

Article history: Received 26 November 2015; accepted 18 March 2016

Migrant associations as alternative jobs providers: Experience of Turkish and sub- Saharan communities in Belgium

Altay Manço[♥]
Andrea Gerstnerova^Y

Abstract

It can be said that Belgian labour market has been challenged since the 1970s due to changing economic landscape. The two major drivers for change were the deindustrialization and globalization. For some, these two drivers have brought a perceptible deterioration of working conditions and pay. In general, foreign workers are among the first to be affected by such changes. Their temporary residence status, unrecognized qualifications, limited language skills and lack of access to the social networks of the native-born Belgians make them particularly disadvantaged in the labour market. In order to overcome these obstacles, migrant communities have developed various, more or less effective, measures. To illustrate this, this paper discusses the role of migrant associations in economic integration among the Turkish and the sub-Saharan communities residing in Belgium. Particular emphasis is made on the contribution of the community's social capital in the process of transferring knowledge, financial and material means and professional networks. The social capital that sub-Saharan and Turkish communities dispose is of great help to immigrants. It can ease their adaptation into the new socioeconomic environment in material, financial and psychological terms. However, to some extent, the mobilization of the community's social capital can also incite the development of parallel societies that are in contrast to the ideal conception of a cohesive society. The adherence to the legislative framework of the host society may also be questioned. The occurrence of informal activities within the migrant associations is not infrequent.

Keywords: *Economic integration; immigration; community life; sub-Saharan Africans; Turkey; Belgium*

Introduction

Newcomers face a number of barriers when entering the labour market. First and foremost are the challenges with obtaining work permits and accreditation for their skills and educational qualifications. There are also other contextual barriers related to geographical, political, socioeconomic environments of the host society and socio-cultural characteristics of newcomers. Despite the general acceptance of migrant workers especially in a period of economic

♥ Dr Altay Manço, Scientific Director of Institut de Recherche, Formation et Action sur les Migrations, Liege, Belgium. E-mail: amanco@irfam.org.

Y Dr Andrea Gerstnerova, Brainiact S.A.R.L., 6 rue A. Duchscherer, L-1424 Luxembourg, Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg. E-mail: a.gerstnerova@brainiact.com.



growth, the level of their acceptance is not the same for all of them. Migrant workers from developing countries are often considered as less desirable and their stay is mostly perceived as temporary (Drbohlav, 2003). This unequal attitude may encourage the less privileged immigrants to develop feelings of ‘communitarianism’ that actually interfere with the overall conception of a modern cohesive society characterized by the cultural and social ‘mixity’ (Magocsi, 1999). The existing lack of integration measures tailored to the needs of immigrants strengthens ethnicity and ethnic-oriented job markets concentrated in particular urban areas. As a consequence, many ethnic businesses and services created by immigrants to overcome social barriers directly or indirectly hampering their access to the local labour market in numerous Belgian cities.

This paper shows the variety of Turkish and sub-Saharan diaspora reactions to the lack of adopted integration measures to overcome repercussions of socioeconomic changes in Belgium. The development of a particular community’s reactions is considered in the historical political context of immigration from Turkey and sub-Saharan Africa to Belgium. This paper draws upon the findings of various sources but three studies covering the period from 2006 to 2013 are of utmost importance (Manço, 2006; Manço and Amoranitis, 2010; Gerstnerova, 2013).

After outlining the historical context of the immigration to Belgium as well as the existing links between associative life and employability of community members in the next chapter, we consider social capital as an asset for both communities in the subsequent chapter. Afterwards we illustrate the support networks benefits in real cases of migrant communities installed in Belgium. In this respect, the two most prominent immigrant groups, Turkish and the sub-Saharan communities were selected to provide examples of migrant associations as alternative job providers: the relatively ancient Turkish economic immigration was low-skilled, but the more recent sub-Saharan diaspora to Belgium is for a part highly qualified.

