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**Turkish Migratory
Flows To Poland:
General Description**

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Olimpia Żuchaj**

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1. Introduction: purpose, objectives and the constraints of the research

1.1. Objectives of the study

The total amount of Turkish immigrants staying in Poland (comparing with other groups of migrants like Vietnamese or citizens of the former Soviet Union) is not large enough to stir up the attention of official institutions and initiate the monitoring and regular observation of the Turkish residents in Poland. Furthermore, due to peculiar strategy of settlement, the total number of Turkish nationals staying in Poland is underestimated and data concerning the same topic (for example the number of Turkish citizens crossing the border illegally) collected by different public institutions happen to be not coherent.

Presented research is the first systematic exploration of that subject carried out in Poland by Centre of Migration Research affiliated with Institute for Social Studies, University of Warsaw. The principal purpose of the research was the preliminary exploration of the group of Turkish migrants living in Poland consisting in a thorough description of various forms and the dynamic of the flows of the people into Poland, as well as identification of their settlement and economic strategies.

The study was implemented from September 15th till December 15th 1999. Beside the general lack of official data and statistics mentioned above, main difficulties in carrying the study occurred due to a fact, that the group of Turkish migrants is rather closed and their representatives are distrustful of researchers. Because of this, the key problem for reliable realisation of the research was winning confidence of a few Turks, who enabled the researchers to contact other respondents and provisionally explore the community of Turkish immigrants staying in Poland.

1.2. Method

Because of the distinctive features of the group of Turkish migrants in Poland (small, strongly integrated group connected by the network of misty relations, hierarchies and structures of reinforcements and interests)¹ the research was pursued primarily with “soft”, qualitative methods of data collection. Beside the examination of Turkish immigrants themselves, persons belonging to the so-called “contact area” were also inquired. The notion of the “contact area” is understood as the group of vernaculars, who are obliged to or are strongly interested in contacts with migrants, i.e. civil servants and officers, neighbours, Polish spouses and their relatives, persons who co-operate with migrants, help or exploit them, etc. They are expected to know a lot on the actual behaviour and strategies employed by migrants thus constitute an important source of information and observations.

The second source of information were available statistical data. Most useful and informative appeared to be statistics collected by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration and the Polish Border Guard Headquarters. Where it was possible, data concerning Turks were compared with data on Vietnamese, Ukrainians (currently the

¹ Faist T. (1999) *Transnationalisation in International Migration: Implications for the Study of Citizenship and Culture*, conference paper.

biggest and most visible groups of migrants in Poland) and French citizens (exemplifying the flow and stock of migrants from Western Europe countries).

In-depth interview (IDI), based on a list of problems was the main tool of qualitative data collection. In cases, when respondents were distrustful or reluctant to talk to the researcher, the interviews took form of informal conversations, related to topics from the list. During the fieldwork the researchers have conducted 39 IDIs: 27 of them with Turkish respondents, 12 with Poles from “contact area”; 27 IDIs were done in Warsaw urban area, which is the place of the highest concentration of Turkish nationals and enterprises, while the rest were done in Poznan (see Appendix 1).

Basic method of reaching respondents was the snowball method. This way of exploration appeared to be comparatively effective, but since it is so time-consuming, taking all advantages of this approach and reaching all interesting respondents was impossible. On the other hand, due to the lack of the reliable data (i.e. addresses) valid and representative sample could not be drawn, what excluding usage of quantitative methods.

Only half of the respondents (i.e. 14 persons) agreed for the interviews to be recorded, whereas in the rest of the cases the detailed notes had been taken during or immediately after the interviews, which were thoroughly analysed afterwards. All interviews were carried out by researchers themselves. According to the knowledge of foreign languages among Turkish respondents, 9 IDIs were conducted in Polish, 12 in English, while the rest in Turkish.

1.3. Reliability of data and sources

It should be emphasised at the very beginning that the report neither attempts to estimate the actual magnitude of the stock of legal and illegal Turkish migrants staying in Poland, nor aims at far-reaching generalisations. Data collected in the research are not representative of the population of Turkish migrants staying in Poland, but being conscious of the limitations of data, they allow researches to indicate general migratory trends, identify main pull and push factors of migration to Poland and reconstruct the basic strategies of functioning in social space. Due to the short period of realisation of the research, no representative of the group of illegal Turkish migrants in Poland was reached.

In order to enhance the reliability of collected data, the information collected from different sources were verified first of all by comparing each other. Nevertheless, the official statistics were regarded as more reliable. Additionally, facts given by the respondents during interviews were checked according to their inner coherence².

² For simplicity, quotation from interviews with migrants are signed with the letter T (Turkish Respondent), quotations from interviews with Poles belonging to the “contact area” are signed with the letter I (Polish Informant).

2. General description of Turkish population in Poland

2.1. Background: evolution of Polish-Turkish economic exchange

The deficiencies of the Polish economic system, in combination with the reawakening of consumption desires among Poles during the 1970s, led in the 1980s to a great demand in Poland for all types of consumer goods, which the centrally controlled socialist economy was not able to satisfy. This strong demand, together with the liberalisation of passport regulations and the relaxation of limitations on Poles travelling abroad, gave rise to ranks of Polish “petty traders”³, who under the pretext of travelling for tourism brought those goods most hard-to-find in Poland from their trips abroad.

Turkey immediately became one of the primary markets for individual import of textiles - due to the low price of such goods there and the fact that “Turks quickly introduce new patterns and are able to forge brand-name products with ease” (110). The regular trips of Polish petty-traders to Istanbul led to formation longer-term contacts with Turkish manufacturers and wholesalers for whom Poland became an important sales market.

Attempts to reform the socialist economy led by the end of the 1980s to the new possibilities of opening private firms with combined Polish-foreign capital, and it was then, that the first Turkish businessmen turned up in Poland. The flow of small trades dealing with textiles and fast moving goods who came to Poland looking for opportunities for establishing some business or those who opened here textile factories or other enterprises can be described as the first wave of Turkish migrants to Poland.

The political transformation of 1989, liberalisation of the economy and the introduction of free market principles also affected the shape of Polish-Turkish commercial contacts. The opportunity to conduct import and export legally and the low import duties led to mass commercial trading thus, only wholesalers with a certain amount of capital remained in the business - once the laws limiting imports into Poland ceased to be valid, the former “suitcase commerce” ceased to be profitable.

With the growth of the economy in Poland, the nature of market has also changed - demand for cheap textiles and shoes gradually decreased (they are now primarily purchased by petty traders from the countries of the former Soviet Union⁴), and accordingly, some of the Turkish firms expanded or changed their original type of business – for example moved into forwarding, developing, real estate trading, electronics assembly, etc.

Over the last two years Poland has seen a second wave of Turkish businessmen and investors into Poland. They are “drawn” to Poland not by Poles themselves, but rather by Turks who have been already running businesses in Poland and who have decided to extend and diversify the type of business they have been doing. In fact, Turks staying in Poland exemplify a specific pattern of chain migration. Unlike in Germany⁵ or in USA (referring to Mexicans)⁶, Turkish migrants coming to Poland in the eighties have

³ Iglicka K. (1999) *Nomads and Rangers of Central and Eastern Europe*, “Working Papers” ISS UW, Seria: Prace Migracyjne, nr 27.

⁴ For some Turkish businessmen Poland was first stage of their expansion into former Soviet Union.

⁵ Faist T. (2000) *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Space* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

⁶ Massey D., Alarcon R., Durand J., Gonzalez H. (1987) *Return to Aztlan: The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico*, University of California Press: Berkeley.

not been offered job of low-skilled industrial workers, but have had to actively look for an economic niche for themselves. Positive selection at the beginning of migration flow shaped its contemporary form – previous small trades and wholesalers nowadays become successful businessmen and investors who bring from Turkey potential partners or engineers not just poor family members.

