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## EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES

Journal on European Perspectives of the Western Balkans

VOLUME 3 NUMBER 2 (5) OCTOBER 2011

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## Letter from the Editor

The current – already the fifth – issue of our journal is, as it was the case with the first one, a thematic one. We try again to bring together papers dealing with a single topic from various points of view that would be according to our mind in the interest of our readers. It seems to us that our choice is both a current and a challenging one.

The authors focus their research interest on the case of Turkey. One could find as much as possible reasons exactly why Turkey. So there is no need to contemplate on this specific. However, generally speaking, it is a tremendous and an upward trend of change in the appearance of this huge, complex and challenging country, which increasingly attracts the attention of a broader scholar community. This has not only been the case during last few years, but throughout almost the whole previous decade. At the very moment, at least three angles produce this highly attractive policy output: a rarely witnessed dynamic economic development, in particular in a time of the all encompassing global crisis, a unique nature of the current state of the affairs between the EU and its candidate country as well as a tremendous change in the broader regional security environment. We try to add our piece of a thought over.

There are seven contributions in this volume (we have omitted the usual section Sarajevo 2014), prepared by authors from various countries. The first two papers deal with an overview of the evolution of the relation between Turkey and the EU, while the following five are topical. It is sometimes rather easy to oversee the decades long political and policy communication of Turkey with the EU as well as it is important to see the improvement in certain areas, like slowly bridging the gender gap in Turkish politics and the issue of a post – secular society, to name only two of them, which the reader has a chance to get familiar with in the following pages. We are proud to have the guest view from the eminent statesman Süleyman Demirel, the ninth President of the Republic, the person, who has practically witnessed the EU – Turkish relation in its full scope. And

it is this relation, which stands out as a test for policy makers as well as politicians on both sides.

The Croquis brings a multifaceted view upon Cappadochia, a region, which is exceptional and characteristically for Turkey. A pearl in the Central Anatolia, attracting an enormous attention, which has been since long ago transferring into a civilization's messaging. The two book reviews reflect the one written by a former Ambassador to Turkey, who witnessed its dynamics in the midst of the previous decade, while the second is a scholarly historically overview of the country concerned.

One could say there are three ambitions behind this issue. Firstly, we would like to contribute to the understanding of the relation and of the case; secondly, we would like to add to the policy approach and reasoning, and thirdly, it is also our aim to encourage further research and reading of the subject. Having in mind the immense tempo and structurally challenging trend of the change during at least the last year in the broader region with Turkey at its core, much more consideration and policy discussion is needed. No wonder that the Editor received more than twenty paper proposals; some of them will be included in the issues to come.

So, hopefully, again a handful of policy supply for those with both academic and practical eagerness to enrich their knowledge and upgrade their critical approach. We do not measure the correspondent demand, but are in favour of meeting the expectations as well as to learn from the feedback, too.

The Castle of Jable, October 2011

M. J.

**guest view**

**World and Turkey Today – Tomorrow**  
*Süleyman Demirel*



# World and Turkey Today – Tomorrow

Süleyman Demirel<sup>1</sup>

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Founded in 1923, the Turkish Republic had its first truly democratic multi-party elections in 1950, but we were on a rather steep learning curve. Our predominantly agriculture-based economy on the other hand was suffering from a lack of sufficient infrastructure, capital and entrepreneurship.

Turkey today is a country of 75 million people with a per capita gross national income of over 10 thousand US Dollars. 16<sup>th</sup> big economy among 192 countries. It has a functioning market economy which is no longer solely dependent on agriculture and imports. On the contrary, we are now exporting virtually everything to the whole world and 90 percent of our exports are industrial goods.

Turkey today also enjoys a much improved infrastructure with 60 thousand kilometers of highways and 500 hundred dams, as well as water, electricity and natural gas networks covering the entire country. In fact, the Turkish construction companies with a well earned reputation are now active and on demand worldwide building dams, roads, airports, schools and hospitals in every corner of the globe. Furthermore, Turkey has now become an energy hub between the producer countries to its east and south (which represents 70 percent of world's proven energy resources) and the consumer markets in Europe. And last but not the least, the literacy rate today is over 95 percent and the number of universities is close to 100, while the use of internet is the highest in the region.

Turkey today is thus an entirely transformed country when compared to where it stood in the 1950s. But let me try to further illustrate this point. Today's Turkey is no longer a recipient of foreign aid as it was in the 1950s,

<sup>1</sup> Süleyman Demirel is the 9th President of Turkey.

but is emerging as a major donor in this field extending close to 2 billion US Dollars of assistance annually worldwide. Turkey today is not seeking a source of inspiration to consolidate and advance its democracy, but as a candidate to EU membership, presents one to a wide geography striving to undergo a similar positive change. It is not a remote and distant place as it was in the 1950s, when only an average of one hundred thousand tourists used to visit annually as opposed to 27 million last year.