Historical context of the Turkish and Sub-Saharan immigration to Belgium: is family reunification a stepping-stone to the development of communitarianism?

Since the second half of the 20th century, there was a steady increase of immigrants that has had a strong impact on the socioeconomic composition of the Belgian society. On the one hand, the society has experienced the consequences of the national immigration policy inspired by the vision of economic growth (Turkish immigration case, in the 1960s) and, on the other hand, the society has experienced the consequences of its national foreign policy wishing to keep special relationships with its former African colonies

(sub-Saharan immigration case, in the 1980s). Both adopted national policies mistakenly considered the Turkish and the sub-Saharan immigration as a temporary phenomenon and therefore delayed the elaboration and the implementation of local integration policies. As a result, the Turkish and sub-Saharan communities themselves have developed their own measures tailored to their real needs and available capacities. In general, the first support measures occur within the family circle itself.

Turkish immigration to Belgium

In Belgium, as in other Western European countries, the immigration was essentially driven by the demand for cheap labour in order to remedy to the domestic industry needs in the post-war period. The Kingdom of Belgium (hereinafter the Kingdom) recruited for its coal and steel factories essentially male workers coming from the South European countries and Turks (unskilled workers originally from peri-urban and rural areas). This 'adult man' immigration policy worked relatively well for about 20 years, until the outbreak of the economic crisis in the 1970s. Since then, traditional Belgian industries began to lose their competitive edge. Successive shifts in the international demand caused by adverse oil price shocks in 1979 sent abruptly the national economy into a period of prolonged recession. As a result, former rich industrial regions started to suffer from high structural unemployment levels and decreasing employment. The Kingdom not only found itself in need of a significant industrial restructuring, but it had to deal with the masses of legally present foreign workers whose economic value on the local labour market was suddenly undermined. Most of the Turkish steel and mine workers failed to overcome the occurred mismatch between skills required by the initial industrial sector and the new labour demands.

The economic recession of the 1970s and the consequent decreasing employment stimulated calls for stricter immigration reforms that would hamper the access of non-European workers to Belgium. Against the odds, the adopted decisions to suspend the procedure of recruitment and the introduction of visas lead neither to immigrants returning to their own countries, nor to a decrease in immigration. On the contrary, many Turks remained in Belgium and fetched their families to join them. In terms of numbers, the family reunification has since become the most important channel for immigration to Belgium. Turkish communities have gradually become the largest diasporas from outside the European Economic Area residing in Belgium.

The family reunification has, however, undergone important changes in time. While in 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s Turkish female spouses (with or without children) came to join their husbands residing in Belgium, the new millennium opened the way to family reunification with the elderly and the young newlyweds (Turkish grooms and brides married to children of former steel and mine workers already installed in Belgium) (Manço, 2006).

4 *Migrant associations as alternative jobs providers*

It is estimated that in 2011, there were about 170,000 residents of Turkish origin (whether or not naturalized)¹ living in Belgium (Schoonvaere, 2011). Half of them are settled in the Dutch-speaking region of Flanders, another quarter in the bilingual Brussels-Capital Region and the last quarter in the French-speaking region of Wallonia. More than half (51%) of the Turkish immigrants are installed in only nine Belgian municipalities (Brussels, Ghent, Charleroi, Genk, Liege and some other former coal-mining areas) (Manço, 2006).

According to Manço (2006, 2013), the number of Turks who arrive in Belgium by marriage culminates shortly before the 2000s (1,000 to 2000 entries were recorded by the Belgian authorities per year). This coincides with the increased need for labour within the Turkish businesses (Manço, 2013). The Turkish entrepreneurs called for a flexible, unskilled and cheap workforce as the majority of their ethnic businesses constitute low entry threshold activities that are open almost day and night and every day of a year (Manço and Akhan, 1994; Gatugu et al., 2004). During the last decade, 75% of all Turkish immigrants moving to Europe have done so within the framework of family reunification procedures (Manço, 2006, 2013). These workers have usually no professional qualifications or experience recognized in Europe. Therefore, the probability that they enter the informal job market constituted by various ethnic businesses of Turkish immigrants is very high.

