillover, catch-up effect)
Migration is a problem to be solved	Migration is a part of broader social construct

Unlike the common belief, the main migration flows are not from low-income countries to high-income countries but from middle-income countries to high-income countries. At the core of this migration debate are the highly skilled migrants being the drivers of development. However, the drawbacks of emigration from the homeland can also be misleading because of the counter-beneficial effects. If these prejudices and assumptions about migration are put aside, the mobility of humans can be embraced, and nourishing effects of migrants can be utilized, primarily for the homeland.

The traditional approach assumes that the developing source country usually suffers from losses related to the skilled migrant, such as economic stagnation, less innovation, slowing of development, and social unrest in a vicious cycle. In contrast, the developed destination country usually benefits from the gains related to the attraction of skilled migrants, such as innovation, economic dominancy, continuation of living standards, social stability, and political power. On the other hand, the modern World has become more connected and integrated, and living opportunities combined with mobility have increased, leading to transnational communities and people migrating more than once to a new destination or their homeland, bringing their migrant capital, namely life knowledge, ideas, experiences, social and business networks, innovation and work culture. Communities having individuals with higher diversity in education and background exhibit a higher likelihood of innovating (Østergaard et al, 2011, p. 508). This transformation makes win-or-lose calculations harder to predict. The individuals, companies, or countries embracing this transformation benefit more from this new World order.

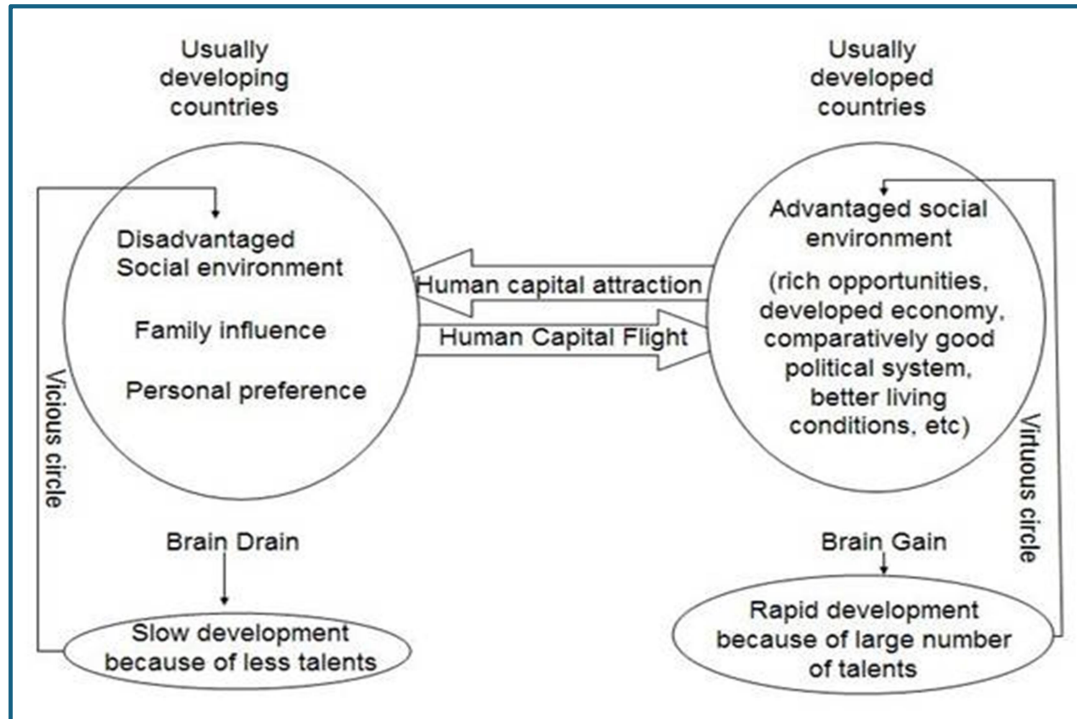


Figure 10: Brain Gain – Brain Drain Relation

(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/70/Diagram_showing_the_process_of_brain_drain.jpg. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

Despite the short-term costs, emigration can benefit households and entire countries by reducing labor market pressure, encouraging individuals to enhance their skills, and granting women greater economic responsibility and independence (OECD, 2017, p. 1). In the long run, the knowledge and experience of return migrants and enduring migrant networks enhance the country's integration into global business, education, and trade systems.

In a global skill market, proficiency (rather than citizenship or nationality) is the primary means for individuals to move between countries. Factors driving migration, such as wage differences, lifestyles, personal security, political engagement, career prospects, and children's futures, are typically considered rational responses. Skilled migrants no longer adhere to the traditional migration model of permanently relocating from their country of origin to their destination country. Instead, opportunities for temporary moves have expanded significantly. Many first-generation skilled immigrants maintain strong economic, social, and cultural connections with their home countries. The phenomenon of transnationalism—where migrants live their lives both literally and

symbolically across multiple countries—is experiencing rapid growth (Crush & Hughes, 2009, p. 345).

The concept of brain drain is typically associated with largely negative implications. Economically, when skilled individuals migrate, their departure results in losing an emigration surplus—a measure of the value they contributed to the economy versus their actual earnings. This loss directly translates into an economic deficit due to their absence. Furthermore, brain drain can increase skill premiums, exacerbating inequality by rewarding individuals with scarce skills at higher rates. Additionally, countries may experience fiscal losses from reduced tax revenue, diminished economies of scale, and the loss of role models and knowledge transfer from highly skilled individuals to their peers.

Moreover, brain drain impacts various sectors, including health and education. It has far-reaching consequences for a nation's GDP, entrepreneurship, investment in training and education, foreign direct investment, and the development of critical domestic institutions like government, education, and healthcare. Some scholars argue against the concept of brain drain, suggesting that it oversimplifies the complexities of skills migration. They propose a more nuanced understanding that acknowledges both positive and negative effects. For instance, they argue that brain drain may be a temporary stage, potentially leading to a "brain gain" in the long term. Countries can benefit from enhanced levels of human capital formation spurred by the prospect of emigration, resulting in a net increase in education and skill levels (Crush & Hughes, 2009, p. 342).

Furthermore, skilled migrants often maintain strong ties with their home countries, contributing significantly to their economies through remittances. Remittances, representing a substantial portion of many nations' GDP, have a multiplier effect on economic growth. Highly skilled migrants are likely to send more significant amounts of money, often directed toward productive investments, further stimulating economic development. Beyond financial contributions, skilled migrants facilitate the exchange of knowledge and social capital between countries, fostering economic dynamism and institutional change. Through diaspora networks, migrants disseminate new technologies, management strategies, and trade opportunities, generating new possibilities for economic growth. However, establishing and utilizing these networks may be hindered by state restrictions in receiving countries and limitations on exchanging technical knowledge by companies (Crush & Hughes, 2009, p. 342).

Nonetheless, skilled migrants maintain close ties with their home countries, contributing to transnationalism, wherein individuals lead lives between multiple nations. Moreover, many migrants eventually return to their home countries, potentially leveraging their accumulated human, entrepreneurial, financial, and social capital to spur development. In some cases, return migration may be more effective in boosting development and wages than foreign assistance. Strategic immigration and development policies should aim to effectively manage human capital to benefit both sending and receiving countries. Policy responses include financial compensation for skills migration, restrictions on migration, changes to immigration policies, and efforts to retain skilled personnel. Overall, brain drain affects countries differently based on their levels of human capital and skills emigration. While it may positively impact countries with low human capital and emigration rates, it tends to have adverse growth effects in countries with higher rates of skills emigration (Crush & Hughes, 2009, p. 342).

<i>Positive effects</i>	<i>Negative effects</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provides rewarding opportunities to educated workers not available at home ● Inflow of remittances and foreign exchange ● Induced stimulus to invest in domestic education and individual human capital investments ● Return of skilled persons increases local human capital, transfer of skills, and links to foreign networks ● Technology transfer, investments, and venture capital by diasporas, aided by ICT ● Circulation of brains promotes integration into global markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Net decrease in human capital stock, especially those with valuable professional experience ● Reduced growth and productivity because of the lower stock of human capital ● Fiscal loss of heavy investments in subsidized education ● Remittances from skills migration may taper off after some time ● Reduced quality of essential services of health and education ● Students educated at government expense imply further drain ● Opportunities for short-term movement is seriously constrained by immigration policies of developed countries ● Causes increasing disparities in incomes in country of origin

Figure 11: Brain-Drain Balance Sheet (Wickramasekara, 2023, p. 7).

These positive and negative effects are summarized in the Brain-Drain Balance Sheet, indicating that migration is not a zero-sum game consisting of winners and losers, but a multifaceted complex phenomenon linked with different social mechanisms.

2.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF MIGRATION AND IDENTITY

Identity stands at the center of individual's psychology, and it affects almost every stage of the migration process. The migration decision is linked with the individual and social identity. These identities are transformed into new ones during the migration process. Adaptation is directly correlated with individual identity, and developing migration-specific networks and diasporas are correlated with social identities. Highly skilled migrants are considered to have a closer mentality and lifestyle to destination

countries. They are expected to adapt faster to destination countries. However, the language barrier, homesickness, and lack of attachment are also common among highly skilled migrants, making them universal during cultural shock and adjustment periods for migrants (Lysgaard, 1955, p. 129).

Social identity constitutes the segment of a person's self-perception that arises from their perceived affiliation with a specific social group. Initially formulated by social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s and 1980s, social identity theory introduced the concept of social identity to explain intergroup behavior (Tajfel & Turner, 2004, p. 33). Social identity theory examines the concept of the "in-group" and "out-group". It posits that identities are formed through a process of distinction that is relative or adaptable, depending on one's engagement in various activities. During the migration process, an individual constructs a migrant identity. Most of the time, this new identity merges with the previous identity of a person. If a person has loose bonds with their homeland culture, this new identity may become dominant. The interview participants expressed themselves as preserving their Turkish identity mostly, and some of them constructed new transnational and global migrant identities without referencing any particular location.

Although Turkey occupies a distinctive geographical and cultural crossroads between the East and the West, it has predominantly pursued a foreign policy aligned with Western interests throughout its contemporary era. This inclination towards the West is intricately tied to Turkey's formal adoption of a Western identity, which emerged as part of its modernization efforts following the Independence War. However, the emergence of Islamist movements has, at times, strained this Western identity, leading to occasional tensions between the secular/Kemalist establishment and Islamist factions within Turkey. The societal conflicts complicate citizens' identity development, creating liminality. Although Hofstede's 1991 study suggested that Turkish culture leaned towards collectivism, recent research indicates a more nuanced reality. It shows that contemporary Turkish culture exhibits both individualistic and collectivistic tendencies, defying easy categorization. Particularly among urban, highly educated, and young demographics, there is a noticeable shift towards individualism, indicating a departure from traditional collectivist norms. This evolution can be observed across different historical periods, notably since the 1980s when Turkey began experiencing rapid socio-economic changes driven by globalization and liberalization. Consequently, Turkish youth increasingly prioritize values such as freedom, self-respect, and

independence, emphasizing personal autonomy and challenge. This shift has led to a complex identity landscape where traditional values like respect for tradition and religiosity coexist with modern values such as personal agency and achievement. Negotiating between these conflicting values poses challenges for Turkish youth in forming their identities, leading many to seek a balance between tradition and modernity for a coherent sense of self (Morsunbul et al., 2016, p. 153). Some interview participants expressed their feeling that their values and lifestyles were closer to their destination countries compared to Turkey even a long time before migration.

In some situations, acquiring a new identity to resolve the identity crisis can be the main motive of migration. A European identity consists of two primary components: Europe as a cultural community characterized by shared values (cultural identity) and Europe as a political entity characterized by shared democratic principles (political identity). EU values encompass human dignity, freedom of movement, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and human rights (Prutsch, 2017, p. 5). U.S. values prioritize independence and self-determination, emphasizing the individual's role in shaping their identity and future through their choices, abilities, and endeavors. Other U.S. values include individualism, equality, diversity, unity, liberty, and self-governance (Althen et al., 2003, p. 5).

Researches indicate that individuals desiring to migrate, exhibit distinct personality traits that set them apart from those who prefer to remain in their home country. According to these findings, prospective migrants tend to display higher motivation levels for achievement and power and a strong orientation towards work. They are considered “adventurous and risk-taking” and “more energetic and enterprising than those left behind”. Conversely, they often demonstrate lower motivation for affiliation and less emphasis on family centrality than individuals who do not wish to emigrate. This migrant personality is one of the many factors influencing migratory behavior (Boneva & Frieze, 2002, p. 477). This observation also explains why governments and companies support migration to enrich their societies. The idea is also supported by the fact that migrants tend to be entrepreneurs. Developed countries praise entrepreneurship culture since it is one of the main drivers of development. Migrant founders of many successful US companies are the most important figures of this hypothesis. Immigrants also take key roles in senior management of top companies in the U.S. It is hard to conclude that Turkish migrants preferred their careers over their

family because of their frequent expressions of longing for their families and friends. However, it is safe to say that they are more motivated for achievements.

Childhood experiences deeply affect people's aspirations and a role model may cause an individual to migrate, if. A movie or a book can cause a longing for an idealized country, as in the case of [EK] and [NDÇ] "Bi' Gidene Soralım" episodes.

Emotional contagion is a social contagion characterized by the spontaneous transmission of emotions and associated behaviors. This phenomenon of emotional alignment can occur between individuals or within larger groups. Emotions can be shared among individuals through various means, whether implicitly or explicitly. For instance, deliberate thinking, analysis, and creativity have all been recognized as contributing to this occurrence (Hatfield et al., 1993, p. 96). The migration tendencies of the close circle of friends are stated to affect the migration decision of an individual by the study participants. The network effects combined with emotional contagion can contribute to the spread of migration culture. Our 'extended self' covers the digital World as well as the physical World. The lifestyles of physically separated people may interact in the digital World to recognize a commonality that may play an essential role in these people's migration decisions. Transnational digital migrant networks and social media increase the range and speed of the spread of ideas and emotions, which is one of the most critical aspects of technology in the context of psychology.

A significant portion, if not the majority, of prospective migrants participate in what we refer to as 'cognitive migration', wherein they actively envision themselves socially and emotionally situated in a specific location in the future—sometimes days, weeks, or even months before making a definitive decision to migrate physically. That is, quite often, our minds have migrated many times before our bodies do so (Kyle & Koikkalainen, 2011, p. 7). Cognitive migration (leaving is a personal possibility) stands between awareness (migration is an abstract possibility) and action (migration decision). Most highly skilled interview participants expressed that they imagined themselves living in foreign countries many times before migration. So, we can deduce that highly skilled migrants spend long periods of time in a cognitive migration state. Cognitive migration is a transition state that distinguishes highly skilled migration from forced migration and impelled migration.

Acculturation is the process of social, psychological, and cultural change that occurs when individuals balance and adapt to both their original culture and the dominant

culture of the society they live in (Berry, 2015, p. 520). Acculturation is also absorbed through emotions. So, positive and negative experiences affect the adaptation to different cultures. Even though highly skilled migrants seem advantageous for adaptation, cultural adaptation is also challenging in some situations. Yörükoğlu and Kara (2017) discover that although the majority of highly skilled Turks in Germany feel well-adjusted to their new environment, some face challenges such as securing housing and overcoming language barriers (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 33). The educational attainment of these skilled migrants does not exclude them from the difficulties associated with migration (Yanasmayan, 2016, p. 2041). According to Yanasmayan (2016), highly educated Turkish migrants in cities like Amsterdam, London, and Barcelona often find themselves at the lower end of "ethnic hierarchies" (Yanasmayan, 2016, p. 2041). Consequently, their national and religious backgrounds pose disadvantages for them (Yanasmayan, 2016, p. 2041).

Place attachment refers to the emotional connection of individuals, which forms with a particular location, representing the relationship between people and the spaces they inhabit. Personal experiences and perceptions heavily shape this bond. Scholars have extensively explored what qualities make a place significant enough to foster attachment. Schroeder distinguished between "meaning" and "preference," defining meaning as the array of thoughts, emotions, memories, and interpretations a landscape evokes, while preference pertains to the level of liking one landscape over another (Florek, 2011, p. 346).

Scholars distinguish "rootedness" and "sense of place" when discussing attachment. Sense of place develops through the cultivation of meaning and associations tied to constructed environments. In contrast, rootedness is an innate attachment to a place due to prolonged residency, often passed down through familial ties or historical connections. It is suggested that due to frequent migration patterns in recent centuries, some U.S. citizens may lack a deep sense of place attachment, having not had the opportunity to establish roots over generations (Scannell & Gifford, 2001, p. 1).

Migration should be examined in the context of place attachment since the already developed attachment to the homeland is sacrificed at the expense of a new future, bringing a new challenge to develop a new attachment with the destination. As the time spent in the homeland increases, the migration becomes more difficult and traumatic with the loss of homeland, leading to a grieving period.

There are two categories of losses: physical, which pertains to tangible losses such as the loss of a loved one, and symbolic, which involves abstract losses such as the loss of homeland, status, social environment, ego strength, and social identity, which immigrants commonly experience. Any of these losses can trigger the grief process. According to Parkes (1965), grief unfolds in four stages: numbness, yearning and searching, disorganization and despair, and reorganization. However, reaching the final stage of grieving, where an individual regains interest in life and moves forward despite the loss, is not always straightforward. If grief remains unresolved or mourning persists for an extended period, it may become internalized and lead to depression. In other words, individuals may become stuck in the second phase of the grieving process (Parkes, 1965, p. 13).

'Homesickness' refers to the distress experienced when away from home, characterized by persistent thoughts of home and attachment objects. Those affected often report a mix of depressive and anxious symptoms, exhibit withdrawn behavior, and struggle to concentrate on matters unrelated to home. This condition can affect both children and adults, whether on a long journey, or relocating to another country (Stroebe et al., 2015, p. 157). There are specific phrases for this situation in Turkish, such as "sıla hasreti" or "gurbette olmak" meaning homesickness, a strong, sad feeling of missing one's home (and often left-behind loved ones, such as family and friends) when physically away; a longing to return home; despondency caused by a longing for home and family; strong, sad feeling of missing one's home (and often left behind loved ones, such as family and friends) when physically away. Many interview participants stated their longing for Turkey, especially for their families and their friends. However, they also mentioned that their work orientation eases overcoming homesickness in the case of highly skilled migrants.

To summarize, migration is primarily a process that depends on capabilities, aspirations, and opportunities. A person's values of shape her aspirations and decisions; thus, migration is a highly subjective and personal experience, requiring qualitative analysis to support quantitative analysis in migration studies.

2.5 CULTURAL DISTANCE AND MIGRATION

The culture of a society includes shared values, beliefs, and everyday practices operating at meso and macro levels, which complements the psychological level. The culture encompasses a large variety of social dynamics, and it is often hard to describe the implicit parts. The cultural adaptation is the crucial part of the migration. Several scholars have attempted to describe distinctive aspects of several countries that represent an overview of their cultures. In the context of this study, it is expected to observe the unique nature of highly skilled migrants' ability to cultural adaptation.

The middle-income countries have the most significant emigration numbers, as described in the Myths about Migration and Reality section, because aspiration is not the only necessary constraint. The capability to migrate is another critical parameter - the economic, cultural, and social capital defined by Bourdieu underlines this capability. The cultural distance between source and destination communities also plays an essential role in migration decisions and the personal transformation process. Bhugra (2004) suggests that when sociocentric individuals from cultures prioritizing group identity migrate to egocentric societies, they may experience heightened feelings of alienation. Consequently, allocentric individuals from collectivist societies may encounter distinct forms of stress if they migrate to individualistic societies where their social connections are primarily with individualistic individuals. Similarly, idiocentric individuals from collectivist societies who migrate to individualistic societies and interact with idiocentric individuals may undergo unique experiences. Despite their cultural stereotyping and lack of representation of subcultures in society, cultural models may provide insights for understanding migration (Bhugra, 2004, p. 139).

2.5.1 Lewis Cultural Model

Lewis's cultural model classifies different cultures into three main categories (Lewis, 2003, p. 10): linear active, multi-active, and reactive.

Multi-active: extroverted, talks more than listens, people-oriented, social, has divided attention, can interrupt and be disruptive, shows affection and talks about personal matters, uses expressive body language and gestures, makes general plans, has a flexible approach to truth, and easily combines personal and professional life.

Reactive: introverted, listens more than talks, does not interrupt or disturb, composed, quiet, patient, good listener, uses limited body language, indirect, hides feelings, avoids

opposition, values reputation, introduces small changes, calm, punctual, people-oriented, prioritizes diplomacy over truth, takes personal goals seriously.

Linear-active: introverted, both listens and speaks, focuses attention, structured but firm and specific, uses limited body language and gestures, plans actions step by step, sometimes impatient, sticks to facts, relies on logic, values reputation, respects the law, prioritizes truth over diplomacy, values privacy, and separates personal and professional life.

Lewis created a comprehensive model based on these traits, placing all major nationalities on a single scale. Linear-active, multi-active, and reactive types are plotted on a graph forming the Culture Triangle.

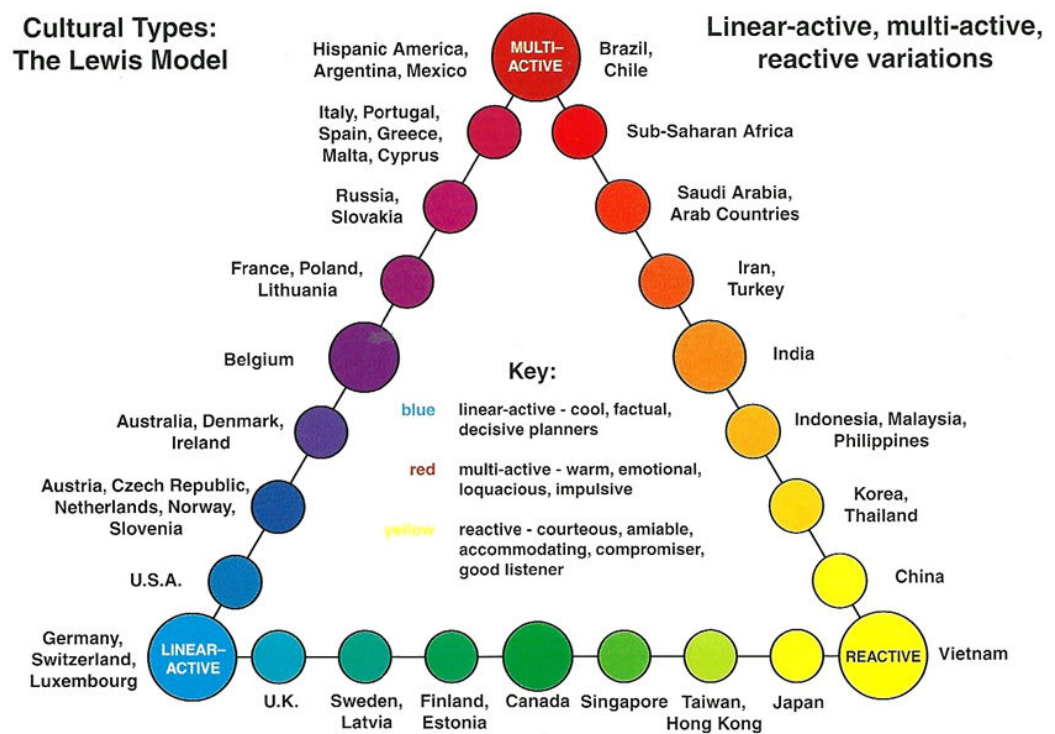


Figure 12: Lewis Cultural Model

(<https://en.empowerment-coaching.com/post/cultural-types-the-lewis-model>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

Turkey's geographic position also reflects its cultural in-betweenness between the West and the East. Turkish culture is considered between multi-active and reactive,

emphasizing collective culture and impulsive, emotional, and compromising individuals. Turkish people seem to develop new bonds quickly while the individualistic and more bureaucratic Western culture can sometimes be challenging for the Turkish migrants.

According to Lewis's cultural model, Turkey stands between East European and Arab countries (Lewis, 2003, p. 10). The strengths of Turkish culture are high cultural awareness, sincerity, and morality. The weaknesses of Turkish culture are that understanding functioning business in a democratic system is difficult for them, teamwork can be complex, and it is difficult to expect a sense of unity in an international environment. The weaknesses of skilled Turkish migrants diminish with the exposition to foreign cultures and Western-oriented education, making them favorable in multi-cultural business environment of destination countries.

2.5.2 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, developed by Geert Hofstede (1984), serves as a framework in cross-cultural psychology. It illustrates how a society's culture influences the values of its members and their corresponding behaviors. This framework is derived from factor analysis (Hofstede, 1984, p. 1).

Initially, Hofstede devised his model after conducting a factor analysis of the findings of a global survey of employee values conducted by IBM from 1967 to 1973. Over time, the model has undergone refinement. Initially, the theory proposed four dimensions for analyzing cultural values: individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance (referring to the strength of social hierarchy), and masculinity-femininity (about task orientation versus person orientation). Subsequent research by Gert Jan Hofstede and his teams expanded upon this, incorporating six key aspects of national culture for country comparison scales: power distance index (PDI), individualism versus collectivism (IDV), motivation toward achievement and success (MAS, previously masculinity versus femininity), uncertainty avoidance index (UAI), long-term orientation versus short-term normative orientation (LTO), and indulgence versus restraint (IVR).

The PDI measures the extent to which authority is accepted and followed, while the IDV assesses whether people prioritize team collaboration or individualism. The MAS reflects the values within a society, and the UAI indicates a nation's inclination to avoid ambiguity. The LTO expresses whether societies prioritize tradition or embrace modernity in their dealings with the present and future. Lastly, the IVR index compares

a country's willingness to delay gratification for long-term benefits against its preference for enjoying life without restraints in the present.



Figure 13: Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions for Turkey, Germany, Netherlands, and the USA
<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

If we compare Turkey with common migration destinations Germany, the Netherlands, and the USA, we can observe that Turkey has distinct power distance and uncertainty avoidance characteristics. Turkey exhibits a high score on the power distance dimension, indicating several characteristics of the Turkish approach: dependency, hierarchy, inaccessibility of superiors, and an ideal boss is seen as a paternal figure. Power is centralized, with managers depending on their superiors and adherence to rules. Employees typically anticipate clear directives and formal interaction with managers, expecting control and maintaining a formal attitude. Communication tends to be indirect, with selective information flow. Similar hierarchical structures are observed within family units, where the father typically assumes a patriarchal role to which others defer. This power distance characteristic of Turkey gives individuals a feeling that expressing their thoughts is hard and they cannot affect the decisions related to their personal lives, which may lead to a migration decision to take control of their lives (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool>. Accessed: 2.8.2024).

Turkey registers an 85 on the uncertainty avoidance dimension, indicating a strong inclination towards the need for laws and regulations. To mitigate uncertainty and anxiety, individuals rely heavily on rituals. While these rituals may appear religious to

foreigners, they often serve as traditional social customs employed in particular circumstances to alleviate tension. The ambiguity, indirectness, and uncertainty in society may cause individuals anxiety, leading to a migration decision to regulate their social lives (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool>. Accessed: 2.8.2024).

Scoring 46, Turkey is characterized as a collectivist society, placing significance on the collective "We." Individuals belong to groups such as families, clans, or organizations, where mutual support is exchanged for loyalty. Communication tends to be indirect, prioritizing harmony within the group and avoiding open conflicts. Relationships are founded on moral principles, which take precedence over task completion. Building trust requires an initial investment of time. Nepotism may be more prevalent, and feedback, even in professional settings, is typically communicated indirectly. These settings may be a problematic issue for individuals who are career achievement-oriented and want their boundaries to be clearly defined. Some individuals may resolve this issue by looking for a community where boundaries and roles are clearly defined (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

2.6 DIASPORAS

Since the late 1970s, the term "diaspora" has seen a surge in usage and interpretations. Generally, it can be defined by three main characteristics, each of which has older and newer connotations. Firstly, it pertains to the reasons behind migration or dispersion. Historically, it referred to forced dispersion, particularly associated with the Jewish experience, and more recently with Palestinians. Contemporary interpretations, however, encompass various forms of dispersal, including trade and labor migrations like the Chinese, Turks, and Mexicans. Secondly, it involves the relationship between the homeland and the destination. Older interpretations implied a return to a perceived homeland, often involving projects aimed at influencing or returning to the homeland. Newer interpretations focus on continuous linkages across borders, such as in migration-development connections, extending beyond the traditional origin-destination paradigm to include countries of onward migration and lateral connections. Lastly, the third characteristic concerns the integration of migrants and minorities into their new countries. Older views suggested limited social integration, with boundaries maintained vis-à-vis the majority group, often

through discrimination. Assimilation was seen as the dissolution of diaspora identity. Newer views highlight cultural hybridity resulting from dispersion, suggesting that diaspora maintains cultural distinctiveness vis-à-vis other groups even as integration occurs (Faist, 2010, p. 12).

Diasporas maintain connections to their countries of origin or heritage, often retaining legal identities and socioeconomic ties across multiple nations. This connectivity can significantly amplify positive impacts on global business, trade, cultural interchange, and diplomatic relationships. Additionally, it prompts governments to consider the influence of their diaspora populations in national development strategies and policies. The involvement of migrants and diasporas in society holds significant potential for development in both their countries of origin and host countries. They contribute to creating diverse and dynamic societies that embrace innovation and global engagement in trade, investment, skills, and knowledge exchange. Leveraging their knowledge of both the host and home countries, they serve as facilitators, intermediaries, and cost-effective resources for mutual benefit (IOM, 2013, p. 21).

In the country of origin, they serve as gateways to global labor markets, trade opportunities, business expansion, cultural interactions, and diplomatic engagements, often bringing back fresh ideas, expertise, and financial resources. In the host country, they foster trust and understanding among diverse cultures, values, beliefs, and political systems, laying a foundation for business ventures, trade relations, and cultural and diplomatic collaborations.

Moreover, the private sector offers access to untapped markets, opportunities to establish new branches, access to specialized skills, and the ability to conduct cross-border business operations. Governments have implemented various initiatives aimed at encouraging and supporting diaspora networking, especially regarding initiatives related to returning to or investing in their countries of origin. These efforts encompass a wide range of activities, from organizing business events and exhibitions both in the home countries and host countries, offering scholarships for diaspora children, providing platforms for competing for development project funding, supplying training resources for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), offering matching grants for investments in community development, establishing diaspora skills databases and job banks, and developing web portals and other IT tools to facilitate communication.

Innovative technologies and the widespread use of social media have significantly influenced diaspora relations with their home countries by bridging geographical distances. While affordable travel options allow for faster and more frequent movement in various directions, the Internet and social media platforms have facilitated the creation of numerous online diaspora networks, enabling real-time connectivity and fundamentally altering the dynamics of migration and mobility. This technological landscape enables diaspora members to contribute their expertise, experience, and skills to the development of their country or community of origin without necessitating physical return. Additionally, temporary contract workers can prolong their stay abroad while maintaining close ties with their families through digital means.

Digital diasporas offer new ways to map individual identities in the context of complex globalization and localization patterns, helping to avoid the limitations and negative impacts of identity politics. The term 'digital diaspora' is relational and functions on three levels: it is specific to the Internet, oriented around networks, and embedded in broader social practices. It also takes into account political, geographical, and historical specificities (Ponzanesi, 2020, p. 978).

Social network sites (SNS) of the Internet serve as "transnational social spaces," where communities are built on bonds of solidarity rooted in a shared sense of collective identity, fostering a deterritorialized 'community of feeling'. Platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp cater to the fundamental human need for interaction, dialogue, information exchange, and expressing concerns and experiences. This need is particularly pronounced among migrants, who often experience loneliness and disorientation before and after their journey, facing various adaptation challenges and bureaucratic procedures. These online groups offer both psychological and practical benefits to migrants. They provide moral support, serving as a source of encouragement and inspiration by highlighting group successes or mitigating narratives about encountered difficulties. Additionally, they offer concrete information about the migration process. Furthermore, Facebook and WhatsApp serve as privileged spaces for negotiating and constructing identity, creating a sense of 'community belonging' through shared content and personal experiences, and fostering trust among members. In these groups, individuals seek psychological refuge and build identities based on sentimental ties to their country of origin, often manifesting in nostalgia towards cultural or characteristic aspects. Despite this, users maintain a solid connection to their home country and frequently use their mother tongue to communicate, although integration into the new

context is also observed. In conclusion, migrant SNS groups maintain and even strengthen ties to cultural, political, economic, and linguistic roots despite physical separation from their places of origin. Thus, SNS serve as fluid, boundary-less environments where communities reinforce solidarity bonds based on shared collective identity, facilitating the circulation of ideas, symbols, and cultural materials, ultimately forging a deterritorialized 'community of feeling' (Mapelli, 2019, p. 1).

Possessing legal status, including citizenship, in both the host country and the country of origin, allows individuals to engage fully in the social and political activities of the nation that grants them this legal status. When transnational communities can hold multiple citizenships or nationalities, it enhances their mobility and facilitates bridge-building across societal, economic, and other dimensions.

Diasporas operate at many levels (psychological, sociological, cultural, integration, business, and political) and phases of migration (before, during, and after), having major impact on today's technology and information oriented World with the rise of digital diasporas. Turkish migrant community has raised its awareness in recent years, realizing the power of diasporas, which is another key finding of this research.

The community leaders among the Turkish diaspora are more influential in countries like Germany, where the Turkish community has a critical mass.

The Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU) Hesse state deputy İsmail Tipi stated, "There are three keys that immigrants must have to open the door of integration/harmony/participation in Germany. These are language (German), qualification (specialization in a subject), and social participation (like volunteering in associations, fire departments)". Tipi added that "Immigrants who achieve these will have no problems participating in life in Germany, and added that it is possible to get critical positions in all kinds of institutions and organizations (including political parties). The lack of participation in social institutions can be the only criticism that can be noted about the skilled migrants. The language barrier seems to be the major obstacle hindering this interaction. The dual citizenship issue is especially a blocking issue for countries like Germany to benefit from skilled migrants' capacity" (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 36).

