

Documento de Trabajo

Working Paper

**Here and There: Transnational and Community
Links between Muslim Immigrants in Europe (WP)**

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8/5/2007

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Summary

This work explores the opinions expressed in a survey of Muslim immigrants in Europe in regard to their transnational links with their countries of origin and the ties which link them to their own ethnic communities in their countries of destination.

1. INTRODUCTION

Muslim immigrants residing in Europe are today the focus of the media and of political and academic observers. Since the 9/11 attacks on New York, European countries have been caught up in an international conflict between the Atlantic block and the Muslim countries which allegedly offer shelter and support to Islamic terrorism. Muslim minorities resident in Europe and in the US are in an uncomfortable situation, having migrated from countries that are now perceived as enemies on the international stage, as occurred, to give an extreme example, in the US with the German minority in the First World War and the Japanese in the Second. After 9/11, the focus on Muslims in Europe in public debates was underpinned by the evidence that some of the perpetrators of the Islamic terrorist attacks on Madrid and London were immigrants and descendents of immigrants long-established in the country, as were the participants in lower-intensity conflicts involving very large numbers of people such as the disturbances in the French *banlieus* in November 2005 or the protests deriving from the publication of the Danish cartoons in January 2006.

Under the visible surface of international relations, shaped by the tensions between certain European countries and certain Muslim countries, there are other types of relations across the borders of both groups of countries, which might be called *transnational* because they are not conducted by States or Governments, but by the people themselves. Immigrants maintain transnational links with their countries of origin which weave relatively invisible but nevertheless very dense webs, with rich and fluid relations, above and beyond borders. These links, in turn, tend to be anchored in immigrant communities with a common national origin in the country of residence (known as *ethnic communities*), so that relatives, friends, work or business colleagues, fellow supporters of religious or political views, etc, who live in the same district or city participate in these networks of long-distance relations.

This work explores the opinions expressed in a survey of Muslim immigrants in Europe in regard to their transnational links with their countries of origin and the ties which link them to their own ethnic communities in their countries of destination. Among the former, the emotional ties, such as feelings of national identity, linking them to their countries of origin are distinguished from the links deriving from transnational activities such as travelling, sending remittances and presents, conducting business and following the news in their native language. Among the latter group, social ties within the ethnic community include informal relationships such as family and friendships, and formal relationships such as membership of voluntary associations and organisations. The analysis focuses on three national groups which are the most numerous among the foreign Muslims in the cities where they live: Bangladeshis in London, Turks in Berlin and Moroccans in Madrid. The survey offers figures based on samples that are small but nevertheless interesting because of their representativeness in respect of the three communities under study, ensured by the strictly random selection of the sample, which is unusual in surveys to immigrants.

Both transnational ties and recourse to ethnic communities by immigrants and their descendents in destination societies are the subject of controversy today in the social sciences. Classic Anglo-Saxon theories concerning the *assimilation* of immigrants in the destination societies foresaw successive processes of acculturation into the language and rules of the majority, incorporation into the primary groups of the majority, and upward social mobility which would, after several generations, end up by integrating foreign individuals into general social life (see, for a classic summary, Gordon, 1964; or the discussion in Alba and Nee, 1997, 2003, p. 2-27). In the last few decades of the 20th century, however, these expectations clashed with the evidence of the formation of stable ghettos and subcultures among immigrants, especially in North America but also in Europe, and with the arguments of ethnic and racial movements. Social scientists became increasingly interested in understanding why immigrants sought opportunities for economic improvement, social mobility, cultural integration and satisfaction in personal relationships via close ties with their countries of origin and their own ethnic community in their destination countries. They wondered whether the diversification of the ethnic origin of foreigners in the US and the arrival in Europe of large waves of Muslim immigrants in search of work from the 1950s and 1960s would raise new issues which the classic assimilation theory was not equipped to resolve, having originally been based on the experience of European migrants to North America.

Although cross-border links are as old as migrations themselves, the interest of sociologists, anthropologists, political analysts and historians in them increased in the 1990s and the first few years of the 21st century, because their intensity and extension has multiplied in recent decades at pace with the technical possibilities afforded by communications and transport, and by economic and cultural globalisation. New technologies have enabled people deciding to relocate to live with one foot in each country, becoming not so much emigrants in their country of origin and immigrants in their country of destination, but so-called *transmigrants*, as soon physically here as there; or immigrants whose economic, social, political and cultural activities locate them both here and there although they do not travel as often (for a revision of literature on transnationalism, see Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004; Vertovec 2003, 2004; Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999; Morawska 2003a; Kivisto 2001; and, more specifically regarding Islam and transnationalism, Mandaville 2001; Al-Sayyad and Castells, 2003).

The latest research on immigrants' transnational links have questioned some of the basic assertions of the assimilation theories. Classic literature on assimilation assumed that all immigrants would in principle tend to maintain intense feelings of identity with their countries of origin and become involved in activities that kept them in touch with them (in an effort to offset their scant economic, social and emotional resources in the destination society through support from beyond its borders), but that, over time, such feelings and activities would abate as immigrants became integrated into the destination society. However, empirical studies performed in the 1990s and early 21st century reveal a huge diversity among immigrant communities when it comes to nurturing their ties with their societies of origin, with some groups much more intensely involved than others. Furthermore, the research has questioned that such ties tend to weaken over time, since it is not only the new arrivals who are responsible for maintaining them, but sometimes it is precisely those who have been away for longest and are most integrated in their destination society who maintain the strongest transnational links (Portes, 2003; Morawska, 2003b, 2004; Faist, 2000, 2004; and Levitt, 2003). Accordingly, the assumed general and transitory nature of transnational links is called into question, raising the research questions that guide this paper, namely whether or not Muslims in Europe are 'all the same' in terms of their transnational links and whether 'they distance themselves over time' from their countries of origin.

