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“Guest Workers” and Trade Union Politics in the Ruhr Coalfield from the Late 1950s to the Early 1980s

Abstract

The article examines the West Germany miners union's (*Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau und Energie*, IGBE) attitude towards Turkish migrant workers in the Ruhr coalfields between the 1960s and the 1980s. By the beginning of the 1970s, the Turkish migrant workers had evolved into an important part of the Ruhr mines' workforce. The Ruhrkohle AG, the unitary enterprise (*Einheitsunternehmen*) of the Ruhr mining industry, was for a short period the largest employer of Turkish migrant workers in the Federal Republic. Despite not paying much attention to the needs of Turkish workers during the 1960s, at the beginning of the 1970s the IGBE undertook many initiatives to integrate the Turkish miners in the union organisation and their families into the miner communities. This resulted in the miners union and the Ruhr mining industry being perceived as a role model for progressive integration policies in the Federal Republic. However, in the 1980s the return assistant policy in the mining industry again stimulated conflict between trade union organisations and the Turkish workforce.

Keywords: *trade union politics, coalfield history, Ruhr, labour migration, Turkish migration*

Introduction

In many respects, labour migration to the coal mines in the Ruhr region is a special case of migration in Germany's labour market history of the 1960s and early 1970s.¹ While large parts of the German national economy depended on so-called *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) to fill additional jobs created by the long lasting economic upturn, the Ruhr mining industry suffered a crisis starting in 1958. Nearly 270,000 jobs were

1 For the history of labour migration to Germany in a general view, see Rita Chin: *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany*, Cambridge et al. 2007. Jochen Oltmer/Axel Kreienbrink/Carlos Sanz Díaz (eds.): *Das “Gastarbeiter”-System: Arbeitsmigration und ihre Folgen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und in Westeuropa*, Munich 2012.

lost until 1973. Nevertheless the number of “guest workers” in the Ruhr mines rose from 12,000 to 29,000 over this period.² The mines required foreign labour to replace domestic miners, who found more secure jobs on a still absorptive labour market. The Ruhr mining industry therefore was an exceptional case, as labour migration did not constitute a precondition for economic growth, but a precondition for a reasonably well regulated process of downsizing. In the 1970s and 1980s this particular development of the mining industry in the Ruhr continued. In times of rising unemployment, the mining industry remained an occupational niche for “guest workers”, while in other industries they were more likely to be made redundant than domestic workers.³

Another specific characteristic of the Ruhr mines was the high proportion of labour migrants from Turkey, which reached 70 per cent of total foreign work force in the early 1970s and 80 per cent in the early 1980s.⁴ Since the 1970s, Turkish migrants have been perceived as a special problem for integration policy in Germany. However, it is a widely unquestioned perception that the Ruhr mining industry has been more successful in integrating Turkish “guest workers” than most other industries.⁵ The *Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau und Energie* (IGBE, miners’ union) has been particularly associated with a progressive integration policy. This paper seeks to challenge this perception by reconstructing the union’s attitude towards migrant workers from the 1960s to the 1980s.

The 1950s and 1960s: Invisible “Guest Workers”

In the 1950s and 1960s both the recruitment and social situation of migrant workers were not major topics in West German economic and social politics. In regards to the mining industry and the mining union, there were only two moments during this

- 2 Heinz Reintges/Paul Schorn/Hans-Gerhard Willing: *Jahrbuch für Bergbau, Energie, Mineralöl und Chemie Essen* 1974, p. 910. Jean-Luc Malvache: Die Beschäftigung angeworbener ausländischer Arbeitskräfte im Steinkohlenbergbau – unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Bergbau-Aktiengesellschaft Lothringen (BAGL), in: Bochumer Kulturrat (eds): *Die drei großen Herren und die anderen: Aufstieg und Niedergang der Zeche Lothringen und die Geschichte der Einwanderung im Bochumer Norden*, Bochum 1999, pp. 207–22. Johannes-Dieter Steinert: Chianti am Rhein: Der Ruhrbergbau als Zuwanderungsziel, in: *Geschichte im Westen* 12:2 (1997), pp. 135–149, 146.
- 3 Karin Hunn: “Nächstes Jahr kehren wir zurück...”: Die Geschichte türkischer Gastarbeiter in der Bundesrepublik, Göttingen 2005, p. 353.
- 4 Fritz Ziegler: Grunddaten und Grundsätze der Beschäftigung fremdsprachiger Mitarbeiter bei der RAG, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv* 3659.
- 5 See for example Manfred Burazerovic: *Die Türken in der jüngeren Geschichte des Ruhrgebietes – unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Essener Raumes*, Essen 1995, p. 62.

period when questions of migrant labour attracted greater attention. In the mid-1950s, the miners’ union criticised the signing of an intergovernmental labour recruitment agreement with Italy. This was followed by a series of similar agreements with other European and non-European countries over the next fourteen years, since the West German government and business leaders had recognised foreign labour as a necessary precondition to maintain the economic upturn.⁶ The miners’ union, in contrast, raised concerns over foreign labour recruitment, claiming that employers would use migrant labour to cut wages and social standards. In early 1956, the general assembly of the IGBE instructed the executive board to do everything “to prevent the infiltration [*Einschleusung*] of Italian mine workers”.⁷ In the IGBE’s members’ journal *Bergbau und Wirtschaft*, an anonymous author stated: “I am convinced that [the employment of foreigners] will blow the groundwork we laid in the post-war period”.⁸ But once the bilateral agreement with Italy had ensured that the Italian labour migrants were given equal treatment in respect of wages and working conditions, the miners’ union accepted the inevitable. In spring 1957, IGBE’s chairman Heinrich Gutermuth addressed a delegation of Italian unionists with an official statement, saying that political and trade union policy concerns of his organisation were not an issue anymore.⁹ As a consequence, the signing of labour recruitment agreements with Greece, Spain and Turkey in the beginning 1960s remained more or less uncommented on by the miners’ union, all the more so as the number of “guest workers” in the pits was still relatively small at that time. Referring to the agreement with Turkey from December 1961, however, the IGBE’s Journal *Einheit* warned employers not to have too many expectations about the numbers and “usability” of Turkish workers arriving in the Federal Republic over the next years.¹⁰

It was not until 1964 that foreign labour again attracted some attention from the IGBE. This corresponded with a generally growing public interest in the “guest worker question”, inspired by the celebration of the one millionth “guest worker’s” arrival in

