

Young people of immigrant origin and their attitudes towards political participation. A comparative study with Greeks, Italians, Turks and Germans ⁽¹⁾

Countries with important numbers of foreign workers as, for example, Germany usually create a fiction that says that these workers will return to their country of origin after a certain period of time. But the truth is very different: immigrants and their children intend to stay. This “negation of reality” could explain why, after more than 30 years of massive immigration, the first research on political orientations of young immigrants in Germany was carried out in 1997.

The research compares political orientations of young immigrants and young Germans, as well as their readiness to participate in political processes. The comparison takes into account specific living conditions of immigrants, and also existing political orientations in the host country. The groups of young people with “immigrant background” that participate in the research (Greeks, Italians and Turks) show little differences in terms of migration profiles: Around 40% of the young adults between 18 and 25 with Greek, Italian and Turkish backgrounds were born in Germany and have always lived there; 30% of them arrived in Germany before schooling age and the rest entered the country after the age of six.

Their opinions about democratic principles, the level of acceptance of social organizations and institutions, and different forms of political participation clearly differ depending on gender, level of education and employment.

Key words: immigration, political orientation, political participation, comparative research.

Introduction

During the 1950’s, the Federal Republic of Germany needed workers and started a process to recruit foreign workers in their countries of origin, signing bilateral agreements ⁽²⁾ with the respective governments and sending out “Recruitment Commissions” with the objectives of recruiting workers and carrying out medical examinations. These examinations were to be carried out by German doctors that were brought to the countries that had signed the agreements. Immigration policies were based on the idea that recruiting foreign workers was a temporary solution and that immigrants would return to their countries of origin after a certain period of time; therefore, the Federal Republic of Germany was not a country of immigration.

The repeated statement regarding the provisional character of the permanence of foreign workers (that is why they first were called “Gastarbeiter”, which means host-workers, someone that after a certain time

(1)
Weidacher, A.(ed.) (2000) *In Deutschland zu Hause. Politische Orientierungen griechischer, italienischer, türkischer junger Erwachsenen im Vergleich* (At home in Germany. Political orientations of young Greek, Italian, Turkish and German adults from a comparative perspective). Opladen, Leske + Budrich

(2)
These agreements were signed with Italy in 1955, with Spain and Greece in 1960, with Turkey in 1961, with Morocco in 1963, with Portugal in 1964, with Tunisia in 1965, and with Yugoslavia in 1968.

returns home) and the idea of Germany not being a country of immigration determined all official answers to the lack of policies and measures related to immigrant workers. This official attitude had as a consequence that during the first years no one would even mention the word integration, why would they? Why integrate the family or the foreign workers if they were returning to their countries of origin some day?

During the first years, the only existent political decision was that, after the pressure of and the agreement with a German union, foreign workers had to accept the same salary agreements as German workers.

But since the late sixties, reality proved that the need for working force was not temporary, and that foreigners also have a family (sometimes even created in the Federal Republic of Germany or as a consequence of family regrouping) with children that start to need services and the problems related to the massification of the living-space in certain neighbourhoods where mostly foreign families live. The crisis of 1973/74 that also affects foreigners and starts to make conflicts with the native population visible obliges the political parties to debate about new measures and decisions regarding the immigrant population (3).

From the beginning, political reactions to new situations that arise with the presence of foreign families are reactive: as the problems are surfacing. Political reactions always were based on the assumption that, sooner or later, immigrants would return to their countries of origin.

This hypothesis has been the cause for the failure of most theories (integration, acculturation, cultural interaction, identity, etc.) or policies directed to social integration, which as a consequence has originated a heavy social burden: economic investments in socio-educational policies for immigrants and their children that don't show the expected results because objectives are not clear and the resulting increase of social tension which endanger social cohesion.

Social, educational, and political measures, as well as several research projects have been carried put as a reaction to the difficulties and the problems that were surfacing (4).