2.2. Population: general characteristic

The number of Turks in Poland is estimated for about 1500 persons (unofficial information from the Turkish Embassy in Warsaw confirmed by Turks living in Poland). The majority of them live in Warsaw or the vicinities. There are small communities of Turks in Poznan, Gdansk and Lodz. In turn, our informants staying in touch with Turks due to economic partnership or those who are employed in Turkish enterprises talk about at least a few thousands of Turkish nationals permanently staying in Poland.

Statistical data show that the number of visas or temporary and permanent residence permits issued to Turkish nationals is relatively small and does not exceed a thousand persons per year. Comparing to the number of Vietnamese and Ukrainians the amount of Turkish nationals staying in Poland seems to be marginal and is similar to the number of French staying in Poland (table 1 – 4).

Table 1. Visas issued by regional authorities in the period of 1994 – 1997 (selected nationalities)

Citizenship	Visas Type	1994	1995	1996	1997
Turkey	Visa with work permit	151	182	127	167
	Other resident visa	495	507	528	413
	Return visa	211	212	206	198
	Administrative visa – expulsion	4	4	3	4
Ukraine	Visa with work permit	1.141	1.273	1.110	1.368
	Other resident visa	3.139	3.959	4.559	3.995
	Return visa	2.040	2.116	2.155	1.982
	Administrative visa – expulsion	749	655	740	721
Vietnam	Visa with work permit	978	1168	1.025	1.587
	Other resident visa	2.074	2.541	3.676	3.036
	Return visa	636	685	1.080	1.002
	Administrative visa – expulsion	16	7	29	32
France	Visa with work permit	204	257	160	263
	Other resident visa	342	326	354	504
	Return visa	184	230	185	133
	Administrative visa – expulsion	-	-	-	-

Source: Poland: Statistical Data on Migration 1992-1997, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs Ministry of the Interior and Administration

In 1998 regulations concerning types of visas issued to foreigners have been changed what influenced the total number and differentiation of visas issued to Turkish citizens.

Table 2. Visas issued by regional authorities in the period of 1998 – 1999 (selected nationalities)

Citizenship	Type of visa	1998	1999
Turkey	With work permit	349	89
	Resident visa	263	179
	Transit visa	-	-
Vietnam	With work permit	1.596	86
	Resident visa	2.619	534
	Transit visa	-	-
Ukraine	With work permit	1.374	269
	Resident visa	3.273	2.659
	Transit visa	-	-
France	With work permit	369	94
	Resident visa	624	560
	Transit visa	-	-
Total*	With work permit	10.505	2.015
	Resident visa	32.849	17.959
	Transit visa	1	3

* Total number of visas issued in Poland in 1998

Source: Poland: Statistical Data on Migration 1998-1999, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and Administration

Table 3. Permanent residence permits granted in Poland in the period of 1993 – 1999 (selected nationalities)

Citizenship	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Turkey	21	30	28	24	42	15	10
Ukraine	517	717	808	978	1.382	137	91
Vietnam	137	177	273	417	592	74	61
France	(missing data)	33	33	42	54	6	10
Total*	(missing data)	3.205	3.808	4.343	5.329	815	587

* Total number of permanent residence permits in Poland

Source: Poland: Statistical Data on Migration 1992-1997, Poland: Statistical Data on Migration 1998-1999, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and Administration

Table 4. Statistics of decisions concerning temporary residence permits in the period of 1998 – 1999 (selected nationalities)

Citizenship	1998 Decisions			1999 Decisions		
	Positive	Negative	Discontinued	Positive	Negative	Discontinued
Turkey	38	-	-	186	14	1
Vietnam	727	25	-	1.439	356	18
Ukraine	895	28	6	2.507	121	5
France	42	1	-	543	3	7
Total	4.882	142	31	16.709	959	121

Source: Poland: Statistical Data on Migration 1998-1999, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and Administration

A slightly different picture of Turkish migrants has appeared on the basis of statistics of Polish Guard Headquarters (table 5). The total number of Turks coming to Poland does not exceed 0,02% of foreigners crossing the Polish borders (88 592 thousands in 1998) but reaches the level of 20 thousands persons per year. The high level of visits as well as tourist travels allows for assumption that some of Turkish citizens keep travelling more or less regularly between Poland and Turkey. Circular migration is a common form of migration to Poland, which is applied by different groups of migrants, for example Ukrainians.

In connection with information given by the informants and by the owners of Turkish travel agencies that “Poland is not an attractive country for tourists” (I7) and “Turks generally do not like travelling abroad, and they come to Poland sporadically usually combining a visit to Warsaw with visiting Prague and Budapest during the short time visit” (I8), and “annually, a maximum number of 1.000 persons come to Poland for tourist reasons”(I8), we could presume that Turkish nationals visit Poland rather for trade or other reasons than for tourism. Thus the hypotheses of circular migration employed by some Turkish residents in Poland is highly probable.

Table 5. Turkish citizens coming into Poland in the period of 1993-1999

Reason for coming	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	First 9 months 1998	First 9 months 1999
Total number	15.408	17.561	17.330	22.248	24.323	20.379	15.792	15.909
Visits	1.165	1.566	1.886	2.757	3.510	3.739	2.837	2.922
Trade	4.543	5.627	5.115	5.653	8.283	5.863	4.415	3.675
Tourism	3.383	3.190	3.137	3.932	3.422	2.889	2.215	2.780
Transit	5.209	5.771	5.587	7.939	6.816	4.928	4.069	3.713
Other	1.108	1.407	1.605	1.967	2.292	2.960	2.256	2.819

Source: Polish Border Guard Headquarters

Another interesting fact discovered during the study concerns the country of origin of Turkish citizens coming to Poland. The substantial part of Turks who run the

business or work in Poland belong to the group of Bosnian or Bulgarian Turks who emigrated to Turkey in the sixties or in the nineties⁷ and then, “feeling as a second class citizens”, as one of our informants from “contact area” (I2) said, left Turkey.

Having Bosnian or Bulgarian origins could be an important advantage in the Polish reality. Firstly, fluency in other Slavic language makes learning Polish much easier (Bulgarian Turk – needed 7 weeks to gain fluency and start to read and write in Polish I7). Secondly, the “cultural distance” to the host society is shorter, therefore those persons adapt easier, are more likely to assimilate and probably do not suffer as much from the “temperamental differences” and the sense of isolation in Poland as their compatriots of Turkish origin do. Thirdly, some of them had had an opportunity to work in Poland i.e. for construction firms, even before they migrated to Turkey, so they know the Polish reality pretty well.

2.3. Social and demographic profile of migrants (in the group of the respondents)

Although following characteristic was prepared on the basis of information collected during interviews with Turkish respondents it hopefully reflects the typical features of Turks staying in Poland.

Sex

The prevailing majority of Turkish migrants to Poland consists of a male population. Nevertheless there are a few women too; they belong to the group of managers and business representatives as well as Turkish spouses brought to Poland with the families.

Age

A great majority of Turkish migrants are people at the age between 25 and 50, but there are some younger people (at about 20) and of course children brought from Turkey (or born in Poland), and some seniors – the parents of the Turkish businessmen who have retired from work in Turkey and visit Poland for a short time, or even moved to Poland to stay with their children.