- 6 Christoph Rass: *Institutionalisierungsprozesse auf einem internationalen Arbeitsmarkt: Bilaterale Wanderungsverträge in Europa zwischen 1919 und 1974*, Paderborn et al. 2010.
- 7 Statement of the IG Bergbau und Energie departments of works council and work safety to the executive board, 30 May 1956, in: *Archiv für Soziale Bewegungen: IG Bergbau und Energie-Archiv 775a*. Heinrich Wallbruch: “Italiener retten den Bergbau nicht”: Zur Anlegung fremdländischer Arbeiter, in: *Die Bergbauindustrie* 9 (1956), pp. 245f.
- 8 “Grundsatzfragen der bergmännischen Berufsausbildung”, in: *Bergbau und Wirtschaft* 9 (1956), pp. 267–273.
- 9 Headquarters IG Bergbau to the Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund federal board, 20 May 1957, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 775a*.
- 10 Es fehlen Arbeitskräfte: Türken und Japaner werden für die Bundesrepublik angeworben, in: *Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie* 14:16 (1961), p. 4.

the Federal Republic.¹¹ Moreover, caused by the ongoing economic crisis of the mining industry, the IGBE again put the question of the necessity of foreign labour in mining industry on the agenda. Since 1962, the pace of coal mine closures accelerated significantly. In 1964 more than 30 pits were destined to close down, and the whole region would freeze in shock.¹² The dark future prospects of the mining industry encouraged many miners to change their jobs and the industry – as long as the labour market still remained absorptive. The management of the coal pits replaced the domestic miners by more “guest workers”, whom from then on were predominantly recruited in Turkey. The share of foreign labour in the new hires of the Ruhr pits increased from 21 per cent in 1960 to 62 per cent in 1964.¹³

Against this background, foreign labour became a topic of interest again for IGBE's executive board. It was symptomatic of the union's previously very moderate interest and engagement in this field that, before starting the campaign, the executive board first had to gather basic information on the employment conditions of the foreign workers already working in the pits. Within the union's administrative departments there was no data available for example about the distribution of the “guest workers” across the pits. For this purpose, the IGBE sent questionnaires to all labour directors (*Arbeitsdirektoren*)¹⁴ in the managing boards of the mines, requesting information on costs, turnover or frequency of sickness days and work-place accidents of foreign workers. This questionnaire was aimed at finding arguments against the expansion of foreign employment. To this end one question was: “What measures may be taken to support the new employment of German workers thus far to permit an abandonment of foreigners?”¹⁵ In fact, the labour directors noted some problems with foreign labour on the plant level. But in the same breath they strongly pointed out that they saw

- 11 Karen Schönwälder: *Einwanderung und ethnische Pluralität: Politische Entscheidungen und öffentliche Debatten in Großbritannien und der Bundesrepublik von den 1950er bis zu den 1970er Jahren*, Essen 2001.
- 12 Werner Abelshäuser: *Der Ruhrkohlenbergbau seit 1945: Wiederaufbau, Krise, Anpassung*, Munich 1984.
- 13 Karin Hunn: “Nächstes Jahr kehren wir zurück...”: Die Geschichte türkischer Gastarbeiter in der Bundesrepublik, p. 109.
- 14 The Co-Determination Act for the coal, iron and steel industry (*Montanmitbestimmungsgesetz*) had determined a mandatory appointment of a labour director to the management boards. Virtually, the choice of the labour directors laid in the hands of IG Bergbau und Energie's executive board.
- 15 Die Beschäftigung von Gastarbeitern und die damit zusammenhängenden Gefahren, 6 October 1964, Archiv für Soziale Bewegung Bochum, IG Bergbau und Energie-Archiv 1262a.

no alternative to foreign labour, since the pits were not competitive on the domestic labour market. From an economic point of view, foreign labour was definitely efficient, as the labour directors admitted.¹⁶

Despite these statements the IGBE again started to sow the seeds of doubt about the sense and benefit of foreign employment in the mining industry. The main argument was that the long-term survivability of German coal mining was reliant on a fast progress of mechanising and rationalising the production process to reduce costs. In turn, mechanisation and rationalisation depended on a well-educated and high qualified permanent work force. It was not only that the Turkish “guest workers” lacked those attributes. Moreover, from the viewpoint of the IGBE, foreign labour damaged the reputation of the mining profession and therefore was able to boost the exodus of experienced skilled labour from the pits and to hinder the recruitment of well-educated youngsters. Especially IGBE chairman and member of the Bundestag for the Social Democratic Party, Walther Arendt, denounced foreign labour in several speeches as an existential threat to the German mining industry. He stated: “Last but not least it is to bear in mind that a high guest worker quota in a plant causes an increased outflow of domestic workers and an ebbing of the apprentice flow.”¹⁷ The union’s perception of “guest worker” employment as a symptom for a crisis-laden economic development was clearly different from the perception in other industries, in which foreign labour was still considered as a precondition for continuous economic growth until the late 1970s. However, the IGBE’s (though not overly vociferous) campaign against the expansion of foreign labour ended quite abruptly in early 1965. Subsequently, the foreign labour topic almost disappeared from union’s press articles for the next years.

Until the late 1960s, whilst still adhering to the controversial idea of increasing foreign labour, the IGBE showed little interest in the situation of the “guest workers” who had already been working in the Ruhr pits. Local and regional IGBE groups then initiated more and more personal contacts between “guest workers” and domestic miners by organising joint activities, like football matches, excursions or celebrations. But these organised contacts were not aiming at a long-run or permanent integration; in fact, the intention was just to demonstrate hospitality and contribute to international solidarity. Specific social problems and needs of the migrant workers, for example their housing situation, were hardly picked up by the IGBE. Social conflicts between the management of the pits and the foreign workers, for example concerning wages and working conditions, were often simply caused by a lack of knowledge

16 Markus Lupa/Wolfgang Jäger (eds.): *Geschichte der Ausländer in Deutschland: Schulungsmaterial der Bildungsstätte IG Bergbau, Chemie und Energie, Haltern am See* 1997, pp. 59 ff.

17 Walter Arendt: *Sicherung der Belegschaft für den Steinkohlenbergbau: Ein Problem von heute und morgen*, in: *Gewerkschaftliche Rundschau für Berg- und Energiewirtschaft* 15 (1964), pp. 703–710, 703.

about the difference of gross and net wages, and sometimes escalated in the form of local wildcat strikes. Such strikes were suppressed with great severity. The so-called ringleaders were fired and promptly expelled from the Federal Republic.¹⁸ The IGBE showed no recognisable effort to moderate or deescalate such conflicts.

