

Master Thesis

MIGRATION AND RETENTION FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Perspectives from Highly Skilled Turkish Migrants in the Netherlands

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Abstract

Highly skilled migrants are becoming an increasingly important element in global migration flows. They have a key role in the regional development, contributing the host economies in a number of ways, including knowledge transfers, increasing diversity, bringing new specialisations, entrepreneurial activities, and improvement of human capital in general. Attracting and retaining highly skilled people from other regions is a crucial policy area for regional development and knowledge-based economies and the Netherlands is among the leading countries in this global competition. Among the home countries of migrants in the Netherlands, Turkey come into the picture as a major origin, with an increasing trend in the last decade. This research explores the perspectives of the recent wave of highly skilled Turkish migrants in the Netherlands from three interrelated dimensions: how and why the highly skilled migrants move from Turkey to the Netherlands, in which conditions they prefer to stay, and how they perceive their contribution to regional economic development. Employing a mixed strategy, primary data from an online survey and semi structured interviews with 16 migrants and one policy maker has been analysed in this research. Besides other conclusions and policy recommendations, the key findings of this research include that highly skilled Turkish migrants provide invaluable contribution the Netherlands, its regional economies, and companies. Although the attraction factors have an effect on their migration to the Netherlands, their decisions primarily result from push factors in the origin. As a result, their retention and sustained contribution also depends on those factors as well as developing an attachment with the cities and integration to the communities, which is highly related with learning Dutch language and positive influences and concerns about public services.

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1 Introduction

Highly skilled migrants, which commonly refer to those with a tertiary education or an equivalent specialized work experience, are becoming an increasingly important element in global migration flows, especially from undeveloped to more developed nations (Iradale, 1999). Major host locations of the highly skilled migrants are populated urban centres mostly in the developed economies, such as US, Canada, UK, Australia, Scandinavian and Western European countries (Borjas, 1994). These population movements are observed to be structural and have been taken place as continuous waves, which lead to changes in the population and workforce composition of host countries (Nathan, 2014). They also provide invaluable contribution to the human capital and growth of the host cities, regions, and countries. Knowledge based economies that need skilled professionals from abroad and aim to attract them with specific policies accept this process as a gain while for the origin countries it has been referred and discussed as “brain drain” (Guhlich, 2017).

Highly skilled labour migration has also become one of the key policy areas of the European Union (EU), often referred as a problematic issue with social and political outcomes. After the enlargement of the EU into Eastern Europe, a major skilled and unskilled labour movement within the EU countries took place from East to West, within the enabling environment provided by the free movement of workers. However, European countries and regions compete for skilled labour not only within the EU but all around the World. Labour migration has been considered as a factor for continuous economic development of the EU and numerous programmes and projects have been implemented, aiming to match new skills for third country nationals with labour market needs in the EU (EU, 2019). At the national level countries also enact enabling laws and introduce regulations for highly skilled labour and regional authorities implement comprehensive talent attraction strategies (OECD, 2014; Facchini & Lodigani, 2014). For instance, a recent law on the immigration of skilled workers has been enacted on 1 March 2020 in Germany, targeting 25,000 skilled migrants each year.

The Netherlands, being one of the major actors in this competition, imposes detailed regulations for highly skilled labour attraction from inside and outside of the EU. For example, one of the key policies is the “30% ruling” or “30% facility”, provided as a tax incentive for highly skilled migrants (*kennismigranten*), granting an exemption from the income tax for 30% of the gross salary for five years. Likewise, provision of a “search year” for attracting highly skilled graduates and imposing salary limits (Berkhout et.al., 2016) for keeping highly skilled in knowledge intensive jobs are other national key policies for their attraction and retention. At the regional level, one of the most successful examples is Eindhoven, placing talent attraction into the core of regional development policies (Kentie et. al., 2016).

Among the home countries of migrants, Turkey come into the picture as a major origin for both skilled and unskilled labour in the Netherlands, as well as in many other developed European countries. Turkish labour migration, has been largely studied, from a sociological point of view, with a primary focus on the integration of individuals into the host countries or segregation of neighbourhoods in the host cities, as well as the effects of emigration or “brain-drain” in Turkey. Besides, the literature on Turkish migrants’ transnational practices has traditionally focused on migrant workers in countries such as Germany, Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands to which millions of Turkish citizens have immigrated in the last 60 years, but there is a limited number of studies on highly skilled Turkish migrants (Cesur et.al., 2018).

However, Turkish highly skilled migration into the Netherlands has been increased tremendously, especially in the last decade, according to several studies conducted in other countries, such as Germany and Canada (Ozcurumez & Aker, 2016) and according to numerous government reports, news, and evaluations in the Turkish media (Şap, 2019; Türkmen, 2019; The Independentturkish, 2019; Özkan, 2019). Besides the attraction factors of the Netherlands, this recent increase has evidently been happening mainly because of the social, economic, and political environment in Turkey. Starting with an integration with the EU Acquis, this period has mainly been characterized by major incidents in the social, political and economic environment in Turkey, namely the Gezi protests, numerous terrorist attacks in metropolitan cities, a coup attempt, Syrian War and a massive forced migration from Syria, transformation of the state into presidential system and a rapid devaluation of TRY. According to a survey conducted by the former Turkish Undersecretariat of Defence, the highly skilled labour in the defence industry, which has probably been sending the largest number of highly skilled people from Turkey, migrate because of various reasons, international experience, career opportunities and quality of life being the most common and 80% of the highly skilled migrants want to return, expecting a level of improvement in all those areas, including stabilisation of the socioeconomic and political environment of the country (The Independentturkish, 2019).

Nevertheless, determinants of the recent wave of skilled labour migration to the Netherlands from Turkey and their retention are complex and require in-depth analyses and the perspectives of the individuals, their attachments and contributions to the host regions have not been studied in detail. As indicated by Castles (2006), policy programmes for attracting high-skilled migrants are imposed as importing labour but not people. Within this framework, the main intention of this research is to contribute to the recent academic debate by introducing the individuals' perspectives about their attraction motives, expectations for retention and their contribution to regional development in the context of recent Turkish highly skilled migrants in the Netherlands.

In the next chapter, theoretical background relating to the geography of highly skilled people, their migration practices and their influences on development is elaborated. Empirical approach of this research, including research questions, research strategy and methodology is provided in the third chapter. Fourth chapter briefly introduces the context regarding the current situation of Turkish highly skilled migrants and policies in the Netherlands. Results of the online survey and descriptive analyses are given in the fifth chapter. The main basis of this research, results of the in-depth interviews and their content analysis are provided in the sixth chapter. Finally, conclusions are summarized in the seventh chapter together with a discussion and preliminary recommendations.

2 Theoretical Background

There is a substantial body of literature on the geography of highly skilled workers, migration and their influence on development. As it is briefly revealed in the introduction and as detailed in the next chapter, the main argument of this research derives from regional development perspective, exploring the contribution of the recent wave of highly skilled Turkish migrants to the regions of the Netherlands and the conditions for its continuation.

There are various names that refer to highly skilled migrants in the literature: “Skilled migrants”, “highly skilled migrants”, “business migrants” etc., and also referred as “talent” in economic geography literature. Since it also represents the population of this research, the definition made by Ozcurumez and Aker (2016) has been used in this study: Highly Skilled and Business Turkish Nationals (HSTBN). Therefore, the population of this research will be referred as the HSTBN in the Netherlands hereafter.

Theoretical background and the following analyses mainly focus on key concepts in the economic geography literature, which are related to migration: human capital and skills, talent attraction and retention, labour mobility, knowledge diffusion and diversity. It does not go in detail to the migration theories and studies. However, retention of highly skilled migrants and their sustained contribution is also closely related with the reasons behind their migration decisions, migration processes and their attachment and integration to host cities and regions. Therefore, migration theories, including pull-push model, transnational space and social networks, each describes these reasons and processes from different perspectives, are also briefly described in this chapter.

Within the neoclassical approach, migration has been studied for its economic impacts, in a narrowly defined setting, taking labour as a factor for production function and as a one-off shock, rather than a dynamic and continuous occurrence (Fingleton & Fischer, 2010). Migrants enter only as workers and are substitutes with natives and migration has limited economic impacts. For firms, migration helps labour productivity by cutting labour costs, but migration has no wider effects, since other productivity shifters are exogenous (Nathan, 2014).

However, studying the trends and general characteristics of migration, it is observed that migration brings much more than that. To begin with, although there is an overall decline in labour migration in the last decades (OECD, 2009), there is a clear distinction between the highly skilled migrants and the less skilled. The highly skilled people are generally migrating from less developed regions and countries to developed regions (Iammarino, Rodriguez-Pose, & Storper, 2017) and they are also expected to be more likely to move comparing to less-skilled (Achenbach, 2017). Specific migration schemes also allow highly skilled to be more mobile (Castles 2007). Highly skilled people usually move to countries where their education and work experience match with the needs of the labour market (Borjas, 1989) but a major difference between highly skilled and less skilled labour migrants is that, economic factors do not always play the key role for the highly skilled.

Romer (1994) initially theorized the relations between knowledge, human capital, and economic growth. According to Romer, long term growth depends on technological innovation and endogenous development. Human capital plays a critical role in this process, through enhancing labour productivity, intensifying capital, and achieving growth (Polasek et al., 2010 in Erdem, 2016). Lucas (1988) contributed to the approach with introducing that the spatial concentration of skilled labour generating strong external economies, as a result productivity and growth (Meier et. al., 2007). Lucas

emphasizes the role of investment in human capital through education for achieving long term economic growth.

Therefore, endogenous growth theories approach the highly skilled migration phenomenon from human capital of the individuals, its agglomeration and contribution in the cities and regions. Higher agglomeration assumed to produce positive externalities, as a result of creating a dynamism in large cities and regions, which in turn increases economic growth (Iammarino, Rodriguez-Pose, & Storper, 2017; Storper & Scott, 2009; Glaeser, 2005; Florida, 2002). Skills and human capital are key components of this agglomeration, creating innovation, technological progress, regional development and growth based on knowledge, and highly skilled people are considered as those who transfer this knowledge. (Lucas, 1988; Romer, 1994; Glaeser, 2005; Florida, 2002). Long-term productivity and growth are driven by innovation, which are determined by knowledge diffusion as well as R&D efforts of firms (Ulku & Pamukçu, 2015). Human capital is also considered as a key factor for the investment location decisions and an integral element in the innovation ecosystems and clusters (Crescenzi et. al., 2020).

In evolutionary economic geography literature, knowledge is recognized as an evolving entity, rather than a public good as characterized by diminishing returns, but accumulates and develops cognitive capacities in time, embodied in individuals and firms (Boschma, 2009). Skills are considered as a key factor for innovation, and improved by diffusion of knowledge with labour mobility, among other factors, such as spinoff processes and networks. Firms can also access to new knowledge by, international R&D collaborations, foreign direct investments, personally embedded relationships, etc. as well as international mobility of skilled labour (Martin et. al., 2018). International labour mobility is also valued by firms, as a means of enhancing cultural diversity and redistributing international expertise across their branches (Martin et. al., 2018). Literature shown that migrants are more likely to switch industries and occupations than stayers (Kekezi & Boschma, 2020) and bring new specialisations, supporting the increase of related and unrelated diversification through new path creations.

There is a plenty of empirical evidence on the positive influence of highly skilled migrants on host economies. In his comprehensive book, Kerr (2018) suggests that highly skilled immigrants hold a highly critical position in the economy and society of the United States (US), asserting that talent is mobile, shaped by the environment and it is the most precious resource. He studied the ethnic background of Nobel prize winners, patent owners, workforce population, and entrepreneurs in the US. Using education, patent and workforce data, Kerr documented the increasingly large share of immigrants in the knowledge intensive areas. According to his findings, 40% of the Fortune 500 companies were founded by first or second-generation immigrants, they constitute half of the founders of the unicorns and since 1970, more than 60% of Nobel prize winners have been immigrants in the US. One of the most stunning finding in this book is the highly increasing share of Chinese and Indian inventors in the patents in US. In the late 1970s, approximately 1 in every 220 patents were filed by Chinese or Indian inventors or coinventors from the San Francisco Bay Area. Today, this number increased to 1 in every 11 patents.

To sum up, highly skilled migrants are expected to contribute to the host economy in a number of ways, including knowledge transfers as a result of mobility at an international scale and between companies, through increasing diversity, bringing new specialisations, with entrepreneurial actions and improvement of human capital, as well as increasing labour productivity and reduced labour costs. As a result, besides investing in the quality of education, attracting and retaining talent from

other regions plays a key role both in research and in regional development policies. One of the most important conclusions for policy makers remains as how to attract and retain highly skilled people.

As initially theorized by Becker (1962), investment in the human capital can also yield non-economic returns for individuals. Place assets and spatial qualities have been recognized as factors for the attraction of economic agents in general and as important features for local and regional development strategies (Servillo et. al., 2011). Personal development, professional network, international experience, and working conditions and opportunities could even be more important than income in the migration decision of the highly skilled (Kou et. al., 2015).

According to Storper and Scott (2008) one of the most complex problems of contemporary social science is the causal relationship between urban growth and associated spatial patterns of population movement: Do people move to jobs or do jobs move to people? They analyse three branches of research each explaining the factors that attract highly skilled people. Firstly, Florida's (2002) creative class theory, emphasizes the amenities available in a local environment. The key amenity that attracts people is tolerance, which can be observed by looking at diversity, including artists, gays and foreign-born people. Diversity and tolerance lower the entry barriers for new migrants and results in more diversity. Glaeser (2005) on the other hand, suggests skills and climatic amenities are primary in attracting people and developing human capital. He suggests that in cold places, attracting growing numbers of highly skilled labour requires other public services, such as high-quality public schools, safe neighbourhoods and affordable housing. Lastly, Clark et. al. (2002) emphasize entertainment and urban attractions such as parks, museums, art galleries, orchestras, landmarks etc. as attractive factors and growth of human capital. These amenity-based approaches appear to provide partial explanations for attracting highly skilled migrants. However, Storper and Scott (2008) are critical about the approach that labour selectively migrate to cities that are favoured with relevant amenities which leads to urban growth, suggesting that migrants are unlikely to be able to move in significant numbers unless job opportunities are in place.

The approaches that were summarized above have mainly studied highly skilled migrants, their attraction and retention from the perspective of its economic effects on regions. However, social complications that come with migration flows, their reasons and result have not been studied in detail in the economic geography literature (Guhlich, 2017).

With a point of view from the migration studies, the reasons and motives for migration are largely studied, yet there is not a comprehensive theory explaining the phenomenon. However, there are several theories and approaches developed within various disciplines. Firstly, the pull-push model introduced by Lee (1966) assumes that migration to regions with some pull factors and opportunities is determined by the lack of opportunities in other regions. It creates a migration flow in waves, between regions that push workforce because of oversupply or other push factors and the regions lack the required workforce. For highly skilled migration the pull and push factors vary, including soft factors such as diversity, openness, amenities, tolerance, culture, language etc. and hard factors such as, income, career, jobs and educational opportunities (Musterd & Gritsai, 2013).

Secondly, social network theory emphasizes the role of families, friends and communities on migration decisions. In this theoretical framework, the connections between the potential migrants in the home countries and actual migrants in the host countries as migrant networks have been studied (Massey et.al., 1993; van Meeteren & Pereira, 2016). Guhlich (2017) summarizes the empirical research which examined the important role of family and social networks in migration and the career

pathway of highly skilled migrants as well. It has been argued that family and social networks were crucial for migration decisions and for labour market participation. Social networks are also considered to contribute to knowledge diffusion by reducing information and communication costs, as knowledge is exchanged through groups with high social capital (Nathan, 2014).

Thirdly, built on the social network literature, transnational approach explains migration as a process of movement and settlement across nation state boundaries where people keep or build multiple networks of connection to their home country (Basch, Glick-Schiller & Szanton-Blanc, 1994). One of the most important implications of this approach is that migrants continue their relationships with their home countries even though they migrated to another country. This is especially relevant for highly skilled because of the availability of increased connection opportunities.

Finally, highly skilled migration has also an effect on individual social and career pathways, and this could be negative for some, which has not been studied in detail in the literature (Guhlich, 2017). As Guhlich (2017) cites from Muhirwa (2012), only a small number of highly skilled migrants moving to Europe or North America managed to get jobs which correspond to their qualifications and skills. Highly skilled migrants most of the time experience “deskilling”, being underpaid or having to undergo a professional reorientation after migration. Language skills have been an important source to overcome such problems.

In conclusion, besides the attraction factors, condition for retention and the perceptions of the HSBTN about their contribution to economy, the effects of migration on individual career pathways, their attachment to places, integration with communities, strategies for coping with these new challenges have also been scrutinized in this research. As it has been summarized above, the literature for highly skilled migration is widespread in different fields and since a bottom-up approach has been adopted in this research, examining individual experiences, strategies and perspectives, the theoretical background has also been prepared with a general overview of relevant theories and approaches. The research questions based on this literature and reasons of selecting the research strategy and methodology will be explained in the following section.

3 Empirical Approach

3.1 Research Questions

The main objective of this research is to deliver an original contribution to the field with an improved understanding of migration and staying decisions of highly skilled labour and their attachment and contribution to regional economic development, within a contextual perspective. Within this framework, the main research question is formulated as follows:

How and why do the highly skilled migrants move from Turkey to the Netherlands in the recent wave, in which conditions do they prefer to stay and how do they perceive their contribution to regional economic development?

