THE ISTANBUL POLICY CENTER-SABANCI UNIVERSITY-STIFTUNG MERCATOR INITIATIVE

and

SALT

cordially invites you to the documentary screening of

650 Wörter/ Words/ Kelime

by

Martina Priessner

(2014/15 Mercator-IPC Fellow, Istanbul Policy Center)

Discussant

Özlem Topçu

(2014/15 Mercator-IPC Fellow, Istanbul Policy Center; Political Editor, Die Zeit)

Friday, November 13, 2015, 18:00-20:00

SALT Beyoğlu

(İstiklal Cd. No:136)

The film 650 Words tells the story of eight people from different regions in Turkey—all of whom want nothing more than to be reunited with their loved ones in Germany. However, before they can start living together with their spouse they must first obtain the Goethe Certificate "Start German 1" in their home country, which is a mandatory requirement to apply for a family visa. The language test requires an active vocabulary of 300 German words and a passive vocabulary of 650 words. If applicants fail the test, they are denied a visa. Whether one wants to go for a short while or for good, if one has family living in Germany already, if one struggles with literacy in their own mother tongue, or if a newlywed is waiting on the other side, no visa application can be submitted without the language exam. Sometimes, even if the test is passed successfully, such a visa application can still be rejected.

In the film, those interviewed, Ayşe, Ibrahim, Nur, Soner, Hayriye, Halil, Zelal, and Naime, reflect on the language course as a journey they embark upon to join their husbands and wives in Germany. Some had to move to Istanbul from far away to have access to a language course. Some had to give up their jobs. Some had to learn to read and write. As these eight individuals reveal their personal lives, how they met their partners, and their dreams about living side by side with their families in Germany, future utopias are built, stories of loss are shared, and unique stories emerge that also trace a complicated relationship between two countries.

This documentary was realized through the Mercator-IPC Fellowship Program. Mercator-IPC Fellowship Program is a part of the Istanbul Policy Center-Sabanci University-Stiftung Mercator Initiative. For more information: ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/en

Following the screening, the discussion will be in Turkish and there will be no translation. The documentary will be in Turkish and English subtitles will be provided. Please RSVP to Egemen Can Erçelik (e-mail: egemenercelik@sabanciuniv.edu, tel: 0212 292 49 39 ext. 1417).

Please click here for the trailer.