

## Globalization: Challenges and Opportunities Facing Migrants

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### Abstract

*With the advancements in transportation technology and the rise of industrial revolutions world mass migration began in the early nineteenth century and enabled increasing numbers of people to set out for other parts of the world in search of better life standards. We argue that in the twenty-first century with the rise of globalization the challenges and opportunities facing global migrants are immense. Hence, in this paper we aim to address these issues via scrutinizing the case of Turkish migrants.*

**Key Words:** Globalization, Migration, Technology, Knowledge Economy, Turkey

### 1. Introduction

It is claimed that migration and globalization created societies across the world that are now truly pluralistic. In this new set up different cultures, religious traditions and values meet, interact, and influence each other constantly. This new century also associated with the knowledge economy increasingly require people who have been trained to see the opportunities inherent in such a multi-cultural setting. New societies also need people who are equipped with sufficient knowledge and sense which enable them to solve conflicts when traditions and value-systems clash. In this era of new economic opportunities it is clear that education and knowledge can play an important role in fostering understanding between different cultures.<sup>2</sup> It has been emphasized by many that the twenty-first century will be the century of knowledge. This will be so by redefining their identities, promoting their cultures and sharing their heritages. Hence, education will continue to contribute to the development of global culture. This is much evident when we consider the behavior of urban dwellers. Urbanities get to know and understand each other better through sharing the cultural sphere. By this token, local authorities and NGO's are required to adopt an active role in the process of cultural development, bringing to bear professional sources of information and experience and making them available to the researchers.<sup>3</sup>

### 2. The Age of Knowledge Economy

The 'Age of Knowledge Economy', also presents us with the challenge of the "Age of Migration". At the dawn of the twenty-first century, it is estimated that immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers comprise more than 2.5 percent of the world's population.<sup>4</sup> They represent nearly one of every 38 people on earth. These figures do not include illegal immigrants, many of whom are merely seeking out their daily living.<sup>5</sup> Much study of human movement will become a substantial part of research conducted by social scientists which is often limited to statistical evaluations. These types of efforts inevitably miss the humane touch.<sup>6</sup>

### 3. New Era of Transformation

In this new era of transformation, "migrant's demands reflect the basic reality that as long as millions live on less than a dollar a day, people will continue to move in search of work."<sup>7</sup> Inequalities in the distribution of wealth which exists as a result of the fast growing globalization trend with the impact of more information and advanced communication technology, "it is true that countries on every continent have been touched and molded by the movement of people within and across borders due to an unstable appetite for cheap labor."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He is also the founder of JCI Istanbul (JCIST) Crossroads International Short Film Festival and Contest which is the sole immigration and cross cultural dialogue themed short film event in the country since 2006. The festival became a major home for immigration related short films all around the world.

<sup>2</sup> Naidoo, Loshini (2007) Rupture or continuity? The impact of globalization on cultural identity and education in Indian immigrant families in Australia. *Transnational Curriculum Inquiry* 4 (1) <http://nitinat.library.ubc.ca/ojs/index.php/tci>

<sup>3</sup> <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001146/114697eo>.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2006/english/chapter\\_1/index.html](http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2006/english/chapter_1/index.html)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2006/english/chapter\\_1/print/chapter\\_1.html](http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2006/english/chapter_1/print/chapter_1.html)

<sup>6</sup> Istanbul 2010, Istanbul ECOC 2010 Initiative Group Promotional Publication, Istanbul, 2008

<sup>7</sup> Leif Brottem, *Global Immigration*, Mother Jones Magazine, Feb.08,2006

<sup>8</sup> Weley D.Chapin, *Immigration and Security: A Review of the Global Migration Crisis: Challenge to States and to Human Rights* by Myron Weiner, <http://Jspc.library.wise.edu/isasues/1999-2000/article>

The number of people in the world living in abject poverty is very disturbing. The economic pressure to migrate can be so high that when legal means are restricted, people may migrate regardless of their legal status. Anti-globalization sentiments today are typically justified in the words of former American president Jimmy Carter: "globalization, as defined by rich people like us, is a very nice thing if you are talking about the internet, you are talking about cell phones, and you are talking about computers. This doesn't affect two-thirds of the people of the world."<sup>9</sup>