Five sub-questions are formulated in order to clarify possible answers to the main question with a detailed view. Firstly, as it is briefly stated in the introduction, the initial step of moving to Netherlands is likely to be influenced by the expectations of the migrants from the social, economic and political environment in Turkey. Migration is usually considered as temporary and most migrants return or leave at some future point, but some of them are likely to stay in the host country and, as new families and communities form, it becomes their new home (Goldin, et. al., 2011; Kou et. al., 2015). There has been an increasingly ongoing emigration (or brain-drain) in Turkey and to reverse this trend, new policy measures and funding opportunities are introduced but there is not enough evidence on the effects of these interventions. In this context the first sub-question formulated as follows:

1. *To what extent does the socioeconomic environment in Turkey affect the migration or returning decisions of HSBTN in Netherlands?*

There are two key steps of a migration decision: deciding to leave and selection of the city and country to live. Which one comes first is going to be explored in the first sub-question. However, job opportunities, host country and city characteristics, amenities and other soft conditions, personal networks etc. are all related to the second and affect the choice of location. In a large-scale study which covers 13 European cities, Musterd and Gritsai (2013), categorized the host city attraction factors as “hard” and “soft” factors, and apart from these, a third crucial group of factors, social and professional networks, have ben emerged as primary. Hard factors like job availability has become as second most important factor and soft conditions (diversity, openness, amenities, and tolerance) has been also relevant, but never of prime importance (Musterd & Gritsai, 2013). Only in Amsterdam had the soft factors an effect in this study. Therefore, this effect could be related with the city’s characteristics, shaped by diversity and tolerance or the image of the Netherlands in general. Three sub-questions are formulated based on these attraction factors of the host city and the country. Within this framework the responses have been explored focusing on the local and regional characteristics as well as a wider focus on the Netherlands.

2. *How do local, regional, and national attraction factors influence HSBTN decisions?*
3. *To what extent national policies of the Netherlands and regional strategies are successful and sustainable for attraction and retention of HSBTN?*
4. *How do the personal networks, ethnic/cultural preferences, affect skilled labour migration in the current wave from Turkey?*

Another key element influencing the long-term strategies of the migrants and eventually retention of the talent is related with the migrants' perceptions on their attachment, integration and discrimination in the workplace and in the social life. According to Anderson and Huang (2019), migrants earn less than natives at entry to the host labour market, but their relative wages increase over time in the host country and the assimilation of high-skilled labour is faster than the assimilation of lower-skilled. Therefore, a fifth sub-question is formulated as follows, in order to explore these perceptions.

5. *What are the perceptions for discrimination, attachment, integration and deskilling, and how do they influence HSBTN's life plans?*

3.2 Research Strategy

This research is comprised of a mixed strategy, starting with a quantitative part for analysing the general characteristics of the population, followed by a qualitative part for developing a detailed and focused understanding of the subjective perspectives. The main reason for selecting a mixed research strategy, including a quantitative part is that there is a lack of description regarding the general characteristics of the target population: recent wave of HSBTN.

On the other hand, the main approach to this study as summarized in the second chapter: lack of research including individuals' perspectives with a contextual approach about the subject in the economic geography literature. In addition, even though skilled migration is a widely studied subject in such a strategy in the migration literature, there is hardly any academic studies on the recent wave of HSBTN in the Netherlands. As a result, while one of the key objectives is to determine the general characteristics of the population, an in-depth understanding is needed from economic geography perspective and for regional policy making.

A cross sectional case study has been adopted for the research design, because of the expectation of homogeneous characteristics of the last wave of HSBTN and because of time and budget limitations. The data of this research has mainly been collected primarily; however other secondary data has been presented in the context chapter.

As Flyvbjerg (2006) sets in his classic paper, *Five Misunderstandings about Case-Study Research*, together with other advantages of case study research, context-dependent knowledge is highly valuable for developing expertise in the studies of human affairs. Comprehensiveness of this research's main topic also requires such a strategy. However, as Flyvbjerg (2006) also asserts, summarizing case studies is often difficult, and it is mostly because of the properties of the reality studied and that often it is not desirable to summarize and generalize case studies. This approach also partly relates with this research and as suggested by Flyvbjerg: it should be read as narratives in its entirety.

3.3 Methodology

Regarding the research methods, firstly an online survey has been conducted by collecting primary data from 199 HSBTN. In addition, statistics and reports from public and private institutions and newspaper articles about the current situation of skilled labour migration has also been used as secondary sources of information for determining and refining the regional and socioeconomic context of the study.

A set of questions have been prepared for the first part of data analysis. Afterwards, the questions have been uploaded to an online survey platform (Survey Legend) and adjusted for the capabilities

and requirements of this platform. As the third step a pilot survey implementation has been conducted with 10 individuals. Following this pilot implementation, several non-essential questions have been excluded from the questionnaire form, some questions have been re-written to improve the understandability and the overall form has been shortened in order to increase the response rate with reducing the completion time. The final version has been launched on 6 April 2020 and the last response to the survey has been collected on 4 June 2020.

Online surveys are easier to implement but more difficult to gather responses, comparing the face to face implementation of questionnaires. Besides the subject matter, context and size of the population, level of responses also depends on the length and complexity of online survey forms. Therefore, the form has been kept at an optimal length, in terms of number of questions and completion time, seeking responses to the most crucial aspects of the research. The questions have also been prepared in Turkish and as easy to understand with simple wordings. The form has been implemented as a combination of prioritizing questions, Likert scales and open questions. The English translation of the final online survey question form has been given in Appendix 1.

The qualitative part of the research is based on data collected via semi-structured, face-to-face, and online video meeting in-depth interviews with 16 HSBTN. As the last question of the online questionnaire, the respondents are asked whether they would share their contact details in case they volunteer for joining in-depth interviews. Interviews have been conducted from 16 April 2020 to 28 June 2020, with those individuals who volunteered to take part.

In order to provide input for the regional context and acquire a deeper knowledge about the policy implementations, one additional interview has also been conducted with a local policy maker. Both the semi-structured interview questions for the HSBTN and for the policy maker have been improved with the initial results of the online survey. The final versions of the semi-structured interview forms are given in the Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

The next chapter chapter briefly introduces the context regarding the current situation of Turkish highly skilled migrants and policies in the Netherlands and strategies and activities at the regional level.

4 Context

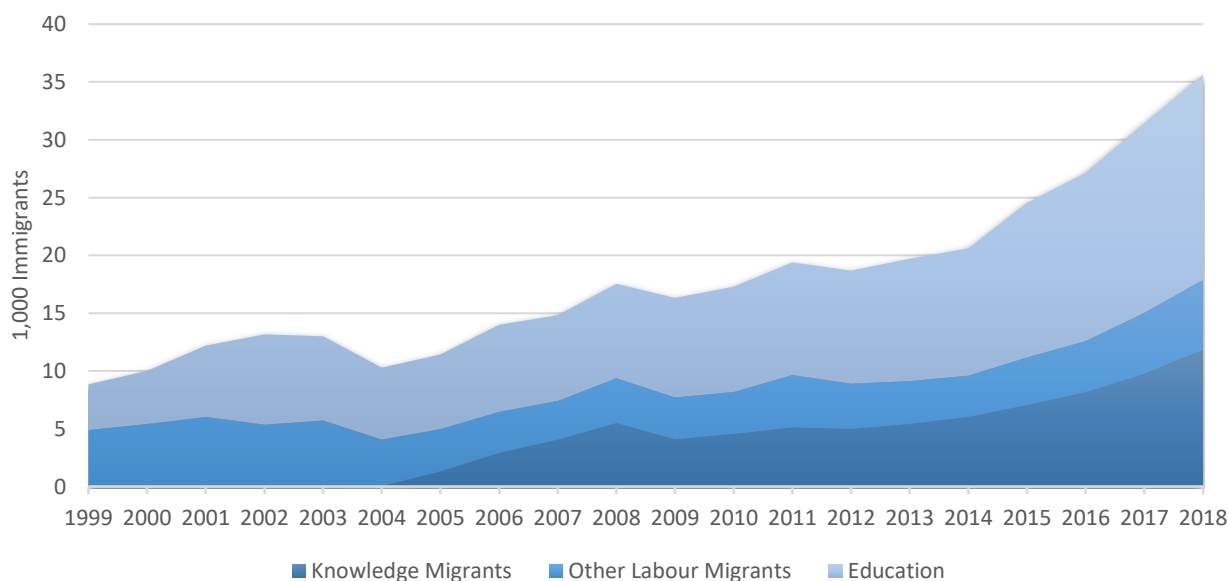
4.1 Policies and Current Situation in the Netherlands

According to the Global Competitiveness Report 2019 (Schwab, 2019) the Netherlands ranks fourth globally both in the overall index (82.4 score) and in the highly skilled workforce pillar with a score of 84.6. The country owes this success for being considered as one of the most open countries towards migrants and especially expatriates (or commonly referred as expats). Being one of the major actors in this competition, the Netherlands imposes detailed regulations for highly skilled labour attraction from inside and outside of the EU. One of the key policies is the “30% ruling” (or 30% facility), provided as a tax incentive for highly skilled migrants, granting an exemption from the income tax for 30% of the gross salary for five years. Likewise, provision of a “search year” for attracting and keeping highly skilled graduates and imposing salary limits (Berkhout et.al., 2016) for keeping highly skilled in knowledge intensive jobs, are other national key policies for their attraction and retention. In addition, the Netherlands also allows the spouses of the highly skilled migrants to work in the Netherlands, which is also regarded as a critical measure for retention of families.

The OECD Report (2016) titled “Recruiting Immigrant Workers: The Netherlands 2016” emphasises that the future demand for skilled labour will exceed domestic supply in the next decade although 7,000 highly skilled migrants come from outside of EU every year, with the main policy scheme for attracting highly skilled migrants. Eligible companies that are recognized by the Dutch Government easily attract foreign labour. However, SMEs mostly lack those necessary knowledge and capacities for recruiting highly skilled migrants (OECD, 2016). In this report, OECD also emphasizes that retention rates of highly skilled migrants can be improved if spouses had better opportunities in the Dutch labour market.

According to CBS Migration Motives Statistics, the number of knowledge migrants have been steadily increasing both within EU (CBS, 2020) and from other countries together with migrations for education (Figure 1). In 2018, the total number of highly skilled migrants reached to 11,830 people.

Figure 1 Migration Motives of Non-EU/EFTA Citizens



Source: Prepared with CBS (2020) data

The overall diversity in the Netherlands is expected to increase in the next 30 years according to a recent research by Dutch Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) and Statistics Netherlands (CBS) (Moca-Grama, 2020; Pieters, 2020). By 2050, almost 40% of the working population in the Netherlands is expected to have a migrant background. The composition of the migrants' origin will also change. It is expected that there will be more migrants coming from EU countries (30%) while traditional migration countries, including Turkey will decrease to 25%.

Regarding the regional level, there are several strategies implemented by regional development authorities in the Netherlands, such as Metropolitan Region the Hague/Rotterdam and Amsterdam in Business. Nevertheless, as one of the most competitive regions for international talent, the activities of Brainport Eindhoven Region have been examined in this research. Brainport Eindhoven Region ranks 40th in the The Global Talent Competitiveness Index 2019 (INSEAD, 2019) while Amsterdam is in the 21st rank.

At the regional level, Brainport Development can be regarded as a best-case example. Brainport Development is an economic development agency working for the Brainport Eindhoven Region, in the Southeast of the Netherlands and it is funded by 21 municipalities including Eindhoven and surrounding 20 municipalities. Apart from other activities for fostering regional development, Brainport Development has actively been attracting highly skilled migrants to Eindhoven Region. According to the policy maker from Brainport Eindhoven, who has been interviewed, besides their own attraction activities at the regional level, they also support companies on their own talent attraction activities and collaborate with other institutions for the retention of migrants:

There is a dedicated team and a programme for international talent in the Brainport Development. Their talent attraction program consists of two main action lines: The first is to reach out to the target group in the rest of the world, conveying the message “if highly skilled people would like to have a great career in tech, they should move to Brainport”. A specific website including a job portal is managed where all English high tech and IT vacancies in Eindhoven Region are listed. There are 25 countries targeted by Brainport Eindhoven, including Turkey. Online campaigns are organized for those countries through online platforms such as Google, Facebook, and LinkedIn. As a result of these campaigns, approximately 500,000 people visit their website every year, and more than 80,000 people click on vacancies and apply for jobs. Turkey has been in the top five countries of people visiting the website, responding to online campaigns, and clicking on vacancies. The second action line is supporting companies in the region, especially SMEs since big companies already have the capacity and knowledge on how to attract international talent. However, SMEs also face a shortage of talent and becoming increasingly aware that they can recruit talent from outside of the Netherlands. Therefore, Brainport Development supports these companies, with advisory services, knowledge, and networking to get better at or to start with international recruitment. In addition to talent attraction activities, Brainport Development also closely collaborate with Holland Expat Centre South, who focuses on the retention part, supporting migrants during their settling processes and living in the Eindhoven Region. Therefore, as different organizations, Brainport Development and Holland Expat Centre South work together as an integral and strategic programme for attraction and retention of international talent.

Expat Centres are also key institutions at the regional level, providing essential services for migrants as well as companies. They facilitate, among other things, a smooth application for the necessary residence and registration in the Personal Records Database (BRP) in collaboration with

municipalities and the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND). In addition, expat centres also provide a wide range of information on housing, finance, taxation, education, etc. (Decisio, 2017)

4.2 Highly Skilled Turkish Migrants in the Netherlands

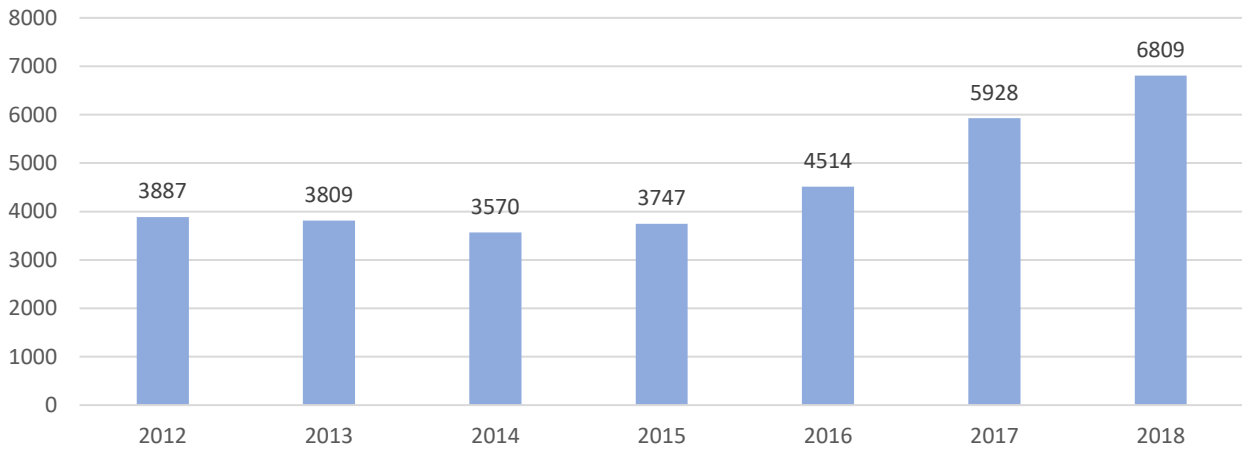
Among home countries of migrants, Turkey come into the picture as a major origin for both skilled and unskilled labour in the Netherlands, as well as in many other developed European countries. Turkish labour migration, has been largely studied, from a sociological point of view, with a primary focus on the integration of individuals into the host countries or segregation of neighbourhoods in the host cities, as well as the effects of emigration or “brain-drain” in Turkey. Besides, the literature on Turkish migrants’ transnational practices has traditionally focused on migrant workers in countries such as Germany, Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands to which millions of Turkish citizens have immigrated in the last 60 years. Fassmann and İçduygu (2013) provides a detailed summary of the characteristic of immigrants and history of traditional emigration from Turkey to Europe: Turkey began to export labour following an official agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany in 1961, while the economies of many Western European countries needed labour. Following Germany, similar bilateral agreements, specifying the general conditions of recruitment, employment, and wages, were signed with other governments including the Netherlands in 1964. However, there is a limited number of studies on highly skilled Turkish migrants (Cesur et.al., 2018).

Turkish highly skilled migration to the Netherlands has been accelerated, especially in the last decade, according to several studies conducted in other countries, such as Germany and Canada (Ozcurumez & Aker, 2016) and according to numerous government reports, news, and evaluations in the Turkish media (Şap, 2019; Türkmen, 2019; The Independentturkish, 2019; Özkan, 2019). Besides the attraction factors in the host countries, this recent increase is evidently happening mainly because of the social, economic, and political environment in Turkey. Starting with an initial integration with the EU Acquis, this period is mainly characterized by major incidents in the social, political and economic environment in Turkey, including the Gezi protests, numerous terrorist attacks in metropolitan cities, a coup attempt, Syrian War and a massive forced migration from Syria, transformation of the state into presidential system and rapid devaluation of TRY.

According a recent study by Social Democracy Foundation from Turkey (SODEV, 2020), 62,5% of the young people stated that if there will be an opportunity, they would settle abroad and live there (SODEV, 2020). In addition, according to a survey conducted by the Turkish Undersecretariat of Defence, highly skilled labour in the defence industry migrate because of various reasons; international experience, career opportunities and quality of life being the most common and 80% of the highly skilled migrants want to return, expecting a level of improvement in all those areas, including stabilisation of the political environment of the country (The Independentturkish, 2019).

