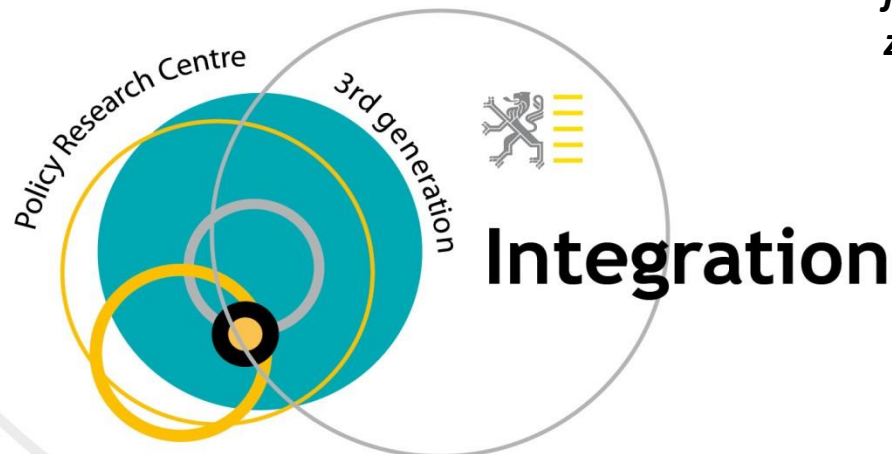


Return migration or return mobility of Belgo-Turkish 2nd generation youth: the grass is always greener on the other side of Ipsala

26 August 2013

Joris Michielsen (PhD)
Zeynep Balci

joris.michielsen@ua.ac.be
zeynep.balci@ua.ac.be



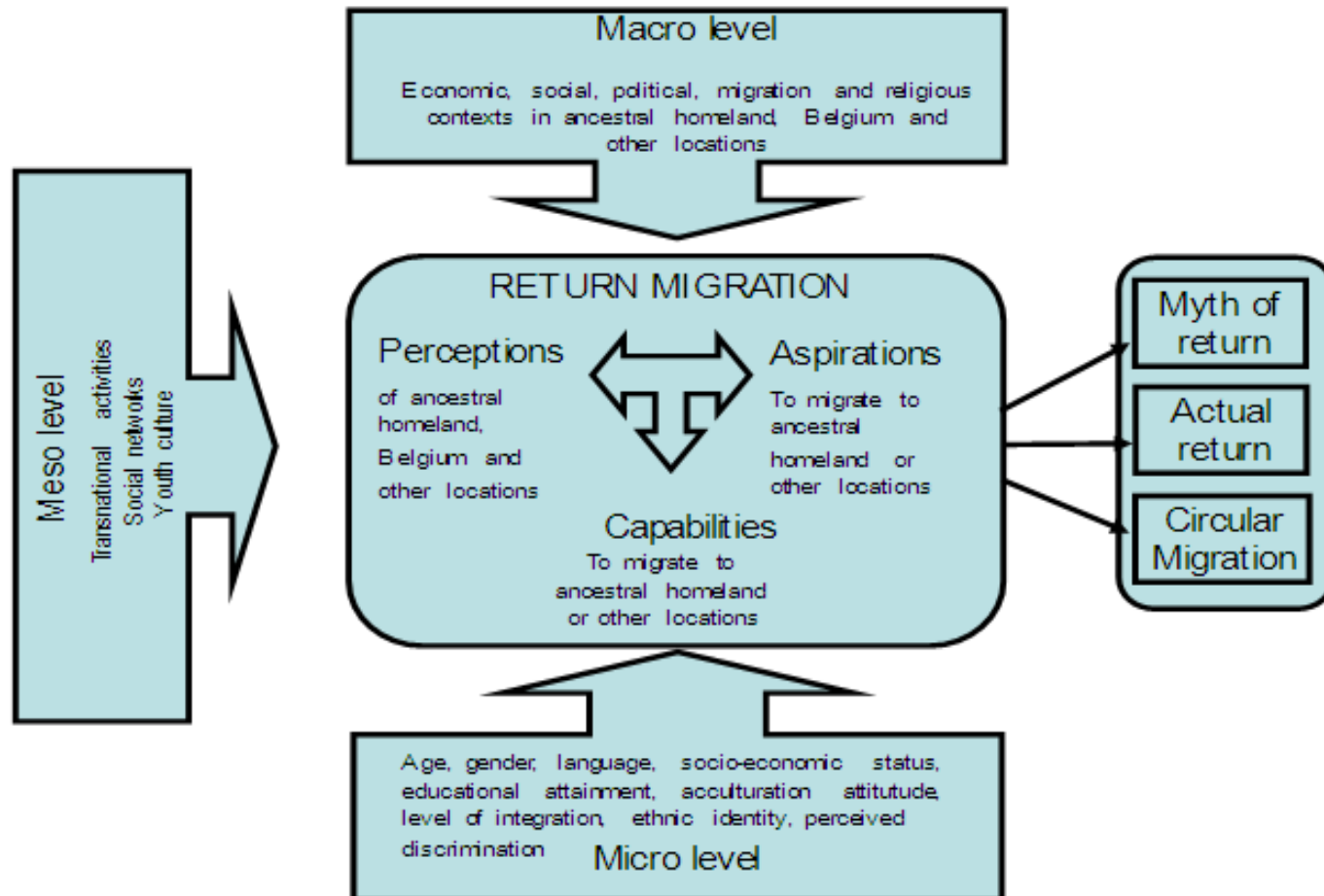
Outline of Presentation

- **Introduction**
 - Turkish migration to Belgium
 - Contextual background of the research
- **Research questions**
- **Research methods and sites**
 - Belgium and Turkey
 - 27 interviews with Turkish 2nd generation youth
- **Findings**
 - Return mobility with aspirations of circular migration: Belgium pushes and Turkey pulls
 - Successful circulation, locked migration and failed migration projects: Turkey pushes and Belgium pulls
 - Return mobility results in return migration

Turkish migration to Belgium

- **1964: bilateral agreements between Belgium and Turkey**
 - Flexible work permit regime
 - Tolerant family reunification regulations
- **Mainly labour migration with aspirations to return**
 - Mine
 - Textile industry
- **From guest worker to settler**
- **Second largest non-EU27 migrant community in Belgium:**
 - 39 828 with Turkish nationality (2011)
 - 112 000 Belgians with Turkish origin (naturalisation and 2nd generation)
- **Family-reunification and marriage**
- **Emigration aspirations from Turkey to Belgium dry up or change**
 - Not labour but human rights
- **Aspirations of 2nd generation youth to emigrate to Turkey**
 - In line with other European countries

Theoretical Model



Research questions

- **RQ1. What are the circumstances and motivations for the emigration to the ancestral homeland?**
 - What are the roles of push-pull factors and opportunity structures on micro-macro level underlying this emigration of the 2nd generation Belgian-Turks?
 - Which information, images and imaginations nurtures their plans and aspirations?
 - Do they envisage their “return” as a permanent emigration to Turkey, as part of their international mobility plan or an event of circular migration?
- **RQ2. What are the experiences of the actual “returnees”?**
 - Does the image and expectation of the ancestral homeland become reality or not?
 - Can they live up to their aspirations and migration projects, i.e. their plans to permanently emigrate, circulate when achieved their goals or hop to another country?

Research methods and sites

- **Target-sample of 30**
 - 12 “returnees” in Turkey and 15 with aspirations in Belgium
 - Saturation after 27
- **Sample accessed by**
 - Self-selection via response to add in online journals
 - Personal networks
 - Snow balling
- **18-35, aspirations to or actual emigration, educational level, Flanders & Brussels, 2nd generation**
- **Semi-structured open interviews**
 - Predefined topic list discussed beforehand and tested in pilot interview
 - Adaptation of topic list during the interviews when new topics discovered
- **Native researcher with proficiency in Dutch and Turkish language**
- **Ethics and analysis**
 - Oral consent
 - All interviews were recorded and transcribed
 - Coding and analysis with Nvivo 10

Profile of informants in analysis

- **Place of birth**
 - Belgium (26) & Turkey (1)
- **Gender**
 - Female (20) & male (7)
- **Place of residence:**
 - 15 in Belgium: Antwerp (4), Brussels (3), Limburg (7), East Flanders (1)
 - 12 in Turkey (Ankara (2), Gaziantep (1), Istanbul (7), Konya (1) and Sakarya (1)
 - Emigration to Turkey: within the last year (5) & one and maximum eight years (7)

Age	Educational level	Labor market Position					
		Other	Student	Unemployed	Manual worker	Non-manual workers	Self-employed
<25	Secondary		BF8				
	Higher		BF5				
25-29	Secondary			BTF4, TBF4 TF15		BF1, BM1, BM4	
	Higher	TF12	TF19, BF9, BM3	BF2, TF13, TF14, TF16, BF6, TF17		TF18	TM5
≥30	Secondary				TF11, BM2	TM6	TM7
	Higher					BF3, BF10, BF7	

Findings

the grass is always greener on the other side of Ipsala

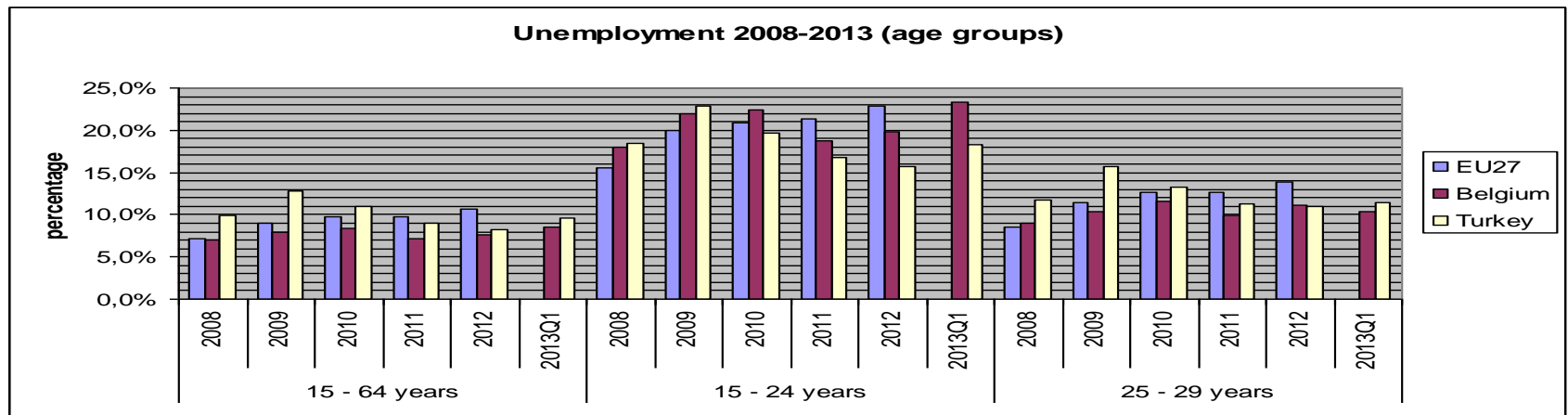


“Write in capitals: I emigrated [to Turkey] because of experiences of discrimination [in Belgium]” (TM5)

“If you have money, you have, power and here [in Turkey] power is the only thing that counts. Here it is all about brands, who you are dressed eg. Which is not that much the case ther [in Belgium]. There they treat you as a human being, you have your civil rights and nobody minds your business, but here you only have rights if you have money. No money means no rights” (TF14)

RQ1. Circumstances and motivations for emigration to Turkey?

- What pulls and pushes?
 - Turkish economic miracle



- Ethnic penalties in domain of education and labour market participation in Belgium
- Discrimination (religious and highly skilled)
- Transnational identity

"I feel more attached to the Turkish language and the Turkish way of sharing emotions and humor. Sometimes I go to the Flemish theatre, but I find it so absurd. Everyone is laughing, while I don't think it's funny at all. I try to force myself, but hey what can I do, I just don't have it in me" (BF4)

RQ1. Circumstances and motivations for emigration to Turkey?

- **Three profiles of return migration motivations**
 - Return because of economic possibilities: economic return
 - Return because of the “Turkish way of life”: romantic return
 - Return through family or partner: followers
- **Which information, images and imaginations nurtures their plans and aspirations?**
 - Most follow news and development in Turkey via Turkish media
 - Imaginations of Turkey based in Facebook, feedback from family in Turkey or actual “returnees”, holidays and consumption styles (*Almanci* & spectacularist consumption on TV)

“Some had remarks, such as: ‘yes, but you only have been there for holidays. Of course things are look better and you feel more comfortable and pleasant during holidays. But you have never lived and worked there.’ Okay, but I have been there for 2 month, so that is a kind of living there, no?” (BF7)

From movies and photographs and from feedback of my brother and siter in law who frequently visit Istanbul. I have never been there myself” (BF5)

“I have never heard from someone [in Turkey] that they have to contribute half of their wage to taxes. It does not exists there. That is why the Turks manage to escape from the economic crisis, buy as much as they can!” (BM1)

RQ1. Circumstances and motivations for emigration to Turkey?

- **Do they envisage their “return” as a permanent emigration to Turkey, as part of their international mobility plan or an event of circular migration?**
 - Most informants in Belgium see the emigration to Turkey as an event of circular migration
 - Return to Belgium when having children and raise them in the Belgian educational system
 - When their goals (economic or romantic -> finding roots) are achieved
 - Youth without responsibilities

It is as, if you have the chance now [to emigrate to Turkey], you have to grab it You can always return (BM2)

- One informant see emigrating to Istanbul as a part of international mobility
- But once the informants are in Turkey this temporary character materialize in something permanent (→ RQ2.)

RQ2. What are the experiences of the actual “returnees”?

- **Does the image and expectation of the ancestral homeland become reality or not?**
 - Difficulties to socio-culturally and economically integrate
 - Human capital not valued
 - Hierarchy and authoritarian society, gender, nepotism and cheating
 - Consumerism on credit and talking big

“When I arrived here [Istanbul] I believed everybody, no I doubt everything, everybody acts in their own interest” (TB15)

- Transnational identity, in-betweenness and imagination of Belgium/Europe

“In Belgium I felt like a Turk, but since I’ve been living here, I realized that I am an European” (TF14)

RQ2. What are the experiences of the actual “returnees”?

- **Can they live up to their aspirations and migration projects, i.e. their plans to permanently emigrate, circulate when achieved their goals or hop to another country?**
 - But once the informants are in Turkey this temporary character materialize in something permanent
 - Successful and decided to stay
 - Locked in

“Now I have Kerim [husband] in my life. He will not be able to work in ther [in Belgium]. He studied for teacher. At least I can work with my knowledge of Turkish in Turkey even with my knowlegde of Dutch. “(TB12)

- Double looser and failed migration project

“The people [in Belgium] seems to wait for my failure” (TB16)

Conclusions

“You know, sometimes you have to go. Maybe I had to come and work here to get it out of my mind. At least I will not regret for not trying” (TF17)

- Return mobility with aspirations of circular migration: Belgium pushes and Turkey pulls with feedback mechanisms via peers, (social) media and transnational networks
- Return mobility results in return migration
- Successful circulation, locked migration and failed migration projects: Turkey pushes and Belgium pulls

IMISCOE 3CI PhD Conference 2014

‘Changing Europe – Changing Migration’: Europe in the world on the move

20-25 January 2014, Centre for Migration and Intercultural Studies (CeMIS), University of Antwerp, Belgium

5 days of intensive interdisciplinary training by internationally recognised scholars for 30 selected PhD students, junior and post-doctoral researchers

5 ECTS

Guest Lectures

- *Prof. dr. Peggy Levitt* (Wellesley College & Harvard University)
- *Prof. dr. Russell King* (Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex)
- *Prof. dr. Klaus Zimmermann* (Bonn University & Institute for the Study of Labor)
- *Prof. dr. Godfried Engbersen* (Research Group on Citizenship, Migration and the City, Erasmus University Rotterdam)
- *Prof. dr. Marco Martiniello* (College of Europe & Center for Ethnic and Migration Studies, University of Liège)
- *Prof. dr. Christiane Timmerman* (Centre for Migration and Intercultural Studies, University of Antwerp)

Application process

All applicants have to submit an extended abstract presenting their current research project, a recommendation letter of their supervisor, a motivation letter and a curriculum vitae.

Deadline for applications

15 September 2013

More information: www.imiscoe.org (PhD training page)
or Joris.Michielsen@uantwerpen.be (academic coordinator)



CeMIS

Centre for Migration and Intercultural Studies
University of Antwerp



Citizenship
Migration
and the City



IMISCOE