Turkey is no longer a consumer of security within the Alliance, but a producer and a generator of peace and stability in its broad neighborhood and beyond. Furthermore, we are not only trying to expand the scope of security alone, but our focus and priority has now shifted to expanding the space of freedoms in this rather tricky equation.

Finally, we are no more a country merely with regional considerations and aspirations, but one with the means and capability to make a global impact.

In the meantime, the world has changed a lot too. The Cold War ended and the iron curtain came crashing down together with the infamous Berlin Wall. With that history also ended in dialectic terms and democracy proved to be the best form of governance. The winds of globalization engulfing the entire planet have in many terms shrunk the world to a global village while increasing the pace of life with enhanced mobility and accessibility.

The bipolar nature of the international system also started evolving, with the US initially standing out as the sole superpower. But then different countries from all corners of the world have emerged as important players in global politics and economics. The United States is still leading the world on many fronts. But ranging from Brazil to India, South Africa to China, and Turkey to Indonesia, countries with a host of increased means and capabilities have started assuming greater responsibilities in global governance, compelling it to become more representative and transparent. The G-20 of which Turkey is an active member is a clear reflection of this reality.

Overall, our ability to make the world a better and safer place has considerably increased. However, new and evolving risks and threats have accompanied the opportunities. Only a week after the tenth anniversary of 9/11, I don't think I need to elaborate on the impact of global terrorism on the way we live and operate in this world. But it is obvious that we are still living

under the shadow of terrorism, which seems to have benefited more from globalization and all that it entails. Worse though, our response to terrorism is still lacking a realistic strategy and a concerted clear vision.

In particular, the growing tendency to associate Islam with violence and terror has been the greatest mistake. It has led to the rise of xenophobia and a new breed of extremism in the West while polarizing the whole world along cultural and religious fault lines.

Along with terrorism and its off shoot consequences, we are faced with a host of other risks and threats, which are equally alarming and demand our joint and immediate attention. Among them, WMD proliferation, energy security, poverty, epidemic diseases, water shortage, food security and global warming are the first to come to mind. Without an exception these evolving threats affect us all and place at jeopardy both our development and security, which are increasingly interlinked. So yes, we are now confronted with a new set of risks and opportunities different from those of the 50s. And yes it is a fact that a new world order is in the making with new players around.

However, some things haven't changed. We are still faced with formidable challenges that require us to cooperate and leave us no room for indifference. More international collaboration is indispensable. Security and development are still the two inextricable foundations of lasting peace and stability. Peace and welfare remain indivisible. And we still need sound leadership to help us sail through these rather uncharted waters. Indeed the world population continues to rise while its resources are not yet able to keep up with that pace. In the Western world on the other hand, we see an ageing population in need of young labor force and innovative ways to maintain their welfare systems.

Advances in technology are our strongest hope as many good things that are common to our life today were beyond our dreams only a decade ago. Furthermore, the new technologies in communication and transportation have increased the unhindered mobility of persons, capital and ideas rendering borders irrelevant. Indeed our age today is one of information and integration. But along with all its benefits, this phenomenon also brings with it new strains between and within societies. The more people are exposed to other cultures and traditions, the more complicated it gets to live together in peace and harmony.

To be able to steer this process in the right direction we need to focus on our common values and ideals rather than letting our cultural and/or religious differences be exploited, which only leads to discrimination and alienation.

In this regard, the Arab Spring is a source of hope. It is still in its early stages and the road ahead will certainly be a bumpy one. It is nevertheless a prosing reminder that all human beings vie for the same goals, they yearn and deserve to live in peace and liberty, free from conflicts and oppression that stunt their development and prosperity. They all want to live in dignity, free from fear of persecution for their ideas and ideals. They aspire to be governed by accountable regimes, respecting the rule of law and basic freedoms of faith, expression and association.

In other words, they all desire to live in a democracy, which allows them to control and shape their future rather than being a mere subject of it.

Leaders of the region must heed this call and meet the aspiration and expectations of the people for a better future in this lifetime as well as for the future generations.

# articles

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*Janja Vukašinić*



# Turkey and Europe: the Crucial Transition of the 1970s

Carola Cerami<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

The main aim of this paper is to examine the historical process of Turkey-EC/EU relations, and to underline the extent to which the changes that occurred in the 70s contributed to the genesis and evolution of some of the great “unresolved questions” that characterise Turkish-European relations today. In particular the questions of “identity and evolution”, “geopolitics and strategy”, “religion” and finally “mutual perception”. The paper is a first attempt towards a new historical reconstruction of Turkish-European relations that identifies the 70s as an important moment of evolution and change, rather than of crisis and, as such as the key to interpretation of both the historical and current relations. Accordingly, the paper’s analysis of the 50 year history of the complex relations between Turkey and Europe underlines the importance of rethinking the 70s historiographically. In this context, the 70s are of extraordinary interest, for it is in these years that the seeds of some of the principal transformations that have progressively changed the relations between Turkey and the EC/EU were sown.