Between 2015-2017, 1.730 Turkish people have applied for a work permit in the highly skilled migrant scheme while in 2014, the number of applications was 220 (Start & Erçetin, 2018). In the first 11 months of 2018, this number has increased to 1020 (Özkan, 2019). Since not being publicly available, more recent number of applications within this scheme and actual highly skilled migrants cannot be presented here. However, according to the most up-to-date CBS data, yearly total migration numbers from Turkey has been steadily increasing between 2014 and 2018 (Figure 2), a growing part of which apparently consists of highly skilled migrants.

Figure 2 Total Yearly Migration from Turkey



Source: CBS Statline, 2020

The change in the migrant characteristics overall, as Castles (2017) indicated, also changed the composition of Turkish migrants. Turkish population in the European countries, mostly being immigrant workers for approximately last 60 years, have been increasingly taking in highly skilled migrants, or “expats” as commonly referred, during last two decades. This change has also affected the approach and perceptions on Turkish communities in the European countries. A noteworthy empirical study conducted by Türkmen (2019) in Germany narrates this transformation, which clearly explains directly from its title: “But you don’t look Turkish!”: The Changing Face of Turkish Immigration to Germany”.

This changing characteristics of the Turkish population in the Netherlands have been analysed in the following two chapters. Based on the online survey results and descriptive analyses, the next chapter summarizes the demographic characteristics of the population, migration decisions, occupational attributes as well as general opinions about migration motives, long term plans and contributions.

5 Descriptive Analyses: Survey Results

The research population consists of the Highly Skilled and Business Turkish Nationals (HSBTN) that moved to the Netherlands in the last 15 year-period. The sample of the online survey represents the wider sample prior to the in-depth interviews. This survey has been distributed through Turkish “expat groups” on online social media and messaging platforms. These platforms are mainly Facebook, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp Groups. At the time of survey implementation, there were two major Turkish online expat groups in Netherlands: “NL-TR Expat Group” had 974 members (NL-TR Expat Group, 2020) and Turkish Professionals Network Eindhoven Facebook Group had 1,914 members (TPNE Expat Group, 2020). Apart from these two major networks, Turkish Universities’ alumni groups for expats who live in the Netherlands have also been used as channels to reach the target group. There were only two groups in Facebook at time of the survey implementation. Both of these groups have been established by the alumni of Middle East Technical University (METU), one of the most successful universities in Turkey, leader in the national rank with a score of 73.5 according to CWUR World University Rankings 2020-2021 (2020). METU-NL Facebook Group had 590 members (METU-NL Expat Group, 2020) and METUROPE Facebook Group had 1,486 members (METUROPE Expat Group, 2020). There is also one Turkish expat group in the LinkedIn platform (NL-TR Expat Group, 2020) which has also been used as a secondary channel of survey distribution.

Apart from the expat groups, the Turkish mothers’ online solidarity groups have also been used as distribution channels: Utrecht Mothers (390 members) (Utrecht Mothers Expat Group, 2020), Amsterdam Mothers (3,234 members) (Amsterdam Mothers Expat Group, 2020), Den Haag Mothers (839 members) (Den Haag Mothers Expat Group, 2020), and Rotterdam Mothers (852 members) (Rotterdam Mothers Expat Group, 2020). These groups have been included as distribution channels, since they are established by HSBTN and spouses of HSBTN who recently moved to the Netherlands. Members of these groups are not only mothers but mostly those individuals who are newcomers and need solidarity by other HSBTN. On the other hand, other Turkish groups, members of which include first or second generation of worker migrants in the Netherlands and those who mostly do not fit the target groups of this research have been excluded. Three rounds of announcements by posts and messages has been made through these distribution channels in early April, late April, and late May 2020.

Lastly, a snowball sampling technique has also been used in order to increase the sample size, with a support from those who take part in the in-depth interviews and online survey. Closed social groups established in the WhatsApp messaging platform has mainly been used for the snowball method.

As a result of the online data collection process with the survey platform, 199 responses have been collected. This initial data set has been cleansed from missing and erroneous cases in 3 steps in order to increase reliability and validity of the research outcomes. This process has been conducted based on the recommended framework in the Encyclopaedia of Research Design (Salkind, 2010). Firstly, 41 cases which included answers to only less than 10% of the questions have been deleted. These are mainly the respondents, who started the survey but left on the first page. As the second step, cases from 36 respondents out of 158, who filled the demographic information but left the main body of the survey as missing have been deleted. Most of these people realized that they do not fit the target group of this research and stopped answering in the beginning. Finally, although they answered the whole survey, 5 respondents’ answers have also been excluded since they were not in the target group,

either not “highly skilled” based on education level and job experience or not arrived in the last 15 years.

On the other hand, responses of 23 people who are not currently employed in the Netherlands, are not excluded from the analyses, because even though they do not have a job at the moment, they are highly skilled, most used to have a job before either in Turkey or in the Netherlands and participate in the potential workforce pool in the Netherlands and provide valuable information about the migration decisions. As a result, the final dataset has been comprised of 117 cases.

5.1 Demographic Characteristics

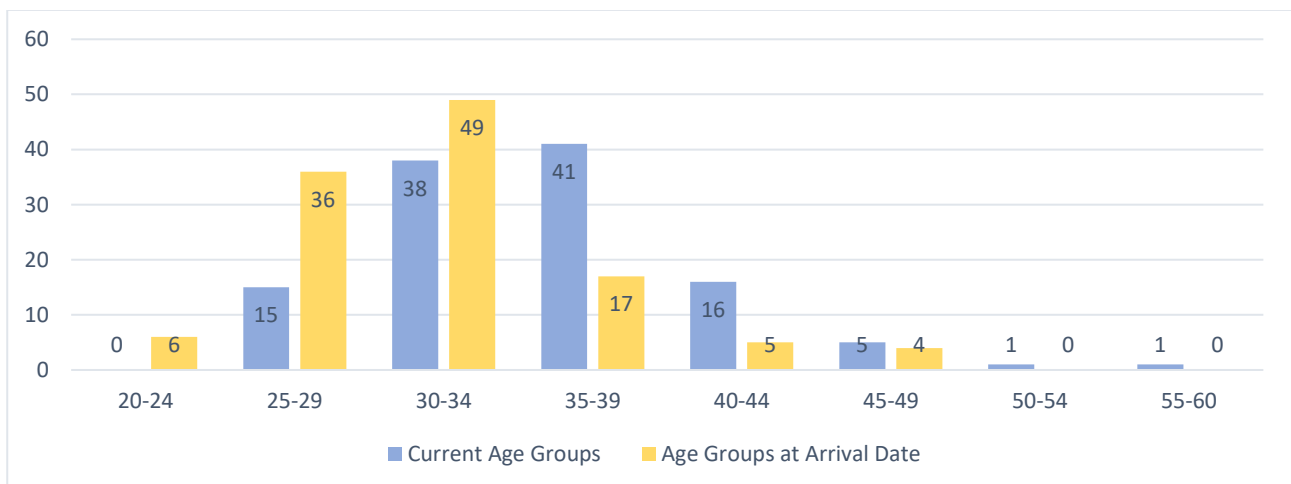
The median age of the sample is 35. Analysing the age distribution of the sample in age groups, it is observed that almost 68% of the respondents are in their thirties and including the ones at the 25-29 age group we can see that 80% of them are below 40 years old (Table 1) (Figure 3). Calculating the ages of the sample at the time of their arrival at the Netherlands the median age becomes 32 and that 92% of the them moved before the age of 40.

As it could be expected, the mobility of the highly skilled individuals is higher at younger and more productive ages. However, a level of work experience also appears as a requirement for finding a job as a highly skilled migrant in the Netherlands. The percentage of the people who moved before their thirties is relatively low but still, they represent more than one third of the sample (36%).

Table 1 Current and Arrival Age Groups

Age Groups	Current Age		Arrival Age	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
20-24	0	0%	6	5%
25-29	15	13%	36	31%
30-34	38	32%	49	42%
35-39	41	35%	17	15%
40-44	16	14%	5	4%
45-49	5	4%	4	3%
50-54	1	1%	0	0%
55-60	1	1%	0	0%
Total	117	100%	117	100%

Figure 3 Current and Arrival Age Groups



The sample is equally divided between genders: there are 59 female and 58 male respondents. 24% of the respondents are single or divorced and 76% are either married or partners living together (Table 2). It can be assumed that this large number of married respondents, is also resulted from the fact that a number of couples may have both attended the survey. However, even though we assume that all the married people (and unmarried partners) are represented together in the sample, and exclude one spouse, the number of married individuals is still above 60%. There are 38 people who have one child and 16 people have 2 children, in total 46% of the sample do have children. Comparing the percentages within the married individuals, 36% do not have children, 45% of them have one child and 19% have two children. This figure has an effect in the reasons for migration decisions, bringing children's education as a primary factor for migration. This theme has been further analysed in the next chapter.

Table 2 Marital Status

Marital Status	Count	Percentage
<i>Single</i>	27	23%
<i>Divorced</i>	1	1%
<i>Partnership</i>	4	3%
<i>Married</i>	85	73%
<i>Total</i>	117	100%

The highly skilled population is also highly educated (Table 3). More than half (53%) of the highly skilled migrants has a master's degree or above, 13% are PhD graduates. 46% have bachelor's degrees and only one person is a vocational college graduate, which is a two to four years programme in mechatronics. In addition, the average work experience is 11.2 years and more than 60% of the sample are experienced between 5 to 15 years, corresponding to a mid-senior level (Table 4). Thus, it can be said that the HSBTN are all highly educated with a mid-level of work experience.

Table 3 Education Level

Education Level	Count	Percentage
<i>PhD</i>	15	13%
<i>Master</i>	47	40%
<i>Bachelor</i>	54	46%
<i>Vocational College</i>	1	1%
<i>Total</i>	117	100%

Table 4 Work Experience

Work Experience	Count	Percentage
<i>1-5</i>	16	14%
<i>5-10</i>	33	28%
<i>10-15</i>	39	33%
<i>15-20</i>	17	15%
<i>20-25</i>	5	4%
<i>25-30</i>	6	5%
<i>35-40</i>	1	1%
<i>Total</i>	117	100%

Because of the need in the high-tech industries, information technologies and other related areas, more than half of the respondents possess an engineering background; especially computer, machine, electrical and electronics, and industrial engineering (Table 5 and 6). 54% of the sample has an engineering background and 24% consists of computer and software engineers. Apart from these departments with at least 3 or more people graduated, others that are represented by 1 or 2 people, are distributed among many different areas including civil engineering, communications, food engineering, sociology, statistics, accounting, architecture, chemistry, city planning, dentistry, international relations, journalism, language and literature, medicine, biology and psychology.

Table 5 Educational Background: Faculties

Faculty	Count	Percentage
Engineering	63	54%
Economy and Administrative Sciences	27	23%
Natural Sciences	12	10%
Humanities and Education	10	9%
Health Sciences	3	3%
Architecture and City Planning	2	2%
Total	117	100%

Table 6 Educational Background: Departments

Department	Count	Percentage
Computer and Software Engineering	28	24%
Business Administration	9	8%
Electrical and Electronics Engineering	9	8%
Machine Engineering	9	8%
Economy	8	7%
Industrial Engineering	8	7%
Mathematics	5	4%
High School Education	5	4%
Public Administration	4	3%
Chemical Engineering	3	3%
Physics	3	3%
Others	26	22%
Total	117	100%

Regarding language skills, apart from one person who speaks Bulgarian and one who speaks German, all the respondents stated that they fluently speak English. 83% of the respondents fluently speak English as the only foreign language (Table 7). English, only 9 people stated that they are also fluent in Dutch, as a second foreign language and 2 of them speaking both Dutch and German. Therefore, quite a low rate of the HSBTN speak Dutch (8%). Since it may constitute a barrier for integration, this issue has been further analysed in the next chapter.

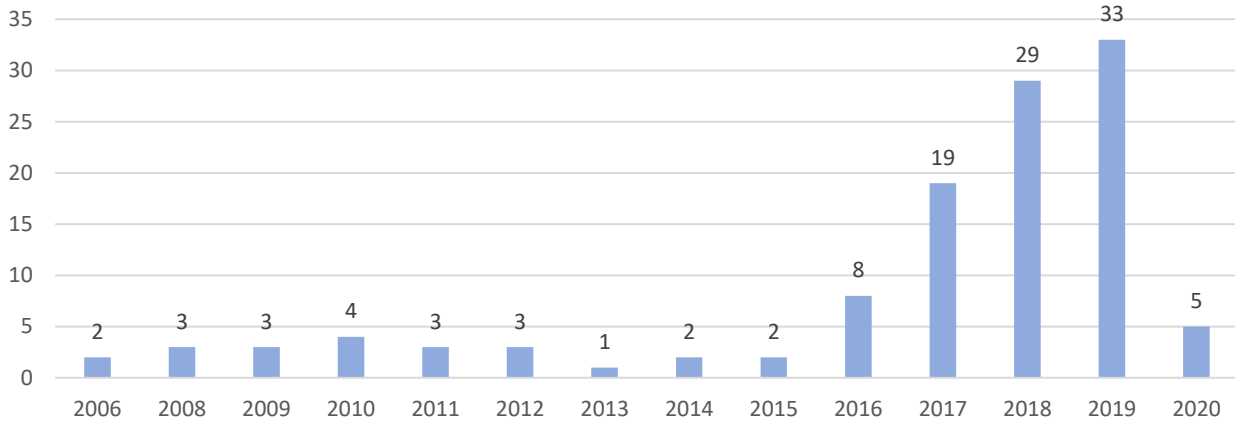
Table 7 Fluently Spoken Languages

Languages	Count	Percentage
Only English	97	83%
Dutch	7	6%
French	4	3%
German	3	3%
Dutch and German	2	2%
Other (Bulgarian, Spanish, Russian and Azerbaijani) (=1)	4	4%
	117	100%

5.2 Home - Host Locations and Migration Dates

Examining the arrival dates, we can see that approximately %74 percent of the sample arrived in the last 5 years (Figure 4). It can be seen that there is an increasing trend in the migration rates, especially in the last 5 years. This result is parallel with CBS migration data (CBS Statline, 2020). It is also expected considering the increasing interest in several research studies conducted by government, research institutions and NGOs from Turkey and reflected in the Turkish media as summarize before.

Figure 4 Arrival Years of HSBTN



On the other hand, this could also partially be explained by a certain level of selection bias, because of an expected level of diminishing response rate from the people who moved earlier. These people might be better integrated and not much active in the online expat groups. However, this estimated effect should be marginal since the increasing trend in HSBTN migration is also evident from previous studies and government data.

The effects of Covid-19 pandemic are already reflected in the migration numbers. The employment processes for some may have been postponed, if not cancelled completely. When we compare the number of HSBTN in first quarters of 2019 with 2020, the number of people who moved to the Netherlands has diminished by four times, even though the travel restrictions for preventing the spread of the novel coronavirus, started only after the second half of March 2020. While there were 12 people who moved to the Netherlands in the first three months of 2019, it is only 4 in 2020.

Since there are two alumni groups of METU, among the survey distribution channels, it initially has been considered as an indicator for the origin of the Turkish HSBTNs in the Netherlands: The majority of the expats in the Netherlands have been expected to be the alumni of METU and moved from Ankara. However, İstanbul came out to be the major origin of migrants. In general, highly skilled people originated from the biggest metropolitan cities of Turkey, with İstanbul and Ankara leading with 59% and 33% respectively (Table 8). These two cities are also the centres of industrial and commercial activity in Turkey.

Table 8 Origin Cities of HSBTN in Turkey

<i>Origin Cities</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>İstanbul</i>	69	59%
<i>Ankara</i>	39	33%
<i>İzmir</i>	5	4%
<i>Others (=1) (Bursa, Eskişehir, Kocaeli, Samsun)</i>	4	3%
<i>Total</i>	117	100%

This result represents a clear distinction with the earlier waves of migration to the Netherlands, which are mostly dominated by low skilled worker migrants. The first and second generation of Turkish migrants in the Netherlands, predominantly came from rural areas and other smaller cities of Anatolia (Fassmann and İcduygu, 2013).

Concerning the geographical distribution of HSBTN in the Netherlands, the results are parallel with the findings of Decisio (2017). A majority of the HSBTN located in the Randstad Metropolitan Region together with Eindhoven. There has been a low level of mobility between cities (Table 9). This is mostly because of the fact that the majority of the sample moved in the recent years and still living in the same city at the time of arrival. It is observed that, around 80% of the HSBTN has been living in the first five highly populated metropolitan areas of the Netherlands, where MNEs and other companies in technology and finance sectors as well as international organisations, have mostly been located: Amsterdam, Eindhoven, The Hauge, Utrecht and Rotterdam. Apart from these five biggest cities, after their initial location decision at the time of their migration, HSBTN also moved in cities and towns which are in close proximity to the populated metropolitan centres; for instance, Amstelveen and Wassenaar, enjoying a less populated area but in close proximity to Amsterdam and The Hauge, respectively.