#### **4. Globalization and Migration**

It is true that we are all touched and molded by migration and globalization. Migration is an issue that affects all areas of the world. Nevertheless, migrants hardly come out and tell their stories because of dramatic personal struggles. These struggles are full of animosity and isolation. Additionally, people at large are indifferent if not having negative feelings or reactions to the unknown stranger. In this sense, education plays a key role in informing the public about this sensitive area. In this era of new economic opportunities, we are also challenged to acquire proper higher education to aid catch up with the knowledge economy. "In the words of Adrienne Rich, U.S. poet, essayist, and feminist, one society might value homogeneity more than another; one ethnic group might welcome new immigrants more than another; and business owners might take a radically different view of immigration as compared with labor unions".<sup>10</sup> "Labor unions are very involved in the migration issue and are interested in seeing more unity of the labor workforce throughout the world to ensure comparable wages for workers wherever they may be employed. Moreover, the volume and type of migration clearly influences local citizen reaction, as do prevailing economic conditions."<sup>11</sup>

#### **5. New Economic Opportunities**

People increasingly leave their homelands for a better future. "More and more ethnic groups are becoming dispersed around the globe. In fact only 10-15 per cent of the world's geographic countries can be reasonably described as ethnically homogeneous."<sup>12</sup> With the free movement of capital, search for cheap labor, turned into poor seeking any kind of labor far away. So the era of immense migration in the search for jobs and freedom started. "A hundred years ago, most people in the west rarely moved even to the next village; now whole villages from Bangladesh are relocating to northern England."<sup>13</sup> In search of economic and social freedom; "in the last quarter century, migration has doubled, so that over three percent of people on the planet now live outside the land of their birth. People flow in all directions, but there is now just one dominant flow: South to North."<sup>14</sup> The UN says that 2.3 million people are moving from the developing world to the west every year."<sup>15</sup>

#### **6. Case of Turkish Migration**

Where does the Turkish migrant stand in the "Era of Mass Migration" and the "Age of Knowledge Economy".<sup>16</sup> Today, Turkey is still struggling to reverse the "Mass Intellectual Migration" during 1970's that has caused severe economic loss in terms of domestic intellectual capital. The same "Mass Intellectual Migration" of Turkish intellectuals of 1970's -1980's helped build Europe back to its old strength after the World War II. But today, the Turkish immigrant community overseas is still one of the lesser known immigrant communities in the world. It is estimated that there are approximately 3.6 million Turkish nationals living abroad, of whom about 3.2 million are in the European Union countries.<sup>17</sup> According to the researchers, people of Turkish origin compose the major national group among immigrant groups in Europe. Germany alone harbors two-thirds of the Turkish immigrants in Europe<sup>18</sup>. Germany and German-speaking countries in Europe have been the main gateways for Turkish migrants.<sup>19</sup> The 1.3 million Turkish migrants in Europe who already have dual citizenship with the country they live in almost equal to the sum populations of Luxemburg and Malta.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/j/jimmycarte121011.html>

<sup>10</sup> <http://jspc.library.wisc.edu/issues/1999-2000/article3.html>

<sup>11</sup> Adrienne Rich (b.1929), "Prospective Immigrant Please Note", lines 1-3,19-21 (1962)

<sup>12</sup> Stan Skrzyszewski; A Meta Model for Global Governance, Global Strategies Forum, 2006

<sup>13</sup> Anthony Browne, The Folly of Mass Immigration, May, 2003.

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.opendemocracy.net/people-migrationeurope/article\\_1193.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/people-migrationeurope/article_1193.jsp)

<sup>15</sup> *ibid*

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.opendemocracy.net/people-migrationeurope/article\\_1193.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/people-migrationeurope/article_1193.jsp)

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/print.cfm?ID=176>

<sup>18</sup> Kirisci Kemal, "Turkey: A Transformation from Emigration to Immigration", Center for European Studies, Bogaziçi University, 2003.

<sup>19</sup> İçduygu Ahmet, International Migration and Turkey, 2002: "The Country Report for Turkey For the Continuous Reporting System on Migration (SOPEMI) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)", Paris, OECD, 2002.

On the contrary, almost four million Turks from Bulgaria have migrated to Turkey in the years of 1878, 1913, 1945, 1950, 1977 and 1989. Hence Turkey harbors huge number of indigenous migrants and these people strive to establish a better life.<sup>20</sup>

## **7. Conclusion**

We try to focus on the problems of migration, integration, and inter-culturalism caused by the rapid globalization and inequalities it creates. Thus we aim to scrutinize the different aspects of spatial mobility and intercultural experience from both historical and modern standpoints. In this respect of migration, these aspects include migrants' separation from their home society and their integration into the host society, to be precise factors influencing and determining migration as well as consequences of migration on both societies. Thus we hope to achieve and encourage "thinking globally and acting locally" to create better solutions.

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