## KEYWORDS

European integration, Turkey, Enlargement, History, European Union, EC

## INTRODUCTION

“Turkey after the Cold War is equivalent to Germany during the Cold War – a pivotal state, where diverse strategic interests intersect”. These are the

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words Richard Holbrooke<sup>2</sup> used to define Turkey's new role in the post Cold War era. This statement has been confirmed over the years, and even exceeded by the growing centrality of Turkey, not only as a regional player in the intersection between the Middle East, the Eastern Mediterranean, Southern Caucasus and the Black Sea region, but also as a new player in 21<sup>st</sup> Century international relations. In this context, the issue of whether Turkey should be a member of the European Union takes on an importance that goes beyond the process of European integration, and becomes part of a broader debate on the future geopolitical dynamics of a key strategic area in the evolution of international relations.

The main aim of this paper is to examine the historical process of Turkey-EC/EU relations, and to underline the extent to which the changes that occurred in the 70s contributed to the genesis and evolution of some of the great "unresolved questions" that characterise Turkish-European relations today. In particular the questions of identity and evolution, geopolitics and strategy, religion and finally mutual perception.

When analysing the relationship between Turkey and the EC/EU, historians traditionally adopt a cyclical view that suggests that the difficult relationship is characterised by highs and lows of togetherness and detachment as provoked by recurrent Turkish crises and European uncertainties. However, this approach overlooks, or at least underestimates, the signs of evolution and the subsequent "mutual recognition" that have played an important part in relations between Turkey and the EC, since the beginning of the 70s.

This paper underlines the need for greater historiographical attention to be given to the 70s as a period of transition, evolution and change; the comprehension of which seems ever more important in the analysis and interpretation of Turkey's 50 years history with the EC/EU.

In light of new historiographical trends in the fields of European integration history and international history, the paper focuses on three key points: 1) the evolution of the EC and new dynamics in the process of European integration from the 70s onwards, 2) the transition phase and the main changes that occurred in Turkey from the 70s onwards 3) the new process of defining transatlantic relations and the events that occurred in the Eastern

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<sup>2</sup> American Ambassador to the United Nations (1999-2001)

Mediterranean area and in the Middle/Near East from 1973 onwards. The premise of this paper is that by understanding these three points we will be able to rethink the history of relations between Turkey and the EC/EU, thus constructing a new analytical perspective that identifies the 70s as an important moment of evolution and change, rather than of crisis.

The paper is divided into two parts. The first will place the 70s in the context of the entire history of the relations between Turkey and the EC/EU, in order to emphasize the influence of events in this period on the analysis of the changes and evolutions that took place in the following decades. The second part will assert the need to rethink the importance of the 70s in order to understand the principal “unresolved questions” that underlie the complex and problematic relations that still exist between Turkey and the EC/EU.

This paper should be seen as a starting point towards a more complete and detailed historical reconstruction of the central role the 70s played in the relations between Turkey and the EC/EU. It aims to provide a historical reconstruction which is more concerned with identifying transition and evolution than the phases of cyclicity. The availability of new documentary sources provides an opportunity to deepen our understanding of relations between Turkey and the EU/EC.

The main sources for this paper were provided by the Historical Archives at European institutions: the Historical Archives of the European Union in Florence, the Historical Archives of the European Commission, Parliament and Council. In particular, the documentation provided by the European Council made it possible to reconstruct the minutes from the EC-Turkey Association Council meetings during the decade 1973-1983. Research carried out at the National Archives in London helped to shed light on the link between European political cooperation, enlargement of the EC and the Turkish situation. Last but not least, the NARA declassified documents from 1973 to 1983, helped to clarify American policy with regard to Turkey.

### **TOWARDS A HISTORICAL PERIODISATION: THE RELEVANCE OF THE 70S**

The history of relations between Turkey and the European Community officially began when the Association Agreement was signed in Ankara

on September 12<sup>th</sup> 1963. Since then, for nearly fifty years, the dialogue between Turkey and the European Community has been punctuated by difficulties, misunderstandings and mistrust.

The changes that started to occur in the 70s within Turkey and the EC acquired higher visibility over the subsequent years, to the point that by the arrival of the 80s they were both substantially different players on the international relations scene. These changes determined a new “mutual recognition” and with it, the need to rethink the rules of interaction in a new international context. Thus, the subsequent events of the 90s and AKP’s accession to power in 2002, can be reinterpreted from a new historical perspective which started in the 70s and is able to define the origin and evolution of some “unresolved questions” that still characterize the complex relations between Turkey and Europe.

