

Migrant mobilities in Europe: Comparing Turkish to Romanian migrants

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Abstract

Besides huge differences in attitudes towards the European Union (EU), it seems to be common sense in nearly all strata of EU member states' societies that the EU created a common and seemingly borderless space of mobility for its inhabitants. Sometimes this characteristic is not only the first positive thing that comes to people's mind when asked about the Union but also the only one. This paper investigates to which extent Turkish migrants as third-country citizens residing in EU member states make use of this mobility space in a physical and non-physical manner. Data on Romanian migrants is used to contrast these findings. The analysis builds on recent survey data on transnational activities of migrants and nationals in six EU member states (Denmark, Germany, Italy, Romania, Spain and United Kingdom) collected by the EUCROSS study. It is found that a considerable part of the interviewed Turkish migrants visited other EU member states recently, but that, nevertheless, intra-EU mobility is less common in their case than for migrants from Romania. However, this difference can neither exclusively nor mainly be explained by the absence of European citizenship or by the residence within or outside the Schengen space.

Keywords: Mobility; transnationalism; Turkish migrants; Schengen; European citizenship.

Introduction

Recent studies have investigated intra-European mobility of EU citizens (Favell, 2008; Recchi & Favell, 2009) and the transnationalisation of selected European societies (Mau, 2010). Furthermore, (short-term) intra-EU mobility and personal networks in particular have been seen as key elements of 'horizontal Europeanisation' (Mau & Mewes, 2012; see also Fligstein, 2009; Kuhn, 2011). However, the study of short-term mobility within the EU has so far largely been restricted to EU citizens. In contrast, the research of third-country migrants' mobility within Europe is usually focussing on the migration process itself. This paper aims to broaden this perspective by presenting findings on the non-migration related border crossing mobility practises of Turkish migrants¹ who reside in member states of the European Union. Hence,

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¹ Throughout this paper the terms "Turks", "Turkish" or "Romanian" etc. refer to nationality in a strictly legal sense, i.e., to the fact whether or not a person is formally a citizen of the respective



while not investigating the complex process of identification formation itself, the paper relates to the above stated findings. It does so by focussing on two of the five forms of mobility identified by John Urry (2007), namely on the physical and communicative mobility of persons.² The analysis will limit itself to mobility experiences which were not part of the individuals' migration processes as such.

The paper follows a comparative approach in order to judge the relative extent of Turkish migrants' mobilities. Mau and Mewes (2012) showed that movers and stayers differ in the degree to which they are involved in transnational activities. Therefore, it is not the majority population of the countries of residence but another migrant group – namely Romanians – which is used for this comparison. While Romanian migrants enjoy a set of rights which is derived from the EU membership of their country of origin, Turkish migrants reside as so-called third-country citizens in the European Union. This difference between both groups is most significant for the presented analysis as it allows exploring the question whether the lack of EU citizen status influences the extent to which Turks make use of the common European mobility space.

Existing studies, such as Neumayer (2006), also clearly show the impact of visa regulations on international mobility. One of his arguments is that for citizens of most countries in the world the national passport is from a practical point of view less important than the visa it contains (or lacks). In this sense it could be assumed that the question whether or not Turkish migrants reside within the Schengen area has a direct impact on their intra-European mobility, since the residence permit of a Schengen country usually allows its holder to visit other Schengen countries without further formalities (Faure Atger, 2008). To review this issue, survey data collected both in signatory and non-signatory countries of the Schengen agreement is used in the analysis.

The first part of the paper provides an overview of the data used, while the second part presents some insights in physical mobility, extent of personal networks abroad and non-physical mobility of Turkish migrants. The final part of this text discusses the results of regression analysis, which uses physical intra-European mobility as a dependent variable.

Data and sample composition

The analysis presented is based on data gathered by the project “The Europeanisation of Everyday Life: Cross-Border Practices and Transnational Identities among EU and Third-Country Citizens (EUCROSS)”, funded by the European Commission in the 7th Framework Program. As part of the survey computer assisted telephone interviews were conducted with 1.000 nationals in Denmark, Germany, Italy, Romania, Spain and the United Kingdom (UK).

state. On the contrary, it is not used as an ethnic description. Therefore, the term “Turk” refers for example to Turkish citizens of Kurdish ethnicity as well.

² Urry identifies a total of five mobilities which are closely interrelated and allow the occurrence of social life across spatial distances. The three forms not mentioned above are: the ‘physical movement of objects’, ‘imaginative travel’ and ‘virtual travel’ (Urry, 2007: 47).