Place of origin

The majority of respondents was born in Istanbul and the vicinity of the huge city or other big cities on the Mediterranean (Antalya) and Egean coasts (Bodrum, Izmir), the capital Ankara and the surroundings, Bolu on the way from Istanbul and Ankara, as well as the towns of eastern Anatolia: Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Malatya, Gaziantep (Kurdistan). Actually, most of them had moved to Istanbul before migrating to Poland.

Marital status

Nearly all the men over the age of 28 are married. In the group of people who came to Poland for a short time (2–3 years) majority of them married a Turkish citizen. Their families remained in Turkey and do not intend to move to Poland, nevertheless most of the spouses paid a visit to Poland during summer holidays. The men send their earnings home and declared going home after finishing working in Poland. Among the Turks who came to Poland for the longer time or settled here, the practice of reuniting or even foundation of families (i.e. going to Turkey to marry a Turkish fiancée, and bringing her to Poland) has been observed. Another group consists of Turks who while staying in

⁷ See: İcduygu A., Keyman Fuat E. (1998) *Globalisation, Security and Migration: The Case of Turkey*, Paper presented at the conference “International Migration: Challenges for European Populations”, 25-27 June, Bari, Italy.

Poland married a Polish citizen, or having married a Pole abroad (not only in Turkey), moved to Poland in the end because of the 'whim' of the Polish spouse. The very young people who came to Poland to work in family business are not considering getting married in the nearest future.

Polish partner (I10) of a Turkish businessman circulating between Turkey and Poland claims that some of Turks beside having a Turkish spouse and family in place of origin are engaged in long-lasting relationships with Poles.

Social status in the country of origin

Beside the Turks of Bulgarian or Bosnian origins and workers who have come recently brought by developing Turkish companies, Turkish immigrants enjoyed relatively good social and economic position.

Education

Turks staying in Poland are either educated persons who are mainly high skilled specialists in engineering and managers with a good command of English and other European languages, or, for the opposite, people with secondary or only primary school dealing mainly with textiles or restaurant sector. What is interesting, Turks living in Poland are internally polarised – those educated and belonging to upper strata express very negative opinions about Turks dealing with textiles determining them as uneducated boors responsible for the very bad image of all Turks in Poland.

Religion and maintaining Turkish tradition

Turks are Moslems, but very few observe the religion in Poland in the way as real believers of Allah in Turkey do. A few of them limit their behaviour to some strict rules – so they do not eat pork, do not drink alcohol, do not lie, help one another, pray from time to time. There are mosques in Warsaw, Poznan, Gdynia, but Turks comparing to other Moslem communities go there very rarely. Actually, those who do it, in most cases, come from big traditional families of towns in western Turkey. Most of educated 'European' Turks ('elite') living in Poland declared themselves as atheists.

3. Migration to Poland

3.1. Routes of migration

Some people, especially those who have established companies dealing with textiles in Poland, had come several times to Poland before they decided to invest their money here. Most of them came as tourists, and then started the business here using connections they made in Turkey with Poles coming here for trade in the 80s and 90s. Similarly, newcomers and representatives of Turkish companies who were sent by their mother company to establish a branch in Poland, first wanted to get to know whether there were possibilities to do so. Another group of Turks who had visited their friends and relatives in Poland as tourists before coming here for a longer time consists of young people who undertook a job here and elderly parents who having retired in Turkey came to stay with their children in Poland. Majority of Turkish specialists (mostly engineers) who came to Poland to work at Turkish companies came here for the first time – they even had not heard much about Poland and they came here nearly by accident. There was just a possibility of going abroad to work and it was not really important which country they would go to.

For the majority of Turks, Poland was not the first foreign country they visited. They usually have visited other countries for tourist or trade reasons. Some of the

specialists worked for similar contracts in the countries of the former Soviet Union or developed countries of Europe, America and Far East. Still, a few of them had never been abroad before, and Poland is their first experience concerning working abroad.

A great majority of Turkish migrants in Poland before going abroad have migrated inside Turkey, specially those living in small villages, but not only those. Usually, the first stage of migration was moving to Istanbul, the second one was moving abroad.

Most of the people who decided to come to Poland to work in Polish or Turkish companies on the basis of contracts declare intention of earning money here and getting back to Turkey. This group consists mainly of married young men, who left their families at home. Young single males admit that they think mostly about saving some money, gaining some training and going farther West. Presumably, persons of Kurdish origin who apply for refugee status in Poland do this only in order to stay in Poland legally and wait for the opportunity to move west illegally.

3.2. Reasons for leaving Turkey and advantages of staying in Poland

Asked why they decided to migrate, most of respondents pointed the economic aspect of their decisions, but not only. Turks employed by Turkish enterprises in Poland or sent by their companies to establish and develop their branches here seems to confirm the hypothesis of relative economic deprivation as an important motivational factor of migration⁸. As it was mentioned above – Turkish immigrants coming to Poland usually belong to highly educated specialists and managers or quite successful self-made men running businesses here. Therefore, in their cases, moving to Poland has not been “to be or not to be” question but rather the way of further improving the economic status of the migrant and his family. The deficiency of well-paid job opportunities in Turkey at the moment (“a job should be appreciated by a person, since there is not enough jobs in Turkey now, so when the possibility of going abroad occurs you should take the chance”, T11) combined with the fact, that going abroad for a job raises the rank of nobility in the personal environment, improves the chances of getting a good job after returning to Turkey and shorten the service in the army for a person who worked abroad⁹ constitute quite a substantial push factor, which countries of Western Europe are aware and afraid of. Some respondents, especially members of different kinds of minority groups claimed to suffer from the limitations of personal and political freedom.

Between reasons that determined choosing Poland as a country of residence, respondents enumerated:

- Good job opportunities or good conditions for establishing own business in Poland;
- Better salary one can get in Poland, in comparison with the amount of money one can earn in Turkey (for contracted employees);
- Freedom of social and political life in Poland;
- Marriage with a Polish citizen;
- Proximity of Poland to developed Western Europe (and the prospect of accession to the European Union);

⁸ See: Faist, T. (2000) *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Space*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

⁹ One year of working abroad enabled a person to perform a shorter service in the army (one month instead of 18). For the remaining period he is obliged to pay an equivalent of 10.000 DM.

- Existence of networks established by the pioneers (family members, Turkish friends) facilitating newcomers to start their own business at the very beginning (for example: picking up from the airports; arranging a job, accommodation, etc.);
- Relative easiness in getting to Poland and obtaining Polish visa.

Although push factors enumerated above are strong enough to incline people towards leaving Turkey, the advantages of Poland still seems to be insufficient to attract a substantial flow of Turkish migrants and “anchor” those who have already come for a long-term staying.

3.3. Irregular flows and refugees

People who consider Poland as a transit country constitute a considerable component of irregular flows. Among them there are Turkish citizens (mainly of Kurdish origins) who apply in Poland for the refugee status. After being granted refugee status they tend to leave Poland and go further West.

Applying for a refugee status is a practice commonly used by people, who tended to stay in Poland after expiring of their visas. Being given such a status is the only possibility to legalise the residence in Poland in the cases when the foreigner crossed the border illegally, and frequently, it is the last possibility to avoid being expelled to the country of origin (or the country of the last residence). They also try to gain some time of legal staying in Poland needed to contact traffickers arranging transit to the target country (mostly Germany) or another transit country, because the decision in the case of granting or refusing the refugee status takes minimum 90 days. In practice the three months' period concerns only “manifestly unfounded” applications; there are some cases of staying in Poland even two years, or more, without the final decision.

The applications for a refugee status have been submitted in Poland for only a few years (from 1992). The number of applications for a refugee status submitted by Turkish citizens is rather insignificant comparing the total number of applications (table 6), what may be caused by the fact, that none of Turkish citizens has been granted that status until now (table 7).