#### *Phase One: 1963-1973*

The first phase, the decade from 1963 to 1973, saw the birth of Official relations between Turkey and the EC, that were initiated with the signing of the Association Agreement in Ankara on September 12<sup>th</sup> 1963.<sup>3</sup>

This Agreement laid out both a distinct time frame, divided into three subsequent stages (a “preparatory” stage, a “transitional” stage and a “final” stage), and a main objective: the establishment of a Customs Union. An Additional Protocol, signed by Turkey and the EC on November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1970<sup>4</sup>, came into effect on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1973, at the same time as the second financial protocol. This Protocol marked the beginning of the transitional stage, whose main purpose was to create a Customs Union between Turkey and the EC within twelve years. At least up to 1973, the Turkish political elite’s expectations were more or less in line with the progress made in Turkey’s relations with the EC as determined by the Ankara agreements. The year 1973 marked the culmination of understanding between Turkey and the EC, which was officially expressed when the Additional Protocol came into effect (Onis, 2001). In the first decade of interaction between Turkey and the EC, the two sides seemed to have the same interests, mainly geared towards commercial and financial agreements. At the 19<sup>th</sup> ministerial level

<sup>3</sup> *Agreement establishing an Association between the EEC and Turkey*, in “Official Journal of the European Communities” (OJEC), 24.12.1973, No C 113/2, pp. 2-8.

<sup>4</sup> Official Journal of the European Communities. L 361, No 31.12.1977, pp.60-75.

session of the EC-Turkey Association Council, which took place in Ankara on June 30<sup>th</sup> 1973, participants reiterated the need to continue to work together to achieve better integration.<sup>5</sup> It was clear that new commitments would have to be made at a time when profound international changes and new challenges in transatlantic relations had begun to occur.

*Phase Two: 1973-1983*

Starting in 1973, a series of unprecedented economic, social and political developments began to influence international affairs and, specifically, the relations between Turkey and the EC, and between Turkey and the United States.

John Gillingham described this turning point at the beginning of the decade as a “Regime change”. This interpretation emphasises the fundamental change in values, methods and decision-making processes that took place in the early 70s, at the end of the Bretton Woods system. At this time, there was a new outlook on transatlantic relations which challenged the Atlantic/European project that had come into being after World War II (Gillingham, 2003).

According to the historian Vassilis Fouskas: “The period October 1973 to August 1974 represents one of the most interesting historical conjunctures of twentieth – century history. It was a period marked by the Yom Kippur War and the first oil embargo (October 1973), as well as by Turkey’s two consecutive military advances on Cyprus, on 20-22 July and 14-16 August 1974. These events, although regionally located in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near/Middle East, had global repercussions.” (Fouskas, 2005). This and other events in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Near/Middle East necessarily compounded direct tensions in EC-Turkey relations.

In any analysis of Turkish-EC relations, consideration of the following factors is essential: the Cyprus crisis of the summer of 1974, the harsh Turkish-Greek conflicts and the new dynamics in the East Mediterranean, the increased tension in relations between Turkey and the United States

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<sup>5</sup> Archives of the Council of the European Union, Bruxelles, CEE-TR 25/73, 19<sup>o</sup> EC-Turkey Association Council meeting, June 30th 1973

due to an arms embargo imposed by Congress after the events in Cyprus<sup>6</sup>, the previous impact of an oil embargo on the West following the Yom Kippur War, and numerous other negative financial developments. In particular, 1974 was “*a critical turning point*” in Turkish-EC relations (Onis, 2001). Turkish diplomacy encountered one of the thorniest issues it had ever faced, a military coup in Cyprus; instigated by the Greek military regime, the coup witnessed the occupation by Turkish armed forces of almost half the island. Greek-Turkish relations were at a total standstill. Cyprus became an object of international concern, whereas the new Greek democracy began a surprisingly quick process of democratic transition, and announced that it intended to apply for membership to the EC. This was a highly significant turning point in Turkish-EC relations as it gave rise to mistrust and misunderstanding: Turkey found it difficult to believe the equidistant, impartial position that EC members had claimed to hold towards Greece and Turkey.

Conflicts and contradictions were rife in Turkey in the 70s. Nationalistic feeling was strong and coincided with the desire to create a more independent foreign policy. An Islamic-inspired political party emerged under Necmettin Erbakan’s leadership, and inspired others to follow suit. The government was highly unstable and, although Turkey was alternately led by some of its most prominent contemporary representatives (Bülent Ecevit and Süleyman Demirel), the country was unable to cope either with the widespread economic and social crisis or with the violence of political terrorism. Furthermore, the country’s geopolitical and strategic characteristics meant that it was directly influenced by the changing face of international relations, and the transformation that began in Turkey in the 70s was to have repercussions for years to come. Internal financial difficulties and an inability to launch a much-needed political reform plan were accompanied by a growing dissatisfaction with the EC.

At the same time, the EC had also moved into a new phase. By the end of the 60s, international and transatlantic relations were changing, and this prompted the formation of the so-called “Second Europe” after the 1969 Hague Conference (Dahrendorf, 1973). In this evolving context, national, EC and intergovernmental dimensions acquired a new role within the EC in the 70s, and European politics and diplomacy were becoming more complex with increasingly more policy-making layers, which did

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<sup>6</sup> The arms embargo on Turkey imposed by the US Congress began on February 5<sup>th</sup> 1975

not always coincide with each other. Numerous challenges also emerged in the EC's external relations, and led to the birth and consolidation of the European Political Cooperation (EPC) and to the launch of two major parallel contemporary policies: the Mediterranean policy and the policy for democracy and the protection of human rights.