Furthermore, with the exception of Spain, additional interviews with 250 Turkish and 250 Romanian migrants were conducted in each country. Data collection started in early 2012 and was completed in early 2013. To be included in the migrant samples individuals had to possess Romanian or Turkish nationality, without being naturalised in the country of residence (CoR). Furthermore, they had to be migrants in the literal meaning of the term. Therefore, members of the so called second (or a later) generation who were born in the CoR were not recruited for these samples.

Table 1. Average age, age at migration, duration of sojourn in CoR (in years), gender (in per cent)

	Age		Age at migration		Duration of sojourn		% female	
	Turks	Romanians	Turks	Romanians	Turks	Romanians	Turks	Romanians
Denmark	41.2	33.4	20.8	26.3	20.4	7.1	47.2	41.0
Germany	46.2	48.8	19.1	33.4	27.1	15.5	56.1	56.8
Italy	33.9	42.2	24.9	29.3	9.0	12.9	43.8	59.8
Romania	40.7	---	29.0	---	11.7	---	31.2	---
Spain	---	36.8	---	28.5	---	8.2	---	58.7
United Kingdom	38.5	33.6	26.1	28.5	12.4	5.1	43.0	48.6

Source: EUCROSS (2013). Turks: N=1235; Romanians: N=1225.

Turkish migrants surveyed are on average younger than CoR nationals. However, as Table 1 demonstrates, they are slightly older than intra-EU migrants from Romania. The smallest gap between all three groups occurs in Germany, where, at the same time, respondents of both migrant samples show the highest mean age. Turkish citizens also migrated at a younger age and have already lived significantly longer in the respective CoR than Romanian migrants. The only exception from this rule is Italy, where Romanians on average stayed four years longer than Turks.

The longer duration of sojourn in Denmark and Germany is likely to be related to the history of Turkish labour migration between the late 1950s and the early 1970s. Both countries ceased their active labour recruitment policies in 1973, however in neither of these cases this did end the immigration of Turkish citizens as originally intended. Instead it changed its nature from mainly work orientated mobility to migration patterns of family reunification (Herbert, 2003; Liversage, 2009; Soysal, 2003). This interpretation is supported by the fact, that “family and love” was mentioned as the main reason for migration in both countries whereas “work” and “education” dominated in Italy, Romania and the UK (data not presented).

However, the earlier mentioned differences in duration of sojourn between the surveyed countries is partially also resulting from the EUCROSS sampling itself. As mentioned, the migrant sampling frame excluded naturalised individuals. However, in contrast to Germany and Denmark, laws allow immigrants to retain their original nationality when they become British citizens. Therefore, it has to be assumed that, in direct comparison, a higher share of Turkish immigrants acquired CoR citizenship in the United Kingdom

over time than in those countries where they would have had to renounce Turkish nationality (Düvell, 2010; King et al., 2008; Pötzschke et al., 2014). Hence, it seems reasonable to assume that a higher share of Turkish long-term residents in the UK, compared to Denmark and Germany, wasn't eligible for the respective EUCROSS migrant sample. With the exception of the sample in Romania the gender distribution was reasonably balanced across all Turkish samples.

Physical and non-physical mobility of Turkish migrants

Table 2 offers an overview over the physical cross-border mobility of both migrant groups.

Table 2. Recent trips (within last 24 months) in per cent

	EU countries		Countries outside the EU		Country of origin	
	Turks	Romanians	Turks	Romanians	Turks	Romanians
Denmark	48.8	67.2	12.8	18.4	88.0	84.4
Germany	28.2	58.8	9.1	18.4	82.5	78.4
Italy	61.6	54.0	22.8	9.6	76.0	88.0
Romania	9.2	---	17.6	---	89.2	---
Spain	---	30.8	---	7.2	---	73.2
United Kingdom	44.4	57.7	14.1	17.4	87.1	86.3

Source: EUCROSS (2013). Turks: N=1250; Romanians: N=1248.

The data show that in most countries a considerably lower number of respondents in the Turkish compared to the Romanian samples visited another EU member state within the last two years before the survey. Besides Turks in Romania, those living in Germany were least likely to have done so. This is remarkable considering Germany's geographical position and the fact that it is a Schengen country, which provides (most of) its foreign residents with the possibility to visit neighbouring countries without any further formalities. Turkish migrants residing in the UK, a state which is not part of the Schengen area and does not share a land border with another EU-member state (with the exception between Northern Ireland and Ireland) are, on the contrary, much more likely to have visited another EU country. In fact, the respondents of this sample are in this regard only a few percentage points behind those living in Denmark, which in turn is a Schengen country, shares a direct border with another Schengen state and, due to its smaller size, offers less possibilities for extended mobility within its own borders. Nonetheless, while the percentage in Germany is lower in comparison to that measured in the other EU-15 countries, still more than one in four Turkish migrants living there visited another EU country at least once in the 24 months preceding the survey. Furthermore, it has to be considered that the specific item only asked for visits, which included at least one overnight stay. However, the qualitative data collected in the second stage of the EUCROSS project indicates that

respondents tended not to consider countries they passed when traveling to the country of origin (CoO) by car (Pötzschke et al., 2014).