Studies concerning the role of ethnic communities in the life of immigrants have developed along similar lines. The assimilation theories understood that the ethnic community offered a safety net to new arrivals, in an initial phase in which they were, at least, linguistically non-adapted; in general, however, over time they would tend to integrate into the economic, social, political and cultural life

of the society in the broadest sense, seeking opportunities beyond the limits of their own national community. However, research concerning the experience of migrations in the second half of the 20th to the US and Europe has shown that for some groups the ethnic community offers a permanent and often successful channel for incorporation into the destination society, not towards structural acculturation and assimilation such as that projected in the most classic studies, but towards *ethnic pluralism*, in which immigrants protect their social mobility and their cultural practices within their community of origin, or a *segmented incorporation*, in which immigrants' life opportunities clash with the social discrimination exercised by the majority, isolating them. As in the case of research on transnational links, social research on the methods of incorporation of immigrants to destination societies have observed significant diversity between national groups, some of which tend more to seek support in the ethnic community than others, and persistence over time of social ties which also link immigrants with their compatriots in the destination country (Morawska, 2004; Joppke and Morawska, 2003; Portes and Rumbaut, 1990; and Zhou, 1997). This paper also aims to ascertain, as far as the information in the survey permits, whether Muslim immigrants in Europe differ in their links to their respective ethnic communities while they are residing in the country of destination in line with their nationality of origin.¹

The data used here to describe transnational links and the national communities of immigrants and to discuss their general or diverse nature and their transitory or permanent characteristics are the result of the Muslims in Europe Survey, whose field work was performed in the second half of 2004, financed by the European Commission and the University of Michigan.² Samples of Muslim immigrants from each of the three communities that were subject of the study were small, covering 141 interviews to Bangladeshi resident in London, 204 to Moroccans resident in Madrid and 225 to Turks living in Berlin, and they were not weighted. The smaller size of the UK sample is an unwanted effect of the sampling method, which sought Bangladeshi immigrants who had participated in previous surveys and given their consent for future cooperation. The sample of the original survey was built by randomly choosing addresses in the districts where ethnic minorities were concentrated, according to the UK Census of 1991, but this original sample was saturated before completing the 200 interviews planned. The sample in Berlin was chosen randomly from a list of residents with a Turkish surname taken from telephone directories, including both fixed and mobiles. Lastly, the sample in Madrid was taken from a larger random sample of Madrid residents who were of Moroccan nationality when they registered with their local councils; the list was supplied by the Madrid Council's Statistics Department. The sampling methods of all three cities were therefore different, but all offer representative results in respect of the ethnic communities that were under study, and they solved, using various methods, the problem of the absence of exhaustive records of foreign population which researchers could access directly.

Over the next few pages (section 2), we compare the three groups of people surveyed (Bangladeshis in London, Moroccans in Madrid and Turks in Berlin) to answer the question of whether transnational and community ties are general –equally frequent– in all three cases, or not. Section 3 then deals with the question of whether the more recent immigrants tend to feed both kinds of tie more than those who have been living in Europe for some time. The main results and data from

¹ The data in the Muslims in Europe survey does not, however, allow verification of the relation between the strength of transnational links and of ties with the ethnic community. This would be a highly interesting question, as well as a controversial one. Classic literature on migrations assumed that people who tended most to live within the limits of their national community would also maintain closer transnational relations, and vice-versa. Both types of connection would be lost over time. However, studies of more recent cases show that there are a variety of possible combinations: some groups form strong ethnic communities in the destination country but they relinquish economic, social, political and cultural relations in their country of origin; others choose the opposite solution, and most seek intermediate combinations, establishing with the ethnic community and/or country of origin partial and circumstantial relations (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004; Vertovec, 2003, 2004; Morawska, 2003a, 2004; Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt, 1999; and Kivisto, 2001.)

² The units of the University of Michigan which have financed this research include mainly the European Union Center, which receives the backing of the Washington delegation of the European Commission, in order to boost Americans' knowledge of contemporary Europe, as well as the Office of the Vice President for Research, Center for Political Studies, Research Center for Group Dynamics and the International Institute.

both sections are summarised and set forth in the conclusions.

2. ARE THEY ALL THE SAME? DIVERSITY BY IMMIGRANT GROUP

Muslim immigrants living in Europe conserve or build close transnational links with the societies they come from. The vast majority identify with their country of origin and feel proud of their national origin, while fewer think of themselves as belonging to the European destination nationality. The vast majority also travel to their countries from time to time and around half do so once a year. Half of those surveyed assert that they send money and presents to their countries. Lastly, a huge majority follow the news of their region in their native language.

Yet they are not ‘all the same’; on the contrary, the results of the survey show major differences between the transnational activities of the various groups of Muslim immigrants in Europe. Turks are the most used to cross-border contacts: they follow the news in their native language more than the rest and they travel and send remittances more frequently than the Bangladeshis. Moroccans rank somewhere in between, since they visit their homeland and send money as much as the Turks, but they tend to follow the news in their native language less than the Turks and the Bangladeshis. The Bangladeshis are the least frequent travellers and send fewest remittances, although both practices are nevertheless widespread, and in terms of following the news in their native language they rank between the other two groups. There is not therefore the homogeneity or generality of cross-border ties which classic assimilation theories would expect.

Transnational Links

Feelings of National Identity

More Muslim immigrants in Europe identify with their nationality of origin than with their destination nationality (regardless of whether they have formal citizenship) but almost half say they have a kind of mixed identity. A vast majority of European Muslims think of themselves as belonging to their nationality of origin. Eighty-eight percent strongly agree or agree with the sentence ‘I feel Bangladeshi/Moroccan/Turkish or Kurdish’. On the contrary, when asked about identification with the destination country, most of those surveyed (56%) say that they do not feel British, German or Spanish, with just over a third (35%) strongly disagreeing. Eighty-three percent say they are proud of their original nationality, while 36% say they are proud of their destination nationality (see Table 1 in the Appendix).

As well as this preference for their nationalities of origin, the responses of Muslim immigrants in Europe suggest that mixed identities are somewhat more common than differentiated ones. Calculating the percentages of all those surveyed, 48% agree (to some extent) with both the sentence which asserts their pride in their original nationality and the one which asserts their pride in their destination nationality. A slightly smaller but nevertheless numerous group (41%) say they are proud of their nationality of origin but not of their destination nationality.