Table 9 Major Host Cities in the Netherlands

<i>Host Cities</i>	<i>Current Location</i>		<i>City of Arrival in NL</i>	
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Amsterdam</i>	34	29%	40	34%
<i>Eindhoven</i>	28	24%	28	24%
<i>The Hauge</i>	10	9%	12	10%
<i>Utrecht</i>	8	7%	6	5%
<i>Rotterdam</i>	5	4%	5	4%
<i>Amstelveen</i>	5	4%	-	0%
<i>Wassenaar</i>	5	4%	-	0%
<i>Others (<=2)</i>	22	19%	26	22%
<i>Total</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>100%</i>

Lastly, for geographical distribution, seeking the reasons for choosing the cities that HSBTN live with an open question, we can see that locations of the jobs have been the main determinant when choosing where to live, which have been mentioned 63 times, which is parallel with the theoretical background and empirical findings, summarized in the second chapter. Others included factors such as, cosmopolitan environment (18), quality of life (15), friends and family (8) and other factors that have been mentioned less frequently. Since it is a critical measure for attraction factors, these have been further analysed in the next chapter.

5.3 Occupations and Work Environment

94 of the 117 highly skilled migrants, are currently employed in the Netherlands. 86 of these 94 people previously had jobs in Turkey and left their previous jobs for another one in the Netherlands (Table 10).

Table 10 Employment Situation in Turkey and in the Netherlands

	<i>Employed in NL</i>	<i>Unemployed in NL</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Employed in TR</i>	86	18	104
<i>Unemployed in TR</i>	8	5	13
<i>Total</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>117</i>

21 people within the remaining 23, stated that they moved because of the jobs of their spouses. 18 of these people had actually been employed in Turkey. These highly skilled people, a large majority being females, have left their jobs in Turkey in order to move to the Netherlands and could not find a job or did not prefer to participate in the workforce at the moment.

The survey questions related with the sectorial background and current sectors that HSBTN are employed, are categorised with NACE Rev 2 Level 2 classification. More than half of the respondents had been employed in the high-tech sectors in Turkey and still employed in those sectors in the Netherlands (Table 11). 54 people remained in the same sector, a majority of them are in the computer programming sector. 40 people of those who are employed in the Netherlands have changed their sector. Although this intersectoral mobility has been occurred between similar sectors such as information services, computer programming or telecommunications, there are also sectorial shifts between these sectors and sectors such as financial services, other manufacturing sectors and international organisations.

Table 11 Sectors of HSBTN Occupation in Turkey and in the Netherlands

<i>NACE Rev 2 – Level 2 Sectors</i>	<i>Turkey</i>		<i>The Netherlands</i>	
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Computer programming, consultancy, and related activities</i>	35	34%	29	31%
<i>Education</i>	12	12%	3	3%
<i>Financial service activities, except insurance and pension funding</i>	6	6%	7	7%
<i>Human health activities</i>	6	6%	2	2%
<i>Architectural and engineering activities; technical testing and analysis</i>	5	5%	6	6%
<i>Information service activities</i>	4	4%	4	4%
<i>Manufacture of computer, electronic and optical products</i>	4	4%	4	4%
<i>Telecommunications</i>	4	4%	2	2%
<i>Manufacture of electrical equipment</i>	3	3%	4	4%
<i>Scientific research and development</i>	2	2%	5	5%
<i>Other manufacturing</i>	2	2%	3	3%
<i>Other Sectors (<=2)</i>	21	20%	22	23%
<i>Total</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>100%</i>

While 88% of the sample had a permanent contract in Turkey, this number decreased to 63% in the Netherlands (Table 12). 92 people had full-time permanent contracts in Turkey, but only 47 of these people, just above half of those, continued to have full-time permanent contracts in the Netherlands and two of them have become entrepreneurs. 26 of them have either full time or part time temporary contracts and 17 people have become unemployed. We can see that 28% of the sample left their full-time permanent jobs in Turkey for temporary jobs in the Netherlands. Also, out of 6 entrepreneurs in Turkey, only one person continued to be an entrepreneur, others have full-time jobs in the Netherlands.

Table 12 Employment Contract Types

<i>Contract Types</i>	<i>Contract in TR</i>		<i>Contract in NL</i>	
<i>Entrepreneur</i>	6	6%	3	3%
<i>Full time temporary contract</i>	6	6%	30	32%
<i>Full time permanent contract</i>	92	88%	58	62%
<i>Part time temporary contract</i>	-	-	2	2%
<i>Part time permanent contract</i>	-	-	1	1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>100%</i>

61% of the sample are employed in large enterprises, 39% are employed in SMEs and half of those are in medium enterprises (Table 13). This categorization has been based on the responses of the respondents, keeping in mind that they may not have fully aware of the ownership structure and the actual size of the company that they are working for. Therefore, company size data is dependent on the estimations and approximations of the respondents. Besides, SME categorization is also based on the “number of employees” criteria only (medium-sized enterprises: 50-249 employees, small enterprises: 10-49 employees and micro firms: less than 10 employees) excluding the turnover criteria, according to the suggested criteria defined in the “User Guide to the SME Definition” by the European Commission (EC, 2015).

We can see that employing highly skilled migrants require a certain level of company size in general. Although there are micro and small firms or even start-ups that are interested in attracting highly skilled migrants, and employ a small percentage of HSBTN, big medium sized companies and mostly large enterprises have the capacity and become eligible to deal with the regulations and costs related with migrant recruitment. Moreover, 15% of the respondents in the sample are employed by very large companies, most probably MNEs or international organisations, employing more than 10.000 people.

Table 13 Size of the Companies of HSBTN

<i>Company Size</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Micro Firms</i>	9	10%
<i>Small Enterprises</i>	9	10%
<i>Medium Enterprises</i>	19	20%
<i>Large Enterprises</i>	57	61%
<i>Total</i>	94	100%

Finally, when we look at the job mobility level of the HSBTN in the Netherlands, we can see that more than half of the respondents changed their jobs at least once (Table 14). The average number of jobs is 2.1 in the working population and 47% of the working HSBTN are at their first job in the Netherlands. 31% have changed their job twice or more.

Table 14 Job Mobility of HSBTN

<i>Number of Previous Jobs in NL</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>0</i>	44	47%
<i>1</i>	21	22%
<i>2</i>	12	13%
<i>3</i>	11	12%
<i>4</i>	3	3%
<i>5</i>	3	3%
<i>Total</i>	94	100%

5.4 Migration and Return Decisions

Analysing the responses to the open question about the reasons and factors on migration decisions and long term thoughts of the HSBTN, we can see that the pull factors related with the decision of the city such as “cosmopolitan environment” or factors related with the decision of the country such as “quality of life” and “personal freedoms” etc. have come out to be minimal. 58% of the HSBTN’s decision have been resulted from a major push factor: the decision to leave Turkey in the first place (Table 15). 20 people (18%) have chosen moving into the Netherlands as their first decision and only 2 people have chosen moving into a specific city as their first decision.

When we analyse the distribution of the second decision among those who have chosen “going abroad” as their first decision, “moving into the Netherlands” comes first with 56% (Table 16). Specific city choices do not come into the picture even as a secondary decision. Therefore, resulting from push factors, HSBTN do mainly decide leaving their home country. The characteristics of the Netherlands as a whole predominates the decisions of highly skilled after they start thinking of migration. This result appears as a key factor, providing valuable information for developing talent attraction policies both in the regional and at the National scales. These perspectives have been scrutinized further in the in-depth interviews and analysed in detail in the next section.

Table 15 Migration Decision Order

<i>Decisions</i>	<i>Initial Decision</i>		<i>Secondary Decision</i>	
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Going Abroad</i>	68	58%	23	20%
<i>A Specific Job</i>	21	18%	32	28%
<i>Moving into the Netherlands</i>	20	17%	45	40%
<i>Other</i>	6	5%	4	4%
<i>Moving into the City</i>	2	2%	9	8%
<i>Total</i>	117	100%	113	100%

Table 16 Secondary Migration Decisions of the First Group

<i>Secondary Decisions</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Moving into the Netherlands</i>	38	56%
<i>A Specific Job</i>	26	38%
<i>Going Abroad</i>	2	3%
<i>Other</i>	2	3%
<i>Total</i>	68	100%

This order of decisions is also related with the long-term plans of the highly skilled migrants, regarding their stay in the Netherlands. We can see that 53% of them perceive that they consider staying in the Netherlands permanently (Table 17). Most people do not consider moving back to Turkey. On the other hand, quite a number of people, 34% of the sample, are not sure or have not decided yet. However, if we distribute these people between temporary and permanent based on their weights 81% appear to be permanent.

Table 17 Perceptions for Staying in the Netherlands

<i>Perceptions for staying in NL</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Temporary</i>	15	13%
<i>Permanent</i>	62	53%
<i>Not Sure</i>	40	34%
<i>Total</i>	117	100%

This relatively high number of undecided people may have a significant effect in policy development. Policies for retention might focus on these people as a target group, better understanding their expectations and developing activities for those, might be considered as a regional policy agenda.

When we ask about the same issue from a different perspective, asking when do they think that they will be back in Turkey, we can see that 64% of the sample do not consider going back at all and 21% think that will be back in 10 years (Table 18). Analysing these two responses together it is observed that 11% of HSBTN seem to be open for moving to third countries.

Table 18 Expected Time Frames for Return Migrations

<i>Time frames</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>In one year</i>	1	1%
<i>In three years</i>	6	5%
<i>In five years</i>	10	9%
<i>In ten years</i>	25	21%
<i>Do not consider going back</i>	75	64%
<i>Total</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>100%</i>

More than half of the HSBTN (54%) stated that they had other options, 91 alternatives in total, during the time of migration. Among these 63 respondents, as a respond to an open question for other country and city options, Germany has been stated 26 times and UK has been stated 15 times as the top two alternatives. Other alternatives included USA (8), Sweden (8), Belgium (6), Canada (5) and 13 other countries from all over the developed world.

5.5 Perceptions on Migration Motives and Life Plans

Further seeking the reasons for migration, respondents were asked a set of prioritization questions, based on the pull-push factors. These choices have been tested during the pilot interviews and adjusted accordingly. As a result, parallel to the analyses summarized above, first reason for migration has come out to be the desire for living abroad, with a score of 7.7 out of 10¹ (Table 19). Desire to live in the EU and in the Netherlands also got relatively higher scores: 6.8 and 6.1. Starting a specific job came in the fourth place with only a score of 5.1. Other reasons which are not listed in the set have also been asked as an open question. 14 people mentioned the future and education of their children, 7 people stated that there were political reasons and 6 people said the decisions had been related with their jobs.

Table 19 Reasons for Migration and Factors on Migration Decisions

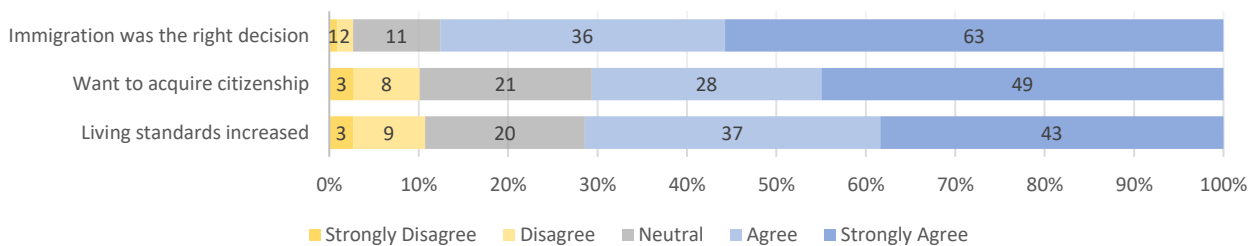
<i>Reasons for Migration</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Factors on Decisions</i>	<i>Score</i>
Wanted to live abroad	7.7	Professional network	3.8
To live in the EU	6.8	Job of my spouse	3.7
Wanted to live in NL	6.1	Seen a job opportunity	3.6
To start a job	5.1	Personal network	2.8
For marriage	1.7	Head-hunter found me	1.8

¹ Because of the limitations of the online survey platform, respondents asked to give points between 1 to 10 for each item for these questions. Since zero point was not available, respondents were informed to give one point if the item did not have an effect at all. During the data analysis, results have been transformed into 0-9 scale and the final scores have been adjusted to a scale of 10. Therefore, the results have been calculated on a 0-10 scale in the end.

Another set of prioritization questions have been asked for the factors that had an effect on their migration decisions (Table 19). Results of this set have revealed lower scores, professional network has come out to be the first choice with a score of 3.8. Other reasons included only education as the main factor, and it has been mentioned only 5 times. Examining the results in detail, we can see that all the items have been given 0 scores by more than 50% of the sample. These results can initially be interpreted as none of these factors played a key role for the majority of the HSBTN. We can conclude that their personal decisions have been a major factor for migration. However, these factors have also been asked during the in-depth interviews and further analysed in detail in the next chapter.

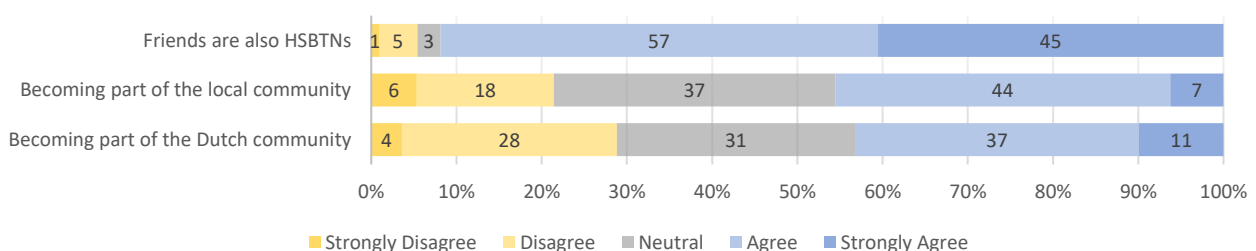
For further analysis of the opinions on migration, staying and contribution, seven sets of Likert scale questions have been asked in order to gather the perceptions of the HSBTN about (1) migration decisions, (2) job related and (3) socioeconomic reasons for migration, (4) their integration process, (5) job related and (6) socioeconomic considerations about staying and lastly (7) their perceived contribution to the economy and business environment. Firstly, three questions have been asked, regarding the perceptions on HSBTN migration decisions: whether they consider their migration decision as a “good” or “right” one, whether their living standards have been increased, and if they are planning to or want to acquire citizenship. As a result, we can see that majority of the HSBTN strongly agree or agree at all of them. 71% of the respondents stated that their living standards have been increased in the Netherlands and also 71% are planning to or eager to acquire citizenship of the Netherlands. Besides, 88% of the respondents do consider that their decision to move to the Netherlands was the right one (Figure 5). Only 3 people have chosen to disagree or strongly disagree.

Figure 5 Perceptions on migration decisions



Regarding HSBTN’s perceptions about their integration into the Dutch community in the Netherlands and local communities they live in, relatively fewer people (43% and 46%) agree that they are becoming a part of these communities (Figure 6). However, these levels can still be considered a relatively high level, because of the fact that majority of the HSBTN moved in the recent years with an increasing trend. Besides, a considerably high level of “neutral” responses to these questions reveal that majority are not against becoming a part of these communities. However, a very large percentage of HSBTN (92%) agreed or strongly agreed that their friends are HSBTN like themselves.

Figure 6 Perceptions about the Integration of HSBTN in the Netherlands



Reasons and motives of HSBTN have been categorized into two, as a combination of push and pull factors: job related and socioeconomic reasons (Figure 7 and 8). Analysing these two sets together, we can see that generally socioeconomic reasons are more important than the job-related ones. 88% of the respondents indicated that their migration resulted from a socioeconomic instability in Turkey, with choosing to agree or strongly agree. Following this reason, higher quality of life in the Netherlands, general concerns for themselves, families or children’s future and desires to live in the Netherlands or specific cities all revealed as reasons for a majority of HSBTN to migrate, differentiating from 84% to 57% positive responses.

Regarding the job-related reasons, opportunities to fulfil professional ideals have been revealed as the first (strongly agree and agree: 62%) rather than better career or income opportunities. However, all of these factors seem to have played a significant role deciding on migration. On the other hand, “better job position” has got 39% of the responses on the positive side. Entrepreneurial opportunities, job of the spouses and not being able to find a suitable job in Turkey also do not seem to have been a significant reason for majority of HSBTN. Among the socioeconomic reasons, only relatives or friends in the Netherlands has not played a significant role for a large majority of HSBTN. Only 10 people just agreed to this statement.

We can make the inference that HSBTN mostly migrated because of the socioeconomic reasons with a combination push and pull factors and “opportunities” rather than the attributes of the job position that they have been moved to work. We can say that most HSBTN’s jobs were “better” in Turkey.

