TURKISH COMMUNITY IN GERMANY AND THE ROLE OF TURKISH COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

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Abstract
This article analyses the role of Turkish community organisations in Germany. It first explains the historical background of Turkish immigrants in Germany, secondly the role of civil society in Germany, particularly the historical background of Turkish community organisations are analysed and lastly the types of Turkish community organisations, the interactions among each other and their role in Germany are evaluated.

Keywords: Turkish Community Organisations, Immigration, Germany, Turkey, Civil Society

Introduction

Germany has had a Turkish community since 1961, when the Federal Republic ratified a bilateral treaty to recruit guest-workers from Turkey. Although this community has long been a part of Germany's social landscape, Turks have remained mostly detached from the German polity (Ögelman *et.al.*, 2002: 147) as it was expected that these migrant Turkish labourers would return to their home country. Following the economic recession of the late 1960s, recruitment was banned in 1973. At the same time, however, the introduction of the 1973 family reunification law allowed Turkish immigrants to bring their spouses and non-adult children to Germany. In this way, the German government wanted to restrict the influx of more foreign workers while facilitating the integration of existing ones (Yükleyen and Yurdakul, 2011: 68). Although immigrants constitute more than ten percent of Germany's population (Yurdakul, 2006: 439), Germany still does not define itself as a 'country of immigration'.

Immigrant organisations have a crucial influence on the political behaviour of immigrants in host societies (Vermeulen and Berger, 2011: 160), such that state institutions increasingly cooperate with them to legitimize their own immigrant policies (Amelina and Faist, 2008: 96). One important question is whether organizations founded by second or third

generation immigrants can still be regarded as immigrant organisations. Indeed, they are generally defined as 'ethnic' rather than 'immigrant' organisations (Vermeulen, 2005: 21-22). Turkish community organisations are transnational, having contacts with political representatives in both Turkey and Germany. Thus, they may act as a 'bridge' between Turkey and Germany, and regarding Turkey-EU relations. The German public and its politicians have mostly viewed Turkey's EU membership through the lens of the Turkish immigration experience in Germany (Humphrey, 2009: 142). Specifically, as Stelzenmüller (2007: 105-106) argues, this debate is closely linked with Turkish immigrants and German identity. It is claimed that it is more challenging to integrate Turkish immigrants than other immigrant groups both because Turkish immigrants constitute the largest group, and because of many cultural and religious differences from the host society (Kaiser Pehlivanoglu, 2002: 55).

This article first presents the historical background of Turkish immigrants. Secondly it analyses the role of civil society in Germany, particularly the role of community organisations. Lastly, it explains the historical background and various types of Turkish community organisations in Germany and their role in Germany are evaluated. Two interviews were conducted in Berlin in September 2012. One of the interviewees was Rupert Strachwitz, who is studying on German civil society and currently working as a Director of Maecenata Institute of Humboldt University. Another interviewee was Suat Bakır, who is a Chairman of Turkish German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TD-İHK).

Historical Background of Turkish Community in Germany

As already mentioned, Turkish immigration to Germany began in 1961, following the signing of the labour recruitment agreement between the two countries (Sezgin, 2011: 237). A recruitment ban was implemented after the oil crisis in the early 1970s. Currently, Turkish immigrants are the largest immigrant group in Germany, with 2.5 million individuals. During the early 1980s, Germany's Christian-Democrats (CDU/ CSU) in particular exploited anti-foreigner sentiments, running a national election campaign warning about 'overforeignization' and calling for a reduction in non-EU foreigners. This contributed to the alienation of German-Turks (Ögelman *et al.*, 2002: 156).

Unfortunately, German-Turks continue to be misrepresented in both Germany and Turkey, despite their transformation and upward mobility they have experienced over the last 50 years. Among Turks, they are usually referred to as *Almancı* ('German-like) or '*gurbetçi*' (emigrant)[49] (Kaya and

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[49] The term refers to someone in the diaspora, away from one's homeland.