Table 1. Mixed national identities (percentage of total surveyed)

I am proud to be British/Spanish/German	I am proud to be Bangladeshi/Moroccan/Turkish-Kurdish		
	I agree or strongly agree	I disagree or strongly disagree	Percentage of total
I agree or strongly agree	47	1	48
I disagree or strongly disagree	41	11	52
Percentage of total	88	12	100

Although overall the feelings of national identity among Muslim immigrants in Europe keep them united with their countries of origin more frequently than with their countries of destination, the differences between the three ethnic groups surveyed are significant and substantial. Bangladeshis resident in London have relinquished their identity most in favour of that of their destination,

followed by the Moroccans of Madrid and the Turks of Berlin, whose attitudes hardly differ. In Madrid and Berlin most (64% and 67%, respectively) ‘strongly agree’ with the assertions regarding their identification with their nationality of origin (‘I feel Bangladeshi/Moroccan/Turkish or Kurdish’); in London, identification with the nationality of origin seems to be less intense, since 72% ‘agree’ with the sentence. The differences between ethnic communities in terms of their identification with their nationalities of destination (‘I feel British/Spanish/German’) are more notable. Ninety-one percent of Bangladeshis agree or strongly agree that they consider themselves British, although just over one-third of them (35%) strongly agree. At the opposite extreme are the Turks, of whom only 13% agree with the sentence ‘I feel German’. Moroccans are somewhere in between, since 33% agree with the phrase ‘I feel Spanish’. This set of questions therefore indicates that the Bangladeshi community in London mostly maintains cross-border ties of national identity, but less frequently and less intensely than the Moroccan community in Madrid and the Turkish community in Berlin.

Responses to the question about national pride are broken down in a similar way. Only the Turks vary in their responses, ‘strongly agreeing’ with ‘I feel proud to be Turkish or Kurdish’ less often than with ‘I feel Turkish or Kurdish’ (20% less). As a result, the Moroccans seem to be the most willing to admit intense feelings of pride in their origin, since 62% say they ‘strongly agree’ with the sentence, compared with 48% of Turks and 27% of Bangladeshis. Among the Bangladeshis, the preferred response is that of lower intensity: 72% say they ‘agree’ with the sentence. Only among the Turks are there a considerable group (27%) which denies being proud of their origin. This question underpins the results of the previous one, but in the case of the Turks there are nuances.³

Table 2. National identity feelings (breakdown by immigrant group)

	Bangladeshis in London	Moroccans in Madrid	Turks in Berlin	Total
I feel Bangladeshi/Moroccan/Turkish-Kurdish				
I strongly agree	25	64	67	55
I agree	72	32	22	38
I disagree or strongly disagree	3	4	11	7
I feel British/Spanish/German				
I strongly agree	35	8	1	12
I agree	56	25	12	28
I disagree or strongly disagree	9	67	87	60
I am proud to be Bangladeshi/Moroccan/Turkish-Kurdish				
I strongly agree	27	62	48	48
I agree	72	35	25	40
I disagree or strongly disagree	1	4	27	12

Transnational Activities

The opportunities offered today by international transport are clearly reflected in the data from the Muslims in Europe Survey: the vast majority say that they tend to travel to their home country, which is surprising since this includes one ethnic community which lives near its country of origin (Moroccans in Madrid) but also one that lives a long way away (Bangladeshis in London). Overall, only 12% of immigrants say that they do not often visit their country, while 45% do, but not every year, and another 42% do so at least once a year (see Table 2 in the Appendix).

As might be expected, geographical distance is reflected in the responses of each group concerning travel to their countries of origin. While just over half of Moroccans (57%) and Turks (53%) say they travel at least once a year to their homelands, 82% of Bangladeshis say they visit their country but not every year. However, it is among those immigrants who live closest to their home country, Moroccans, who most often say they never visit it (20%), which may be due to the fact that they are recent migrants, or it may be an assertion of personal distancing with their country, or evidence of

³ The question concerning national pride in the destination country does not allow a comparison between ethnic groups, since it only makes sense to pose it to those who have responded positively to questions of national identity feelings in their country of destination, and these are very few in Madrid and Berlin.

relatively few resources or of difficulties in crossing the borders (after all, 13% of those surveyed in Madrid said they arrived ‘in *pateras*’ (small boats), and another similar percentage said they had ‘no papers’, which discourages them from leaving the country in case they cannot get back in).

Table 3. How often do you travel to Bangladesh/Morocco/Turkey? (breakdown by immigrant group)

(%)	Bangladeshis in London	Moroccans in Madrid	Turks in Berlin	Total
At least once a year	3	57	53	42
Less than once a year	82	23	42	45
Never	15	20	4	13

Economic ties with countries of origin are frequent, via remittances or presents to family members left behind or to one or other organisation in the country of origin, which are much more frequent than employment or business contacts. Just 5% of those surveyed say they work or do business with people who live in their countries of origin. In contrast, half of the immigrants surveyed say that in the last 12 months they or some other family member have sent money or gifts to family members or other persons and organisations in their countries of origin (see Table 3 in the Appendix).

Although the differences between ethnic groups are small, it is worth recalling that the proportion of those who contribute economically to maintaining households or organisations in their country among Turks and Moroccans (55% and 52%, respectively) is higher than among Bangladeshis (38%). Specifically, half (51%) of Moroccans said they had sent money to their family in the last 12 months, while only 7% had sent money to other people or to some organisation in Morocco. Among the Bangladeshis, the difference between the destination of cross-border economic contributions was smaller: 36% of Bangladeshis surveyed had sent money to their families and 26% to other persons or some organisation.

Table 4. Have you or any other member of your family sent money or gifts to relatives or to other persons or organizations in Bangladesh/Morocco/Turkey in the last 12 months? (breakdown by immigrant group)

(%)	Bangladeshis in London	Moroccans in Madrid	Turks in Berlin	Total
Yes	38	52	55	51
No	62	48	45	49

Ease of global access to the mass media is made evident by the responses of Muslim immigrants in Spain when it comes to monitoring news in their country of origin. More than three-quarters (78%) of those surveyed said that they followed the news in their native language. The preferred medium is television (69% of those surveyed claimed to follow the news on television and in their native language), followed by the press (46%) and the radio (40%) (see Table 4 in the Appendix). If we compare consumption of news in native languages and destination languages, the differences are small. The proportion of those surveyed who claim to follow the news in European languages hardly exceeds that of those who say they do so in their native tongue (84% vs 78%).⁴ Accordingly, interest in current affairs in both countries is similar.⁵

⁴ I assume it is likely that most of those who follow the news in their native language are consuming media in their countries or origin or neighbouring countries, although they may also be, for example, listening to radio programmes produced in the destination country and aimed at their ethnic community, which would combine information about the country of origin and news about the country of destination.