Figure 7 Socioeconomic Reasons for Migration

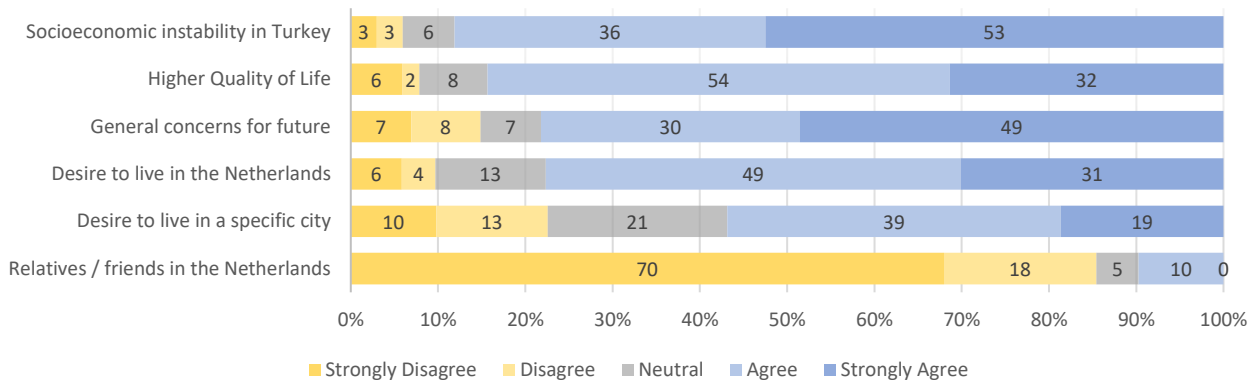
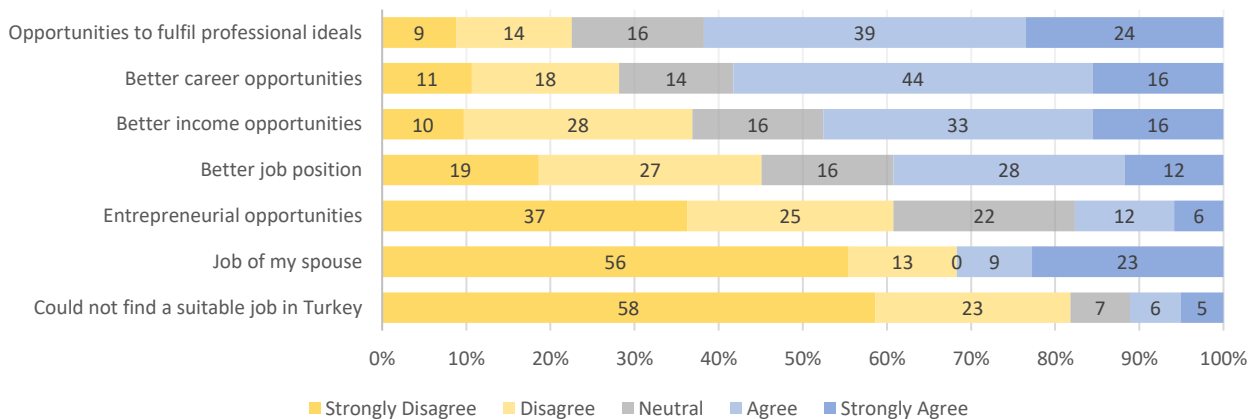


Figure 8 Job Related Reasons for Migration



As an important influence for retention, regarding the considerations for life plans, HSBTN were asked about the potential factors that might have been relevant for staying in the Netherlands or going back to Turkey (Figure 9 and 10). Similar to the reasons for migration, results of these two sets together, reveal that in general, socioeconomic factors for life plans are more important than the job-related ones. Firstly, while 80% of the respondents indicated that better living standards for their families or themselves in the Netherlands affected their plans, only 6% disagreed to this. Similarly, the majority of the HSBTN indicated that they want to live either in the Netherlands (71%) or in their current city (66%). Additionally, getting a better salary in the Netherlands (71%) and opportunities to fulfil professional ideals (66%) are also among the factors deriving from the host country conditions, that affect the majority of HSBTN life plans for staying.

A noteworthy factor, which is related with the origin country conditions and which has an effect on life plans of the HSBTN, has been an increase in the socioeconomic stability in Turkey (62%), while 14% of the participants are not sure about this. Job-related factors, such as a new job opportunity, a position in Turkey or spouses' jobs, appear to have a minor effect, regarding the conditions in Turkey. These results are parallel with the reasons for migration, which mostly affected by a perceived socioeconomic instability in Turkey and seem to bring valuable input for retention policies. Availability of entrepreneurial opportunities in the Netherlands seem to have divided the sample equally while 23% are not sure about it. However, we can also infer that a relatively high percentage of HSBTN (39%) considers staying if an entrepreneurial opportunity arises in the Netherlands. This is much higher than the 11% of "entrepreneurial intent" in the Netherlands, according Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2018 (GEM, 2019).

Figure 9 Socioeconomic Factors for Retention and Return Migration Decisions

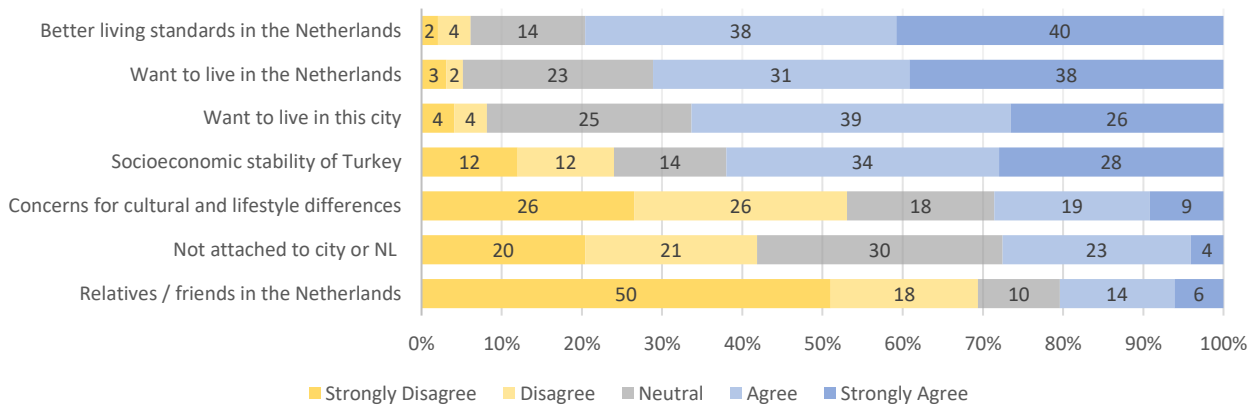
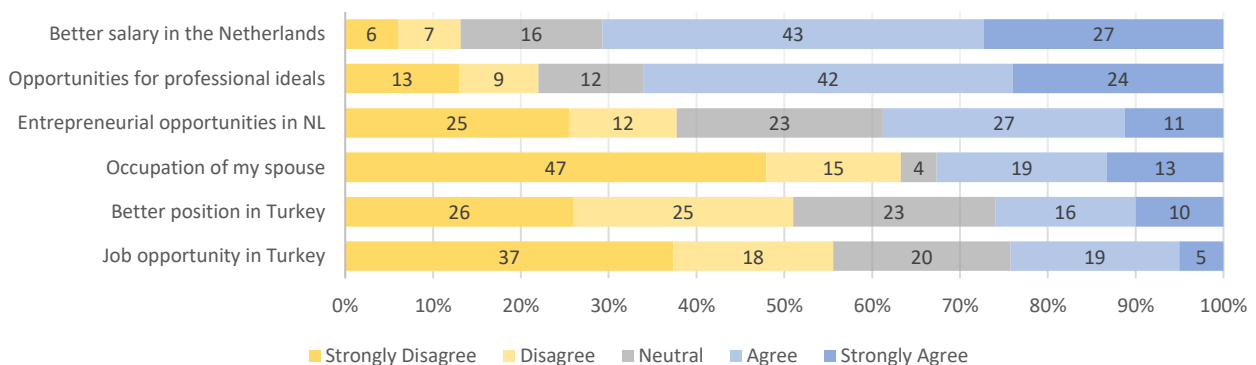


Figure 10 Job Related Factors for Retention and Return Migration Decisions



As a key element for integration to the Netherlands and a determinant for long term living plans, perceptions about experienced discrimination have also been examined. In the questions related with discrimination, any kind of feeling of discrimination experiences, not necessarily to go as far as racism, have been requested in order to find out actual incidents and HSBTN evaluations about those. As a result, 9% of the respondents experienced discrimination at the workplace and 12% experienced in social relations (Table 20). Although it seems that only a small minority experienced these, considering the social environment and highly regulated business environments, this percentage could also be considered as a relatively high level. A comparative or time series analysis has not been conducted to evaluate this result in order not to exceed the scope of this research; however, this issue has been further examined in the next chapter.

Table 20 Experienced Discrimination at the Workplace and in Social Relations

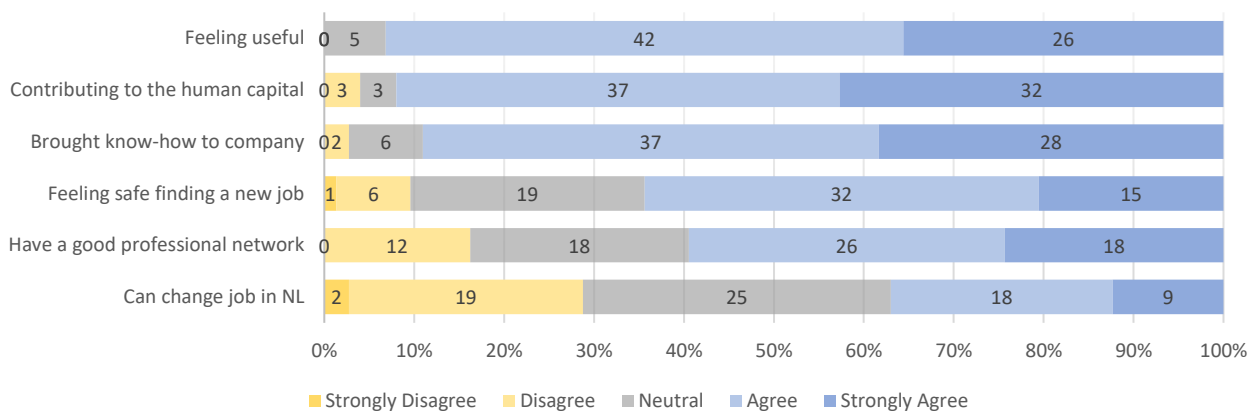
	<i>Discrimination at the workplace</i>		<i>Discrimination in social relations</i>	
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Yes</i>	7	9%	12	12%
<i>No</i>	67	91%	85	88%
<i>Total</i>	74	100%	97	100%

5.6 Perceptions on Contribution and Business Environment

Regarding the perceived contribution of HSBTN to the Netherlands, it can be said that a very large majority, almost all of the respondents stated that they brought know-how to their companies and feel useful and as a result contribute to the overall human capital in the Netherlands (Figure 11). This result is especially notable, when compared with the top job-related reason for migration: “opportunities to fulfil professional ideals”. It seems that there is a reciprocal gain between companies and HSBTN, as their perception. While HSBTN fulfil their professional desires, they also bring know-how and feel useful to the company and contribute to the human capital in the Netherlands, confirming the theoretical background.

Majority of HSBTN also built a good level of professional network and feel safe finding a new job in the Netherlands, although not as much highly regarded as the perceived contributions. However, only 37% of the respondents consider changing their jobs in the Netherlands in the near future and 34% are not sure about it.

Figure 11 Perceptions about Contribution and Business Environment



The results of the content analysis based on in-depth interviews have been provided in the next chapter.

6 Perspectives of Highly Skilled Migrants: Interview Results

The qualitative part of this research is based on data collected via semi-structured, face-to-face, and online in-depth interviews with 16 HSBTN in the Netherlands. Apart from one face-to-face interview, all the interviews have been conducted via online video meeting platforms. Interviews had to be conducted in such a way because of the social distancing measures enacted by the Dutch government for preventing the COVID-19 pandemic. Voices and/or videos of the interviews have been recorded with the informed consent by the participants and transcribed afterwards.

Transcriptions have been analysed in three steps for content analysis with the recommended approach by Corbin and Strauss (2008). A qualitative analysis software (NVivo) has been used for this analysis and coding queries have been used for identifying patterns and themes within the transcriptions. Concepts or themes have been coded, examples for these concepts have been identified and finally, the concepts have been analysed for finding commonalities, patterns, or different cases. After starting with open coding to identify main themes, axial coding has been implemented in order to analyse main themes and patterns with their relationships, connections and causal or intervening conditions between themes and strategies of HSBTN. Finally, selective coding has been conducted to determine the central phenomena and structure the whole data. The code tree, summarizing main patterns and the structure have been prepared and provided in the appendices section (Appendix 4). Finally, perspectives of HSBTN have been categorized and analysed under three themes: (1) attraction and migration processes, (2) retention and integration, and (3) sustained contribution to regional development.

General characteristics of the in-depth interview sample are summarized in table 21. Median age of the sample is 35, the same as the median age of the online survey sample. Apart from two participants who Migrated to the Netherlands in 2006 and 2009, all the participants moved to the Netherlands in the last 4 years. More than two thirds of the sample are married, and more than half of the married participants have children. The interview participants are also highly educated with 1 PhD, 9 master's and 6 bachelor's degrees.

Table 21 Basic Characteristics of the In-Depth Interview Participants

ID	AGE	GENDER (M/F)	MARITAL STATUS	CHILDREN	CITY	EDUCATION	BACHELOR DEPARTMENT	ARRIVAL YEAR
HSBTN-1	39	M	Married	1	Den Haag	Master	Electronics Engineering	2018
HSBTN-2	35	M	Married	2	Eindhoven	Master	Electronics Engineering	2019
HSBTN-3	40	M	Married	1	Eindhoven	Bachelor	Machine Engineering	2016
HSBTN-4	34	F	Single	-	Amsterdam	Master	Mathematics / Finance	2017
HSBTN-5	35	M	Single	-	Eindhoven	Master	Software Engineering	2019
HSBTN-6	42	M	Married	1	Wassenaar	Bachelor	Public Administration	2018
HSBTN-7	37	M	Married	-	Utrecht	PhD	Economy	2009
HSBTN-8	33	F	Married	-	Eindhoven	Bachelor	Software Engineering	2019
HSBTN-9	42	F	Married	1	Amsterdam	Master	Economy	2016
HSBTN-10	31	F	Single	-	Amsterdam	Master	Business Administration	2018
HSBTN-11	45	F	Married	-	Amsterdam	Bachelor	Economy	2006
HSBTN-12	30	M	Married	-	Eindhoven	Master	Machine Engineering	2018
HSBTN-13	30	M	Single	-	Hilversum	Bachelor	Civil Engineering	2016
HSBTN-14	28	M	Single	-	Utrecht	Bachelor	Software Engineering	2017
HSBTN-15	34	F	Married	-	Almere	Master	English Language Education	2019
HSBTN-16	35	M	Married	2	Eindhoven	Master	Machine Engineering	2018

6.1 Talent Attraction and Migration Processes

Attraction of highly skilled migrants, or “talent attraction” as it is most commonly used within regional development policies, depends on various factors, such as availability of jobs, quality of social and physical environment, regulations and other benefits provided by governments, and availability of social and professional networks as summarized in the literature. Nevertheless, apart from all these pull factors, attraction depends on the availability of highly skilled people in the international labour market, in the first place. Push factors resulting from individual motives, perceptions, and plans play a substantial role. Therefore, initial migration decisions and migration processes, although also closely related with their retention, have been analysed together with attraction. Especially, in the case of HSBTN, migration reasons and motives which derive from the push factors, are the most critical ones. As it is also revealed in the survey results, HSBTN initial decision has mostly been to live in another country.

6.1.1 Primary Motives for Migration: Push Factors

Motives and reasons for all of the HSBTN’s migration are combinations of different pull and push factors. There is not one motive for any participant. However, while the set of pull factors highly differentiate, push factors are almost the same and could be categorized under the theme: “socioeconomic and/or political instability of Turkey” as repeatedly stated by the HSBTN. This result had also been revealed in the survey: desire for living abroad being the first decision of migrants, with a score of 7.7 out of 10. Apart from four participants, all of the participants declared that they first wanted to leave Turkey and started to look for alternatives. Priority motives of these four participants, two of whom moved in the 2000s, all have been mostly related with attributes of or changes in their jobs or personal life plans, however they are still not related with the attraction factors of the Netherlands but life-course occurrences, such as (1) relocation of business operations from Turkey, (2) marriage, (3) education opportunity and (4) relocation of the department in an international organisation.

Perceptions on the socioeconomic situation of Turkey either paved the way to migration decisions of HSBTN gradually in time or specific incidents in the country had serious impacts and the decisions have been taken and implemented in a short period of time. Regarding those participants who decided gradually, several patterns emerge: the most common one being “children’s future and education”. All of the married participants stated that, education and future of their children had been the utmost reason, with a perception of a low-quality education system in Turkey as well as the dissatisfaction about the living environment for their children. Moreover, “education of children” has been a factor even for the single participants and unmarried couples:

[...] of course, I could not imagine a future in Turkey. This is a more serious part. If I want to have a family, if I want to have a child, I would not like to raise or send my child to school in Turkey. Not for myself but more when I consider in long term, for family life (HSBTN-10, 31, F, Amsterdam).

However, while children’s education seems like a long term plan or an idea for people who are not married or do not have children, it is also considered as a period and resulted in a medium-term plan for staying in the Netherlands for those who already have children. Some of these couples consider going back after the primary or secondary education of their children. It can be said that this major push factor, socioeconomic instability of Turkey, does not mainly influence the migrants, for planning their own lives but more for their children’s future.

Although it is the most important aspect, this motive is not only related with the future of the family or children but it is also stated as an economic push factor because of the judgment by HSBTN about the diminishing quality of the public schools in Turkey and because private schools are very expensive but perceived as a necessity for a good quality education for their children in Turkey. Therefore, migrating into Netherlands, where primary and secondary public schools offer a high-quality education for free, provides substantial amount of savings as well.