Table 6. Statistics of Turkish citizens applying for refugee status in Poland in the period of 1994 – 1999*

Citizenship	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Turkey	-	-	28	12	19	19
Total	598	843	3.211	3.531	3.405	2.955

*Including children and accompanying persons

Source: Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and Administration

Table 7. Statistics of decisions concerning the refugee status taken at first instance in the period of 1996 – 1999*

Citizenship		Decisions		
		Positive	Negative	Discontinued
1996	Turkey	-	-	20
	Total	120	374	1.457
1997	Turkey	-	6	8
	Total	139	588	3.148
1998	Turkey	-	9	3
	Total	53	1.291	1.696
First 6 months 1999	Turkey	-	8	5
	Total	34	1.865	808

*Including children and accompanying persons.

Source: Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and Administration

From the statistics on decisions issued by Ministry of the Interior and Administration we could assume that persons who applied for a refugee status did not fulfil the provisions of the Convention and Protocol, the applications were “manifestly unfounded” (negative decisions) or the procedure of granting the status has been discontinued. The discontinuation of procedure has occurred in the case, when a foreigner ‘disappeared’ during the procedure (he/she most likely has illegally crossed the Polish border, or decided not to apply for the status any more and stay illegally in Poland, but the latter occurs very rarely) (see Appendix 2).

In some instances of persons in whose cases the procedure has been instituted may be put into one of special reception centres for refugees of Ministry of the Interior and Administration where she/he can stay there until the final decision in his/her case is issued. In the reception centre he/she is provided with accommodation, food, medical care, material help, pocket money, etc.

As concerning Kurds who apply for the status, there are only few of them in the reception centres, the rest live with friends or somewhere else waiting for the decision, or, shortly after having made an application for getting the status, “disappeared” (and the proceeding has been discontinued). It means, strictly speaking, that they have managed to cross the Polish border illegally, and continue their original plan.

Persons in whose case the negative decisions have been issued and are to leave Poland, but avoided the execution of the decision, may be put in a guarded centre in Lesznów. That centre is for the persons waiting for the expulsion, when immediate delivery of the alien to the Polish State border was impossible.

A number of Turkish citizens apprehended by Border Guards in 1998 for illegal border crossing amounted 27 persons that was a very small share of the number of all the apprehended foreigners (7.222 persons). Overwhelming majority of Turks were caught by the Guard on the German border (24 cases).

The number of Turkish citizens admitted to Poland in 1998 (32) is marginal comparing to that of all foreigners (10.686); all of them were sent from Germany. At the same time there were 41 Turks readmitted from Poland of 7.079 of all readmitted foreigners. There were 7 Turks of 100 foreigners readmitted from Poland to Germany. There were 33 Turks of all 1.725 foreigners readmitted from Poland to the air border.

Only few Turkish citizens take the risk of crossing the border using forged passports or visas (4 of 499 such cases in 1998), so the overwhelming majority of illegal transit migrants prefers other means to get to the target (or another transit) country.

Because of the short time for the research, it was impossible to arrange any meeting with the Turks staying in Poland illegally (for the majority of cases the migrants perceive Poland only as a transit area on their way further west). But during the talks with other Turks living in Poland, it appeared that they exist in Poland, too, but any speculations concerning the rough number of the group is impossible.

4. Functioning of Turkish migrants in a host society

4.1. Areas of economic activity

According to the official statistics, there are about 500 work permits issued every year to Turkish citizens. Actually, the number of Turks working in Poland may exceed the number of permits issued to them.

Table 8. Work permits granted to Turkish citizens in the period of 1998 – 1999

Type of work permit	1998	First 9 months 1999
Individual	505	346
Contract	-	-
Export services	1	-

Source: National Labour Office

Table 9. Work permits granted to Turkish citizens according to the type of profession in the period of 1998 – 1999

	Type of profession								
	Total	Managers	Owners	Specialists and experts	Administration workers	Doctors	Skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Others
1998	505	73	277	95	11	2	28	2	17
First 9 months 1999	346	92	105	93	15	1	31	1	8

Source: National Labour Office

The core of Turkish labour migration consists of managers, owners and specialists (88% of all work permits in 1998 and 83% in first nine months of 1999), most probably belonging to upper strata of the society. Their mobility seems to be an example of transnational flows of financial and human capital, which is a typical feature of contemporary global economy.

Ambiguity of Polish legal regulations and the corrupt tendencies of governmental offices might be actually conducive to Turkish citizens running their business in Poland. Assisted by Polish legal offices, they are able to take effective advantage of loopholes in Polish regulations. According to our Polish informant, kind of misty and informal links between most influential Turkish citizens and the managers of Polish banks, customs offices, etc have been already developed.

Important component of business tactic, difficult to assess from outside (but visible in smaller centres such as Poznan) is the structure of links established between Turkish businessmen. Aside from a personal contact, they also provide each other with mutual assistance (i.e. lending the lawyers and accountants employed by one firm for the purposes of handling accounting of another Turkish firm) what probably decrease operational costs and help to diversify risk. Some businesses operate as open holding companies (such as the Koc family holding), others are linked by personal connections of the owner, family ties, or a contract signed with partners in Turkey.

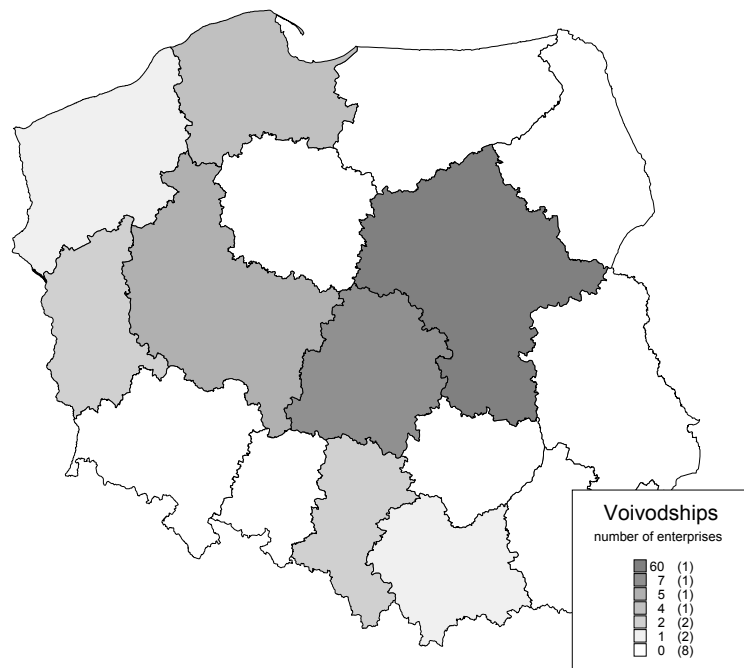
An element that limits the scale of operations for Turkish businesses in Poland is lack of trust with respect to their Polish employees. As a result, positions within the firm are duplicated (for each given position held by a Pole, there is an analogous position held by a Turk)¹⁰, a factor that significantly raises the operating costs of the firm – although, on the other hand, the creation of additional positions may be a strategy for legally bringing new Turkish migrants to Poland. This resistance to ceding managerial control to Polish employees makes it necessary for them to supervise, constantly and personally, all the Poles in the firm, effectively blocking the development of the firm above a certain number of employees¹¹.

This general lack of trust towards Poles in business affairs is also attested to by the fact that most Turkish firms operating in Poland are family business (for example Sabri Bekdas' empire). In many cases, family businesses operating in Turkey "delegate" one of their members to open a subsidiary in Poland.