Officials of the "Turkish Architects and Engineers Union Germany (TMMB)" stated that there is (usually) no discrimination against people with high professional competence related to their ethnic origin. In addition, the authorities underlined that profession is the

basis of harmony and profession facilitates the adoption of the language, lifestyle, and culture of the destination country (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 33).

Turkey needs to make serious investments so that highly skilled Turkish immigrants do not flee their country but leave and return later or stay in touch with Turkey, even from a distance, and Turkey can benefit from it. CDU member Olcayto Dingersu stated, "Turkey should be made attractive not only in terms of job opportunities, but also in terms of justice, education, urbanization, and other social aspects". He stated, "This can be achieved through developments in all kinds of 'human rights' dimensions" (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 38).

Dr. Yaşar Aydın (The Social Democratic Party of Germany - SPD) underlined, "If relations between Germany and Turkey are to be developed with the help of highly skilled Turkish immigrants, science and politics must be kept strictly separate. For example, at the Goethe Institutes, a long-established institution in Germany, one can find people from all views, regardless of which party is in power, because the concept of 'participation' is essential for German science centers; but unfortunately, the situation in Turkey is going in the opposite direction" (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 38).

Kerim Arpad (German-Turkish-Forum - DTF) emphasized, "The importance of us, as the Turkish community living in Germany, being able to influence the civil society in Turkey from abroad". He stated, "This can be achieved not only in terms of political parties, but also in the form of collaborations between partner cities, associations and universities" (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 36).

Similarly, Memet Kılıç (The Greens Party) stated, "The development of the Republic of Turkey in the future will be with the support of highly skilled citizens abroad". Kılıç pointed out, "Scientific and important studies can only be carried out abroad and together with abroad, without being caught in any political contradictions and turmoil" (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 36).

Turkey can benefit from the newly forming skilled diaspora. Caner Aver, an expert on Skilled immigration, integration, and migration research, skills transfer, local politics (ZfTI), stated, "The issue of highly skilled Turkish immigrants may come to the agenda more within the scope of the development of economic relations between the two countries". He also noted that "The most important reason is that highly skilled Turkish immigrants are less dogmatic and have a more positive approach to living with a dual identity. Sharing that this is tried to be encouraged, but when government policies are

involved, institutions are inevitably negatively affected by this". Aver emphasized that "Harmonization/integration/participation studies should be carried out through completely independent Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)" (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 36).

Gökay Sofuoğlu (The Turkish Community in Germany - TGD) stated, "In order for the relations between Germany and Turkey to be improved with the help of highly skilled Turkish immigrants, the two countries should agree on common values". He added, "I was not sure that this is desired. Does Germany really want Turkey to develop? On the other hand, does Turkey really want to be a country that respects human rights at EU standards?" (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 37).

There are other associations in different countries operating in business level such as European Turkish Businessmen and Industrialists Association (ATİAD - Avrupa Türk İş İnsanları ve Sanayicileri Derneği), the Turkish-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TD-IHK - Türk-Alman Ticaret Ve Sanayi Odası) and the World Turkish Businessmen Foundation (DÜTİV - Dünya Türk İşadamları Vakfı).

Several institutionalized associations are operating in various contexts in the United States, which can provide models for other diasporas in other countries (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>: Accessed: 20.08.2024):

American Association of Teachers of Turkic Languages (AATT): AATT members are teachers of Turkic languages, universities, including language schools in government services, and other related educational institutions. AATT is dedicated to enhancing study, criticism, and research in the field of Turkic languages, literature, and linguistics (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>: Accessed: 20.08.2024).

American Friends of Turkey (AFOT): It is a charitable organization with programs and activities to promote greater public awareness and understanding of Turkey's history, culture, and modern-day society, and in doing so, to build bridges between the American and Turkish peoples (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>: Accessed: 20.08.2024).

American Research Institute (ARIT): ARIT is a non-profit educational institution dedicated to promoting North American and Turkish research and exchanges related to

Turkey in all humanities and social sciences fields (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

American Turkish Council (ATC): ATC is a business association which is dedicated to effectively strengthening US-Turkish relations through the promotion of commercial, defense, technology, and cultural relations (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

American Turkish Society (ATS): ATS aims to serve corporations and individuals interested in Turkey and U.S.-Turkish relations (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Anatolian Artisans (AnARt): AnARt is a small but growing organization supplemented by a network of expert consultants (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Assembly of Turkish American Association (ATAA): The founding principle of ATAA was the need to create cohesion and cooperation between the large numbers of social/cultural Turkish American organizations around the US (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Atatürk Society of America (ASA): ASA is an independent non-profit organization that promotes Atatürk's political legacy as a contribution to universal freedom and peace (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Bridge to Turkiye (BTF): Bridge to Turkiye Fund was established to make a difference, improve life, and cultivate social change for the common good (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Institute of Turkish Studies (ITS): ITS is the only non-profit, private educational foundation in the U.S. that supports the development of Turkish Studies in American higher education (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Intercollegiate Turkish Students Society (ITSS): ITSS aims to increase communication and cooperation among Turkish student associations in the U.S. and Canada

(<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Turkish American Alliance for Fairness (TAAF): TAAF is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting public understanding and fair treatment of issues of concern to Turkish Americans, public education, and other civil activities in related matters (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Turkish American Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Maritime Trade (TACCIM): TACCIM is a non-profit organization that promotes opportunities to increase business, trade, and investments between the U.S. and Turkey (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Turkish American Scientists and Scholars Association (TASSA): TASSA is an independent, non-profit, and non-political organization that aims to increase communication and cooperation among its members and their counterparts (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Turkish Cultural Foundation (TCF): TCF aims to promote and preserve Turkish culture and heritage worldwide, through original programs and cooperation with like-minded organizations (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Turkish Philanthropy Funds (TPF): TPF was created by individuals who recognized the importance of assisting donors eager to give back to Turkey (<https://tr.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/policy-history/turkish-american-associations/>): Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Both destination and origin countries benefit from the highly skilled migrants more as they have social, technical, and managerial capabilities to act as a mediator between these countries and create win-win situations enabling transnational valuable flows besides migrants. Trust is a vital issue in building this fabric. Flexibility and adopting new technological, lifestyle, and workspace trends are other key elements to attract migrant capital and power.

Diasporas are essential for migrants to support each other, develop collective power towards a mission, and transfer valuable experiences and networks to others. There

are examples of these global initiatives and NGOs indicating that the highly skilled migrants are organized, seeking ways to create value for Turkey and still feel connected to their homeland:

“Bi’ Dünya Kıvılcım Association” (A reference to a quote of Atatürk, who said to early skilled migrants of Turkey, “We send you as sparks, you must return as fierce flames!”): Bi’ Dünya Kıvılcım (Turkish for “A World of Sparks”) Association, aims to bring together Turks who have completed at least high school education in Turkey and then go abroad to continue higher education or working life, under one NGO. They prefer to redefine the highly skilled migrant profile, which is often evaluated in the context of “brain drain”, as “brain power”. They want to contribute to Turkey and humanity by bringing together Turkish brain power spread worldwide and producing projects with relevant organizations in Turkey in the fields of science, technology, culture, and arts.

“Enlightenment Pioneers of the Republic” is a workgroup of “Bi’ Dünya Kıvılcım Association”. They hold up a mirror to the story of a generation who bid farewell with their words and who laid the foundations of the modern Republic of Turkey when they returned. They express their aim as follows: “Today, as Turkish young people with higher education abroad, we want to properly carry the torch of the Republic that we received from the Sparks to the next generations”. This project can be considered as an inspiration to the modern migrant generation of Turkey to continue the highly skilled migrant culture supporting the development and prosperity of their homeland, Turkey.

Global Turks par Excellence: The Global Turks par Excellence Project, created and led by Ayşegül Dicle Aydın, in partnership with AmCham Turkey and YASED (International Investors Association), aims to highlight the ever-accelerating level of accomplishment among Turkish professionals. The project started with a research study reaching out to “1500 Professional Global Turks” worldwide who owned acclaimed cross-border assent. The research that lasted two years, worked through a detailed leadership survey and collected 1000 surveys, from 5 continents and 60 countries. The research targeted individuals with triumphant international success, incorporating diverse sectors, expertise areas, and critical functions. In its second chapter, the Global Turks par Excellence Project aims to establish a Global Turkish Business Community and aims to create an executive Leadership Development Academy to develop the Turkish Leaders of the 21st Century.

Turks in Tech: Turks in Tech is a Global Turkish Tech Community whose goal is to have 20 Unicorns founded by Turkish Founders in 20 Years. They organize network events all over the World, including in San Francisco, New York, Toronto, London, Berlin, Amsterdam, Istanbul, and Ankara.

2.7 IMPORTANT HISTORICAL EVENTS AFTER YEAR 2000

The highly skilled migration cannot be studied independently of the historical context. This thesis aims to capture the historical perspective of the highly skilled migration of Turkey after the year 2000. The most important historical events that happened over the World, which contributed to global and Turkey's migration for this period, can be summarized as follows:

- 9/11 Terrorist Attacks on U.S. in 2001. This event is a turning point for the relations of the U.S. and Western countries with Islamic countries, giving rise to Islamophobia. International student applications and enrollments declined after 9/11, which the Council on Graduate Schools attributed to visa policy changes, prospective students' perception that the United States was less welcoming, and increased global competition for students. A recent report found that the challenging social and political climate continues to negatively impact U.S. colleges and universities' efforts to recruit international students and companies to recruit international skilled workers. (<https://www.boundless.com/research/how-9-11-changed-the-u-s-immigration-system/>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)
- The Gölcük Earthquake 1999 led to significant loss of life and property, while the 2001 Turkish economic crisis was a financial downturn characterized by a stock market crash and the devaluation of the Turkish lira. This crisis stemmed from longstanding political and economic issues plaguing Turkey for years. Turkey's economic instability and short-term coalition governments led to a new political party, the Justice and Development Party - JDP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP in Turkish). Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was elected as Prime Minister of Turkey in 2003 with the promise of a modern democratic Turkey balanced between conservative, religious roots and partner/candidate member of the EU.
- The movement of skilled and highly skilled European citizens to Turkey, and Turkish citizens to the EU, has increased since the 1999 Helsinki Summit, when Turkey was

granted candidate status for EU membership (Sánchez-Montijano et al., 2018, p. 23).

- The expansion of the Internet played a pivotal role in fostering globalization during the decade, facilitating rapid communication among individuals worldwide. Social networking platforms emerged as a novel means for people to maintain connections and build networks across distant locations, provided them Internet access. The first social networking sites were LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, established in the early 2000s. They reached 830 million, 2.9 billion, 2.3 billion, and 550 million users, respectively.
- In the early years of the decade, there was a notable and long-anticipated rise of economic powerhouses in Asia, particularly India and China, which experienced double-digit growth for much of the period. This economic surge contributed to their increasing dominance on the global economic stage. However, the rapid growth of emerging economies vis-a-vis developed nations triggered some protectionist tensions during this period. They played a role in escalating energy and food prices towards the end of the decade. The latter part of the decade was marked by a worldwide economic downturn, which originated with the housing and credit crisis in the United States in late 2007. This crisis led to the collapse of major banks and financial institutions, sparking a global recession that commenced in the United States and had repercussions across much of the industrialized World.
- The 2010s bring significant societal changes to Turkey. Gezi Parkı events started as an action to prevent the Government of the Republic of Turkey from non-legal reconstruction of the Artillery Barracks in Taksim Gezi Parkı, located in the Beyoğlu district of Istanbul, within the framework of the Taksim Pedestrianization Project in 2013. With the interventions and the government's insistent statements regarding the construction, the protests turned into anti-government demonstrations. The protests spread to other provinces of Turkey, especially to metropolitan cities such as Ankara and Izmir (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gezi_Park_protests. Accessed: 24.07.2024).
- From 1999 to 2013, there was an upward trend in the movement of highly skilled EU citizens and young returnees or migrants of Turkish origin from the EU to Turkey. This increase was driven by positive political, societal, and economic developments in Turkey, such as its EU accession process, democratization, and a relatively

healthy economy, alongside adverse societal and economic conditions in the EU, like the economic crisis, high unemployment, and xenophobic and discriminatory attitudes. Although legal frameworks and policies for highly skilled migration were not fully cohesive on both sides, their existence still acted as a positive driver. According to Sánchez-Montijano, Kaya, and Sökmen (2018), after 2013, characterized by the Gezi Parkı protests and the government's gradual shift from democratization to authoritarian tendencies, the rapid rise in security concerns, political and economic instability in Turkey reversed this trend (Sánchez-Montijano et al., 2018, p. 23).

- Irregular immigration to Turkey peaked between 2014 and 2019, having a significant impact on society. Before the 2019 local elections in Turkey, refugees and immigration were not significant issues. However, these topics have shaped party positions due to increasing economic challenges and the political parties' focus on migration since August 2021. The media significantly amplifies the importance of migration. Anti-immigrant parties gain visibility, legitimacy, prestige, and recognition through media coverage. The emphasis on migration in Turkey grew notably in 2022 and 2023, driven by the rise of anti-immigrant political parties that brought the migration issue to the forefront (Balta et al., 2023, p. 7). Highly skilled emigration has also gained attention after 2016 in media and public discussions for being more influential on Turkey's highly skilled human capital.
- The coup attempt in 2016 was another societal trauma for almost every citizen of Turkey. On July 15, 2016, a faction within the Turkish Armed Forces, known as the Peace at Home Council, attempted a coup against state institutions, including the government and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. They tried to take control of various locations in Ankara, Istanbul, Marmaris, and others, such as the Asian side entrance of the Bosphorus Bridge, but were ultimately unsuccessful as loyalist forces and civilians defeated them. The government claimed to have evidence linking the coup leaders to the Gülen movement, a group designated as a terrorist organization by Turkey and led by Fethullah Gülen, a Turkish businessman and Islamic scholar living in exile in Pennsylvania. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_Turkish_coup_attempt. Accessed: 24.07.2024)
- The 2017 Turkish constitutional amendment referendum included the abolition of the current parliamentary system and the introduction of the presidential system, the elimination of the office of the prime minister, the increase of the number of deputies

in the parliament from 550 to 600, and changes in the structure of the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK). The changes were accepted by public voting of Turkish citizens, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was elected president. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017_Turkish_constitutional_referendum. Accessed: 24.07.2024)

- The Turkish economic crisis continues in Turkey and has international repercussions due to the financial contagion effect. The crisis started with the rapid increase of the dollar in 2018, which continued until 2023. The country's inflation was 20.3 percent in 2018, reaching 64 percent in 2022. The crisis became visible in 2018, with the lira losing significant value in fluctuations. It reached a more profound dimension in the next stage with unpaid debts and economic contraction. These main cornerstones, and other social and political incidents, are considered a deviation from Turkey's established political, democratic, and economic systems, causing unrest for some groups in society. The Democracy Index published by the Economist Group is an index measuring the quality of democracy worldwide, which confirms this situation, indicating a continuous decline in Turkey's democracy index in the last ten years. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_economic_crisis_\(2018%E2%80%93current\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_economic_crisis_(2018%E2%80%93current)). Accessed: 2.8.2024)
- COVID-19 emerged as one of the most significant threats since World War II and is considered the century's most severe global health crisis. Originating in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, in December 2019, the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was officially named by the World Health Organization (WHO). Its rapid spread worldwide presented formidable health, economic, and social challenges across the globe. The pandemic precipitated a global economic downturn, prompting numerous countries to enforce full or partial lockdown measures to curb the spread of the virus. These lockdowns reduced markedly global economic activity, leading to operational cutbacks or closures for many businesses and job losses. The impact was felt in the manufacturing, service, agriculture, food production, education, sports, and entertainment industries. Furthermore, the outlook for World trade deteriorated significantly in the forthcoming years (Naseer et al., 2023, p. 1). Some companies switched partially or fully to remote working. Many countries deploy economic support mechanisms by aiding individuals or companies. This monetary expansion leads to inflation. The COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread disruption

to the global economy, resulting in the most significant economic crisis in over a century. This crisis exacerbated inequalities both within countries and among nations. Early indications suggest that the recovery process will be uneven, mirroring the initial economic effects of the pandemic. Emerging economies and socioeconomically disadvantaged groups are expected to require more time to recover from the income and livelihood losses inflicted by the pandemic (The World Bank, 2022, p. 50).

- Until the 1990s, Turkish immigrants were primarily motivated by political and economic factors. While emigration from Turkey to the EU slowed due to Turkey's economic stability in the early 2000s, it increased again towards the second decade. Between 2008 and 2018, migration networks and freedom levels played significant roles in determining the EU destinations of Turkish migrants. The size of a Turkish migration stock in an EU country notably increased the number of Turkish immigrants receiving long-term residence permits based on familial ties. Additionally, the greater the disparity in freedom levels (measured as freedom from fear due to security concerns) between an EU country and Turkey, the higher the number of Turkish immigrants. Dudu and Rojo (2022) stated that these findings confirm that the decline in Turkey's democracy level, resulting from state interventions and authoritarian policies, is a crucial factor influencing destination choice. Specifically, the impact of a potential increase in the difference between Turkey's and the EU-28's freedom levels outweighs the effect of a potential rise in the Turkish migration stock in Europe. Thus, security-based (democracy level) and social (migration networks) drivers have become increasingly relevant in the twenty-first century due to changes in the profile of Turkish immigrants (Dudu & Rojo, 2022, p. 155).
- The Russia-Ukraine conflict, which started in February 2014, turned into a full-scale invasion and occupation of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022. This war resulted in the migration of Ukrainians to Europe and changed the immigrant profile of the EU. The OECD report titled "What We Know About The Skills And Early Labor Market Outcomes Of Refugees From Ukraine" (2023) indicates that a significant portion of adults possess vocational or academic qualifications that can fulfill a percentage of the highly skilled migrant job market demands of the EU (OECD, 2023, p. 2).
- Germany is considered the economic and growth locomotive of the EU and a major destination of highly skilled Turkish migrants. Germany's gross domestic product

(GDP) has lost its positive trend in recent years. This trend, in connection with lowered wages and the rise of far-right, triggered the consideration of highly skilled migrants for alternative destinations. The German government devised the Skilled Labor Immigration Act in 2020 and 2024 to cope with this issue and neutralize its effects (<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/-/2248702>. Accessed: 4.8.2024)

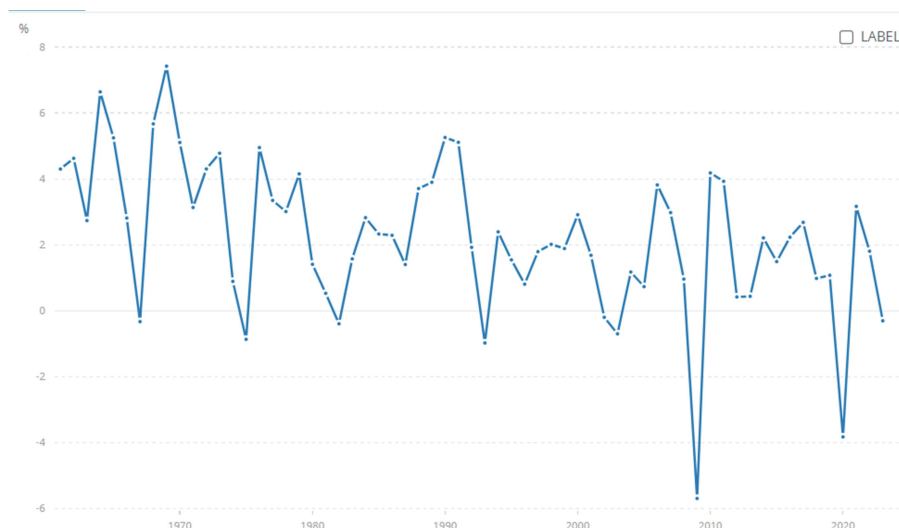


Figure 14: GDP growth (annual %) – Germany

(<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=DE>, Accessed: 2.8.2024)

- Since 2016, there has been a notable rise in Turkish government policies aimed at leveraging skilled labor for Turkey's socio-economic development. These include initiatives to encourage skilled return migration, strategies to engage the diaspora, and reforms in education and training programs for the local workforce (Kilic & Biffl, 2022, p. 2051). Brain gain initiatives of institutions such as TÜBİTAK, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı - YTB), and Higher Education Institution (Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu – YÖK) have had a short-term and limited impact (Elveren & Toksöz, 2018, p. 23).
- At the regional level, if the civil war in Syria ends, Turkey may recall and revisit the benefits of Europeanization experienced in the early 2000s. These benefits include freedom of speech, reconciliation with the past, social cohesion, economic stability, the end of the military legacy, and, most importantly, the rule of law. Such positive developments in Turkey, the EU, and the region could lead to the continued prosperity of Turkey's economy and democracy, resulting in increased mobility of

skilled and highly skilled European citizens to Turkey and vice versa (Sánchez-Montijano et al., 2018, p. 23).

2.8 MAIN MIGRATION STUDIES OF TURKEY

Turkey's geographical location on World migration routes and the intense external migration that emerged with the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire due to changing employment opportunities and the change in the mode of production after 1950. It was exposed to the influence of increasing internal migration movements due to terrorist incidents after 1980, and this pressure continues in some way. In addition, reasons such as the deployment of educational organizations in cities and policies to encourage investment, and the formation of differences in social life between cities, and rural settlements, have made cities attractive and pushed large population masses towards cities. It is seen that international population movements, which started similarly and for similar reasons, gained significant momentum after the 1990s. This increase in international population movements shows that the issue of migration will gain more importance over time in Turkey, which acts as a transition between the wealthy West and the immigrant-producing Middle East (Çağlar, 2018, p. 29).

The paradigm change from one based on nationalism and the nation-state to one founded on transnationalism and the globalized World challenges Turkey's citizens and government. Several paradigmatic shifts since the early 20th century have initiated a process of revisionism regarding Turkey's international migration policies. For the first half of the 20th century, nation-building concerns determined the nature of emigration and immigration flows in the country as the departure of non-Muslims and the arrival of Turks and Muslims dominated the flows. In the mid-20th century, migration policies focused on the economic gains from emigration flows: labor migration to Europe was seen as a tool for reducing unemployment, obtaining remittances, and acquiring skills. Starting in the early 1980s, Turkey was faced with flows of immigrants with different national, ethnic, and religious backgrounds: regular and irregular labor migrants, transit migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. In the 1980s and early 1990s, no noticeable policy concern on emigration and immigration issues were seen in politics. From the mid-1990s until recent times, the Turkish state's position regarding international migration has broken away from the approach of "ignorance and neglect" that dominated the 1980s and early 1990s: both emigration- and immigration-related issues

have gained importance in the public policy-making agenda. Today, in the early 21st century, Turkey is confronted with very dynamic questions about the consequences of emigration and immigration, and how various migration patterns can be managed by policymakers. It appears that the country's migration policy-making processes are now caught up between "the politics of the past" (nationalist legacies) and "the politics of the future" (globalist trajectories) (İçduygu & Aksel, 2013, p. 174).

The migration of minorities was the dominant mechanism during the first years after the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923. There were also some students sent abroad for education who are expected to return to lead the cultivation of this young Republic. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk said: "This nation and country are in great need of knowledge and wisdom; then something as natural and necessary as protecting those who have received an education and a diploma. We are obliged and will send our children to Europe, America, and everywhere else to receive other education, training, knowledge, and science. We have to go and learn science, expertise, and art, wherever it is" (Yörükoğlu & Kara, 2017, p. 31). The best sentence reflecting this model is Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's message to one of the students, Sadi Irmak, "I send you as a spark; you must return as a flame". Guest workers, who went to Germany and other European countries in the 1960s, are the largest group of emigrant people. However, most of them did not return to Turkey and brought their families to their destination countries as opposed to this "guest" label. These people have always preserved their ties with their home country, Turkey. They spent their holidays in their homeland, sent remittances to Turkey, and planned to live in Turkey after their retirement. Political events/instabilities and a lack of freedom during the 1980s led to another migration wave, including artists and writers. The emigrant profile, which evolved into skilled emigrants in the 2000s, consists of students, white-collar skilled workers, entrepreneurs, and investors. This migration transformation is in parallel with post-industrial and neo-colonial theories.

In studies conducted in the late 1960s and early 1970s, low wages in Turkey were seen as the main reason for emigrating or not returning. Other factors that came to the fore in these studies were the more significant opportunities for specialization abroad, the management approach based on hierarchical authority in Turkey, and political pressure. Studies in the 2000s both examined the issue of brain drain more comprehensively and utilized some statistical methods. In addition to low wages and career concerns, these studies highlighted that science and academics were not

valued enough in Turkey, the lack of freedom of expression, poor workplace conditions, and political instability were the main driving factors. In the last decade, while the difference in living standards and income levels between Turkey and the country of residence abroad became secondary factors in decisions to emigrate/not to return, political instability, limited academic freedom, and problems related to science policy and the higher education system became primary reasons. Therefore, for researchers abroad, the problems of academic freedom and academic opportunities in general and the negativity created by political instability far outweigh the appeal of economic growth (Elveren & Toksöz, 2018, p. 21).

The recent migration trend, known as the "new wave" and named after a Facebook group called "New Wave in Berlin", created in 2016, is distinguished from Turkey's labor migration of the 1960s - 1970s and the refugee influx following the 1980 military coup. Despite their varied political backgrounds, these new wave migrants share two key characteristics: they oppose the AKP government, unlike many established Turkish diaspora groups such as the Union of International Democrats, and they are predominantly well-educated, with many being notable figures in Turkish civil society. From a structural viewpoint, the new migration wave has influenced Turkish politics in three significant ways. First, it has strained Turkey's diplomatic relations with Western countries, especially Germany. Second, it alters Turkey's demographic structure, often described as a brain drain. Lastly, it is transforming the composition of Turkey's diaspora. However, the AKP government has introduced various programs to convince highly skilled citizens to remain in Turkey or to encourage highly skilled return migration. An example of these initiatives is the National Leading Researchers Program. Research is still needed to determine precisely how and to what extent the departure of new wave migrants will impact Turkey's domestic population structure in the long term (Tuncel, 2021, p.1).

The identities of Turks in Germany and other Western European countries often blend elements that seem to exclude each other, such as being European and Muslim. They create various 'transnational social spaces,' including ethnic business riches and transnational media organizations. Nermin Abadan Unat describes the evolving nature of the Turkish population in Germany during the latter half of the 20th century, transitioning from 'guest workers' to 'transnational citizens' (Abadan Unat, 2011, p. 5). Zeynep Yanasmayan, in her research on highly educated Turkish migrants in Spain, the Netherlands, and the UK, observes a more recent transformation from 'guest

workers' to 'global talent'. This shift is also evident in the growing body of literature on highly skilled Turks in Germany over the past 20 years (Elveren & Toksöz, 2018, p. 1-26; Elveren & Toksöz, 2019, p. 33-59; Tansel & Güngör, 2003, p. 52–69; Sunata, 2011, p. 1-258). Researchers have identified several reasons for the emigration of highly skilled Turks, including gender inequality in Turkey and better educational and job opportunities in countries like Canada and Germany. Members of this new migrant group often refer to themselves as 'the new wave,' distinguishing themselves from the blue-collar migrants who moved to Germany half a century ago (Filiz, 2024, p. 4). As noted in the psychological aspects of migration section, the highly skilled migrants may also face difficulties in adaptation, and they may sometimes find themselves at the bottom of the 'ethnic hierarchies' (Yanasmayan, 2016, p. 2041).

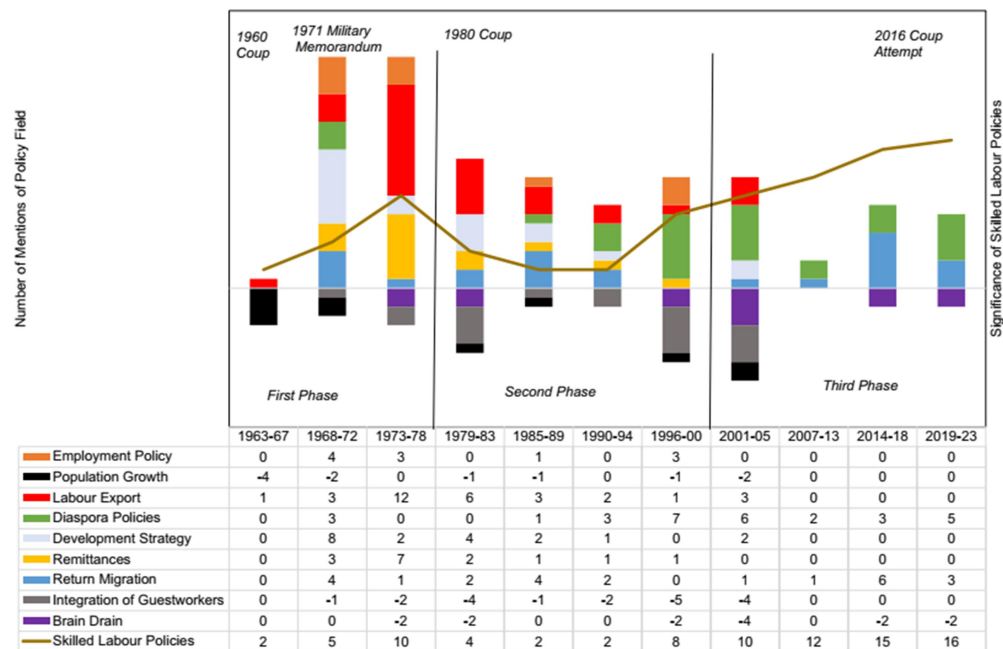


Figure 15: The three phases of Turkish migration policy in the National Development Plans and the weight given to highly skilled labor policies (Kilic & Biffi, 2022, p. 2051)

Three distinct periods in Turkey's migration policy history can be identified. The first period, during the 1960s, focused on encouraging emigration to reduce population pressure and boost economic growth through remittances. The second period, from the 1970s to 2000, emphasizes diaspora policies related to Europe, recognizing the Turkish diaspora's role in economic development and international relations. Since 2000, Turkish migration policy has shifted towards promoting the immigration of highly skilled individuals, aiming to advance technological progress and foster a knowledge

society supported by intellectual elites. This shift has been accompanied by institutional and legal reforms (Kilic & Biffl, p. 2047).

Period	Dominant Types of International Migration	Dominant State Ideology Related to Migration
1923-1960	Emigration of non-Muslims Immigration of Muslims and/or Turks	Nationalism/Statism
1960-1980/90	Labour Emigration (Muslims and/or Turks)	Developmentalism/Liberalism
1990-2010	Immigration of foreigners (non-Muslims and/or non-Turks)	Neo-liberal Institutionalism

Figure 16: An Overview of the International Migration Transition of Turkey (İçduygu, 2014, p.10).

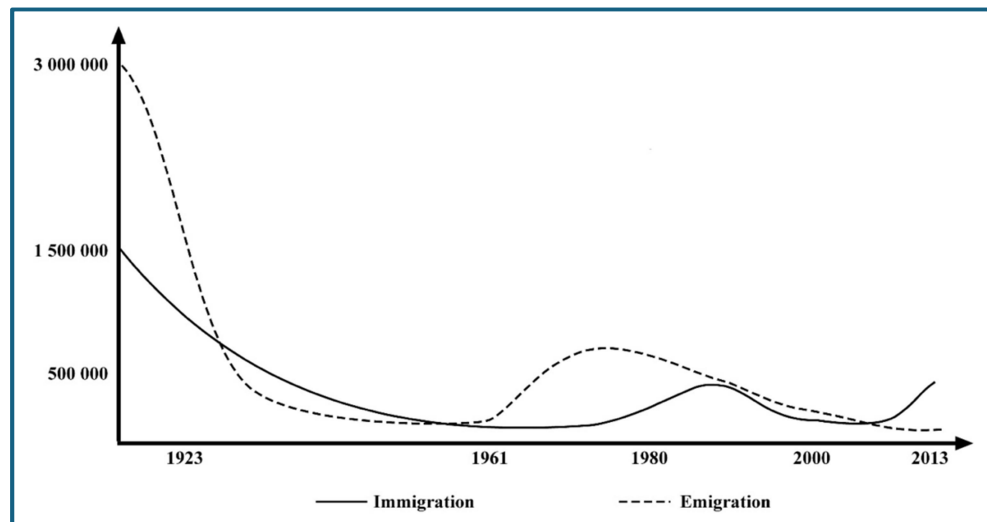


Figure 17: Various Stages of the Migration Transition in Turkey, 1923 - 2013 (İçduygu, 2014, p. 10).