Subthemes, that also construct the main push factor with a gradual development of the mindset of HSBTN include obstacles in the work and business environment of Turkey. HSBTN have been mostly graduated from the top universities, some of them have already studied abroad and experienced a foreign country from the developed world and had the privilege to experience a knowledge-based job environment. This assessment is especially valid for HSBTN who previously were employed in the defence industry in Ankara, who took part in the major projects where they had the chance to do research and development and fulfil their professional ideals. It is also valid for those who were entrepreneurs and previously had their own businesses in Turkey. These individuals had experienced a level of dissatisfaction or even resentment for the changes of their work environments or while doing business in the knowledge intensive industries.

Finally, as for those individuals and families who had taken migration decisions in a short period of time, following specific incidents, migration has become as a primary objective in their lives. As a result, also combined with other difficulties in their personal lives, they have started to lose their sense of belongings in their jobs, businesses and in the social life which eventually caused to seek for alternatives elsewhere. This process has been summarized as follows by one of the participants:

HSBTN-9: After July 15 [the attempted coup], I decided to move abroad by all means. (...) Decided either going to Canada or UK and try to find a job there. But then a previously available option re-emerged for Amsterdam.

EÇH: So, you had the idea to go abroad, if not for this company, you would have moved and searched for others?

HSBTN-9: Yes. That would have been a tough process, a risky one but yes, in our minds it was clear to go. (...) The Netherlands was a good alternative among all. Gender equality, security, freedom quality of life, all was appealing to raise our child here. (...) In the job interview they first said that the job location has been changed and it was going to be in İstanbul. As soon as I have heard it, I said that there were no need to continue and if not Amsterdam, I would not want to pursue the recruitment process. Then they have come up with another position and recruited me for that position in Amsterdam (HSBTN-9, 42, F, Amsterdam).

6.1.2 Attraction Factors

Examining the pull factors resulting from the attractive aspects, benefits, or other advantages of the Netherlands, that support HSBTN's decisions to move into the Netherlands, economic reasons, income benefits or better career options are not the primary motives. One of the key attractiveness determinants of the Netherlands is the wide usage of English language. According to EF English Proficiency Index 2019 (EF EPI, 2019), Netherlands is the leading country in the world, among those where the native language is not English. Moreover, since 2011, when this index has been published for the first time, the Netherlands has always been in the top 3. Netherlands has been enjoying this very high proficiency level, becoming one of the most attractive countries for global workforce, as it is also stated in the EF EPI Report: "English is becoming a basic skill for the entire global workforce ... [and] has the potential to generate opportunities, strengthen employability, and expand horizons" (EF EPI, 2019). Participants repeatedly mention this advantage of the Netherlands. According to one

of the participants, it is better than other countries including UK, because English Language is highly widespread but still a second language:

HSBTN-3: Netherlands, comparing with Germany, has seemed like more liveable for us, also because of language. That was very important. Ability to manage your life with English is a fundamental advantage compared to other European countries. I think even better than UK. Because you have other problems there. It is their native language. Because of that, it is difficult for you to communicate. But here, two foreigners, both speaking English: the system, English in the Netherlands, works quite well indeed (HSBTN-3, 40, M, Eindhoven).

Another common key factor, that has been stated by a number of HSBTN, is being in proximity to Turkey. This advantage is not only related with the geographical aspect of proximity but more than that it is closely related with the highly advanced transportation connections with Turkey. Because of the large number of Turkish community in the Netherlands, there have been numerous direct flights between many cities in Turkey and in the Netherlands each day of the week before Covid-19 crisis. Because of these good connections, HSBTN visit their friends and relatives a number of times every year and they have the ability to go in a few hours if an urgent incident arises. HSBTN consider this as a crucial advantage. This opportunity of freedom of movement and keeping close contact with home, makes the Netherlands more attractive compared to many other developed countries from all over the world. Other than the Netherlands, only Germany, Belgium, Austria and to a certain level Sweden shares this advantage.

Higher education, especially post-graduate study is another motive and at same time a strategy of migrants while moving to another country. It is also a channel for policy makers while attracting highly skilled migrants. European programmes and other projects on higher education or traineeships allow authorities to attract highly skilled migrants, at the same time allowing them to integrate with the country. According to the regional policy maker that has been interviewed:

We use Erasmus plus funding (...), as a part of our talent attraction program. We have traineeship projects and we match graduates and near graduates in technology and IT from Spain and Italy, to companies in our region, where they have a traineeship for half a year, like a work experience project. When they are coming to the Netherlands to Brainport for half a year for the traineeship, they are getting scholarship from Erasmus Plus. (...) We also attract and retain international students. With the perspective that when internationals come and study here at the Eindhoven University of Applied Science, when they are done with their studies, they stay here for a job.

Besides Erasmus Plus, as a national policy for attracting international talent, the Dutch government also grants work permit for an orientation year (or search year) to graduates from the Netherlands Universities, Erasmus Mundus graduates and graduates from top 200 universities. One of the participants, benefited from this advantage, having decided to stay after his post-graduate studies. On the other hand, as a distinctive case, one of the participants used this advantage as a strategy to move into the Netherlands, following the decision to leave Turkey:

HSBTN-3: This is how we came to the Netherlands: My wife applied for a fulltime master's programme. She started that and with her student visa, we all moved. So, we have got the residence permit like that. I did not have a job when we first came. Meanwhile, our daughter started to school. I was looking for a job. 7-8 months passed this way. Then I have found a job. And then my wife also finished her master and she found a job too (HSBTN-3, 40, M, Eindhoven).

Apart from these most common attraction factors: language, proximity, and education, another common theme has been "income and career"; however, not as constituting a reason, although job

satisfaction has been a positive factor. It has generally been stated that the incomes of HSBTN were higher in Turkey. In addition, they mostly start at lower job positions in the Netherlands. Therefore, income and career mostly been a negative factor, although 30% regulation has been mentioned as an advantage of the Netherlands by most of the participants. Therefore, a certain level of deskilling has been experienced by a majority of the HSBTN. The concept of deskilling is examined in the last section, together with the contributions to the economy, since it has been observed as a temporary phase.

Other factors that have been a motive for a minority of participants include the availability of the Turkish community in the Netherlands and its EU membership. Turkish community in the Netherlands had a very limited effect on the motives. Only two people mentioned that they have relatives in the Netherlands, and that it is good to have somebody to be supported by in times of crisis. However, they did not play a significant role.

Finally, EU membership of the Netherlands had almost no influence on the motives for HSBTN migration. However, being an EU citizen has become an important factor after settling into the Netherlands for two main reasons: complicated and time-consuming visa regulations imposed by many countries to Turkish citizens and free movement within the EU for both travel and work:

EÇH: Does the EU membership of the Netherlands affected your decision? Do you want to be an EU citizen in the future?

HSBTN-16: No. Not at all.

EÇH: Do you want to become a citizen of EU or the Netherlands?

HSBTN-16: Yes, definitely. It is for not being obliged to acquire a residence or work permit. Because that is an obstacle all the time. If I will get the citizenship, I will not need a permit, I will be able to work anywhere (HSBTN-16, 35, M, Eindhoven).

6.1.3 Migration Processes

Migration processes have been categorized separately from the reasons and motives, although they are closely related in particular cases. Processes or procedures during migration reveal the ways in which individuals and families practice their strategies and they provide useful inputs policy making. HSBTN's first strategy is to find a job through online job announcements, including the websites of specific companies, but mostly through LinkedIn, an online social network platform for professionals. It is usually a long job seeking and application process. As stated by several individuals, this process may take more than six months with at least 50-60 applications.

On the other hand, intermediary companies are also a key element during the recruitment and migration processes. Especially, large companies outsource HR processes to intermediary companies. These companies are not like ordinary human resources companies, which are normally involved only during recruitment process. On the other hand, these companies, proactively attract highly skilled people as headhunters, recruit them within their own company structures, take part in migrants' settling processes, and lease them to technology companies with temporary contracts, as "contingent workforce". This allows large companies to reduce their costs and risks, dealing with the uncertainties of recruiting migrants.

Lastly, social, and professional networks also have a level of influence during migration processes, parallel with the empirical studies that suggest the active role of social networks on the migration

processes. Among the interview participants of this research, only one recruitment process has been achieved with a support from a friend from within the company, which can be considered as a social network. However, in general, for HSBTN moving to the Netherlands, professional networks seem to have more influence. Most of the time, intermediary companies utilize the networks of previously recruited migrants. For instance, one of the participants played a central role together with his colleagues, for attracting many other HSBTN:

EÇH: Did your personal network influence your migration process? Friends, relatives, or colleagues?

HSBTN-12: No, not for me but I have drawn other people, together with two colleagues. We have come together with these friends, from the same company and we have drawn 25 people from that company after we came. (...) Headhunter companies, who brought us here, scanned our Linked accounts completely and asked as if we knew certain people. They asked one by one. So, in the last three years more than 15 people came from our previous company in Turkey to this company that we are working in. Not counting other companies (HSBTN-12, 30, M, Eindhoven).

6.2 Talent Retention and Integration

Parallel to talent attraction, retention of the highly skilled migrants is also a major policy area both at the national and regional scales. National governments, regional and local authorities as well as companies aim to keep the already acquired talent, in order to avoid recruitment, training, integration and other related costs by attracting new people.

In the Netherlands, expat centres work like a one stop shop for almost all the necessities of highly skilled migrants, especially during their settlement processes. As government offices, there are eight of these centres covering all over the Netherlands. All the HSBTN stated that they appreciate the services provided by expat centres. Several HSBTN and their spouses benefitted from expat community meetings, Dutch lessons, and other activities. There are also other target-oriented activities of expat centres for the retention of highly skilled migrants. For instance, Expat Centre South implements a project called Expat Spouses Initiative, in cooperation with more the 15 public and private institutions, universities and companies, connecting the spouses of highly skilled migrants with local job opportunities.

Evaluating the current situation, in the last 10 years, retention rates have been increasing over time, as it is observed by the policy makers: The classic expat role, coming to work for a company for one to three years, has been changing and the highly skilled migrants have been intending to stay longer and build a life in the Netherlands. Especially if migrants have children or they get a relationship, the chances are much bigger, and they stay for a long time.

Talent retention also depends on various factors. Some of these factors are within the powers of host countries and cities and could be improved by their policies, while others are directly related with individual priorities, life plans, and actual reasons for their migration.

6.2.1 Individual Life Plans

When we look at the HSBTN perspectives, firstly, overall life plans of HSBTN themselves play a crucial role and initially the results are parallel with the regional authorities' observations. HSBTN do not consider going back to Turkey, at least in the short to medium term. However, a vast majority considers going back at some time in the future. Several HSBTN stated that they are considering going back after retirement, sometimes wanting to move back for living in a coastal village. This kind of return migration, after quitting the workforce population, could be assumed not to have negative

returns on host cities or countries, may even be beneficial for the Dutch economy at an aggregate level.

On the other hand, although HSBTN do not consider going back to Turkey, a common understanding among them is to be open minded about moving to other countries, especially within Europe, also keeping the contact with Turkey. This is especially stated by software engineers and developers, some naming themselves as “digital nomads”. This subtheme has been categorized as transnational preferences of HSBTN. HSBTN in general do want to keep their relations with Turkey, having an attachment to Turkish culture, social relations etc.; however, as long as they can maintain their connections, they feel themselves free to go anywhere in the world:

EÇH: What about your long-term thoughts? Do you want to go back? What do you think?

HSBTN-10: Frankly speaking, my ideal life is like this: I do not want to break apart from Turkey. I love the culture, our food, our music, our lifestyle etc. I already have a social community in Turkey. I want to keep it. My family would never come here. Because of that, I am trying to establish a life where I can keep a bridge between Turkey and the Netherlands. (...) I have not hundred percent decided to go back but I am close to have a life like that. Maybe I can do trade in between or some other jobs that can allow me to do so.

EÇH: Other places?

HSBTN-10: Being close to Turkey is an important factor, where English is widespread. I would not want to be a Turkish in a Spanish community, for example. Because I want to live where there is diversity, I would definitely want to go a metropolitan and international city. It could be New York, Sydney, Berlin, Amsterdam. But when compared to other two, since they are far away, it could be Berlin. I feel like going to Berlin. If there will be a good opportunity, would I move to Berlin? Yes, I would (HSBTN-10, 31, F, Amsterdam).

6.2.2 Attachment and Integration

HSBTN’s attachment and integration to the Netherlands and to the city that they live in, are also key factors for their retention. First of all, parallel to previous empirical studies, HSBTN’s attachment is closely influenced by the time spent in the Netherlands. Apart from two participants who moved in the 2000s, all the participants declared that they feel attached neither to the city, region nor to the country. Besides, all the HSBTN, including the ones who moved earlier, stated that their friends are mostly Turkish HSBTN, like themselves, confirming the results of the online survey.

Factors that influence the level of attachment and integration of HSBTN, which are related with host countries and cities are also categorized under several subthemes: while quality of life has a positive influence, Dutch language, healthcare system and to a certain level perceived discrimination influence negatively.

Quality of life, although it is normally studied under the migration motives or pull factors in the migration literature, it has appeared to be much more related with retention as a result of the content analysis within the context of this research. From the perspective of HSBTN, a European country should already have a certain level of life quality. The Netherlands does not differentiate itself on the perceptions of HSBTN, before migration. However, only after they migrate to the Netherlands, could they experience the high level of quality of life in the Netherlands and start comparing with other European countries. Several HSBTN emphasized the quality of work-life balance in the Netherlands

and benefits of having a great deal of spare time for themselves. In general, HSBTN consider the job opportunities and living environment as a good combination together:

Quality of life was not primary. I did not come here with those in mind, but I seriously realized it here. Eindhoven is an ideal combination as a city. In Turkey, most of the job opportunities are in İstanbul or in Ankara. But liveability of İstanbul is very low. It is a very problematic city; you only survive there. We also have cities like İzmir and Bursa, small, beautiful, and maybe more enjoyable to live. But you do not have much job opportunities there. Here it is very good, providing all those facilities together. (...) I do not even consider buying a car. We do not need it (HSBTN-2, 35, M, Eindhoven).

On the other hand, there are major factors that have a highly negative effect on HSBTN integration and as a result their retention. Firstly, cultural differences appear to have a key role for attachment and integration, but more than that not being able integrate is closely related with Dutch Language. This appeared to be one of the most notable results of this research. Language has been a strength for attraction but also it appears as a crucial weakness for retention. Participants repeatedly mentioned the advantages of widespread English usage in the Netherlands. However, as it is also summarized in the previous chapter, from the online survey responses, it is apparent that, HSBTN do not spare their time for learning Dutch. This is also a clear result of the in-depth analyses. They mostly start learning but not become proficient in using it. Even after 10 years, HSBTN do not prefer learning Dutch, which prevents them integrating with the community, the city, or the Netherlands in general. This is perceived to be a result from the wide usage of English, but it could also partially be related with linguistic differences between Turkish and Dutch languages.

There is a number of policies and implementations imposed by local, regional, and national authorities and companies in order to teach Dutch language to migrants. However, soft measures, such as incentives to companies for providing Dutch language education to employees, does not seem to create a significant effect for HSBTN. Since they do not feel the necessity of learning and improving their Dutch language skills, they do not pursue the education. An initial policy input could be to introduce a reward or a penalty system, providing substantial advantages of learning Dutch or disadvantages of failing to do so, as suggested by one of the participants:

EÇH: Is there any kind of specific obstacle for you to stay here?

HSBTN-7: Yes. First of all, they have to teach us Dutch. This is the primary problem. (...) Actually, I am at A2-B1 level but as a Turkish, there is no sense for me to speak Dutch. If I do it is obvious that I am a migrant. In the beginning, it has a negative effect, when you are in that class. What makes me different as Turkish is to speak fluent English. They are amazed by this: a Turk speaking fluent English. We are like a new species to them. (...)

It must be compulsory, in some way. After a certain year, we must be forced to speak Dutch. I do not mean deportation from the country but there could be some kind of monetary penalties, of course at the same time not letting people to escape. Because they will do. (...) For example, there could be small amount of salary cuts every month or year, until they learn or taking away the expatriate rights or for example if they do not learn to a level of B1 in 3-4 years, eligibility for 30% ruling could be taken away. This could be a serious measure. (...) Another recommendation could be a rewarding system. For example, those who learn Dutch could be eligible for 30% ruling one more year. This could be a motivating measure. There must be such regulations to keep expats here, those who stay more than 5-6 years. If there were such a regulation, both I and my wife would have definitely learned (HSBTN-7, 37, M, Utrecht).

Differences between health care systems is another key factor for Turkish highly skilled migrants against their retention. A large majority of HSBTN stated that they have serious concerns about the

healthcare in the Netherlands. Moreover, several HSBTN stated that they still take healthcare services from Turkey. The concerns are related with the quality and the accessibility of services. Those, especially younger HSBTN, who have not yet experienced any healthcare services, state that they have not encountered with these problems but developed an anxiety for being sick in the Netherlands because of the overall experiences and perceptions towards the system among Turkish people. Finally, crisis situations related with healthcare seem to increase these concerns. Although they trust the Dutch government and prevention measures in place against Covid-19, HSBTN stress that if they are going to get such a disease it would better be in Turkey.

Finally, perceived discrimination has emerged as another subtheme, which produces a negative influence on integration. This subject has only been studied, within the scope of this research, for its effects on personal views about integration; other psychological and sociological aspects in the migration literature have not been analysed in detail. Discriminations have been scrutinized separately for workplace and social life. Types and perspectives of discrimination in the workplace and social life reveal different characteristics. In the workplace, there are clear distinctions between younger and older generations of Dutch population, diversified and international character of companies, also between small and large businesses. In those companies, where the majority is composed of Dutch nationals and older people, there is a higher level of perceived discrimination, as well as in smaller companies. There is a phrase which has been encountered occasionally by HSBTN in such workplaces, reminding the fewer availability of career opportunities: *“if you are not Dutch, you are not much”*.