The fact that less than ten per cent of the Turkish respondents in Romania visited other EU countries is not that surprising considering that their CoR is situated at the periphery of the current European Union and in direct proximity of their CoO. While visits to non EU states were in general less common to Turkish than to Romanian migrants, the contrary holds true for visits to the CoO, both with exception of the samples in Italy. On average, 85 per cent of the Turkish migrants visited Turkey at least once during the preceding 24 months. With respect to the small group of people who showed a total abstinence of international mobility in the same period it is again Turks in Germany who stand out with 14.3 per cent. This is nearly double the value measured for Turkish migrants in Denmark. All others are in between. These figures are higher for the Turkish migrants than for Romanians in all countries, with the exception of the UK where the means of both groups are at 9.3 per cent.

With regard to both physical and non-physical mobility, personal networks on an international scale are highly important. Therefore Table 3 shows the basic parameters of both migrant groups' networks, using the aggregated values of the individual samples.

Table 3. Personal networks abroad in per cent

	People from CoO, living in CoO		People from CoO, living neither in CoO nor in respondent's CoR		People from third countries	
	A few	A lot	A few	A lot	A few	A lot
Turkish migrants	14.6	70.1	38.6	18.1	17.4	7.0
Romanian migrants	35.5	42.7	44.2	20.4	22.8	5.9

Source: EUCROSS (2013). Turks: N=1250; Romanians: N=1248.

When asking respondents for the existence of personal contacts (friends, family, etc.) abroad, the questionnaire offered "a few", "a lot" and "none" as substantive answer categories.

It is plain on first sight that the personal networks of both migrant groups have a clear focus on people who hold the respective CoO nationality. Nearly 85 per cent of all interviewed Turks and 78 per cent of the Romanian migrants still have contact to nationals of their CoO who also live there. This, of course, does not come as a surprise since the respondents are 'first generation' migrants. It can therefore be assumed that most of them would have left (some) friends and family behind. Additionally, more than half of the respondents in both groups know people of their own nationality in third countries.

Nevertheless, Table 3 also shows that nearly one in four Turkish migrants knows third country nationals who are not residing in his or her own CoR. However, there are considerable differences between the samples. While 47 per cent of the Turkish respondents in Italy reported such contacts, only a single

Turkish migrant in Romania did (data not presented). The respective values of the remaining three samples vary between 18 and approx. 30 per cent. The data furthermore reveal that the majority of these third-country nationals are residing in other EU member states. Unsurprisingly, most Turkish citizens who the respondents know outside their CoR are living in Turkey itself. However, the clear majority of those not living in the CoR reside in countries of the European Union.

Considering international communication as a major form of non-physical or communicative mobility (Urry, 2007), EUCROSS also examined the frequency in which respondents were in contact with the aforementioned acquaintances abroad and which means of communication they used. The data shows that the communication behaviour of a considerable share of Turkish respondents in all five surveyed countries is frequently transcending national borders (table not presented). With the exception of Turkish migrants in Romania at least half of all migrants talk to someone abroad once a week or more often. In fact, telephone or telephone-like conversations (e.g., via Skype) present the most frequently used channel of communication with friends and family abroad in four of the five samples. This finding is in line with the assumption of a growing transnationalisation of migrant communities worldwide. Since it is unlikely that respondents have dramatically good or bad news to report each week, it is moreover safe to assume that for most migrants at the beginning of the 21st century, long-distance calls have lost their main character as emergency signals or short life signs to those left behind in the CoO (Pries, 2008). In fact, messages sent via social networking sites, which are the second most commonly used means of international communication for the Turkish migrants analysed here, are likely to be sent in such cases today (without being limited to this function). More than 56 per cent of all Turkish respondents in Denmark and still 20 per cent in Germany used such services on a weekly basis. E-mails and letters which are usually much longer than the aforementioned messages and substantially less direct than telephone calls are sent least often. The share of respondents who used e-mails and letters to communicate with people abroad at least once a week ranged from 13.5 per cent in Germany to 34.8 per cent in Italy.