Turkey's little-known participation in discussions on foreign policy issues in Europe, in the context of the emerging EPC, is symptomatic of the growing need for intergovernmental cooperation in the 70s. During this decade, the EPC began to implement new procedures for consultation and interaction between EC member states, which, alongside the traditional bilateral relations between states and other incomplete EC procedures, created a fragmented decision-making process in Europe. Given that the EPC played an internal role in European cooperation, a role that enabled intergovernmental dialogue on foreign policy, analysis of its dynamics at that time helps to shed light on Europe's debate on Turkey. The most recent documentation on the 70s shows that Turkey seemed to grasp the novelty of the EPC, which was such that Turkey became the only third-party country (associated with the EC but not a member or an official candidate for membership) to be offered a "special relationship" with Europe.<sup>7</sup> However, Turkey clearly did not have the political strength to influence the EPC (Cerami, 2008).

Another important topic is the enlargement of the EC into Southern Europe (Greece, Spain and Portugal), with the exclusion of Turkey. Ziya Onis pointed out that there is a certain element of truth in the conjecture that weakness in domestic politics and inaction led to a sort of self-exclusion. But at the same time, if Turkey had applied, it would not necessarily have achieved the same result as Greece, Spain or Portugal. Given the size of Turkey, its identity issue, and the negative opinion the West had of its intervention in Cyprus, it is doubtful that Turkey would have been accepted into the EC in the way the other Mediterranean countries of Southern Europe were (Onis, 2001). The documents that are currently available show that in 1975 the Turkish political class was very concerned about the consequences of Greece's entry into the EC, and that this concern manifested itself primarily in EPC consultations, i.e. at intergovernmental level. The "missed opportunities" theory is a good starting point to understand Turkey's history, but it is not enough to explain its complexity.

<sup>7</sup> TNA- FCO 9/1840 Political consultation between Turkey and EEC, 1973; TNA – FCO 30/3017, Political cooperation between EEC and Turkey, 1975.

Furthermore, since this theory is based on a bilateral dimension (EC-Turkey), it prevents a clear understanding of exactly how “exceptional” Turkey was in the Mediterranean context. This all became increasingly clearer in the 80s, when the EC was getting stronger and its intergovernmental, national and EC dimensions had coexisted for enough time for the rules of the game and European diplomacy to change (Cerami, 2008).

Meanwhile, the European integration process was changing and the EC was gradually developing an explicitly political dimension. Since the late 70s, democracy had become an important criterion for EC membership, and in 1986 the standards required for the respect of human rights in EC member states were clarified by the Single European Act. However, even in its embryonic state in the late 70s, the democratisation and human rights policy was not at one with Turkey for various reasons. On the one hand there were the new requests from the European Parliament and the public for a greater consideration for human rights and democratisation, and on the other hand there were the geopolitical and security requirements expressed at the European Council and at the EPC. The member states had geopolitical and strategic concerns about Turkey because the country was subject to domestic and international changes that were often at odds with the protection and promotion of human rights.

Between 1977 and the coup d'état of 1980, relations between Turkey, Europe and the Western bloc in general were deeply troubled. In Turkey at this time there were strong independent movements, violent political and religious conflicts, growing nationalist sentiment, widespread dissatisfaction with the traditional pro-Western foreign policy, and the desire for the country to play a more independent role in international relations. All of these factors, combined with a very difficult economic situation and a lack of convincing political solutions, resulted in a social, political and economical crisis that politicians were incapable of addressing. This was the backdrop to the military coup on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1980, which had the same characteristics as all Turkish military regimes: defence of the secular state and the Kemalist tradition, re-establishment of security, economic recovery and anchorage to the west. The implications for democracy and human rights of this familiar litany of features were, of course, dire.

In 1983, the 3-year military rule ended, and the Motherland Party, founded by Turgut Ozal, won the political elections in Turkey on November 6<sup>th</sup> 1983.

As Onis wrote: “The post 1980 era represents a period of radical transformation for both Turkey and the European Community with rather striking implications for their subsequent relations. In the Turkish case the principal change was in the economic sphere. The heavily protected and inward oriented economy of the 1960s and the 1970s was steadily transformed in the direction of a far more open and outward oriented economy in the course of the 1980s and the 1990s.... With a more open economy and substantially stronger industrial base, Turkey in the late 1980s adopted a more positive approach towards the Community based on the notion of active participation and geared towards maximizing the opportunities provided by the Community.” (Onis, 2001).

Therefore, the decade 1973-1983 was an important transition period, and was the breeding ground for some of the issues in Turkish-EC relations which are still “unresolved” today.