Discrimination has been perceived more in the social life. HSBTN might be one of those who experience the highest level of problems in terms of discrimination among all expat communities. This is mainly because of the established perceptions of Dutch population against Turkish communities. Although the Netherlands is widely characterized with tolerance or openness, there is an established perception, or prejudice as the HSBTN name it, against the Turkish communities who immigrated during 60s and 70s within worker migrant schemes, who still could not become fully integrated with the country and mostly live in a level of segregation. However, HSBTN cannot easily communicate and establish relations with the Turkish community in the Netherlands, while they cannot communicate with Dutch community as well. This is regarded as a lack of solidarity and a cause for being alone.

Another common expression repeatedly mentioned during the interviews is the phrase that reveals the surprise of the Dutch people: *“Oh, you do not look like Turkish”*. This confirms that the findings of Türkmen (2019) in Germany are also valid in the Netherlands. In the beginning it appears as a kind of discrimination, people at first try to avoid get in contact. However, after it is realized that the cultures are different, the perspective against HSBTN change. Although, this behavioural change, mostly phrased as “you are not like other Turks”, which can be considered as an acceptance and reveals the feeling of being a “respected” person. However, it is still considered as a discrimination by HSBTN, raising a certain level of nationalistic thoughts and apparently prevents to be attached. More than half of the respondents mentioned about their disturbance against these behavioural patterns.

6.3 Contribution to Regional Development

HSBTN’s perceptions about their contribution to the economic development of the Netherlands and its regions is the final main theme of this research. There are two dimensions considering the

contribution of HSBTN: overall contribution of the community as a whole and the perceived contributions at the individual level. As it is discussed in the theoretical background, highly skilled migrants contribute to the host economy through a number of approaches including knowledge transfers as a result of mobility at international and interregional levels and between companies, through increasing diversity, with entrepreneurial activities as well as reduced labour costs. At an aggregate level, besides contribution or an addition to the human capital of regions, highly skilled migrants are more like an essential necessity for the regions in the Netherlands, because of the lack of enough skilled labour to respond the needs of a high number of companies. It is observed that this necessity is recognized by policy makers as well, together with the additional contributions by highly skilled migrants by increasing diversity:

I think, the contribution of international talent in our region is huge. It is very important on two aspects: One is that there is a shortage of talents. So, if you do not have the talents, companies cannot innovate. They cannot produce the technology. But on the other hand, and also for us as an economic development agency, an important aim is that also, we strongly believe that diversity drives innovation. So, when you work in multinational teams, and we also get feedback from companies about that, who work with multiple multinational teams in more diversity, you get more creativity and more innovation in the company. On a regular basis, we get feedback from companies saying, the teams in their companies with more nationalities, it is sometimes a bit harder at the beginning to get them going but when they are going, they create more innovation, more creativity and they are doing way better than then teams with only Dutch people. So that is, I think, a very important contribution of internationals to our economy because they bring the diversity that is needed for innovation and also be part of international economy, that we are nowadays.

All of the HSBTN also concur that they together provide a great deal of contribution to the economy. At the individual level, only one participant who work in an international organisation, mentioned that because of the massive size and the bulky structure, his contribution has been lower than his capacity as he states. In addition, two participants who are both software developers, stated that their type of work is very well defined with codified knowledge and does not involve any extra contribution. On the other hand, all the other participants emphasize that they provide a lot of additional contribution to their companies and consequently to their regions and the country as a whole. Based on the perceptions of HSBTN, their individual contributions are categorized into two subthemes. Confirming the evolutionary economic geography approaches, it is achieved with international mobility and through knowledge transfers between sectors and regions:

If we think of the work environment, those skilled labour who came here in the recent years, a great deal originated from the defence industry. In the defence industry of Turkey, there is a very significant level of skills, knowhow, and experience, both technical and methodological or in terms of systems, which have been established in the recent times. I also observe that, even though we came here to the companies who do “state of the art” type of business, since they are different industries, for example, those who were in defence or aviation, brought the knowledge which cannot be available otherwise here. This is both my own experience and experiences of my friends. They say, for example, “they had no idea about this or that, I thought them”. There is a contribution, an advantage and that is related with coming from a different industry, related with transferring the capabilities here (HSBTN-16, 35, M, Eindhoven).

Regarding different levels of mobility, which contributes to the skills of the companies and regions through knowledge transfers, we can say that HSBTN themselves provide international mobility in the first place. Examining the mobility within the Netherlands, it can be said that HSBTN also consider themselves as flexible and openminded for alternative job opportunities. Six participants,

more than one third of the sample, have changed their jobs at least once in the Netherlands. Mobility of highly skilled people is also valued by policy makers at the European scale.

We are also a part of European network of regions in Europe, that also doing talent attraction management like Brainport. Last week, we launched an initiative called the European Talent Mobility Forum. That is a collaboration of 8 regions in Europe [Berlin Partner, Bizkaia Talent, Brainport Development, Copenhagen Capacity, Move to Gothenburg, TalentScotland, Turku Business Region and Work in Estonia]. We collaborate on talent attraction, to exchange knowledge and good practices and also work together on European talent mobility.

EÇH: They are your competitors at the same time.

PM-1: Yes, we compete, and we collaborate. So, we learn from each other. (...) We see that when we collaborate, we can achieve more and get better results. And also, for instance, perhaps in the near future we can do joint projects on attracting talents from out of Europe to Europe. And also get talent mobility, like some of the people that work a couple of years in Copenhagen and then come to Brainport and then go to Stockholm, for the labour mobility within Europe.

Second subtheme of perceived contributions is related with the mindsets and characteristics of working styles in the Turkish culture. A common perception of HSBTN is that Turkish working culture itself, provides a great deal of contribution in the Netherlands. HSBTN mostly stated that what differentiates Turkish highly skilled labour is related both with putting the work in a priority position in their lives and flexible thinking abilities which is usually considered as a unique advantage in a highly organized and regulated work environment.

Turkish white-collars have their advantages comparing to many countries. We are hard-working. I think, we put a lot of effort in order to prove ourselves, in order to produce decent results. For example, our project (...) would not be realized without us, so we had a central role but apart from the language or cultural factors, in terms of business ethics and hardworking we have formed the heart of the project. We have accomplished a high percentage of it. (...) Beyond that, we have got used to work selflessly in Turkey. It is not just for our company. I believe Turkish employees provide a significant contribution in many workplaces. Actually, we have been educated very well, compared to world standards. Having the intellectual background, adaptable thinking, creating solutions, providing benefits to others, I think these are all influences of coming from a communal society. (...) We have grown with this culture. In order to do good for all, to have a positive impact, we sacrifice ourselves. Well, of course not everybody, but most of the people I encountered are like this. So, within our company, Turkish people play a locomotive role. Besides, I must emphasize this: especially Turkish women. For example, we three women, an engineer, a manager, and a communications professional, have got awarded. We have shown exceptional performance among all the departments (HSBTN-9, 42, F, Amsterdam).

Another contribution is related with the level diversity at the workplace, as also perceived by HSBTN. As it is briefly mentioned above diversity provides different viewpoints and boosts innovation. On the whole, as stated by several HSBTN, different backgrounds create alternative perspectives into the teams in the office and these perspectives influence planning processes of the companies, which affect their future activities or business fields that they operate. Diverse teams attempt certain new activities or alternative ways of doing business, sometimes those which have never been done in those companies. As a result, it is observed as a crucial benefit and a way of path creation.

On the other hand, diversity has perquisites in order to yield additional benefits and sometimes it also has drawbacks. Two participants, who work in large technology companies, pointed out that their teams are composed of only Turkish people, where highly skilled migration does not create any diversity in the workplace. Sometimes even the company meetings are conducted in Turkish language

within these teams. For other, relatively smaller companies where the highly skilled migrants are a small minority, HSBTN do not observe any additional contribution as a result of it. Moreover, if the teams are not diverse enough, this could apparently create a level of discrimination:

Diversity should be balanced; for example, a 10% foreigner rate is even harmful against 90% or 80% locals. But if it could be around 60% - 40%, then you can talk about a cultural diversity and synergy. Because if this rate remains at 10% it could lead to discrimination. That is what I have experienced in my previous job (HSBTN-14, 28, M, Utrecht).

Lastly, depending on the types of work, businesses, or responsibilities, ethnic or cultural diversity sometimes observed to have no effect. Several participants stated that they do not observe different viewpoints although there is a high level of ethnic and cultural diversity. This has been observed in large companies operating in high technology fields, where all members of the business teams possess a very high level of common technical background, some holding PhD degrees. Another common observation where diversity has no or at least a marginal effect, has been stated by two software developers, who explained the fact that software development is a very specific area which requires same set of skills and has its own languages and culture. Even though, they all have different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, they all speak a common technical language, describing the codified knowledge between the software developers all over the world, providing a cognitive proximity. This “software culture” is regarded those participants as probably the strongest common language among all the industries. Therefore, when everybody is equipped with the same scientific and technological knowledge at an advanced level, or have the same technical requirements and software languages, ethnic and cultural background seem to have a marginal effect.

Another contribution is related with entrepreneurship. Almost half of the participants stated that they are open to entrepreneurial opportunities. Some even had previously been entrepreneurs in Turkey. However, the entrepreneurial ideas or attempts of the HSBTN in the Netherlands are not in the knowledge intensive sectors or in their own sectors. They are mostly considering commercial activities in a small scale. Two spouses of HSBTN are already self-employed. Both are doing trade, one with Turkey and another within the Netherlands. Although ease of doing business and starting a business is considered to be quite high by HSBTN in the Netherlands, several procedures with government had a discouraging influence among those who were involved in entrepreneurial activities. Language emerges as a key obstacle when entering in entrepreneurial activities.

Finally, a key subtheme regarding the contribution of HSBTN is related with their “deskilling” at the time of migration. The concept of deskilling has been used to define the situation where HSBTN are employed in positions that are lower than their capabilities, experiences, or previous positions. HSBTN are rarely employed as managers or at senior positions in the beginning and most of the time they are employed at lower positions, that do not correspond to their level of experience and expertise. This is considered as a significant contribution to the economy:

Expats are inexpensive anyway, in terms of economy. When I look around, I see that in terms of education and intellectual capacity, expats are the highest. Even so, they are the lowest in terms of costs, because there is 30% advantage. Because of this, I think there is a lot of contribution to the economy. I know this: if I had the same skills with a Dutch in my team, I would not be employed in this position. I must have something more, a different ability, so that I can be here. This is not only in my sector; I observe this among my friends in other sectors too. (...) So, if I were graduated from an ordinary university from the Netherlands and only had a bachelor’s degree, probably I would have been at a higher position at the moment, in this team. Graduated from the best university in Turkey, finished master’s in the same field,

wrote a book on this field, acquired several international certificates, only then could I be employed at the same position (HSBTN-4, 34, F, Amsterdam).

From the companies' perspective, they benefit from the opportunity of employing highly experienced people in lower positions, with lower salaries, decreasing chances of mistakes, increasing cost efficiency, and achieving better outputs. As it is examined within the reasons, HSBTN do not consider income, career, or job positions among their primary motives of their migration and they agree with a certain level of deskilling. Therefore, although this situation is partly related with discrimination, it does not emerge as a discouraging factor for retention but as also observed both by HSBTN and policy makers, it is also considered as an adjustment period and this initial phase do not take a very long time.

The conclusions and preliminary policy recommendations of this research are summarized in the next chapter.

7 Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

This research explored commonalities and differentiating perspectives, examining individual approaches in three interrelated dimensions of the main research question: (1) how and why the recent skilled labour migrants move from Turkey to the Netherlands, (2) in which conditions they prefer to stay (3) and how they perceive their contribution to regional economic development. In addition, HSBTN's opinions on five sub-themes, regarding possible motives of migration, processes, long term plans and contributions have been scrutinized.

Societal relevance of this research has been aimed to be established with addressing current tendencies for population movements and regional human capital improvements, helping to better understand the current situation and provide a baseline for the policy makers to develop better policies. Therefore, main expectation of the author of this thesis is that the evaluations on the general characteristics of the population, overall generalizable opinions, in-depth analyses based on individual perceptions and conclusions which have been summarized to provide policy inputs, will be relevant for especially regional authorities, municipalities or other relevant governmental bodies to better understand the expectations, ambitions, limitations etc. of the HSBTN individuals as actors of regional economic growth and in which ways could they be able to produce better outcomes in the long run. In addition, further research and more detailed analyses could be conducted building on the key findings as a result of this research and preliminary policy recommendations, which are summarized below.

Based on the perceptions from HSBTN and policy makers, the Netherlands could be considered as a best case example for attracting highly skilled people and keeping them, with the policies and regulations that are already in place as well as proactive programmes and campaigns by regional authorities. This is highly relevant for Turkish highly skilled migrants as well, together with natural advantages, such as being in proximity to and having good connections with Turkey, compared to many developed countries that are in competition for highly skilled labour. Moreover, activities organized by expat centres and their active involvement in the settling processes, could itself be regarded as a best-case. HSBTN highly appreciate these efforts and take part in their activities. Consequently, both the attraction factors and policies and implementations for integration and retention, result in an overall evaluation by HSBTN to consider their decision to migrate as the right one.

On the other hand, it is of importance and aim of this research to identify improvement areas in order to provide policy inputs. There seems to be a need for improving branding activities, since a knowledge gap has been observed among the HSBTN. The Netherlands has rarely been mentioned as first choice of the HSBTN, for whom the main objective has been to live abroad. Some of these people end up in several other countries. Especially the high quality of life in the Netherlands, is mostly unknown among HSBTN before migration. The advantages of the country and specific regions might be better promoted, with keeping a balanced and politically correct language as it is mostly a sensitive subject for the origin countries.

Summarizing the reasons and motives for migration, even though life course events and priorities based on these, differentiate between HSBTN, there has been major commonalities. Attraction depends on the availability of highly skilled people in the international labour market, in the first place. As for HSBTN, the socioeconomic situation of Turkey is the primary reason for their migration, putting the Netherlands as an option mostly because of the concerns about children's

future, their education and experienced obstacles in the work and business environment. As for the pull factors, economic reasons, income benefits or better career options are not the primary motives for migration of HSBTN. On the other hand, wide usage of English language, locating in proximity to Turkey with good level of connectivity, and higher education are among the key attraction factors. HSBTN's migration processes include, applications for job announcements, intermediary and headhunter companies, and professional networks.

For retention of the highly skilled migrants, expat centres play a key role, providing services for almost all the necessities of highly skilled migrants during their settlement processes. In general retention rates have been increasing over the last decade. However, retention also depends on factors that are directly related with individual priorities, life plans, and actual reasons for their migration. Usually not having an effect in migration decisions, quality of life in the Netherlands highly affects the decisions to stay for longer periods. HSBTN mostly do not consider going back to Turkey, at least in the short to medium term; however, they are open to other opportunities, especially within Europe.

HSBTN's attachment and integration to the Netherlands and to the city that they live in, are also key factors for their retention. As for attachment, participants mostly do not feel attached to the city or to the country. Besides, all of them have mostly Turkish friends, so not attached to the Dutch community as well. In general, high quality of life in the Netherlands has a positive influence for retention, while Dutch language, healthcare system and to a certain level perceived discrimination influence negatively. Discrimination appeared to have minor effects on HSBTN, and it is observed to be improving in time. However, negative effects of language and healthcare system on retention are the two key findings of this research, which provide valuable input for retention policies.

Language has been a strength for attraction but also it appears as a crucial weakness for retention. Even after 10 years, HSBTN do not prefer learning Dutch, which prevents them integrating with the community, the city, or the Netherlands in general. There is a number of policies and implementations imposed by local, regional, and national authorities and companies in order to teach Dutch language to migrants. However, soft measures, such as incentives to companies for providing Dutch language education to employees, does not seem to create a significant effect. A policy input could be to introduce a reward or a penalty system, providing substantial advantages of learning Dutch or disadvantages of failing to do so.

Expectations from the Dutch health care system is another key factor for Turkish highly skilled migrants against their retention. Some people even take healthcare services from Turkey. The effects of healthcare system on talent retention, could be a further research subject, including a comparison of such systems in detail, before suggesting alternative policies. However, as a preliminary policy input: alternative healthcare schemes might be provided to anyone who have such concerns.

Although, highly skilled migrants are an essential necessity for the regions in the Netherlands, because of the lack of skilled labour, it also creates an additional contribution by increasing diversity and knowledge transfers. In addition, diverse teams undertake new activities or alternative ways of doing business, sometimes which have never been tried before, leading innovative solutions and creating diversification at the company and in the region at an aggregate level. Although diversification is observed as a crucial benefit, in order to create positive returns, it should be balanced. Regarding the HSBTN, the perceived contributions is also related with the mindsets and characteristics of working styles in the Turkish culture. As a common perception, what differentiates HSBTN is related both with putting the work in a priority position in their lives and flexible thinking

abilities which is usually considered as a unique advantage in a highly organized and regulated work environment.