Most of Turkish enterprises are situated in Warsaw urban area. Costs of running the firm registered in Warsaw suburbs are lower than in a town centre. For example one of the biggest Turkish construction company (already mentioned) is registered in Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Other firms tend to concentrate in big urban areas – Lodz, Slask, Poznan, Gdansk, Szczecin (Map 1).

¹⁰ For example, during the construction of the Reform Plaza in Warsaw the Polish engineering staff was duplicated by a staff of Turkish engineers, even though in light of Polish construction regulations the latter could not be liable for any violations during the course of construction - as the entire legal liability for the course and correctness of construction work rests with Polish engineers.

¹¹ On the role of trust in the functioning of firms, see: Fukuyama F. (1997) *Zaufanie. Kapitał społeczny a droga do dobrobytu*, Warszawa: PWN.

Map 1. Geographical dispersion of Turkish enterprises

Source: Embassy of the Republic of Turkey

Basing on the list of Turkish enterprises functioning in Poland and information collected during the interviews, following areas of activity can be distinguished:

Production

Most of Turkish textile companies used to start their activity as importers and wholesalers. The best of them persisted the big competition at the very beginning and keep running the textile business; some of them have specialised in one or two sorts of products (for example children clothes); but – as they say in interviews – the business is not so profitable as it used to be at the beginning of the 90s (due to emerging of competition low-price sector of the market and decreasing of the demand for cheap and low quality textiles produced by Turkish firms).

There is at least one company dealing with construction. Its investments are located in Warsaw (its skyscraper located in a city centre has been already finished, the next ones are under construction) and recently also in Szczecin. What is interesting, owners of this company started their business in Poland from trade in textiles, but as the changes of market demand took place, they extended their business considerably and now invest in construction business with a great success.

Services

Trade companies of Turkish capital are for the most cases, just wholesale shops filled with cheap goods imported from Turkey, like textiles, shoes, and so on. Some of the Turkish investors decided to come to Poland to supervise the business because they did not trust their Polish partners or just wanted to establish their own business.

The demand for electronics and white goods is still high, which attracts Turkish companies looking for new markets. One of the biggest companies in Turkey producing

white goods has been operating here (through the established Polish company) for less than a year and sales have been growing up at a very fast rate.

Turkish restaurants emerged some years ago, as the Turkish community has grown bigger. Most of them are located in large towns (i.e. Poznań), but still they are not numerous. The guests mostly constitute of Turks staying in close relationships and the restaurants are usually the places of meetings of friends and relatives. Besides the restaurants, there are small, temporary bars recently successfully competing with Chinese and Vietnamese cuisine.

In the late 90s, Poles constitute potential and quite vast group of customers for Turkish travel agencies which operate on the Polish market. As the owner of the biggest tourist agencies said: "In Poland the tourist service sector is growing because people are getting richer – as in Germany, so some Turks decided to establish the tourist agency to get ahead of other foreign investors" (T8).

4.2. Pioneers and followers

According to the sequence of coming to Poland, two types of Turkish migrants can be distinguished:

- *pioneers*, who had visited Poland several times (mainly as traders or tourists) before deciding to stay in Poland for the longer time;

- *followers*, who came to the area prepared by their friends, relatives; specialists and representatives of Turkish companies and usually stay for short, exact period.

Pioneers, in general, undertook several actions to settle among the Polish society. During their stay in Poland they prolonged entry visas, most of them have applied for a permission to reside in Poland for a specific period (it was easier for them to get such permission if they conduct here an economic activity, taken up studies or got married to a Polish citizen)¹². Some of them decided to settle down in Poland, a few have learnt some Polish, married a Pole, and even applied for a Polish citizenship and renounced the Turkish one. But, even among the *pioneers* who have been staying in Poland for 8-10 years, married Polish spouses and have children, there are a few persons who still migrate in a circular way between Turkey and Poland using tourist or trade visas.

On the contrary, *followers* perceive their residence in Poland as temporary. Thus, they usually applied for the permission to reside for a specific period of time which enabled them for multiple entering the Polish border without applying for the visa, facilitate to get a job, etc. Only few of them have tried to learn some Polish. The marriage with a Pole in this group occurred very rarely.

For the most of Turks who stay in Poland, the country is not so economically attractive to settle down here. In most cases even staying in Poland for a long time has a temporary character. The duration of their residence here depends on development of the business and the overall prosperity in Poland. Therefore, in case of more serious disturbances and the obstacles hindering them from doing well here they are ready to leave Poland, but for the present they do not precise the direction (coming back to Turkey or going to another country).

¹² See Act on Aliens, Article 17.

4.3. Future plans

The time-horizon and future plans of Turkish migrants staying in Poland depend on their ambitions, the kind of activity they held in Poland and the success of their business.

Most people who succeeded in their own business in Poland (mostly the pioneers) or who married a Pole and prolonged they residence several times or even – in some cases – settled down and decided to apply for Polish citizenship. But still some of them declared their future residence in Poland to be closely related to the success in the business here.

Young people working in Poland mostly as low-skilled, manual workers want to stay in Poland for a short time only, and move further West. For the present, they do not precise the target country.

Those who came here to work in the Polish company as specialists for a specific time try to prolong they residence for another 2–3 years with the intention of earning money, then they want to go back to Turkey.

The representatives of investors who constitute the management of new companies who had visited Poland several times and they checked whether the possibilities of developing of the business existed in Poland, usually plan to stay in Poland for at least 5 years or more, if they succeed.

Those who apply for a refugee status in Poland, mostly of Kurdish origin, perceive Poland only as a transit area and want to go West, as quickly as possible. The decision of applying for the refugee status prevent them from being expelled from Poland (they allowed to stay legally in Poland for at least 3 months, what gives them an opportunity of arranging transit to West). They declare not to stay in Poland longer than they have to, and even after getting that status they would probably continue the original plan of going to Germany.

4.4. Co-operation with Poles

According to the statistics of invitations issued to Turkish citizens by Polish nationals we could conclude that there is a group of Poles who maintain close relations with Turks and who invite them to Poland. While the invitations issued in 1998 to Turkish citizens by Turks who have got the permission of settlement in Poland are not numerous.

Table 10. Statistics of invitations issued in the period of 1998 – 1999 to Turkish citizens by Polish citizens

Invitations issued by Polish citizens	1998	1999
Invitation registered	548	580
Invitation refused by regional authorities	9	6

Source: Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and Administration

Table 11. Statistics of invitation issued in the period of 1998 – 1999 to Turkish citizens by Turks who have got the permission of settlement in Poland

Invitations issued by Turkish citizens	1998	1999
Invitation registered	11	13
Invitation refused by regional authorities	-	-

Source: Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and Administration

Table 12. Statistics of invitations issued in the period of 1998 – 1999 to Turkish citizens by corporate bodies and those without legal status based in Poland

Invitations issued by corporate bodies	1998	1999
Invitation registered	26	35
Invitation refused by regional authorities	2	-

Source: Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of the Interior and Administration

Even if coming to Poland on the ground of invitations is indeed one of the forms of circulatory migration, it could not be invented and developed without a co-operation with the Poles.

4.5. Observance of social norms

In comparison with migrants from the former USSR, the number of crimes committed by Turkish citizens as registered in public crime statistics is of a marginal nature. Most probably, this is not simply a reflection of the low number of Turkish migrants in Poland – the group of Vietnamese migrants is estimated to include at least 30 thousand individuals, but the number of crimes committed and their nature significantly differ from crimes committed by Ukrainians, for example. The number of crimes committed by Turks does not exceed 20 a year, of which only 1-2 are of a serious nature.