As time passed, foreigners that arrived as a consequence of bilateral Agreements were getting old and definitely didn't return to their countries of origin, their children have grown up in Germany and many of them have acquired the German nationality. Some of them now have more civil rights as a consequence of the expansion of the European Union. Citizens of countries of the European Union now can vote and be elected in local elections since 1994; the reform of the right of nationality in 1999 has opened the possibility to enlarge political participation for an important number of foreigners.

The research we will now comment, the first study on this issue, comes up after many years of immigration and when it becomes visible that political participation of young foreigners is possible. The content of this research focuses on two topics:

- The comparison of political orientations and the availability to act of young people from immigrant families with Germans.
- The examination of possible correlations between specific living conditions of immigrants and political orientations in the country of reception.

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Weidacher, A. López
Blasco, A. (1982) *Ausländerpolitik und Integrationsforschung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Policies for foreigners and research on integration in the Federal Republic of Germany). Eine Darstellung wichtigster Ergebnisse mit Auswahlbibliographie. München DJI Verlag. ISBN 3-87966-160-X

(4)
López Blasco, A. (1983) *Sozialisationsprozesse und Identitätskrise spanischer Jugendlichen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. DJI Verlag. ISBN 3-87966-178-2

Multiple or transnational citizenship

In many occasions, tolerating foreigners is limited to refer to the utility of their presence. The assessment of immigrants by the native population classifies them in different categories: depending on cultural proximity of the language, colour of the skin and religion, geographic proximity and the political system of their country of origin, etc. Also depending on quality of political and economic cooperation with these countries of origin.

Currently, the relation of Germans with foreigners belonging to EU-member states develops without cultural or political problems. This is also the case for EU-countries such as Greece, Italy, Spain or Portugal, from where 30 or 40 years ago a great number of workers arrived. Immigrants from these countries, but also from countries that (still) don't belong to the EU, such as Turkey or the countries from former Yugoslavia, have a common immigration background. As members of the EU, Greeks and Italians not only hold a different legal status, but they also enjoy a higher level of acceptance, as shown by different surveys among the German population.

EU-member countries are linked by common objectives in the social, political and economic field. In spite of the fact that foreigners coming from the EU do not enjoy full access to public institutions or the right to vote, the political union requires a feeling of belonging and, at the same time, acknowledgement of the cultural equality of the different vital settings between different groups of the population.

From a scientific point of view, as well as by pressure groups, demands of political and cultural equality are based, mostly, on the fundamental rights established by the Constitution. This way, and with references to ethnic and political links in the life of current society, the origin, marriage, and change of country of residence question the traditional idea of nationality and promote the concept of multiple or transnational citizenship. In this context, we can't overlook that the conditions to set up life in the fields of information, mobility, human biology or economy all national borders are trespassed and the development towards global society is promoted.

From this point of view, the thesis that states that for a democratic society loyalty of citizens is not enough seems to lose strength, while the idea that a status of national citizenship, although multiple and transnational, needs to promote political and social solidarity for all members of the society they are living in gains ground. Also in modern democracies a great part of the population lives as if politics was only a matter of representatives paid by the people and by the institutions. Responsibility towards shared problems, political participation, is very important in modern societies for the personal development, probably as important as couple relationships and paternity/maternity (Flanagan/Sherrod). Politicians and researchers underline that democracy is only viable through concrete solidarity, "a parliamentary constitution and the democratic institutions are not enough," democracy has to prove its capacity in institutions that are supported and trusted by the citizens.

First research on political orientations of young immigrants and Germans in Germany

The German Youth Institute in Munich carried out a study in 1997 that for the first time analyzes political orientations of young adults of immigrant

families (when this research was carried out there were 7.32 million foreigners in Germany).

Questions about political opinions and active participation of young people of immigrant origin were asked for the first time in researches about youth in Germany in the “Foreigners Survey” carried out in 1997. This survey was created as an independent appendix of the investigation about political orientations of young Germans. From then on, young immigrants were included in representative researches about political orientations (5). And no longer only “foreigners” are defined as a reference group, but all young people with immigrant backgrounds (for example, also young people with German nationality and parents that are also integrated).