#### *Phase Three: 1983-1993*

After 1983, the changes that had started to take place in both Turkey and the EC in the previous decade acquired greater visibility, and it became necessary to redefine interplay in order for the two parties to be able to agree on a new “mutual recognition”.

Turgut Ozal led Turkey into a new phase for the next decade (1983 to 1993). His liberal policy aimed to pull Turkey out of its economic crisis, to bring the country closer to the West again, and to promote Turkey’s entry into the EC. On April 14<sup>th</sup> 1987, Turkey submitted a formal request for EC membership.

Turkey’s application was rejected in 1989 by the European Council on the grounds that Turkey had failed to satisfy both basic economic and political criteria for full membership.<sup>8</sup> But Turgut Ozal’s politics sowed the seeds for the pluralization of Turkish politics and the changing framework of Turkish foreign policy (Dede, 2011). As Hakan Yavuz wrote, “the years from 1983 to 1999 were dominated by the politics of identity and the introduction of a new political language about privatization, human rights and civil society. Neo liberal economic policies were fostered, and a new

<sup>8</sup> Commission of the European Communities. Commission opinion on Turkey’s request for accession to the Community, SEC (89) 2290 final. Brussels: 20.12.1989.

Anatolian bourgeoisie emerged”(Yavuz: 2009). During the second half of the 80s and 90s, there was a gradual change both in Turkish political and social structures, and in foreign policy which were lead by a new social class that looked for and gained new positions in administration, industry, academia, media and politics. The conservative capitalists – the Anatolian tigers – who found an opportunity to expand economically through Ozal’s liberalization program later formed the social and economic foundations of the AKP (Dede, 2011). In the meantime, the “Second Europe” of the 70s had gradually become the “Third Europe” of the 80s (Dahrendorf, 1979). Its evolution from “European Community” to “European Union” included fundamental economic and political changes. On the economic front, the member states were moving towards a Single European Market, while on the political front they were focusing on democracy and human rights. At the same time, the third phase of enlargement into southern Europe had begun, and this led to the official birth of the European Union in 1991 on the signing of the Maastricht Treaty.

The 80s were to witness a change in the EC’s policy with regard to democracy and human rights. For the first half of the decade, diplomacy in this respect was primarily of a “declarative” nature, and political and security priorities frequently prevailed over that of human rights. In the second half, however, changes in the international situation, and specifically the easing of tensions associated with the Cold War, along with the public’s growing attention to human rights and fundamental liberties, combined to induce a Community policy that was more substantial and incisive . These changes applied most evidently to Turkey, against whom the EC leveled human rights-related charges with increased severity. That said, the EC/EU’s pro-democracy policy in the 80s and 90s was compromised from the very outset. On the one hand, in response to increasing public sensitivity to the human rights issue, and mindful of the need to establish satisfaction on said issue as a non-negotiable condition for Turkey’s admission to the Community, Europe accused Turkey, with increasing firmness, of abuse. On the other hand, the EC revealed gaping policy uncertainties and ambiguities, and proved incapable of becoming an acceptable point of reference for democratic forces within Turkey. (Ugur, 1999).

Obviously alongside economic and social factors there were also important changes in the international scenario: the end of the Cold War, which led to the end of the bipolar system, opened new scenarios in the Middle Eastern context and for post Cold War Turkey led to new questions and

objectives. At the same time the globalization process demanded different answers from the past, answers oriented towards greater openness to the outside and a different foreign policy approach.

The end of the Cold War presented Turkey with new challenges and expanded its foreign policy options. The country began to launch new initiatives within its regional area: it played a central role in the promotion of the Black Sea economic cooperation project, and it began to reformulate itself and its role in the new regional and international dynamics of the post Cold War world.

The Copenhagen Council of Europe (1993) signaled a moment of change by defining three precise parameters/requisites for Turkey's accession to the EU: democracy and full respect for human rights and for minorities; a functional and competitive market economy; and effective acknowledgement of the *acquis communautaire*, i.e. the ability to respect the community "house rules" as a whole, and to achieve the Union's political, economic and monetary objectives.

#### *Phase Four: 1993-2002*

The fourth phase, approximately from 1993-2002 was characterized by stop-go dynamics in Turkey- EU relations and accompanying uncertainties . Specifically, the promise of the Customs Union agreed in 1996<sup>9</sup> was overturned by Luxembourg Council of Europe's decision in 1997<sup>10</sup> to exclude Turkey as a candidate for admission to the EU, on the grounds of Turkey's internal situation.

The Turkish Government's disappointment was considerable: just as the EU was officially initiating the process of enlargement towards the East, Turkey was excluded. The subsequent months witnessed massive difficulties in relations between the two parts, and saw the renewal of the Turkish population's "euroscepticism" that had first arisen during the 70s. In the

<sup>9</sup> Decision No 1/95 of the EC-Turkey Association Council of 22 December 1995 on implementing the final phase of the Customs Union, in Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC). 13.02.1996, No L 35, pp. 1-47.