⁵ Furthermore, it cannot be said that those who follow the news in their native languages are a different group from those who follow the news in the language of the destination country, since the differences between the two groups are not statistically significant, either for all those surveyed overall (as one might expect in view of the volume of positive responses), or for each city. This means that the fact that a person is interested in the news in his country of origin and that region does not depend on whether or not he is interested in that of his country of destination and its surrounding area: the vast majority of Muslim immigrants follow the news of their homeland, regardless of whether they also follow the news in their new country.

Transnational habits of each ethnic group are also different in this regard. A massive 95% of Turks in Berlin say they follow the news in Turkish (or Kurdish), followed by 77% of Bangladeshis in London and 59% of Moroccans in Madrid. Those surveyed in Berlin are the immigrants who most frequently follow the news in their native language in any media, television (91%), radio (70%) or press (80%). Those who do so least, the Moroccans, tend to follow the television news most (56%), while the radio and newspapers have only minority audiences (11% and 5%, respectively). While they are notably less interested (in comparative terms) in the news in their own language, they are also more interested in the news in the language of the European country where they live: 94% of Moroccans follow the news in Spanish, 81% of Turks in German and 75% of Bangladeshis in English.

Table 5. In a normal week, do you tend to watch, listen to or read the news in Bangladeshi/Arabic/Turkish? (breakdown by immigrant group)

(%)	Bangladeshis in London	Moroccans in Madrid	Turks in Berlin	Total
Yes	77	59	95	78
No	23	41	5	22
In a normal week, do you tend to watch, listen to or read the news in English/Spanish/German?				
Yes	75	94	81	84
No	25	6	19	16

Ethnic Communities

The ethnic community seems to offer Muslim immigrants a very important resource in their daily lives. Many participate in ethnic organisations and mosques that are predominantly ethnic, and the vast majority have relatives who live in the same city (almost half in the same district), and they meet with friends of their origin more frequently than with European friends.

Muslim immigrants in Europe do not focus their social lives in the ethnic community to equal degrees; rather, there are very significant differences according to the group. Bangladeshis are most immersed in their community, in terms of primary circles, family and friends, especially in comparison with Moroccans. However, the Turks tend to participate most in formal ethnic organisations and describe their religious organisations as more homogeneous from the standpoint of their members' national origins.

Primary Ethnic Circles

Most Muslim immigrants in Europe have their families very close to them, regardless of whether they share the same roof. Almost half (47%) of those surveyed said they have relatives in their neighbourhood and almost three quarters (72%) in the same town. These high percentages suggest that the family is an ethnic support network and that it probably connects with other, non-family ethnic networks (see Table 5 in the Appendix).⁶

Bangladeshis live close to relatives most often, and Moroccans least often. As for the presence of relatives in the neighbourhood, but not under the same roof, there is a huge difference between Madrid and the other two cities. In Madrid, only 19% of those surveyed had relatives in the neighbourhood, whereas the figure was 69% for Berlin and 75% for London. The differences are smaller when it comes to having relatives in the same city, but not in the same neighbourhood. The percentages here are 64% for Moroccans, and 76% and 80% for Turks and Bangladeshis, respectively. In all three cases there is a clear majority of Muslim immigrants who have relatives living in the same city, and in the last two cases the same applies to the neighbourhood.

⁶ Nevertheless, it is important to take into account that the data in the survey do not indicate the intensity of dealings with these relatives, neither do they confirm that these relatives are all members of the same ethnic background, since there could be mixed couples in the sample whose immigrant members have relatives who are British, Spanish, German or of other nationalities different from their own. However, based on how the samples were chosen, and because mixed marriages are very infrequent among Muslim immigrants, these responses do serve to give us an overview, with some reservations, of the ethnic communities of Muslims in Europe.

Table 6. Do you have relatives living in... (breakdown by immigrant group)

(%)	Bangladeshis in London	Moroccans in Madrid	Turks in Berlin	Total
Your neighbourhood?				
Yes	75	19	69	48
No	25	81	31	52
Other areas of London/Madrid/Berlin?				
Yes	80	64	76	73
No	20	36	24	27

Another fundamental informal social circle is that of friends.⁷ The vast majority of Muslim immigrants in Europe said they had met with friends recently: responding to a filter question in this regard, just 2% of the Berlin Turks denied having entertained or having been entertained by a friend in the last year, and only 17% of the London Bangladeshis and Madrid Moroccans denied having spent time with their friends in the last month.

Aside from this minority who do not cultivate friendships, it is clear that most Muslim immigrants have met with friends, either of their same ethnic origin or that of the country where they live, but that the first option is more frequent than the second. Fifty-six percent of those surveyed in London and Madrid had spent time with friends from their ethnic community in the last month, and 33% had done so more than three times. Fewer (43%) had spent time with British or Spanish friends, and only 16% had done so more than three times. On the other hand, the proportion of Turks who had visited or received a visit from friends from their ethnic community in the last year was very high: almost all (98%) had, and 58% had done so often or very often, while less than half (47%) had entertained German friends, and just 10% had done so often or very often (see Tables 6 and 7 in the Appendix).

Based on this data, it is obvious that the social life of Muslim immigrants in Europe in terms of their circle of friends revolves more frequently around their own ethnic community than that of the wider destination society. Yet almost half say they do meet with British, Spanish or German friends. Furthermore, cross-referencing the responses to both questions, they do not appear to be alternative solutions, but rather the people who had more intense social lives in general had them in both circles and those who had little social life had little in either circle. For example, in London and Madrid, half of those who had not spent time with friends from the country of destination had not spent time with friends from the country of origin either. And 80% of those who had met with friends from the country of destination more than three times had also met more than three times with friends from their country of origin. Those who enjoy a relatively intense social life but one which is limited to their own ethnic community, in other words, those who say they have never met with friends of European origin, but who have met more than three times with friends from their own ethnic group, account for just 11% of total UK and Spanish samples. In Berlin there were no statistically significant differences in terms of the frequency with which they visited their Turkish friends and their German friends, so that these are not alternative options but are often combined.

