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Immigration and Integration: Examining Fethullah Gulen's Philosophy of Integration

Abstract

Forced migration is a huge asset, but also a challenge within Europe. The key to overcoming it is love, tolerance, dialogue, humility, self-devotion, as well as creating common and safe spaces for meeting and working together in socially beneficial tasks. In order to prevent and solve problems arising from taking in refugees of different faiths and cultures, believers of all religions need to accept these tasks as a top priority. Although the role of religion in lives of immigrants has been a subject of interest by scholars, not much focus had been put on the importance of social activism of faith-based community organisations in favour of immigrants. This paper focuses on social networks as playing an important role in the integration process, and examines Turkish Islamic Scholar Fethullah Gulen's view of integration within current EU policy regarding Muslim immigrants.

Key words: immigration, integration, dialogue, Fethullah Gulen, Muslim.

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Introduction

European countries are witnessing a continuous political and social discussion about immigrants' integration into receiving societies. The issue of integration of refugees is back on the agenda, in terms of labour market integration, education,

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housing, healthcare, contact with society and cultural orientations (including attitudes towards refugees) (Uche 2018). As refugees and other types of migrants become members of society, and increase in number, there is a risk of having multiple divided communities within a larger host community, segregated by culture, religion, income and other differentiating factors. Therefore, migration is associated with difficulties and challenges, such as the risk of separation, marginalisation and social conflict. One of the major concerns of Muslim immigrants is of losing their identity, which ultimately leads to a concern for the receiving society that immigrants tend to form ghettos which in its turn hinders integration. For some observers, disaffected Muslims in France, the UK or the Netherlands are seeking to create a society entirely separate from the mainstream (Inglehart, Norris 2009). While trying to learn about the actual 'state of knowledge' in integration/assimilation research is difficult due to an increasing number of studies on specific cases, groups or problems, but also because there is a lack of agreed-upon theoretical and methodological concepts and indicators (Schneider, Crul 2010). In addition, the current political and socio-economical condition of the Muslim world increases such fears.

This article will first focus on what should be understood by the word integration. Secondly, the measures taken by the EU for integration will also be elaborated. Finally, the ideas proposed by a Turkish Islamic scholar Fethullah Gulen, aimed at overcoming the obstacle of integration, and creating a possible contribution to social harmony will be examined. Gulen's approach might deconstruct such fear and contribute to integration.

Integration versus Assimilation

Integration has the benefit of allowing citizens to respect other cultures, creating a sense of unity within a community. In addition, individuals that partake in multiple societies gain resources from multiple cultures, while expanding their own horizons (Berry 2017). Cultural integration is a form of cultural exchange in which one group assumes the beliefs, practices, and rituals of another group, without sacrificing the characteristics of its own culture. Assimilation is a process, through which a person forsakes his or her cultural tradition to become part of a different culture. When the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) promotes local integration of refugees, it does so in a way that suggests a full package solution, containing not only economic, but also socio-cultural aspects. Perhaps this is why

its members don't not use the word 'assimilation' to describe integration, contrary to what is contained in the 1951 convention relating to the status of refugees (UNHCR 1951). The notable difference inherent in the definition of the two words is that while the former places a demand on refugees to imbibe into the culture of the host community, obtaining its culture and identity, and contributing economically, the latter indirectly places the demand on both refugees and the host community, therefore allowing refugees to contribute economically and socio-culturally, while keeping their identity (Ager, Strang 2008).

Inter-cultural contact does not seem to be a solid policy approach for many governments, at least not on national level. In many countries the organisation of such projects is left to actors in civil society and NGOs. Whereas socio-cultural themes play a central role in the public (and political) debate on refugee integration throughout Europe, there is only limited systematic attention for socio-cultural integration as a specific part of the refugee integration strategies. Only in terms of preventing radicalisation are there some national schemes. Integration policy has its limits, and cultural integration is a task for every single member of society. Policy will be sufficient to an extent, but in fact it is everybody's job to support integration (Berlinghoff 2014).