Table 13. Statistics of crimes committed by foreigners in Poland (selected nationalities)

Citizenship	Years	Total crimes committed by foreigners	Murder	Bodily harm	Brawling or battery	Rape	Theft of private property	Theft of private property including car theft	Burglary	Robbery and extortion	Fraud	Forgery	Against a functionary	Against state institutions	Dealing in stolen property	Bribery	Currency violations	Customs violations	Tax violations	Fraudulent seizure of public property	Road violations	Drugs	Illegal possession of weapons	Illegal crossing of borders	Other	Damaged parties between foreigners
Turkey	1999	8	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	4	18
	1998	17	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	9	16
	1997	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	14	22
	1996	17	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	4	-	1	-	9	22
	1995	16	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	6	2	-	-	5	28
Germany	1999	212	-	4	5	-	12	5	5	1	6	17	5	2	5	2	-	-	-	-	93	4	2	-	49	2958
	1998	395	1	4	13	3	4	-	6	3	3	1	10	9	13	8	1	1	1	1	199	1	3	2	108	3941
	1997	489	1	7	9	2	21	4	10	5	-	12	12	3	14	-	1	4	1	5	275	1	6	1	99	4058
	1996	487	2	4	8	2	14	10	10	4	2	1	12	12	25	4	1	3	-	4	267	2	1	1	108	4271
	1995	535	5	7	4	3	24	10	10	7	-	-	5	13	24	1	-	6	1	8	292	1	1	-	118	5550
Ukraine	1999	1661	7	5	23	2	67	20	57	115	11	62	5	-	25	9	-	6	2	1	52	13	3	7	1189	311
	1998	1693	9	8	18	-	86	18	70	125	3	4	7	7	55	5	-	1	1	6	124	13	2	-	1151	453
	1997	2152	5	11	16	7	108	44	71	143	2	3	13	13	79	6	-	3	-	9	141	2	7	1	1519	563
	1996	2071	11	9	15	3	150	67	90	179	-	-	7	7	70	11	-	6	1	6	126	4	5	1	1371	651
	1995	1832	13	10	23	4	167	55	116	196	-	3	6	6	83	1	-	3	-	10	122	6	5	3	1068	633
Vietnam	1999	21	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	13	20
	1998	62	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	3	1	-	-	3	-	-	1	50	39
	1997	71	1	2	2	-	1	-	-	5	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	2	50	46
	1996	52	1	1	1	-	2	-	2	4	2	3	-	-	4	1	-	-	1	-	9	-	-	-	21	39
	1995	54	-	-	6	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	16	-	-	-	23	56

Source: The General Headquarters of Police

Data from the Drugs Bureau show that some of the legally operating Turkish firms might be involved in transport of heroine through Poland along the northern branch of the Balkan route (e.g. travel agencies or forwarding agents). Unfortunately, because operational data are kept secret, it is impossible to estimate the number of Turkish firms which provide cover for smuggling activities, or which to a certain extent (the network of mutual favours) participate in such.

4.6. Perception of Poland and Poles: prospects for integration

Integration of migrants in a host society is a long-term process, which could be analysed in at least two dimensions: adaptation and assimilation.

By the term *adaptation* we mean a capacity to achieve one's goals by means, which are accepted by the host society, assuming familiarity with the binding social rules in the given society (including not only social and legal norms but also the traditional, un-codified hierarchy of values and rules of behaviour). Adaptation concerns the sphere of actions taken by an individual and does not require identification with values of the host society.

By the term *assimilation* we mean the level to which the migrant identifies with the host society's system of values, and the inclination to treat members of the host society as members of their own reference group.

Because adaptation refers to actions that are taken by an individual, and are therefore noticeable by others (which can be measured to some extent), it is easier to speak of the forms that adaptation takes. Assimilation, in contrast, is a subjective psychological process, and for this reason can be only rough estimated on a base of indirect factors.

As concerns adaptation (judging the functioning of Turkish enterprises, and ability of dealing with everyday problems) we can state that Turkish citizens in Poland do adapt quickly and effectively (despite the lack of knowledge of the Polish language). A large role in easing and accelerating this process is played by assistance from the Turkish network, as well as from Polish friends, partners and clients.

Readiness to assimilate to the host society is related, to a high degree, to the factual intention of migrants to settle in a target country. Since the majority of Turkish citizens assume their stay in Poland as temporary, the process of assimilation is impeded and slowed down by that fact. Beside it, process of assimilation is hindered by following factors: lack of willingness to assimilate from the migrants' side, intensity of relations with other Turks in Poland and abroad, difficulties in learning the local language, the overall isolation felt by Turks among Poles, and – enhanced by respondents very often – crucial differences in mentality between them and the representatives of the host society. In spite of those difficulties, a few of Turkish citizens we have talked to demonstrated a firm commitment to Poland.

5. Conclusions

The first and superficial exploration of Turkish community in Poland denied the illusion that Turks living here constitute a strongly consolidated exclusive and isolated group. On the contrary, within Turkish community at least a few sub-groups can be pointed. Among differentiating factors there are: ethnicity (Turkish and Kurdish); contacts with Slavic nations in the past (Turks from Turkey and Turks from Bosnia or Bulgaria); sequence of coming to Poland (first flow of migration in the late 80s, second one in the late 90s) and geographical dispersion of Turkish nationals in Poland (majority live in Warsaw urban area, and a few only reside somewhere else).

The groups of Turks staying in Poland also differ over their perceptions of Poland as a target country or only a transit area, fields of economic and social activities held in Poland; strategies of settlement; frequency of contacts with Poles and other nations and the willingness to assimilation to the host society.

At present Poland seems to be rather the target country – mainly for those who have established or want to run a business in Poland or are employed by Turkish enterprises, and for the persons who accompany them, like relatives or spouses.

Poland is usually perceived as a transit country by those Turkish migrants who come here illegally (for example persons who are trafficked by organised crime groups or networks) or legally, but with the intention of illegal crossing the Polish border or working in a host country without an official permission. Since the number of Turkish citizens who have been arrested during the attempt of illegal crossing of border has been systematically decreasing and approached 30 persons in 1998, we can assume that Poland does not play an important role as a transit country for Turks.

Undoubtedly, networks of Turkish compatriots and relatives exist in Poland, although not in such forms and sizes as in Western European countries, where the diaspora of Turks who have stayed there for years, is much bigger. Turks, in general, help each other but, such an assistance is limited mainly to kith and kin. The same relations prevail among persons of Kurdish origin and Turks born in Bosnia and Bulgaria. Types of assistance are numerous and varied. It could be an arranging of invitations, accommodation or a job. Turks who have stayed in Poland for a longer time provide the newcomers with information about social and economic life in Poland (and abroad) and know-how about law regulations in Poland. They also instruct those who decided to apply for a refugee status in Poland, as well as arrange further transit to Germany, or even the return to Turkey; etc.

Majority of Turks contacts the Turkish Embassy or Consulate only in emergency and usually does not apply for any additional help. For the real assistance they could approach the Association of Turkish Businessmen uniting all owners and managers of Polish companies of Turkish capital, and seems to be an institutionalised form of Turkish network (or lobby) in Poland. One of examples of the actual assistance of the Association was buying the return ticket to Turkey for a Turk who has recently come to Poland from Holland and was not able to find job here. In other case, Turkish manual worker was advised to leave Poland and migrate to Sweden because of the lack of job opportunities in Poland for unskilled workers.

In comparison with Vietnamese community in Poland, Turks are relatively less exclusive and isolated. Migrants from the first wave of Turkish migration developed much more connections with Polish partners or companions than specialists on temporary contracts representing the second wave. The last group abandoned learning Polish and

usually stick together with foreigners and other Turks belonging to the second wave. What is interesting, two waves of Turkish migrants tend to limit their relations with other Turks to their own circle.