Until the early 1960s, the efforts made by the IGBE to integrate “guest workers” into the own organisation remained sparse. By then, only about 20 per cent of the migrant workers in the Ruhr coalfield had become members of the IGBE, whereas the general unionisation rate of the Ruhr miners was at about 80 per cent.¹⁹ The recruitment of foreign workers as union members was mostly left to the personal initiative of the districts and local union officials. Therefore, some districts showed relatively high unionisation rates of foreign mine workers, while the unionisation rate in other districts remained around zero. The executive board started to deal with this topic when, in the middle of the 1960s, the increasing number of Turkish “guest workers” gave cause for concern about the establishment of Turkish rival unions.²⁰ To prevent this the IGBE strengthened the efforts to tie the Turkish miners to their own organisation, but the language barrier often proved to be too hard to overcome. The interpreters, who were appointed to the residential homes for foreign workers by the mine companies, were not able to mediate between Turkish miners and the trade union, since many union officials suspected them of misusing their position for self-interests.²¹ The IGBE consequently sought to recruit and instruct Turkish shop stewards to improve the unionisation of their fellow countrymen.²² But initially the success of these efforts remained limited.

A position paper discussed by the IGBE executive board pointed to another obstacle for the unionising of Turkish migrants: they were blamed for not considering the prevailing working conditions and tariff provisions as an achievement of the union, but

- 18 Peter Birke: *Wilde Streiks im Wirtschaftswunderland: Arbeitskämpfe, Gewerkschaften und soziale Bewegungen in der Bundesrepublik und in Dänemark*, Frankfurt am Main et al. 2007, p. 120; Karin Hunn: “Nächstes Jahr kehren wir zurück...”: Die Geschichte türkischer Gastarbeiter in der Bundesrepublik, pp. 113 f; Markus Lupa/Wolfgang Jäger (eds.): *Geschichte der Ausländer in Deutschland: Schulungsmaterial der Bildungsstätte IG Bergbau, Chemie und Energie*, p. 68.
- 19 Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau und Energie Hauptverwaltung: *Beschäftigung der Gastarbeiter*, 15 June 1964, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3236*.
- 20 Karin Hunn: “Nächstes Jahr kehren wir zurück...”: Die Geschichte türkischer Gastarbeiter in der Bundesrepublik, p. 123.
- 21 Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau und Energie Hauptverwaltung, *Beschäftigung der Gastarbeiter*, 15 June 1964, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3236*.
- 22 Griechische und türkische Vertrauensleute wollen in der Gewerkschaft mitarbeiten, in: *Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie* 17:21 (1965), p. 3.

as a matter of course. Instead, as the position paper stated with noticeable disapproval, the migrant workers expected to be rewarded for their visible support and special benefits for joining the union.²³ Until the end of the 1960s, the miner’s union did not recognise the “guest workers” as a group with specific problems and in need of special union representation.

The 1970s: Ruhr Mining Industry as a Role Model for Integration Policy?

At the beginning of the 1970s a remarkable change in the IGBE’s attitude towards the “guest worker question” took place. In autumn 1970 the *Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau und Energie* members’ journal *Einheit* addressed a whole topic page to the situation of the migrant workers for the first time. In his leading article Heinz Werner Meyer, member of *Industriegewerkschaft* executive board and future chairman of the *Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund*, stated:

Foreign labour brings advantages to both employers and work force. Because sufficient labour enables adequate production and thereby better profitability. Good profitability is, however, the best guarantee for job security and a fundamental condition for social progress. We have to see foreign labour from this point of view. But with all the demand, we must not forget our responsibility and our duties towards foreign workers in the Federal Republic. The employment of 1.8 million foreign workers brings social problems. It is not enough to incorporate them into German labour and social insurance legislation. Here, special benefits are required.²⁴

Foreign labour as a condition for guaranteed future and social progress as well as the acceptance of the necessity of special benefits for migrant workers – compared to the statements made just a few years ago, the change of position of the IGBE executive board could not have been more distinct. There were several reasons for this change of mind in the early 1970s. Firstly, it was a clear response to the growing right-wing extremism and xenophobia becoming most apparent in the election successes of the

23 Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau und Energie Hauptverwaltung: Beschäftigung der Gastarbeiter, 15 June 1964, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum, IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3236.

24 Heinz-Werner Meyer: Pflichten erfüllen und mehr Verständnis aufbringen, in: *Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie* 23:18 (1970), p. 8.

National Democratic Party during the second half of the 1960s.²⁵ Without doubt, this increased for all unions the necessity of a more visible solidarity with the foreign workers. Secondly, and probably more important for the union's growing interest in the matters of foreign workers, the revision of the Works Constitution Act (*Betriebsverfassungsgesetz*, BVG) in January 1972 enabled non-European Economic Community foreigners to run for works council positions. Before, only European Economic Community foreigners who had lived for at least three years in the Federal Republic and had worked for one and the same employer, had been eligible for works council membership. The new arrangement of the 1972 Works Constitution Act raised serious fears within the IGBE that thousands of Turkish miners themselves could seize the chance to compile election lists and compete against the union's lists. To avoid this, intensified efforts to involve the Turkish workers into the own organisation were regarded as indispensable.

Thirdly, in 1969, supported by the IGBE, the *Ruhrkohle AG* (RAG) was founded to run all mines of the Ruhr region and stop the mining industries' free fall. Turkish workers played a key role in the manpower planning of the new mining company. Soon after its foundation, RAG requested 3000 Turkish workers from the office of the German recruitment agency in Istanbul, which was the largest single recruitment order since the German-Turkish recruitment agreement had been signed in 1961.²⁶ Within four years, until the federal government declared a recruitment stop by the end of 1973, the share of foreign miners within RAG's workforce nearly doubled from 7.6 to 14.3 per cent.²⁷ Furthermore, the duration of employment of Turkish miners increased. In a creeping process, an increasing number of Turkish employees changed their social position from migrant to permanent workers, a development which was for example reflected in their changing housing conditions. In 1970 about 84 per cent of RAG's Turkish miners were living in shared rooms in the workers' hostels of the mines, since they planned to return home in the short term and therefore did not want to spend too much money on housing. But already in 1973 more than 40 per cent of the Turkish miners had moved from the workers' hostels to company-owned flats and had brought

- 25 Ulrich Herbert/Karin Hunn: Beschäftigung, soziale Sicherung und soziale Integration von Ausländern, in: Hans Günter Hockerts (ed.): Geschichte der Sozialpolitik in Deutschland seit 1945 5: Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1966–1974: Eine Zeit vielfältigen Aufbruchs, Baden-Baden 2006, pp. 781–810; Armin Pfahl-Traughber: Der organisierte Rechtsextremismus in Deutschland nach 1945: Zur Entwicklung auf den Handlungsfeldern "Aktion" – "Gewalt" – "Kultur" – "Politik", in: Wilfried Schubarth/Richard Stöss (eds.): Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Eine Bilanz, Bonn 2000, pp. 71–100, 76–78.
- 26 Karin Hunn: "Nächstes Jahr kehren wir zurück...": Die Geschichte türkischer Gastarbeiter in der Bundesrepublik, p. 222.
- 27 Übersicht Ausländeranteile bei der Ruhrkohle AG, 1990, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 10775.

their family to the Ruhr region.²⁸ Only a minority had the intention to stay there forever, but most of them were then prepared to work in Germany for an undetermined time. Finally, at the end of the 1970s, only 17 per cent of the Turkish migrants still lived in workers’ hostels, while 56 per cent dwelled in a company-owned flat with their family, and 27 per cent had found a flat on the private housing market.²⁹ Meanwhile, more than 80 per cent of the foreign employees had been among RAG’s workforce for more than four years.³⁰ The longer job tenure provided at least limited opportunities for job advancement, so that the Turkish workers were no longer solely placed in lower wage groups, although they were still far away from the higher positions within the workforce. But on the whole, the Turkish miners were getting closer and closer to the ideal of the trade unions’ main clientele: the localised, permanent and skilled worker.