The position of Muslim migrants appears to be half-way between the dominant values prevailing within their destination and their origins. This suggests that Muslims are not exceptionally resistant in levels of integration, as some studies suggest (Bisin et al 2008). A community is best integrated when it feels it belongs and matters. As long as economic, social and political barriers prevent individuals achieving their full potential, they will neither belong nor matter (Warsi 2017).

The IZA Expert Opinion Survey of 2007 reveals the views and experiences of stakeholders deeply involved in the ongoing integration of ethnic minorities in the EU-27. Insufficient knowledge of the official language, inadequate education, lack of information about employment opportunities, and internal barriers (social, cultural, and religious norms originating from within the respective ethnic minority), along with institutional barriers (citizenship or legal restrictions) are reported as very significant obstacles. The vast majority of experts, however, cite discrimination as the most serious barrier to the social and labour market integration of ethnic minorities. Other barriers preventing integration are a lack of experience in the host country's social context, lack of interest in integration, and competition from intra-EU migrants.

Business and non-governmental initiatives (including church initiatives) are viewed as important means of overcoming integration barriers. The experts'

suggestions to enhance integration include the following: training in self-confidence, active lobbying, cultural diversity education, elimination of institutional barriers, public attitudes and media management (promoting the benefits of immigrants on national media, challenging racism in the media). Internal barriers (social, cultural, and religious norms, immigrants' own opinions about themselves, lack of motivation and intergenerational mobility) are also serious culprits of non-integration. Low education and self-confidence, as well as cultural differences, also hinder integration (Constant et al 2008).

The immigrant integration strategy should be based on curiosity, trust, and a natural need to get to know 'the stranger'. It also needs flexibility and mechanisms of adaptation to the changing reality. An active integration policy, through civic participation, should invest in the human and social capital of immigrants and infrastructure, to ensure economic development and a high quality of life for the residents.

The Council of Europe has awarded the 2018 Innovation in Politics Award, in the Human Rights category, to the city of Gdańsk for its work on the Gdańsk Model of Immigrant Integration (EWSI 2020). The Model, proposed by Gdańsk City Council, conforms with the teachings of the Catholic Church, including the 2004 *Erga Migrantes* Instruction, the 2013 document "Welcoming Christ in Refugees and Displaced Persons", and messages for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, including the special messages of Pope John Paul II (d.2005)¹ and Pope Francis.

¹ The message written by John Paul II in 2005 includes the following: "Integration is not presented as an assimilation that leads migrants to suppress or to forget their own cultural identity. Rather, contact with others leads to discovering their "secret", to being open to them in order to welcome their valid aspects, and thus, contribute to knowing each one better. This is a lengthy process that aims to shape societies and cultures, making them more and more a reflection of the multi-faceted gifts of God to human beings. In this process, the migrant is intent on taking the necessary steps towards social inclusion, such as learning the national language and complying with the laws and requirements at work, so as to avoid the occurrence of exasperated differentiation. In our society, characterised by the global phenomenon of migration, individuals must seek the proper balance between respect for their own identity, and recognition of that of others. Indeed, it is necessary to recognise the legitimate plurality of cultures present in a country, in harmony with the preservation of law and order, on which social peace and the freedom of citizens depend. Indeed, it is essential to exclude, on the one hand, assimilationist models that tend to transform those who are different into their own copy, and on the other, models of marginalisation of immigrants, with attitudes that can even arrive at the choice of apartheid. The way the path to take is that of genuine integration with an open outlook that refuses to solely consider the differences between immigrants and the local people" (Żelazek 2017).

Gulen's Approach to Integration

Trans-national religious and faith-based movements can play crucial roles in peacebuilding with their strong faith-based motivation, long term commitment, religious, spiritual, and moral authority, and the ability to facilitate constructive social relations between different population groupings (Stassen 1992, Thistlethwaite and Stassen 2008, Sampson and Lederach 2000, Gopin 1991).