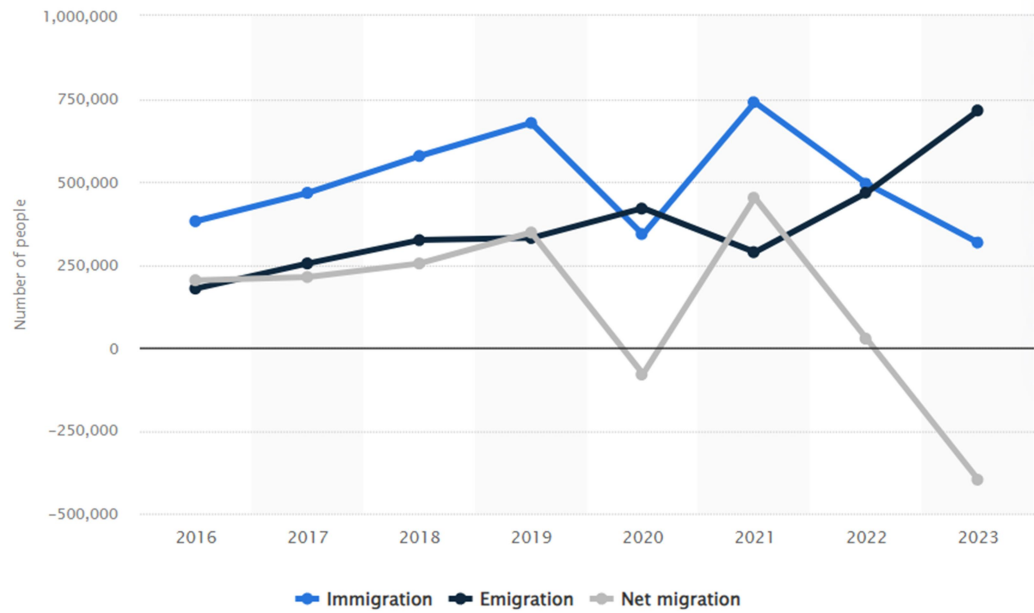


Figure 18: Immigration and Emigration of Turkey (2016 - 2023)

(<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1484002/turkey-net-migration/> Accessed: 13.08.2024)

Regarding migration statistics, Turkey had an emigration boom around 1960 – 1980 because of European Guest Workers. The incoming migrants were more than outgoing migrants in the 2016 - 2022 period if we discard the effects of COVID-19 pandemics. However, the net migration decreased after 2021, and emigration has a continuous rising trend. Furthermore, the number of outgoing young people constitute most of the emigrants. So, we can say that Turkey is losing its young talents and intellectual capital.

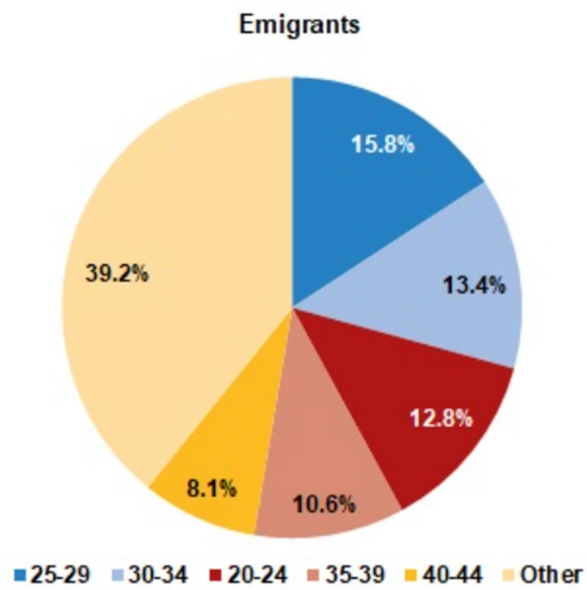


Figure 19: Age Distribution of Turkish Emigrants for 2022

(<https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=International-Migration-Statistics-2022-49457&dil=2> Accessed: 13.08.2024)

Several drivers are correlated with migration. However, researchers grouped these into four main factors: security, labor market, social, and geographic.

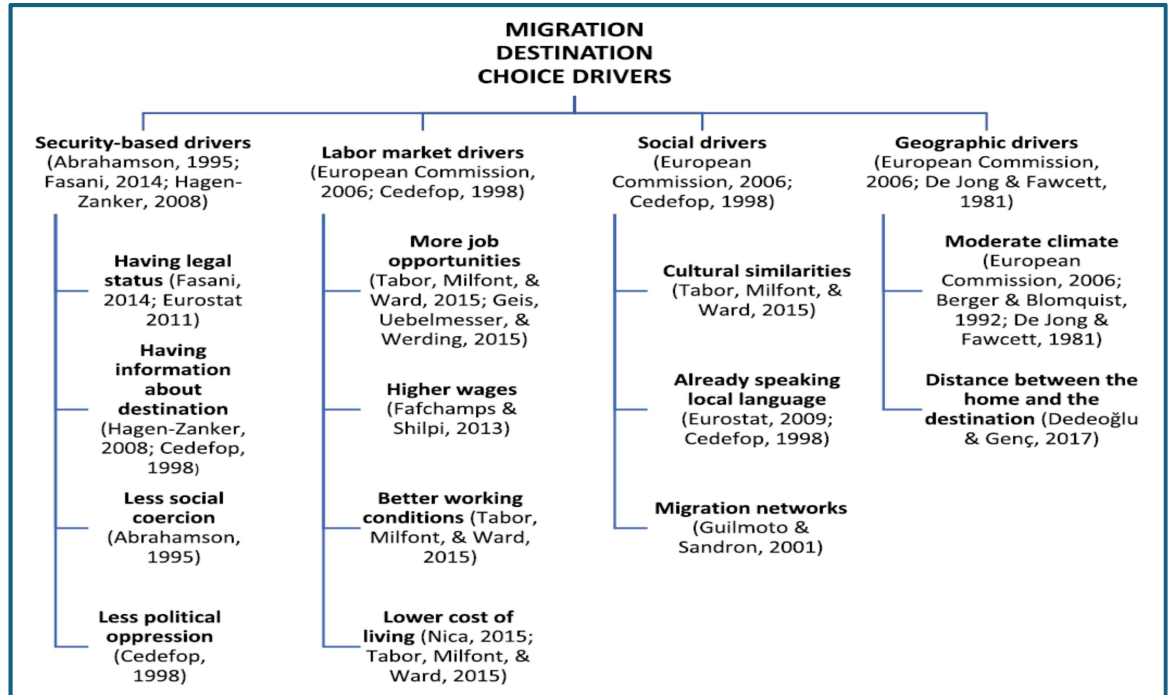


Figure 20: Migration Destination Choice Drivers (Dudu & Rojo, 2022, p. 142).

The findings of the interviews of this study with highly skilled migrants give similar results in this study. Labor market drivers (especially more job opportunities and better working conditions) are significant causes of highly skilled Turkish migration. Security-based drivers (having legal status, having information about the destination, less social coercion, and less political oppression) and social drivers (cultural similarities, already speaking local language and migration networks) becoming more dominant causes of highly skilled Turkish migration in recent years. Distance between the home and the destination is especially important for middle aged late migrants. Moderate climate is reported as a challenging issue for migrants heading North Europe. Nevertheless, migration seems to be the result of broader social dynamics.

The utilization of technology, the cultural adaptation of migrants, unique characteristics of highly skilled migrants, the rise of migrant networks and diasporas are the main focal points of the thesis discussion.

3.CHAPTER

METHOD AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

Qualitative anthropological analysis methods include participant observation, in-depth interviews, and textual analysis (Mack et al., 2005, p. 2). Therefore, online semi-structured interviews were chosen as the research method to cover these aspects. The quantitative background section is designed as a prelude to the qualitative anthropological analysis. The qualitative data was collected by two approaches:

- Digital ethnography
- Online semi-structured interviews and surveys

Qualitative data are examined through four stages as suggested by the literature (Gunbayi, 2023, p. 1):

- Thematic analysis
- Descriptive analysis
- Content analysis
- Analytical generalization

In thematic analysis, the transcripts from individual and focus group interviews, documents, and observation notes, are examined by organizing them into categories and sub-themes under relevant main themes. This approach helps uncover themes, categories, and sub-themes related to the phenomenon studied within the transcripts, documents, and observation notes. If desired, a matrix table can be created from this analysis, showing which participant expressed views under which central theme, category, or sub-theme, or thematically organizing documents and observation notes accordingly. Additionally, frequencies and percentages can be provided for the matrix table created. The section names are formed and the sub-themes are elaborated by thematic analysis (Gunbayi, 2023, p. 1). The following phases and stages of theme development in qualitative content and thematic analysis are proposed by Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, and Snelgrove (Vaismoradi, 2016, p. 103): Initialization (reading transcriptions and highlighting meaning units; coding and looking for abstractions in participants' accounts; writing reflective notes), construction (classifying; comparing; labeling; translating & transliterating; defining & describing), rectification (immersion

and distancing; relating themes to established knowledge; stabilizing), and finalization (developing the story line).

Descriptive analysis builds upon thematic analysis, offering a more in-depth examination of the data. In this approach, it is crucial to present the data related to the research problem under the relevant themes, categories, and sub-themes, using direct quotations from interview transcripts, document texts, and observation notes. The aim is to convey who said what on each theme from the transcripts without interpretation and analyze participants' perspectives on the themes through direct quotes. This approach helps enhance the credibility of the research by linking it to the collected documents and observation notes. The data is presented descriptively through direct quotes from interviews, observations, and documents. The relationships between themes and sub-themes may also be explored (Gunbayi, 2023, p. 4).

Content analysis represents the final stage of qualitative data analysis in the findings section. It builds upon thematic and descriptive analysis, which are necessary components for conducting content analysis. Content analysis is a more in-depth, comprehensive, and complex form of thematic and descriptive analysis. Its primary goal is for the researcher to interpret the data coded in themes and make sense of it by adding their own insights in the final stage. This process involves analyzing the research problems and sub-problems as dependent variables, with other influencing factors treated as independent variables. The researcher incorporates their interpretations comparatively and thoroughly. In this way, the researcher reveals the "hidden part of the iceberg" by connecting the findings from thematic and descriptive analysis and offering their own interpretations (Gunbayi, 2023, p. 7).

Analytical generalization is applied in the discussion section, where the research findings are examined about existing literature. When using analytical generalization, the researcher evaluates the findings by focusing on how their research contributes to the studied phenomenon, compared to previous studies or scientific works on the topic. This approach involves analytically discussing the significance of the findings, highlighting the similarities and differences between the current research and past studies or literature, and identifying the unique contributions made by the researcher's work (Gunbayi, 2023, p. 8).

3.1 QUANTITATIVE BACKGROUND

The theoretical background chapter states the drivers and different aspects of migration. The highly skilled migration study needs to frame Turkey's recent state of economy, democracy, freedom, and social life through the lens of youth and middle class, before analyzing the digital ethnography and interview data.

There is always a tendency to believe that there is a direct relationship between happiness and income. "The World Happiness 2023 Report" predicts this relationship. Some outlier countries perform better or worse than the general tendency depicted by the regression curve. Turkey is one of the worst-performing countries, being 106th among 137 countries, reflecting some other potential social problems affecting happiness (Helliwell et al., 2023, p. 36).

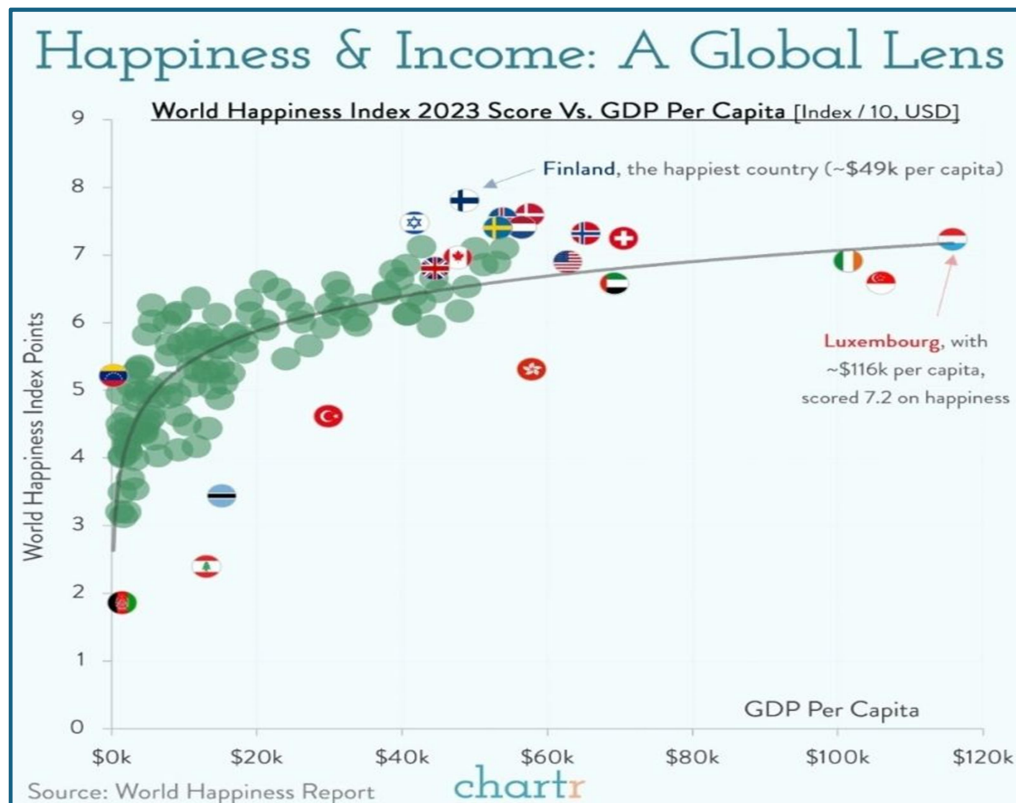


Figure 21: Happiness and Income Curve (<https://www.charttr.co/stories/2023-11-26-3-happiness-and-income-a-global-lens> Accessed: 13.08.2024)

Turkey hosts the World's largest refugee population, with nearly 3.6 million Syrians under temporary protection and around 370,000 refugees and asylum-seekers from other nationalities (<https://www.unhcr.org/tr/en/overview-2>. Accessed: 2.8.2024). The

registered refugee population is almost 4 million, but according to unofficial sources, it exceeds 13 million with the addition of unregistered refugees. This economic, social, and demographic change pushes the limits of the Turkish state. However, the region is considered a passage and settlement of many communities and ethnic groups for an extended period of time.

As indicated by worldjusticeproject.org (WJP), Turkey has fallen from its 80th place in 2015 to 116th place in 2022 among 140 countries worldwide. This place puts Turkey among African, South American, and Asian countries and indicates a diversion from its route and ideal to enter the European Union, which was a primary target of the Turkish state before 2010.

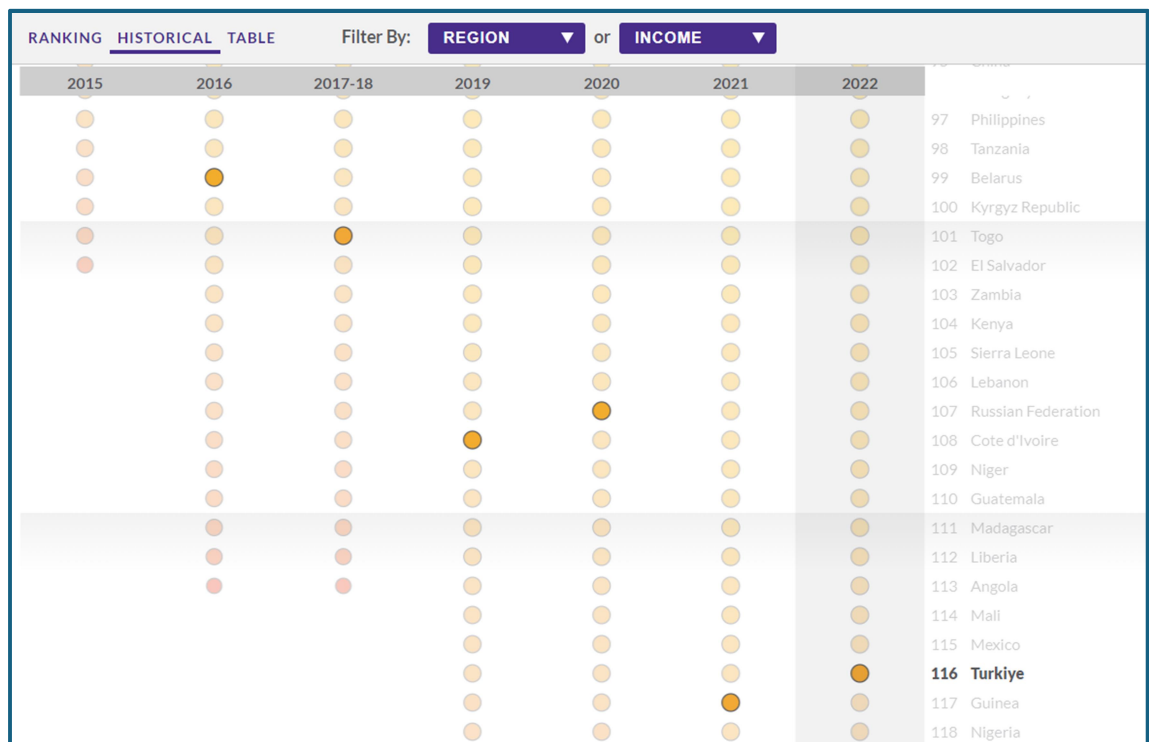


Figure 22: Turkey's ranking according to the WJP Rule of Law Index (<https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/global>. Accessed: 2.8.2024).

Government powers, fundamental rights, and criminal justice are the main problems, according to WJP decomposition.

	GLOBAL RANK	Government Powers	Absence of Corruption	Open Government	Fundamental Rights	Order and Security	Regulatory Enforcement	Civil Justice	Criminal Justice	OVERALL SCORE
Turkiye	116 / 140	0.28	0.45	0.40	0.30	0.73	0.40	0.43	0.34	0.42

Figure 23: Turkey WJP decomposition
(<https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/global>. Accessed: 2.8.2024).

“The Corruption Perceptions Index” evaluates nations and regions according to the perceived level of corruption within their public sector. Scores ranging from 0 (indicating high corruption) to 100 (representing very low corruption) reflect this perception.

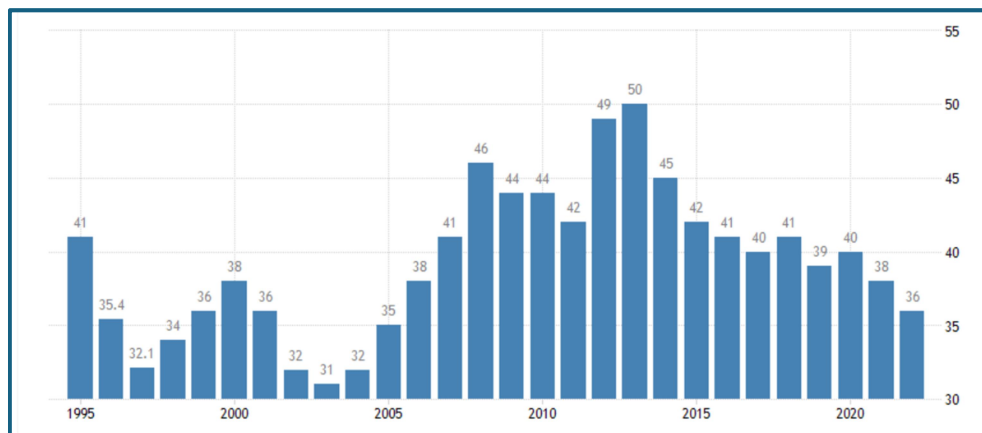


Figure 24: Corruption Perceptions Index history of Turkey for the last 30 years
(<https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023/index/tur>. Accessed: 2.8.2024).

The history of Turkey's Corruption Perceptions Index for the last 30 years shows that Turkey's measures against corruption had their best performance in 2013, but this figure began decreasing afterward. The Corruption Perceptions Index depicts results similar to those of the WJP Rule of Law Index.

In economics, the Gini coefficient, alternatively referred to as the Gini index or Gini ratio, is a statistical tool used to depict income, wealth, or consumption disparities within a nation or a specific social demographic. The Gini coefficient quantifies the disparity among values within a frequency distribution, such as income levels, within a frequency distribution. A Gini coefficient of 0 indicates absolute equality, where all income or wealth values are identical. Conversely, a Gini coefficient of 1 (or 100%) signifies extreme inequality, where one individual possesses all the income while everyone else has none.



Figure 25: Gini Coefficient of Turkey between 1987 – 2019

(https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Turkey/gini_inequality_index/. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

Income distribution indicators by equivalised household disposable income, 2014-2023

Survey year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Income reference year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
S80/S20 ratio	7.4	7.6	7.7	7.5	7.8	7.4	8.0	7.6	7.9	8.4
S90/S10 ratio	12.6	13.3	13.6	13.4	13.7	13.0	14.6	13.7	14.2	15.0
Gini coefficient	0.391	0.397	0.404	0.405	0.408	0.395	0.410	0.401	0.415	0.433
Gini coefficient (Social transfers excluded)	0.446	0.454	0.465	0.468	0.473	0.463	0.470	0.482	0.487	0.520
Gini coefficient (Pensions and survivors' benefits included all other social transfers excluded)	0.399	0.406	0.412	0.414	0.417	0.405	0.420	0.419	0.423	0.445

Figure 26: Gini Coefficient of Turkey between 2014 - 2023

(<https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Income-Distribution-Statistics-2023-53711>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

As Turkey's historical Gini coefficient data is examined, it is noticed that the income distribution of Turkey is balanced around the 2006 – 2010 period. However, this balanced and good distribution performance in terms of social equality became worse in the forthcoming years.

According to World Talent Ranking 2023, Turkey is in 49th position among 64 countries. Overall, the top strengths are indicated by the labor force growth and skilled labor. In contrast, the overall top weaknesses are employee training, attracting and retaining talents, quality of life, graduates in sciences, and university education. In summary, there is a good quantity of human capital, but the well-educated community

needs more life satisfaction and quality, especially after the university. This situation makes Turkey attractive to foreign countries or companies looking for talent.

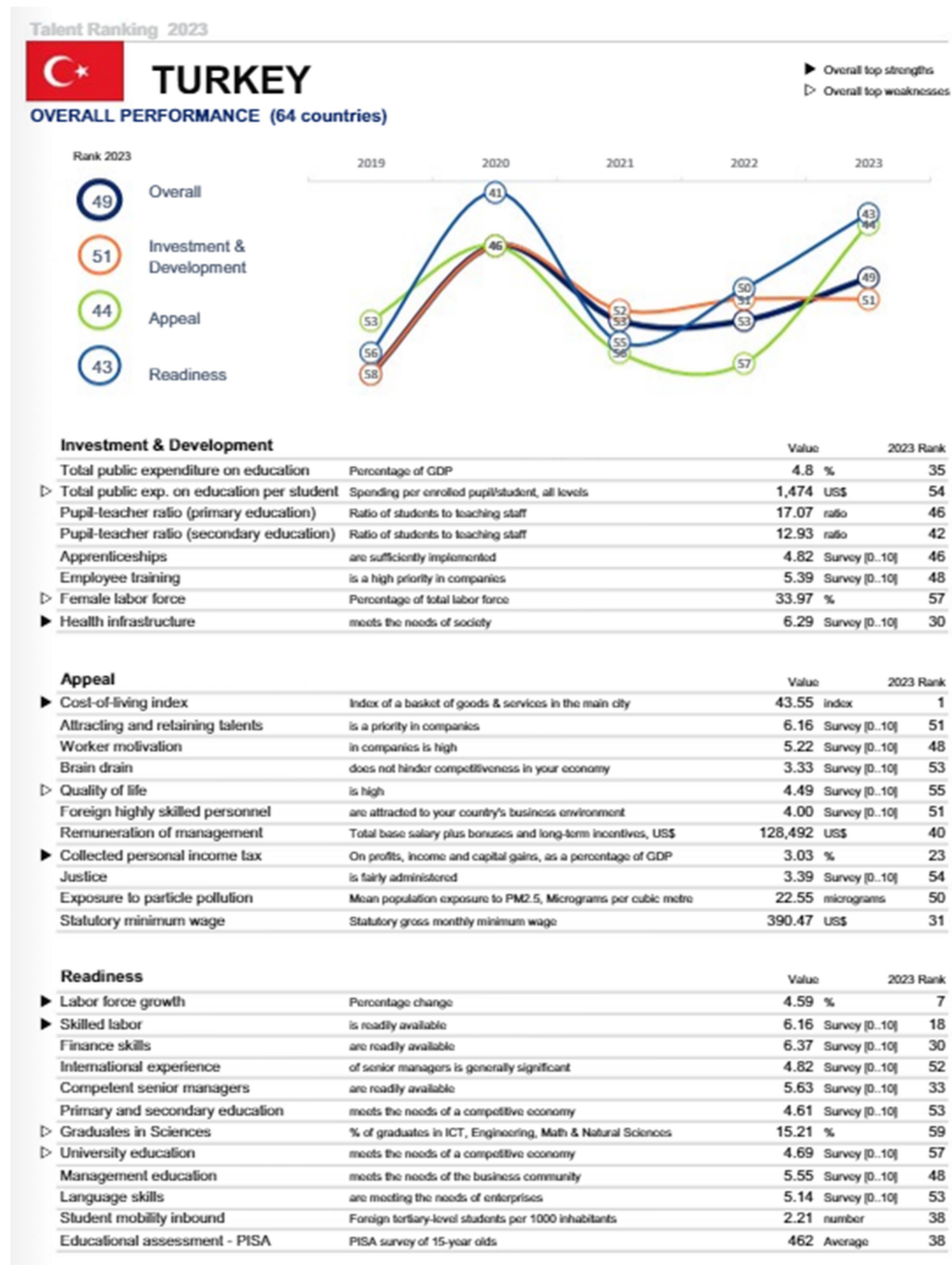


Figure 27: IMD World Talent Ranking 2023

(<https://www.imd.org/centers/wcc/world-competitiveness-center/rankings/world-talent-ranking/>. Accessed: 22.07.2023).

The OECD Talent Attractiveness Scores of Turkey present similar results to the IMD World Talent Ranking, indicating that Turkey is falling behind other OECD countries in attracting highly skilled migrants. It ranks at the bottom 2 for highly educated workers and entrepreneurs and at the bottom 5 for university students.

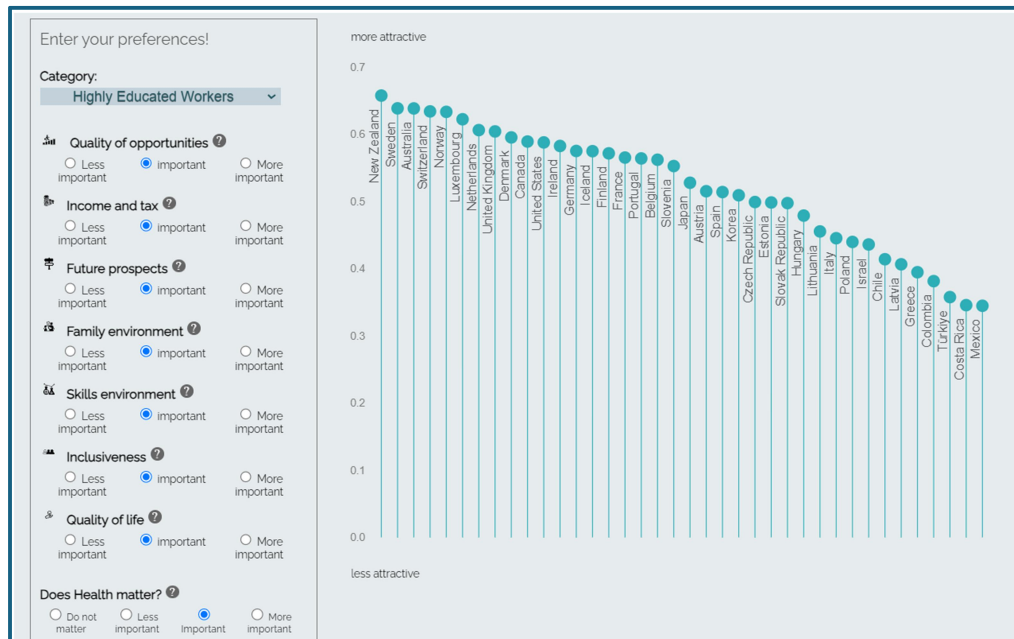


Figure 28: OECD Talent Attractiveness Score of Turkey for Highly Educated Workers

(<https://www.oecd.org/migration/talent-attractiveness/>.

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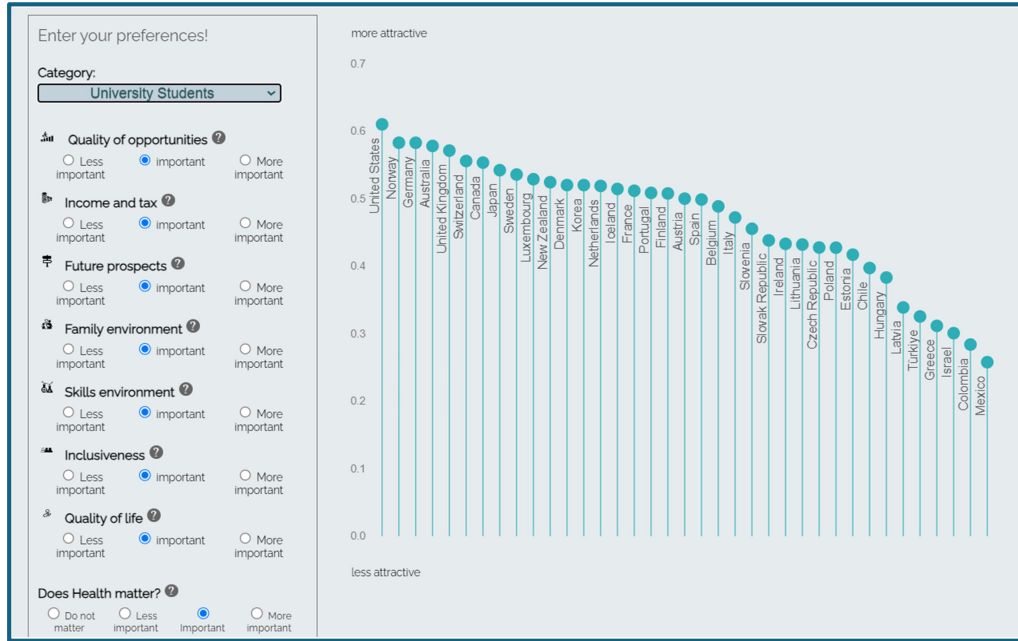


Figure 29: OECD Talent Attractiveness Score of Turkey for University Students (<https://www.oecd.org/migration/talent-attractiveness/>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

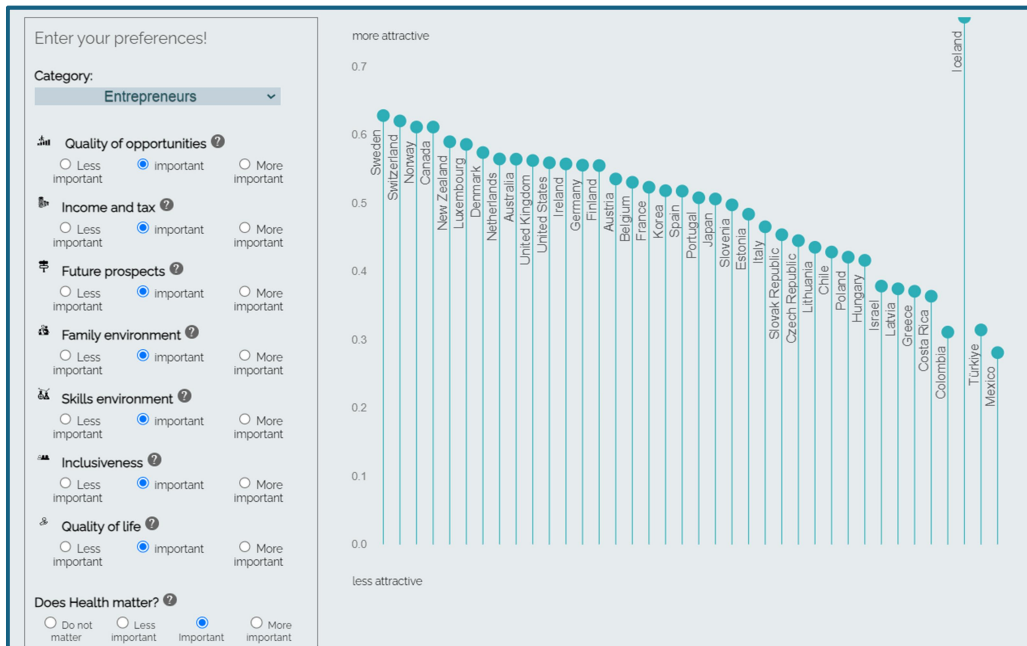


Figure 30: OECD Talent Attractiveness Score of Turkey for Entrepreneurs (<https://www.oecd.org/migration/talent-attractiveness/>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

According to the “Potential Net Migration Index Survey”, carried out between 2015 and 2017, Turkey has a potential brain drain ratio of 19% and a potential youth drain ratio of 10%.

COUNTRY ▾	PNMI ▲	BRAIN ▲	YOUTH ▲
Turkey	-9%	-19%	-10%

Figure 31: Potential Net Migration Index Survey
(<https://news.gallup.com/migration/interactive.aspx>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

High-tech investments and their shares in GDP are one of the main economic drivers of developed nations. Investigating the Turkish digital information and communication technologies share in the gross domestic product (GDP) from “McKinsey Future of Work Turkey’s Talent Transformation in the Digital Era 2020” report, we can observe that this lags behind the US, China, and Europe averages. This indicator and highly skilled emigration create a vicious cycle, which can be one of the factors causing Turkey’s current situation in the middle-level income trap (McKinsey, 2020, p. 11).

In the next 10 years, demand for workers with social skills is projected to increase by 22%, and demand for workers with technological skills will increase by 63%. This situation will increase the importance of the global talent race even further in the forthcoming years.