⁷ Unlike in the case of the family, the survey yields information in regard to the intensity of dealings with friends of the same national origin, and we can compare it with the intensity of dealings with European friends; but in this area heterogeneousness in posing the question limits the scope for international comparison. In London and Madrid the question was how often in the last month those surveyed had spent time with their friends, and those who did not answer zero were asked whether these friends were Bangladeshi/Moroccans or ('white' British)/Spanish. In Berlin they were asked how often, in the last year, they had visited Turkish friends and German friends, and how often they had entertained Turkish friends at home and had entertained German friends at home, based on a scale of frequency.

Table 7. London and Madrid: in the last month, how often have you spent time with Bangladeshi/Moroccan friends? (breakdown by frequency of visits with British/Spanish friends, %)

Bangladeshi/Moroccan friends	British/Spanish friends			
	More than three times	From once to three times	Never	Total
More than three times	80	41	25	28
From once to three times	13	47	24	30
Never	7	12	51	42

As with the network of relatives, in regard to friends from the same country of origin there are also very notable differences between Bangladeshis and Moroccans. The Bangladeshis' network of friends is more active: 66% of Bangladeshis surveyed said they had spent time with friends in the last month, they also said that they had done so more than three times with friends of their same nationality, compared with 36% of Moroccans; and just 2% saw nothing of them, compared with 34% of Moroccans. Although the question posed to the Turks does not allow a comparison with the data from the other two groups, as we have seen, the data also reveals a very active network of Turkish friendships, since 58% said that they had invited or visited friends frequently or very frequently in the last year, and 40% said that they had done so sometimes or not very often and just 2% said they never had.

Table 8. In the last month, how often have you spent time with Bangladeshi/Moroccan friends? (breakdown by immigrant group)

	Bangladeshis in London	Moroccans in Madrid	Total
More than three times	66	36	28
From once to three times	32	30	30
Never	2	34	42

Formal Ethnic Organisations

Quite a few Muslim immigrants participate in formal organisations. The most popular ones are sporting, ethnic and cultural organisations, each of which attracts 19% of them. Another 17% said that they participated regularly in the activities of a religious organisation or mosque. Somewhat fewer, 12% of those surveyed, participated in a trade union (see Table 8 in the Appendix).

Among these organisations, only mosques and ethnic organisations can be considered to comprise predominantly persons of the same national origin. More than half of those surveyed did not respond to the questions regarding the ethnic composition of the organisations, perhaps above all because if they are large organisations it is difficult to have an opinion in this regard. Nevertheless, the mosques seem to have a distinct national identity, since 31% of those surveyed said that most of the persons involved in the activities are Bangladeshis, Moroccans or Turkish. But the rest of organisations offer Muslim immigrants mixed social environments, according to around a quarter of those surveyed (see Table 9 in the Appendix).

The differences between the three ethnic groups surveyed are not so conclusive in terms of participation in formal ethnic organisations as they were in terms of informal relationships with relatives and friends. There are no statistically significant differences between the three immigrant groups when it comes to participating in religious organisations and mosques, but it is true that the ethnic nature of these organisations seems to be more notable in Berlin than in the other two cities: 88% of the Berlin Turks who participate in activities of this kind asserted that they did so surrounded by persons also originating from their country, while 67% of the London Bangladeshis and 46% of the Madrid Moroccans said the same thing. Furthermore, ethnic organisations are more popular among Turks (with 27% of participants) than among the other two immigrant groups (with 17% of participants among Moroccans and 14% among Bangladeshis).

Table 9. Are the persons participating in this mosque or religious organisation in their majority Bangladeshis/Moroccans/Turks, in their majority British/Spanish/German, or an equal mix of both? (breakdown by immigrant group)

(%)	Bangladeshis in London	Moroccans in Madrid	Turks in Berlin	Total
Majority of Bangladeshis/Moroccans/Turks	67	46	88	70
Majority of British/Spanish/Germans	11	3	2	4
An equal mix of both	22	51	10	26
Do you participate regularly in the activities of an ethnic organization?				
Yes	14	17	27	21
No	86	83	73	79

To end, it is worth mentioning that this impression that Turks are more willing to participate in formal organisations within their ethnic community contrasts with the previous observation, whereby the Bangladeshis were the group most likely to build their daily lives in primary circles within the community itself. This comparison, as well as those deriving from the analysis of feelings of identity and transnational activities does not indicate a generality of cross-border and community links, as the assimilation theory assumed, but rather a notable diversity from one group to the next and depending on the transnational links and social ties in the ethnic community in question.

3. DO THE LINKS FADE OVER TIME? PERSISTENCE OF TRANSNATIONAL LINKS AND ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

The effect of the passage of time on immigrants' links with their country of origin and their ethnic communities in their countries of destination does not match the projections of classic assimilation theory either, according to which immigrants who have lived longest in the new country would distance themselves from their homelands and their ethnic community more than the new arrivals. The results of the Muslims in Europe Survey indicates that while it is true that the emotional transnational links, such as feelings of national identity, tend to be eroded over time, transnational activities do not follow the same pattern, while ties with the ethnic community, contrary to forecasts, are actually strengthened over time.

To confirm this, in this section we have divided those surveyed in the Muslims in Europe Survey into three groups of a similar size: the first group includes those who say they arrived in the country where they now live prior to 1985, and the second those who arrived between 1985 and 1995, and the third those who migrated after 1995. The first group comprises individuals who have been in Europe for up to 40 years (the first to arrive in this sample did so in 1953), and the third included some who had arrived in Europe in the year in which the field work was carried out, namely 2004. Accordingly, there is a comparison of the attitudes declared in 2004 of three categories of immigrants according to the time they have been immigrants, which obviously has limitations. First, it enables differences in age to impact on results, since of those surveyed the most long-established in Europe are also likely to be older on average than those who have just arrived. Secondly, it does not allow observation of a change in attitudes over time, which would require a longitudinal study in which the questions were repeated at sufficiently distinct times, rather than performing a single comparison between categories in line with the time they migrated. Thirdly, it does not consider the differences between generations, since in the sample there were so few born in the country that it was advisable to remove them from the analysis.