<sup>10</sup> Presidency Conclusions - Luxembourg European Council, 12-13 December 1997. [ON-LINE]. [s.l.]: Council of the European Union, [16.04.2004]. SN400/97. Available on <http://ue.eu.int/en/info/eurocouncil/>.

meantime, Turkish society continued, among other things, its process of evolution and internal transformation, with the aim of laying down the foundations for the consolidation of the AKP. Additionally, in the post Cold War context, Turkish foreign policy began to experiment with new ideas regarding Turkey's position both within the region and on the international scene.

In another change of direction, the Commission's Report on its relations with Turkey re-assessed the Luxembourg decision and stressed the importance of reinvigorating relations.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, the 1999 Helsinki Summit granted Turkey the status of candidacy for admission to the EU.<sup>12</sup> It was an important step forward, not least because it constrained the Turkish administration to reflect seriously on the implications (primarily regarding democracy, economic growth and human rights) of admission to the club. The effect of Helsinki 1999 proved to be salutary, as it galvanized substantial and incisive reform within Turkey. It was in this period that Turkey began to talk of the "process of Europeanization" as beneficent, one that could launch real and profound reform.

#### *Phase Five: 2002-2011*

The period from 2002 onwards is marked by the accession to power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP), which was elected in November 2002. The AKP's coming to power demonstrates both the evolution of the Islamist movement and the potential for reconciling democracy and Islam (Benli Altunisik: 2010). AKP used its majority in parliament to accelerate the reform process. A crucial question has been the compatibility of Islam and democracy. With the coming to power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP), Turkish democratization becomes relevant to the debate about integrating Islamists into the system. Specifically, the 2002 – 2005 period has been defined as "the golden era of reform". As Zyna Onis and Sunhnaz Yilmaz writes, "The positive effects of the deep Europeanization process manifested itself in three interrelated and mutually supporting areas. First, this was one of the successful periods of economic growth in recent Turkish economic history.... Second, the golden age was characterized by major reforms on the democratization front. Turkey took giants steps

<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key\\_documents/1999/turkey\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/1999/turkey_en.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Helsinki European Council: Presidency Conclusions 11/12/1999 Nr: 00300/1/99. [ON-LINE]. [s.l.]: Council of the European Union, [s.d.]. Available on <http://ue.eu.int/en/info/eurocouncil/>.

in the direction of democratic consolidation through a series of major reforms..... The third area affected Europeanization in the conduct of foreign policy” (Onis, Yilmaz: 2009).

This golden age produced eight batches of legislation that guaranteed conformity with the Copenhagen criteria and aligned Turkish legislature with the *acquis communautaire*. In the process, Turkey modified a third of its Constitution, adopted laws that conformed to international standards on human rights, abolished the death penalty, improved the rights of women, created new safeguards against torture, and reformed the detention system. New laws eliminated drastic limits with regard to freedom of expression and of association, both for individual citizens and for the media. The ensuing climate of trust saw six years of economic growth at 7% p.a., and an unprecedented wave of foreign direct investment (Independent Commission on Turkey, 2009).

On 17th December 2004, the Council of Europe, consisting in the Heads of State and of the Governments of all the member States of the EU, decided unanimously to open negotiations for Turkey’s admission.<sup>13</sup> Said negotiations were officially opened in October 2005.

Paradoxically, the subsequent years were marked by notable uncertainty and by a slowdown in reform within Turkey. Already in December 2006, 8 of the 35 sections of the negotiations were suspended on account of Ankara’s refusal to open ports and airports to incoming goods from Cyprus. The following year, 2007, brought both presidential and legislative elections, and saw Turkey intensely involved in national issues. Although the AKP continued to voice its unequivocal commitment to full EU membership, these national interests undoubtedly slowed the process of reform.

At the same time, various European leaders expressed negative attitudes towards Turkish membership, and European negotiators imposed increasingly burdensome conditions, the collective impact of which was not negligible. Concurrently, and unsurprisingly, Turkish grassroots euroscepticism grew, and Davutoglu’s foreign policy explored new areas of interest within Turkey’s own regional sphere and in the Arab world, re-opened economic and commercial dialogue with Russia and the Black Sea area,

<sup>13</sup> Brussels European Council-Presidency conclusions - 17 December 2004. [ON-LINE]. [s.l.]: Council of the European Union, [09.02.2005]. 16238/1/04 rev. Available on [http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/83201.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/83201.pdf).

and launched “soft power” initiatives in bordering Arab countries. From the Turkish viewpoint, this policy did not substitute, but rather paralleled, its West-oriented equivalent. A factor that has positively impacted Turkey’s “soft power” has been the multilateral, cooperative, win-win approach of new Turkish foreign policy: the strategic depth doctrine of Turkish foreign policy.