Kentel, 2005: 8), while in official German discourse they are usually referred to as '*gastarbeiter*' (guest-worker) or '*auslander*' (foreigner). However, Turkish immigrants in Germany no longer wish to be called immigrants as many are German citizens or have permanent resident status. Therefore, in this article they are referred to as 'German-Turks'. As Kaya and Kentel (2005: 3) argue, today's German-Turks have little in common with the old 'guest-worker' stereotypes of the past, having become a highly active part of the population. Another factor is that while these immigrants were previously seen as Turks, they became Muslim after the attacks on the USA on September 11, as the immigration debate shifted from a cultural to a religious focus (Mudde, 2012) in Europe.

Citizenship sets out the rights and obligations of individuals identified as members of a society. There are two main types of citizenship: the ethno-cultural and civic understandings.[50] The ethnic model is based on the principle of descent, referred to as the '*jus sanguinis*' principle, which makes it very difficult for immigrants to gain access to the political community.[51] Germany before 2000 was the main example of this model of citizenship. In order to receive German citizenship, an applicant had to provide evidence of at least one German ancestor (Yurdakul, 2006: 438). In contrast, the civic model provides easy access to naturalisation through the '*jus soli*' principle.[52] The SPD attempted to reform citizenship rights by introducing this principle into German citizenship law, with a new citizenship law coming into force on 1 January 2000 that partially changed the principle of descent. According to this law, children born in Germany to foreign nationals will now receive German citizenship so long as one of the child's parents has resided lawfully in Germany for at least eight years and holds entitlement to residence or has held an unlimited residence permit for at least three years. In most cases, such children also acquire their parents' citizenship, although they have to opt for one of their two nationalities before they become 23. Since the introduction of this new citizenship law, the number of foreigners applying for naturalisation has greatly increased. Kaya and Kentel (2005: 10-12) argue that this partial introduction of the principle of *jus soli* indicates that the definition of Germanness is no longer limited to ethnic descent, and that ethnically non-German individuals can be

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[50] For further detail, see Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham, " Migration and Ethnic Relations as a Field of Political Contention: An Opportunity Structure Approach" in Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham (eds.), *Challenging Immigration and Ethnic Relations Politics,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p.30.
[51] For further detail, see Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992.
[52] For further detail, see Adrian Favell, *Philosophies of Integration: Immigration and the Idea of Citizenship in France and Britain,* Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1998.

incorporated into the political sphere through civic channels. Since 2000, the political environment for the Turkish community has changed. In Berlin, for example, multicultural practices have slowly become institutionalized in local integration policies (Vermeulen and Stotjin, 2007; cited in Vermeulen and Berger, 2011: 161).

Most German political parties are receptive to the participation of German-Turks, especially the SPD and the Greens. German-Turk politicians like Cem Özdemir, who has participated in local and federal German politics, express their opinions about immigrant rights, integration, and foreign policy (Ögelman *et al.*, 2002: 155), while political parties have developed initiatives to increase communication with voters from different minority groups. For example, a German-Turkish forum was established by the SPD, which led the CDU to set up a similar forum (DTF, *Deutsch-Turkische Forum*) to make the party more attractive to voters with a Turkish background (Kaya, 2011: 503-504). The German-Turkish Forum, which tries to bring Turkish immigrants and the CDU closer together, supports EU membership for Turkey. This forum argues that if German and Turkish cultures were incompatible with each other, it would be useless to try to integrate people of Turkish descent into German society (Böttger and Maggi, 2009: 39-44).

Because of the low level of political opportunities for German-Turks, they have to develop alternative ways for participation, such as through civil society. Firstly the role of civil society in Germany is discussed below.

The Role of Civil Society in Germany

German civil society has a long tradition, growing rapidly during the late 18th and 19th centuries (Berman, 1997: 1-11). It became divided along different socio-cultural lines, particularly Catholic versus social democratic. During the 1970s, new types of associations were established, focusing on specific issues, such as the environment. The reunification of Germany led to new opportunities and challenges for German civil society (Reimer, 2005: 15).