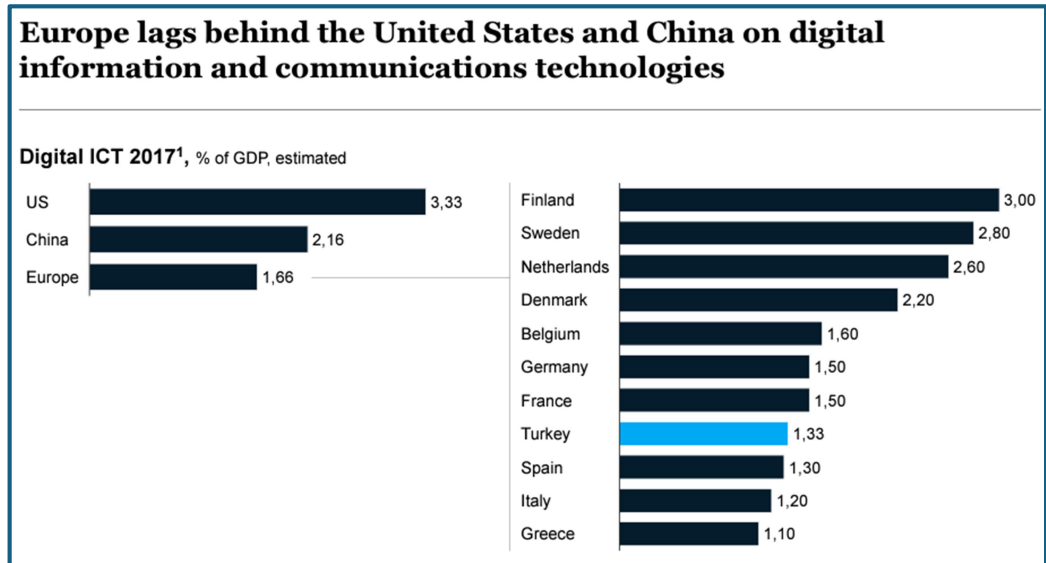


Figure 32: Digital Information and Communication Technologies Share in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (McKinsey, 2020, p. 11)

Hanke's modified misery index is the sum of the unemployment, inflation, and bank-lending rates minus the percentage change in real GDP per capita. The index is used to assess the economic well-being of the average citizen by combining the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate with the annual inflation rate. It operates on the assumption that increases in unemployment and inflation lead to economic and social challenges for a country. Turkey ranks 25th in the World Misery Index of Hanke ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Misery_index_\(economics\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Misery_index_(economics)), Accessed: 20.08.2024).

Hanke's Annual Misery Index — 2020						
Rank (Worst to Best)	Country	Misery Index	Rank (Worst to Best)	Country	Misery Index	Rank (Worst to Best)
1	Venezuela	3827.6	53	Greece	31.3	105
2	Zimbabwe*	547.0	54	Mauritius	30.4	106
3	Sudan	193.9	55	Gambia*	30.2	107
4	Lebanon	177.1	56	Cabo Verde	29.9	108
5	Suriname*	145.3	57	Bolivia	29.9	109
6	Libya*	105.7	58	Kazakhstan	29.5	110
7	Argentina	95.0	59	Guatemala	29.3	111
8	Iran	92.1	60	Burundi*	28.7	112
9	Angola*	60.6	61	Philippines	28.3	113
10	Madagascar	60.4	62	Azerbaijan	28.2	114
11	Brazil	53.4	63	Spain	28.2	115
12	South Africa	49.3	64	North Macedonia*	28.1	116
13	Haiti	48.9	65	Belize*	27.8	117
14	Kyrgyzstan	47.1	66	Democratic Republic of the Congo*	27.4	118
15	Nigeria	45.6	67	Equatorial Guinea*	27.1	119
16	Eswatini*	42.7	68	Comoros*	26.2	120
17	Lesotho	42.4	69	Myanmar	26.0	121
18	Peru	42.2	70	El Salvador	26.0	122
19	Zambia*	41.6	71	Mozambique	25.8	123
20	South Sudan*	41.2	72	Nicaragua	24.7	124
21	Turkey	41.2	73	Mexico	24.6	125
22	Namibia	40.7	74	Sri Lanka	24.3	126
23	Gabon	40.5	75	Chile	23.9	127
24	Congo*	40.3	76	Albania	23.8	128
25	Botswana*	39.7	77	Bosnia and Herzegovina	23.8	129
26	Iraq	39.5	78	Iceland	23.5	130
27	São Tomé and Príncipe*	39.3	79	Ecuador	23.3	131
28	Liberia	39.1	80	Fiji*	23.2	132
29	Jamaica	38.6	81	Mauritania*	23.2	133
30	Malawi	37.9	82	Morocco	22.8	134
31	Jordan	37.9	83	New Zealand	22.3	135
32	Guinea	36.8	84	Belarus*	22.0	136
33	Uruguay	36.7	85	Italy	22.0	137
34	Armenia	36.7	86	Oman	21.6	138
35	Montenegro	36.2	87	United Kingdom	21.5	139
36	Tunisia*	36.1	88	Egypt	20.9	140
37	Ethiopia*	36.1	89	Indonesia	20.9	141
38	Honduras	35.8	90	Kenya	20.8	142
39	India	35.8	91	Vanuatu*	20.4	143
40	Panama	35.7	92	Kuwait	20.3	144
41	Colombia	35.4	93	Papua New Guinea	20.1	145
42	Mongolia	35.4	94	Russia	19.9	146
43	Georgia	34.8	95	Nepal	19.5	147
44	Uzbekistan*	34.1	96	Romania	18.5	148

Figure 33: Hanke Misery Index 2020

(<https://www.nationalreview.com/2021/04/hankes-2020-misery-index-whos-miserable-and-whos-happy/>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

Looking at the historical data of the World Happiness Index, Turkey has had some fluctuations in the past, but happiness seems to have continuously decreased after 2017.

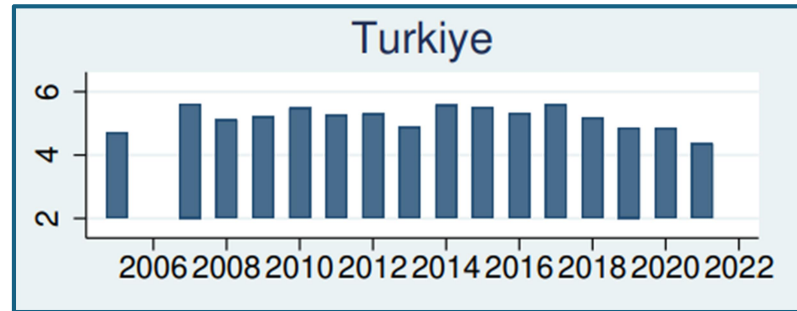


Figure 34: World Happiness Index of Turkey (<https://worldhappiness.report/data/>).

Accessed: 2.8.2024)

The percentage of unemployed young people, the percentage of house owners, and the ratio of medical professionals to the total population are the other declining indicators in Turkey that are causing unrest in society. “The New Middle Class in Turkey: A Qualitative Study in a Dynamic Economy” summarizes the following conclusions about the new middle class in Turkey, consistent with the findings of the extant literature (Uner & Gungordu, 2016, p. 669). They are educated individuals residing in urban areas, predominantly holding white-collar professions obtained through educational attainment. Thus, we can conclude that the new middle class in Turkey is highly skilled. Proficiency in at least one foreign language is common among them. While identifying themselves as belonging to the middle class, they prioritize factors such as income, education, vehicle ownership, lifestyle, and cultural pursuits. The level of religious observance varies within the emerging Turkish middle class, with some displaying strong religious adherence and formal religious practices. Consequently, it can be inferred that the new middle class comprises two distinct subsets—secular individuals and conservatives. Purchasing items from reputable brands like iPhone and Samsung, residing in condominiums is not solely about functionality but also symbolizes achieving a certain standard of living. In essence, acquiring specific brands or products serves as a symbol of reaching a particular socioeconomic status. So as income, education, car, lifestyle, and culture become less accessible year by year, as shown by different surveys, it is a predictable result for these communities to leave their countries in pursuit of different opportunities and achieve better living standards.

The emerging Turkish middle class strongly emphasizes being 'children-oriented', which entails prioritizing investments in their children's welfare to equip them for a promising future. Middle-class parents firmly believe that ensuring their children receive

quality education, including graduating from private schools and acquiring proficiency in at least one foreign language, preferably English, is essential for maintaining their socioeconomic status. Turkey's current justice, economy, and freedom trends of Turkey do not promise a bright future for the new middle class and their children. This situation is another reason why these people are chasing ways to migrate and provide better opportunities to their children. While interpretations may vary among subgroups within the emerging middle class in Turkey, democracy, individual freedom, and acceptance of alternative lifestyles are deemed fundamental concepts. In terms of outlook, conservatives express optimism for the future, whereas secular individuals exhibit a sense of despair. Furthermore, secular individuals express a desire to live abroad if given the opportunity (Uner & Gungordu, 2016, p. 669).

The following statistics are recorded in the Turkish Youth Study 2023, conducted by Çağlar (2023). This research underlines that Turkey does not promise a bright future for most of the respondents in addition to the current middle-aged middle class (Çağlar, 2023, p. 6):

- The age of the participants in the research ranges from 18 to 25.
- Most % of the respondents, 63.3%, are high school graduates or equivalent. However, since participants in our study were asked about their most recent high school diploma, those who are still university students.
- 27.4% are currently employed. Among those who state that they are employed, 13.5% are civil servants, while 12.1% are skilled professionals like lawyers and doctors, 88.5% of those not employed indicated being students.
- Only 17.3% of respondents reported feeling happy. The majority, comprising 52.5%, described themselves as moderately happy, while 30.1% considered themselves unhappy. The most prominent aspiration for the future is to achieve a good life (46.7%).
- A significant proportion, 63% of young people, expressed a desire to live in another country if given the opportunity. The top five preferred countries are as follows:
 - Germany: 14.5%
 - USA: 13.8%

- UK: 9.8%
- Canada: 7.0%
- Norway: 6.7%
- The primary motivation behind the desire to live in another country, cited by 47.8% of respondents, is the prospect of improved living conditions. The second most significant reason, identified by 20.7% of participants, is the belief that these countries offer more freedom.
- 86.2% describe Turkey's economic situation as bad. 88.7% perceive income distribution in Turkey as unequal and unbalanced. 84.6% believe that there is excessive unemployment in Turkey.
- The levels of disagreement with the government policies are as follows:
 - Governing style 70.4%
 - Judicial practices 81.2%
 - Economic practices 83.8%
 - Education policies 75.7%
 - Privatization practices 66.9%
 - Minimum wage policies 75.0%
 - Immigration policies 86.3%
 - Climate and environmental policies 56.9%
 - Human rights policy 73.3%
 - Sale of real estate to foreigners 81.1%
 - Current administration of Turkey | Turkey is poorly governed 69.6%
- 98.4% say there are problems in Turkey. The most common problems are economic circumstances, law and justice, unemployment, nepotism, corruption and bribery.
- 71.3% think that qualifications and merit are not considered in the recruitment process for public sector positions.

- More than half of the youth do not align with any political ideology. 51.4% stated that they do not see themselves within the political spectrum.
- Nearly all young participants (98.3%) anticipate that Turkey will encounter problems in the near future.
- The most expected problems in Turkey are primarily related to:
 - Economy: 32.2%
 - Refugees / Migration: 27.3%
 - Terrorism: 15.8%
- Turkey is an attractive alternative for developed countries needing skilled and quality human capital, because of its young population, moderate education quality, and adaptable, eager people willing to migrate.

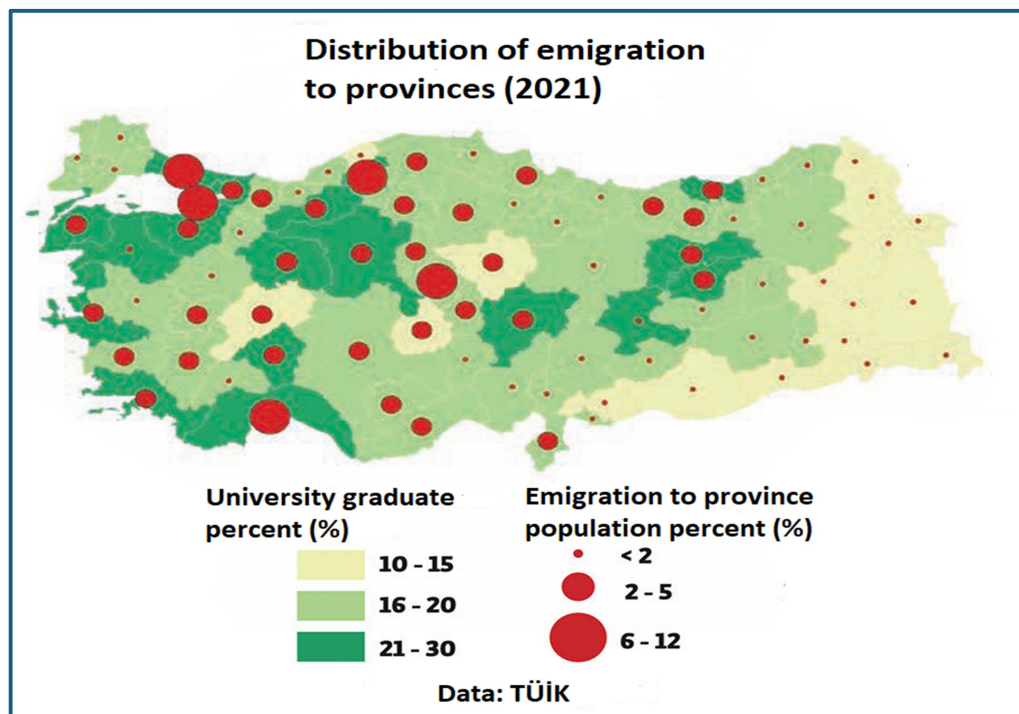


Figure 35: Distribution of Emigration to Provinces
 (<https://gazeteoksijen.com/yazarlar/dr-ozge-oner/kim-bu-yerliler-kalanlar-ve-gidenler-uzerine-209589>. Accessed: 2.8.2024)

The emigration statistics of TÜİK indicate that as a region's education increases, the emigration percentage also increases (Öner, 2024, p. 1). Highly educated citizens have higher capability and aspiration of migration.

3.2 DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Technological developments combined with people's desire to express and explain themselves, have given rise to several digital materials that can be ethnographic sources. Classical ethnography studies involve a researcher spending time with the community and making participative observations for the research. According to O'Reilly (2004), ethnography is an iterative–inductive research, which evolves in design throughout the study and utilizes various methods. It recognizes the importance of theory and the researcher's involvement, viewing humans as objects and subjects (O'Reilly, 2004, p. 2). The new social media redefined the roles of the people. In digital ethnography, researchers typically interact with participants through mediated contact rather than direct presence. They might observe participants by digitally tracking their activities or inviting them into their social media practices. Listening can involve reading, engaging, and communicating through various other means (Pink et al., 2016, p. 3). Any person can be the subject of an interview, and any person can be the interviewer, unlike the classical mass mainstream media, where only some selected or privileged people are the subjects. A new media type called 'podcast' allows different presenters and speakers to create their productions independently. "Bi' Gidene Soralım" (BGS) (can be translated as: "Let's ask someone who went") is a podcast series hosted by [EO], a young professional who graduated from Boğaziçi University and went to London. [EO] started to conduct interviews with his near circle of Turkish emigrants, mainly from Boğaziçi University, who chose to live in Europe. As with new episodes, the spectrum of his series widened to many different people ranging from Africa and America to the Far East, and also the profession of people diversified from entrepreneurs, engineers, and economists to real estate consultants and yoga trainers. The guests depict a general picture of Turkey's highly skilled middle-class emigrant profile. This podcast series is a starting point for studying highly skilled people's emigration from Turkey due to the vast number of digital ethnography resources it offers. The series started in December 2019, just before the COVID-19 epidemic and the lockdowns. So, it also reflects the changes that occurred during this turning point.

This digital ethnography resource supports and complements semi-structured online interviews.

Although we cannot ask the questions we want when benefiting from digital ethnography through podcasts, the advantage is that people spontaneously convey meaningful experiences and can collect data from people who are open to talking. Open sources containing many data have become essential in supporting qualitative studies. Listening to the podcast before semi-structured interviews provided critical insights for the interview questions. A broad spectrum of different professional backgrounds, marital status and destinations is selected to get an overview of highly skilled emigrants before more focused interviews.

Some critical observations from this podcast series and the anecdotal experiences of the guests are as follows:

They may be willing to participate in the podcast because they want to talk about the problems they remember about the country in the past, connect with other people, get involved in business or social networks, and transfer their experiences to newcomers. This podcast also serves as an excellent example of how diasporas, which in the past were limited to a physical region formed by social meeting environments such as friends, places of worship, or family relationships in daily life, turned into digital diasporas and evolved into a transnational and global form.

“Bi’ Gidene Soralım” podcast exemplifies a post-modern diaspora and communication method/channel. This new phenomenon, which started in more closed communities such as Facebook and WhatsApp groups, has also included forms that reach large audiences via Spotify and YouTube. Social media theories also have different opinions about the reasons behind people’s choices.

Some people emigrated after listening to the podcast and receiving inspiration from others. In this sense, the podcast also functions as a post-modern biography, in which pioneer migrants transform their experiences into a new kind of narrative.

The initials of the names and surnames of “Bi’ Gidene Soralım” podcast guests are indicated in square brackets ([XY]) in the following sections.

Table 3: Profiles of Podcast Guests

Initials	Profession	Destination	Age	Marital Status	Year of Migration	Episode
EO	Business Administration	London UK	20 - 30	Single	2016	Host
DD	Sociology	Prague Czech Republic	20 - 30	Single	2018	S1E10
BA	Mechanical Engineering	Warsaw Poland	20 - 30	Married	2019	S1E6
MAA	Actor	Wales	30 - 40	Married	2013	S2E17
ET	Writer	Zagreb Croatia	40 - 50	Single	2016	S5E1
TS	Business Administration	Dublin Ireland	20 - 30	Single	2021	S1E20
GBK	Economics Management	London UK	10 - 20	Single	2014	S1E3
EÇ	Marketing	Stockholm Sweden	20 - 30	Single	2018	S1E19
BU	Mechanical Engineer	Delaware US London UK	30 - 40	Married	2017	S1E8
ZU	Economics	California US London UK	30 - 40	Married	2014	S1E8
MC	Event	London UK	10 -	Single	2010	S1E4

Initials	Profession	Destination	Age	Marital Status	Year of Migration	Episode
	Management	Barcelona Spain	20			
ST	Computer Engineer Social Media Influencer	London UK	20 - 30	Single	2010	S1E22
GG	Social Media Influencer	London UK	20 - 30	Single	2010	S1E22
HY	Writer	London UK	10 - 20	Single	2008	S1E12
RB	Film Producer	New York	10 - 20	Single	2014	S1E23
GT	Economics Law	California US London UK	20 - 30	Single	2013	S1E7
GŞ	Law	Leiden Belgium	20 - 30	Single	2017	S1E26
DE	Neurobiology	Vienna Austria Brisbane Australia	10 - 20	Single	2008	S1E24
BÜ	Political Science and International Relations	Vienna Austria Leipzig Germany	20 - 30	Single	2014	S1E27

Initials	Profession	Destination	Age	Marital Status	Year of Migration	Episode
EK	Politics Economics	Cardiff UK	10 - 20	Single	2010	S1E2
PK	Sociology	Nice France	20 - 30	Single	2010	S1E25
DY	Product Design	Paris France Chicago US New York US	20 - 30	Single	2010	S1E13

3.2.1 Before Migration

3.2.1.1 Contact and Experience of Foreign Cultures

The migration patterns of highly skilled Turkish migrants are not dominated by a single factor like economics, professional expectations, or freedom but rather a combination of them, which can be interpreted as lifestyle migration [DD]. There exists an acculturation phenomenon for well-educated, highly skilled Turkish people because of their exposure to Western culture even from the early stages of their lives and Turkey's close relations with the EU and the USA. Many of them knew the cultures, adopted similar daily practices of their destinations and interacted in multinational working environments, which are facilitated by the development of technology. So, virtual migration and cognitive migration phenomena are observed before the physical migration. The education of highly skilled migrants allows them to get to know the EU and the USA cultures.

The Erasmus student exchange program between Turkish and EU universities gives students a chance to experience the EU while EU countries attract young talents [BA, DD]. Turkey joined the Erasmus mobility program in 2004. This agreement is a significant milestone for Turkish students who prefer the EU for their studies, work, and migration, as there is a chance to experience the EU for a short period before moving

there permanently. The strategic aims of the Erasmus program of the EU are stated as increasing talent mobility and attracting talents outside of the EU (European Union, 2023, p. 18). The economic situation is another driver since EU countries have fewer financial requirements than the US for education, living costs, and travel to Turkey.

[EK] attended high school at United World Colleges outside of Turkey and stayed in the UK afterward. She is an example of how very young, and talented people with a vision can migrate at very early ages.

3.2.1.2 Partner, Family and Network Factor

Although there are various podcast participants, we can observe that migrants are mostly triggered mostly by a family member, close friend, colleague, or university friends to migrate and that their destination preference is affected by them.

Migration with a partner is another pattern that is another motivation for migration and eases adaptation by supporting each other, as in the cases of [BA], [BU], [ZU], [ST], [GG], and [TCO].

3.2.1.3 Country Specific Factors

The US and EU emigrants' characters are also diverging. In the later ages, Europe is preferred instead of taking risks and migrating to the USA. Emigrants of the USA or culturally distant places pose a higher risk-taking character to migrants, and these migrants are more likely to be entrepreneurs because of the higher incentives and appropriate ecosystems (Tula et al., 2024, p. 451).

The Brexit period and the end of the Ankara agreement with the UK triggered many people to catch this last-minute train and take their last chance to migrate to the UK [BU], [ZU]. This case shows that creating obstacles and introducing new regulations for controlling migration may have boosting effects.

New technology hubs and startup centers like Prague create new alternative routes for highly skilled migrants, as stated by [DD], indicating the coverage of new migrant networks.

Personal experiences and character shape migration preferences. [DY] thought that the French university education was rigorous and migrated to the USA for a more

flexible and free education. On the other hand, [RB] thinks that Europe is a better option for migration than the USA regarding visa requirements and distance to Turkey.

As stated by [GBK], the Ankara agreement with the UK and other visa types supporting entrepreneurship are more suitable for the people of younger generations, who prefer working more flexibly and remotely. Therefore, the transition to entrepreneurship and flexible jobs is related to the spirit of the time, as mentioned by other guests [DD]. [EÇ] also created a startup after migration to Sweden. These examples support the hypothesis that migrants have entrepreneurial characters that can flourish in suitable environments.

The figure below indicates the dominance of the EU and the USA as student attractions.

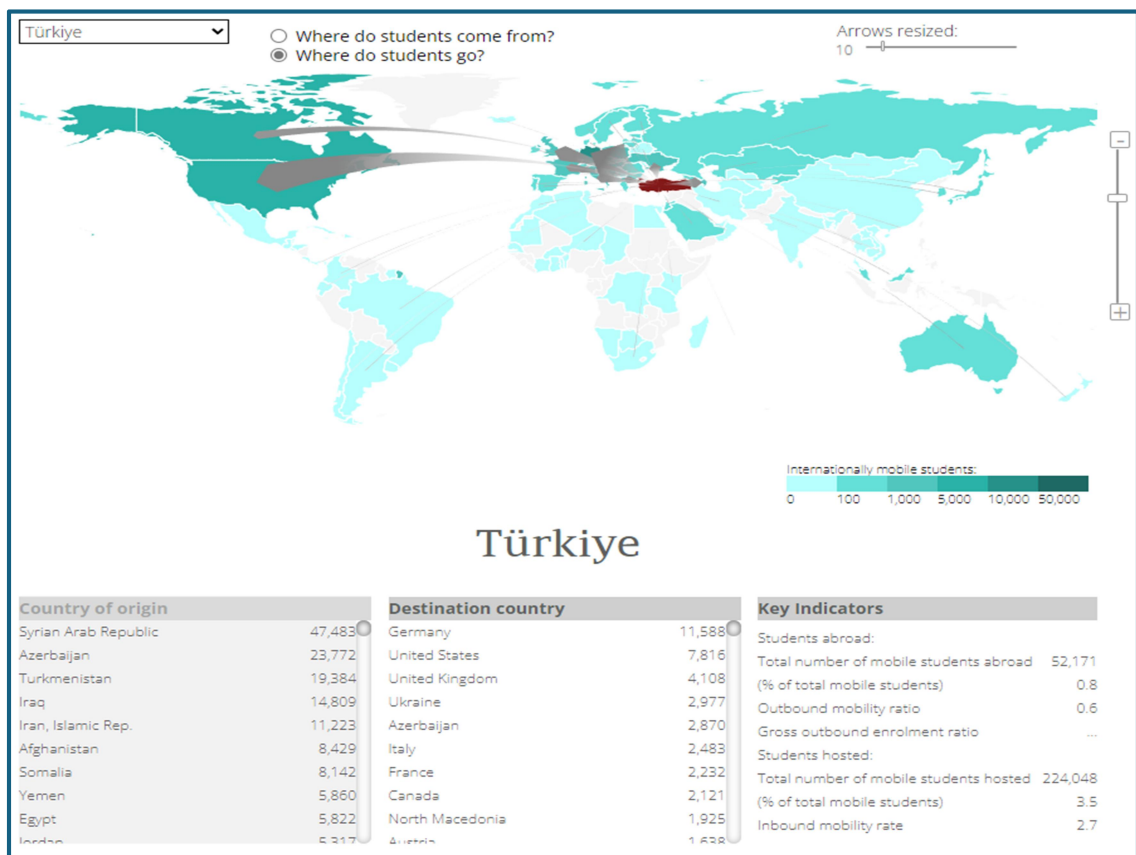


Figure 36: Global Flow of Tertiary Level Students (<https://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow>. Accessed: 2.8.2024).

3.2.1.4 Socioeconomic Factors

The pace of city life and business life in Turkey, especially in İstanbul, seems to be a significant factor in migration decisions. Most of the migrants reported that they are migrating to have better work-life balance, employee rights, and pressure on employees in their destination countries. The ease of transportation, access to nearby parks, sports culture, and low stress levels of the majority are the most prominent factors in the new life of emigrants.

The highly skilled emigration from Turkey also means an escape from chaotic, overcrowded, expensive cities like İstanbul and perhaps a reaction to the damaged urban culture and lost urban history corresponding to the adolescence period of the Y generation, according to podcast participants. The population boom, rapid development, and urbanization resulted in an unplanned metropolis -İstanbul- and marginal groups with substantial income inequalities are the main consequences of this change.

The lives of highly skilled emigrants of Turkey are affected by the polarization of Turkey, which resulted in the Gezi Parkı incidents, the Coup attempt, and other restrictions on their lives. They feel that they live in liberated, areas under siege that are continuously concentrated in smaller areas. The stadium concerts and spring music festivals were canceled. Minorities like LGBT+ individuals, people from different religions, and artists find fewer opportunities to express themselves, as indicated by actor [MAA], Jew emigrant family, and writer [ET].

Historical breakpoints affect migration characteristics. Gezi Parkı incidents triggered a migration wave. On the other hand, [DY] said he preferred to stay closer to his family after the Gezi Parkı incidents. COVID-19 also reminded the importance of being closer to family members during hard times and shifted migration preferences to closer destinations. Most of the emigrants tend to return to Turkey during lockdowns and spend time with their families, indicating the preserved strong bonds with their homeland.

Even the middle class is polarized. These can be described as conservative and secular subgroups. While people may have secular and conservative traits, one tends to be more dominant. Some new secular middle class members mentioned that they would live abroad if given the opportunity (Uner & Gungordu, 2016, p. 669). For some

secular ones with minds and lifestyles similar to the developed countries, pursuing opportunities outside of Turkey is becoming an expected route, forging a 'migration culture' as defined by Massey (Massey et al., 1993, p. 452). It is said that: "Home is a feeling, not a place". The main driver of this feeling is security, which is mainly connected to freedom, equality, justice, and economic situation. Indeed, some citizens of Turkey do not feel at home and feel as if they are minorities having power distance from the government, according to [ET].

Economic conditions seem to be secondary but also mentioned by many participants. The most crucial aim is to have a new experience and take advantage of an opportunity. There are also examples of people who have dreamed of going abroad since childhood or youth. For some people, emotions such as anger and resentment are at the forefront. "Turkey lost an X, but Y country has gained a Z" trend in social media is an example of how much some migrants are offended by the recent order of Turkey and expressed themselves in an emotional way, validating the collective and emotional character of Turkish culture. These examples support the migrant personality and cultural distance models.

3.2.1.5 Combination of Factors

The push-pull effects of the homeland are always important social parameters in the decisions of individuals. The adventurous personality is a more individual, personal, and psychological aspect of migrants. While other macro mechanisms, such as economic conditions, complaints about social changes, polarization, physical mobility, and social mobility potential, initiate specific migration flows, these mechanisms continue according to the self-sustaining mechanism of cumulative causation. Globalization and the global talent race have accelerated and attracted talented individuals to different locations. Also, the 'zeitgeist' (the spirit of the time) pushes liquid modernity and praises having fluid jobs, relationships, and places of residence, leading to more migration (Bauman, 2000, p. 13).

Migrants' professions are mostly associated with the service sector (law, digital marketing, administration, economy, tourism, and engineering), which makes easier to migrate and it emphasizes the rise of the information society. Some migrants accept category switches and work in different jobs after migration. Previous advertising agency workers [CH], [BU] opened stands in London markets. Previous engineers and tourism professionals [ST], [GG], [TCO] became influencers.

Some migrants carried out pragmatic cost-benefit analysis or a balance sheet and choose a place to go among many options. Migration may occur not only through job change but also through assignment from the Turkish offices of multinational companies [BA], [TS]. In this sense, it can be said that the spread of multinational global companies has also increased their impact on migration, as stated by Frederic Jameson's Theory of Multinational Capitalism. In this way, those who go abroad as expats for a certain period or education can become emigrants over time. For new generations, some companies in Turkey may face the situation of becoming an intermediate step for migration, which is an indication of globalization (Jameson, 1991, p. 57).

3.2.2 Abroad

3.2.2.1 Expectations and Initial Phase

[BU], [ZU], [ST], [GG], and [TCO] complained that the destination countries have bureaucracies for creating a bank account, and renting a flat takes longer time than in Turkey. It is emphasized by almost every guest that Turkey is very competent in the service sector (restaurants, online retail, e-commerce, and delivery services), the health sector, and e-government in almost every episode like [ST], [GG], and [TCO]. However, these benefits provided by the Turkish service sector and health sector come with sacrificing others' labor. Labor exploitation, pressure on some employees, and the working conditions of some sectors were mentioned to trigger other migration patterns like the emigration of health workers. [TS] emphasized that the nightlife of İstanbul is more vivid than many cities.

The pace of health, e-government, and banking sectors shows that Turkey is better in the service sector. People became aware of these issues when they went abroad [BU] and [ZU]. The COVID-19 period has shown the good aspects of Turkey's healthcare system and the advantages of being close to the country and returning when necessary. These are the factors that make Europe favorable compared to distant countries. While there was a social state in Europe, there were substantial treatment costs for those without private insurance in the USA. The COVID-19 incident showed that Turks are more adaptive and accustomed to unusual events, as mentioned in COVID-19 special episodes. [ST], [GG], and [TCO] stated that Turkish migrant families favor England, the USA, and other European countries because of education standards. [ST], [GG], and [TCO] said that migrants sacrifice their social capital,

cultural capital, comfort of living in a large house and affording a housekeeper during migration.

3.2.2.2 Adaptation and Cultural Dimension

For many people, the moment of transition to emigration is uncertain. Similar to Turkish guest workers, it is common to go as an expat or a student for a short or indefinite period and to extend this period and to establish a settled life over time by finding a job in the destination place, extending the duration of the job, or getting married. For this reason, being called a 'migrant' is an awkward definition for some podcast guests. One of the reasons behind this is the references in their minds about the past. Most emigrants grew up in a time when blue-collar workers during labor migration were called 'migrants', like the guest workers of Germany in the 1960's.

In addition to the advantages of going abroad, [MC], [HY], and [TS] also explained the comfort of living in small cities. Podcast participants [ZU], [BU], [RB], and [BÜ] living in big cities such as London also talk about issues such as ease of transportation, abundance of parks, security, and clean air, even in large cities, unlike Turkey.

Migrants living in multicultural places like London and Munich do not experience prejudice much, and locals do not judge them. Also, a multicultural environment makes the adaptation of individuals easier, as mentioned by [EK] and [HY]. However, there can be other conservative places, especially in every country's rural side. So, it is not easy to categorize a country by its name because it may have many different lifestyles. Examples are central states of the USA vs. coastal states of the USA like New York, North of Italy vs. South of Italy, London vs. rural area of the UK, and major cities vs. rural area of Spain [MC]. Although some discrimination stories exist, it is hard to generalize these patterns to systematic discrimination. These can be seen as some people's prejudice or an individual's cultural distance from strangers or reactions to the fast changes in their society. [DY] emphasized that it is vital to maintain previous routines for ease of adaptation to new places.

The similarity of Turkish urban culture and Turkey's close physical distance to Europe eases the adaptation of migrants. University tradition, media, exposure to brands, and culture are also factors that facilitate adaptation to the USA. Other factors that enable Turks to adapt are Turkey has a multicultural foundation and proximity to European culture compared to other countries. The Lewis Cultural Model and the Hofstede

Cultural Dimensions indicate these cultural distances. [BA] stated that some companies have cultural onboarding procedures to help people adapt to the new societies and workplaces. Generally, highly skilled emigrants reported success in their adaptation because of their cultural and mental similarity to their destinations. Migrants who came in previous years to Europe tended to become ghettoized and create a closed society because of the cultural distance from locals (Şahin, 2008, p. 245).

Things that are missed about Turkey are family and friends, climate, food, the Bosphorus, conversation and socialization around the 'raki' drinking table, accessibility and affordability of many services. Migrant emotions are dominated by nostalgia for past Turkey. [ET] noted the verses from the Constantine Cavafy's The City poem: "You won't find a new country, won't find another shore. This city will always pursue you".