Sub-Saharan immigration to Belgium

The arrival of sub-Saharan Africans followed rather different immigration scheme than it was in the case of Turkish unskilled workers mentioned above. On the contrary to the Turkish prevailing economic immigration (at least in the post-war period until the eruption of the economic crisis in the 1970s), the sub-Saharan diaspora never consisted of more than 15% of work permit holders (Monitoring socio-économique, 2013). The African immigration to Belgium, strongly influenced by the legacy of colonialism of earlier centuries, was in 1980 for the most part highly qualified. In fact, Belgian authorities lured young qualified Africans to become full-time students at local universities by offering them sufficient financial means and a one-year residence permit (Myklebust, 2012). The residence permit was for successful students renewable. This residential option soon became very popular. Students from former colonies (Belgian Congo, Rwanda and Burundi) did not hesitate to subscribe themselves to further study program in order to preserve their residence status in Belgium.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the demands for university studies were progressively overtaken by demands for asylum (due to the political instability in their countries of origin, according to Kagné and Martiniello, 2001) and family reunification. Since 2009, the family reunification cases have officially taken the lead over other delivered residence statuses (as in case of the Turkish immigrants).

¹ It is estimated that 75% of Turkish immigrants are naturalized (Manço, 2006).

In 2011, there were about 120,000 residents of sub-Saharan origin (whether or not naturalized) living in Belgium half of whom Congolese immigrants (Gerstnerova, 2013; Schoonvaere, 2010). Altogether 45% of the sub-Saharan diaspora is settled in the Brussels-Capital Region (Direction générale des statistiques, 2010) and its number continues growing (Gerstnerova, 2013). By joining the community in the Belgian capital, the sub-Saharan Africans hope to be provided by other diaspora members with some stability that would allow them to find their bearings and get used to the rules of the Belgian society (Kasongo, 2015).

Community's social capital: an asset for a diaspora and a threat of a major society?

The significant increase of the cultural diversity accompanied by the occurrence of immigrants' special needs (not fulfilled by the national/local integration policies) strengthened the development of a community's social capital. The development of the social capital refers to establishing trust-based networks (it means strong connections among family members, members of communities and organizations with shared history, experience and common purpose). Putnam (2000) calls this process 'bonding'.

Experience shows that immigrants turn to their trust-based networks when searching for assistance in the host society (Gerstnerova, 2013). At first, they turn for help to family members and only when the response is not sufficient they tend to mobilize other representatives of the diaspora (especially community members coming from the same village, region, ethnic group, etc.). The density of intra-community relations depends on the detected need for solidarity, reciprocity and collective strength. It usually differs in time and in relation to the type of residence permits of particular immigrants (Adam et al., 2002).

However, the bonding function of the community's social capital may be interpreted by representatives of the major population as a creation of ethnic ghettos. In that respect, the development of the community's social capital (taking forms of ethnic shops and services) is behind a deterioration of the majority perception of and attitudes towards immigrants. Although immigration has been to some extent regarded as a success story in economic terms (at least until the economic crisis in the 1970s), in the past three decades the immigration has been perceived as a serious root of social problems. Mass media and political debates have even fostered the negative perception of immigrant communities originally from outside the European Economic Area within the Belgian population.

Not doubtfully, the type of residence permit (family reunification, work, secondary school education and university-level studies, asylum, etc.) predetermines to a large extent the course of the economic integration process of immigrants. It is, however, the lack of social ties within the host society that make them so disadvantaged by the local labour market (Gerstnerova, 2013).