To start with, there are very significant differences in the time each group of immigrants has spent in the new country, which suggests that the variation in behaviour in accordance with the time of residence in Europe is not entirely independent of the variation in line with the nationality in question; although the interaction between the two factors is beyond the scope of this paper, it does raise an interesting issue for future investigations. The most long-standing immigrant groups are

those in Berlin and London: two thirds of the Turks surveyed (66%) arrived before 1985, and more than half of the Bangladeshis (57%) settled in London prior to 1985, and another 38% did so in the following decade. However, almost two thirds (65%) of Moroccans in Madrid emigrated between 1985 and 1995, and another third (31%) did so after this latter date. The differences in attitudes among the three communities set forth in the previous section suggest we should question the validity of the classic hypothesis that the new arrivals tend to have more frequent recourse to transnational and ethnic community links than those who arrived longer ago. Why is one of the most long-established groups, namely the Turks in Berlin, equally as or more involved in transnational activities (and why do they feel equally or more identified with their own nationality of origin) than the most recent group, that of Moroccans in Madrid? Why do the latter actually not use the support of transnational ties and social links in the ethnic community more than the groups that have been in Europe longer, as the assimilation theory projected, but rather less? In addition to the analysis by community this section examines the analysis by individuals, according to the time since migration, in a bid to shed more light on some of these issues.

Feelings of National Identity

Based on an analysis of the responses of Muslims in Europe regarding their feelings of national identity in accordance with the year in which they arrived in the destination country, differences emerge between the more long-established immigrants and the newer arrivals which suggest that there is a tendency for original identities to become more diffused in favour of destination identities, as proposed by classic literature on assimilation. At emotional level, it is true that transnational ties become more diffused, to an extent, over time.

The responses to the set of statements 'I feel Bangladeshi/Moroccan/Turkish or Kurdish' and 'I feel British/Spanish/German' clearly show that the newest arrivals remain more attached to their original identities and are more resistant to embracing that of their destination than those who migrated longer ago. The 1995 cut differentiates between those who arrived in the last 10 years from the other two groups, who are similar to each other, so that there does not appear to be a progressive development of identity over time, but rather this group, which arrived in the late 1990s and early 21st century, stands out from the rest. Those who migrated after 1995 'strongly agree' with the statement regarding their original identity in 66% of cases, in contrast to the frequency in the other two groups, which are similar to each other: 50% of those who migrated between 1985 and 1994 say they strongly agree and 46% of those who arrived before 1985 also say they strongly agree. At the same time, 74% of the group of most recent immigrants disagree with the statement on destination identity, compared with 52%-53% for the other two groups.

The question regarding the pride of belonging to the country of origin also yields similar results, although somewhat less evident. On the one hand, it might be imagined that the time of residence abroad gradually erodes sentiments of pride in regard to original nationality, since the percentages of agreement with the assertion 'I am proud to be Bangladeshi/Moroccan/Turkish or Kurdish' increase as we progress through Table 10, from the column representing the more long-standing immigrants to the column depicting the most recent ones: just 35% of those who reached the European country where they reside before 1985 are proud of their national origin, followed by 47% of the group of those who arrived between that date and 1994, and 63% of those who travelled in 1995 or afterwards. On the other hand, reactions to the statement 'I am proud to be British/Spanish/German' follow a somewhat different pattern, similar to the one observed in the responses concerning the set of questions which started 'I feel...'. While it is true that the most recent immigrants, from 1995 onwards, are those who most often reject the phrase (65%), the other two groups hardly differ between them, since 38% of immigrants who had migrated on intermediate dates rejected the sentence and 45% of those who arrived in the fifties, sixties, seventies and early eighties did so. The seven percentage points of difference between the frequency of rejection of the phrase among the more long-standing immigrants may be the result of a sample error, while in the most recent group, above and beyond margin for error, there is clear rejection of the phrase concerning pride at belonging to the destination nationality, some twenty points higher than the rest.

Table 10. National identity feelings (breakdown by immigration date)

(%)	Up to 1984	Between 1985 and 1994	From 1995 onwards	Total
I feel Bangladeshi/Moroccan/Turkish-Kurdish				
I strongly agree	46	50	66	54
I agree	46	47	28	40
I disagree or strongly disagree	8	3	6	6
I feel British/Spanish/German				
I strongly agree	14	14	7	11
I agree	33	34	19	29
I disagree or strongly disagree	53	52	74	60
I am proud to be Bangladeshi/Moroccan/Turkish-Kurdish				
I strongly agree	35	47	63	48
I agree	49	48	30	42
I disagree or strongly disagree	16	5	7	10
I am proud to be British/Spanish/German				
I strongly agree	19	18	9	15
I agree	36	44	26	35
I disagree or strongly disagree	45	38	65	50

In short, the survey here shows that the emotional transnational ties among Muslim immigrants in Europe tend to erode over time or at least that immigrants arriving in the last 10 years more often conserve such ties than those arriving earlier, and they are more reluctant to identify with the destination country.

Transnational Activities

The most recent immigrants, arriving in Europe from the mid-1990s onwards, tend to travel to their country of origin more often than the rest: half (50%) do so at least once a year, compared with 40%-42% among the more long-established immigrants. Sporadic trips are more normal among the older immigrants, since half (51%-52%) of those who migrated before 1995 said they visited their country less than once a year, whereas the figure was 25% among those who had migrated later on. However, the remaining quarter (25%) of the latest immigrants said that they never travel to their country, while only 7%-8% of the older ones said the same.⁸ The figures, therefore, do not clearly confirm the hypothesis that visits to countries of origin are more typical among immigrants who have been in Europe for less time, since there are more of these who travel at least once a year, but there are also more of these who never travel to their homeland.

Table 11. How often do you travel to Bangladesh/Morocco/Turkey? (breakdown by immigration date)

(%)	Up to 1984	Between 1985 and 1994	From 1995 onwards	Total
At least once a year	42	40	50	44
Less than once a year	51	52	25	42
Never	7	8	25	14

Furthermore, there are no statistically significant differences in Muslim immigrants' willingness to send remittances to their countries of origin, in line with their arrival date in Europe. According to the survey responses analysed here, the economic help provided by these immigrants to their families, to other persons or to organisations in Bangladesh, Morocco or Turkey does not depend on the time they have spent living in the European country where they have settled.