In the USA, civil society has tried to maintain a distance from the state, whereas the opposite can be observed in France, where power was concentrated in Paris after the 1789 French revolution. Germany represents a middle position between these two models. In Germany, civil society developed relatively recently with the rise of Prussia, and restarted in the Federal Republic of Germany after World War II. In the last decade especially, citizen participation and voluntary work have been increasingly promoted by politicians, with all of the major parties agreeing with this process (Anheier, 2009). Civil society in Germany is primarily financed by the state, although civil society organisations (CSOs) can usually act

independently of the state, with no direct control being exerted on them. However, the foundations under civil law are subject to the state's legal supervision. CSOs are consulted by the *Bundestag* (federal parliament) or *Landtage* (state parliaments), and they involve in several commissions preparing legislation (Reimer, 2005: 26-47).

There are few foundations in East Germany, reflects the population sizes in different federal units, although another factor is that civil society has only recently been introduced in East Germany, since 1989. In contrast, the high density of CSOs in some West German states is the consequence of their historical background, such as the presence of a strong bourgeoisie and the important role of the church and local authorities (Reimer, 2005: 23).

According to the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI), conducted in Germany from 2003 to 2005, political rights, confidence in the rule of law, decentralisation, socio-economic environment and financial support to CSOs by the state were all rated as excellent (Reimer, 2005: 10). According to CIVICUS, the impact of civil society on politics, society and economy in Germany is rather high (Reimer, 2005: 53).

CSOs influence media framing and agenda setting of political issues, affecting how domestic debates are framed in Germany. The main division is between large, well-resourced CSOs and small, single-issue, financially weak ones (Lang, 2000: 386). Germany's most influential interest groups have been labour unions, welfare organizations and employers associations (Ögelman *et al.*, 2002: 155). Strachwitz (2012) argued that business organisations in particularly are much more influential in German politics than CSOs. He also notes that, according to German law, parliament must hold hearings with relevant organisations in any law-making process and CSOs are registered at the parliament. Lobbying also takes place at state as well as federal level. In December 2006, the German Federal Minister of Finance stated that 'the state needs civil society', admitting that the government depends on CSOs to fulfil its obligations towards its citizens (Strachwitz, 2011).

Although the corporatist elements in the German system, such as trade unions, churches, welfare organizations and business organisations, provide opportunities for class and religious interests to participate in public policy-making, immigrants and minorities are excluded from such decision-making.[53]

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[53] Yasemin Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994. Cited in Pontus Odmalm, "Turkish Organizations in Europe: How National Contexts Provide Different Avenues for Participation", *Turkish Studies,* Vol. 10, No.2, June 2009, p.155.

Immigrant Organisations in Germany

Immigrant organizations have four main functions. First they can act as links between the sending and receiving countries, providing advisory services for future immigrants, and giving them an intermediary role in a complex bureaucracy. They can also help soften the shock of transition by offering a setting in which immigrants can meet fellow nationals and speak their native language. They can maintain interaction among immigrants, especially for those who lack informal ties, and may try to form formal ties to develop some form of bonding. Second, they can complement the state in integrating newcomers into the host society. If organisations can establish well-functioning relationships with the authorities responsible for integration policies, then they can facilitate integration. This can include providing native-language information about the host country or acting as a link between immigrants and different socioeconomic sectors of the host society and its political world. They can also be used as a 'training school' for further political participation. Third, if they are part of an established network, immigrant organisations can act as a unified force in support of their particular ethnic group in relation to the host society. The extent that immigrants cluster in organizations is an important indicator of the strength of their collective identity. The character, number and size of organizations indicate the extent that immigrants prefer to see themselves as different or be seen by others as different. That is, these organizations can be viewed as an expression of the collectively-felt identity of their members. This may be defensive, in response to exclusion, or offensive, which stems from immigrants choosing to set themselves apart from others. Thus, there is a distinction between organizations that prefer to reinforce the group's ethnic identity and those that encourage integration. Immigrant organizations can also play an important role to establish links between the ethnic group and its country of origin, and serve as contact points between ethnic communities in different settlement countries, such as those among Turkish communities in different European countries (Odmalm, 2009: 158). Schoeneberg (1985: 419) argues that whether immigrant organisations have predominantly segregative or integrative effects depends mostly on the basic activities they offer to their members, and on the position they take towards the rest of society. They may direct their organizational efforts towards the preservation of traditions and the defence of their culture of origin from the influences of the host society, or help and encourage their members to relate to members of the host society.