In sociology, Bourdieu's "habitus" concept defines how people perceive and respond to the social world they inhabit by way of their personal habits, skills, and character disposition. People with a common cultural background (social class, religion, nationality, ethnic group, education, and profession) share a habitus as the way that group culture and personal history shape the mind of a person; consequently, the habitus of a person influences and shapes the social actions of the person (Lizardo, 2004, p. 379). Collective consciousness and habitus of Turkish migrants affect the adaptation to their destination and feeling of longing for Turkey. Sense of humor, nostalgic Turkish popular music, and intimate conversations are essential examples of this cultural fabric [RB]. Highly skilled migrants state the ease of adapting to foreign cultures, but also revive their cultural bonds to their homeland, resulting in an eclectic migrant culture.

Although many Turks want to leave their habits about Turkey behind and forget them, [EK] likes to preserve them. He organizes Turkish pop parties. He likes to introduce Turkish food to his colleagues (like ordering local Turkish food 'kumru' to the office) like a cultural ambassador. Some migrants even need to act like political ambassadors and explain the situation in Turkey and national politics to foreigners, as in the case of [BA].

3.2.2.3 Migrant Social Networks and Diaspora

In Western countries, individualism is very essential. [BA] said that developing social relations at work is not common. Local people often set clear boundaries between work and private life. The local people sometimes make a clear distinction between work life

and private life, preferring to spend time with family and older friends, which makes it harder for highly skilled Turkish migrants to develop close relationships with locals. This situation is mentioned in Italy, Germany, and the Netherlands episodes of the “Bi’ Gidene Soralım” podcast. Late adult migrants above age 30 especially reported difficulties in developing new relationships. According to Erik Erikson's stages of psychological development, people establish intimacy and relationships till ages around 30, corresponding to early adulthood. After ages around 30, which is called middle age, people tend to maintain relationships with their previous friends and family rather than make new intimate relationships (McLeod, 2024, p. 1). Cultural differences can be another obstacle or threshold. Although individualism made it harder for those who migrated in previous years, those who migrated recently can overcome these difficulties in the age of technology by socializing with digital diasporas or online platforms.

Turkish skilled migrants form communities with highly skilled migrants from Turkey, and other countries [TS]. Similar experiences, similar struggles and similar life views seem to bind people together to form these “skilled migrant communitas”. “Communitas” denotes an informal condition where every community member is on an equal footing, enabling them to partake in a shared experience, typically during a rite of passage. This state is typical among individuals undergoing liminality collectively. Highly skilled migrants express that they prefer meeting with the members of multinational highly skilled worker communitas rather than other Turkish people like blue collars or Turkish people living in ghettos. These members have similar experiences, similar liminality, and similar rite of passage, denoting communitas character rather than community character (Turner, 1969, p. 95). People may prefer to be friends with other migrants they meet in places such as the same workplace or university, who have common troubles and lifestyles, rather than people with whom they share common country origins. New personal and group identities are constructed based on shared experiences rather than common origins.

Individualism is observable in social and professional life. In the education system, students are autonomous and responsible for their development. Those who went abroad as students, like [GT], especially emphasize the short duration of class hours and the importance of individual study.

3.2.2.4 Career, Job, Workplace and Daily Routines

Work-life balance is essential in countries of immigration. Work that goes beyond working hours is not assigned. There is much emphasis on planning. [BA], [GŞ], [BU], [CH] say that their work and ideas are appreciated. Employees have better rights than in Turkey, such as paid leave, maternal leave and lower stress. A cultural orientation or listening to migrants' previous experiences may mitigate the cultural shock.

However, migrants from Northern countries like [DY] in Sweden and [TS] in Ireland mention the challenges of dull and cold weather in opposition to Turkey.

Some unique countries, like Australia have better life and job opportunities. [DE] stated that their citizens don't have any prejudice against Turks. [GŞ] said migrants with high expectations can be disappointed and advises being realistic about migration. [BU] and [CH] mentioned multitasking, hardworking, and experiencing different projects in the workplace before migration as the advantages of Turkish migrants for adaptation.

[EK] mentioned that, unlike Turkey, there is no prejudice or discrimination based on a person's age, namely ageism, in Canada. It is possible to get an education and have a profession at older ages.

3.2.2.5 Migrant Social Networks and Diasporas

Pioneer migrants have the effect of setting new migration routes, building new migration networks, and dragging their own close networks with them, which can result in new migration systems. Examples of these pioneer migrants are professionals from the defense industry who migrated to the Netherlands and Germany, and the IT sector professionals who went to England and Germany after 2014.

Most guests mentioned the increase in the number of Turkish migrants in some cities like London [EK]. Even though it varies according to experience, Turkish groups are generally active, and there is solidarity. There was meeting culture originating from the period before 2010, when social media was scarce. Political issues can also be an obstacle to unifying of migrants, indicating the continuation of polarization abroad.

"Göçmen Kadınlar Grubu" (translated as Migrant Women) Facebook group (having 44.000 members as of July 2024 and mentioned by several podcast guests) and "Bi' Gidene Soralım" started to fulfill the migrant's need to share information and demand help from others but evolved to psychological support mechanisms for newcomer

migrants looking for social connections to attach in place of their connections left behind [BGS Season 5 teaser episode]. “Göçmen Kadınlar Grubu” stated their purpose as follows: “Let us form a group as women living abroad or preparing to move. We wanted to talk about our common topics such as moving, settling down, adapting, learning a language, adapting children, finding a nursery/caregiver/school, socializing in a new city, finding a job, missing home, and share our questions and what we learned with each other” (https://www.facebook.com/groups/gocmenanneler/?locale=tr_TR, Accessed: 18.07.2024). Social media, Facebook, and WhatsApp groups are the primary socialization medium of Turkish migrants, said [ST], [GG], and [TCO]. The first episodes began with a close friend group of [EO], but the community grew like a snowball; people from a variety of countries and professions attended the podcast series. One can observe the evolution of the guest and listener community as a social and professional group. Some people admitted that they got the inspiration to migrate from the podcast. Some researchers, namely [EA] and [CA], also used the vast data of the podcast in their studies.

Sociologist [PK] indicated that diasporas and political representation evolve over time and generations. [BÜ] said that “Although it is nice to be a migrant, it is tiring to travel a lot and not be settled. This process makes it difficult to establish social bonds”. Excessive mobility negatively affects the psychology and social life of migrants.

3.2.2.6 Return Migration and Circular Migration

Migrants from different episodes expressed similar feelings: “Once you get there, all countries in the World are at the same distance from you. While in Turkey, there is a dilemma between homeland and outside. But once you go abroad, the whole World becomes your hometown; it becomes more accessible. Once you've lived this experience, the second one is never that hard”.

Approximately 1/3 of people consider migrating to other countries like [GBK], [BA], [BU], [ZU], [TS] and [GŞ]. This situation confirms that migrants are more reluctant to migrate again [BGS 5th season teaser episode]. Circular migration and liquid modernity are dominating modern migration culture in that sense. Young, single, or unmarried migrants consider another migration route while migrating families and late adults tend to migrate less because of the constraints associated with the partner, children, and closeness to the elder family members living in Turkey.

Migrants like [HY], [BU], and [CH] miss Turkey, but they are also aware that the country has changed, and they have nostalgic feelings because they know that they will not be able to find the same country. [BA] says that their closest friends have already migrated too. These migrants have adopted online meetings with their closest Turkish friends. Migrants with multiple migration experiences admit they lost the feeling about home and a sense of connection to a particular location [HY]. 'Turkey is getting worse' thought also poses a barrier and makes it difficult to return. Returning migrants tend to face the re-entry cultural shock stages indicated in the W-adaptation curve (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, 2017, p. 185).

The most significant difference he observed when they returned to Turkey was that prices were higher and people were more nervous than other countries, as mentioned by [RF] and [DE]. [EO], [GŞ], and [BÜ] indicated that even if the migrants think that the politeness, small talk and smiles are superficial in destination countries, it feels good to adopt these habits.

[BÜ] indicated that Germans are more humble, more traditional, and less interested in luxury than Turkish people. [BU] and [CH] emphasized that differences between classes in Europe are not chasms like in Turkey. They added that Turkey has a culture of making these differences more evident, giving expensive restaurants and cars in Turkey as the example.

Almost all of the emigrants like [EÇ] consider returning back to Turkey for a mission (indicating strong bonds with their homeland) or for their retirement during their elder years. The literature describes this phenomenon as the 'Salmon bias' of the 'Hispanic paradox', which explains why migrants feel more secure or comfortable in their home countries due to the health care system, climate, social support mechanisms, and their savings being more valuable after certain ages (Abraído-Lanza et al., 1999, p. 1543). Health care system can be a critical parameter in preferences during the migration phase and subsequent return decisions.

There is a group of skilled migrants who expressed their will to return to Turkey if it is possible to settle in coastal villages or Bodrum and work remotely. This demand reflects the changing work dynamics and work-life balance of migrants. The will of migrants, like [BU] and [CH], to return to rural areas of Turkey is the expression of escape from the large cities of Turkey, especially from İstanbul. [DY], [EÇ], [RB], and [GŞ] stated that instead of choosing one of the options of the country of origin or the

country of emigration for their future lives, as before, there is an increasing tendency to establish a transnational life, having homes in both countries and spending some periods at different locations.

Working opportunities have led people to different migration models like 'digital nomads' who travel to different countries and work remotely instead of only one. There is a need to develop flexible working models to keep up with the World and benefit from highly skilled migrants.

3.2.2.7 Identity

The higher skill levels may precede the individual's passport or identity for mobility. When [CH] first came, she felt inferior because she was unemployed. Migrant identity defines a universal meta-identity above the national identity. The debates about the Turkish identity corroded its definition. Some Turkish citizens look for other sub-identities (Oğuz, 2022, p. iv). Migrant identity is another alternative for individuals trying to overcome national identity crises all over the World.

'Offended', 'sad', 'disappointed', 'forced', 'difficulty' and 'angry' are among those expressed podcast guest emotions about migration. Migration can be considered a traumatic process followed by a grief stage simultaneous with the change in place, lifestyle and social bonds. Migrants often endure various losses directly tied to their migration experience. These can encompass the loss of family and friends (interpersonal losses), loss of home and income (material losses), as well as the loss of status, social roles, identity, communication opportunities due to a new language, planned futures and dreams, or simply familiar surroundings (abstract losses). Eisenbruch referred to the distress following the loss of homeland, identity, and social connectedness due to relocation as "cultural bereavement." Achotegui introduced the concept of the "Ulysses syndrome" to normalize the feelings of alienation and stress experienced after migration (Renner et al., 2024, p. 2).

As a researcher on Sephardic Jews, [PK] faced Neva Shalom synagogue attacks, explosions, and the killing of Uzeyir Garih while living in Turkey. Inequalities, economic conditions, and problems in education forced her to migrate to France. She faced discrimination in France too: "You don't look like Turkish" and "The other Turks are not like you" sentences express prejudice on some occasions. A Sephardic Jew said: "We are Jews in Turkey, and we are Turks in France". Discrimination is widespread for

some migrants. However, highly skilled migrants report fewer discrimination cases due to their ‘highly skilled global migrant’ group identity.

3.2.2.8 Migration Culture

As we observe from the episodes of “Bi’ Gidene Soralım” podcast, we can talk about the migration culture of highly skilled migrants, especially in younger generations. Many young adult university graduates mentioned that not only they but also their friends and acquaintances have already migrated, and others have plans to migrate to other countries. Early studies conducted by Douglas Massey (1993) and fellow researchers explored the concept of a migration culture, wherein migration becomes deeply embedded in the behaviors and values of a community, thus becoming integrated into the broader societal norms (Massey et al., 1993, p. 452).

Although migration took place as a result of realizing an ideal or taking advantage of an opportunity in the previous years, in the years after 2010, we observe a period where the expectation and norm from graduates of important high schools (such as German High School, Robert College) and universities (such as Boğaziçi University, Bilkent University, and METU) are going abroad. For many young people, migration allows them to broaden their social networks beyond narrow kinship and neighborhood ties. It may be conceived as a necessary stage in their existence, a rite of passage to adulthood. Graduates of top tier high schools of Turkey prefers foreign universities even more every year, lowering the average age for highly skilled migration every year (“Yurtdışını tercih eden liselilerin sayısı çarpıcı biçimde artıyor” <https://gazeteoksijen.com/egitim/yurtdisini-tercih-eden-lisellerin-sayisi-carpici-bicimde-artiyor-200316>. Accessed: 18.07.2024).

The increase in emigrants has also led to an increase in transnational companies and enterprises. Money transfer services, markets selling Turkish products, those providing consultancy to Turks who want to go abroad, and Turks who want to rent their homes abroad, mentioned in the “Bi’ Gidene Soralım” podcast. These examples provide alternative routes for emigrants. [BÜ], [BU], and [CH] mentioned that migrants tend to be hardworking to prove themselves. Some migrants, like [DY] and [EÇ], became entrepreneurs after migration.

Podcast guests say that migration is a difficult phase, but mastering it develops and transforms people, which refers to the ‘migrant capital’ phenomenon.

3.3 SEMI-STRUCTURED ONLINE INTERVIEWS AND OFFLINE SURVEYS

The digital ethnography study depicts a general overview and exposes some insights about the highly skilled emigrants of Turkey. The semi-structured online interviews and offline surveys complement this part by focusing on people working in high-tech, consisting of engineers from various disciplines, managers, students, and entrepreneurs. They are all abroad during the interviews. The semi-structured online interview participants are selected from the 14 people already known from university and previous workplaces, complemented by the 12 additional people who volunteered to participate in the study. 5 out of 12 volunteers are contacted from LinkedIn without anyone's reference. Snowball sampling was used to contact the seven other new volunteers known by previous volunteers. A total of 20 people were present in the one-to-one interviews. 6 participants preferred to respond with offline written answers. Semi-structured online interviews and offline surveys were conducted between September 2023 and December 2023. The following open-ended questions were asked during semi-structured interviews and surveys, and special attention was paid not to bias their answers:

1. "Could you introduce yourself regarding your educational and professional background and qualifications? Also, were you working in any job in Turkey before immigrating? What was your education and work history?"
2. "When and how did you make your migration decision? Were there any people or issues that played a role in your decision? If so, how?"
3. "When you decided to migrate, what communication channels and networks did you use when choosing the place to migrate? In your experience, which communication channel or network is most helpful for the migration process? (Workplace network, academic network, university network, close friends, family, social media -LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube)"
4. "Do you continue to follow your daily routines or cultural habits in the country you immigrated to? If you don't, why? How is your adaptation to social and business life here? (Do you have any difficulties in adaptation? If so, what are they?)"

5. "Would you define yourself as a citizen of the country you came from, a citizen of the country you immigrated to, a citizen of a mixture of two countries, or a citizen of the world? What does migrant identity mean to you? Has your self-definition changed after migration?"
6. "How is your communication situation with people of Turkish origin in the countries of immigration? Do you think that people of Turkish origin help each other or come together for a cause?"
7. "Could you evaluate skilled migration in terms of Turkey's development and progress? (Do you think immigration undermines Turkey's development or not?)"
8. "Do you think that people of Turkish origin are preferred in foreign countries? If yes, what do you think are the reason(s) for this?"
9. "To what extent were your expectations (cultural, social, professional) met in your country after immigration? What would your thoughts and attitude towards migration if you had your current mind?"
10. "Do you plan to return to Turkey or migrate to another country? If yes – otherwise, why? What advice would you give those considering emigrating from Turkey?"
11. "What would you do if you had the opportunity to work in a Turkish institution/organization/company that offers you suitable opportunities or to establish a company yourself?"
12. "Is there any other issue regarding highly skilled human migration or brain drain that I did not ask but you would like to share with me?"

The following highly skilled migrants are the semi-structured online interview and survey participants of the study:

Table 4: Semi-Structured Online Interview Participant Profiles (created by the researcher)

Age	Name	Male or Female Married or Single or Divorced Number of Children	Destination Country	Profession	Work Experience Before Migration (years)	Date of Migration	Occupation	Time Spent at Destination (years)
40-50	Person 1	F/ M/1	Canada Waterloo	Electronics Engineer	7	2005	Company	18
40-50	Person 2	F/M/2	Germany Munich	Electronics Engineer	7	2005	Company	18
30-40	Person 3	M/?/?	Germany Mannheim	Electronics Engineer / Entrepreneur	12	2019	Company / Entrepreneur	5
40-50	Person 4	M/?/?	USA / Germany	Mechanical Engineer	14	2013 Germany as company expat, 2021 USA as Entrepreneur	Company / Entrepreneur	11
40-50	Person 5	M/M/1	Netherlands Eindhoven	Electronics Engineer	17	2019	Company	5
20-30	Person 6	F/M/0	Netherlands Eindhoven	Computer Engineer	4.5	2022	Company	2
30-40	Person 7	F/M/ 0	Netherlands Eindhoven	Industrial Engineer	10	2020	Entrepreneur	4
40-50	Person 8	F/M/0	Belgium Brussels	Computer Engineer	13	2018	Company	6
40-50	Person 9	M/M/0	Belgium Brussels	Computer Engineer	13	2018	Company	6
30-40	Person 10	M/S/0	Netherlands Amsterdam	Mechanical Engineer	7	2022	Company	2
50-60	Person 11	F/M/0	USA	Electronics Engineer	5	1997	Entrepreneur	7
40-50	Person 12	M/M/0	Netherlands Eindhoven	Computer Engineer	10	2017	Company	7
40-50	Person 13	F/M/0	Netherlands Eindhoven	Computer Engineer	10	2017	Company / Entrepreneur	7
30-40	Person 14	F/M/1	Germany Munich	Economics / Business Administration	12	2022	Company	2
20-30	Person 15	F/S/0	USA	Industrial Engineer	-	2023	Entrepreneur	1
30-40	Person 16	F/D/0	Germany Munich	Industrial Engineer	14	2022	Company	2
50-60	Person 17	M/D/1	Luxembourg	Aerospace Engineer	25	2019	Company	5
40-50	Person 18	M/M/1	Germany	Electronics	-	2008	Company	16

Age	Name	Male or Female Married or Single or Divorced Number of Children	Destination Country	Profession	Work Experience Before Migration (years)	Date of Migration	Occupation	Time Spent at Destination (years)
				Engineer / Student				
40-50	Person 19	M/D/1	Germany	Mechanical Engineer	16	2022	Company	2
20-30	Person 20	F/S/0	Germany Munich	Computer Engineer / Student	2	2022	Student	2
40-50	Person 21	F/M/?	Germany	Electronics Engineer	20	2015	Company	9
40-50	Person 22	M/M/2	USA	Computer Engineer	-	1999	Company / Entrepreneur	25
40-50	Person 23	M/M/1	USA	Electronics Engineer	-	1998	Company	26
30-40	Person 24	M/S/0	Germany Munich	Aerospace Engineer	10	2020	Company	4
20-30	Person 25	F/S/0	Italy Torino	Electronics Engineer / Student	1	2022	Student	2
40-50	Person 26	M/M/2	USA Dallas	Electronics Engineer	15	2014 USA migration, 2021 entrepreneur	Company / Entrepreneur	10

Summary of interview participant data:

- Destination: 1 Canada, 6 USA, 9 Germany, 1 Luxemburg, 1 Italy, 6 Netherlands, 2 Belgium
- Age Distribution: 4 people 20 – 30, 6 people 30 – 40, 14 people 40 – 50, 2 people 50 – 60
- Male / Female Distribution: 13 Female, 13 Male.
- Profession: Mostly people working in the high-tech, students and entrepreneurs. Engineers from various disciplines and managers.

It is observed that the semi-structured online interview participants' ages have a median value of 40 – 50, and the median value for the year of migration is 2017. It can be deduced that the migrants are not migrating just after graduation from university like in the 2000s but are experienced senior employees after 2010.

Table 5: Semi-Structured Online Interview Participants' Motives for Migration (created by the researcher using thematic analysis)

	Name	Experience life in a new country	A job offer/opportunity or education opportunity	Better future for their children	Partner residing in the destination country or migrating with partner	Problems in Turkish business environment	Problems in Turkish social environment	Economic Conditions	Acquaintances in destination
1.	Person 1	X	X						
2.	Person 2				X				
3.	Person 3		X	X					
4.	Person 4	X		X		X	X		
5.	Person 5								
6.	Person 6	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
7.	Person 7	X			X	X			
8.	Person 8	X	X		X		X		X
9.	Person 9	X			X		X		X
10.	Person 10	X							X
11.	Person 11	X							
12.	Person 12	X			X		X		
13.	Person 13	X			X		X		
14.	Person 14	X			X				X
15.	Person 15	X						X	
16.	Person 16	X					X		X
17.	Person 17	X			X	X			X
18.	Person 18		X						
19.	Person 19	X	X						X
20.	Person 20	X							X
21.	Person 21			X					
22.	Person 22		X						
23.	Person 23		X		X				
24.	Person 24	X	X			X			X
25.	Person 25	X	X		X			X	
26.	Person 26	X			X				

The following is the order of most reported motives of semi-structured online interview participants:

1. Experience life in a new country: 19 people
2. Partner residing in the destination country or migrating with a partner: 12 people
3. Acquaintances in destination: 10 people
4. A job offer/opportunity or education opportunity: 10 people

5. Problems in the Turkish social environment: 7 people
6. Problems in the Turkish business environment: 5 people
7. Better future for their children: 3 people
8. Economic conditions: 3 people

3.3.1 Before migration

As deduced from the interviews, the dominant patterns for migration are a combination of the following:

- Curious migrant character desiring to experience a new life
- Pull factors
 - Work in a more prestigious company,
 - Will to reach their full potential in a different setting,
 - Trying to achieve better living conditions for themselves or their children
- Push factors
 - Lack of opportunities in Turkey
 - Find a more suitable position that is not available in Turkey (This is also related to the lack of new types of innovative businesses in Turkey)
 - Reaction to the current economic, social, and political instabilities and tensions
 - Stress and extra hours in the working environment
- Network effects and migration culture
 - Affected by the recent migration culture and new skilled migration wave
 - Inspired by the experiences of friends and acquaintances
 - Referenced to a company by a friend or colleague

These motivations are supported by the cultural affinity, mental affinity, skill and capability match, personal and professional networks of the potential migrants, as

defined by de Haas (2021) in the Aspirations-Capabilities Framework (De Haas, 2021, p. 1).

Many skilled migrants are middle class before migration. They were exposed to Western culture during their education, career, and daily life. They are mentally closer to their destination countries in terms of lifestyle even long before migration and a 'cognitive migration' phenomenon exists in most cases. This situation explains the ease of adaptation. Many highly skilled migrants are work-oriented, and the multicultural business environments provide an integration path.

The interview participants have already been employed in Turkey, they found jobs without any major obstacle in their destinations, and economic causes are rarely mentioned by highly skilled migrants, which debunks the belief that economic conditions are the primary driver of migration at the micro level for highly skilled migrants. At least, this is not true for highly skilled migrants of Turkey, indicating lifestyle migration, which is a combination of different factors. On the other hand, young generation representatives Person 6 and Person 20 have complaints about economic conditions in Turkey and are indicated as a major cause of migration.

3.3.1.1 Early Formed Ideals and Adventurous Character

[Person 22] said, "I think one should have a goal. I have been dealing with computers since childhood and have my computer projects". His story indicates his determined migrant character looking for a place to fulfill his childhood goals.

Some migrants choose migration because of the combination of opportunities (i.e., a job offer is received) and their curious personalities and wanderlust (an intense urge to travel, wander, and explore the world) to experience migration as in the cases of [Person 1] and [Person 3].

The wife of [Person 26] said, "I am exhausted in Ankara". He accepted migration for a change and escape from the routine of their previous life. He did not have the motivation to escape from Turkey like other people. He earned a USA Green Card from the lottery in 2005. [Person 26]'s migration is an example of a different route owing to a Green Card to experience a new life indicated in the "adventurous and risk-taking" character of the migrant personality (Boneva & Frieze, 2002, p. 477).

3.3.1.2 Migration Flows and Cumulative Causation

Many migrants listen to the positive experiences and encouragement of their friends, acquaintances, and colleagues, which affect their motivation, as in the case of [Person 1]. These interactions cultivate the migration culture and self-sustaining migration mechanisms. The increasing migration flow from a specific workplace to another specific destination affected the migration decision of [Person 6].

3.3.1.3 Contact and Experience of Foreign Cultures

Previous international work partnerships or project experiences, business or touristic travels, of people give a chance to examine and predict life in the destination country before migration as in the stories of [Person 2] and [Person 4]. Internships, university studies, EU Erasmus programs, MS studies, and PhD studies are other means by which people can find a chance to experience life in destination countries as an alternative to their lives in Turkey. [Person 3] is a case who completed MS studies in Germany and worked in Turkey for some years before final emigration.

There are examples of people, like [Person 26], working in the Turkish offices of international companies and then moving abroad, which indicates mobilization and globalization in the era of post-industrial society and multinational capitalism.

3.3.1.4 Partner and Family Factor

The initial migration decision and not-to-return decision of Turkish families were affected mainly by the tendency to secure the future lives of the children. [Person 21] said, "The advice of my cousin, who lives abroad, and the suggestion of a friend, who recently returned from abroad, was influential in my decision. In Turkey's current education system, I could not see a competent, positive, science-based, fairly accessible, and low-cost option for my two children". He is an example of a parent migrating for the future of his children caused by the deteriorated Turkish education system. The migrants do not consider return migration if their children spend longer time in a foreign country, adapt to the education system, or plan to get higher education in this country, as in the cases of [Person 23] and [Person 26].

Some of them, like [Person 2], [Person 7], and [Person 5's wife], even choose to migrate with their partners and without finding a job. This situation is especially valid for women, who are an indicator of migrations increasing the gender gap. However, in

some circumstances, the gender equality policies of destination countries, like the European Union, can balance this (European Union, 2020, p.1).

3.3.1.5 Unexpected and Unplanned Factors

The COVID-19 incident changed [Person 7]'s plans, and the cancellation of job positions led her to try her own business, which is an example of the unexpected and unplanned factors in migration. [Person 11] told, "After university, I started my own business, but Turkey was no longer satisfactory. I went to the USA with a tourist visa to find a business partner for my business. I could not find a partner, but I found a job", expressing her travel and unplanned migration story.

3.3.1.6 Lack of Career Opportunities in Turkey and Self-Actualization

Innovation and retreat are the two types of response behaviors to the anomies resulting in migration associated with the lack of opportunities in the homeland, according to Merton's Paradigm of Deviant Behavior (Merton, 1968, p. 230). Similarly, exit involves accepting the loss of the benefit and changing behavior (possibly migrating) to seek the best alternative, according to Exit, Voice, Loyalty Framework of Hirschman (Hirschman, 1970, p. 4).

[Person 17] was always thinking about living in a foreign country. His close friends and family also encouraged him. He left his previous workplaces due to political interventions. He wanted a technical job position, but there were few suitable positions in Turkey. That is why he went to Luxembourg. He is one of the specialists who cannot find a proper place for him due to Turkey's human resources policy, which is constraining experienced people for managerial positions, resulting in lack of career alternatives.

[Person 18] said, "Occasionally, I feel sad when I think about the fact that I spent my most productive time in Germany, but considering the social life offered to me, I am happy to be here. I think that the main reason for the brain drain in Turkey is cultural and that educated people are made to feel more worthless day by day, and life revolves around only material things. Unfortunately, in recent years, educated people have been migrating to countries where they can feel better, as the economic capital has moved to a segment whose level of education is not high." indicating the 'minority' feeling of a middle-class individual and the feeling of more productive at the host

country. Previous studies revealed that the global welfare gains from the skill bias in receiving countries surpass the losses in many sending countries (Biavaschi et al., 2020, p. 14). Thus, highly skilled migration results in a more efficient allocation of talent, with a larger number of highly skilled workers residing and working in countries where they are most productive.

[Person 18] said, "I was lucky to be involved in the design of aircraft projects. I achieved career satisfaction after ten years in 2017. Projects were completed, and new projects were started to be contracted to other companies. We were no longer able to do work as comfortably and on a budget as before. I started thinking more about what I could do to improve myself. I wanted to see the organization in different companies". He is an example of experienced technical specialist who is very attractive for talent-lacking EU companies.

[Person 22] said, "There was the influence of my circle of friends, and at the same time, the companies specialized in my interests were in the USA". Migration can be perceived as a means for self-actualization in his case.

[Person 20] thought there would be more chances and development zones for his career in her destination. "Going to graduate school" is the more dominant expression than migration, according to her. A senior from the university and a family friend's daughter went before. They became role models. She decided to go after the pandemic. She felt pressure about not missing the opportunity to migrate. The desire to discover new things is in her character. She chose computer engineering because it allows a flexible and satisfactory life. She thinks the USA is an illusion of the American Dream. She chose Germany because it is closer to Turkey.

[Person 24] said, "I advocate competition and free markets regarding brain drain. I think I served my country. Since I could not improve myself and benefit from it, I made a change. Whether it results positively or negatively depends on the steps Turkey will take. It is not black or white. It is not about the exploitation of human resources but the use of human resources. If these potential human resources remained in Turkey, they would be wasted. In previous years, education was at the forefront, and these people excelled. I left because I felt that human resources were not used properly". This example emphasizes the validity of the Macro Theory of Neoclassical Economics, the New Economic Theory of Economic Labor, and the World Systems Theory.

3.3.1.7 Network Effects

[Person 22] said, "When choosing a university and city, I looked at the conferences I followed and looked at the university rankings". Some offline investigation methods were used instead of social networks and social media (such as LinkedIn) in the 2000s.

[Person 19] said, "My friend inside the company asked for my CV and delivered it to the company. He also became a reference". There are other situations where friends or acquaintances can become a reference, such as in the situations of [Person 1] and [Person 17]. These examples support the theory of The Strength of Weak Ties, which emphasizes the importance of loose relationships like an 'acquaintance' rather than a strong bond like a 'friend' or a 'relative' (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1368).

3.3.1.8 Socioeconomic Factors

[Person 20] said, "It is in my character to experience new things. Apart from this, the fact that I was a good student, the social state, low university fees, the presence of Turks, acquaintances who had gone before, and they did not require a language test were also factors in their choice of Technical University Munich. Salaries and the economic situation were constantly discussed in Turkey. It was annoying to talk about this, even though I didn't mind it myself", indicating the role of pressure of economic conditions on Turkish citizens combined with the migration culture of young generations in her migration experience.

When her friend was accepted to graduate school, [Person 25] was also motivated to migrate. Social instabilities and the economic situation in Turkey were also factors. Turks coming to the University in Italy, especially Milan, have increased significantly in the last two years. They searched online and found the position. Schools and living were not expensive, and there were scholarship opportunities. They chose Italy because it has a more pleasant climate and is cultural similarity to Turkey. The reason for the emigration of highly skilled individuals to Italy is the desire to feel comfortable within the culture is also indicated by another study by Samuk-Carignani et al. (Samuk-Carignani et al., 2022, p. 16). She is an example that the migration constraints vary for different individuals, leading to different choices and destinations.

[Person 9] expressed his minority feeling: "I always wanted to go. I was very upset about the results of the 2018 election. I said to myself, "I don't want to live here with these people; I do not want to stay here" after the elections. The majority of Turkish

people did not fit my mentality, and I always felt like I was a minority. When I looked at Turkey's past, I could foresee the future. Even if there were temporary good times, it would never be a country suitable for my mentality. I always wanted a free, more comfortable place". His partner, [Person 8], accepted his proposal to migrate when fewer relatives left in Turkey.

[Person 13] has always had a tendency to live abroad. His experience working abroad for a short time also gave him courage. The economic situation and political developments after the Gezi Parkı events and finally the coup attempt triggered the need for a change. The insecurity created by the belief that the justice system is not working and the tension of Turkish society resulted in him and his partner to migrate. This migration story is an example of the effect of historical events on migration decisions.

People who go to these countries feel that they are going to a place that is mentally close to them in terms of lifestyle, so lifestyle migration is a major pattern.

3.3.1.9 Combination of Factors

[Person 16] said, "The decision to migrate came spontaneously. Relatives who left in the past had positive opinions. The number of people leaving Turkey has increased in the last 6-7 years. A friend of mine who went there recommended it. Munich was a place I knew and had been before. I also knew the work discipline. Distance was a serious criterion when choosing a place like Munich instead of the USA. Economic conditions were certainly not the cause, but there was some improvement. I preferred an international business environment. I loved aviation, and I was able to have a new experience by staying in a safe area without changing the industry", indicating the combination of factors leading to migration.

[Person 7] said, "We have acquaintances who have been to the Netherlands before; it is very important that there is no language barrier, the 30% tax advantage for expats is attractive, there is no prejudice against Turks, and there is an international environment" about the pull factors of the Netherlands.

[Person 8] and [Person 9] knew Belgium before migration. Belgium is a very good place for an expat because of the multinational organizations such as NATO and the EU. Since their families would stay in Turkey, they wanted to be close enough. They preferred a social state with work-life balance. They did not consider a capitalist

country like the USA. They did not choose Germany because of the German language barrier. They applied to northern countries, since job opportunities are few in southern countries,. Their experience is an example of migration as a multi-criteria decision.

It is difficult to say that only one dominant parameter causes migration. In general, it can be said that people with immigrant personalities and tendencies are embracing opportunities and increasingly migrating under the influence of driving forces such as the economy, social structure, excessive urbanization, anxiety about the future, and political events. Different dynamics can be observed in this context.

3.3.1.10 Migration Culture

For Turkey, a highly skilled migration culture is developing as more people migrate, this affects others' decisions, and the expectation of the society from the highly skilled people force them to follow the norm to migrate.

[Person 19] said, "Migration is like a chain reaction. When some critical people start leaving, it triggers other people. If someone important is leaving, people think there is something strange about this, and they should leave too".

[Person 1] stated, "Every time I go to Turkey after 2015, people ask how I can migrate to Canada. Even if they do not migrate, they think that living abroad will make them happier. It shows that the environment in Turkey is getting more squeezed. This change is becoming more apparent as the rate of highly skilled migrants going abroad increases". As the populations of foreign countries are aging and lack talent, they become dependent on immigrants to stay in the race with other countries and try to attract more highly skilled migrants.