However, the time spent does impact clearly on their willingness to follow the news in their native language; but in the opposite sense that might be expected based on the classic hypothesis that newly-arrived foreigners conserve their ties more than their predecessors. Eighty-nine percent of those who migrated before 1985 follow the news in their native language, followed by 80% of those who migrated between 1985 and 1994, and 60% of those who arrived in Europe since 1995.

⁸ The fact that the most recent community is also the one geographically closest to its country of origin, Morocco, and that among these immigrants the considerable proportion of one fifth never visit their homeland, may have an impact here.

Table 12. In a normal week, do you tend to watch, listen to or read the news in Bangladeshi/Arabic/Turkish? (breakdown by immigration date)

(%)	Up to 1984	Between 1985 and 1995	From 1995 onwards	Total
Yes	89	80	60	77
No	11	20	40	23

In short, it cannot be concluded that the transnational activities of Muslim immigrants in Europe tend to tail off over time. There is no clear relationship between arrival date and visits to the country of origin, nor is there a statistically significant relationship between the arrival date and the sending of remittances, while the relationship between arrival date and monitoring of news in the native language contradicts the hypothesis that ‘they become more distanced over time’.

Ethnic Communities

If we cannot assert that more recent Muslim immigrants maintain all transnational ties with their countries of origin more frequently than those who have been living in Europe for longer, the results of the survey do clearly show that the ethnic community offers stronger social ties to older immigrants than to more recent ones, contrary to the classic assimilation theories. Both the primary ethnic circles, of family relationships and friendships, and formal national organisations have a greater presence in the social life of immigrants who are long-established in London, Madrid and Berlin, than for the rest.

As for the presence of relatives in the neighbourhood and the city, there are statistically significant and major differences, according to which the family circle becomes stronger as the time of residence increases. Seventy-one percent of Muslims arriving before 1985 in London, Madrid or Berlin have relatives living in their neighbourhood, while the figure is 45% for those arriving between 1985 and 1995, and 27% for those arriving after 1995. The same scale is true, although with smaller differences, when they are asked about relatives living in the same city: 77% of the first group have relatives in their city, compared with 74% of the second group and 61% of the third. It is, however, worth recalling that the presence of relatives in the immediate environment does not necessarily imply, although it is a condition for, intense day-to-day contact with them; and we do not therefore know the extent to which these differences indicate that the social life of those surveyed is conducted within their ethnic community, or whether they simply reveal an accumulation of immigrants of the same origin who come to Europe following family networks and strengthen them via marriages within the community once there. It is not therefore surprising that older migrants have more close-knit family networks in their district and in their city.

Table 13. Do you have relatives living in... (breakdown by immigration date)

(%)	Up to 1984	Between 1985 and 1994	From 1995 Onwards	Total
Your neighbourhood?				
Yes	71	45	27	49
No	29	55	73	51
Other areas of London/Madrid/Berlin?				
Yes	77	74	61	71
No	23	26	39	29

As for circles of friendship, there is no statistically significant relationship in London and Madrid between the year of arrival and the declared fact of having spent time with friends from the destination country in the last month. But there is a significant and linear relationship between the year of arrival and the fact of having spent time with friends of the same ethnic origin. Fifty-five percent of the more long-standing immigrants asserted that they had seen friends from their own community more than three times in the last month, as did 44% of those who arrived between 1985 and 1995, and 35% of those who arrived after that. Just 13% of the first group denied having spent free time with friends from their national community, compared with 23% of the second group and 36% of the third. Accordingly, it seems that the circles of friendship within the national community

are more intense for the more long-standing immigrants, unlike what might be expected based on the hypothesis that the new arrivals take refuge in their community; whereas it does not seem that those who have spent longest in their cities have had more opportunities or been more inclined to meet with local friends.

Table 14. In the last month, how often have you spent time with Bangladeshi/Moroccan friends? (breakdown by immigration date)

(%)	Up to 1984	Between 1985 and 1994	From 1995 Onwards	Total
More than three times	55	44	35	28
From once to three times	32	33	29	30
Never	13	23	36	42

Participation in formal ethnic organisations does not hinge on the immigration date as far as mosques and religious organisations are concerned, but it does as far as ethnic organisations are concerned. The more long-standing immigrants, arriving before 1984, tend to participate more than the rest in associations that represent immigrants from their country (28%, compared with 15% and 19% in the more recent groups). This comparison offers another clue, contrary to the hypothesis that newly-arrived immigrants tend to take refuge in organisations of their national communities, whereas those who are longer established tend to join majority associations.

Table 15. Do you participate regularly in the activities of an ethnic organization? (breakdown by immigration date)

(%)	Up to 1984	Between 1985 and 1994	From 1995 Onwards	Total
Yes	28	15	19	21
No	72	85	81	79

The responses to the questions on recourse to ethnic community in their daily lives shows, on aggregate, that the classic hypothesis of the transitory nature of ties created by immigrants within their national group is not applicable to the Muslims residing in Europe today. On the contrary: those who have been living in Madrid, London or Berlin for the longest period have very close-knit family networks, in their own district and elsewhere in the city, they see friends of their own nationality and they participate in ethnic organisations more often than newly-arrived Muslim immigrants.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The data from the Muslims in Europe Survey portrays an image of immigrants who live ‘here and there’: most maintain transnational ties with their countries of origin and close social links with members of their ethnic community in the city where they live. The responses also show that the three kinds of immigrants surveyed behave differently in terms of the frequency with which they have recourse to the various transnational links (trips, remittances, news) and social ties in the ethnic community (relatives, friends, members of organisations). Lastly, they show that it is not mainly the new arrivals in Europe who use these links and ties, in an effort to mitigate their deficit of integration in the destination society, but rather the more long-standing immigrants who use several of them more frequently.

To what extent do Muslim immigrants maintain transnational links with their societies of origin?

- The vast majority of Muslim immigrants feel that they are members of their national community of origin –whether Bangladeshi, Moroccan, Turkish or Kurdish– and considerably more of them identify themselves with their countries of origin than with their destination nationalities – whether British, Spanish or German–. But mixed identities are somewhat more frequent than single ones: almost half of those surveyed said they felt proud of both national identities, although the other half was more inclined to be proud of their nationality of origin than that of destination.