The lack of equal opportunities for career advancement due to discrimination related to their ethnic and/or cultural origin only increases this existing disadvantage (Castelain-Kinet et al., 1997). Driven by acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1987) and anxious pessimism (Sayad, 1991) from underemployment² as well as dismissive attitude towards the representatives of the majority (Bourhis and Leyens, 1994), the immigrant communities develop their own measures to overcome the problems related to the lack of social ties and equal opportunities in the labour market. The majority of them want to earn a decent living for their family and to obtain an acceptable social status in the society. The status of unemployed is generally perceived with a sense of guilt and illegitimate presence (Sayad, 1991). However, the implementation of community support activities is not the same within the Turkish and the sub-Saharan diaspora. While the sub-Saharan activities have been usually developed from scratch on the basis of urgent needs of their members, the organization of the Turkish support activities used to profit from entrepreneurial skills of association leaders.

Ethnic entrepreneurship and new venture creation: case of Turkish diaspora

Migrants represent an important pool of entrepreneurs in Belgium. Whilst data for Belgium as a whole are not available, partial statistics indicate that proportionately more migrants and members of ethnic minorities than nationals start small businesses. In case of Turkish immigrants, we can suppose that one Turkish family out of three earn a living from working for ethnic businesses (Manço, 2006).

The creation of the first Turkish business dates back to the early 1970s. Belgian census counted 850 Turkish businesses in 1975. We may presume that a part of these ventures was created in a reaction to the on-going economic crisis (in the 1970s). Ever since, their number continued growing and in 1995 reached the number of 1970 Turkish businesses and in 2005 the number of 3,600 Turkish businesses in Belgium (Manço, 2006). A large part of them (43%) are situated in the region of Flanders. Another 37% is situated in the Brussels-Capital Region and 20% in the region of Wallonia (Manço, 2006). The number of Turkish immigrants engaged in ethnic businesses has been multiplied by six in the past forty years. While, in the early 1970s altogether 5% of the Turkish labour force represented entrepreneurs and their employees (it means various assistants, occasional helpers as well as managers recruited either from the extended family, or the Turkish community), forty years after, they were close to 30% (Manço, 2006). About 24,000 Turkish workers (out of the 80,000 of the total Turkish population) in Belgium are employed in ethnic businesses (Monitoring socio-économique, 2013).

Historical experience shows that the Turkish entrepreneurial dynamics (in terms of the rate of formation of business ventures) used to grow in parallel

² Employment not in the desired capacity, whether in terms of compensation, hours, or level of skill and experience.

with the increasing unemployment levels of community members (Manço, 2006). They usually climax in periods of economic restructuring like deindustrialization and globalization, it means periods associated with frequent eruptions of unemployment. For example, in the deindustrialization period, the Turkish manual workers hoped to rise up the social scale of the local labour market by starting to work in another economic sector, but the inappropriateness of skills acquired made their upward mobility unlikely (Nocker et al., 2012). As a consequence, the Turkish community was in the 1970s largely affected with job losses. Concerning the number of unemployed Turks, the situation is any better in the period of globalization. The Monitoring socio-économique (2013) data in Brussels showed that 30% of the active Turkish population were unemployed compared to 18% for all foreigners and 8% for Belgians. The second generation of the Turkish workers stays as well particularly vulnerable to the local labour market.

However, European experience shows that the entrepreneurial dynamism cannot be explained solely by unemployment rates. Other factors also come into play like national legislation that favours venture creation and/or provides easy access to financial resources. For example, in the European scale, Great Britain and Sweden hold primacy in a number of Turkish entrepreneurs (they represent altogether 38% of the active Turkish population in Great Britain and 28% in Sweden) despite their generally low unemployment levels (less than 12% of the active Turkish population is unemployed) (Manço, 2006).

Concerning the Kingdom of Belgium, it also favours a new venture creation. As for the Turkish community members, they are essentially active in low entry threshold activities in niches left vacant by the major population such as grocery stores, street vending, restaurants and catering. The scope for breakouts or diversification into mainstream markets is rather limited due to insufficient management and marketing skills (Turkish immigrants do not usually possess high education diploma despite a clear improvement with respect to the second generation of immigrants) and inadequate knowledge of Belgian official languages (European Commission, 2015).