Regression analysis

In order to analyse the effects of the formal status as EU citizens, social networks, non-physical mobility and other independent variables on intra-EU mobility six regression models were computed. The dependent variable was of a dichotomous character and indicated whether or not respondents had visited another EU country during 24 months prior to the survey.

The three models presented in Table 4 include both Romanian and Turkish migrants. A dummy which separates both groups is at the same time a measure of the influence of EU citizenship. Model 1, which only includes the aforementioned dummy shows that the effect of citizenship status on physical

mobility in Europe is highly significant. Thus, Romanian respondents were significantly more likely to have undertaken such travels.

Table 4. Logistic regression models for recent physical mobility of Romanian and Turkish migrants within the European Union (unstandardised regression coefficients)

	M1	M2	M3
Romanian migrants (<i>baseline: Turkish migrants</i>)	0.620***	0.275**	0.190
Current economic household situation		0.255***	0.203***
Education (<i>baseline: lower secondary education or less</i>)			
Intermediary secondary		0.377*	0.457*
Higher secondary		0.510***	0.616***
University		1.288***	1.237***
Knowledge of additional language/s		0.496***	0.311*
Female		-0.309***	-0.333***
Age		-0.0143**	-0.00523
Duration of stay in CoR		0.0114	0.00872
Partner's origin (<i>baseline: no partner or partner from CoO</i>)			
CoR			-0.0654
Other EU country			0.368
Third country			-0.0887
Social contacts in CoR - Number of family members, in-laws and friends originally			
from CoO			-0.104
from CoR			0.148*
from 3 rd country			0.255***
Social contacts abroad - Number of family members, in-laws and friends originally			
from CoO and living there			-0.227**
from CoO living neither there nor in CoR			0.433***
from third country living in any country but CoR			0.269**
Frequency of communication abroad via			
Telephone or VoIP (Skype etc.)			0.161**
Mail or e-mail			0.00821
Social networking sites			-0.0256
Consumption of TV content in a third language			0.0894**
Constant	-0.473***	-1.661***	-2.495***
Cragg & Uhler R ²	0.031	0.149	0.235
N	2,498	2,406	2,264

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

When socioeconomic variables are included (Model 2) the model shows highly significant effects of several variables such as a positive subjective evaluation of the respondents' current economic situation, higher education levels and the knowledge of third languages (i.e., besides the CoO and CoR language). On the contrary, gender, introduced as a dummy for females, and age are negatively related with physical mobility within the EU.

Finally, upon the introduction of variables measuring social networks and non-physical mobility (transnational communication) the picture changes again. First and foremost, age loses significance as does the nationality dummy. The

latter is especially interesting as it indicates that the absence of the status as EU citizen is less important than other included factors. In this model (Model 3) the economic situation and higher education levels still show a positive effect on European mobility. Furthermore, the results show positive effects of the respondents' social networks in the CoR and abroad. The fact that the acquaintance with CoR nationals and third country nationals who live in the CoR has a significant positive effect on European mobility indicates that social integration into European societies and European mobility facilitate each other. The highly significant positive correlation between mobility and the existence of contacts abroad (excluding CoO nationals in the CoO) underlines that mobility is furthermore reliant on opportunity structures. At the same time, one can assume that the causal relationship between these variables works in both directions as travels abroad might provide the respondents with new contacts.

Looking at the pseudo R^2 values (Cragg & Uhler R^2) it is obvious that the third model is much more suited to explain the varying degrees of intra-European mobility, since the respective value rises from 0.03 in the first model to 0.24 in the third.

In the three models of Table 5 only Turkish migrants are considered. Model 1 is restricted to the measurement of the relation between the dependent variable and the Turkish migrant groups in the different countries, using Turkish migrants in Denmark as a baseline. It shows a highly significant negative effect of the German and Romanian country dummies. Turks living in Italy are significantly more likely to have visited other EU countries than their co-nationals in Denmark. However, the model shows no significant effect of the UK dummy. These results are remarkable as they suggest that – in case of the surveyed Turkish migrants – there is not necessarily a direct relation as to whether a CoR is situated within the Schengen area and intra-EU mobility. This becomes especially clear regarding the surveyed EU-15 countries in which the residence outside of Schengen has no effect on intra-EU mobility while there are significant differences between those four countries which are part of the Schengen space. However, the negative effect of the Romanian country dummy might to some extent also be due to the countries geographic position which puts it far from the centre of the European Union.

In Model 2 the same socioeconomic variables are added as in the second model of Table 4. The significant positive effects of the economic household situation, higher education and language knowledge are visible in this model, too. However, if only Turkish migrants are included in the model, there are no significant negative effects of age or gender.