- Almost all those surveyed asserted that they travel to their countries of origin, around half of them do so every year at least once and the other half less often.
- Half of those surveyed said that they sent money or presents to their families or other persons or organisations in Bangladesh, Morocco or Turkey.
- More than three-quarters said that they follow the news in their native language, including the news of their home country and their adopted country; but mixed results were very frequent, since most followed the news in both languages.

To what extent do they maintain ties with their ethnic community in their city of residence?

- Close to half of Muslim immigrants have a network of relatives in their own district, and more than three quarters have relatives in the same city.
- Those surveyed see friends from their own ethnic community more often than friends from their country of residence. Just over half of the Bangladeshis and Moroccans had spent time with friends of their ethnic origin in the last month, in London or Madrid, and just over half of the Turks had met often or very often with Turkish friends in Berlin. But these are not mutually exclusive social alternatives, since those who had a more intense social life moved in both circles.
- Almost one fifth of those surveyed participate in ethnic organisations, and a slightly smaller proportion contribute to activities at a mosque, which most describe as mainly ethnic associations.

Are Muslim immigrants in Europe all the same in terms of their transnational and community links?

- Turks, and sometimes Moroccans, are the most transnational group of the three, while the Bangladeshis seem more willing to build their daily lives within their ethnic community.
- In terms of emotional ties, the Turks and Moroccans identify more with their country of origin and less with their country of destination than the Bangladeshis.
- As for transnational activities, the Turks and Moroccans also tend to travel and send money and presents to their countries of origin more often than the Bangladeshis; and Turks also follow more closely the news from their country of origin and are more inclined to do business with persons living there.
- On the contrary, the Bangladeshis live more immersed in their ethnic community, in terms of primary circles, that is, family and friends. But the Turks tend to participate more in ethnic organisations and more often describe their mosques as mainly ethnic associations.

Do Muslim immigrants in Europe distance themselves over time from their societies or origin and their ethnic communities?

- The group which overall migrated most recently, the Moroccans, is neither the most transnational nor the most community-oriented; on the contrary, the longer-standing immigrant groups in Europe more often have ties with their societies of origin (in the case of Turks) and their community of origin in the destination city (in the case of Bangladeshis).

- Looking at individuals rather than groups, those surveyed distance themselves over time from their emotional transnational ties (their feelings of original national identity), but do not cease to participate in transnational activities (travelling, sending remittances, following news) and nor do they sever their ties with their community (relatives, friends, organisations).
- Feelings of identity with the country of origin are stronger among immigrants arriving in the decade immediately prior to the survey than among those who have been living in European cities for longer.
- Newly-arrived immigrants tend to travel every year but also to not travel ever, while the rest tend to travel from time to time.
- Long-standing immigrants send remittances to their countries of origin as often as new arrivals.
- Long-standing immigrants claim to be more interested in the current affairs reported by media in their native languages than the new arrivals.
- Foreign Muslims who have lived in Europe for longest have relatives in their district or city, meet friends of their own nationality and participate in ethnic organisations more often than the new arrivals.

These conclusions suggest that transnational links weave a relatively invisible but permanent web between European and Muslim countries. Ties are furthermore anchored in ethnic communities in the European cities that provide immigrants with very important social resources. But the survey was limited to only three groups of Muslim immigrants, Bangladeshis in London, Moroccans in Madrid and Turks in Berlin, when the diversity observed in the transnational and community links of the three groups suggests that it would be advisable to research a larger number of groups in a broader range of cities. Although this research would face major methodological challenges, this survey shows that it is viable to build representative samples of these groups and aims to encourage researchers to continue and to broaden rigorous research on the attitudes of Muslim immigrants, whose integration into western culture is currently a central issue of public debate.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Feelings of national identity with the country of origin and country of destination

(%)	I Feel Bangladeshi/ Moroccan/ Turkish-Kurdish	I Feel British/ Spanish/German	I am Proud to be Bangladeshi/ Moroccan/ Turkish-Kurdish	I am Proud to be British/ Spanish/German
I strongly agree	52	11	45	10
I agree	36	26	38	26
I disagree	3	21	6	21
I strongly disagree	4	35	5	35
DK/NA	5	7	6	7

Table 2. How often do you travel to Bangladesh/Morocco/Turkey?

	(%)
Every year	42
Less than once a year	45
Never	12
DK/NA	1

Table 3. Economic ties with the country of origin (%)

Do you work or do business with persons living in Bangladesh/Morocco/Turkey?	
Yes	5
No	94
DK/NA	1
Have you or any other member of your family sent money or gifts to relatives or other persons or organizations in Bangladesh/Morocco/Turkey in the last twelve months?	
Yes	50
No	48
DK/NA	2

Table 4. In a normal week, do you tend to watch, listen to or read the news in...

(%)	Bangladeshi/Arabic/Turkish?	English/Spanish/German?
Yes	77	83
No	22	16
DK/NA	1	1

Table 5. Do you have relatives living in...

(%)	Your Neighbourhood?	Other Areas of London/Madrid/Berlin?
Yes	51	72
No	47	27
DK/NA	2	1

Table 6. London and Madrid: in the last month, how often have you spent time with friends from...

(%)	Bangladesh/Morocco?	Britain/Spain?
More than three times	33	16
From once to three times	23	27
Never	22	34
DK/NA	22	23

Table 7. Berlin: in the last year, how often have you visited or entertained friends from...

(%)	Turkey?	Germany?
Often or very often	58	10
Sometimes or not very often	40	37
Never	2	53

Table 8. Do you regularly participate in activities of...

(%)	A Mosque or Religious Organisation?	A Sports Organisation?	An Ethnic Organisation?	A Cultural Organisation?	A Trade Union?
Yes	17	19	19	19	12
No	82	80	75	80	87
DK/NA	1	1	6	1	1

Table 9. Are the persons participating in this organisation in their majority Bangladeshis/Moroccans/Turks, in their majority British/Spanish/German, or an equal mix of both?

(%)	Mosques	Sports Teams	Cultural Organisations	Trade Unions
Majority of Bangladeshis/Moroccans/Turks	31	4	12	1
Majority of British/Spanish/Germans	2	14	8	10
Both, equally	12	26	24	21
DK/NA	55	56	56	68

Firma/Signature