In conclusion, concerning the recent wave of highly skilled Turkish migrants, attraction factors of the Netherlands and to a very limited level the place assets, amenities of the cities appeared to be important but not primary. Since the migration decision of HSBTN have been mostly taken by influence of push factors, any kind of change in those factors can be expected to have a negative affect on retention. Therefore, unless HSBTN develop attachment for cities they live in and integrate with the communities, they could easily leave to other countries or move back to Turkey after their expatriate benefits expire. Sustaining the valuable contribution of HSBTN for a long period of time depends on the developing this attachment, which seems to be highly related with learning Dutch language and to a certain level acquiring access to an alternative healthcare system.

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9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1: Online Survey Questions

Online Survey for Skilled Labour Turkish Migrants in the Netherlands

You are invited to participate in a research study about the perceptions of Turkish migrants in the Netherlands. Under supervision of Assistant Professor Nicola Cortinovis, this survey is conducted by Emin Çetin Haşar, for his master's thesis in the field of Economic Geography at the Utrecht University.

The purpose of this study is to explore perceptions of migrants from Turkey who moved as skilled labour to the Netherlands and obtain an in-depth understanding of their priorities, as actors of regional development. It is intended to expand the knowledgebase for attracting and retaining skilled labour for host cities, as well as indications for regaining them for the origin countries.

Target group of this survey is the skilled labour who moved to the Netherlands from Turkey for business purposes. Therefore, you must have Migrated from Turkey to the Netherlands for such reasons in order to participate at this survey. Results of this survey will be analysed collectively, and your answers will be kept anonymous. The whole survey questionnaire should take around 15 minutes to complete.

Should you have any questions or concerns about this research, please feel free to contact Çetin Haşar (e.c.hasar@students.uu.nl).

Demographic and Background Information

1. Age (numeric)
2. Gender (F/M)
3. Marital Status (Married / Single)
4. Number of Children (numeric)
5. Level of Education (PhD and above, Master's, Bachelor's, high school)
6. Profession/graduation (open question) (such as computer engineer, city planner, sociologist, economist, business administration, etc.)
7. Please write the languages that you are fluent apart from Turkish.
8. When did you move to the Netherlands? (open question) (month and year, such as, May 2017)
9. Total Work Experience (after graduation as skilled labour) (numeric in years)

Employment Information

10. Please fill according to your situation before you moved to the Netherlands
 - a. In which city did you live the last in Turkey
 - b. What was your monthly net personal income just before you have left Turkey? (TL) (open question)
 - c. What was your monthly net household income just before you have left Turkey? (TL) (open question)
 - d. Were you occupied before you leave Turkey (yes/no) (proceed to "i" if negative)

- e. Sector (NACE Rev2, 2-Digit level sector names has been as a drop-down list)
- f. Position (open question) (such as, management, managerial, senior expert, Junior expert, team leader etc.)
- g. Department (open question) (such as, IT, Purchasing, R&D, Production, Marketing, Sales, HR, Finance, Accounting etc.)
- h. Type of contract (own business-entrepreneur/full time temporary/ full time permanent, part time Temp / part time permanent/other)
- i. Did your spouse have a job in Turkey? (Y/N)

11. Please fill according to your current situation in the Netherlands

- a. Which city have you moved in at first in the Netherlands?
- b. In which city are you living now?
- c. Are you employed in the Netherlands at the moment? (yes/no) (skip to “f” if negative)
- d. Initial monthly personal income in the Netherlands (Euro) (open question)
- e. Current monthly personal income (Euro) (open question)
- f. Current monthly household income (Euro) (open question)
- g. Sector (NACE Rev2, 2-Digit level sector names has been as a drop-down list)
- h. First job position in the Netherlands (open question) (such as, management, managerial, senior expert, Junior expert, team leader etc.)
- i. Current job position in the Netherlands (open question) (such as, management, managerial, senior expert, Junior expert, team leader etc.)
- j. Current Department (open question) (such as, IT, Purchasing, R&D, Production, Marketing, Sales, HR, Finance, Accounting etc.)
- k. Type of contract (own business-entrepreneur/full time temporary/ full time permanent, part time Temp / part time permanent/other)
- l. How many people work at your current job?
- m. How many other jobs did you have in the Netherlands before your current job? (numeric)
- n. Does your spouse have a job in the Netherlands? (Y/N)

Migration and Settling Process

12. Do you consider your stay in the Netherlands temporary or permanent?

(Temporary/Permanent/Not Sure)

13. When do you think you will move back to Turkey? (less than 1 year, in 3 years, 5, 10, not considering at the moment)

14. Which one is the primary reason for moving to the Netherlands? Please provide points between 1-10:

- a. To start a job
- b. Wanted to live in the EU
- c. Wanted to live in the Netherlands
- d. Wanted to live abroad
- e. Marriage
- f. Other (open)

15. Which factors had an effect on your migration decision to the Netherlands. Please provide points between 1-10 for the following factors, according to the level of influencing your decision to move to the Netherlands
 - a. Personal network had an effect
 - b. Professional network had an effect
 - c. I have seen a job announcement and applied
 - d. A headhunter / HR company got in touch with me.
 - e. The job of my spouse had an effect.
 - f. Other (open question)
16. Which one have you decided first? (Decision of leaving Turkey / Decision of the city where you live / Deciding to move to the Netherlands / Deciding the occupation / Other)
17. Which one have you decided second? (Decision of leaving Turkey / Decision of the city where you live / Deciding to move to the Netherlands / Deciding the occupation / Other)
18. Did you have any other city or country options? (Y/N). Please write down if relevant.
19. What are the main reasons for choosing this city (such as a cosmopolitan environment, social network, quality of life, cost of living etc.)? Please fill if the city itself was an important factor for your migration decision. (open question)
20. Please chose the appropriate answer selecting between “totally disagree” and “totally agree”
 - a. I think it was the right decision to move to the Netherlands.
 - b. I have been becoming a part of the Dutch community in the Netherlands.
 - c. I have been becoming a part of the local community in the city where I live now.
 - d. My/our living standards have been increased in the Netherlands.
 - e. Most of my friends are Turkish skilled labour migrants like myself.
 - f. I am planning to / eager to acquire citizenship of the Netherlands

Push and Pull Factors

21. Please select between “totally disagree” and “totally agree” about **the reasons that is relevant for your migration decision:**
 - a. I moved because of the better income options in the Netherlands.
 - b. I moved in order to work in a better job position.
 - c. I moved because of better career opportunities
 - d. I have the opportunity here to fulfil my professional ideals or desires (scientific studies, technologic innovations etc.)
 - e. Entrepreneurial opportunities
 - f. Because of the job of my spouse
 - g. I wanted to live in the Netherlands
 - h. I wanted to live in this city
 - i. I have relatives / friends in the Netherlands
 - j. I moved because the quality of life is higher
 - k. I moved because I think there is socioeconomic instability in Turkey.
 - l. I could not find a job in Turkey, which is suitable for myself
 - m. General concerns for myself, my family or my children’s future

22. Please select between “totally disagree” and “totally agree” **about the factors that are relevant for staying in the Netherlands or going back to Turkey.**

- a. An increase in the socioeconomic stability in Turkey
- b. A new job opportunity in Turkey
- c. A higher job position in Turkey
- d. Getting a better salary in the Netherlands
- e. Opportunities to fulfil my professional ideals or desires (scientific studies, technologic innovations etc.)
- f. Availability of entrepreneurial opportunities in the Netherlands
- g. Depends on the occupation of my spouse
- h. I want to live in the Netherlands
- i. I want to live in this city
- j. I have relatives / friends in the Netherlands
- k. Better living standards of my family and/or myself in the Netherlands
- l. I have concerns for staying for a long time because of the cultural and lifestyle differences
- m. I do not feel attached to this city/country

23. Please select between “totally disagree” and “totally agree” about the conditions that is relevant for the job environment in the Netherlands.

- a. I feel that I contribute the human capital in the Netherlands
- b. I feel myself useful here in this company
- c. I think I brought new knowledge to this company
- d. I have a good level of professional network within the company that I work for and in the Netherlands in general.
- e. I feel safe to find a new job in the Netherlands
- f. I can change my job in the Netherlands in the near future

24. Do you feel any kind of discrimination in the workplace (such as wage differences for the same job, promotions for higher carrier opportunities or verbal/collective discriminations)? (Y/N) Please briefly write below if this is relevant for you.

25. Do you feel any kind of discrimination at your social relations? (Y/N) Please briefly write below if this is relevant for you.

26. Have your opinions/thoughts changed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Do you feel safer here or would you have preferred/will prefer to be in Turkey, with your family/friends? Please explain shortly. (open question)

Thank you very much for your participation. We appreciate your contribution. Please share this survey form with your friends / colleagues who Migrated from Turkey to the Netherlands as skilled labour. Please leave your contact details below and click the relevant box if you would like to be informed about the results of this research.

As the second phase of this research, in depth interviews will be conducted. Please click the box below if you would like to take part in the second phase. In-depth interviews will be conducted online

because of the social distancing measures for Covid-19. These interviews are expected to take around 30-60 minutes.

- I wish to be informed about the results of this research
- I wish to take part in the in-depth interviews

Contact Details: (Name, E-mail, Phone, Skype/Zoom/MS Teams ID)

**Semi-structured In-depth Interview Questions
Highly Skilled and Business Turkish Nationals in the Netherlands**

This is a semi-structured interview. Main purpose is to talk about your story. There are some 15 questions but please feel free to share your ideas about the migration process in general. I would like to hear about your thoughts, ideas, and evaluations. Some of these questions were also given in the online survey. Here I am planning to go a bit deeper. The interviews normally take 45-60 minutes to finish.

This interview will be used only for my thesis research and your information will be kept confidential. Personal information, company names etc. will not be disclosed in the transcriptions.

If you consent, I would like to record this interview.

General and Background Information

1. Occupation
2. Age
3. Graduation / Profession
4. Marital Status
5. Children
6. When did you move to the Netherlands? Which city?
7. Education?
8. Did you have any education in the Netherlands?
9. Can you explain your process of moving here to the Netherlands? How did it take place?

In-depth Interview

10. Could you please explain your migration process to the Netherlands? How did it take place?
11. How and why did you move to the Netherlands? To what extent does the social, economic, or political environment in Turkey affected your migration decision? To what extent does it affect your returning decision?
12. Also, how did your personnel networks, ethnic/cultural preferences affect your migration decision?
13. Were there other city / country options? Why did you choose the Netherlands?
14. How did urban, regional, and national attraction factors influence your migration and staying decisions, such as a cosmopolitan environment, higher wages or other motivations, not necessarily to be economic only, which provide a better environment for you?

15. Do the authorities of the city that you live in or the business organisations had involved in your migration process? Are you aware of any talent attraction plans/programs which target professionals like yourself?
16. Does your company / city have specific programs for your integration? To what extent national strategies of the Netherlands and regional strategies of this city are successful and sustainable for attraction and retention of skilled labour? Please elaborate.
17. Please consider your conditions for staying in the Netherlands in the long run. Are there specific obstacles for you to stay here longer, that could be solved by the central, regional, or local government authorities? What do you think the central government, local authorities or the business organisations can do better?
18. Do you think migrants like you contribute to regional development? Do feel that you contribute to the city/region that you currently live, or the company you currently work for?
19. How do you think you or your colleagues or your team could contribute better in the long run at your company or in the Netherlands? Do you think the diversity (cultural / Ethnic etc.) helps increasing innovation or creativity?
20. Do you feel attached to the Netherlands and/or the city-Region you currently live?
21. Do you consider going back to Turkey or moving to another country? What are your expectations for going back to Turkey? Please further elaborate on your short- and long-term plans and considerations.
22. Would you consider becoming an entrepreneur in the Netherlands? If yes, would it be in your current sector or another one? Also, do you consider changing your job in the near future? Please explain.
23. Do you feel any kind of discrimination in the workplace (such as wage differences for the same job, promotions for higher carrier opportunities or verbal/collective discriminations) or anywhere else? How does it affect your long-term plans?
24. Did the Netherlands being an EU member country affected your decision. Do you want to be an EU citizen in the future?
25. Do you think that the COVID-19 pandemic influenced your thoughts, long term decisions? Please give details.

**Semi-structured In-depth Interview Questions
Regional Policy Makers**

This is a semi-structured interview. There are some 17 questions but please feel free to share your ideas about the talent attraction policies and implementations in your region or activities of your agency in general. I would like to hear about your thoughts, ideas, and evaluations.

This interview should take around 60 minutes to finish. This interview will be used only for my thesis research and the information will be kept confidential. Personal information, company or institution names etc. will not be disclosed otherwise permitted.

If you consent, I would like to record this interview.

1. Could you please explain your institution? What type of activities and responsibilities are you entitled?
2. Are human capital development and innovation priorities for you?
3. Do you have a specific policy/plan/program for talent attraction? What type of skills do you target and how and why do you select these? How do you attract talent to your region? Please give details.
4. Does your region already host already a good number of skilled migrants?
5. How do you evaluate the contributions of migrants in your city/region? Do you think they commit themselves in the long run to the city/region or the Netherlands? How do you measure these?
6. Do you have country specific strategies for attracting skilled labour? What type of strategies have you implemented (as the city/region), such as proactive talent attraction, working with head-hunters, online marketing and promotion etc.
7. Do the companies or cities have specific programs for integration of the migrant? To what extent national strategies of the Netherlands and regional strategies of this city are successful and sustainable for attraction and retention of skilled labour? Please elaborate.
8. Do you have specific EU Projects on this matter? How does your plans/programs go in line with EU regional policies (smart specialisation strategies etc.)?
9. Are there any competitor cities in the EU or elsewhere for skilled labour attraction? Please elaborate on the policies and activities of your competitors?
10. Are there any programs for supporting the migrants during their process of migration? Please give details.
11. Do you provide after-care/integration services for the migrants? Do any government or private sector organisations provide such services? What type of services available?
12. What type of differences do you observe between attracting talent from EU member countries and Turkey? Does it have positive affect on regional commitment?

13. Do you work together with clusters/technoparks/companies for skilled labour attraction and retention? Do you work together with municipalities or other public authorities for motivating people to stay? What type of measures (economic, social, physical, or political) are there in place for retention?
14. Are there any drawbacks for attraction/retention of migrants in terms of the legal basis, or national/regional policies or political or societal acceptance? For example, there are specific benefits for entrepreneurs or skilled labour who move in the Netherlands. Are these measures useful? What could be done better? Please elaborate.
15. Are you aware of any kind of “discrimination” happening in the workplace (such as wage differences for the same job, promotions for higher career opportunities or verbal/collective discriminations) or anywhere else?
16. How do you collect local/regional data on migrants? Are there regional databases that you could share?
17. Do you think that the COVID-19 pandemic will have an influence on the regional policies, long term plans? Please give details.

9.4 Appendix 4: Code Tree

<i>Themes and Subthemes</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Files</i>	<i>References</i>
Contribution	Overall perceptions about HSBTN contribution to the economy	17	83
Diversity	Positive and negative effects of diversity levels in the workplace	15	17
Entrepreneurship Ideas	HSBTN's experiences and perceptions about entrepreneurial activities	16	17
Job Mobility	Knowledge diffusion between companies and countries	5	5
Jobs and Work Environment	Overall evaluation about occupations and work environment	13	17
Opportunities and Deskilling	Evaluations about job opportunities	5	7
Perceived Contribution	HSBTN's perceptions about their contribution to the company, region and the Netherlands	17	20

<i>Themes and Subthemes</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Files</i>	<i>References</i>
Integration and Retention	Negative and positive factors for integration, life plans and their effects on retention	17	149
Attachment	Perceived attachments to places and communities	15	18
Covid-19	Effects of Covid-19 pandemic on HSBTN's thought about staying, returning and other life plans	16	16
Discrimination	Perceived discrimination in the workplace and in social life	16	24
Dutch Language	HSBTN approach to learning Dutch language and its effects on integration	12	15
Healthcare System	Positive and negative evaluations on Dutch healthcare system	10	12
Life Plans	Overall short, medium and long term plans of HSBTN regarding staying, migration and return migration	17	34
Public Services for Integration	Evaluations on the services provided by local, regional and national government authorities	16	17
Social Relations	HSBTN friends and social practices in the Netherlands	6	7
Spouses and Family	Effects of HSBTN families on migration and life plans	5	6

<i>Themes and Subthemes</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Files</i>	<i>References</i>
Motives and Reasons	Motives, reasons and strategies for migration	17	133
Attraction Factors	Effects of local and national attraction factors in the Netherlands	17	84
Education	Post-graduate education	5	7
English Language	Widespread usage of English	6	6
EU and Dutch Citizenship	Life plans for acquiring citizenship and effects of EU membership	16	17
Income and career	Positive and negative effects of income and career	6	8
Job of Spouse	Perceptions of people who moved because of the jobs of their spouses	2	2
Proximity to Turkey	Geographical proximity and connectivity to Turkey	6	7
Quality of Life	Effects of quality of life at the local and national levels	12	19
Transnational Practices	Transnational perspectives of HSBTN	8	13
Turkish Community	Availability of the Turkish community in the Netherlands	4	5
Migration Process	Strategies and practices for migration processes	13	31
Job Announcements and Headhunters	Job Listings and intermediary companies	3	4
Regulations and Programmes	National regulations and incentives for highly skilled migrants and regional programmes	9	12
Social and Professional Networks	Effects of networks during migration processes	10	15
Push Factors	Factors related with the origin cities and origin country	12	18
Family and Children	Children's education and future of families	6	6
Socioeconomic Factors	Socioeconomic factors in Turkey resulting in migration decisions	9	12