Access and cohesion are crucial factors in understanding the influence of the immigrant community on policy making at the national level. Immigrants have the potential to influence their host country's policies, including its foreign policy. However, this potential can only be

realized if the immigrant community is large enough, has access to political power and speaks with a single voice (Ögelman *et al.*, 2002: 162). Ögelman *et al.* (2002: 145-147) argue that two factors limit the political power of immigrant groups regarding policy-making in the host country. The first is their cohesion, which depends on organizational and material capabilities. The second is whether the group's access to political power is determined by the host society's political institutions. In countries that facilitate the acquisition of citizenship and grant immigrants participatory rights, those immigrant groups that are large, homogeneous and well-organized, have greater influence over their host country's foreign policy. Ögelman *et al.* (2002) also note that, if immigrant preferences differ from those of the host population, then immigrant influences on foreign policy can be significant.

In Germany, immigrant organizations have defended immigrant rights vis-à-vis German political parties and local and the federal German state authorities. As a result, Germany's institutions have gradually begun to take these organizations seriously and consider them as representative and consultative bodies in immigrant issues (Yurdakul, 2006: 436). Thus, the institutions of the majority society search for ways to work together with immigrant organizations because they recognize their influence in transforming immigrant communities (Yükleyen and Yurdakul, 2011: 70).

However, immigrant organizations in Germany have not been given any special role in the formulation of integration policy, and formal links with organizations are not well established. Instead, labour unions and churches play a more prominent role than immigrant organizations. Although few provisions exist for the collective participation of immigrants at a federal level, there are crucial differences at the local level. Moreover, there is a high degree of variance in terms of funding for immigrant organizations, which again often relates to the attitude of the local government (Odmalm, 2009: 155).

In the next section the role of Turkish community organisations in Germany will be discussed.

The Role of Turkish Community Organisations in Germany

As mentioned earlier, for a long time, German citizenship policies made it almost impossible for immigrants to naturalize and become part of the political community. This lack of formal opportunities led immigrants to develop a more civil society-orientated means of participation (Odmalm, 2009: 154). As Kaya and Kentel (2005: 10) argue, in response to Germany's exclusionary *auslander* status attitude towards Turkish immigrants, the latter have tended to develop strong ethnic structures. In addition, the lack of political participation and low level of representation in Germany has made them direct their political activity towards Turkey, which has also received

encouragement from Turkey in the form of networks of consular services and other official religious, cultural and educational organisations. Ostergaard-Nielsen (2000: 23-38) argues that the way in which Turks organize has not only depended on Germany's institutions, but is also related to Turkish immigrants' socioeconomic position, developments in Turkey, and developments in Turkey-EU relations.

Although the German institutional context has not effectively channelled Turkish community into German organizations, it has permitted immigrants to develop their own organizations. There are several indigenous German organizations relevant to Turkish incorporation. Organizations such as the *auslanderbeirate* were created by the government to represent immigrant interests, while civil organizations such as *wohlfahrtsverbande* have an official mandate to represent the interests of various immigrant communities. German political parties constitute another organizational medium through which immigrants can negotiate the terms of their incorporation, although the Christian Social Union (CSU), the *Republikaner* and the *Deutsche Volksunion* parties refuse to include immigrants because of strategy (Ögelman, 2003: 173-175).