In this section, the contribution of Fethullah Gulen's viewpoint and the movement's activities which he inspired, regarding the integration of Muslim immigrants, will be discussed.

Fethullah Gulen is a spiritual leader, as well as an advocate of peace and inter-faith dialogue (Esposito, Yilmaz 2010, Yucel and Albayrak 2014, Carroll 2007, Saritoprak 2005). He is one of the world's most influential and controversial Muslim spiritual leaders, who has inspired a major trans-national civil society movement. While he is a prominent advocate of inter-religious dialogue, he has been accused by some secularists of being a fundamentalist, with a hidden agenda to apply sharia law to Turkey, and by religious fundamentalists for compromising his religion. On the other hand, political Islamists have also accused him of being disloyal to Islam, due to his interfaith dialogue activities with non-Muslims in Turkey and abroad.

Since a failed military coup in 2016, the Erdogan regime has claimed that he was the mastermind behind it. Gulen rejects these claims pointing to his past and current activities². Many academics studying the trans-national phenomena related to the movement conclude that the participants in the movement are working towards a flexible integration of the traditional values and cultural elements with globalisation, democracy and modern social organisation (Yavuz and Esposito 2003, Esposito and Yilmaz 2010, Yucel 2010, Carroll 2017). In his sermons, Gulen promotes integration rather than assimilation. His encouragement for integration is that it is not just a theory but should also be put into practice by his admirers in the non-Muslim countries, through education, dialogue, and contributing to societies.

² Gulen has rejected claims of being behind the failed coup attempt on July 15th, 2016, as well. Speaking to the BBC from his home in the US, Gulen condemned the rebellion (BBC 2016). Erdogan has sought to divide the populace against itself by framing any political opponents as either an enemy, or as a hostile force in the country. He has claimed that Gulenist sympathisers or those who criticise his policies 'have poured the poison of disloyalty into the very arteries of our national life and these people must be punished' (Yavuz 2018).

There is a wide range of obstacles which prevents Muslim immigrants from integrating. The major obstacles are: a lack of good education of Muslim immigrants in EU standards, ghettoisation, the challenge of radicalization, and discrimination due to the current political and social conditions of the Muslim world, whilst language barriers are the major obstacles.

Gulen's views on integration can be summarised under three categories: Contribution to integration through education; avoiding historical polemics between Muslims and Christians; and overcoming obstacles through interfaith and intercultural dialogue, with the focus on commonalities.

Instead of building mosques, Gulen recommends the establishment of educational institutions, including secular ones. He sees ignorance as one of three great enemies, with some Muslims seeing the EU, America, and Israel as enemies and the cause of their social, political, and economic problems. Gulen indicates that the biggest enemies are, in fact, ignorance, poverty, and disunity (Gulen 1998). Since he was young, Gulen has fought against ignorance, extremism and the resulting disunity through education and dialogue. He has inspired millions to open over four thousand educational and dialogue NGOs in Turkey and abroad.

For achieving integration through education and dialogue, knowing the local language is indispensable, so he strongly recommends: "learn the language of the society you live in, get to know the people of the country you live in, do all kinds of dialogue, do not follow extremism, do not act against the politics of the state you live in. If you live this way, you will have a lot in common with the people of those countries. Leave historical polemics to historians" (Saritoprak 2005). Gulen's emphasis on education prevents ghettoisation. Educated young people find jobs, earn money, increase their self-confidence and do not have to worry about integrating into society. Ignorance causes ghettoisation.

In dealing with radicalism, Gulen emphasises the importance of tolerance and the original interpretation of Islam. He recommends learning the art of living together in a globalized world, not accepting the differences on the agenda, but standing on common points (Gulen 2011, 35). In the face of unfairness towards Islam and Muslims, Gulen prevents the radicalism by channelling synergies accumulated in Muslim young people, to benefit society (Yucel, Albayrak 2014, 34-35). Thus, that energy does not turn into hate, but rather yields useful results. Radicalism triggers discrimination. Here, it is an important role for NGOs in Europe. Governments also have responsibility in this regard.

