

Immigrants' urban outdoor recreation: Explorative case studies in Turkey and Germany

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Introduction

Migration is a global fact which is driven by many complex and inter-related economic, social, political, environmental reasons. Europe has become 'a continent of immigration' in the course of the last half century, and European societies have experienced growing ethnic and cultural diversity (Okólski, 2012). Accordingly diverse social groups with various cultural backgrounds interact in everyday life. Besides several economic and social challenges, the role of outdoor recreation on urban green spaces (UGS) deserves consideration in the social inclusion of immigrants. UGS are public places for recreation, stress relief, outdoor recreation activities and places for interaction and encountering other people. In contrast to dense built environment of the cities, meeting and communicating on urban green can be platform for breaking social segregation (German-Chiari and Seeland, 2004, Seeland et al., 2009, Leikkilä et al., 2013).

Personal characteristics of the visitors including cultural and socio-demographic background have been found to have an influence on the normative interpretation of outdoor recreation use patterns (Manning, 2011). Immigrants participate in recreation activities, but sometimes in different ways than the members of the host community due to their diverse habits, preferences and behaviour. However little is known about these differences in recreation habits and preferences in the urban environment of continental Europe. In contrast, there is a large body of relevant literature in North American outdoor recreation research for example explaining differences in recreation behaviour in urban settings and in the national parks in the United States and Canada. Thus we initiated an international collaboration between Turkey and Germany to a) explore urban outdoor recreation patterns of immigrants, b) investigate the interrelation between cultural background and recreation patterns and c) analyse the role of UGS for encountering people of different migration background.

Study Design

An explorative case study design was implemented to investigate outdoor recreation for immigrants. The first case study was carried out in Antalya Turkey from September to November 2014 and second in Berlin Germany from June to August 2015. The main idea behind the exchanged visits is that interviewing with German migrants in Antalya and Turkish migrants in Berlin is expected to be more fruitful and language barrier-free with native researchers. Antalya is a popular destination for German migrants. Around 40,000 German and German speaking immigrants live in the Province of Antalya and the majority is retired people. It is a popular holiday desti-

nation for German tourists as well. Berlin, as being the capital city of Germany, hosts around 113,000 Turkish descent migrants (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2013). Berlin is known as the largest Turkish settlement in one city outside Turkey.

Method

A multi-method approach was appropriated in both cases. We organised a focus group meeting in Antalya with nine members of the community to gather in-depth information about the recreation behaviour and perceptions of German speaking immigrants in Antalya. This step was then followed by five semi-structured qualitative interviews with German migrants with permanent residency in Antalya. Questionnaire for the guided interviews focused on motives, perceptions and preferences of the respondents in Antalya. In summer 2015 we implemented the Berlin case study initially with the stakeholder and expert interviews including social and environmental NGOs. Later we conducted eight qualitative interviews using the same questionnaire which was adjusted to Berlin.

Findings

We explored the drivers and patterns of immigrants' outdoor recreation behaviour and preferences. Main findings and comparative details are listed in Table 1 and further explained in the following bullet points:

- Germans and German speaking community in Antalya represent an example of retirement migration. Most of them are amenity-driven migrants who live in both countries and many of them are dependant to Germany for major health issues. German community in Antalya supposed to be a culturally homogeneous group

Table 1. Comparative results of qualitative interviews in both cases

	Antalya case study	Berlin case study
Migration groups	- Amenity-driven migrants - Majority is retired people from Germany - Residence in two places	- Labour migrants and descendants - Largest immigrant group in Berlin - Major residence is Germany - Regular homeland visits
Recreation behaviour	Use of UGS on regular basis	Use of UGS on regular basis, but depending on lifestyle
Perceptions	"Germans" have different preferences than Turkish people in terms of activities (sports) and behaviour (solitude, relaxation, lower tolerance for noise and crowding)	"Turks" or "Turkish descent migrants" have different preferences than Germans in terms of activities (picnicking, barbecue) and patterns (larger groups, higher tolerance for noise and crowding)
Conflicts	Litter on urban green spaces and at the beaches	Litter and dog turds in public parks
Potential for inclusion and socializing	- High willingness to integrate into host society - Host community has a high level of acceptance for foreigners - Common interests needed as a starting point - Language as a barrier for interaction - Drink related socializing	- High tolerance of Berlin inhabitants; but discrimination and prejudice exist - High potential for social inclusion (i.e. playgrounds) - Language could be a barrier for the first generation - Food related socializing

- Turkish community in Germany represent a typical example of labour migration. As being the largest cultural group in Germany, Turkish community is composed of several sub-groups based on ethnicity, religious beliefs and life styles. It is supposed to be a culturally heterogeneous group.
- Tolerance was found to be a precondition for living abroad and inclusion into the host society. Although cultural differences exist for the outdoor preferences, respondents agreed on the willingness of host community to accept foreigners.
- Respondents agreed on the high potential of UGS for encounters and social inclusion process. However they concerned about a) language (as a barrier for interaction) and b) common interests (as a starting point).
- Asymmetric conflicts exist between different user groups based on activities in the park and preferences for park conditions. In this sense the less tolerant or highly sensitive people or parties are more affected from the conflicting situations.

Conclusion

Results demonstrated that tolerance is the precondition for living in the foreign countries and for a successful integration into the host society. Respondents in both cities agreed that these areas have high potential for supporting the social integration process; but they also stated that a) language is a barrier for interaction and b) common interests are needed as a starting point. They agreed that the host community have high willingness to accept foreigners and are helpful. However they also mentioned that cultural differences exist in outdoor recreation. The representation of sub-groups and non-participants is important for an inclusive study to find out the reasons of exclusion and displacement. To evaluate this research gap, we recommend a mixed methods approach including quantitative and qualitative research to better facilitate the representation of sub-groups.



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