In the past, as well as currently, there exists the problem that not every migration context or every ethnic or political foreign group can be represented in a sufficiently representative way in a research as to establish valid comparisons from a statistical point of view between the different groups. All groups chosen for the “Foreigners survey” belonged to the countries that in the past provided “Gastarbeiter”, and represented three differentiated cultural models. Furthermore, they differed in terms of the legal-political position as a consequence of their countries of origin belonging or not to the European Union. This different legal-political position (combined with other numerous cultural factors) had great influence on the possibilities of identification of young people. And also another known fact has to be added, that is, the belonging to the European Union plays an important role regarding the behaviour of the native population in terms of the level of acceptance of immigrants. In comparison with these significant differences, starting positions for political orientations of young people are placed in a stage of longer duration of socio-cultural communication of young people with the society in the country of reception. Everyone but a small minority longs or plans to stay in Germany. In spite of this common existential interest, we need to analyze the possibilities and developments of political orientation and participation in a context of varied and different conditions:

- Different levels of connection with the country of origin, from an economic, as well as a political point of view.
- In the short term, favourable conditions for intra-ethnic organization and protection of their own traditions.
- Preservation of specific cultural traditions (interpretation of right, family relations with structures that differ from the ones of the host-country, behaviours based on structures of authority, gender-specific roles.
- Links of cultural traditions with religious characteristics of the country of origin.
- Low levels of education and problems to learn the language spoken in the host country; the parents are not able to support their children in terms of demands of the education system.
- Lack of acceptance or very selective acceptance by the native population (General negative assessment of a minority group by the population).
- Different legal-political positions of immigrants, positions that make social and political identification with the society of reception more difficult and prevent active participation.

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Gille, M., et .a., 2006:
Jugendliche und junge
Erwachsene in Deutschland.
Wiesbaden, VS Verlag für
Sozialwissenschaften.

The surveyed people, all of them Greeks, Italians, Turks between 18 and 25 years old mean approximately 1 million of young adults in this age group.

Greeks, Italians and Turks differ very little in their migration profiles:

- Process of socialization in Germany with similar duration
- The level of education show little differences
- Their level of German language is good or very good in the same proportion
- Most of them want to stay in Germany
- They are interested in acquiring the German nationality in similar proportions.

Around 40% of young adults between 18 and 25 of Greek, Italian or Turkish origin were born in Germany and have always lived there, around 30 % of them arrived before schooling age and the remaining 30 % arrived after the age of 6.

Only 13 % of the Turks (15 % of the Italians, 17 % of the Greeks) show some interest in returning to their country of origin, while 60% of the young adults of all three groups wish to stay in Germany.

Young adults of the three groups are similarly interested in acquiring the German nationality (around 1/3 of them wants the German nationality, 1/3 says it is possible they will want it, and 1/3 says they will possibly not want it), and this in spite of the differences regarding geographic, cultural or political proximity with regard to Germany.

Young adults of foreign origin specially differ from German in terms of level of training and social origin. 93% of parents of immigrants have not finished compulsory education or have a certificate that is equivalent to compulsory education. This is the case for only 36% of German parents.

The research focused on the following question:

In Germany, what is the level of political integration of young adults (from 18 to 25 year olds) of immigrant origin (countries of the EU such as Greece and Italy), compared to young Turks (not EU-member country) and, at the same time, in comparison to Germans of the same age? How do these young people live politics?

The information corresponds to a group of 2,500 young Italian, Greeks and Turks sorted by age, gender, nationality and the region where they live in and to another representative group of 3,500 young people from West and East Germany.

The sample of young foreigners is characterized by common characteristics (countries that in the past provided workers, a similar proportion of young people that were born and raised in Germany, similarities in terms of plans of staying in Germany and qualifications, similar legal-political situation of Greeks and Italians, who belong to EU-member countries, unlike the Turks, who are not a part of the EU) and by differences regarding cultural traditions and legal-political situation. With a set of identical questions about political orientation, the "Youth Survey" added additional questions on specific life situations of immigrants and on socio-cultural orientation. Young people could answer these questions in their mother tongue. In order to identify similarities in the characteristics (such as training, labour situation, family

structure, etc.) and behaviours (such as opinion about democracy, gender-specific roles, trust in political institutions, etc.) not only bi-variable comparisons of characteristics were carried out through cross-tables. Also multi-variant methods were used, such as no-lineal correlation analyses (OVERALS), analytical factor calculations and explorative procedures (CHAID), with the aim of analyzing interactions of numerous factors on the features that are to be explained.