[Person 1] told, "Engineers have advantages compared to other groups as they do not have to get extra education or certification like medical professionals or lawyers to migrate", indicating the fluidity of post-industrial, knowledge-based, service sector characters indicated by Daniel Bell and François Lyotard (Baran & Suğur, 2022, p. 6; Lyotard, 1984, p. 3).

3.3.2 Abroad

3.3.2.1 Expectations and Initial Phase

Those who migrated without establishing an after-university social and professional life in Turkey have fewer references and dependencies on their previous lives. However, middle-aged people (between 35 and 45 ages) with a certain quality of life in Turkey are inclined to seek comfort and convenience in Turkey. [Person 1] said, "People living in a comfort zone can sometimes get disappointed as they compare with high standards. Key to adaptation is mentioned as lowering the expectations and embracing the struggle to build a new life". This should be emphasized because the 'happy migrant' myth is widely accepted in Turkey. [Person 12] mentioned, "Happiness in a place is also related to expectations. Those who come here with high expectations may be disappointed, for example, those who cannot hire a servant or those who cannot go to the hairdresser once a week". One of the drawbacks of Western countries is the price of hiring a housekeeper, accessing health care, or getting any other service, as expressed by [Person 1] and [Person 14]. The service sector is mentioned multiple times as a better side of Turkey. However, the same people also mention that the price of this is the exploitation of the labor of others.

[Person 23] said, "Those who will migrate should be open-minded to adapt. They should consider adapting to a new lifestyle rather than maintaining the old one. Let them think about why they want to migrate. The experience you have on holiday and the experience you have when you live are different, such as languages, bureaucracy, and visas. People should talk with those who have been through those experiences before. Migrate for the right reasons. Do not emigrate for the wrong reasons and be disappointed. Some people go to Portugal and have to deal with the expenses and bureaucracy there. It is also necessary to conduct a risk analysis. If you do not have anything to lose, it may be attractive, depending on your risk appetite", similar to [Person 25].

"The grass is greener on the other side." is a situation about migration. I've also seen people come here and be disappointed. [Person 2] mentioned that some migrants say, "We don't learn much here" and "They are not using our capacity". He advised that those looking for more comfort and slowness should choose Europe, and those who are entrepreneurs and challengers should choose the USA.

[Person 10] warned about the difficulties in migration: “You should not find a country and emigrate just to emigrate abroad. Some places may not be nicer than where you come from. Happiness is also related to the person and the expectation. Migration does not appeal to those who love family life and big families. Northern cultures are more culturally different from Turkey. The house rental process is very long and exhausting”.

[Person 21] mentioned, “When I migrated, my professional and cultural expectations were low, but my social expectations regarding my children’s education were high. I can say that my professional expectations and social expectations were met, but my expectations regarding adaptation to the education system were realized less”.

[Person 24] said, “If I had the state of mind I have now, I would emigrate again. It is important to gain this experience. There was disappointment about some organizational problems in Turkey; there are organizational problems here, too, and it is also important to experience this. I will know this when I return; I have also seen the problems inherent in this job”. When one goes abroad, the opinion about other countries being much more advanced and far better than they are disappears. [Person 20] said that while migrants expect much higher standards and technology in business life abroad, they realize that the difference is not huge, and migration causes these ideals and dreams to normalize. These people realize the value of experience gained in their jobs before migration compared to the experiences of similar people in destination countries, as observed by [Person 16], [Person 19], and [Person 24].

[Person 19] said, “I faced a business life is inferior to my expectations. If I had known, I would have been more hesitant. I am a person with low expectations. Therefore, it is easy to satisfy me. I don’t have many disappointments in life. Do I experience discrimination from Germans? No. Because I’m not expecting the same social conditions. I am not looking for my previous social circle here”.

[Person 23] said, “What I wanted was nothing special, and I had no expectations. I always acted by thinking one step ahead. I think my current life is better than the life I would have had if I had stayed in Turkey”. There is an advantage of going young; those who go later compare with the references from their previous lives in Turkey.

[Person 8] and [Person 9] said, “We wish we had come earlier. Our expectations were met. I have a life where I could spend more time for myself. I wanted more social rights, meritocracy, justice, and equality. When I watch the news in Turkey, I feel depressed.

We already knew European culture, so we didn't encounter big surprises. The earlier you leave, the better you adapt to the country you visit".

[Person 21] said, "We do not have a new migration plan for the next ten years due to my children's education system, but we are open to it if conditions require it. My advice to those considering migration is to decide according to their conditions and priorities and to evaluate the information received from others according to their situation". Each person/family's motivation to migrate may be different. This reason should be determined very well so that in future difficulties, this reason can preserve motivation. Migration has advantages, disadvantages, and costs; if all these are calculated realistically, future disappointment can be prevented.

3.3.2.2 Adaptation and Cultural Dimension

The first excitement of migrants passes away years after their migration, and they can evaluate the destination country more objectively. Establishing new norms over time is concordant with the U-curve of adaptation.

Acculturation is the interaction of the culture of the new society and the original culture on various issues such as traditions and language. Social-economic and political positions include the social, economic, and political positions and rights of individuals who have just joined society. Esser defines this as a structural dimension. Interaction includes the communication of new members of society with their society and members of the new society. Identity is discussed in the context of where the person feels he belongs in social life. These four dimensions are in terms of ethnic culture, ethnic society, host society, and culture of the host society. When evaluated, Berry states that there are four different forms of integration. These four areas are multiple inclusion, which refers to adaptation to both cultures; segregation, where adaptation to the original culture predominates; assimilation, which mainly involves adaptation to the new culture; and marginalization, which refers to rejection of both cultures (Şahin, 2008, p. 230; Mittelstädt & Odag, 2016, p. 25).

Highly skilled migrants' qualifications make them easier to adapt, but they also have strong bonds with Turkey. This situation can be categorized as multiple inclusion, which refers to adaptation to both cultures (Şahin, 2008, p. 230). Their cultural capital, social capital, and technology-oriented online social networks, like WhatsApp, ease this adaptation. They can develop relationships with different nationalities based on their

migrant capital. However, the individualism of Western countries challenges the migrants.

Integration and adaptation characters of recent highly skilled migrants rely more on their cultural capitals, institutionalized cultural capitals (education, professional work experiences, professional social network capitals - namely LinkedIn), and reproduced migration-specific cultural capital rather than their family or close friend social capitals and ethnic capitals as opposed to the earlier generations of 70s, 80s and 90s (Erel, 2010, p. 642; Nohl et al., 2006, p. 1).

[Person 11] said, "I could not return to Turkey for 1.5 years from the USA. I could talk to my family very briefly with the phone card. I said to myself that if I live here, I must adapt to this place, and I deliberately distanced myself from the Turks. This way I adapted faster. Communication tools and mobility have improved over time. I also started coming to Turkey more." indicating the difficulties of adaptation in a technologically inferior and less mobilized era of the 2000s.

[Person 7] stated that as there are so many Chinese and Indians in ASML Company, therefore the company gave priority to hiring Eastern Europeans and Turks. However, since the number of Turks increased, it was decided not to hire any more Turks to avoid in-group favoritism. However, he does not think that Turks are particularly preferred. [Person 24] said, "I think Turks are not particularly preferred. On the contrary, not being a member of the European Union (at least on the corporate side) can create problems. Turks, who come here, perform well wherever they go". This case emphasizes the significance of skills for acceptance to different countries. [Person 22] said, "I have worked at Apple, Google, and university. I did not feel that the Turks stood out or were different. Everyone is evaluated according to their qualifications", and added, "The USA is more neutral on this issue, towards Turks and immigrants. Turks who prefer Europe have to overcome prejudice from time to time but can stand out with their qualities", indicating the difference between Europe and the USA for Turkish migrants.

Some migrants indicate neutral views about Turkish migrants, but the positive views stand out more generally, according to interview participants.

[Person 18] said, "I think that as time progresses and educated people migrate, Turkish people are more preferred in Germany. I think that the flexible mentalities of the Turkish people are a great advantage". [Person 20] said, "Among immigrants from

outside the European Union, Turks are more preferred due to their qualifications. Asians are very successful in their studies, but Turkey is at an optimum point between Asia's hard work and Europe's creativity", indicating why the German companies prefer highly skilled Turkish migrants. The interview participants reported the positive views of locals, such as Turks have good aspects such as ingenuity, quick-wit, adaptation, and the ability to behave politically. There is a perception that Turks do good work and do what they promise. [Person 7] said, "I am part of the recruiting process, and we evaluate dozens of Turkish CVs". [Person 8] added, "Even my company now says, please promote us to your good engineer friends". [Person 10] expressed, "The image of Turkish engineering employees is positive. Dutch think Turks are hardworking and competent people. The number of Turkish employees has increased in my own company". These highly skilled migrants also serve as cultural ambassadors. None of the interview participants reported prejudice or racist experiences. [Person 11] said, "Even though my husband is American, we often come to Turkey. There is a Turkish flag in my car. We are ambassadors of Turkish culture, food, and hospitality. The more adventurous ones go first. Those who leave now are going to the more known places. In general, those from Turkey made good achievements with their knowledge and attitudes. Even though more people come from India and China, our people stand out more, probably because of the education in schools, although education has also deteriorated in recent years. Since it is difficult to come, people with certain qualifications and cultures can come. They want to prove themselves; they are ambitious and flexible. There have a certain level of ethics. We have practical and fluid intelligence. Turks are taking the initiative. They need fewer directives than other migrants. Other countries like India and China need more hierarchy. For example, our doctors can see 80 patients a day. During COVID times, Turkish doctors outperformed other doctors from different countries", expressing better aspects of Turkish work culture and migrants in addition to her solid Turkish identity even after years in the USA.

Experienced migrants mention that extrovert people may have difficulties, a feeling of loneliness may occur, and migration is suitable for those who want to spend time alone and with a few people. A newcomer immigrant told [Person 9], "I have always lived in a big family; I always open Facetime and leave it to hear my family's voices". [Person 10] said, "I knew I would not be as social as Turkey, but my expectations were low. Other people may complain about socializing". [Person 1] told that individualistic Western culture can sometimes be challenging for migrants, but introverted skilled migrants

rarely complain about this. They said it is easier to plan your life because of less intervention and fewer individuals expectations. On the other hand, Turks are extroverts having emotional cultural characters according to Lewis Cultural Model (Lewis, 2003, p. 10). Living in an introvert culture can be challenging in the long term as it is easier to develop intimacy and attachment in an extrovert culture like Turkey. [Person 2] told skilled migrants with Western-oriented mindset have smoother adaptation processes.

[Person 13] said, "Even though there was a low-performing Turk in my team that does not affect people's opinion about me". Therefore, we can infer that there are fewer discrimination examples in multicultural companies and countries. [Person 14] and her family generally meet with the Turkish immigrant community because there are many Turks in Munich, but they also have German and American friends. They do not feel discriminated. She says, "There are warm and formal Germans. The lifestyle is more important than national identity". German neighbors invited [Person 14] and her family to the opera. They became even closer friends when they saw they knew the rules of dressing elegantly for opera. Turkish migrants act as cultural ambassadors in destinations, enabling cultural rapprochement. [Person 24] said, "The image of Turks is different here, but with highly skilled immigrants, this perception also changes regarding education, our contribution, language, lifestyle, and professional characteristics. Turks growing up in Germany are a bit caught in the middle (inbetweeners)", explaining the mediator role of highly skilled migrants between locals and Turkish community in Germany.

[Person 15] said, "I have never had any problems with adaptation. I felt at home since I first arrived. My routines continue the same. As soon as I arrived, I signed up for the nearest gym. I attend weekly painting/art days. The same harmony applies in my business life. There are unlimited resources and help for anyone who wants to learn. As someone who already knows English, I did not experience any language barriers. Of course, this may be a problem in other countries", indicating the importance of routines for adaptation.

It mentioned that it is hard to have an intimate conversation and share similar feelings in the destination country because of the cultural distance. Highly skilled migrants like [Person 1] also mention that the increased polarization of Turkey and lifestyle differences hinder the unification of Turkish migrants. [Person 1] and [Person 7] mentioned that a sense of humor and the life experiences of early adulthood (university

period) especially play an essential part in making a connection with a new person. [Person 8], [Person 5], and [Person 10] expressed that some companies have cultural onboarding procedures to help people adapt to the new society and workplace, reflecting the importance of cultural issues in migration. [Person 24] told, “If there is a project that I can contribute to in the future, I may return to Turkey. I would not go to Saudi Arabia. Cultural proximity is also important. It has to be a place that will satisfy me socially, economically, and professionally”, mentioning the vital role of cultural distance in migration.

The nationality of a migrant is not a crucial parameter for migration-based countries like the USA and Canada because skills are the dominant characteristic of a migrant, as mentioned by [Person 1] and [Person 23]. At the same time, the locals in Germany and other European countries can sometimes consider new Turkish skilled migrants with prejudice originating from previous guest worker migrants of Turkey. The highly skilled migrant interview participants mostly work for multinational countries in the USA, Canada, and Europe. This situation makes adaptation easier and lowers discrimination probability. Migrants working in corporates and startups of European countries report an increasing Turkish migration trend in European countries, which is closely linked with highly skilled migrant policies and cumulative causation theory, as reported by [Person 2], [Person 19], [Person 13], [Person 12], [Person 8], [Person 9] and [Person 16]. Migrants of the 2000s had to cope with some prejudices and stereotyping as there were fewer highly skilled migrants in Germany. For example, [Person 2] faced some questions like “Can Turkish women smoke cigarettes in public?”

[Person 23] said, “No matter how long you live in the USA, you always feel that you were not born and raised there. Since the USA is a country of immigrants and does not have a nation-state identity like Europe, there are many immigrants. I feel more ordinary as an immigrant”. [Person 15] said, “Since the USA is a mixed sociocultural place, I do not think there will be any problems here. It depends on the individual’s adaptation. As soon as I arrived, I started working. I did not encounter any cultural problems. However, this situation may be different in European countries. I think the acceptance there is less due to the image of a large number of previous generation Turks in Germany” indicating the social acceptance and integration in different destination country settings. [Person 17] said, “Since I’m not overly social, I did not have any difficulty here either. Luxembourg is very calm. French and German young people do not prefer Luxembourg and emigrate because there are no social activities.

There are trekking routes, and my sports habits have improved. Women wander alone in the forest. It is very safe”, mentioning the conformity between migrant’s and country’s characters.

[Person 18] said, “I become thinking and living more like a German. As time went by, I began to experience more and more cultural difficulties during my holidays in Turkey. I had no difficulties in adapting to work and social life during migration. I can say that I lived by accepting differences, learning from them, and making a synthesis”. Virtual migration can be considered for this case because the cognitive distance is mentioned less with Germany during his migration process and more with Turkey after his migration process. This case exemplifies the W-adaptation curve and re-entry shock (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, 2017, p. 185).

[Person 21] said, “I had no problems adapting to business life, but my children had difficulty adapting to education. The obligation to learn the local language used in daily life forced us”. Despite the number of migrants in Germany, adaptation of recent highly skilled migrants and the language barrier is still a significant issue for Germany. [Person 2] said that language impedes migrants’ adaptation to daily life in Germany. However, the English business language is the main fulcrum of most skilled migrants for adaptation. [Person 3] told that the language barrier makes the situation harder for local companies dominated by German citizens since the business language is German. [Person 25] also mentions that it is necessary to learn Italian if you will stay for a long time in Italy, especially for government bureaucracy.

Social structure, social system, and regulations ease the adaptation of migrants in almost every destination. [Person 20] mentioned that concerns about social, financial status, and hierarchy are less in Germany and added that even people with very high incomes are more modest, for example, in the cars they drive. [Person 1] said that daily life at the destination is easier because of the well-organized system and regulations.

3.3.2.3 Partner, Family and Turkish Social Circle

Due to its support mechanisms, migrating with a partner or family eases the adaptation period. This situation was indicated by the experiences of [Person 8], [Person 5], [Person 17] and [Person 2].

Despite the drawbacks of a less social life, being away from family members, and the cultural distance between two communities, migration has more advantages for personal development and professional career, according to [Person 6].

[Person 23] mentioned, "All my responsibility was to myself. I had no children. I was not married. I established my daily life routine here. There is excitement, novelty, and adventure feeling at young ages". Since he left young, he had no responsibility to his family. He had more time to socialize and develop a network. After a certain age, there is a tendency to keep old friends instead of meeting new ones. [Person 23] confirmed, "The age I migrate matters a lot. Almost all of the friends I have today are the people I met at university or right after".

[Person 19] said, "If people have children, they should think twice. Emigration is an entirely different thing for those with children. It is more than taking responsibility for oneself. Families should go to places they know. It's challenging to go to a place where you don't know anyone. Everyone must agree and be motivated. Family members should not think about their previous life. Life will not be the same".

[Person 14]'s child had a tough first month at Kindergarten because of the language. There were complaints from the school. He adapted after six months. The adaptation of other family members is also critical for an individual.

3.3.2.4 Gender

Despite having different outcomes for different female migrants, migration has the potential to widen the gender gap as women tend to migrate depending on their spouses.

Turkish women who migrate because of their partners' job situation may have difficulty in finding a suitable job in the destination country or drift to accept a degraded/lower position compared to their previous role. Women typically play a secondary role in family migration decisions, reducing human capital and earning potential in the destination country (Kosyakova & Salikutluk, 2023, p. 14). This situation is reported only in a few cases in the interviews by [Person 2], and [Person 5] signifying a less frequent case for highly skilled migrants.

Being away from social support mechanisms for a family with children and the cost of caregivers or housekeepers also increase this gender difference, putting these

responsibilities primarily on females as a predefined gender role. Conventional family roles and caregiving duties can limit women's participation in the labor market (Kosyakova & Salikutluk, 2023, p. 13). Relevant countries are developing various social support and community projects related to child care to balance these.

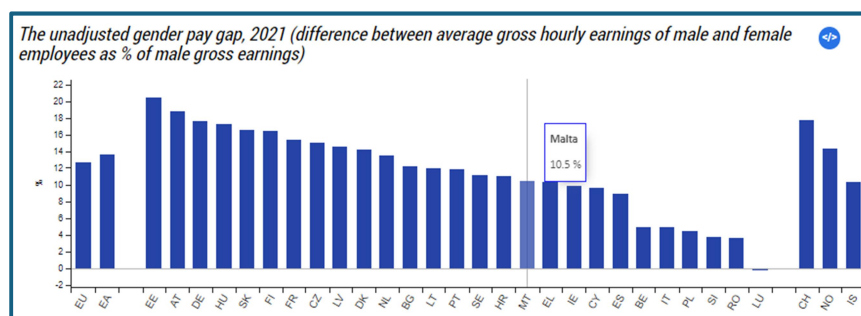


Figure 37: Gender Pay Gap in Europe ([https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender_pay_gap_statistics#:~:text=For%20the%20economy%20as%20a,in%20Estonia%20\(Figure%201\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender_pay_gap_statistics#:~:text=For%20the%20economy%20as%20a,in%20Estonia%20(Figure%201).)). Accessed: 14.08.2024)

Women paid 12.7% less on average compared to men in the EU, which is another factor enlarging the gender gap as depicted in the gender pay gap statistics of 2021. Therefore, migration does not always guarantee an easier or better life for experienced women or mothers in these aspects. On the other hand, the variety and number of different job or career opportunities, job security, working hours, and work-life balance have a counter effect on this drawback, making migration even more attractive for women at the beginning of their careers.

[Person 1] expressed these different aspects “Being a woman in a male-dominated sector like engineering is sometimes challenging as in Turkey. On the other hand, equal opportunity policy is an advantage for women in these countries”.

Other studies show that the gender gap in Turkey's labor market significantly influences the initial migration and return intentions of female Turkish professionals and students living abroad. The findings indicate that this gender gap in return intentions exists regardless of other significant factors, such as age, field of study or occupation, and duration of stay (Elveren & Toksöz, 2019, p. 55). So, the return migration can be another factor that can widen the gender gap in migration.

3.3.2.5 Career, Job, Workplace and Daily Routines

When emigrants visit, they say Turkey seems more chaotic, and people seem restless. They became aware of this not while living in Turkey but when they left. In most places abroad, except for big cities, life is slower. Turkey's agenda is more dense and exhausting compared to those of countries. Work-life balance is essential.

[Person 7] said, "The Dutch are more moderate than the Northern countries, but we do not make friends or do extra activities outside of work. There are so many old acquaintances of local people that there is no need to make friends with someone new. Contact with other immigrants, such as Southern Europeans and Asians, occurs mostly in the workplace. I have had lifelong friends that I have made at every workplace in Turkey before, but the Netherlands is an exception". Some migrants long for their intimate and close friendships in Turkey. Developing a close friendship in a workplace in a Western migrant country is less likely than in Turkey. Meeting and spending time outside of the workplace with colleagues in Turkey seems to be a cultural difference.

[Person 20] said career change is also more straightforward compared to Turkey. Because German young people receive state aid and are trained in qualified schools where other professions such as photography, cooking, and other non-technical jobs are chosen as professions, fewer people choose engineering. This skill shortage is compensated by migration. Many individuals in semi-structured online interview participants worked for defense companies in Turkey before migration. They switched to other sectors like civil aviation, the semiconductor industry, consultancy, information technologies, and entrepreneurship. This situation indicates how destination countries offer different career opportunities and flexibilities for highly skilled migrants.

[Person 15] supports migration and thinks that it is always good to be connected to the rest of the World. However, [Person 15] thinks that it is unfortunate that some people who graduated from engineering in Turkey are doing inferior jobs abroad to facilitate migration.

[Person 16] said, "We have overestimated Europe, there is no extreme efficiency, but the system is defined strictly and works" as one of the main differences between Turkish and European work systems. [Person 4] said that taking initiative and responsibility is always considered a great virtue in destination countries, mentioning also the unfair attitudes faced and problematic experiences of himself in Turkey. On the

contrary, [Person 20] said that his team and working conditions in Turkey may be the best environment in which he has worked. He says, "I wish that working environment was here". There are feelings of nostalgia after migration. Turks think bureaucracy and the slow pace of business is unusual in the destination countries. [Person 20] said, "In Turkey, it was easier to access services".

[Person 26] said, "People of Turkish origin are not particularly preferred in the USA. Hispanics are preferred for low-paid jobs, and Indians are preferred for IT jobs", showing the Dual Labor Market dynamics in the USA (de Haas et al., 2020, p. 28). [Person 6] said, "I think Turkish people are preferred in the Netherlands because of their determination, hard work, and quick wit, as well as our ability to adapt to business life". This situation was also mentioned by [Person 20] for Germany. The last two cases are concordant with the migrant personality theory, stating that migrants display higher levels of motivation for achievement and power, besides a strong orientation towards work (Boneva & Frieze, 2002, p. 477). [Person 12] said, "The last wave of Turkish migrants have prominent skills. Those who are hardworking have good careers regardless of nationality".

[Person 9] said, "Things are planned in detail, and topics are discussed for hours. Every possible possibility is considered, and this process flows very slowly. It took getting used to this at work. A topic can be discussed for three weeks. Everyone here has an opinion on everything, and it takes a long time to discuss them. There is no need to beat around the bush. You can even say to your manager, 'No, I do not think like you; what you say is wrong; I think like that, let's do it like that'. This is being received very positively for voicing your opinion. I thought there would be fights at the meetings when I first came. The culture of directness and hierarchy evolved as we went from east to west. It's hard to get used to it, but once you get used to it, a burden is lifted off your shoulders, and you don't personalize the issues. You don't guess others' opinions because everyone tells you what they really think, and it is not taken personally. However, if it were in Turkey, it would be perceived personally", describing Belgium's discussion, directness, and speakability culture. [Person 8] and [Person 10] have similar experiences.

[Person 19] told, "Childhood dreams, encouragement from friends, and the workplace environment all had some influence on the decision to migrate. I received much respect and was flattered by this at my current company in Germany. Instead of the extreme hierarchy in Turkey, this German company had a very naive, respectful, and humanistic

approach. However, I had to return to Turkey occasionally for family reasons. They said they also support this and remote work. They respected issues related to family and well-being. There were working hours exceeding 11 hours and a challenging environment in Turkey. Everyone was very encouraged and proud when they heard my opportunity". The German culture, the startup culture, and the new company sector play a role in migration. The positive attitude and work-life balance of destination countries are other motivations for individuals working in the harsh work culture of Turkish companies. [Person 9] and [Person 8] told, "We could not have a hobby or a routine either in Turkey because of work. We were working constantly and mandatory overtime. We met with friends once a week and drank. The biggest difference after coming here is that the work ends after you leave the workplace. There is a lake next to our house. We have nature walks. The person you see on the street greets you. I was walking with my head down in Turkey. People in Belgium are not very close, but they act sincerely because they do not have any problems. People in Turkey are very glum, extremely stressed, and anxious. Everyone is in a rush in Turkey, but they do not know what they are trying to achieve. I have become a much more relaxed here", expressing the changes in their life routines, work-life balance, and social habits.

[Person 12] and [Person 13] mention migration's psychological aspects. [Person 12] said, "If we had the state of mind we have now, we would have come earlier and not have tolerated life in Turkey. Even though we lived in a decent neighborhood, Ümitköy, I was close to a fight, even in traffic. We did not realize that the tension was so high when we were in Turkey". [Person 13], who has started to experience headaches in Turkey, thinks that is entirely due to anxiety. When she came to the Netherlands, those headaches passed away. For this reason, they do not follow the news about Turkey.

[Person 24] said, "The migration should be considered as a logical decision, not as an adventure. Some people follow the trend towards here. One should not comply with the trends on social media. Starting to work in Turkey provides good economic and professional development opportunities. Those who worked on the defense projects learned a lot. Engineers in Europe deal with very specific issues and show less development. Unfortunately, Turkey is currently educating and training personnel for other countries". However, this motivation may also enhance development as a described in the 'Catch-Up Effect' of the 'Convergence Theory' in economics.

Most semi-structured online interview participants did not mention a significant economic benefit of migration, which debunks the myth that the motivation for migration

is economic conditions. Migrants usually remain in the same social class, but their living standards have improved compared to Turkey because of the purchasing power parity.

3.3.2.6 Transnational Lives

Transnationalism spreads and dominates in the domains of identities, lives, personal networks, information networks, and companies.

Highly skilled immigrants change the perception about Turkey and take on the mission of cultural ambassadors, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously. They are less affected by issues such as racism, discrimination, and prejudice. They even undertake a mission to break prejudices on these issues and pave the way for other future arrivals.

For Turkish emigrants, especially those who are close in physical distance, there is a desire to feel partly belonging to both sides and to live a transnational life, which is very similar to 'multiple inclusion' defined by the Berry cultural adaptation model (Şahin, 2008, p. 230; Mittelstädt & Odag, 2016, p. 25). In fact, for every emigrant, there is a situation that we can call "feeling belonging to both sides and being mentally dividedness". However, they can take advantage of their "in-betweenness" and start a process of reimagining themselves as 'transcultural mediators' (Kılınç et al., 2022, p. 2726).

[Person 23] stated, "I feel a sense of belonging to both countries. I can not live like I am in Turkey, but I can not live completely like an American. Sometimes I spend time with Turks and sometimes with American friends. When I return to Turkey, everything feels different. You comply with some norms, but you do not forget your culture. We make raki and fish with friends as rituals that remind us of Turkey", indicating that the key to adaptation is to adopt new norms and fuse two cultures.

[Person 10] said, "It is hard to lose ties with the country you come from. We follow the news of Turkey because there is not much news here". [Person 10] added, "Emigration brings some dissatisfaction, but I do not feel far away from Turkey mentally. Being here is no more than working and living in another country", mentioning the transnational lives of migrants. [Person 13] and [Person 14] also maintain emotional ties with Turkey.

[Person 19] said, "I spend 6-7 days in Turkey every month. I have a house for which I pay the rent. When I go, I pick up my children, take them to school, make them do homework, and cook for them. It's better to belong to one side. However, it is physically and psychologically tiring". He is an excellent example of transnational migrant experiencing difficulties of a transnational life. The boundaries are not very clear. He has a life on both sides. He said, "It is much harder than I expected". He added that when a person goes from one place to another, his body leaves, head, social bonds, and soul are left behind. There are feelings of emotional overload and ambivalent feelings associated with transnational life.

[Person 1], [Person 2], [Person 11], [Person 13], [Person 16], [Person 17], [Person 19], [Person 24], [Person 25] are the ones who want to live a transnational life balanced between two countries, indicating the widespread desire to live a transnational life.

[Person 11] said, "I plan to live alternately between the two countries in the future. I don't plan on retiring. If given the opportunity, I would do so without expecting anything to contribute to Turkey, but there must also be a desire on the other side (Turkey) to benefit from you", expressing her will to create value for Turkey.

[Person 17] said, "I know many people who live in Turkey and work in Germany". This situation was also mentioned by [Person 14], whose husband was working remotely from Turkey for foreign companies. This cross-border remote work phenomenon is another type of 'transnational migration' or 'virtual migration' without physically migrating and is also not visible in migration statistics.

3.3.2.7 Identity

Almost none of the migrants expressed the feeling of being 'Dutch', 'German', or 'American'. Even the ones having migrant country citizenship feel that they are Turks living in a different country, a 'World citizen' or an individual without belonging to any country. This situation is in accordance with Erik Erikson's psychosocial development stages which state that identity development occurs mainly before age 18 (McLeod, 2024, p. 1). The migrants' skills or achievements define them better than their origin. The national identities are becoming less significant, especially for highly skilled migrants, giving rise to transnational identities. Although most migrants benefit from this transnational life, some express being in limbo between two countries. Leaving Turkish citizenship is a difficult decision for almost all migrants, indicating their

attachment to Turkey. This transnational identity of 'new wave' migrant Turks has been revealed in another study by Ulucay (2022). While dual identity characteristics have been more prominent among Germany-born Turks, the transnational connections of 'new wave' migrants have emerged as a more decisive factor in shaping their migrant identity (Ulucay, 2022, p. 71).

The stereotype of strong national belonging among Turkish populations in Germany is evolving, with 'new wave' migrants exhibiting more practical and detached perspectives on identity through 'elective belonging.' Migration is becoming a tool for achieving desired identities, further reinforcing their existing disconnection from their home society and nation. For these individuals, family, friends, and their immediate social environment hold more significance in terms of belonging than the nation or country. Their discourse often reflects 'disappointment' and 'emotional detachment' from the broader society. Political and cultural divides, particularly in terms of lifestyle, influence their boundaries with Turkish society, with a preference for freedom, individuality, and safety over origins or ethnoreligious values (Aksoy, 2021, p. 124).

Migrants can not clearly answer questions about where they belong or national identity. Ambivalent feelings are expressed; for most of them, the national identity is not a big concern, and their skills seem to define a more dominant identity for them, which is a particular case for highly skilled migrants. Nevertheless, they still feel a connection with Turkey and a tendency to return to Turkey in the long term. The country where you spend childhood, teenage period, and early adulthood defines your homeland, and it is hard to change it in late adulthood, according to migrants. As a supporting example, [Person 1], [Person 23], and [Person 22] told that their foreign-born and raised children could be considered native citizens of their destinations.

[Person 6] expressed that migrating with her husband made adaptation easier and supported her a lot. However, emotional and social satisfaction cannot be achieved with her foreign friends because of cultural differences. They miss their big Turkish family gatherings. Because of her feelings and her emotional connections, she identifies herself as a Turkish citizen. [Person 25] feels belonging to Turkey. She said, "Ten years are required for Italian citizenship. If it comes to giving up Turkish citizenship, I think a lot and find it difficult. If I have children in the future, I will want them to know Turkish". She wants to live a transnational life in balance without sacrificing any of her identities. [Person 26] and his family became American citizens five years ago. He considers himself mainly as a Turkish citizen and spends holidays in

Turkey, exposing the gap between legal identity and a sense of belonging. [Person 15] told, "I define myself as a citizen of the country I come from. Even though I feel the U.S. lifestyle is more suitable for me, I cannot change where I grew up. I try to protect my values as much as possible". [Person 16] expressed, "Even after one year and three months, I cannot consider here as my home, but it is better than the first 4 - 5 months. You cannot easily forget where you are from birth". [Person 16] thinks that I belong to the country I come from. It still feels better to go and drink raki with the Turks instead of going to the beer garden. Local people do not make him feel like a foreigner. He heard the phrase, "You don't look like Turkish", but he does not find this statement unfair, as he thinks that the Turks who came years ago always talk about the difficulties and negativities they experienced instead of the benefits they gained.

[Person 11] said, "The USA was so hungry for hard-working people at the time of my migration. For the first time, I felt my value not because of acquaintances but because of my talents. Technology and opportunities keep skilled people in the USA. There was a need for many skilled people, and still is. If you improve yourself, doors will open immediately", indicating the skills are above all identities and personal traits in the USA.

[Person 2] travels a lot for business purposes. If somebody asks about her nationality, she replies, "I'm from Turkey", even though she holds a German passport. She feels more comfortable in Mediterranean countries like Spain. This implies that the identity settles before adulthood and it is hard to change. But she does not feel belonging to any place, which is in correspondence with transnational life and the liquid modernity characteristics of a modern highly skilled person.

[Person 8] and [Person 9] said that "While we were in Turkey, we did not feel Turkish. We lived in our closed community. We feel the same way as we did when we were in Turkey. We define ourselves as 'Turkey's secular minority'. We are here because we feel like World citizens. The place where you spend your youth and childhood becomes the place where you belong. That is why I will probably never feel a sense of belonging to Belgium. Some Turks always spend time with Turks and only visit Turkish markets, barbershops, and restaurants. We do not want to be like them", indicating the fluid character of modern, highly skilled migrants who can reshape his/her lives depending on the changing conditions and opportunities.