The Turkish community in Germany offers the most diverse and fragmented organisations. During the early to mid-1960s, they avoided organized political activity. But as temporary guest-worker programmes led to settlement, Turkish immigrants started to express diverse political identities and engage in group activities. The resulting internal divisions over goals and strategies weakened the Turkish community's potential (Ögelman, 2003: 166-167). By the 1980s, the Turkish network of organizations had become the broadest of all immigrant groups in Germany, although it was more polarized along political lines than any other ethnic group network. While religious and conservative groups did not engage in political activities, more leftist organizations participated in politics, both in West Germany and Turkey. Leftist groups also promoted cooperation with German organizations, particularly with the unions. Both the polarization of Turkish politics and the ethnic fragmentation of Turkish society were reflected in Turkish community organizations in West Germany (Schoeneberg, 1985: 424). Thus, Turkish community organizations in Germany display a vast variety of political backgrounds and affiliations, ranging from radical left and right-wing nationalist at each extreme to mainstream organizations. There are also religious organizations such as those of the Alevis. Turkish Sunnis have established several organizations favouring a secular form of Islam that has led to emergence of competing Islamist organizations.

Whether Turkish community organizations are more engaged in homeland or host society issues has depended on the structural conditions and opportunities available for participation. Germany's restrictive

naturalization laws have given rise to two types of political engagement, which are transnational activities or trying to improve immigrant status in Germany. Sometimes, local conditions allow for more inclusive participation in terms of cooperation with German authorities to improve immigrant integration (Odmalm, 2009: 159). Turkish immigrants have established several CSOs in Germany focusing on cultural, political and social issues. In particular, assistance organizations, hometown associations, women, student, parent organizations and professional organizations, such as workers, businessmen and teachers associations have also been established (Sezgin, 2011: 237).

Two of the main problems of immigrants concern equal opportunities in employment and education. In order to deal with these problems, federal and local state institutions provide funding for projects undertaken by immigrant organizations, such as job training projects, neighbourhood centre projects for educational facilities, and consultation offices that help immigrants with bureaucratic problems, such as immigration status or banking and credit problems. As a result, many Turkish community organizations conduct their projects only with the funding they receive from state institutions. The German state authorities perceive these organisations primarily as social service providers rather than political interest groups (Yurdakul, 2006: 439-440).

According to Sezgin (2011: 239-243), most Turkish community organizations try to preserve the identities of their members, as stated in the statutes of more than half of them, while some try to preserve Turkish culture and traditions in Germany. Another crucial aim is the integration of the Turkish community in Germany. Usually, Turkish community organizations keep direct or indirect ties with their counterparts or certain political parties in Turkey. They usually mobilize around homeland political agendas and express their thoughts about Turkish foreign policy. Many of them transfer and attract remittances to Turkey. A limited number of Turkish community organizations provide financial assistance to some Turkish CSOs in Turkey.

The Turkish community in Germany politically incorporates immigrants into the host society through their organizations, shaping the integration patterns of the community while also transforming the majority society (Yurdakul, 2009: 2-7). The main goal of these organizations is to provide greater social justice for immigrants in German society. They emphasize the voting power of immigrants, demanding minority rather than immigrant rights, while standing against assimilation. Turkish immigrants mobilise politically through their ethno-national organizations to challenge German citizenship regulations and negotiate their membership. German political parties, particularly the Social Democrat Party (SPD) and the Greens, support immigrant organizations and immigrant representatives that

help provide an environment for immigrants to organise, mobilise and state their demands to the German state. Thus, they have become involved in the political decision-making process. However, while these organizations may act as representative bodies of the community, they do not have full bargaining power vis-à-vis the German authorities (Yurdakul, 2006: 437-439).

