

CONTEMPORARY TURKEY

This new strategic research initiative most clearly signals the shift to a more broadly focused research strategy for the British Institute at Ankara. Financial support has been provided for research in the areas of law, sociology, anthropology, heritage management and the historical roots of democracy in Turkey, all of which are reported on below. The Institute's new Assistant Director, Mark Herzog, has research interests in the electoral politics of contemporary Turkey and the growth and development of political parties since 2000. Turkish internal and foreign affairs attract much attention from contemporary researchers and commentators, and the issues that concern them will also be on our agenda. However, the Institute is of course neutral and non-political, and in keeping with a policy of playing to the Institute's strength, we will particularly focus on work which seeks to understand modern Turkey in a historical perspective. One of the great strengths of the Institute is that its library and its hostel attract researchers with varied interests and approaches, who by meeting can find common ground that links their studies. Interdisciplinarity can thus be served well at a practical as well as an intellectual level.

Turkish migration to European Union Member States: present and future dynamics

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This ongoing research project seeks to explore the intricacies of migration from Turkey to Member States of the European Union, not only from a contemporary perspective but also taking into consideration how the factors shaping the issue may alter over time, especially following the potential accession of Turkey to the EU.

Essentially, the research seeks to assess how the current legal framework governing the ability of Turkish nationals to access jobs within the EU impacts on the practical experience of those who try to navigate this law. A further aim is to consider how the prospect of future EU membership adds an extra dynamic to the discussion of migration from Turkey and to examine how the legal framework, and thus also the experience of migrants, is likely to change following accession.

Consideration of the following four key issues will feed into the broader evaluation of the research questions.

The current regime. Presently, the scope of the entitlement of Turkish nationals to move to the EU in order to carry out work is largely dependent on the particular Member State in question and their individual visa policy. The project focuses on the interaction between the EU law in the area stemming from the Ankara Agreement – and the European Court of Justice's interpretation of the relevant provisions – and the national laws of the Member States. The aim of this analysis is to expose the often harsh consequences of strict visa policies on the experiences of individual Turkish citizens.

The accession process. The ongoing accession process has ever-changing political and legal implications that shape the broader context against which debates surrounding Turkish migration take place.

Future transitional periods to control movement of new EU citizens. Assuming that Turkey's accession progresses, it is highly likely that transitional periods would be negotiated into the Accession Treaty allowing the older EU states to limit the extension of free movement rights to Turkish nationals for a set period of time. Of critical importance is the question of whether the restrictions imposed would follow the pattern set by previous accession treaties (which have seen restrictions limited to the application of the free movement of workers *acquis* with a maximum duration of seven years) or, rather, whether the older Member States would seek to impose an even harsher transitional regime (in terms of scope and duration) in the event of Turkey's accession.

Social, economic and demographic influences. Critical to the analysis of this largely legal study is the wider context in which the relevant debates and processes are constantly shifting and taking place. As such, it is vital to factor into the research scope to emphasise various social, economic and demographic influences. For example, there is no denying that Turkey's economy is performing significantly better than that of the EU. Furthermore, as many EU economies struggle and unemployment rates rise, the migration 'pull factors' become considerably less powerful. The perception that mass migration to EU countries would inevitably follow accession is somewhat naïve and simplistic.

Overall, this research hopes to play a critical role in challenging the perceptions held by some in the EU surrounding issues of Turkish accession and, even more importantly, regarding migration from Turkey, future migration potential and the characteristics of Turkish migrants.