As a first result of the awakening respect towards the foreign workers, the IGBE engaged the Education Secretary of the Turkish trade union, Mete Atsun, in summer 1970, to explore the life and working conditions of his fellow countrymen.³¹ Atsu’s report made severe accusations and generated some compassion among the IGBE’s executive board.³² Atsu found numerous workers’ hostels for Turkish miners in pitiable condition. Lacking sanitation and cooking facilities, the sleeping rooms were overcrowded and the house rules were reminiscent of the military. Atsu also discovered deep-rooted prejudices against foreigners within the domestic workforce, pressing Turkish miners into social isolation.³³ Atsu’s report made an important contribution to a growing recognition among the IGBE leaders that special support of the foreign workers was necessary. This found reflection in tariff initiatives inuring mainly to the benefit of the “guest workers”, for example improved arrangements for family home-ward journeys or the pay-out of separation compensations for workers whose families

- 28 Jeder 11. Kommt aus dem Ausland: 16.000 Türken im Bergbau, in: Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 23:17 (1970), p. 8. Bericht des Arbeitsattaches über türkische Arbeiter, 15 March 1974, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 1066.
- 29 Aufstellung Wohnungsversorgung der ausländischen Mitarbeiter, 1979, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 958.
- 30 Vorlage Sitzung Hauptvorstand IG Bergbau und Energie, 7 December 1979, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 14059.
- 31 Türke hilft Türken, in: Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 23:12 (1970), p. 4.
- 32 Vorurteile sind tief verwurzelt. Ausländer werden oft ausgebeutet, in: Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 23:18 (1970), p. 8
- 33 Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau und Energie Bezirk Aachen, Bericht über die vorgefundenen Verhältnisse in den Betrieben und Heimen anlässlich einer Befahrung mit dem Kollegen Mete Atsu, 19 August 1970, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 1066. Bericht über den Einsatz unseres türkischen Kollegen Mete Atsu in der Zeit vom 11. bis 14. August 1970 im Bezirk Ruhr-Ost, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 1066.

had been left behind in the home country.³⁴ In addition, the *Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau und Energie* made serious efforts to improve the situation in the workers' hostels, especially by a more accurate selection and instruction of the hostel directors.³⁵

The *Revierarbeitsgemeinschaft für kulturelle Bergmannbetreuung* (REVAG) proved to be a particularly important instrument of support for foreigners in the mining industry. Originally, REVAG had been founded in 1948, involving both mining employers and the mining union, to minister to the ten thousands of ethnic German fugitives and expellees pouring to the Ruhr mines. Since this task had become obsolete for many years, the *Revierarbeitsgemeinschaft* reinvented itself by caring for the new migrant miners, especially Turkish miners. The REVAG offered them a diverse programme with a primary focus on language courses, but also including folklore, excursion and sports events to facilitate the encounter between "guest workers" and locals, film and lecture evenings as well as legal, insurance and health advice.³⁶ From the 1970s, school problems of second-generation migrants were given increasing priority within the REVAG's activities, for example by organising homework tutoring. Working with Turkish children was also related to the hope of getting access to their mothers, whose social isolation from the majority society was particularly hard to break. All in all, the REVAG's programme in the 1970s was still largely characterised by paternalism. Initially, their activities for the social integration of the Turkish families were accompanied by a large portion of optimism emphasising the open-mindedness of both the German and the Turkish side. But in the late 1970s the first considerable traces of pessimism could be found in the records of the REVAG: for example, the "stubborn" Turkish miners, who had been unwilling to learn German, were harshly criticised at a meeting of the REVAG instructors, culminating in the demand to not to extend their work and residence permits. The spread of Islamic schools, whose religious education teachers were blamed for undermining the REVAG's cultural and educational activities, was viewed as a main reason for the growing lack of interest by Turkish families of getting closer in touch with the majority society.³⁷

The IGBE's main approach to matters related to the "guest worker" issue remained to recruit and instruct foreign shop stewards and works council members. In 1972, in the first works council election in the mining industry after the revised Works

34 Klaus Südhofer: *Ausländische Arbeitnehmer im deutschen Steinkohlenbergbau*, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 10774*.

35 Beispielhaft betreut: Hans Alker besichtigt *Ausländerwohnheim*, in: *Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie* 26:11 (1973), p. 4.

36 *Hilfe für viele Kollegen*, in: *Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie* 29:18 (1976), p. 5.

37 Niederschrift über eine Sitzung bei der *Revierarbeitsgemeinschaft für Kulturelle Bergmannsbetreuung (REVAG)*, 5 May 1977, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie 1171b*.

Constitution Act, non-European Economic Community foreigners were eligible to be elected. 48 foreign candidates, including 33 Turkish-born, from IGBE’s electoral lists were elected. Since it had neither been easy to find suitable Turkish candidates with sufficient language skills and basic knowledge of the German legal and social framework, nor to generate the acceptance on the plant level to put the foreign candidates on the election lists, the IGBE executive board could present this result as a success.³⁸ In the following elections the number of foreign works council members in the mining industry rose continuously until it reached 112 (including 86 Turkish members) in the 1978 elections.³⁹ In the view of the IGBE, the election of the Turkish candidates served as incontrovertible evidence for the successful integration of foreigners on the plant level, since the results showed that the domestic colleagues had also voted for foreign candidates.⁴⁰ Still, in the beginning of the 1980s only about four per cent of works council members in Ruhr mining industry were foreign born, whereas the proportion of foreigners in the total mining workforce added up to 17 per cent.⁴¹ Courses at the IGBE union school intensively trained the new Turkish works council members.⁴² In the early 1970s, the IGBE executive board began to organise the so-called *Recklinghäuser Tagung* once a year to inform the Turkish works council member and shop stewards about current tariff policies and to prepare for council elections. In the 1980s, the conference in Recklinghausen developed from a purely internal schooling course into a public-orientated forum to discuss the IGBE’s political attitude towards the “guest worker question”.⁴³

Although the miner’s union did not want the Turkish works council members to be exclusively the advocate of their fellow-countrymen, in practice the protection of the migrants’ in-house interests remained their main task. This made an important contribution to the increasing Turkish miners’ rate of unionisation which reached the remarkably high percentage of 97.8 in the late 1970s.⁴⁴ The growing importance of

38 Hauptabteilung Betriebswesen IG Bergbau und Energie, Aktennotiz, 16 July 1974, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 1066b.