[Person 17] said, "I started to feel like I belong abroad before migration. I am an Atatürk supporter, but we have moved a little away from nationalism. I became more

individualistic so that I could live for myself. I see myself as a World citizen because it is an international environment”, indicating the changing character and identity of highly skilled migrants, which over time, lead to cognitive migration. [Person 19] told, “I myself was not an ultra-nationalist person from the beginning. The feeling of belonging to my country gave me confidence. I have no problems with other countries. I am a Turk living in Germany. I’m trying to stay a little more separated from the Turks here”. A feeling of World citizenship can be sensed in the words of some highly skilled migrants. [Person 17] told that no one feels like a stranger here in Luxembourg. Still, in the international organization where he works, citizens of the same country look out for each other. Spaniards and Italians come together every day and chat over coffee. Turks tend to come together a little less and group together due to stigmatization. However, generally speaking, national identities become less emphasized in international communities.

[Person 7] said, “I feel like Turkish, maybe a bit of a World citizen, but never like a Dutch. The Dutch are more direct than Turks, although not always. Turks are more indirect. My Chinese friend constantly defends his own country’s policies, and I am against that. When it comes to Turkish identity, I do not feel as possessive as those who came in the 60’s and 70’s. I do not defend Turkey fanatically as if I were defending a team. I try to be objective on many issues”. The highly skilled migrants feel a different state of belonging than the guest worker generation, which is another issue separating these two groups.

[Person 18] expressed, “I consider myself as a citizen of the country I immigrated to socially and culturally. For me, a migrant is a person who searches for the most suitable place in the World within the framework of his abilities”, emphasizing the World citizen identity driven by self-actualization and achievement motivation character of highly skilled migrants. [Person 21] said, “I was born in a migrant family; my birthplace is outside Turkey. We immigrated to Turkey as a family when I was in middle school. For this reason, my already existing migrant identity was further strengthened. The meaning of migrant identity includes many things for me, the main ones being cultural richness, tolerance and acceptance of differences, hard work, patience, perseverance, and not giving up”.

[Person 12] said, “The concept of citizenship does not have much meaning after the 2000s. It feels like membership in a club that allows me to continue my life comfortably. I was not highly attached to Turkish customs anyway. I brought the habits I liked”,

indicating a new transnational identity of old habits combined with the new order of destination. [Person 16] told, "You are neither here nor there, and there is such a thing as being in limbo for Turkish emigrants in recent years. I was not too bad there, I am not so good here either", stating the emerging transnational and fluid character of recent highly skilled migrants. [Person 22] said, "Belonging is a difficult topic because I have not thought about it much before. In my opinion, neither the Turkish identity nor the American identity is very dominant", exposing the fading out of identities in modern migrant societies. [Person 23] said, "I never thought about identity. I did not feel the need to define myself. Even if I speak English fluently, it looks like I have an accent. People ask where you are from. It is obvious that I am a foreigner because of my name. I get different treatment when I go to Turkey. They say, "I guess you don't live here" ", indicating the ambiguity, insignificance, and faintness of identity for highly skilled migrants.

[Person 24] said, "Since it was COVID time, I usually met with my close friends. I am not excessively attached to Turkish culture. I do what I used to do with a smaller circle of friends. I am a Turkish citizen, and I read the news about Turkey. I am a World citizen, and I am neutral to everyone. There is a need to integrate, but not by emphasizing the German identity, but by adapting to a global environment. I also talk to my German friends. The environment I work in is global. I love doing what I love on both cultures". He mentioned his high adaptability and cognitive migration before actual migration phase. He did not feel longing for Turkey in his initial years.

[Person 11] expressed, "I consider myself a citizen of both countries, but of course, the country I was born in is more dominant. I am a foreigner in both countries. I say to those who want to come, do not leave where you came from. We have good achievements, but we have years away from your family. It is not clear where I am affiliated. I vote in both places, I belong to both sides, but I don't know how much others see me as a citizen like them. I am not a citizen of the World. Sometimes I feel most connected to a place on a plane. Those who arrive late feel less belonging or attachment to the USA. Children born in the USA are Americans. I say my home is Washington, my country is Turkey". Europe is made up of nation-states, and immigrants' national identities are less visible, but the USA is multicultural and encourages the expression of immigrants' original identities.

[Person 20] said that "Student identity is more dominant than migrant identity. I don't feel like an immigrant at all. Even when you go to the market, people seem more

distant. People are becoming more and more individualistic. I want to be able to do wherever I go and be a World citizen. Traveling to the Netherlands alone and being able to do it made me feel like I could do other things on my own". She wants to establish a transnational life shared between different countries which is another expression of World citizenship. She mentioned that "I can go to the German market, but I like to go to the Turkish market and listen to Turkish music. I have good experiences. I met good people. But it is not possible to adopt every custom of Germans. For example, I do not have the habit of eating Pretzels and riding a bike. They have habits from the past, such as let's go hiking" emphasizing the need to preserve social bonds with homeland during adaptation phase. She added that "It was an elder Turk who helped with his car while I was looking for a house. It was another elder Turk who helped me move to my flat. I am intimate with my Turkish host". She received help from elder Turks as an example of the Turkish collectivist cultural identity and migrant social bonds.

[Person 13] told, "It is challenging to give up Turkish citizenship, but it is necessary for practical issues such as tax advantages. We have positive feelings for both sides when it is a national match. There is no need or demand for me to change my old identity and habits", indicating the eclectic and pragmatic nature of migrant identities.

[Person 14] said, "I see myself as a citizen of the country I came from. In Turkey, it is always necessary to make an effort to defend one's rights. In Germany, your rights are protected. There is no tension here, unlike in Turkey. I don't want to give up my Turkish identity, but Germany's moral and ethical values are closer to me. I'm in-between, so I have bonds on both sides" expressing a transnational migrant identity.

3.3.2.8 Migrant Social Networks and Diaspora

[Person 7] mentioned that "In the Netherlands, people still meet with their school friends. They are not very open to relationships after 30. In Turkey, my friends always go to different places, and we have to make new friends. Even in Turkey, I tried to establish deeper relationships with old friends rather than making new friends. Trying to make new friends in the Netherlands was a bit of a challenge. It would have been easier if I had come as a student earlier". Erik Erikson's research also shows that people focus on making new friendships until age 35. After age 35, people focus on preserving old ones instead of establishing new relationships. Sgaramella, Zammiti, and Magnano (2024) pointed out in their recent study that emerging adults (age 18 -

29) among migrants have more references to 'meeting new people' in their expressions, while middle-aged adults (age 30 - 55) among migrants have more references to 'close circle of friends' and 'family' in their expressions (Sgaramella et al., 2024, p. 8). [Person 9] and [Person 8] also expressed, "We have fewer friends because you cannot make friends like in Turkey. Also, it becomes more difficult after a certain age", indicating the decrease in their social capital after migration.

Most migrants develop a connection with other migrants as they share the same problems and experiences, especially in the early stages of their migration. [Person 1] said, "Even though sometimes we the feeling that this situation can lead to an involuntary, unchosen or obligatory friendship or companionship". [Person 2] does not have any close acquaintances in Germany. She maintained his ties with Turkey through telephone and travel. She did not miss her Turkish friends. She found international friends at work with a similar lifestyle. She did not chat with any people just because they were Turkish or just because they spoke the same language. [Person 3] found migrants from other countries with similar lifestyles closer. [Person 12] and [Person 13] also meet with highly skilled Turkish migrants. They did not have many friends from locals and generally became friends with other expats from different countries.

Highly skilled migrants prefer meeting and developing relations with people with similar lifestyles. The common origin or common language is not a determinant because Turkish highly skilled migrants develop relations with other highly skilled migrants having different country origins rather than meeting with previous Turkish migrant generations or socializing with locals. On the other hand, Turkish people in these communities support and guide their peers and newcomers during the adaptation, as in the case of [Person 6] and [Person 7].

[Person 2] noted that the previous guest worker migrant generation of Turkey has some folkloric elements in their life, like big wedding celebrations and ceremonies. The highly skilled workers of Turkey mostly observe them like an outsider, similar to their Turkish counterparts, according to [Person 2]. New highly skilled migrants of Turkey constitute a different social fraction than the guest worker generation. The new highly skilled generation organizes, helps each other, and forms a different solidarity network themselves, as told by [Person 2] and [Person 7].

In other situations where the workplace is not multinational and there are fewer opportunities to develop friendships, people prefer developing connections with other Turkish people and continue practicing Turkish culture in Germany, like going to Turkish restaurants to meet with Turkish friends. Generally, people feel delighted when they encounter other Turks and have a commonality in their roots and cultural codes. [Person 10] said, "I spend time with my Turkish friends from work and my other Turkish friends. As far as I have observed, different races also prefer their fellow citizens similarly". [Person 10] added, "There is little chance of meeting and developing friendships with the 60s and 70s guest worker Turks. Social class and skill differences stand out more than nationality differences".

[Person 8] and [Person 9] said, "Turks were helping each other. We spend time with everyone, including the Turks. People help each other when needed. There is a WhatsApp group for people recruited through selection and reference. When you write, "I'm looking for a house, citizenship, plumber, government issues, insurance, buying a house, buying a car, etc.", everyone helps you immediately. During the Turkish elections, we collected money and even bought plane tickets for the students to travel and vote", explaining the different community formation aspects of digital social networks and digital diasporas. [Person 10] told, "When abroad, people help other Turks. When we need a serviceman, or when we need to ask something, we ask the social media group of graduates of our university living in the Netherlands". [Person 14] said that "The Munich Turkish immigrant women's WhatsApp group was very beneficial in adapting to the new situation".

[Person 24] explained the gathering of Turkish migrants in the same workplace: "Turks meet every Tuesday. I go about once a month. I generally prefer to go out to dinner with close friends. I know all the Turks at my company. Since their cultural habits and traditions are different, we cannot be close friends with the guest worker generation. We realize that what connects us is not language but subcultures and lifestyles. The discourses are different, the emphasis is different, and the jokes are different. However, the Turkish WhatsApp group includes every Turk in the company".

[Person 17] stated, "Turks gather once or twice a year for Turkish nights. However, in general, there is no excessive meeting environment", indicating the decline of physical meetings in a digitally connected post-modern information society. [Person 20] helped 60-70 people who connected through LinkedIn. Someone who went abroad before Hacettepe prepared a video about his experiences. This was also beneficial. He

received help from those who had gone before. Sharing previous experiences lowers risks related to migration. The migrant networks include not only new and senior migrants but also the potential migrants. [Person 22] said, "There was a community that helped outgoing students. I also helped new students. There are Turkish communities that have become a bit disconnected over time but are active. Associations generally focus on a specific field. For example, there is an entrepreneur association", indicating the disunited and factioned character of migrant groups.

Another case is [Person 20]. She arrived in Germany as a student with her friends and faced an unfortunate series of house rental experiences. An elder Turkish woman helped them by renting her own house and treated them as if they were her relatives. So, in some cases, experiences may differ, and young people seeking for help may get protection from previous generations, reflecting the collectivism and protectionist nature of Turkish culture.

Since [Person 20]'s roommates in Munich were Turkish and she had friends from Hacettepe University, she was not exposed to German culture much. Local people also continue their relationships with their groups. [Person 20] indicated the significance of online social networks for socialization, "Bavaria is also a somewhat closed society, but you become good friends once you break their shell, you become good friends. Chinese and Egyptian friends who come from abroad, like me, are more focused on meeting and being friends. There is a Munich Hacettepe Engineers WhatsApp group which facilitates socialization too". Online social networks facilitate a smooth transition to their adaptation in her case. [Person 16] meets with both Germans and Turks. He is closer to some Germans and more distant to others, being another evidence of that the relationships are based on mental similarity rather than nationality. [Person 19] said, "Turks help each other, but I am not among them. The old ones are closer to each other. Luckily, I always came across good Germans. I also have German friends. I did not experience any negativity while socializing". [Person 19] and [Person 20] are examples of migrants developing relations with locals.

[Person 11] said that Turkish groups organize picnics and gatherings in places such as Washington and Kansas. Sometimes, there are differences of opinion on issues such as sports and politics. After the earthquake in Turkey, the migrant population came together, and differences of opinion were put aside. [Person 21] said, "The country I immigrated to has a very high number of people of Turkish origin. There have been migrations to this country in the past years. Migrants have different education levels,

interests, and political views. I think we come together for a common purpose, depending on the subject. I observe that cooperation networks have been established among migrated people, especially in recent years”, expressing the rise of migrant networks. There has been a positive trend for highly skilled migrants to gather around different purposes in recent years, according to interview participants.

Some more focused diaspora groups like “Bi’ Dünya Kivılcım”, “Turks in Tech”, “Global Turks par Excellence”, which are organized and aimed to create value for Turkey as professionals. These examples signify that the awareness and ability to establish an organization increases as the number of highly skilled migrants increases in foreign countries. Epstein and Heizler-Cohen (2016) also observed that migrant leaders act as intermediaries between migrants and natives, and their influence grows over time (Epstein & Heizler-Cohen, 2016, p. 26).

Most highly skilled Turkish migrants still feel connected to Turkey, interested in and caring for Turkey. They are seeking ways to have a positive effect on Turkey and create value. This situation gives rise to new communities, associations, and diasporas more focused on these issues and supporting individuals. Some semi-structured online interview participants have a connection with professional diaspora networks. [Person 3] is a member of “Yüksek Öğrenimli Türk Göçmenler Grubu (Highly Educated Turk Migrants Group)”.

[Person 7] said, “There is a Turkish migrant women’s group on Facebook (Göçmen Kadınlar), with members from all over the World (44200 people as of 5.5.2024). All the women are incredibly supportive and make an effort to help others. People share their private lives. I have never seen people share so much about themselves and try hard to help someone in any social group. This situation may be related to migrant psychology”. Due to homesickness, people with common pasts, roots, and stories need to share feelings and develop bonds with each other. Inclusiveness and the large number of members reflects Turkish collective culture on cyber world and digital domain. People, used to see each other abroad on the street, ‘hugged each other’ and chatted in the past. The current migrants ‘hug each other’ and unite in the digital environment.

[Person 6] stated that some mechanisms, like information and experience transfer are encouraged to compensate for these adverse effects of migration and added that adverse effects can be lowered by return migration. On the other hand, the interview

participants are reluctant to return to Turkey, which elevates the importance of diasporas in Turkey's development .

[Person 7] said, "Solidarity may be higher among those who came in the 60s and 70s. We also have solidarity, but more of a humanistic support, not just because somebody is Turkish. If there is an Italian around me, I will support him too", indicating the multinational character of new wave migrant support groups.

Highly skilled migrants tend to remain in a "third space," forming their own "alternative diaspora spaces" where they have the flexibility to navigate between locals, other migrants, and established diasporas. Their diverse skill sets and knowledge enable this ability to move fluidly between different groups (Kılınç, 2022, p. 32).

Some migrants have taken the mission to be ambassadors of Turkey in destination. [Person 11] told, "I have had 2500 students in the last five years. At least they all have some knowledge about Turkey because of my talks. Sometimes I answer questions like 'Can you dress like this in Turkey?', 'Do you cover your head?', 'Is your hand cut off when you steal something?'. I give information about the Turkish history and altered their views". [Person 16] also feels a mission to correct perspectives on Turks.

[Person 15] said, "I am not in direct contact with the Turks myself. However, they come together on holidays and special occasions. We are generally a helpful nation. I go to the Turkish market in Los Angeles and go shopping. What I have observed in Turkish Facebook groups in the USA is that Turks generally try to help find a job or short-term accommodation or anything else" as examples of effective Turkish social networks.

[Person 1] observed groupings among Turks in Canada centered on politics. In the past, Turks had two stands at festivals. There is never any mixing between these two groups. Politics causes polarization abroad, like in Turkey. [Person 1] added that other nationalities like India and China seem to have a more organized diaspora in Canada and the USA, but Turkish people have supportive mechanisms for newcomer migrants to some extent. [Person 16] stated, "WhatsApp groups that came in the past also differentiate themselves intellectually, especially politically", indicating the continuation of polarization among migrant groups. He elaborated on this situation as: "Some conservative groups consider the other migrant groups are the ones who left Turkey because of the government even though the country is beautiful". 90% of [Person 26]'s family friends are Turkish, indicating the ease of connection with people having common origins at the family level. There are two Turkish associations having conflict

with each other and not united, unlike other diasporas which are another reflection of a polarized society.

[Person 25] told, "There are informative documents and videos of Turkish students who have previously come to this university. We have meetings. They helped me both before and after I left. He also helped others. There is a Turkish community that came years ago. There was one in Milan. There is no Turkish market in Turin, but other countries do. Italians' perspective on Turks is not negative but relatively neutral. They have a warm-blooded nature. There are large groups of Chinese and Iranian students", explaining a bigger and more connected Turkish society in Italy than in previous decades.

[Person 18] said, "Among the people of Turkish origin, I establish rapport more easily with those who came to Germany for similar reasons. I don't think people of Turkish origin generally come together to help each other. I think being able to chat about the same topics is a more important reason than coming from Turkey", referring to the multicultural migrant 'communitas' gathered around similar lifestyles and experiences.

[Person 10] explained that "Skilled human migration has positive and negative effects. Losing the best affects a country negatively, but those who leave do not disappear either. They can have collaborations or return. Having soft power is important for Turkey. Turkey has a diaspora deficiency in terms of promoting Turkey and changing negative views about Turkey", exposing the positive effects and potential of highly skilled migration for Turkey.

Turkey successfully implemented new strategies and tools to enhance its soft power. Undoubtedly, the shift in Turkey's policy towards its diaspora has become one of the most significant aspects of its soft power strategy (Açıklan, 2024, p. 14).

Turkish migrants are willing and inclined to help newcomers, although they are not well-established as other nations' diasporas. Polarization of Turkey affects the unification and institutionalization of Turkish diasporas in destination countries (Adar et al., 2024, p. 1; Kılınç, 2022, p. 3). To strengthen civil society, the Turkish government has heavily invested in the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı - YTB) and associated institutions for capacity building and various activities. Since 2011, YTB has aimed to establish closer ties with the Turkish diaspora by providing administrative and financial support to local NGOs in the countries where they reside. Initially launched in 2013 as the "IMECE

program," this initiative later became known as the YTB Financial Assistance Program. Financial support programs have been the primary channels for initiating activities, particularly those aligned with political-legal and socio-cultural policy priorities. Since 2011, YTB has supported over 1,000 projects across 70 countries, with funding exceeding 100 million TL (Kolbaşı-Muyan, 2023). However, the AK Party's close ties with certain NGOs, such as the Union of International Democrats (UID) in Western Europe, have faced criticism. Established in 2004 in Cologne, UID serves as an umbrella organization for much of the Turkish diaspora despite ongoing criticism from the European public. This institutional and community-building effort among the Turkish diaspora is rooted in specific values and political visions that do not resonate with all Turks living abroad. These differences are often due to divergent political views, personal beliefs, or legal issues, reflecting Türkiye's socio-political diversity (Açıklalın, 2024, p. 10).

The technology speeds up and expands the migrant network formations. The awareness and ability to establish diaspora organizations increases as number of highly skilled migrants increases in foreign countries.

Building strong connections with Turkish diaspora NGOs after the mid-2000s enhanced Turkey's institutional capacity and enabled the inclusion of the Turkish diaspora in Turkey's decision-making process (Açıklalın, 2024, p. 16).

Results from the interviews revealed that the transfer of diaspora knowledge depends on life stages and the length of time spent in a new country. Individuals new to a country are less inclined to participate in knowledge transfer compared to those who have resided in a new country for a longer period. Surani (2021) reported similar results in his research (Surani, 2021, p. 134).

3.3.2.9 Return Migration and Circular Migration

A balanced outward and return migration may have benefits for Turkey, but in the last five years, people have migrated without a plan to return. Turkey is a country that lacks highly skilled people. According to McKinsey's Future of Work Report, over the next decade, the demand for workers with social and technological skills is expected to rise (McKinsey, 2020, p. 35). If Turkey continues losing its intellectual capital, it will negatively affect the country and the next generation. The key to benefiting from migrants is to offer flexible, living and working conditions comparable with those in

developed countries. Another way to benefit from migrants is to use their networks and experiences by connecting them with diasporas.

If Turkey wants to benefit from the experiences and capabilities of highly skilled migrants, it should devise a network and propose working conditions without the need for these people to physically spend long periods in Turkey. Flexibility has a larger weight in peoples' decisions for their work and private life compared to other parameters like salary or title. An incentive for these people to establish a startup or have a branch of their associated foreign companies is another model to attract intellectual and economic remittances to Turkey.

The study indicates similar results to those of previous research on return migration. Non-financial factors, such as the significance of family and social considerations, play a significant role in the decision of highly educated individuals to return. Recent studies show that political instability and bureaucratic obstacles outweigh economic factors in return decisions (Elveren & Toksöz, 2018, p. 23). Economic instability in Turkey, previous intentions to remain abroad, and workplace experiences in Turkey also contribute to the decision not to return. Female respondents also demonstrate a lower likelihood of returning, suggesting a more selective migration process for women (Güngör & Tansel, 2014, p. 1). It has been observed that the process of legal compliance and relations with the EU positively affected the decision to return. It was seen that there was a positive relationship between the time spent at the destination and the decision not to return (Elveren & Toksöz, 2018, p. 23).

[Person 2] said, "It is important to provide people money, purpose, flexibility, and autonomy regarding returning to Turkey. There are many things that one cannot buy with the money in Turkey but are free here: the child goes to school by bicycle, the child goes to the same school with his/her school friends", expressing the multi-dimensional parameters associated with return migration. [Person 24] expressed similar ideas for return migration, saying "I would prefer Turkey if it offered the same opportunities as other countries".

The problematic justice system and the unfair workplace experiences are major issues for migrants. [Person 4] declared that the prerequisite before other constraints for the return migration is the well-established institutions and moral system guaranteeing the prosperity of individuals. Similarly, [Person 12] said, "Social issues such as justice need to be resolved", emphasizing the core values of a society.

Young professionals like [Person 6] are open to all alternatives between staying in their current country, returning to Turkey and relocating to another country for the next years, depicting the flexible and pragmatic choices of the young generation.

Skilled migrants like [Person 6] prefer working in an international company rather than local companies because of their multicultural environment and flexible working conditions abroad. They may even they consider returning to Turkey. Integration to multicultural ecosystems, diversity, and career development are the essential demands of highly skilled professionals.

[Person 7] said, "I did not lose contact with Turkey completely. Sometimes they call from Bilkent for interviews, or I want to bring someone from Turkey for an internship. I want to go back and share my experiences. I plan to support a Turkish company willing to expand abroad", indicating her strong bonds with Turkey.

[Person 7] told, "I did not come here thinking I would go and live in the Netherlands for the rest of my life. There are times when I get really overwhelmed by the weather. Maybe we will consider going to Southern Europe or Turkey after obtaining citizenship at the end of 5 years. I do not want to stay here for many years. I prefer a life with ties to both parties". [Person 2], [Person 7], [Person 8], [Person 9], and [Person 10] also indicated the weather as a challenging part of migrating to Northern countries and realized the importance of climate for happiness after migration.

[Person 17] said, "One of my biggest dreams is to work remotely in Milas. Luxembourg is making laws that allow this". Attraction centers can be created for returning migrants, such as offices in Antalya Teknokent, Bodrum and other coastal regions. Remote working opportunities for Turkish companies can also be considered as incentives for benefiting from highly skilled professionals.

[Person 8] and [Person 9] told, "There is generally a negative trend for Turkey. There is no effort to bring back those who left. What we have earned is only beneficial for me. Even if a company in Turkey pays very good salaries, it is difficult to give up comforts such as freedom of speech. There is nothing to offer against such positive aspects" indicating the lack of efforts and opportunities offered for return migration.

[Person 8] and [Person 9] expressed, "We thought we would return to Turkey when we retired, but we are not sure. We are thinking of places like Spain, Greece and Croatia. Since the work permit is resolved after obtaining citizenship, other European countries

will also be possible for us. Then we can seize a better opportunity” emphasizing their possibility of migrating again, implying the ‘circular migration’ trend. [Person 2] has a similar intention of circular migration. [Person 4] has migrated twice, which is an example of this case.

[Person 10] said, “I am not planning to migrate to another country, but I am considering returning to Turkey if there are positive indicators. There is unhappiness on people’s faces in Turkey. The economic situation may also have repercussions on business life. There is also a political crisis. Supporters of both sides do not feel positive about each other”. According to [Person 10], polarization and economic situation seem to be the main problems of Turkey. [Person 10] also represents a group inclined to return to Turkey if there are positive indicators.

[Person 11] said, “All migrants are trying to do something for Turkey. We are taking some initiatives, but we cannot find support for them. Sometimes people stay away from us because of our knowledge. Sometimes they stay away from us for personal reasons. Precious people are living abroad. I have accumulated knowledge, and I want to be useful to those around me in Turkey. Likewise, the people around me could not be this productive because they could not find an environment in Turkey. It’s a bit of a vicious cycle. Migration often has a personal benefit”, expressing the need for coordination of highly skilled migrants for the benefit of Turkey.

[Person 12] said that the Netherlands is a sweet spot regarding access to different countries and being open to foreigners. He thinks that even if some things improve in Turkey, it does not seem possible for social relations to improve in the short term. [Person 12] said that what is important is not the financial dimension or the career but the social dimension.

[Person 12] said that it would be acceptable if he could stay in the Netherlands and work remotely in Turkey. Such flexibilities are needed to attract skilled migrants.

[Person 15] told, “Brain drain is of course sad. However, when we look at the lives of Turkey’s great entrepreneurs, most of them have an American background. As long as one returns to Turkey, I find the migration experience useful”, mentioning the knowledge spillover and network-enhancing effects of migration for Turkey.

[Person 15] said, “Due to the crowd and traffic in Istanbul, I do not plan to return to Turkey for at least 5-10 years. I may consider returning in the future depending on the country’s politics” mentioning the correlation between return migration and politics.

[Person 16] told, “Since I reside in Europe, I received more offers from other companies, remote and hybrid, from the Netherlands and Switzerland. Situations like these also occur that make it possible to have different experiences without having to move”, indicating the possibility of virtual return migration for skilled workers.

[Person 17] said, “The people around me have no concern or desire to contribute when they return to Turkey. Meritocracy is important. Everyone comes to certain positions with the favor of a relative or a close friend”. People having distinctive, disappointing, and unfair experiences do not consider returning to Turkey. [Person 18] said, “I may consider migrating to a country that offers broader and more flexible opportunities in terms of social life. If there is a chance, I can return to Turkey after 15 years to share my experiences. I think something should be done for the young population in Turkey. I don’t know if this is management or teaching at the university, but I would like to support the young people in the land where I was born. My advice to those who want to emigrate from Turkey is to adapt to the countries they go to, observe the differences well, and improve themselves”, expressing the development zone associated with migration and his will to transfer his knowledge and experience to Turkey.

[Person 18] indicated the importance of cultural and social capital: “Today, unfortunately, societies where socio-cultural values are minimized and only material goods come first are doomed to lose their educated population. For example, in Turkey, they always call rich people wealthy, but I always say that wealth is about materiality, and wealth is about education and perspective. I think that human drain and brain drain will decrease when rich people become socio-culturally wealthy, and those around them feel this effect”.

[Person 19] said, “It is difficult for the government to offer the same opportunities when I plan to return. I do not want a situation that would reduce our quality of life.

[Person 20] shared her observations about different migration patterns: “If there were better economic conditions and freedom to travel, there might be fewer people migrating. Some people go abroad and pursue different opportunities, but perhaps they want to return to Turkey in the end. Some are in Turkey and work for foreign

companies. Remote workers and Turkish offices of foreign companies create added value for abroad. Thus, complex migration patterns are observed today”.

[Person 20] is considering going to the Netherlands or England because the language barrier is lower than in Germany, and English is accepted in daily life. She feels like she is isolated from culture and life this way. Especially after the pandemic, circulation increased significantly. Young people have a desire to change jobs. Eventually, she wants to establish her own company to realize long-term projects like Trendyol. Being able to meet a friend is the most valuable thing in the World according to her, adding “Money does not matter if you cannot be with your loved ones”. She wants to avoid separation from her loved ones during the pandemic period. She is aware that he must fight a new struggle in every new place. She is also aware that the struggle abroad will provide more opportunities for the future.

[Person 21] said, “Based on my personal experience, I do not think that brain drain undermines Turkey’s development. Migrating brain is a tiny part of Turkey’s brain power capacity. Additionally, they can continue to serve when they or their children return to Turkey. On the other hand, some people may have decided to emigrate because they cannot currently participate in Turkey’s development with their brains” focusing on the positive effects of migration. [Person 23] also mentions his positive ideas about skilled migration: “Migration effects are beneficial in my opinion. Turkey’s image is important in terms of public opinion and promotion. Turkish startups here are trying to open branches in Turkey. There are those who return with knowledge. Migration is not a system of exploitation of developed countries. When there is exploitation, it becomes one-sided. People want to seize the opportunities”. [Person 24] also thinks optimistic about migration: “I think that it will have positive aspects in the medium and long term when people see different living standards and cultures and their experiences are shared”. Most of the interview participants express the spillover effects and positive externalities of migration. Mobility has increased not only in Turkey but all over the World. Some organizations and governments develop better policies to benefit from mobility.

[Person 22] explained the constraints imposed by having children abroad for return migration and added his plans to benefit from the brain power of Turkey: “My children and my wife were born in the USA. As time goes on at the destination, there is a stickiness that makes it difficult to return. I would like to open a branch of my company in Turkey. Some talented people in Turkey want to go to other countries but cannot. I

would like Turkey to benefit from my experiences". [Person 23] has similar constraints with his foreign-born child: "Due to the healthcare system and high cost of living in the USA, we can consider the Mediterranean, Portugal, and Turkey for retirement. My daughter's condition is also important as to what will happen when she grows up. Transnational life also appeals to me, because of my daughter's situation and because she wants to live in warm places with her family". [Person 26] also emphasized the importance of life routines of family hence making another migration harder: "When our children go to university, we may return to Europe or Turkey, preferably to the seaside. We will not consider returning if we do not receive a very good offer from Turkey. We don't even want to change our state because our children's routine is set". [Person 22] and [Person 1] both mentioned as time passes and have local partners, it is becoming more challenging to consider return migration. So, the family structure is an important limiting factor for circular migration.

[Person 25] said, "I do not plan to return to Turkey. First, I try to find a job in Italy and then in Europe. I want to stay in Italy for a few years and gain experience. Even though migrating again is not as difficult as before, I want to maintain the order I set. There are also many engineering positions in Turin. The USA is not attractive because of its healthcare system. I love the social state structure of Europe. The possibility of finding a job after graduation is attractive, but in the USA, it is more difficult", emphasizing the importance of the healthcare system, work permit, and work experience as migration constraints.

[Person 20] mentioned that "There is also migration from Germany to USA due to economic conditions", giving an example of how a migration system (Germany-USA) affects another migration system (Turkey-USA) as the limited skilled migrant resources flow from one country to another. Germany is also losing its good skilled workers to the USA, its population is aging, and its capacity is decreasing. Turkey is also aging and entering the elderly population category. There is also a cyclical and increasing migration trend among all countries.

[Person 21] told his current satisfactory living conditions and reluctance about returning: "I do not have an entrepreneurial personality. Since I have already served a Turkish institution for 20 years and am satisfied with my current professional life, I will unlikely to consider a new opportunity".

When [Person 25] joined a Turkish company, her salary was insufficient to meet even her basic needs. She says she can buy a car even now as a student in Italy. She added, "If the conditions in Turkey improve, we can return, but I would not consider it under current conditions", mentioning the importance of economic conditions for young generations.

[Person 26] told, "90% of those who went abroad and are in good situation, do not return unless they are old, retired or their parents need assistance. Turkey can benefit from very few people and startup companies. It does not make sense to spend older age here. A place to get cheaper healthcare is needed. Dallas is not a place for old people; Ankara is our home". His plans are in line with the 'Hispanic paradox' or 'salmon bias' which suggests that migrants are likely to be close to or return to their country of origin at older ages.

[Person 26] is pessimistic about the skilled migration: "The number of educated people in Turkey is decreasing. They don't give education opportunities to young generations. The intellectual capacity of Turkey will decrease even more".

[Person 1] is one of the migrants who demand flexibility in their lives like remote working and a transnational life split between different countries rather than returning to Turkey. Apart from salary, the working environment and other side factors are also important parameters for people to return. Turkey and Mediterranean countries are appealing for middle adulthood, late adulthood, and retirement, which are in correspondence with the migrants' tendency to return to their homeland at a late age for economic conditions, weather, social support, and medical services.

[Person 2] said, "My current transnational life provided by my company is attractive today and even next years. I prefer a country with better weather than Germany but Turkey is not a must. The center of gravity of my life will probably shift to Turkey in the forthcoming years because of my aging father and mother", indicating the flexibilities and life opportunities associated with the skills of migrants.

[Person 7] said, "I especially feel sad when doctors emigrate because they are harder to replace than other professions. Doctors also go through complex procedures regarding language and equivalence exams abroad". Due to demographic change, European countries are aging and need exceptionally skilled immigrants (like healthcare professionals, engineers, and managers) to sustain development.

3.3.2.10 Cultures of Migrants

Highly skilled migrants rely more on their cultural capital than blue-collar migrants, who rely on social capital (Erel, 2010, p. 648). Highly skilled migrants do not experience a significant increase in their financial capital and social mobility to higher social strata, as expressed by many interview participants. On the other hand, they become physically distant from their previous Turkish social networks and lose homeland social capital. Nevertheless, almost all migrant groups develop a specific form of capital called migrant cultural capital. Migrants develop a specific culture, which is a reconciliation of all connected cultures. Individualism, less hierarchy, open conversation, work-life balance, flexibility, multiculturalism, respect for opinions and efforts are the main differences expressed by these migrants. The hardworking, experienced, creative, versatile and adaptable natures of highly skilled Turkish migrants are the most appreciated characteristics by their peers at their destinations. This migrant cultural capital serves as a melting pot for these unique characters attributed to their affiliated networks and communities.