As already mentioned, these community organisations are not homogeneous, with diversities among immigrant groups developing and intensifying through interaction with the political organisations of the receiving society. These organisations are different in terms of their background, strategy and goals, while participating in politics and negotiating their positions (Yurdakul, 2006: 449). In accordance with the dominant class cleavage in Germany, Turkish community organizations on the left, especially Social Democratic ones, have established close links with the SPD, which enables them to get more state funding than more conservative and transnational-oriented organizations. The presence or lack of several opportunities for political engagement provides them with certain political ways by which they define their goals and strategies in relation with regards to the host society (Odmalm, 2009: 157). As Yurdakul (2009: 2-12) argues, Turkish community organizations are not passive recipients of the German state's political decisions; rather, they are active political agents in the political system that develop their own patterns of integration depending on their interactions with the receiving state. They try to integrate into the majority society in their own ways, rather than in ways imposed on them by state authorities. The members of these organizations wish to be accepted as citizens through civic participation that transforms both their own communities and the civic traditions of the host country. Apart from these groups, Turkish immigrant elites have become important political actors in negotiating rights and membership for their own community, also sometimes for other minorities and disadvantaged groups.

Types of Turkish Community Organisations in Germany
Religious Organisations of Turkish Community in Germany

Because Islam is not recognized as an official religion in Germany, it has been very difficult for Turkish religious organisations to participate in the political system (Vermeulen and Berger, 2011: 169). Islamic religious organisations do not have the legal status of a corporation under public law, unlike Christian churches and the Jewish community. Instead, they are considered as private organisations without legal standing (Jonker, 2000). Furthermore, due to national, ethnic and intra-Islamic religious differences, no umbrella organisation exists to represent German Muslims (Kogelmann, 1991: 315-336).

The main religious organisations of the Turkish community in Germany and their main goals and functions are explained below.

Turkish-Islamic Union of the Directorate for Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği- DITIB)

DITIB was established in 1983 as a result of the Turkish parliament's decision to set up religious centres for Turkish immigrants in Europe. It is commonly believed to be the formal representative of the Turkish state institution, the Directorate of Religious Affairs. However, its members emphasise that they only have an informal agreement. Imams funded by Turkey are sent to Germany, while other activities include youth groups, mosque or women's groups that are funded by associational resources. They are careful not to make any statements that would offend official relations between Turkey and Germany, but aim to maintain the loyalty of German-Turks to Turkey. *Diyanet*'s 'official Islam' calls for the integration of German-Turks without losing their Turkish national identity. Germany cooperates with the *Diyanet* because it has the largest network of mosques, but it would prefer the development of home-grown Islamic organizations (Yükleyen and Yurdakul, 2011: 70-71). It is the largest Muslim umbrella organisation in Germany, incorporating 870 mosque associations, and one of the most important Turkish organisations in Germany. The Turkish government coordinates DITIB's activities through the religious attaché of the Turkish embassy. The Turkish state also trains all DITIB administrators and religious scholars (Ögelman *et.al*, 2002: 151). There has been close cooperation between DITIB and other Islamic organizations in Germany since 2001. It has participated in the 'Islamic Conference' organized by the German Federal Home Office since 2006. The first Islamic conference united various Muslim organisations into one contact organisation called the 'Coordination Committee of Muslims'. DITIB also participated in the 'Integration Summit' initiated by the Federal Home Office in 2006. The aim of this meeting, which included representatives of both the German authorities and immigrant organisations, was the development of a 'National Integration Plan' (Amelina and Faist, 2008: 97-98) because Germany has focused on the formation of a German Islam in order to domesticate Islam and Muslims. One of the key aspects of this strategy is to promote DİTİB as the representative of moderate Islam in Germany. The official appointment of DİTİB as the sole representative of Muslims in Germany at the Integration Summit of 2006 excluded opposition Turkish groups and Muslims with non-Turkish national origins (Humphrey, 2009: 144).