39 Mikail Zopi: Mitarbeit der ausländischen Kollegen im Betriebsrat, in: Tip, September 1984, pp. 41–43, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 11929.

40 Konferenz mit ausländischen Arbeitnehmern in Recklinghausen: Kein Platz für radikale Minderheit, in: Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 32:5 (1979), p. 4.

41 Mitarbeit ist gefragt: Walter Beer appelliert an ausländische Kollegen, in: Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 35:1 (1982), p. 4.

42 Premiere in Haltern: Seminar in Türkisch: Lehrgang für ausländische Betriebsräte, in: Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 25:13 (1972), p. 8.

43 Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 10770.

44 Udo Butschkau: Notwendigkeit der Einbeziehung ausländischer Jugendlicher in die gewerkschaftliche Jugendarbeit, in: Tip, December 1984, pp. 10–24, in: Archiv für soziale

migrant labour within the IGBE organisation was also reflected by the formation of work committees for foreign employees (*Arbeitskreise für ausländische Arbeitnehmer*) on the district level in 1974. In 1979 a committee directly responsible for the executive board was installed to coordinate the union's *Ausländerpolitik* (foreigner policies) on the federal level and to prepare statements of the IGBE executive board on this issue.⁴⁵ In 1980 the IGBE employed the first Turkish-born union secretary for the department of works councils.⁴⁶

The 1980s: The Policy of Return Assistance

After growing in importance during the 1970s, *Ausländerpolitik* was established as a key issue of German domestic politics by the beginning of the 1980s. The rise in unemployment, the growth of the foreign resident population despite the recruitment stop of 1973, and the increase of xenophobic attitudes and right-wing extremism among the German population created a political climate in which the limitation and reduction of the migrant population gained priority over integration policies. When taking office in October 1982, the first government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl promised to halve the number of foreigners in Germany.⁴⁷ For the first time *Ausländerpolitik* became an issue of a governmental declaration. The Kohl government aimed at the prevention of unlimited and uncontrolled immigration, the limitation of subsequent immigration of family members and the encouragement of return migration as main political goals.⁴⁸ In October 1983 the Bundestag passed an *Assisting Act for Returning Foreigners* (which had been already partly prepared by the Social Democratic-dominated predecessor government under Helmut Schmidt), offering unemployed or short-time working non-European Economic Community migrants, who were prepared to return permanently to their home countries within a year, a grant of 10,500 DM (plus extra grants for accompanying spouses and children).⁴⁹

Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 11929.

- 45 Dieter May: *Ausländische Arbeitnehmer in der IGBE*, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 10775; Klaus Lentz: *Ausländerpolitik in der IG Bergbau und Energie*, in: *Gewerkschaftliche Monatshefte* 33:7 (1982), pp. 443–447.
- 46 Einheit: *Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie* 33:6 (1980), p. 4.
- 47 See Christian Wicke: *A Romantic Nationalist?: Helmut Kohl's Ethnocultural Representation of his Nation and Himself*, in: *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 19:2 (2013), pp. 141–162.
- 48 Ulrich Herbert/Karin Hunn: *Beschäftigung, soziale Sicherung und soziale Integration von Ausländern*, in Manfred Schmidt (ed.): *Geschichte der Sozialpolitik in Deutschland seit 1945 5: Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1982–1989: Finanzielle Konsolidierung und institutionelle Reform*, Baden-Baden 2005, pp. 619–652.
- 49 Ulrich Herbert: *Geschichte der Ausländerpolitik in Deutschland: Saisonarbeiter, Zwangsarbeiter, Gastarbeiter, Flüchtlinge*, Munich 2001, p. 254.

In the mining industry, especially within the *Ruhrkohle AG*, a new strategy of personnel policy aiming at limiting and reducing foreign workforce found increasing acceptance and started to be accepted by the beginning 1980s. Fritz Ziegler, labour director in the RAG management board and member of the IGBE, explained the company's future personnel policy at a REVAG conference, pointing out that the foreign workforce of the RAG foreign work force would rise to 20 per cent of the total work force until 1990. This was due to very low percentages of the relatively young foreign workers retiring, who then continued to constitute a relatively high percentage of the RAG's total labour market recruitment. In contrast to this development, Ziegler maintained, the new personnel policy should be geared to the social and overall economic responsibility of the *Ruhrkohle AG*. From now on the RAG would give preference to domestic unemployed over foreign unemployed workers. Foreigners who had no experience in underground mining should no longer be hired; experienced foreign workers should only be hired if suitable company-owned accommodation could be provided.⁵⁰ The new personnel strategy was also a result of the raising concern in the mining industry about growing xenophobia and ethnic-religious tensions in society, which was feared would spill over into the pits, if the percentage of foreign workers would increase in combination with the general reduction of the mining workforce. For example, Fritz Ziegler believed that even a long lasting residence in Germany offered no safe protection against the growing political and religious fanaticism in the Islamic world that could eventually reach the Turkish workers at the Ruhr pits. He worried:

If every second workplace at the coalface (which is the most sensitive workplace underground) is occupied by a foreigner, a spark is enough to light a large-scale fire. We cannot be certain that the foreigners take a servile and acquiescent role in our plants forever.⁵¹

Progressively also union papers pointed to the link between religious fundamentalism and political extremism, and they warned about the danger for trade union shop floor policy shaped in the mosques.⁵²

50 Fritz Ziegler: Vortragsmanuskript, 1981, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3659.

51 Ibid.

52 Isolierung bringt uns nicht weiter: Die Politik gehört nicht in die Moscheen, in: Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 34:1 (1981), p. 8; Horst Niggemeier: Atatürk ist Vorbild: Gedanken über Gespräche mit Türken, in: Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 34:1 (1981), p. 8.