Human resources and financial demands of Turks are usually tackled within the family or the community circle. In fact, a very large majority of Turkish ventures situated in Belgium are little family businesses. There are several reasons for this. One of the principal reasons is the fact that by engaging their family members, the Turkish entrepreneurs save their relatives from long-term unemployment. Being a part of the Turkish Muslim community also helps a would-be entrepreneur to obtain financial means to start up his or her business (Manço, 2006; Kaya and Kentel, 2007). According to Parthoens and Manço (2005), attending mosques creates trust between believers that facilitates lending money and getting various information and aid. In a number of cases relatives of the moneylenders are afterwards involved in the newly created businesses (Parthoens and Manço, 2005). Entrepreneurs of the Turkish ethnic businesses assure by the involvement of community members and the

promotion of traditional cultural values their regular and faithful customers throughout the Turkish community. This helps them to gain a good reputation within the local Turkish community that may be subsequently capitalized both in the creation of a migrant association (Turkish entrepreneurs play generally a leading role in the establishment and management of Turkish migrant associations), and in the launching of their political careers in Belgium and/or in Turkey (Manço, 2006; Kaya and Kentel, 2007; Kaya and Kentel, 2005). Their possible associative or political success is afterwards reflected back in rising profits of their ethnic businesses and in expanding their import-export capacities (Manço and Akhan, 1994). The role of intra-community marriages enabling the young Turks to join the Turkish diaspora in Europe should not be either overlooked when talking about running ethnic businesses.

Migrant associations' dynamics and their role in the labour market

Migrant associations may be defined as 'voluntary groupings of immigrants and their descendants' (De Haas, 2006) that wields power and resources to forge collective benefits (Putnam, 2000). In the era of globalization, the collective identity of migrant groupings is even strengthened by various means of new telecommunication technologies (Fauvelle-Aymar, 2006). Most immigrants coming to Belgium experience a certain disillusion after their arrival (Manço, 2004). This may be explained by the lack of adequate integration measures implemented at the local level and harsh employment and residential conditions (Kasongo, 2015). Immigrants usually use community-based support networks to overcome their existential difficulties. These community support networks act in fact as self-help associations that do not provide only time to other community members but also advice as well as material and financial assistance.

According to observations of Amoranitis and Manço (2011) made on 150 migrant associations, their functions cover in general several areas. Firstly, migrant associations assure contact with other community members and create linkages: a possible function of associations can also be fuelling communitarianism. For some, this bonding function may even open the way to the economic integration of community members. In more practical terms, in Belgium, several migrant associations employ the paid staff (registered or not). That constitutes in total 1500 paid positions within the Turkish and sub-Saharan associations counted together. Secondly, migrant associations strengthen individual capabilities of community members and teach them new skills (for example through volunteerism). In some cases migrant associations even guide them in the realization of their vocations. Thirdly, migrant associations help to raise awareness of the functioning and available resources of the host society. For example, they build partnerships with local institutions to improve the impact of their investment activities. Fourthly, migrant associations summon efforts to organize specific actions and projects in countries of origin. Fifthly, they help to improve the understanding of public

administration officials and other NGOs representatives dealing with immigrants of difficulties the particular community members are facing in the process of integration both in the labour market, and in the whole society (Gerstnerova, 2013).

It is clear that the majority of the benefits made by migrant associations concern principally the host society. However, in one case out of three, we can also observe some combined benefits improving living conditions both in the country of the installation, and the country of origin³. As for the numbers of generated jobs within these solidarity associations, they are much higher in the country of origin than in the country of the installation. In the country of installation migrant associations can nevertheless generate a lot of volunteer positions. It should also be noted that migrant associations follow a certain development cycle. Despite slight variations in different periods of time and in relation to the changing aspirations of their founders, there are 8 main phases that migrant associations typically follow (Amaranitis and Manço, 2011, p. 34–37)⁴.