New wave highly skilled migrants employ their cultural capital to migrate. They construct a new social and economic capital based on their cultural capital. This situation supports that cultural capital is convertible to social capital and economic capital. Cultural capital provides us with new opportunities and social mobility before the migration. Migration-specific cultural capital is formed during the migration process, allowing migrant societies to reconstruct new identities and new opportunities as alternatives to national identities (Erel, 2010, p. 654).

[Person 2] observed the previous guest worker generation: "They are a relatively conservative group trying to build a completely new life in a different country. 'Guest worker' label always feel them as guests of Germany who will return to their country after a while, but this never happened. Their reaction to the normative German culture is getting even more conservative with the fear of assimilation, losing their cultural and moral values, resulting in holding on their religious values even more than before. Also, the discipline and rules of German culture put this generation out of social life in Germany". [Person 4] has a similar observation. Because of this group's unique character, the Western-oriented and more liberal new skilled worker generation finds it hard to build a connection with the guest worker generation.

Some skilled migrants do not prefer Turkish friends abroad because of their intervention in other people's lives, their polarization, and their discrimination, both on religious and secular sides. Respect for one's personal life and opinions is a main factor in choosing friends from other nationalities.

[Person 4] said, "The in-between culture of Turkey residing in the middle of Europe and the Middle East brings contradicting views and dynamics making Turkey's evolution and development slower". So migration can be considered as a result or outcome of Turkey's structural problems instead of the problem itself, as stated by Migration Transition Theories.

[Person 17], [Person 7], [Person 19] and Person 26] said that the amenities, being closer to parks and sports culture in foreign countries also encourage Turkish immigrants to do more sports, such as hiking, indicating the effect of migration on an individual's habits and routines.

[Person 7] said, "Having housekeeper coming to home for cleaning, cooking, ironing and looking after children or going outside for dinner in Turkey are usual but having those amenities in the Netherlands is luxury", indicating a departure from previous life routines to adapt to the new culture. [Person 19] expresses the same situation for Germany. [Person 14] also confirmed the same situation for Germany and said, "Our family formed new routines different than Turkey". [Person 17] told his similar experience in Luxembourg: "The service industry here is costly and slow. I work like a doorman here. It takes a long time to get the job done through the homeowner, the company, and the worker". [Person 26] mentioned a similar situation in the USA.

[Person 10] expressed, "In the Netherlands, I do not follow the old daily routine. In Turkey, there are conversations during tea, coffee, and cigarette breaks, but not here. They do not have the habit of meeting colleagues for lunch or dinner as in Turkey. Organization, planning, work follow-up, and distribution of work are done much better in the Netherlands. People don't work hard, they don't work overtime. Everyone wants to finish work and leave immediately", as another example of cultural adaptation at the workplace.

[Person 12] said, "It has been difficult to be away from established social life and family. It's hard to find new friends unless you're extremely social. If you have a hobby, there are many opportunities. Everyone has a hobby here, so I adopted sports. I came

as an engineer with ten years of experience. It becomes difficult to show oneself here again after a certain age”, mentioning the difficulties of adaptation.

[Person 10] told, “I bought a bike because it is a means of transportation. It is not expensive, but it’s cumbersome to drive in Turkey. When someone buys a bicycle, people gather around and talk about the bike”, and mentioned the significance of unique bicycle culture in the Netherlands.

[Person 10] said that “It is always possible to find festivals, concerts, and niche activities not only about the Netherlands but also about different cultures in Amsterdam”, expressing the multiculturalism and inclusiveness of the Netherlands.

[Person 14] said that “The cliché “You don’t look like Turkish” has now been demolished. We have more feelings of underdevelopment that come from Islam and Eastern society. There is respect for differences, such as, a prayer room at work or respect for Ramadan. It could also be because it is a multinational company” expressing the respect to different cultures in Germany. [Person 16] has a similar experience. [Person 17] told, “In the first year at work, they said you were not a Turk because I was very professional, prone to teamwork, open, and honest. The Dutch people’s perspective about Turks changed after what they saw from me”, indicating the invalidation of stereotypes by highly skilled migrants and the trend of inclusion and diversity supporting each other.

[Person 14] said, “Even though I worked in a good company in Turkey, I did not feel very valuable, but here, I felt very qualified and valuable. They said, “We did not expect you to be this qualified; you are outstanding.” We saw ourselves as very inferior in Turkey. Turkey also has a culture of complaint and unhappiness, which makes one feel worthless. In Germany, everyone minds their own business; if they do not, they change jobs. Senior employees in Turkey come to the company thinking they deserve the best, and the slightest negativity is perceived as injustice. In Germany, everyone is in the system and is more visible to others. Whenever I contribute, it is honored. In Turkey, I was unaware of the work I was doing when it was presented to me”, expressing the difference in recognition and work ethics between two countries.

[Person 16] mentioned the drawbacks of excessive systematic and organized life in Germany, contradicting their previous lifestyle: “Life in Germany pushes people to be more planned. Markets are closed on the weekend. Online shopping orders arrive in 2 days. Restaurants finish serving food at 8-9 and only serve beverages. It isn’t easy to

enter the city center by car. This situation directs people to public transportation but reduces flexibility". [Person 14] and [Person 19] have similar experiences.

[Person 16] said, "60% of the workplace population is German, but the company culture is multicultural and has a young population. The most important thing is that young people are reacting to classical German working conditions and want flexibility; they want to come to work late. There is more of a startup culture in the workplace", indicating the differences between corporate and startup cultures in Germany. [Person 17] also indicates Luxembourg's employee rights and flexibility at work.

[Person 19] said, "Culture and business life are both very different. I tell those who come that if you try to continue your habits in Turkey here, you will be disappointed. Everyone has the same status", indicating the insignificance of social stratification in Germany.

[Person 2] said, "The risk-avoidant and opportunity-missing culture of Germany is probably the hardest part for me as I am passionate about business and life. Systematic and well-organized life in Germany is good. However, the lack of passion is the hardest part of living in Germany for me". [Person 2] added that "The difference between the newly arrived skilled Turks is their passion, ability to take risks and desire/addiction to success. Germans live in under challenged conditions. Therefore, it is normal for immigrants to choose more challenging jobs".

[Person 19] said, "The feedback culture is very different. A Turkish person may take bad feedback personally, but it is not personal. When a person I have argued with is asked about my evaluation, he can talk very positively. They are straightforward and do not involve emotions. The responsibilities given, the reactions to mistakes, and the appreciation of work are very different. It is hard to get used to being direct, but it is relaxing once one get used to it. Turks are a bit over thinkers", indicating the emotional character of Turkish culture. [Person 13] told, "Participation in the work environment was very different and challenging. They are very confident. They are not afraid to say and talk. The fact that they were so direct seemed harsh at first. However, then I adopted. It also made me more expressive and self-confident. It has improved me in defending and expressing what I believe in" indicating the cultural differences at the workplace in line with cultural distance models and cultural adaptation period.

[Person 20] told, "When I was sick and could not get out of bed, my Turkish roommate made me soup. Since my landlord was Turkish, she took me to the doctor and

completed the missing documents. I came across a fraudster while looking for a house. Again, a Turkish acquaintance from the consulate helped. I became a member of the Telegram group and found the house there”, stating the assistance she received from various Turks at critical times and the strength of bonds between Turkish communities in Germany.

[Person 7] told, “As you work in Turkey, your colleague becomes your friend in your private life as well. The Dutch people we invited to our home did not invite us back to their home. Eastern Europeans (Slovakians) said that if we were them, we would call” indicating the cultural differences between countries.

[Person 7] said, “It is easier to talk to a person in a government institution”. This indicates the power distance mentioned in Hofstede’s cultural dimensions.

[Person 16] said, “I have a social support network consisting of a close circle of 10 - 15 people. Germany’s state-run bureaucratic environment is a bit exhausting” and admitted as the drawbacks of a bureaucratic country.

[Person 17] said, “There are not many activities with colleagues at work. It is Christmas, and we have a few meals together. There was a celebration almost every day at our Turkish company”, indicating the lack of social events at work.

[Person 23] explained his ease of adaptation to the USA: “When they see a negative reaction in Europe, European immigrants become more introverted. When there is a big cultural difference from where you come from, culture shock is also high. The lifestyles of the people in Turkey and the American lifestyle were not very different. That is why I did not have much difficulty adapting”. As he elaborated more, he said that constant exposure to the American lifestyle, his father’s American co-workers, computer games, and the Turkish education system made his adaptation much easier.

[Person 23] said, “I cannot say that Turks are preferred. There are immigrants from many other places. There is no prejudice or perception about Turks. You come to a place with your characteristics and achievements. I do not feel a mission to promote Turkey, but I feel that when they get to know me, they will think that there are such hardworking Turks too”, indicating the positive effects of highly skilled migrants on the perception of Turks.

[Person 25] described the difference between education and university life in Italy as another example of the individualism of Western countries: “Exam systems and

education are different. More self-study and individual effort are encouraged. In Turkey, students are not allowed to stay idle. At Bilkent, attendance was compulsory. There are not many assignments and exams; only a final exam exists in Italy. The responsibility for development lies entirely with the student. In a master's degree, one starts working with the professor immediately in Turkey, and in Italy, the thesis is completed in the last semester. More lessons are taken in Italy".

[Person 25] described the cultural diversity in Italy as similar to that of Germany and the Netherlands. They said, "You don't look like a Turk at all. My phenotype is similar to Italians. There is also a lot of cultural diversity in Italy."

3.3.3 Highly Skilled Migration Unique Characteristics and Entrepreneurship

Highly skilled migrants are driven by self-actualization more than other migrants. Therefore, it is not easy to categorize their motivations. There are instances where economics, children, social instabilities, polarization, and lifestyle choices are dominant. Individuals seeking appropriate job positions or an environment for entrepreneurship are also common cases.

Likewise, migrant entrepreneurs are often regarded as exceptional entrepreneurs, primarily due to the concept of selection. Migrants may exhibit lower risk aversion, demonstrated by their choice to migrate, a decision fraught with risks. They are perceived to have a keen eye for identifying new business opportunities, similar to how they identified opportunities for migration. Migrants are also believed to have additional resources such as support, training, and financing, as they often enhance their education, acquire new skills, save more money, and expand their social networks while living abroad. However, despite these theoretical reasons for viewing migrant entrepreneurs as superior, empirical evidence does not strongly support this notion. Not all migrants become entrepreneurs, and those who do have varying levels of success depending on their backgrounds and circumstances (Naudé et al., 2017, p. 3).

On the other hand, some of the highly skilled migrant participants of the study become entrepreneurs after migration. They mentioned that it is due to the fact that the risk taker and above-average skills of these migrants combined with the encouraging and supportive environment of destination countries. 7 out of 26 have experienced entrepreneurship in destination countries (USA, Netherlands, and Germany) and prefer running their own business after corporate experiences. These countries have

mechanisms to support and ease the create startups and new businesses [Person 13, Person 11, Person 22, Person 7, Person 3, Person 26, Person 4]. Highly skilled migrants in the study seem to be positively separated from the migrant community in that sense.

Planning is considered critical in Western business environments. Everyone's opinion is listened to. There isn't much of a strict hierarchy. There is a culture of discussion and directness. In Eastern societies like Turkey, the culture of expressing ideas indirectly is common (Hendry & Watson, 2001, p. 6). This can be a challenging factor for innovators or unorthodox thinkers in these Eastern societies, leading to migration.

[Person 2] stated, "As I am a high-level executive in a big corporation in Germany, an application of a person from my previous Turkish company or Turkish university draws more attention. An ordinary German may not know Turkish skilled workers, but they are well-recognized in business environments. For example, the Turkish aviation industry praises experimentation, and an engineer in this industry can experience three projects in a few years. However, on the other hand, a German engineer can achieve this level of experience throughout his whole career. This much experience is very valuable, and that is the reason why companies prefer Turkish engineers". This observation is not only expressed by [Person 2] but also by engineer working in the same corporation [Person 24] and another executive working in a German startup [Person 19]. [Person 3] and [Person 4] mention skilled Turkish people as adaptive, experienced, and hardworking (in line with migrant personality), which breaks prejudice and makes Turks more favorable and preferable. Highly skilled immigrants can differentiate themselves from the local population with their desire to prove themselves and their high capacity. It is stated that Turkish emigrants have characteristics such as practical intelligence, taking initiative, entrepreneurial identity, finding quick solutions, and working more intensively. [Person 21] observed a similar situation: "I think Turks are preferred. I think traits such as hard work, being responsible, being able to think quickly/practically, and being adaptable are generally effective. A good education and professional experience are also effective in the recent brain drain". The multi-active cultural category in Lewis Cultural model mentioning flexibility and migrant personality traits mentioning achievement orientation are combined in highly skilled Turkish migrants (Lewis, 2003, p. 10; Boneva & Frieze, 2002, p. 477).

[Person 7] said, “There are many places for people with Ph.D.s to work here. It is difficult to find a position of this depth for PhDs and post-docs in Turkey. These people will inevitably move here. I have many friends with PhDs working at ASML company in the Netherlands”. So, as Portes stated, highly skilled migration should not be considered as a zero-sum game with winners and losers (Portes, 2019, p. 15). However, if there is a capability mismatch for a person, migration may enable an individual to reach his/her full potential with increased innovation and a win-win (individual-humanity) situation in the long run.

[Person 16] expressed the migration’s positive business network effects: “It is too early to talk about the effects of brain drain, but there are still some positive examples”. A migrant from her company became the intermediary for the interaction of a business agreement between a company from Turkey and a company from the destination.

[Person 19] said, “Whether brain drain is good or bad seems very shallow to me. We are born and die as individuals. I don’t feel like anyone is using me. I make my own decisions. Other countries should also provide appropriate opportunities. Evolutionarily, humans must seek the most suitable living conditions for themselves”. He is one of the examples of thinking liberally on a more micro and individual level.

[Person 22] said, “Maybe I won’t establish a firm in Turkey, but I will open one branch of my American company in Turkey”. Companies owned by Turkish immigrants, such as Udemy and Opsgenie, also opened offices in Turkey, bringing their entrepreneurial culture and networks with them as a positive outcome of migration.

[Person 22] said, “The Internet and globalization have developed a lot in 20 years. In terms of entrepreneurship, there was less development in this sector in Europe and Turkey” indicating the lack of support for entrepreneurs and innovators in Turkey. [Person 13] has established a business in Turkey after migration. She has complaints about the business environment in Turkey for entrepreneurs. She said customs taxes are high in Turkey. She wanted to make the production in Turkey. She applied to KOSGEB (Small and Medium Industries Development Organization) but could not get a response. She was going to export later, but it did not work out. She decided to produce locally for each country because of Turkey’s restrictive business environment and lack of support.

Turkish skilled migrants have an effect on minimizing the prejudice against Turkish people as they are educated well (some of them having an M.S. degree), gained lots of

experience in the early stages of their professional life and have a similar lifestyle to local counterparts. [Person 20] indicates that Turkish engineers are more creative and dynamic approaches to problems. An executive working in a German company [Person 19] says the applicants to job advertisements are mostly Turkish and they have better qualifications compared to others. Therefore, it is an expected outcome that the ratio of Turks in new skilled migrants is higher than others. These findings are also supported by various reports of different organizations: Turkey is successful in educating and raising new talents but cannot retain or attract talents.

[Person 7] stated the suitable environment for entrepreneurship at her destination: "There is a very positive and supportive ecosystem here for entrepreneurs, even though I am a foreigner. There is an environment where startups are only 5% successful, but they are more open to learning and making mistakes". Working in a corporate environment before entrepreneurship was also beneficial.

It is difficult to change business domains in Turkey; even within the same company, it is necessary to build relationships. [Person 13] said that "In the Netherlands, if you really want it and believe in it, they let you. They let you try different positions".

3.3.4 Major Changes in Highly Skilled Emigration Profile After Year 2000

The people who migrated around 2000 mostly preferred the US or Canada for their education or work and long-term settlement because of the quality of the universities and the better job opportunities at that time. 11.9.2001 terrorist attacks affected the migration policies of the USA, and visa rules became stricter. Mobility programs, incentives, and the workforce needs of the EU gave rise to the migration flow to Europe around 2010. This situation, combined with globalization, caused highly skilled migrants of Turkey to choose and make a tradeoff between different countries depending on education, job opportunities, living conditions, and proximity to Turkey.

Another study by Ozcurumez and Aker (2016) depicted similar results about highly skilled and business Turkish nationals (HSBTN) in Canada and Germany who moved there between 2000 and 2010. While most of the HSBTN in North America move there to find a job and potentially settle permanently, those in Europe primarily migrate for foreign work experience or education abroad, preserving their bonds and aiming to enhance their employment prospects upon returning to Turkey. Therefore, HSBTNs who seek long-term employment and settlement tend to move to North America. At the same time, those pursuing education abroad and aiming to find preferred jobs in Turkey or other countries prefer Europe. (Ozcurumez & Aker, 2016, p. 8).

[Person 11] explained this change as follows: “The immigrant profile has not changed much for Turks, but in general the USA has become more closed to immigrants with time. The USA’s strength is due to immigrants. The USA itself caused the USA’s problems. After the 9/11 incidents, obtaining a visa became more difficult, of course, with the Bush era. Highly skilled immigrants like us were not affected much. It became more difficult for other migrants. Visas have also become difficult for students, even for those who have lived there for a long time”.

The people who migrated at the beginning of the 2000s went with very little information about their destinations, as expressed by [Person 1], [Person 11], [Person 22], and [Person 23]. After the rise of the internet and social media, people began to share their experiences, companies or universities promoted themselves, and more information became available and accessible. These information networks triggered the evolution of digital migrant networks. New migrants benefit from the experiences of already settled migrants functioning as bridgeheads and lowering newcomers’ risks as expressed in the Cumulative Causation Theory, reflected in the experiences of [Person

5], [Person 6], [Person 13], [Person 12], [Person 14], [Person 19], [Person 16] and [Person 20].

Migrants of the 2000s faced difficulties in adaptation, communication, and obtaining information in a technologically inferior and less mobilized era. Migrants of the 2000s mostly use their close personal networks, as in the cases of [Person 1] and [Person 11], and information from the internet to find universities, as in the cases of [Person 23] and [Person 22]. But the migrants of the 2010s and 2020s use wider personal networks like the previous migrants from the same university or company through alum networks, as in the cases of [Person 20], [Person 25], and Person 19], and professional social media like LinkedIn, as in the cases of [Person 5], [Person 13] and [Person 12]. These cases support the idea of an information society as social lives are likely to be shifting to the cyberspace and The Strength of Weak Ties is gaining importance.

The importance of digital networks such as LinkedIn has increased, which means cultural capital has become essential. Since these digital networks and social media did not have wide coverage before 2010, it was not easy to establish a vast network in the regions where migrants settled. Acquaintances from Turkey were the intermediaries for migration, and social capital was more important before 2010. These are the results of post-industrial society and information society in migration. Dekker and Engbersen (2013) noted that firstly, social media and digital networks increase the potential for maintaining strong connections with family and friends (Dekker & Engbersen, 2013, p. 401). Secondly, these networks address weaker connections that are essential for organizing migration and integration processes. Thirdly, they create a new infrastructure made up of latent connections. Fourthly, they provide a wealth of insider knowledge on migration that is informal and unofficial, making potential migrants more 'streetwise' about the migration process. Dekker and Engbersen (2013) also concluded that social media are transforming migration networks and thereby lowering the threshold for migration.

Migrants of the 2000s had to build an entirely new social network in destination countries like the USA, while migrants of 2020s could preserve their networks as some of their social circles had already migrated to hub cities like Munich and Eindhoven. This situation supports the Cumulative Causation Theory for late migrants.

Those who migrated to Europe took less risk and perhaps received less financial compensation than those who went to the USA. The social state in most European

countries supports people, but the USA has fewer the social state and income inequality as seen from Gini coefficients. Those who migrate to Europe are more inclined to return to Turkey. They think they should be close to their homeland, especially at older ages. Migrating to the USA is more likely to be considered at a younger age, as it is seen as a more significant social investment and risk. Sadka and Razin indicated that the USA draws most of the World's highly skilled migrants as a center for tertiary education and innovation. On the other hand, Europe's welfare system is more generous than that of the USA, and income equality is better than the USA (Sadka & Razin, 2014, p. 1).

Age is a factor that constrains the preference for the destination country. People are inclined to stay closer to their homeland in late adulthood, as suggested by 'Hispanic paradox' or 'salmon bias' theories. [Person 19] said, "I would not want it to be further away from my family. For example, Spain is far away compared to Munich and Ankara". [Person 24] said, "Maybe the USA would be more difficult for me. When I get bored, I go to Turkey every two months. There was a PhD position in the USA, but the defense industry is impenetrable to newcomers. I chose Germany because of its proximity, work-life balance, and ease of getting a job".

Migrants of the 2000s went abroad with the will to return to Turkey after some period (i.e., after graduation), but migrants of the 2010s and 2020s planned migration for longer periods during the initial phase. [Person 23] said, "There was never a moment when I decided to migrate. I thought graduate school would be a good experience. Then, I thought I would work in USA for 1-2 years. Then, I got used to it, and I settled down. Since the situation in Turkey was not very promising, I did not think of returning". [Person 22] and [Person 11] have similar stories of the uncertainty of the time of migration decision.

The open positions for skilled workers have surged in both Europe and North America. The main difference is that Europe has recently realized the possibility of attracting developing country citizens. Visa restrictions and highly skilled immigrant visa privileges in Europe (EU Blue Card), the UK (skilled worker visas), Canada (Comprehensive Ranking System), and the USA (H-1B visa) also changed the migration flows and trends with time. Points-based systems are more successful in attracting and selecting highly skilled migrants than job offer requirements, labor market tests, and shortage lists. Although offers of permanent residency attract highly skilled individuals, they generally decrease the overall human capital in labor flows by

being more appealing to non-high-skilled workers. Bilateral recognition of diplomas and social security agreements encourage higher flows of skilled workers and enhance the skill selectivity of immigrant flows (Czaika & Parsons, 2017, p. 603). Europe has become a more attractive destination, according to study participants. [Person 19] emphasized, “My company is proud of hiring quality engineers. When there is an open position, 60% of the applicants are Turkish. I think people coming from Turkey are more educated and skilled. One of the reasons for this is that people here work in a particular and niche field. In Turkey, we have experienced many projects from beginning to end in 10 years. Turkey gives the opportunity to attract such young and experienced people to Germany. We work very long hours in Turkey. That is why we seem to be more hardworking. That is why Turks have a good appearance”. This statement is in parallel with the IMD World Talent Ranking 2023 report and OECD Talent Attractiveness Tool, which indicate Turkey as a country with fairly good educated and skilled human capital but not retaining these talents.

[Person 20] told, “Factors and economic situations such as the Russia-Ukraine war change immigration trends. Ukrainian immigrants have increased, and they are preferred in Germany more”, which is an indicator that the global trends can also change the market conditions and affect the migration possibilities.

There is a belief that education and hard work do not get rewarded enough in Turkey as in the previous decades, which indicates the lack of social justice and income equality in recent years, as mentioned in World Justice Project Reports and Gini Coefficients. Highly skilled people tend to migrate to achieve better self-actualization in a different setting. Migration can be considered as a psychological and micro-level individual decision triggered by macro-level social settings in this respect, as in the cases of [Person 24], [Person 19], and [Person 22].

Marital status is also a constraint for migrants. A single person can be more focused on personal career achievements. At the same time, parents consider migration as a way to avoid the risks of Turkey and as an investment for the next generation, which is consistent with the 'children-oriented' character of the emerging Turkish middle class. Marital status and having children affect the return migration decision since the children of a migrant family develop deeper bonds during childhood with the destination country, and it is becoming harder to return to Turkey, as told by [Person 23], [Person 22], and [Person 1].

Economic factors triggering migration are mentioned more by the younger skilled migrants. The migration of a closed circle of friends is also another factor for migration for the younger generations represented by [Person 15], [Person 6] and [Person 25], indicating the role of social networks and cumulative causation on migration culture.

Turkish migrants have realized the importance of diasporas, social, and business networks. So, they tend to establish new social and business networks with different purposes for migrants like “Göçmen Kadınlar” (support group for migrant women), “Bi’ Dünya Kivılcım” (highly skilled migrant group focused on the benefit and development of Turkey), “Global Turks par Excellence” (business network consisting of Turkish migrants) and “Turks in Tech” (network consisting of technology-focused Turkish migrants).

Return migration or transnational life between different countries is constrained by Turkey’s offered living standards and progress compared to the new reference living standards of migrants. Once migrated, a new identity formation and culture adaptation process challenges and transforms migrants into multicultural and versatile people who can act as mediators and bridges between different cultures. This identity formation and adaptation process is easier and faster for highly skilled migrants as they were previously exposed to the cultures of destination countries.

According to identity negotiation theory, newcomers to a foreign culture must address the insecurity or vulnerability of their identity. The better new migrants manage their sense of identity threat, the more effectively they can adapt. Highly skilled immigrants’ cultural competence and professional skills distinguish them and broaden the scope for identity negotiation in a diverse workplace. Their cultural competence also allows them to control the information they receive, process, and share. Additionally, they strive to facilitate proper communication by influencing or educating their surroundings through their identity. Highly skilled immigrants in culturally diverse environments do not see race or nationality as obstacles to identity negotiation (Surakhmad, 2023, p. 415).

The loss of homeland and the grief period (numbness, yearning and searching, disorganization and despair, and reorganization) are experienced smoother due to the work-oriented nature of highly skilled migrants. Research by Grosskopf et al. (2024) supports that integration within a company provides highly skilled migrants with valuable resources such as local, regional, and national values, norms, behaviors, system knowledge, language skills, and social contacts. Consequently, the

organization directly impacts the cultural integration of migrants into both its closer and broader social environments.

CONCLUSION

Highly skilled migration has become a pivotal factor in the global landscape, significantly influencing both the source and destination countries. The strategic movement of skilled individuals offers a multitude of benefits, including economic growth, innovation, and cultural enrichment for host nations. For source countries, while it presents challenges such as brain drain, it also provides opportunities through remittances, skill transfer, and the potential for returning talent.

As nations compete to attract skilled migrants, policies focusing on merit and skills-based criteria have gained prominence. These policies are not only aimed at addressing demographic challenges, such as aging populations, but also at enhancing economic competitiveness and fostering national development. The dynamic interplay between migration and globalization underscores the need for balanced and forward-thinking migration policies that consider the interests of all stakeholders involved.

Looking forward, the sustainable management of highly skilled migration will require international cooperation, robust legal frameworks, and adaptive strategies that respond to evolving global needs. By embracing the multifaceted nature of skilled migration, countries can harness their full potential to drive progress and innovation in an interconnected World.

The emigration patterns of Turkey have changed substantially in each period of the Republic. The migration of minorities is the dominating characteristic of migration during World War I and II. The guest worker migration to Europe in the 1960s and 1970s is the second great wave of emigration. The third important wave is the emigration of highly skilled migrants after the 2000s (Abadan Unat, 2011, p. 5; Tuncel, 2021, p.1).

The research question of this thesis is: "In an age where the speed and impact of technology change are continuously increasing, how are the migration characteristics and dynamics of highly skilled emigrants of Turkey changing?". The digital ethnography and interviews provide a snapshot of the highly skilled migration of Turkey after the year 2000. This research demonstrates the following observations related to the highly skilled migration dynamics of Turkey after the year 2000:

- Emigration of young individuals to the USA for education and work was the initial skilled migration pattern. The second pattern is the migration of young individuals to Europe for education and work combined with the migration of highly skilled middle-aged individuals and entrepreneurs.
- The increase in mobility facilitates new alternative migration destinations and circular migrations.
- The rise of the new digital communication channels and cultures, together with new wave migration has caused the digital transnational communities and diasporas to expand their influence area and participants centered on highly skilled migrants.
- The rapid development and spread of technology allow transnational lives for migrants.
- The migration patterns respond quickly to Turkey's agenda and global changes.
- Highly skilled migrants become more mobile between different locations and lifestyles due to their highly skilled migrant identities, which are above their national and sub identities, developing transnational identities.
- Multifaceted causes and drivers of skilled migration make this complex phenomenon both endogenous (network effects) and exogenous (sending context and receiving context) parts of a broader, ever-changing socioeconomic system.
- A culture of highly skilled migration is evolving with the spread of migrants and connections. This culture influences the well-educated and experienced highly skilled individuals to migrate, fueling this culture with a social multiplier effect, creating self-sustaining migration flows in a positive feedback loop.
- Kinship is emphasized less by younger migrants, but is an important constraint for married migrants. Professional business networks and online business networks are facilitating highly skilled migration consistent with The Strength of Weak Ties Theory.
- The migration drivers of young generations are the desire to have better economic, educational and career opportunities, while the experienced migrants

stress their family and self-actualization more. Nevertheless, lifestyle and social stability are the shared motives among all migrants.

- The time spent in the destination country increases the tendency to be part of the activities and network that are beneficial for the development of Turkey, as in the cases of “Bi’ Dünya Kivılcım”, “Global Turks par Excellence”, and “Turks in Tech”, “Göçmen Kadınlar” associations, which are founded by senior highly skilled migrants.
- The positive views of digital ethnography and interview participants about highly skilled migration are very similar. The positive outcomes of highly skilled migration can only be realized if
 - Suitable conditions are created for return migrants,
 - Or flexible remote work opportunities are developed,
 - Or effective migrant networks are employed.

The World is changing and becoming more global. People’s desire to be more mobile is inevitable. The nation-state definition left the stage for a new order relying more on the strength of global companies.

The driving forces of countries seem to be shifting towards a society centered on global companies and new social norms initiated by the rapid change of technology. On the other hand, these rapid changes cause a counter movement and the rise of more nationalist and conservative ideas, which reflects itself in the rise of right-wing political parties in Netherlands, Italy, and France.

Migration is a complex phenomenon, as observed in various studies. Efforts to isolate a perspective may be misleading. The World is becoming more mobile, and Turkey gets its share from this transformation. The policies may backfire if they are not inclusive enough and affected from the polarization of the society. As an example, there are regulations to control migration but researches indicate that transitive nature between the middle-income and high-income countries cannot be limited. An effort to control migration may worsen the remittance revenues, return migration entrepreneurship, cross-border university networks, cross-border researcher networks, and quality of education. Therefore, it is more applicable to manage migration rather than stop it. Turkey should devise further policies besides the current ones to benefit from the

migration phenomenon and stimulate different spectrums of the diaspora. The emigrants have vast experience. If managed correctly, the experiences of return migrants or migrant networks can be the driving force of the positive transformation of Turkey.

The impact of return migration, social remittances (“ideas, behaviors, identities, and social capital that flow from receiving country to sending country community” (Levitt, 1998, p. 927)), and diaspora engagement for the development of Turkey can compensate and surpass the decreasing effects of financial remittances with time (Cohen et al., 2012, p. 274). This potential will only emerge if the necessary conditions are created. Creating this environment depends on the creation and implementation of public policies aimed at the ‘from brain drain to brain power’ approach. Although, given the current situation, many emigration countries, including Turkey, have the potential to provide a positive externality from brain drain, but this potential alone is not sufficient.

Turkey can benefit from return migrants. But this cannot be achieved only economically by offering competitive payments. Turkey has to attain the social level of developed countries, including city planning, justice, cooperation, joint projects, innovative projects, startups, and high-tech ecosystems, to attract highly skilled return migrants. Migration is an inevitable phenomenon. The highly skilled migrants preserve their solid bonds and Turkish identities. In the light of new rising initiatives and organizations like “Bi’ Dünya Kivılcım”, “Global Turks par Excellence”, “Turks in Tech”, “Göçmen Kadınlar” and “Bi’ Gidene Soralım”, we can conclude that the forthcoming years’ migration culture will be shaped by the diasporas and different migrant networks.

A high percentage of return migration seems not realistic, but well-organized and free from polarization diasporas with transnational networks can create a ‘virtual return migration’ effect and can utilize the brain power and the unique experiences of skilled migrants for the advancement of Turkey. So, the focus of skilled migration studies should shift from the causes and current situation to the future of migrants.

Sociocultural anthropology can reveal the underlying cultures and social characteristics of migrants with its comparative approach and holistic perspective to understand how people give meaning to their lives. The holistic perspective enables to discover the interlinked relations between the micro-level (individual choices, micro-economic conditions, psychological drivers, identity, lifestyles), meso-level (networks of families and social groups), and macro-level (society, culture, macro-economic conditions,

policies, geography, diasporas) aspects of migration evolving throughout a historical path. The comparative approach can expose the unique characters of individual migrants and highly skilled migrant groups of Turkey with respect to other past and current migrants. In-depth interviews and personal observations are the foremost methodological components of modern sociocultural anthropology which can be complemented by the vast number of valuable digital ethnography resources.

As a future work, technology policies and technology management can be studied in relation to highly skilled migrants in the context of diasporas and technology ecosystems. A comparative analysis can be conducted between different highly skilled migrants with different nationalities.

The interview and survey participants represent a specific group of highly skilled Turkish migrants. This issue is a limitation of this research, and different groups of highly skilled migrants can be considered for further studies.

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EK 2. ETİK KOMİSYON İZİNİ



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SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

İlgi: 22.06.2023 tarihli ve E-12908312-300-00002917679 sayılı yazımız.

Enstitünüz Antropoloji Anabilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Evrim Anıl EVİRGEN'in Prof. Dr. Ali ÇAĞLAR danışmanlığında hazırladığı; "Türkiye'nin Nitelikli İnsan Göçünün 2000 Yılı Sonrası Dönüşümü" başlıklı tez çalışması Üniversitemiz Senatosu Etik Komisyonununun 11 Temmuz 2023 tarihinde yapmış olduğu toplantıda incelenmiş olup, etik açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Sibel AKSU YILDIRIM
Rektör Yardımcısı

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