Most important results

The research we are commenting gives information about political orientations, comparing young foreigners to themselves and to young Germans. All of this in three different levels:

- What is their opinion about the basic rules of democracy (freedom of speech, control of powers, separation of Church and State, etc.) and equality of gender?
- How is their acceptance of political, cultural government institutions?
- How did they participate until now in the field of politics?

On the following, I would like to, firstly, review the more general actions and forms of political participation, such as the assessment of democratic principles, the acceptance of social organizations and entities and participation in political actions (points 1, 2 and 3).

After that, and secondly, I will present the results of the research in relation with fundamental conditions that also have an influence, although independently of migration circumstances, over the development and perception of political interests, opinions, hopes and the disposition to participate. Among these conditions, the following are to be taken into account:

- The role of training as the base to acquire communicative competences and possibilities of interaction, as well as value orientations and the perception of gender-specific roles.
- The labour situation and the form of life influence how political interests are perceived.
- Age and circumstances of the parent's and their children's migration process.

Political opinions and democratic principles

In general and referring to the young interviewees, their opinions on democratic principles show clear differences between males' and females' positions, as well as between young people that have finished secondary education and those who have abandoned school too early.

However, young adults of immigrant origin share in similar high proportions as Germans the objectives of a democratic society and the principles of gender equality. There is a convergence with the thesis that states that there is a trend towards homogeneity of objectives of social welfare based on democratic principles. These similar opinions are explained because young adults share the same sources of information that are specific of young people and the same conceptual world, in spite of the fact that Germans and

foreigners do not have the same opportunities of political participation and identification.

Similar level of acceptance of social organizations and institutions

Regarding questions about trust in social institutions, two different streams can be identified:

- Trust in political institutions, for example, the German parliament, the government, the Justice, police.
- Trust in “solidarity organizations with democratic base”, such as Greenpeace, citizen initiative, unions.

The level of training, satisfaction with the possibilities of political participation, gender, the region where they live in, religious trends, values regarding social security or the level of realization play a central role in the levels of trust (abstention or assessment) and the two differentiated streams previously mentioned.

For example, young adults with medium or low levels of education and for whom religion is very important in their lives identify with values of social security (in lower levels with personal realization) and show great trust in institutions managed or dependent of political decisions. This orientation (as with the group that does not answer to this question) gets stronger among young adults that are already married, that take care of domestic tasks and, above all, among young people with children.

Young German adults and young people of foreign origin behave similarly regarding their acceptance of political institutions, and also with regard to their preferences for certain institutions they trust: Solidarity organizations with democratic base such as Greenpeace or citizen initiatives are valued as very positive, better than other institutions. Among these other institutions, police and courts are more trusted than the government or political parties.

By breaking down the structure of preferences it is possible to identify specific arguments of each nationality that seem plausible: Courts and police are assessed more positive among Germans than among foreigners, especially among Turks. Italians and Turks value German television (probably as organ for intellectual interests) very positively. Greek and Turkish people, with higher proportions of salary men, show more trust in unions. On the other side, Italians, who mostly belong to the Roman-Catholic religion, have a better opinion of Christian churches than Greeks, who are Orthodoxes, or Turks, usually Muslims.

Similar forms of political participation

The answers to the question of young adults' participation in political actions show a similar structure of preferences: The most common form of action among Germans is also the most common action among young foreign adults. But there are also specific differences between each nationality, and there is also a plausible reason: linguistic advantages of Germans and their higher level of education –therefore, also longer duration of the training period– favour competences regarding forms of actions such as collecting signatures, working for unions, public debates, writing to the media and politicians...