Language is also an obstacle to integration. Today, the members of the Gulen Movement are among the best in terms of language amongst immigrants, especially

Turks. After July 15th, 2016, tens of thousands of highly educated members of the Gulen Movement migrated to Western countries, because Turkey's Erdogan regime charged all Gulen supporters with membership of a terrorist organisation without any legal basis, questioning or fair judgment. These include many professors, doctors, teachers, judges, journalists and security personnel (Wise 2017).

According to Gulen's philosophy, all Muslims and non-Muslims are brothers and sisters in humanity. All people are like the branches, fruits, leaves or flowers of the same tree (Gulen 2015). Following his own advice Gulen met with Pope Jean Paul II in February, 1998 at the Vatican. During this meeting, Gulen invited the Pope to visit Christian sacred places located in Turkey together, and proposed opening a new school of theology in Harran in south-east Turkey, where Abraham is believed to have lived for some time; to set up an inter-faith student exchange programme; and to work together, to disprove the idea of "a clash of civilisation" (Ashton, Balci 2008). However, it did not happen for unknown reasons.

Unlike many other Islamic modernist movements, including Salafism and al-Nahdah in Arabia, the Muhammadiyah movement in Indonesia, the Aligarh and Nadwa movements in India, the Gulen Movement has been characterised by mass interaction and participation at local, national, and trans-national levels. This interaction and participation have generated a global network of thousands of socio-cultural institutions, including schools, coaching centres, universities, hospitals, dialogue centres, relief organisations etc. (Mufazzal 2020). Gulen falls apart from most of the Islamic scholars. For him, Islam does not reject interaction with diverse cultures, on condition that it does not challenge the essence of Islam. For all other conditions, dialogue is not a superfluous endeavour, but an imperative which is inherent to the faith (Tedik 2007).

Based on this thought, the Gulen Movement organises intercultural, interfaith, and academic activities which take place under the sponsorships of intercultural foundations affiliated with the movement, such as the Dialogue Society in London, the Forum for Inter-cultural Dialogue in Berlin, and the Australian Intercultural Society in Melbourne, Australia³. In the vision of these NGOs, they aim to contribute to social cohesion, via their activities, which would build bridges between Muslims and non-Muslims. This is a conscientious effort on the part of the Gulen Movement followers in Western liberal democracies: to build partnerships with the non-Muslim sectors of society. While some Muslim groups encourage members and followers to emphasise their Islamic identity, the Gulen Movement

³ For the detail of their activities see www.ais.org.au

promotes the idea that Muslims should work with and within the majority society (Pewforum 2010, 4). Given that the current political climate around Islam in Australia is likely to continue, the Gulen Movement is more likely to be welcomed than shunned (Tittensor 2014).

Gulen's philosophy of integration may contribute to social harmony in the EU. Despite the severe criticism of some secularists, ultra-nationalists, political Islamists, and some religious groups in Turkey, because of inter-faith activities (Yucel 2010), he has not changed his stance about having dialogue and understanding each other for the sake of peace, integration, and minimising conflicts. Gulen argues that even "Paradise can be left for the sake of a peaceful world". His approach to "other" resembles a Sufi approach. Yucel summarises this approach as the following: A need to redefine the concept of "us" and "others" in the framework of serving others. "Us" refers to those who serve, while "others" refer to those who need to be served, which includes all people, not just Muslims, or those who have a physical need (Yucel 2017, 174). This approach minimises being judgemental towards others and narrows the gap between Muslims and non-Muslims. Through this new definition, Gulen shows the importance of a positive perception between Muslims and non-Muslims (Carroll 2007, 38). According to Gulen: "Western hostility pushes Muslims out of the era. They should not fight with the Western world, they should evaluate Western thought in the direction of the facts of the age, respect the values that are not contrary to their own spirit and meaning root, and should also help to maintain peace in the World" (Gulen et al. 1996, 42). Therefore, he considers the West not as an enemy but as a rival to compete.