Against the background of discussions about an implementation of state-run financial assistance for returning foreigners, the RAG conducted sample surveys in 1982 to find out about the desire and willingness of their Turkish employees to return home. Only eight per cent of the respondents indicated that they did not want to remigrate to Turkey and 44 per cent were undecided. 48 per cent expressed the general intention to return, but were by no means ready to get packing.⁵³ In fact, most of them planned to go back when reaching retirement age, or when children would finish school or completing their apprenticeship. In the case of the mining industry, the state-run *Assisting Act for Returning Foreigners* enjoyed additional support in two ways: firstly, the financial grant was not limited to unemployed or short-working non-European Economic Community foreigners who were ready to return to their home countries as it was the case in other industries. Also persons who had been fully employed could apply to the financial grant for returnees. Secondly, the RAG managing board promised to subsidise the state-run programme by a company-run grant for returnees by an equal amount. As a result, 2849 foreign employees of the RAG (including 2706 Turks) decided to accept both the state- and company-run payments and left the Federal Republic permanently. Eventually, the RAG's company-run grants for returnees rose to 30.5 million DM.⁵⁴ In mining industry the *Assisting Act for Returning Foreigners* thus made a remarkable contribution to reducing the migrant workforce in the early 1980s, while in most other industries it turned out to be a failure.

Officially the IGBE had rejected the *Assisting Act for Returning Foreigners*, similar to the *Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund* (DGB, Confederation of German Trade Unions), as the executive board did not believe that this could be an adequate instrument for resolving the so-called problem of foreigners (*Ausländerproblem*).⁵⁵ However unofficially, the miners' union's attitude towards this question was more ambiguous. Even the secretary responsible to the executive board for *Ausländerfragen* was not prepared to simply dismiss the idea of encouraging migrants "to return home" with financial grants.⁵⁶ A visible protest of the executive board against the strategy also failed to take place. Instead, the executive board chose the standpoint of being unable to undo RAG's decision. IGBE leaders announced they would not put any pressure on foreigners and to provide individual mentoring for persons ready to return. In contrast, IGBE's works council members and shop stewards criticised the policy sharply. They

53 Heinz Esken: Vortragsmanuskript, 14 October 1982, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3659.

54 Heinz Esken: Bericht über in die Türkei zurückgekehrte Mitarbeiter der Ruhrkohle AG, 1985, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 36569.

55 Rückkehr von Ausländern nur freiwillig, in: Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 37:5 (1984), p. 4.

56 Walter Beer: Referat Recklinghäuser Konferenz, 1982, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 10773.

complained that such measures, on the one hand, would reinforce the domestic miners’ view of foreigners as being competitors on the labour market and, on the other hand, lead to further anxiety among the foreign employees and reinforce their inclination to remain ethnically segregated.⁵⁷ Retrospectively, after its expiration, the IGBE discussed the results of the returnee programme critically in pointing out that the large-scaled outflow of Turkish miners has led to a loss of experience at the coal face RAG could not afford once again.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, in 1986 the *Ruhrkohle AG* launched another company-run return assistance programme to all non-European Economic Community foreigners between the age of 45 and 50. The RAG offered them a compensation of 20,000 DM and the payout of contributions to pension fund for returning to the home country. IGBE’s executive board adhered to its position of not exerting any influence on company decisions. RAG thus justified the new returnee programme with the predominantly positive experiences 150 former *Ruhrkohle AG* returnees of the first programme had reported. However, other media reports evaluated the situation of former “guest workers” in Turkey more negatively.⁵⁹ The miners’ union’s executive board again referred to the voluntariness and intensive mentoring for the returnees, while the Turkish works council members and shop stewards criticised that the financial returning assistance would jeopardise their integration efforts. At the 1986 *Recklinghäuser Tagung* of the miners’ union, which took place in the context of heated debates about immigration and foreigners in West Germany, the Turkish works council representatives complained about a “damage of trust” and talked about “deportation”. Not without good reason, they warned that financial offers to leave Germany would only fuel the feeling of not being wanted among the Turkish colleagues. The *Ruhrkohle AG*’s second programme for returnees found effectively no support among the Turkish target group.⁶⁰

The result of the negotiations of the 1987 round table for the coal mining industry (*Kohlerunde 1987*) between the mining companies, the Federal Government, the State Governments of North Rhine-Westphalia and the Saar, the IGBE and the energy com-

57 Peter Kühne/Hermann Schäfer: Miteinander reden – voneinander lernen – gemeinsam handeln: Bericht über gemeinsame Seminare ausländischer und deutscher Betriebsräte, Vertrauensleute und Gewerkschaftsmitglieder, in: *Tip*, December 1984, pp. 33–51, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 11929*.

58 Rückkehrhilfe hat den Zechen eher geschadet, in: *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10 December 1984. See also Irina Ludat: Eine Frage der größeren Angst: Bilanz der Rückkehrförderung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte, in: *Die Zeit*, 18 October 1985.

59 Heinz Esken: Bericht über in die Türkei zurückgekehrte Mitarbeiter der Ruhrkohle AG, 1985, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 36569*.

60 Reaktion auf Rückkehr-Programm der Ruhrkohle AG ist gleich null, in: *Recklinghäuser Zeitung*, 8 December 1986; Christoph Meer-Leyh: Gleichberechtigung ist das erklärte Ziel: IG Bergbau und Energie leistet Ausländerarbeit auf vielen Ebenen, in: *Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie 39:23 (1986)*, p. 8.

panies agreed to force the *Ruhrkohle AG* to cut 23,500 jobs by 1995. RAG's managing board consequently began to think about how to achieve a proportional representation of the foreign employees in the job cut, which would have meant a reduction of the "foreign" (or practically Turkish) workforce by 4200 jobs. This goal was impossible to reach on the basis of early retirements, which were the main instrument for the so-called socially accepted job cut in the Ruhr mining industry. The Turkish employees were by far underrepresented among the age group of above 50 and therefore not eligible for early retirements. To launch a new programme for financial return assistance, which was hoped to be more successful than the last one, the RAG commissioned a survey to learn about the conditions under which the Turkish employees were willing to return "home".⁶¹ Finally, RAG's third programme to offer non-EEC foreigners financial assistance for their return was launched for the period of January 1989 to December 1994. It included four different models of return assistance, addressing to a much broader circle of potential remigrants than the first two programmes. Hypothetically, 12,000 migrant employees of the RAG were considered for the programme, of whom 7800 had already received a counselling interview by mid-year 1989. Only 235 of these counselled Turkish employees, however, evinced deeper interest in returning to their home country.⁶² Irrespective of this very limited interest, the first German social insurance agency – that is the miners' insurance and pensions fund (*Knappschaft*) – set up a permanently foreign base in Turkey to counsel former RAG employees.⁶³

The 1980s debates on integration within the IGBE received important impulse from the memorandum "State and Advancement of Integration of Foreign Employees and their Families in the Federal Republic" (*Stand und Weiterentwicklung der Integration ausländischer Arbeitnehmer und ihrer Familien in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*). The memorandum was presented by the first Federal Government Commissioner for foreigners (*Ausländerbeauftragter der Bundesregierung*), the former North Rhine-Westphalian Minister-President Heinz Kühn. It predicted the permanent settlement of a large number of former guest workers and their families in Germany, and demanded further measures of integration for them. Heinz Kühn advocated the separation of immigration policy from labour market policy, the unobstructed access of young foreigners to vocational training and labour market, and reforms of the law on foreigners

61 Fritz Ziegler: Redemanuskript Recklinghäuser Tagung, 1988, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 10772.

62 Arbeitskreis Ausländische Arbeitnehmer beim Hauptvorstand IG Bergbau und Energie, 14 June 1989, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 14060.

63 Knappschaft zieht in die Türkei: Vertretung soll ehemalige Ruhrkohle-Bergleute betreuen, in: Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 5 December 1988.

(*Ausländergesetz*) and the right to vote in local elections.⁶⁴ Within the miners’ union such impulses led also to an understanding that integration policy should not insist on the renouncing of ethnic, cultural and religious identities, but should accept the persistence and promote the protection of migrant identities.⁶⁵

At the same time, however, there were growing doubts about the successful integration of the Turkish miners into the domestic workforce. This idea of integration at the plant level had been nearly undisputed during the 1970s. There was an increasing concern that the growing xenophobia in German society could affect the miners as well as that an islamisation of Turkish miners, following the fundamentalist revolution in Iran, would lead to severe tensions amongst the workers. Evidently, the interaction between German and Turkish miners at the workplace became more sensitive at that time. Issues which had previously been treated as a friendly banter among the workers, now led to heavy complaints to superiors and works councils, as an IGBE representative reported.⁶⁶ To the increasing criticism among the domestic miners that foreigners’ level of wages and sickness absence were too high, the miner’s union responded with a survey at mines with a high employment rate of foreigners to prove the opposite.⁶⁷ But according to this survey, the most frequent subject of complaint among the domestic workers was that more and more Turkish miners were wearing underpants while taking their after-work shower. This was seen as an indication of growing Islamic orientation among the Turkish miners and, at the same time, turned out to be an everyday life problem, since the wet underpants dropped down from the miners’ change- and wash room ceiling, where home clothes were traditionally hung during shifts.⁶⁸ The increase of problems in the relationship between locals and foreigners also had effects on the level of union and works council representatives. A survey conducted by the *Ruhrkohle AG* found that two-thirds of works council chairmen did not believe that foreign

64 Vorlage zur Sitzung des Hauptvorstandes der IG Bergbau und Energie, 7 December 1979, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 958.

65 Vortragsmanuskript Walter Beer, 1984, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3659.

66 Walter Beer: Ausländer am Arbeitsplatz, in: *Die Neue Gesellschaft* 29:6 (1981), pp. 542–544.

67 Diskussion versachlichen!, in: *Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie* 36:3 (1983), p. 8.

68 Bericht zur Recklinghäuser Konferenz, 4 December 1982, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 10770; Das sind die Fakten, in: *Einheit: Mitgliederzeitschrift der IG Bergbau und Energie* 36:1 (1983), p. 8. In mining industry it is common practice to hang up miners’ civilian and work clothes under the ceiling of the change and wash room.

works council members would contribute to a better understanding between domestic workers and migrant workers. In contrast, one quarter of the foreign works council members complained about problems in cooperating with their German colleagues.⁶⁹

Despite the growing tensions at the workplace, the perception of the IGBE was still that the real problems were starting behind the mine gates, in the company-owned miners' housing areas. With the considerably increasing subsequent immigration of family members following the recruitment stop of 1973, Turkish miners moved from the residential homes to family homes in the company-owned settlements for miners. In 1985, 72 per cent of the Turkish *Ruhrkohle AG* employees lived in a RAG-owned family home, but only 48 per cent of the domestic miners.⁷⁰ The housing demand of the Turkish families focused on simple and inexpensive homes, often without bathrooms and modern heating. The first Turkish tenants in a neighbourhood attracted further fellow countrymen, whereas German tenants preferred to move to neighbourhoods offering a higher standard of housing. Already in the early 1980s, the RAG referred to the formation of neighbourhoods with tendencies of ghettoisation, being a proportion of foreign tenants above ten per cent, which applied to about 50 of the 250 miners' settlements that belonged to the company.⁷¹

A survey of researchers of the Ruhr University Bochum, commissioned by the IGBE and the RAG, found that the tendencies of ghettoisation were not caused by the desire of Turkish families to seclude themselves from their environment. In fact, the researchers held the general living and housing conditions responsible for the barriers of integration.⁷² But also the refusal of the Turkish families to pay higher rents for better housing standards contributed to the separation of neighbourhoods, since for the German miners' families the improvement of housing standards was a very high priority. So segregation in housing was at least partly a result of different priorities in expenditure. Despite this, both IGBE and RAG believed that housing policy was the key to successful integration policy in the mining communities. According to the joint guidelines of their housing policy to prevent the further growth of ghettoisation, firstly, available flats at the periphery of neighbourhoods with a high percentage of foreign residents should no longer be let to foreign tenants. Secondly, rent increases

69 Wolfgang Gottschalk: Ausländische Betriebsräte bei der Ruhrkohle AG, in: *Tip*, November 1983, pp. 55–60, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 11929*.

70 Wohnsituation der ausländischen Mitarbeiter bei der Ruhrkohle, 4 September 1985, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3659*.

71 Manuskript Heinz Esken Revierarbeitsgemeinschaft für Kulturelle Bergmannsbetreuung (REVAG) Tagung, 14 October 1982, in: *Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3659*.

72 Hermann Korte (ed.): *Wohnsituation ausländischer Mitarbeiter der Ruhrkohle AG*, Dortmund 1984.

resulting from the modernisation of old buildings should be made acceptable. Thirdly, the guidelines claimed that “integration-willing” migrant families should be given better chances to get a flat in “German” neighbourhoods. The fourth point was about intensifying social work in miners’ neighbourhoods. The RAG appointed sociologists and social workers to build up Turkish-German meeting places in the miners’ neighbourhoods, which were perceived as a seminal pilot project, although the idea of establishing meeting places was rejected, as nobody wanted “Turk houses” within the neighbourhoods.⁷³ Also the REVAG shifted their social work from the residential homes and the pits to the miners’ neighbourhoods with a high percentage of migrant residents.⁷⁴

Programmes to support the school and professional education of the migrant workers’ children became a second priority of integration policy in the mining industry in the 1980s. The sons of their Turkish employees became more and more important for RAG’s long-term human resource planning. The growing percentage of migrant workers’ children among the generally decreasing number of lower secondary school (*Hauptschule*) leavers made it necessary to recruit them even for jobs requiring a more qualified vocational training, such as mine mechanic or craftsmen, particularly since the human resources department of the RAG recognised the ambition of this second generation of Turkish migrants to have a successful career.⁷⁵ Special support programmes were launched to train migrants for the entry into qualified mining jobs. The RAG offered vocational preparation courses, but it was the foundation of the *Institut für Ausländerfragen* (Institute for Foreign Affairs) in 1981 together with the IGBE that had a particularly significant impact on the development of vocational promotion for young migrants.⁷⁶

73 Michael Bechtel: Nur unter Tage sind sie Kumpel, in: PZ Politische Zeitschrift der Bundeszentral für politische Bildung, Mai 1982, pp. 22f; Sanfter Druck auf den Halbmond, in: Süddeutsche Zeitung, 21 July 1986.