This way, all fundamental conditions for the actions and the participation have already been mentioned; conditions that also influence, independently of migration circumstances, the development and perception of political interests, opinions, hopes and the disposition to participate: Finishing training as base to acquire communicative competences and improve the possibilities of interaction, to develop value orientations and the perception of gender-specific roles. Another factor that affects political interests is the labour situation and the life-style. This highlights another important result of the study.

Special consequences of the labour situation and education

The situation of young immigrants can lead to higher levels of disadvantage when they show low levels of education and a labour situation that is not favourable, a situation that is also happening among young adults affected by labour and education disadvantages. Both groups –young people with immigrant background and young Germans with low levels of education– are not interested in politics, state opinions that are less oriented towards democracy, show lower levels of acceptance of political institutions, as well as less contact with political participation.

Early school leaving and low levels of knowledge of the German language are to a great extent problems linked to young adults that arrived in Germany after the age of six. Qualifications not only decide labour opportunities, but also communicative competences, the ability to develop contacts and the possibility of communication.

Together with late immigration and/or low levels of education or knowledge of the language, another factor stand out: the traditional gender role model, family hierarchy and obligations, as well as religious bonds. Young adults who have immigrated at later ages do work, are unemployed or take care of domestic tasks in higher proportions. They have tighter bonds with their families, marry earlier and, in many cases, they already have a family of their own. These young people are clearly less active politically.

On the other side, young people of foreign origin with medium levels of education or those who still remain in the education system actively participate in politics, although in lower proportions than young Germans with equivalent levels of education.

Additional influences of the situation of immigrants that originate differences

The legal status of immigrants and their level of acceptance in the society of reception have great influence on the feelings of political belonging. The unfavourable legal situation of Turks, compared to the situation of Italians and Greeks, and the lower level of acceptance of the Turkish population give the impression that there are difficulties for integration.

The results of the research confirm that part of the young Turkish people are in social organizations that are strongly ruled by tradition. This affects the gender-specific roles, the configuration of family, religious bonds, the possibility of taking individual decisions with regard to the own life, etc.

The research also studied a series of factors that strongly influence how and to what extent young people feel they are part of the host society, feel accepted, respect the social institutions or participate in political actions.

Among these factors we can highlight the following:

- If the bonds with the family and the peer-groups of the same origin are stronger or weaker
- Which is the role of the traditions of their country of origin in their behaviour?
- As foreigners, what experiences of discrimination have they gone through?
- How do they live their discontent regarding their legal status?
- How do they live the unfavourable situation in education, the difficulties of the language and the labour situation?
- For example, young adults of Turkish origin usually limit their contacts to people of the same origin, marriages with Germans are very rare and they demand their own facilities for their spare-time and training.

But, are these orientations the expression of a voluntary separation/segregation, or is it rather their own cultural organization? Are they, on the contrary, the consequence of their labour situation? Or are they only a reaction to legal and social discrimination shown by a majority of the population?

“Integration” goes beyond mere acquisition of the nationality of the host country

The results of the study show that the level of acceptance of political institutions and the political participation of young adults is, in general, also among Germans, pretty low. This conclusion should help to be cautious when it comes to statements about ways of behaving of young people with foreign background.

Low participation of Greeks and Italians, in comparison to Germans, seems to be conditioned by the fact they define themselves in the political framework of the EU, as well as in their own ethnic-cultural belonging. While for young Turks not only problems of legal equality have to be taken into account, but also the interaction and adaptation to the new situation of their cultural traditions, which in many cases is a first rank problem. Difficulties of young Turkish people to adapt the new situation to their cultural traditions increase depending on the level of education: When they have higher levels of education they are more dissatisfied with the rights and liberties offered by the host country, in opposition to the situation Italians and Greeks live.

Although the context of migration is quite similar, young Turks suffer an unfavourable legal status and enjoy lower social acknowledgement. The comparison with young Germans shows that deficits in training not only lower labour possibilities, but also affect political behaviours in the long term. Heitmeyer, W. et al. (1997) argues, and he is right, that legal discrimination, as well as the exclusion in training, education, employment or housing, leads to fundamentalist reactions. However, the results of this study can't lead to the conclusion that young Turks mostly develop fundamentalist thoughts and that this is as a consequence of social exclusion.