In September 2006, the German Islam Conference (DIK) created a new broader national forum to represent Muslims in Germany with the goal of promoting a German Islam. DIK was composed of five main Muslim

organisations: DİTİB, Islam Council, Central Council of Muslims, Union of Islamic Cultural Centres and ten ministerial appointees. Since the introduction of DIK, Germany's dependence on DİTİB as the main representative of German Islam has decreased, with DİTİB being seen as too conservative and closely tied to the Turkish state. DIK's central aim is the national domestication of German Islam as moderate to contain Islamic extremism. In 2007, some Turkish community organisations boycotted the Integration Summit because they regarded the 2005 Immigration Law, which made immigration conditional on a capacity to integrate, as discriminatory against Turkish immigrants, particularly in terms of language and marriage (Humphrey, 2009: 144).

In short, until 1998, the German state's perspective was that Germany was not a country of immigration so Turkish Islam only had a temporary presence. After the securitisation of Islam after 2001, DİTİB was perceived as the face of moderate Islam and the main representative of German Islam. However, after Merkel came to power, the domestication of Islam took a different direction with the introduction of the Integration Summits and DIK. The new goal is to design a German Islam by Germany, rather than designing of Islam in Germany by Turkey (Humphrey, 2009: 150-151).

Islamic Community Milli Görüş (IGMG)

Apart from DITIB, one of the other most important Turkish religious organisations in Germany is the Turkish-Sünni Islamic Community *Milli Görüş*. It is part of the Islamic Council, which participates in the Islamic Conference (Amelina and Faist, 2008: 99-100). It is a diaspora network of Turkish Muslims in Europe, especially in Germany. Having different political ideologies, *Diyanet* and *Milli Görüş* do not collaborate. *Milli Görüş* is usually considered as part of political Islam, seen as preventing immigrants from integrating into German society (Yükleyen and Yurdakul, 2011: 72). In its official website IGMG is defined as an Islamic community which comprehensively organises the religious lives of Muslims. The IGMG addresses all issues regarding Muslims while at the same time representing their interests. The goal of the IGMG is to improve the living circumstances of Muslims and to protect their fundamental rights.

Alevitic Community Germany (Almanya Alevi Birlikleri Federasyonu-AABF)

The AABF was founded by seven Alevitic associations in 1991 to be the central community of the Federation of Alevitic Communities of Europe (*Avrupa Alevi Birlikleri Konfederasyonu*-AABK) (Amelina and Faist, 2008 :100). It is the main umbrella organisations of Alevis in Germany. It includes 130 local organisations which has 100.000 members. It was established

without any pioneer organisation in Turkey. It participates in German Islam Conference and German Integration Summit. Some of its main goals are revival of Alevi in Turkey and Germany, supporting interreligious dialogue and cooperation, education on anti-discrimination and human rights, professionalization of immigrant organisations and increasing their quality and to increase dialogue and cooperation among Turkish cultural and religious communities in Germany and Europe (website of AABF).

Turkish Business Organizations in Germany
Association of Turkish Entrepreneurs and Industrialists in Europe (Avrupa Türk İşadamları ve Sanayicileri Derneği- ATIAD)
      ATIAD has a crucial role in organisation and institutionalisation process of Turkish business world in Germany and Europe. Its primary activity fields include encouraging Turkish people who live in Germany and other member states of EU to entrepreneurship, to contribute to economic relations between Turkey and Germany, to contribute to solve education problems of Turkish community in Germany, to prevent unemployment among Turkish community and to support Turkey's membership to the EU (Website of ATIAD) ATIAD functions as a bridge between Germany, Turkey and the EU through its members' economic relations between Turkey and Germany, as well as between Turkey and other EU countries. Turkey's EU membership bid is supported by the ATIAD in various forms, including establishing contacts with German, Turkish and EU politicians, by producing position papers reflecting the position of ATIAD, and by written contact with Turkish, German and European politicians (Amelina and Faist, 2008 : 106).