The Belgian context and associations

At the beginning of the 1970s, the first Turkish associations were founded either by intellectuals (teachers, agents in diplomatic missions and Muslim religious executives who copied the traditional structures of the country of origin), or by Turkish refugees representing the working class (Manço, 2006). The majority of the created associations in Belgium were meant to unify the Turkish immigrants for specific social events (like funerals including returns of a coffin to the home village). Gradually, the number of created Turkish associations accelerated in Belgium. During the 1970s, the Turkish government legally, financially and materially supported numerous Turkish associations. In this respect, we can give an example of the Turkish religious representatives and teachers active in the supported migrant associations. The government felt somewhat the duty to encourage the transmission of the Turkish culture, artistic skills, religion and language to children of immigrants. By doing so, Turkey wished to retain control over its emigrants generally seen as missionaries of the Turkish culture and important contributors to the economic development of the country (Manço, 2006; Jacobs and others, 2009).

3 The development strategy that considers migrants to be a developing factor for their countries of origin is called 'co-development' (Manço and Amaranitis, 2010).

4 1) group mobilization and creation of an association, 2) search for recognition and collaboration with the host society organizations, 3) affirmation of 'dual citizenship' of association members and identification of their social roles in the host and in the sending countries, 4) initiation of the co-development projects between the country of the installation and the country of origin, 5) realization of innovative projects in the country of origin, 6) consolidation of activities carried out in the country of origin, 7) organization of activities coming from countries of origin, and 8) balancing transfers between the host and in the sending countries. Each of these phases has to tackle with various kinds of problems (material, financial, logistic, informational, etc.) that may lead, if untreated, to the distinction of the particular migrant association.

Over the years, the Turkish associative network has become dense and diversified (in terms of their founders, membership, and assignment). After the Turkish intellectuals (at the beginning of the 1970s), Turkish entrepreneurs took the lead over the creation of migrant associations in the late 1970s. Their associations for the promotion of the Turkish culture were essentially established in small Walloon and Flemish towns affected by the retreat of the coal and steel industry (Manço, 2006). Simultaneously, the Turkish students and labour activists started to found associations. Their major mission was to protect rights among others of Turkish minorities (Kurdish groups and Alevi – a community of Shia Muslims of Anatolia and neighbouring regions marginalized and discriminated against in the Ottoman Empire, etc.). Some of these associations, situated principally in major university towns such as Liege, Ghent, Antwerp and Brussels, were financially supported by Belgian public institutions and trade unions (Manço, 2006).

Recently, there are about 700 Turkish associations in Belgium (Manço and Gatugu, 2005). Some of them count hundreds of members, especially the religious ones (there are about 100 Turkish mosques in Belgium). A significant number of Turkish associations also take part in the twelfth well-structured Turkish federations. Each of the Turkish federation generates around 20 paid opportunities. It means 1–3 people per association (Manço and Gatugu, 2005). These vacancies are financially supported, firstly, by the Turkish government (in case of the aforementioned religious representatives and teachers), secondly, by the public subsidies (in case of organizers of cultural and religious events), thirdly, by Turkish entrepreneurs and other private donors (in case of funding maintenance tasks) and, lastly, by association members themselves from their contributions. The number of paid employees reflects in general the number of volunteers working for the particular association. Amoranitis and Manço (2011) count ten volunteers for one paid employee. It should also be noted that a certain number of existing Turkish cafés and restaurants are falsely presented as migrant associations and thus exempted from paying taxes. Therefore, a part of accumulated profits may be distributed to volunteers as a hidden salary. Volunteers are paid for their services either in cash, or in kind (they are offered low-cost services like cheap accommodation).

Apart from the cultural identity promotion, the majority of the Turkish associative activities encourage in some respects the socioeconomic and political integration in Belgium (Manço, 2006; Jacobs and others, 2009). This is linked to a progressive transition from an expected temporary sojourn into a lifetime project of Turkish immigrants. The incomes of Turkish immigrants are increasingly spent in Belgium and less sent back home. According to Roy (2005), the consumer investments in Belgium rose as the prospects of returning declines.

In comparison to Turkish immigrants, sub-Saharan Africans tend to form rather small associations aiming to unite no more than 10 people in search of their new identity and sense of living. Getting a new role within the created

association helps them to overcome the existing lack of recognition and/or undervaluing of their education, skills and credentials by the host society (Gerstnerova, 2013). Sub-Saharan Africans are usually members of more than one migrant association at a time (Kasongo, 2015). In 2010, there were about 600 sub-Saharan associations in Belgium (Manço and Amoranitis, 2010). However, getting an exact number of sub-Saharan associations and their geographical redistribution between regions is complicated. The majority of sub-Saharan associations stay unofficial. It means that they are not registered in the Belgian official journal – *Moniteur* (Manço and Gatugu, 2005; Gerstnerova, 2014, 2013). A lot of sub-Saharan associations have also an ephemeral nature (Perrin and Martiniello, 2011). They are created just for one particular event, and afterwards they are no more active. Other sub-Saharan associations are not easily identifiable because they operate in several different names at a time (De Bruyn et al., 2008). Last but not least, numerous sub-Saharan associations function more or less like ‘letterboxes’: despite their official registration in the Belgian official journal, the lack of financial and material means hampers their actual development (Perrin and Martiniello, 2011).

Only 10% of sub-Saharan associations dispose of sufficient financial resources to employ staff (maximum 1–3 people per association). The majority of sub-Saharan associations do have to content themselves with the volunteer workers (Ruttiens, 2012). But it does not mean that sub-Saharan associations are not paying anyone for executing the associative work. Some of the engaged volunteers are in fact paid in cash ‘under the table’ for the executed work (Manço and Amoranitis, 2010). In particular, the representatives of the unemployed youth are grateful for earning some quick money, getting some work experience and for being useful for the community (Gerstnerova, 2013). Recently, most of the existing sub-Saharan associations tend to provide information and assistance services to community members who are struggling to survive and adapt in a particular locality (Gerstnerova, 2013). But it was not always the case.

The first sub-Saharan association, Congolese Union – Society for Mutual Help and Development of Congolese Race (original French name: *L’Union congolaise – Société de secours mutuel et de développement de la race congolaise*), was created in Belgium in 1919 (Gerstnerova, 2013). The aim of the association, uniting a group of Congolese immigrants residing in Belgium, was to defend the rights of Congolese veterans of the First World War and to promote a national debate about the Congo (Gerstnerova, 2013). Other associations of that period were run by Belgian colonial masters (Perrin and Martiniello, 2011). In the 1980s, the ‘associative landscape’ began to change significantly. Sub-Saharan associations functioning primarily at the national level were gradually replaced by solidarity associations active only at the local level. Recently, the majority of sub-Saharan associations stick to a particular city district (Perrin and Martiniello, 2011). The militant spirit of sub-Saharan associations that prevailed in their actions during the former part of the 20th

century gradually faded away. Sub-Saharan associations started to cope with problems of daily life of the community members (Perrin and Martiniello, 2011; Gerstnerova, 2013). This statement has been also confirmed by Amoranitis and (2011) who analysed activities of fifty sub-Saharan associations operating in Belgium. Their results show clearly that the majority of activities organized by sub-Saharan associations are focused on tackling difficulties of existence.

In addition, around 6% of today's sub-Saharan associations take the form of local religious groups promoting the ancestral roots or origins of the African population as well as the Pentecostal worship (*églises du réveil*). Sundays, a great part of sub-Saharan Africans meet each other in their new places of worship (Madinda, 2011). Using African languages and African musical instruments can be observed during the Sunday Mass. Due to the fact that the organization of these weekly events requires a certain preparation, the new religious groups generate job opportunities for a couple of migrant volunteers (for example, gospel musicians, singers, etc.). These aids are usually paid by the church gifts offered during the Mass by other believers (Manço and Amoranitis, 2010). These new religions are created in reaction to classic Protestantism and Catholicism. Despite their undeniable social function that allows African immigrants to know each other, share problems and (to some extent) get solutions (religious groups sometimes provide accommodation to people in need), they may incite a strong moral dependence on a pastor who is followed and financed no questions asked (Manço and Amoranitis, 2010; Madinda, 2011).

Conclusion

Sub-Saharan Africans and Turkish immigrants face a number of disadvantages in Belgian labour market. Their economic integration success depends to a large extent on their migration incentives, the type of residence permit and the social capital their community is able to produce. For that reason, the lack of existing integration measures tailored to their specific needs has encouraged sub-Saharan and Turkish communities to develop their own support measures. Community networks are usually responsible for their implementation. Community networks may involve only family members or other members of the diaspora. In case of the sub-Saharan diaspora, the support measures have been mainly developed from scratch on the basis of urgent needs of their community members. Apart from some exceptions, they are rarely well organized or interlinked and do not usually stick to clearly defined objectives. This may be due to the prevalent unofficial forms of sub-Saharan associations. Concerning the Turkish support activities; they used to profit from entrepreneurial skills of association leaders. Turkish entrepreneurs took the lead over the creation of associations since the late 1970s. The observations showed that the entrepreneurial and associative dynamics of the Turkish diaspora used to grow in periods of increased insecurity on the Belgian labour market (deindustrialization, globalization, etc.). In comparison to sub-Saharan

associations, the Turkish ones are able to mobilize significant community resources (financial and material means and consultancy services) for advancing individual economic integration plans of their community members. In general, the Turkish family elders help to live up to aspirations of their grand children. The sub-Saharan migrants do not dispose of that 'safety cushion' represented by the family elders in the host society. On the contrary to sub-Saharan associations, the majority of the Turkish ones are registered in the Belgian official journal.

No matter whether the Turkish or the sub-Saharan ones, migrant associations work as alternative job providers. In Belgium, we count between 1500 and 2000 paid positions within the Turkish and sub-Saharan associations. To that number we have to add about 15,000 volunteers working directly or indirectly for those associations. Volunteer engagement can help immigrants to obtain some work experience in the host society, to enhance their self-esteem and to earn some money.

The social capital that sub-Saharan and Turkish communities dispose of is of great help to immigrants. It can ease their adaptation into the new socioeconomic environment in material, financial and psychological terms. However, to some extent, the mobilization of the community's social capital can also incite the development of parallel societies that are in stark contrast to the ideal conception of a cohesive society. The adherence to the legislative framework of the host society may also be questioned. The occurrence of informal activities within the migrant associations is not infrequent.

In terms of social politics steps to be taken, in order to make the most of the community's social capital and to limit its side effects (in the form of communitarianism that may be behind segregation tendencies and community divisions and tensions), it will be suitable to officially recognize the added value of migrant associations for the host society and encourage their interconnections with other communities. In terms of integration politics, a proposition can be promoting integration activities of migrant associations by various materials and financial means and accompany them in their efforts (provide the necessary consultancy in terms of management of resources and encourage linkages between various stakeholders active in the particular locality). It will also be beneficial to valorize volunteerism within migrant associations, and finally, translate specific professional experience of sub-Saharan and Turkish immigrants into new legal economic opportunities. The establishment, the diversification and the professionalization of migrant networks and their connection with the host society networks are the basis for the development of a cohesive society in which confidence reigns and prejudices linked to immigrants are surpassed.

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