The research in which Weidacher (2000) bases his publication consciously moves away from the concept of young immigrants as a problematic book.

The results clearly show that the development of the ability of articulation, of the competences of orientation and self-awareness depend to high degree of the level of education and the linguistic knowledge. The results also prove that differences in political orientations between young people are not so much a matter of origin, but rather are explained by different levels of education and political knowledge.

As a consequence of a legislative change of the laws to acquire the nationality and the new conditions this implies, politics need to create opportunities for public acknowledgment of cultural traditions (specially in the field of religion). In opposition of Italians and Greeks, Turks also face great problems in terms of adapting their cultural traditions (specially regarding the religious dimension in family political life).

With regard to the legislative change, political institutions underline the requisite of knowledge of the German language. In the study, 75% of the Italian, 68 % of the Greeks and 65% of the Turks say they speak German good or very good, which means, they understand, read, speak and write in German and in their mother tongue. Their own assessment of this knowledge of the German language coincides in most cases with the knowledge ascertained by the interviewees.

The rest, around 25%-35% of the young people, said they only speak their mother tongue good or very good and nearly always belong to the group of people who arrived in Germany after the age of six, who never went to a pre-school or only went to school in their country of origin, or who do not possess any certificate of medium or higher levels, and most of the time left school early. Results do not say anything about competences regarding vocabulary or grammar, or about the role of this knowledge when it comes to decide about continuing education. Currently there is a series of initiatives developed by Turkish mothers and supported by “municipal foreigners councils” and “Popular Universities” to create working groups to improve the knowledge of German and offer information about training opportunities (and/or problems) for their children.

Can this kind of activities do more for “integration” than the German exam required to obtain the German nationality? Besides direct confrontation against xenophobic behaviour, shouldn't we focus more on positive contributions that improve mutual understanding?

Trends of segregation in the host society and between the own groups of immigrants can be counteracted in the media and in politics through dynamic understanding of culture: Culture doesn't develop as an independent form in front of other cultural forms and traditions, but it develops through the capacity of interaction, and it doesn't demand from immigrants to abandon their previous identity, but to expand their competences. The development of a conscience of political belonging and political participation implies that immigrants are not only Italians or Turks allowed to live in Germany, after they acquire the German nationality they should also assume the responsibility of a social and political union in order to be accepted as Germans.

The central question for political belonging and political participation is not nationality. In our opinion, the most important questions are related to:

- What forms are there of understanding national identity?

- How do we treat expectations of minorities? Which possibilities do we offer for them to organize their social life, in order for them to have the same rights as the majority and be able to satisfy their social needs as a population group?

In order to give adequate answers to the still unanswered questions, we believe that it is necessary to continue carrying out new sociologic researches that analyze different forms of understanding the development of a social identity. It will also be necessary to make more efforts to study the expectations and the problems among the established society –the host society– and the different population groups of immigrants and between the different groups of immigrants themselves.

Perspectives and unanswered questions

The coordinator of the publication (Alois Weidacher) concludes asking the following questions: What are the thoughts of young adults of the second and third generation of immigrants about their political belonging in Germany? What do political institutions and democratic institutions that represent their interests mean for them? Which is their attitude towards the central principles of the democratic system? When do they make use of political co-management/participation?

As reviewed in the previous section, the answers to these questions are determined, for the most parts, not so much by the nationality of the interviewees, but by variables directly related with the processes of socialization, that means as it also happens among native young people, and with processes related with the phenomenon of migration: When the process of immigration was started, if they belong to an EU-member country or not, the social status of the parents, level of knowledge of the language of the host country, level of education, the results of their transition to the labour market, etc. If these variables are taken into account the answers of children of immigrants are very close, very similar, to the answers given by young Germans with similar experiences in their processes of socialization (6).