I have already signaled the first signs of evolution in the 70’s and the great changes in the international scene in the 80’s and 90’s, however, the real breakthrough did not come until the arrival of the Justice and Development Party to power and the “zero problems policy” that is associated with the current minister of foreign affairs, Ahmet Davutoglu. This policy saw Turkey’s relations with its neighbors improve and expand, and it was accompanied by a growing interest to acquire a front line role in the regional scene and a greater assertiveness in the larger International Relations field. These developments are evident in certain specific foreign policies: for example, Turkey’s decision not to support the US war effort in Iraq in 2003 and Turkey’s criticisms of Israel after the Gaza War.

### **RETHINKING THE 70S: THE GENESIS OF THE GREAT “UNRESOLVED QUESTIONS”**

Analysis of EC-Turkey relations in the 70s reveals factors that did not appear in the previous decade, and that enable us to define parts of the “ir-resolution” that still dogs said relations today. Turkey-EC/EU relations have existed for nearly fifty years and have developed around a few, central questions that today constitute the “open questions” or the “unresolved questions” that mark current relations.

The first grand question is that of “identity – evolution”. Without doubt, the EU is now experiencing a profound identity crisis, one that primarily stems from the process of European integration. In these circumstances, interaction with a country of Turkey’s complexity poses a massive challenge, above all on the issue of identity. The EU thus finds itself having to re-assess itself and its future choices in terms of foreign policy, of institutional development and of cultural redefinition.

As already stated, from the 70s onwards European policy-making had to contend with overlap, intersection and, sometimes, conflict between

three levels of governance (national, intergovernmental and community). Interaction with Turkey duly took place at three levels: the national/bilateral level, which involved single member States; the community level, which involved EC institutions; the intergovernmental level, which involved a gestating set of mechanisms that stood proxy for EU government. This multi-layering obviously complicated the rules of European politics and diplomacy, and all analysis of EC/EU-Turkey relations must take account of the ambiguities that derived from the complexity of the EC/EU's composition.

The identity question has taxed Turkey too, throughout the period contemplated in this essay. Over the last 50 years, Turkey has defined itself and its international role through countless internal, regional and international challenges. Simultaneously, Turkish society and politics began to undergo profound transformation, whereby Islam played an increasingly important part in citizens' lives. By the 80s, Kemalism had submitted to the influence of a form of puritanical Islamism, and this process had created a Western-Turko-Islamic synthesis that characterizes Turkey to this day; the seeds of this synthesis are definitely to be found in the 70s. It emerged, albeit not in linear fashion, that Islam and republican secularism in Turkey are not separate worlds necessarily in conflict, but symbiotic components of a single historical development.

As Hakan Yavuz says "In the Turkish context... Islamic activism, or Islamism, has been contained and shaped within the framework of Turkish nationalism. Turkish Islam was utilized as a national ideology and form of identity in the nation – building process"(Yavuz, 2009). The "religious question" regards the role of Islam and the extent to which Europe is able to welcome and to integrate a large and mainly Muslim population. Turkey, a secular State with a Muslim population, has shown an increasing desire for democratic development and for progress in terms of human rights and of the strengthening of civil society. It is probable that increasing "Europeanization" and admission to the EU would offer Turkey its best opportunity to protect the secular principles of the Republic at the same time as respecting the Islamic identity of the country.

Another question, is the "geopolitical and strategic question". As an increasingly powerful regional player, Turkey is a "pivotal area", at the centre of the intersection between the great Middle East, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Black Sea region and the EU. The country therefore assumes a central

geopolitical role in a vast area that is critically important to 21<sup>st</sup> Century international relations. Within this scenario, the EU cannot neglect Turkey's strategic importance and will have to sharpen the definition of its own role in an area where Turkey is one of the principal interlocutors. As with other questions, the seed of this "East-West geostrategic question" is to be found in analysis of the 70s. A factor that emerges from the 70s and that remains highly current to this day is that of Turkey's role in East-West dynamics. Anchorage to the West was fundamental to Turkey's security, indeed to its very survival, in the first years of the Cold War. However, the gradual easing of tensions in the international scenario created difficulties in Turkey's relations with the USA, and encouraged Turkish leadership to seek ties with the East and with the Arab countries.

In the literature on Turkish-American relations, this period has been considered the moment in which the first manifestations of friction emerged within the "perfect understanding" that characterized the Turkish-American alliance in the early post-war era. The arms embargo placed by the US on Turkey from 1975 to 1978, following the latter's invasion of Cyprus in the summer of 1974, has customarily been seen as the most fraught period in Turkish-American relations during the Cold War era.<sup>14</sup>

The historian Christopher Ioannides believes that from the end of the 1960s, Turkey had opted to follow the "European" model, in particular that of France and Germany, reinstating diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and establishing mutually beneficial economic cooperation as part of its own separate détente policy. According to this view, while Turkey was re-engaging with the Soviet Union, which brought a number of advantages, it would still remain dependent on the US for its defence and maintain strong ties with NATO (Ioannides, 2001). Relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union continued to improve, especially in the economic field. In fact, at least until 1978, