

Turkey and the European Union
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The Role of the Turkish communities in the European Union

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The relationship between Turkey and the European Union began in the 1960s in two ways, firstly with the signing of the Labour Agreement and secondly with the signing of the Association Agreement in 1963. Since 1996 Turkey is in the Customs Union and this relationship further developed in December 1999 at the Helsinki Summit where Turkey gained candidacy status for the EU. Within the borders of the European Union the Turkish population forms a considerable size which needs to be taken into account when looking at certain issues. According to the figures for 2002, there are currently around 3.8 million Turks (including those who are naturalised) living in the EU. This makes around 1% of the EU's total population. Although in recent years there has been a fall in the number, the population shows an above average number of births and marriages. In addition, the Turks form a significantly young population. Those Turks living within the EU have shown an increasing preference to take on the citizenship of the country they are resident in. This is also evident in the statistics where the number of Turks is actually going down rather than up. Predictions are that this figure will continue to fall or become constant. However, this does not mean that the social, economic and political situation as well as the ties with Turkey will be broken. On the contrary, the Turks living in these countries play an important role in building social, economic and political bridges between the EU and Turkey.

Those who are sceptical about Turkey's entry into the EU due to its religion or geographical location should also step back and consider the 1.3 million naturalised Turks living in the EU. Those who reject Turkey by saying that it is a conservative country imply that they are rejecting the Turks living within their borders. However, the Turks living within the EU can no longer be considered as

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being guests. They have been resident in the country for 42 years and have settled in these countries for good.

Turkish migration which started in the 1960s with the signing of the Labour Agreements with countries like Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, France and Sweden has since then come a long way. The migrants who came in the 1960s were mainly men. This changed, since the 1970s Turkish migration can be seen occurring in several ways: firstly, the major form of migration takes place in the type of Family formation. While family reunification of the Turks was formerly completed by the 1980s, the increase in the trend of family formation can be observed in so far as young Turks living in Europe finding spouses in Turkey. This is the most common and easiest forms of migration nowadays to overcome barriers set to avoid restrictive immigration policies. Secondly, there has been an increase in politically motivated emigration, the majority of these are of Kurdish origin, it is important to bear in mind that there are also economic factors linked to this. Thirdly, there is some illegal labour emigration. None of the above types of migration from Turkey can be considered as being a mass or a managed type of emigration, it is mainly individuals making personal choices.

It is clear that the Turks living in the EU countries are there for good and as time goes by the number of Turks who are labourers is also going down. When looking at the social development one can see that there is no longer a homogenous group of labourers among the Turkish migrants. There are now officers, artists, politicians, academics and sportsmen at a large enough number to indicate the formation of a heterogeneous group among the Turks. As the first generation is moving into retirement the second and third generations are increasingly moving towards esteemed jobs. This can be observed particularly when considering the number of Turkish University graduates which is increasing. Alone in Germany, to date, 30,000 Turkish students are studying at German Universities, where the majority of them select subjects like law, economics, engineering and social studies.

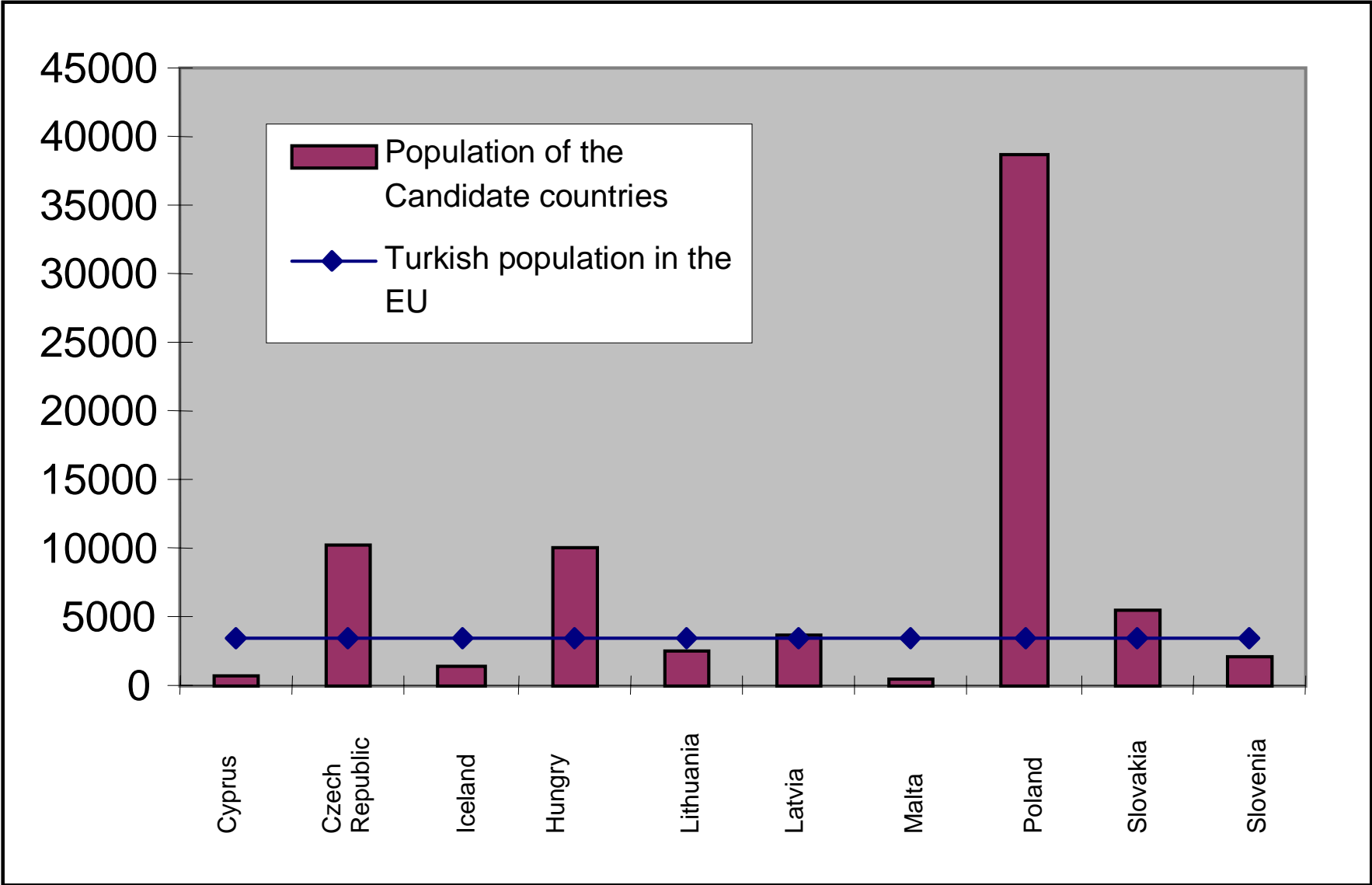
To date, since its foundation, the Center for Studies on Turkey has been involved in researching the patterns and development of migration and migrants within the Federal Republic of Germany and other EU states. The changes and

developments of the Turkish community can particularly be observed in the economic contribution of the Turkish migrants who are living in the EU. In addition to the economic contribution, population indicators like population movement, citizenship, household patterns, workforce statistics, entrepreneurship and the contribution to the GDP of the EU are also important factors which need to be considered. Thus, I would like to briefly touch upon these points.

Migration has become an important aspect of the EU. Not only because the EU is due to increase in size but also because of the question of integration. In 2000 out of the 376. million people who live in the EU, 13.1 million hold a non-EU passport. This indicates that foreigners make up 3.5% of the total population. Due to the high number of naturalisations the number of people with migrant origin is higher, however, in many statistical data this number is not collected. When looking at the total population figures of the individual EU countries Austria has the highest number of foreigners with 9.3%, followed by and then Germany with 6.7%. The Turks regardless of citizenship form the largest group of migrants within the EU. An important aspect of this figure is that due to the birth – citizenship law and the naturalisation process, particularly in Austria, the Netherlands, Sweden, France and Germany, those naturalised or those who have received that countries passport at birth are not recorded as being foreign citizens. Alone in Germany the number of Turks taking on German citizenship in the year 2002 had reached about 730.000 people. Out of the 3.8 million Turks living in the EU, 34.5% have been naturalised.

The social relationship in terms of population can be seen in the following figures. In 2001 the population of the Turks living in the EU was 8.5 times the size of Luxembourg's population. During the Copenhagen Summit where the current candidate countries gained accession status the number of Turks living in the EU was 8 times that of Malta, 5 times that of Cyprus (including Northern Cyprus), 2.5 that of Estonia, 1.7 of Slovenia and 1.4 of Lithuania.

THE TURKISH POPULATION IN THE EU IN COMPARISON TO THE OTHER EU CANDIDATE COUNTRIES



In order to be able to examine the economic and social dimension of the Turkish community, general aspects of a Turkish household have to be taken into consideration. On average, a household consists of 4 people, of which 1.3 people work. The average net income of a household is around 2,000 € of which around 1,700 € is used for everyday living. The remaining 300 € is savings. The potential purchasing power of the Turks is particularly significant in countries like Germany where the Turkish population is higher. In Germany, the Turks are being recognised as the target group of purchases in the telecommunication branch, car industry and furniture industry. In the beginning, the items that were bought in for purchasing by the migrant Turks have also integrated themselves into the purchasing patterns of the Europeans. The Turks themselves have also been influenced by not just the purchasing pattern of the country they are resident in, but also by the way of living. On the one hand they have bought in new varieties of vegetables and fruits to the Europeans, on the other hand they have been introduced to new foods. May it be in the work place, in schools or in general everyday tasks there has been a creation of social cultural exchange among the groups. Purchasing patterns of the Europeans and that of the Turks have been mixed together, implying that the perspective future purchasing patterns will not be separable, instead they are moving closer together. At the same time the contact between the societies has increased

Back in the 1960s the migrant labour force aimed to save its earnings in order to be able to use this for when they return home or for the family they had left behind, hence purchasing power of the Turks was kept low. Changes in family patterns, i.e. family reunification's in host countries also led to changes in the purchasing pattern. According to the study undertaken by the Center where over 2,000 Turks were questioned, a Turkish household, on average, puts aside up to 19% of its income towards savings.

This implies that if one considers the 944,000 Turkish households within the EU, then the Turks together have a saving of around € 4.5 billion. This also means that in total the Turks have an annual net income of € 23.6 billion of which €19.1 billion is used for purchasing.

In recent years the Turks living in the EU have been increasingly purchasing property. According to other studies there are currently 180,000 Turks who are property owners within the EU borders. This implies that a total of 19% of the Turks live in their own homes or have land in the respective country of residence. These figures also show that the Turks have changed their savings and purchasing patterns since the 1960s. In addition this indicates that the Turks have chosen to stay in these countries. At first, investment was done in Turkey but in the past 10 years this has changed and they have moved more and more towards the countries they live in. This is often linked to the better educated second generation who have adopted the values of the country they are resident in including the craze for the purchasing of labels which is at a constant increase within these groups.

When looking at the economic potential of the Turks within the EU one can also highlight the fact that this issue is often overlooked when considering Turkey – Europe relations. When discussing the expansion of the EU and whether or not Turkey should be a part of it, the economic and democratic criteria of the country itself is often looked at. However, it is also of importance to look at the potential of the migrant Turks living the EU. Just to consider the religious and the cultural factors of a country when questioning whether or not it should become a part of the EU is in itself against the basic laws of the EU. It is not fair towards the Turkish migrants who add a certain richness to the EU with their cultural differences. The images which are given to an accession country like Turkey will sooner or later reflect onto the migrant Turks who are living within the EU borders.

In addition to these events, the Turks living abroad have taken it on themselves to build bridges between the country they are resident in and Turkey, particularly bridges of economic nature but also in a social context. For example: a study conducted in the year 2000 showed that 80% of the Turks are in constant contact with Germans. In the workplace this figure lies at around 78% and in friendship circles this figure lies at 75%. In particular the second and third generation are contributing in the building of relationships between the two societies. One of the main reasons is the education they receive helped them to overcome the language barrier which the first generation suffered under.

Besides the social, historical and economic ties between Turkey and the EU, if the Turks living in the EU are used as a source to bring the countries closer, Turkey would be considered as a preferred EU candidate.

Data provided by Eurostat in the year 2001, show that 46.3% of the EU's population was in employment. A total of 12.7 million people at this time were registered as being unemployed. Among the 3.8 million Turks a total of 32.8% are in employment. The unemployment rate among the Turks is above average to the unemployment rate in the EU. There are several reasons behind this, firstly, on average the Turkish population is rather young, secondly, the number of Turkish women that work is below that average number in the EU. These two factors lead to the result that the unemployment rate among the Turks is higher than average. To add, the labour market sectors where the Turks usually are employed have suffered under ground economic downturns which also influence the unemployment figures.

Parallel to the high population of Turks living in Germany, 68.1% of the Turks who are registered as employed in the EU are resident in Germany. Germany is closely followed by France and then the Netherlands. Although the Turkish population is rather high in France the unemployment rate is high, especially in comparison to the Netherlands, where the number of Turks in employment is higher than in France. Out of the 1.24 million Turks who are in employment 1.15 million are in full time conditional employment.

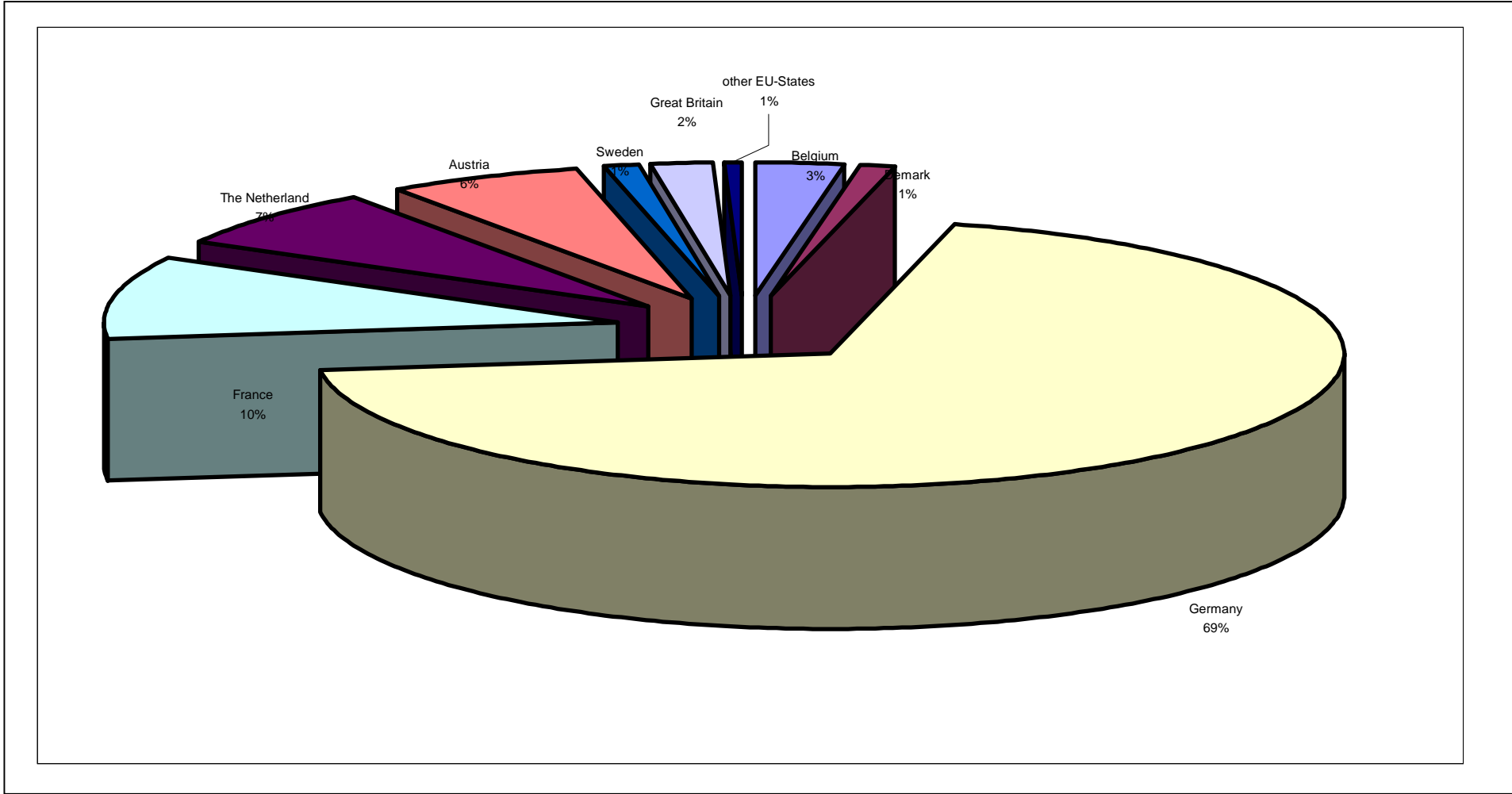
However, a big trend among the Turks is self employment. In 1995, the number of Turkish entrepreneurs lay at 4.8%, the figure for the EU was 12.3%. Despite the large difference, the Turkish entrepreneurs figure has been striking because at the same time these figures show the change from being a guest worker to becoming an employer in the country of residence. In conjunction with the high Turkish population in Germany, the number of Turkish entrepreneurs is of high significance. Due to the economic crisis in the last two years and the immense self created competition, the market sectors for gastronomy etc, where the Turks are found in high numbers, have seen less investment. Those who do not have

enough capital have been faced with many difficulties to stay in the sector if not been forced out. As an entrepreneur it is easy to start up in a certain sector, what is difficult is staying in that sector and making profit. Hence, the developments have resulted in a slight fall of new entrepreneurs in Germany when comparing the figures for 2001 with 2002. However, regardless of these results the number of Turkish entrepreneurs in the EU has risen from 56,500 in 1996 to 82,300 in 2002.

Distribution of Turkish entrepreneurs in the EU 15

Country	1996	1998	2000	2002
Belgium	1,4	1,6	1,7	2,3
Denmark	0,5	0,6	0,8	1,0
Germany	42,0	51,0	59,5	56,8
France	4,5	5,2	7,1	8,2
Netherlands	4,2	4,5	5,0	6,0
Austria	2,9	3,1	4,0	5,0
Sweden	0,3	0,5	0,8	0,9
Great Britain	0,6	0,7	1,3	1,6
Others	0,1	0,2	0,4	0,5
EU-15	56,5	67,4	80,6	82,3
Source: Center for Studies on Turkey, Essen, 2002				

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TURKISH ENTREPRENEURS IN THE EU IN 2002
(percentage)



The importance of the Turkish entrepreneurs does not just lie in the high number they constitute, but also in the investment they do and the economic potential they portray. According to our calculations, during the period 1996 – 2002, the total annual turnover rose from € 21.8 billion to € 35 billion. This shows an increase of 60%. The same development can be seen in the level of investment and the creation of new jobs. During the same period, investment rose from € 5.6 billion to € 9.2 billion, indicating an increase of 64%. The number of new jobs created rose from 232,000 to 411,000, implying an increase of 77%. When considering the fact that in Germany the number of entrepreneurs has fallen in the past 2 years the developments of the past 6 years show positive signs. The small family run business today will in the future build on the relationship between Turkey and the EU. Turkey's entry into the EU will through these developments be strengthened and accelerated.

The 1.2 million Turks, working within the borders of the EU make up 0.74% of the total working population. These Turks contribute a total of € 68.9 billion to the total GDP of the EU. In the 8 countries where the Turks show the highest population the average contribution to the GDP in 2001 per head was € 18,300. When considering the EU-15 this figure per head is on average € 23,200. What needs to be taken into consideration when looking at the average figures are the 8 countries (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Austria, Sweden and Great Britain) they are not just the ones who are the most populated by Turks but are also the richer countries in the EU.

When taking a closer look at the individual countries the average contribution of the Turks, per head, to the GDP is as follows: Denmark € 25,800, Sweden € 22,100 and Great Britain € 22,100. In the above 3 countries the Turkish population is not as high as in the Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Austria. Out of these four the Netherlands has the leading figure for the average contribution which lies at € 19,500. The reason behind this is that the number of employed Turks is higher in the Netherlands than in Germany, implying also that the unemployment rate among the Turks in the Netherlands is lower.

In the 8 EU countries where the Turks have a significant population, Germany is the most populated. This implies that 69% of the € 68.9 billion come from the Turks living in Germany, in the year 2001 this results to a total sum of € 47.42 billion.

As I have already mentioned there is also the cultural aspect which needs to be considered. When talking about culture we often refer to religion. Currently in the EU there are around 13.5 million Muslims which makes up about 3.5% of the EU population. Thus, the Turks through a nominal affiliation make up around 27% of the Muslim population in the EU. When examining the behaviour of the Turks there is evidence to show that there is a movement towards Euro-Islam with an empirical substance. Islam among the migrants has been confronted with a dynamic change whose “end product” could lead to an acceptance of Islam. This is a change which is not based on pluralistic traditions in which the religion is developing. This observation is more significant since such a development was not actively encouraged by the host societies. It is important to note that the virtually forced modernisation upon the Muslim population in Germany has neither resulted in a solidification of traditional religious understanding nor has it resulted in a breaking away from Islam. The modernisation and the life style of the migrants has moreover resulted in changes in the religious-cultural developments. An active encouragement of a European, pluralistic Islam among the Muslim Migrants in the EU, would carry fruitful benefits with it and from an integrational political point of view would be more than beneficial. However, certain normative requirements for a “Euro-Islam” would have to be set. These requirements rest upon five pillars. Firstly the adaptation of the Sharia Law to the living conditions of today and the environment, secondly the acceptance of secularism, thirdly the compatibility of Islam in an industrial state, fourthly the loyalty to the constitution of the host country and finally the agreement to democracy and pluralism.

Although the above examples are positive, without a doubt, the Turks in the EU have many problems and are confronted with many obstacles. The main one is the acceptance by the host society and the feeling of belonging to this society.

Successful integration can only occur in a society where there is equality. In a pluralistic state that is forevermore becoming European the problems of integration have to be solved. Acceptance will result in allowing migrants to form new identities where they can identify themselves with their country of origin as well as the host country which they now call home. The EU is made of 15 pluralistic states that are forevermore becoming European. The formation of new identities is an ongoing process, and thus, as the EU country citizens form a new, and intensified European identity, the recognition of migrants is vital. With their diverse culture they will contribute to this European identity as they are too a part of these societies.

The Turkish society must be looked upon as being equal in a cultural and social dimension. The Turks constitute the majority of third country citizens within the EU. Due to their high population, they contribute to the economy of the EU and they appear settled in the sense that most do not have the intention to return back to Turkey. Many believe that they are the most difficult group to integrate as a result of their cultural differences. However, where the Turks are greeted with acceptance, the social status in the society of the Turks has improved, indicating a positive correlation. The second generation is increasingly getting more and more involved in public issues and defending their rights, which strengthens their conscience levels and political participation.

The false belief that the Turks are not accepted because of their religion and their culture is an obstacle in the integration process. Those who push these reasons forward to say that Turkey is not suitable to be a member of the EU is also endangering the integration of Turks in the EU. To distance the country the migrants come from does not make it easy for the integration process. This point is often neglected in day to day discussions. The latest developments between Turkey and the EU with particular focus on the Turks living in the EU have to be highlighted to also show why their role for integration should not be overlooked.

The Turks living in the EU, play a major role in creating a bridge between Turkey and Europe and between the two societies, contributing to the development of these relationships. Neighbourly, friendship or work relationships and cultural introductions are increasing the interest people have for Turkey and bringing

Turkey one step closer to the EU. Turkey with its different culture will bring a diversity to the EU which will be an asset just like the Turkish community living in the EU has managed to do in the past 42 years.