That their political orientations are similar to the ones of young native people, and that the situation of problematic groups is not the centre of this research, does not mean the concept of “processes of socialization” makes us lose sight of the fact that children of immigrants have to make more efforts to achieve medium or higher levels of education, that they belong in higher proportions to working-class families, that many times their parents haven’t exceeded primary education, and hold lower labour positions (when and with what age do they arrive at the host country, influence of their parents’ traditions and weight of their orientation towards the ethnic group).

The study also states that the knowledge of the language of the host country is not only important to obtain good results in school or profession, but above all it is important to be able to communicate with the native population, to acquire the subjective impression of belonging and specially to allow political participation.

The new possibilities that open up in a host country, such as for example Germany, facilitating legal belonging as a first step to obtain the German nationality, can activate the political belonging.

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The focus of the research was intentionally not set on problematic groups, such as unemployed young people, drug-users or people belonging to disadvantaged groups, as it usually is done when talking about young foreigners.

However, the possibility of obtaining the nationality of the host country is not enough, if, at the same time, there are no measures to cope with some aspects that may increase the disadvantages:

- Disadvantages already existent in the field of training.
- Social segregation in big cities that has their origin in the ethnic group they belong to.
- Difficulties to plan the future due to the postponement of decisions with regard to staying in the host country or returning to the country of origin.
- Promote “acculturation” as a way acquiring more capacity of actuation, more abilities in different socio-cultural fields. This should not be seen as assimilation or betrayal to their origins. In this sense, we assume that culture, from the perspective of immigrants, and, above all, from the perspective of the society of reception, should not be seen as a sum of elements identifiable as different, but as the development of a social structure, as a dynamic process that includes the availability to carry out social communication.
- Activate a new orientation that leads towards the development of a new social identity (national identity) that contributes to eliminate barriers, stereotypes of immigrants among the native population.

Finally, if we ask about the meaning of the commented results, we have to accept that this information obtained through the analysis of researched correlations has, in reality, given us little new knowledge. The data is important because recent researches carried out during the last years confirm the high level of the information obtained 9 years ago in the research commented in this article. The situation of the level of education and training of young foreigners has scarcely changed.

Among policy-makers in the field of education, and even among teachers, the idea is wide spread that children of workers, generally, will have more difficulties if they want to prepare to access medium or higher levels of the education system, and children of immigrants will have much more difficulties to cope with the demands to access higher levels of education.

I think it is sure to say that countries that traditionally had to face massive immigration, after many years, still have not a clear concept about education and support measures for the children of immigrants, so that they may be able to achieve a higher standard in their training qualifications.

In order to achieve that public opinion and politics are willing to offer economic means needed to allow young people to acquire the qualifications that will enable social and labour participation in present societies, it will be necessary to first convince the society as a whole, and specially the political and economic powers, of the fact that there are disadvantages, social burdens, that are a consequence of educational deficits:

- The non-existence of professional qualifications originates great costs for taxpayers and the social security system.
- The economy needs less non-qualified workers.

Pupils, foreigners as well as natives that do not achieve at least qualification levels of compulsory education are branded for the rest of their lives. People

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The focus of the investigation have not wanted to put on problem groups such as youth unemployment, drug addicts or belonging to marginalized groups, as they do when talking about foreigners.

that during their first steps in school feel they don't belong to the group of "winners", that they can't follow the lessons, achieve the objectives other achieve are marked in their self-esteem and in their disposition to achieve social integration.

We have to highlight the fact that "being left behind" in school is not only a problem of the pupil, but also a consequence for the society. At least for this reason we have to demand more commitment and better funding to invest into better training for the children of immigrants.

It is not possible to understand that in the society of knowledge it is still accepted that a certain number of "failures" is inevitable and that in certain sectors of production and services non-qualified workers are needed. From the point of view of the person, school failure is something terrible, but from the point of view of economy it is something useful and advantageous for those that are more qualified.

The demand of working force, with no or low qualifications are regressive and income obtained through these activities is insufficient to cope with the costs of life. The costs created by these situations transform into vital experiences of social impotence and has repercussions for the social relations; and may well be leading young people of the so-called "second and third generation" of immigrants to aggressive responses due to the impossibility of integrating into the society they have been living in for a long time.

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