In an interview by Nevval Sevindi, Gulen expressed his thoughts about joining the EU as follows: "Walking to a point with Europe in their reasonable and own conditions, by revealing our own conditions, can promise good things for our future. To this extent, accepting Europe can be called a European Muslim identity (to this extent, Europeanisation actually has no drawbacks). Today, Western democracies have presented an example of a pluralist, participatory, and economically rich society in this sense. Pluralist democracies are still facing some major challenges today, such as minority and immigrant rights, congregational demands, non-governmental organisations and pressure groups expressing quite different social demands. This means that an abstract understanding of democracy cannot overcome hidden conflicts. Democratic state understanding tries to be re-defined on the basis of pluralist and differentiated cultures and identities" (Sevindi 1997).

Gulen argues that his message is different from that of many other religious public figures around the world, because he himself engages with modernity. He

claims to present an Islamic treatise that genuinely touches on the global and universal principles of Islam by opening up to others (Sunier 2014). Gulen states that “[the ideal Muslim] is sensitive to the dignity and honour of other people as they are their own. They do not eat, they feed others. They do not live for themselves; they live to enable others to live” (Gulen 2010, 89). These moral obligations can only be applied when learned and embodied through disciplining techniques and training of the body and mind. Much of what Gulen proposes refers to the so-called ‘Golden Generation.’ It is an ideal image of the perfect Muslim engaging with Islamic traditions and modernity in a new way. In Gulen’s vision, the Golden Generation is well-educated in the sciences, well-rounded in moral training, and will participate in modernity, and help to shape it (Agai 2002). However, Gulen’s view can be considered highly idealist and some would question the applicability in a highly individualistic and materialist secular society.

Mardin, Turkey could be an example for a case study area for the Gulen Movement. It has been able to mobilise Turks, Kurds, Arabs, and Assyrian Christians in Mardin, to co-operate on tackling their common problems. The city has been heavily affected by the ensuing insecurity as well as infrastructural and economic deprivations, due to conflicts between the Turkish security forces and terrorist organisations, such as the Marxist PKK and the Islamist fundamentalist Hezbollah, respectively since the early 1980s and 1990s. The ongoing conflicts and insecurity have not only deprived the city of basic infrastructures, investments and educational facilities, but also deepened the ethnic fault-lines, less so the religious ones. Against this background the affiliates of the Gulen Movement are the first NGOs which built bridges and established a network between local people from different ethnic groups in the late 1980s and onwards. This network focused on common problems facing all groups, regardless of their ethno-religious allegiance, such as the lack of education of the youth, an increasing unemployment, the youth falling prey to either the PKK or Hezbollah, and ensuing problems of terrorism and economic deprivations. The movement has not only theorised and proposed solutions to be preached about these issues, but also mobilised the local people to tackle these problems together. The local people’s co-operation seems to have yielded tangible outcomes, which has changed the earlier attitudes and practices of the ethno-religious groups in Mardin, thereby preparing the ground for fostering a participative civil society. These tangible outcomes include educational and cultural institutions, which continue to build the human capital for a stable and democratic Mardin.

The question is whether the sociological approach introduced and practiced by the Gulen Movement in Mardin, Turkey, which focuses on communal perfection

through individual perfection, and mobilises different segments of the society to tackle their common problems, putting aside their differences, is applicable to alleviating ethno-religious conflicts in diverse communities around the globe, and to fostering civil society within these communities. The field research about the impact of the movement's services in Mardin, which is not only ethno-religiously divided, but also suffers from terrorism and economic deprivations, suggests that the movement is able to create preliminary conditions for a civil society to flourish from within that community.