74 Jahresbericht Revierarbeitsgemeinschaft für Kulturelle Bergmannsbetreuung (REVAG) 1982/83, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3659.

75 Türkische Mitarbeiter der zweiten Generation bei der Ruhrkohle AG: Situation und Perspektiven, 18 June 1984, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 14059; Ruhrkohle AG: Belegschaftsbericht 1982/83, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 14059

76 Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum, IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 140593649a; Udo Butschkau: Drei Jahre Institut für Ausländerfragen e. V., in: Tip, December 1984, pp. 6–9, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 11929.

Most REVAG programmes were targeted at the wives and daughters of the Turkish miners. Already in the early 1980s more than a half of the participants of the REVAG programmes consisted of Turkish women and girls.⁷⁷ Their participation often depended on the agreement of their husbands and fathers, who preferred them to focus on “useful tasks”, like needlework or house work. However, language and literacy courses also found approval. The Turkish women themselves often found discussion groups, excursions or shopping expeditions more attractive, as the REVAG reported. Mother-child groups or health and educational counselling also found good support. The participation of Turkish women in swimming courses was seen as an outstanding success, which made the closure of the whole swimming complex during the course necessary.⁷⁸

Conclusion

Until the end of the 1960s the “guest worker question” did not gain much attention within the IGBE. The miners’ union initially adopted a sceptical attitude towards the recruitment and occupation of migrant workers. In the end, however, it accepted migrant work as a given reality, as long as the equal social legislative treatment of the migrant workers was ensured in order to prevent wage dumping or other negative effects on the achieved social standards in the mining industry. Beyond that, the IGBE showed no deeper interest in the social and cultural problems of young migrant workers. The following efforts to integrate “guest workers” into the union organisation were not convincing, since they were only driven by the concern that migrant workers would establish their own labour organisations.

The beginning of the 1970s marked a turning point in the attitude of the IGBE towards the migrant workers, who were then recognised as a social group in need of special attention and support by the union. Only from the 1970s a true union policy on foreign workers started to evolve. This was the case not only for the IGBE but also for the other trade unions under the roof of the *Confederation of German Trade Unions*. The trade union’s readiness to pay greater attention to the problems of foreign workers grew in general, partly as a counteraction to the broadening of right-wing extremist and xenophobic tendencies within the German society, partly as a result of

77 Revierarbeitsgemeinschaft für Kulturelle Bergmannsbetreuung (REVAG): Übersicht der im Gesamtbetreuungsbereich durchgeführten Maßnahmen 1982 und 1983.

78 Bericht über die Revierarbeitsgemeinschaft für Kulturelle Bergmannsbetreuung (REVAG) Fortbildungstagung 14 to 15 May 1984, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 3659; Wolfgang Gottschalk: Erfolgreiche REVAG-Arbeit, in: Tip, December 1984, pp. 25–27, in: Archiv für soziale Bewegungen Bochum: IG Bergbau und Energie Archiv 11929.

the upcoming awareness that many “guest workers” had turned into immigrants. But without doubt, the IGBE did more than most of its sister unions to integrate foreign workers.

This specific engagement of the miners’ union correlated with specific necessities on the one hand and was supported by favourable conditions on the other hand. The necessity to take greater care of the needs of the foreign workers grew especially with the legal introduction of the right to stand as a candidate in the works council elections for non-European Economic Community foreigners in 1971. This legal shift at the plant level had significant effects in mining, since more than 70 per cent of the industries foreign work force held citizenship of a non-European Economic Community country, namely Turkish citizenship. So the IGBE faced the threat of independent Turkish lists of candidates participating in the works council elections, supported by 21,000 Turkish voters. To avoid potential competition to its own electoral lists, the IGBE needed to fuel its efforts to satisfy the Turkish workers requirements. Moreover, the union had to place Turkish candidates on its own electoral lists. The number of Turkish works council members elected on the lists of the IGBE grew from election to election. Since Turkish union members also became slowly involved into union’s organisations as secretaries, or in other functions, there were an increasing number of employee representatives who gave priority to the issues of the Turkish miners.

The ongoing socially acceptable reduction of workforce in the coal mining industry in the 1970s also strengthened the importance of the Turkish workers in this branch. Since it relied nearly exclusively on the state-subsidised early retirement of miners from the age of 50 and above, and since the Turkish miners were largely under-represented in this age group, they enjoyed high job security, whereas in other industries foreign workers were the first to be dismissed. Insofar Turkish miners belonged to the winners of the socially acceptable structural change in the Ruhr mining industry as they had established themselves within the indispensable core of the productive workforce. The growing importance of the Turkish workforce for mining industries economic performance thus increased the necessity for both *Ruhrkohle AG* and IGBE to respect the interests of the Turkish workers and their families.

In mining the conditions for a successful trade union policy towards the integration of (former) migrant workers were much more favourable than in other industries for several reasons. Firstly, the coal and steel co-determination system gave the IGBE major influence on the personnel and social policy of the mining companies, especially of the RAG. Secondly, in mining an organisation already existed which had gained significant experience with social and cultural integration work regarding the refugees and expellees during the 1950s and early 1960s. With the beginning of the 1970s, the REVAG could put all its resources and experiences into the social work with Turkish miner families. Thirdly, with the beginning 1970s the largest part of the Turkish miner families lived in company-owned neighbourhoods, in which management work

councils and trade union were closely involved. Aside from all the problems that occurred, this enabled the IGBE, the REVAG and the RAG to carry social and cultural integration work straight into the living environment of the Turkish families.

The discussed necessities and favourable conditions resulted in a social integration policy towards the (former) migrant workers and their families in the Ruhr coalfield that went far beyond the efforts taken in other industries and regions in the 1970s and 1980s. Nevertheless, the inconsistency of German governmental policy towards the migrant workers in this period (to support temporary integration, but not to permit permanent immigration) found its reflection even in the policy of the IGBE (and the *Ruhrkohle AG*). Ultimately, the miner's union maintained its principle of generally prioritising domestic workers on the labour market, supported the recruitment ban of 1973 and agreed tacitly with the governmental and company-run return policy of the 1980s. The Ruhr coalfield thus never left the framework of German policy on foreign workers.

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