German-Turkish Chamber of Industry and Commerce (Türk-Alman Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası- TD-İHK)
      Established in 1994, this organization is a counterpart of the German-Turkish Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Turkey. While the latter represents the interests of German enterprises in Turkey, TD-İHK represents the interests of Turkish enterprises in Germany (Amelina and Faist, 2008: 108). The Turkish Chairman of TD-İHK, Suat Bakır (2012), argued that business organizations are very influential in German politics, noting that TD-İHK is working for the interests of both Germany and Turkey. He stated that his organization was primarily lobbying for visa facilitation for Turkish businessmen, adding that TD-İHK's short-term goal is abolition of the visa requirement, with Turkey's EU membership as a longer-term goal.
      In addition to these associations, another umbrella organisation of the Turkish community in Germany is the Turkish Community in Germany (*Almanya Türk Toplumu*- TGD), founded by the union of several other umbrella organisations in Hamburg in 1995. Its main aim is to represent the

interests and demands of Turkish immigrants to German national institutions. It declares its goal as 'better communication between the German and Turkish nation by supporting cultural exchange, youth welfare, as well as education and occupational training' (Cited in Amelina and Faist, 2008: 103). It claims to be 'independent of political and religious ideologies and autonomous from associations with conservative, liberal, social-democratic or religious orientations' (Cited in Amelina and Faist, 2008: 103). TGD issues press releases, and organises PR campaigns, public conferences and other events. One of its current aims is the replacement of Germany's 'policy on foreigners' with a 'policy of equality'. In addition to requests for recognition addressed to the German government authorities and the public, TGD also demands dual citizenship for immigrants, and the establishment of German-Turkish European schools in other federal states, like the ones in Berlin (Amelina and Faist, 2008: 104).

As Vermeulen and Berger (2011: 161) argue, membership in Turkish community organizations has had a positive influence on Turkish immigrants' degree of political participation in the host society. Those German-Turks who are active in these organizations are more likely to respond proactively to political issues at a national level.

Conclusion

Although the Turkish community is large in Germany, its influence is limited because of the low education levels of the community. In addition, the Turkish community in Germany is not monolithic but highly fragmented and polarised, which means Turkish community organisations are often unable to work together effectively to reach common goals, such as for greater political empowerment or dual citizenship (Ögelman *et.al.*, 2002: 152).

Through their organizations, German-Turks try to persuade German policymakers to adopt their policy preferences. A semi-corporatist social contracting between the state and leading institutions that is rooted in German political culture dominates domestic politics. Thus, immigrant organizations have to face crucial obstacles to lobbying in Germany, regardless of their organizational capabilities, unless the state privileges their members through incorporation schemes. Without such privileged access, immigrants can exert little influence over German foreign policy; even they are large in number, well organized and cohesive in their demands. Turkish community organisations in Germany have various policies concerning Turkey. Islamist German Turks would prefer to orient Turkey more towards fellow Muslim countries, while Kurds, Alevis and other minorities among German-Turks support the implementation of the EU's human rights criteria in Turkey as a condition for Turkey's membership to the EU. However, these

diverse preferences and interests of various parts of Turkish community reduce their ability to play any crucial unified role in forging German foreign policy towards Turkey. German politicians usually seem to be ignorant about the foreign policy preferences of Turkish immigrants, who are not mobilized as an effective lobby to make their voices heard in Germany (Ögelman *et al.*, 2002: 146- 157). As a result, the German polity and the Turkish divisiveness constrain the political influence of German-Turks. German-Turks have limited access to German politics, and the German-Turkish community is fragmented, so their influence on German foreign policy has been almost nothing.

Turkish community organisations in Germany can play a crucial role both in integrating Germany's Turkish immigrants and contributing to solve the sociocultural and economic problems of Turkish community. Turkish community organisations in Germany are highly polarised ideologically, which makes it hard for them to act together for common goals. In order to be more influential in German politics, they have to be professionalized, and they have to cooperate more with German and Turkish CSOs. Turkish community organisations in Germany primarily have to cooperate more with each other by overcoming their ideological rivalries in order to find solutions for their common socio-economic problems, to contribute integration of Turkish community and to increase the influence of Turkish community in German politics.

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