A language barrier seems to be the main obstacle in Turkish-Polish mutual relationships. Thus, the knowledge of other Slavic language is an important advantage, which makes the process of learning Polish easier and facilitate adaptation and assimilation of Bosnian or Bulgarian Turks to Polish society. The other consequence of the Bosnian or Bulgarian origin is that those persons could be regarded as a segment of Turkish migrants which is more likely to settle down and assimilate to the host society and, consequently, less likely to leave Poland and settle somewhere else.

Due to crucial differences in mentality, temperament, hierarchy of values and family and friends relations between Poles and Turks (especially those born in Turkey) they slowly assimilate to the host society. There are even some quite reverse cases when Polish spouses have assimilated to Turkish ones, despite living in Poland. Turkish men, notwithstanding having married a Pole or having a Polish girlfriend, stay in their own environments of other Turks, or among others foreigners. Nevertheless, they judge the adaptation to the Polish society easier and more likely than to the society of other European countries (of course developed ones, like Germany or Great Britain), or any country of the former Soviet Union. Regarding the process of adaptation to the Polish society and its institutions, the strategies used by the Turkish citizens proved to be effective.

Because of the proximity to developed countries of Western Europe Poland continue to be a transit area for Turkish migrants; although the tightening of the Polish – German border and the agreements of readmission with Germany and other European country may contribute to a slight decrease of illegal flows through Poland.

In the nearest future Poland could become an attractive target country as well for regular and irregular migration, but for now on, there are not many job opportunities for uneducated manual workers in Poland. Due to the high flows of illegal and casual labourers from the former Soviet Union, illegal labour market seems to be closed for Turkish workers.

Appendix 1. List of cases (in-depth interviews conducted according to the list of problems or in a form of casual conversations)

Respondents: Turkish Immigrants

1. An employee employed in a Turkish construction enterprise, 10.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in Polish language
2. An owner of a trade and import textile company, 27.11.1999, Poznan, conducted in Polish language
3. A manager working at Casinos Poland, 27. 11.1999, Poznan, conducted in Polish language
4. Owner of an Turkish restaurant, 27.11.1999, Poznan, conducted in Polish language
5. Chief in a restaurant of R4 (a relative of R4), 27.11.1999, Poznan, conducted in Polish language
6. Unskilled worker employed by R2 – 27.11.1999, Poznan, conducted in Polish language
7. Employee in a Turkish travel agency (Bulgarian of Turkish origin), 26.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in Polish language
8. Director of Turkish travel agency, 26.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in English
9. First engineer, employee, 12.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in English
10. Second engineer, employee, 12.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in English
11. Third engineer, employee, 12.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in English and Polish
12. Forth engineer, employee, 12.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in English
13. Sixth engineer, employee, 12.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in English
14. Seventh engineer, employee, 12.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in English
15. Wife of the co-owner of Turkish construction enterprise (Turk of Bosnian origin), 21.10.1999, Grodzisk Mazowiecki., conducted in Turkish and Polish
16. Lecturer (teacher of Turkish) at The Warsaw University, 13.11.1999, Warsaw, conducted in Turkish and Polish
17. Director of large Turkish firm selling white goods, 30.11.1999, Piaseczno, conducted in English
18. Manager of large Turkish firm selling white goods, 30.11.1999, Piaseczno, conducted in English
19. Owner of a textile company, 30.11.1999, Michalowice, conducted in Polish
20. Worker in a textile company, (relative of R19), 30.11.1999, Michalowice, conducted in Polish
21. Kurd applying for a refugee status, 29.11.1999, Reception Camp of Ministry of the Interior and Administration, Debak, conducted in Turkish
22. A refugee (Kurd), 29.11.1999, Reception Camp of Ministry of the Interior and Administration, Debak, conducted in Turkish
23. Turkish woman with a British citizenship, 18.11.1999, British Council, Warsaw, conducted in English
24. Representative of Turkish developing company (director), 24.11.1999, Wilanow, conducted in English
25. Turkish student at the scholarship at the Warsaw University, 07.12.1999, Warsaw, conducted in English

26. Businessmen establishing a Turkish School in Warsaw, 05.12.1999, Warsaw, conducted in English
27. Half-Turkish woman living in Poland, 27.11.1999, Warsaw

Contact Area: Key Informants:

1. First Polish engineer employed in a Turkish construction enterprise (engineer), 10.11.1999, Warsaw
2. Second Polish engineer employed in a Turkish construction enterprise (engineer), 10.11.1999, Warsaw
3. Third Polish engineer employed in a Turkish construction enterprise (engineer), 10.11.1999, Warsaw
4. Polish wife of R2, an owner of Turkish restaurant, 27.11.1999, Poznan
5. Polish wife of R3, 27.11.1999, Poznan
6. Polish wife of R4, living in Berlin, 27.11.1999, Poznan
7. Polish translator in a Turkish construction enterprise, 20.11.1999, Warsaw
8. Assistant at the Turkish Department at Warsaw University, 15.11.1999, Warsaw
9. Partner of Turkish owner of a restaurant and textile wholesalers, 10.12.1999, Warsaw
10. Officer of an Interpol, Police Headquarters, 5.11.1999, Warsaw
11. Officer of Bureau for Preventing the Drug Crimes, Police Headquarters, 07.12.1999, Warsaw
12. Officer of a Polish Humanitarian Organization, 02.12.1999, Warsaw

Appendix 2. Cases of Turkish refugees

During the research, there were two Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin staying in a special camp in Debak. They were sent back from Germany to Poland on the basis of bilateral agreement on readmission to apply for a refugee status here. They said that they wanted to come back to Germany, even if they would be granted the status in Poland, because of the existence of the Kurdish community which issued a newspaper in Kurdish, relatives and friends who succeed in getting there, they had houses, good jobs or their own business, it would be easier for the newcomers to get a job, find accommodation, etc. One of the Kurds who had been applying the refugee status in Germany, and was sent back to Poland to apply for the status here, had even a fiancée in Germany arranged by his relatives, but he had not managed to marry her before he was sent back to Poland. While staying in Poland they contact other Turkish Kurd who have been studying in Poland from 1992 but last year he applied for the status, too, nevertheless, he is still a student at a university. In his case the first decision was negative; so he appealed against the decision of Ministry of the Interior and Administration but was late; the decision of Council for Refugee was negative, too. Therefore he appealed the decision to the Supreme Administrative Court but firstly he asked the officers working at Helsinki Foundation for help in writing an appeal to the Court. He is still a student and he does not have identity documents, so he is likely not to be expelled to Turkey until he finishes his studies.

There are another Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin waiting the final decision. A Kurdish family (parents and 4 children) who were expelled from Germany to Turkey, but after some time they managed to leave Turkey once more, and, this time, reached Poland. Here, they applied for a refugee status. The decision issued by Ministry of Interior and the Administration was negative; next they appealed to the Council for Refugees, but there was no money to conduct thorough examinations to verify whether they were beaten and there was a threat of persecution towards them in Turkey. The money appeared for the examination and the procedure would be continued.

Appendix 3. Opinions on Poles and living in Poland

Friendly atmosphere of the host society

Persons who visited West European countries and America noticed Poles to be much “warmer” towards each other and put more attention to family relations than the people from the North. Nevertheless they underline the big difference of these aspects of social life in Poland in comparison with the mutual relations between people from the Mediterranean countries. But the most important in the process of assimilation is a friendly atmosphere a positive attitude towards aliens. Turks for whom Poland was a first foreign country they have stayed in for a longer time perceive the Polish as reserved and unfriendly towards foreigners, whereas those who travelled a lot – specially the elderly – regard Poles as tolerant and open to aliens.