First, the educational facilities established and run by Turks, Arabs, and Kurds together have minimised, if not eradicated, the perception of Turk-Kurd enmity, through which the PKK has garnered popular support. Second, these institutions, be they college prep courses or cultural centres, took the unemployed youth off the streets, thus taking away the main recruitment resource for both the PKK and Hezbollah. Third, Gulen's ideas about Islam, conveyed through both human interactions and the media, have convinced the public that radicalism conflicts with the very essentials of Islam. Fourth, the Gulen Movement's solid educational services help rationality override nationalist and ethno-religious sentiments, and create a public opinion against violent means of conduct, such as terrorism. The movement's vision of dialogue, tolerance, and search for common grounds between different cultures, is what enables the movement to communicate to a wide range of different communities.

The case of Mardin has demonstrated that the Gulen Movement has been able to mobilise the individuals of Turkish, Kurdish, Arab and Assyrian origins, previously fractured and isolated from one another, to tackle their very own common problems, with their own resources. Thus the individuals organise together and pool their resources to meet common needs (Kalyoncu 2007). The movement's intercultural and inter-faith dialogue experience in Turkey had later inspired followers abroad, including those in Europe after the mid-90s.

NGOs in Europe Established by Gulen's Followers

In this section I will briefly analyse the contribution to integration of 'Forum Dialog' in Germany, 'Dialogo Haaglanden' in the Netherlands, 'Dunaj Institut Dialogu' in Poland and 'Balturka' in Lithuania. These NGOs have been established by Gulen's followers living in Europe, in order to promote understanding and to contribute to integration.

'Forum Dialog' was founded by German Muslims with a pre-dominantly Turkish migration history, whose inspiration stems from the teachings and values of Fethullah. It declares that it is not a religious or ethnic organisation. It offers assistance for all those interested in dialogue in Germany, and advocates a deeper understanding of Islam and other religions, democracy, social participation and human rights, and is opposed to the instrumentalisation of religion.

The movement's followers contribute to integration via educational institutions. The vision of integration embraced by participants of the movement is based, first and foremost, on education⁴. In the past decade, the Gulen Movement in Germany has been building an educational infrastructure that aims to improve the socioeconomic situation of residents of a Turkish background, and promote their integration into German society. With hundreds of learning centres, cultural centres, and schools operating throughout the country, it has attempted to put its ideals of "dialogue, education, and social engagement" into practice. Since much of the debate concerning integration revolves around educational policy, the work of these educational centres, has been having a quietly significant effect. This educational work is intended to convey a vision of integration that is based on a two-way exchange of cultural understanding, and to counteract the cultural stereotypes about Turks, held by many Germans. Such attitudes are increasingly difficult for many in the Turkish community to tolerate, especially the second and third generations of German-born Turks, who feel like second-class citizens in their German homeland. Thus, the vision of integration promoted by the Gulen Movement's centres is one of cultural exchange and enrichment, rather than assimilation. Despite the denials of some German officials that there are Turkish ghettos in Germany, many, if not most, Turks, live a good portion of their lives separately from native Germans. The Gulen Movement's centres are attempting to build a bridge between the two communities (Irvine 2006).

'Dialoog Haaglanden' was established by Gulen's followers in 2008 with the aim of promoting social participation, a sense of citizenship, solidarity, and respect for diversity in The Hague and its surroundings. It aims to bring people together, with dialogue activities on the one hand, and social activation on the other⁵. Their activities and projects focus on social participation, social cohesion, community spirit, citizenship, democracy, inter-cultural dialogue, peace, security, education, youth, and family. Platform INS⁶ is another organisation founded by Gulen Movement followers

⁴ For the detailed activities of Forum Dialog see <https://forumdialog.org/>

⁵ For the detailed activities of Dialoog Haaglanden see <http://www.dialooghaaglanden.nl/>

⁶ For the detailed activities of Platform INS see <https://platformins.nl/>

in the Netherlands, which focuses on inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue. It initiated the project: 'Art of Living Together'.