Finally, the last model includes all remaining independent variables. The previously described effects regarding the German and Romanian country dummies and the socioeconomic variables persist. However, in contrast to Model 3 of Table 4 there is no apparent effect of contacts in the CoR or third country contacts abroad. Nonetheless, there is a positive effect of the acquaintance with Turkish citizens abroad, as long as they are not living in Turkey itself.

Table 5. Logistic regression models for recent physical mobility of Turkish migrants within the European Union (unstandardised regression coefficients)

	M1	M2	M3
Turkish migrants in (<i>baseline: Turkish migrants in Denmark</i>)			
Germany	-0.888***	-0.786***	-0.603**
Italy	0.521**	0.370	0.301
Romania	-2.241***	-2.522***	-2.135***
United Kingdom	-0.179	-0.395	-0.293
Current economic household situation		0.258**	0.213*
Education (<i>baseline: lower secondary education or less</i>)			
Intermediary secondary		0.774**	0.868**
Higher secondary		0.497**	0.630**
University		0.884***	0.961***
Knowledge of additional language/s		0.494***	0.255
Female		-0.185	-0.217
Age		0.00343	0.00951
Duration of stay in CoR		-0.00420	0.000688
Partner's origin (<i>baseline: no partner or partner from CoO</i>)			
CoR			0.0418
Other EU country			0.183
Third country			-0.418
Social contacts in CoR - Number of family members, in-laws and friends originally from CoO			-0.182
from CoR			-0.0190
from 3 rd country			0.106
Social contacts abroad - Number of family members, in-laws and friends originally from CoO and living there			0.0168
from CoO living neither there nor in CoR			0.257*
from third country living in any country but CoR			0.231
Frequency of communication abroad via Telephone or VoIP (Skype etc.)			0.0849
Mail or e-mail			-0.0553
Social networking sites			0.0967
Consumption of TV content in a third language			0.117*
Constant	-0.0480	-1.557***	-2.379***
Cragg & Uhler R ²	0.193	0.271	0.321
N	1,250	1,190	1,136

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

As in the previous regressions, the pseudo-R² values indicate that the explanatory power of Model 3 (which combines cross-border variables,

socioeconomic background and country dummies) is considerably higher than that of Model 1 (which uses solely the country dummies as independent variables).

Conclusion

Using data from the current EUCROSS project, the presented analysis showed that Turkish citizens, residing as third country migrants in Europe are less mobile on an intra-EU level than Romanian citizens who migrated to the same countries. Nevertheless, a considerable part of them made use of what is otherwise considered one of the main accomplishments of the European unification. On average, four out of ten Turkish respondents visited another EU country at least once during the 24 months preceding the interview.

When considering international communication, it was argued that the respondents in four out of five surveyed countries regularly (i.e., at least once a week) cross international borders in a non-physical manner by talking directly to someone abroad. Therefore, it can be asserted that such transnational activities are a regular part of their daily lives. With regard to the extension of the respective personal networks, data showed a clear concentration both on Turkish citizens and on Turkey itself. However, for Romanian respondents contact to co-nationals in other countries and especially in their CoO is most common, too. A main factor in the explanation of this concentration is the EUCROSS survey design, which in its migrant related part, concentrated on individuals who were international movers and not naturalised in their CoR. A certain persistence of contacts to the country of origin is to be expected regarding this group. Nonetheless, nearly one quarter of all interviewed Turkish migrants has international third country contacts, too.

The presented data and regression analysis do not support the assumption that the surveyed Turkish nationals residing in Schengen countries are necessarily more likely to visit other EU states than those residing beyond the borders of the Schengen space. In fact, Turkish EUCROSS respondents who lived in the United Kingdom were more likely to have visited other EU countries than those who lived in Germany and therefore would not have needed additional permits to do so.

The results suggest that a considerable minority of the investigated Turkish migrants engages in transnational activities which can be seen as indicators of a horizontal Europeanisation. The regression analysis furthermore shows that respondents who have larger personal networks abroad, find themselves in a better economic situation and hold higher educational titles are more likely to engage in such activities than others. This corresponds with the respective findings regarding EU citizens (Mau & Mewes, 2012).

A positive effect of EU citizenship on intra-EU mobility was found, yet it was not persistent when additional independent variables were introduced. However, in this regard it has to be taken into consideration that Romanians, which were used as intra-EU migrants to contrast Turks as third country nationals did not enjoy full membership rights at the time of the survey.

Therefore, further comparative analysis, for instance using data of EU-15 migrants, should be undertaken.

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