Relations with Poles

In general, only a few Turks living in Poland have Polish friends, but they define the relationship to be rather loose; the Poles are just colleagues at work.

Most of Turks complain about feeling lonely among the alien society. In their opinion, it is mostly related to the fact of language problems, which result in many difficulties in every day life in Poland, as well as in becoming acquainted with Poles. Another reason for the situation is the fact that they came to Poland alone, leaving their families at home. Young people irrespective of being representatives of textile business or the “elite”, usually have Polish girlfriends, and a few friends, but these are usually loose relations rather than friendship. Those who deal with textiles are more likely to have Polish friends – the relations date back to the times of trading with Poles – usually belonging to the same circle, whereas in the case of the “elite” relations with Poles are limited to professional contacts. Marriage with Polish citizens enabled Turks to have closer relationship with the spouses’ family and friends, but in some cases, very rarely actually, after the marriage with Polish spouse have withdrawn from the previous environment.

The economic attractiveness of living in Poland

People who came to Poland in the last 2 –3 years were surprised by the fast development of the Polish economy. Some of them, before coming to Poland, had known a little about the country from their Turkish friends who visited Poland or had a business there, as well as from newspapers or television. Some of the persons who visited other former communist countries (Kazakhstan, Russia) thought that the Poland and the Polish People resemble the countries and societies very much.

In the opinion of Turkish specialists and managers who earn much here, Poland is a cheap country. People originating mainly from the village or Eastern Turkey stress the higher standard of life in Poland.

Freedom of political and social life

Young high-educated people underlined the fact of observing human rights in Poland to be much better than in Turkey. For some of them the state policy and behaviour of the politicians in Poland are more reasonable comparing to the same aspects of life in Turkey.

The liberty prevailing in the social life of Poles was stressed specially by young persons, regardless the education of the respondents.

Elements of comfortable living in Warsaw

In the opinion of all the respondents, the infrastructure in Warsaw is much better than in Istanbul, “the life is easier and there is less stress in living in Poland” (R20); the

traffic is much smaller, so going to work takes less time than in huge Istanbul; the public transportation is better; there are more parks and other nice places to spend the leisure time. Most of the respondents prefer the climate in Poland to that in Turkey.

The small attachment to tradition and religion

Among the young single people living in Poland and most educated Turks, the attachment to the Turkish tradition is very limited. The situation changes when the spouse or the whole family is brought from Turkey. Moreover Turks, in general, do not attach great importance to observing the religion in Poland.

Poor knowledge of the Polish language

In the opinion of all respondents, majority of difficulties they come across in everyday life in Poland arise because of the lack of knowledge or insufficiency of Polish. All respondents regard the Polish language as very difficult. In fact, they usually had had a few lessons of Polish at the very beginning of their stay here, but they gave it up, although they were aware of the usefulness of the language skills in every day life and doing business in Poland. Some of them had been discouraged from learning it by Poles themselves, who confirmed them in a conviction that it was impossible to learn Polish within several months of their stay in Poland. But in several cases they prolonged their stay several times and – specially the managers of Turkish companies who were sent by their mother companies in Turkey – the lack of the language skills has become more acute. Therefore, not many Turks living in Poland speak Polish and they are mostly the persons who studied the Polish Literature at the university in Turkey or Poland. They usually are employed in the Turkish companies as translators or assistants.

There is another group of persons who themselves have learnt some Polish, from every day contacts with Poles, but this is a “street” language. These are mainly the Turks who decided to stay in Poland for a longer time or to settle here. The main aim of learning Polish was related to the fact, that the life in Poland would be much easier, if they could maintain relations with the locals. Beside this – as a few respondents said – “If you want to do business in Poland you must learn Polish, because – specially in relation to the business affairs – you cannot trust Poles” (R9).

Some of the Turks specially those who have come for a short time (2-3 years) to work in the Turkish company do not want to learn Polish, because they do not need such a skill in their professional relations with other Turkish colleagues. While in relations with Poles working at the same place they use English or ask translators employed in the company.

The image of Turks among Poles (in the opinion of Turks)

In the opinion of most of the Turkish nationals living in Poland, a bad image of Turks prevails among Poles in general. Many respondents wondered whether the image originated from the armed conflicts between Poland and Turkey in the past. Additionally, educated Turks accuse the groups of people dealing with textiles or criminals for the bad opinion about all the Turks staying in Poland. They also wondered whether it was the common tendency in the world of Turks to be disliked for their attitude of the state policy towards Kurdish minority, or all of them were thought to be terrorists. ‘There are not many educated people in Poland – with the exception of specialists (“elite”); and the rest mainly dealing with textiles are interested only in money and girls’ (R13).

Additionally, the bad image of Turks and Turkey occurs as the result of the lack of information about Turkey – the culture, history, and natural beauty. For the lack of such information among Poles the Turks blamed the Turkish Government and specially the Turkish Embassy in Poland.

The opinions of the Turks living in Poland about Poles

The opinions vary to a high degree. In general, educated people regard most Poles as open – minded, friendly and tolerant towards foreigners and polite and warm in social relations, rather educated. Others perceive Poles in a quite different way, claiming that it is very hard to make friends with Poles, who are intolerant and a lot of them are racists. “The opinions about Poles are far from truth because they are expressed by the people who do not stay with Poles and know nothing about them – about their every day life, hobbies, dreams, etc., and the main reason is that they [i.e. Turks] do not speak Polish and as a consequence cannot make acquaintances among the people of the host country. Most of Turks live their life in Poland nearly in the same way as in Turkey. They do not contact and talk with Poles (besides the professional talks and relations); and they usually say only negative things about them, for they only know some aspects of the life in Poland” (R19).

Generally, those who have not met with hostility or some bad behaviour from a Pole have a good opinion of all the society, but the opinion is quite different if such bad experiences have occurred to somebody’s friends or to other Turks (they never say about themselves, but only about the bad experience of their friends). Usually educated people underline the good nature of Poles. In general, Turks like Poles despite of being “cold” and reserved towards each other. Majority of Turks, in spite of different opinions about the social life in Poland, regard the adaptation of the alien Turks into the Polish society to be more likely than the similar process in other host societies. However, the rate and degree of the adaptation process depend on the willingness of such from both sides. Nevertheless, Turks judge the mentality of Poles to be rather different from the Turkish one.

The degree of inter-group integration and the relations with the Turks abroad

Turks living in Poland divided themselves into two groups which do not have much in common. The first group consists of people dealing with textiles or similar business, or keep a restaurant. They came to Poland at the very beginning (then some of them were joined by relatives). In general, they are not well educated. Most of them have learnt Polish (by themselves – not at special courses) because they do not know any other foreign language to communicate with the environment. They sustain close relations with the other Turks conducting the same line of business in other cities.

Another group is the “elite” – management of companies, high skilled specialists, and the like – who have similar hobbies (bridge), speak fluent English and have relations with other foreigners living in Poland. They do not have Turkish friends outside Warsaw, but have visited many Polish towns either for business or as tourists.

Close relations with the relatives and friends in Turkey are sustained by all Turks living in Poland. Although, people of ‘textile business’ stress closer ties with the whole community they lived among before coming to Poland, whereas the ‘elite’ limit the contacts only to a narrow circle. All Turks living in Poland tend to visit their homeland very often, what enhance their ties with the communities of origin.

People dealing with textile and the like, have many friends and relatives abroad, mostly in Germany and the Scandinavian countries. Moreover, their visits to that countries are connected with their business rather than are held only for tourist reasons. People of the ‘elite’ do not have such contacts, despite the fact that they travel a lot.