'Dunaj Institut Dialogu' is an NGO established by Gulen's followers in Warsaw, Poland. The primary aims of the Dunaj are to promote understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims, by building bridges between communities, promoting cooperation, partnership, and service to society, through intercultural dialogue and discussion. Dunaj aims to encourage people to learn and study the spiritual traditions of various societies in the world, showing them respect, attention and recognition. Dunaj has published books on dialogue, organised workshops, seminars, conferences, cultural meetings, conversations, roundtables, carrier talks, social evenings, dinners, international festivals, picnics, tree planting activities, football cups, film& music nights, free cooking lessons, and speaking activities⁷.

'Balturka' was established by Gulen's followers in Vilnius, Lithuania. It aims to work together with members of Lithuanian society and foreigners in order to achieve the 'Art of Living Together'. The core of its mission is to contribute to the understanding and acceptance of different cultures. It has organised the 'Poetic Umbrella' project (under the umbrella of Lithuanian language and culture). In this project foreigners living in Lithuania, with the help of local volunteers, learn Lithuanian poems and songs, and perform for the local community during a final event⁸.

The debate about integration has been ongoing in the modern world, particularly in the West. Due to colonisation of the Muslim World since the mid-19th century, many Muslims have been migrating to Europe for different reasons. Some Europeans have seen them as an asset and symbol of wealth, while others believe them to be a threat to society. Despite all the work done by the states and NGOs, there are still major challenges for the integration of Muslims. Many theories have been developed or put into practice. In my view, Gulen's approach is to solve the problem within Islam, rather than outside of it. The problems of Muslim integration should be solved within Islamic circles. Gulen's approach seems highly idealistic, and may not be applied by the masses due to the current political issues between Erdogan's regime and the EU. However, the field experience and Gulen Movement's followers' educational activities can contribute to integration to a certain extent. It is likely that it can be a model for the EU Muslims in the future if it is empowered by the policy makers and NGOs.

How are key elements such as integration and its evolution measured? Measuring integration certainly requires a benchmark against which the outcomes may be assessed. The OECD/EU report compares the outcomes of the respective target

⁷ For the detailed activities of Dunaj Institut Dialogu see <https://www.dialoginstytut.pl/>

⁸ For the detailed activities of Balturka see <https://www.balturka.org/>

population with those of the remaining population. In other words, it compares the outcomes of immigrants with those of the native-born. To interpret the outcomes of immigrants' integration process the composition of the immigrant population must be considered. In particular, the method of entry matters a lot for the starting point. For example, are the immigrants in question refugees or labour migrants? These factors and other contextual scenarios are crucial to the proper interpretation of immigrants' actual issues and observed differences with native-born populations (OECD/EU 2018, 20). To measure whether Gulen's views affect the degree of integration of Muslim immigrants in Western countries it is necessary to carry out the measurements mentioned in this report. However, this must be a subject of another study.

Conclusions

It can be said that the Gulen Movement can contribute to integration by building civil societies as the basis of civilisation, through individual and societal empowerment. Empowerment is achieved, primarily, when the individual develops and advances his/her own skills, education, and consciousness, and secondly, when other individuals benefit from that person's charity, education, or guidance (Krause 2007).

The Gulen Movement has been running educational and dialogue activities in Bosnia, Northern Iraq, Afghanistan and the Philippines, and has been successful in mobilising the indigenous ethno-religious distinct communities to put aside their differences and co-operate together in order to tackle their common problems.

It can be concluded that examining the Gulen Movement's educational and social activities in the global conflict zones would enable us to develop strategies that may be helpful in minimising ethno-religious conflict and fostering civil society in the EU. Identifying the norms and practices that enable the movement to accomplish such an endeavour may help us identify common and effective strategies to minimise, if not eradicate, ethno-religious conflicts in general.

In this article, Gulen's approach to integration through education, dialogue, and focusing on commonalities between Muslims and non-Muslims have been discussed and a few cases have been briefly elaborated. However, it still needs a case-by-case in-depth research. Finally, it can be said that if the Gulen Movement's educational

activities are successful in war-torn countries and conflict zones, it is highly likely that its activities can widely contribute to integration and social harmony.

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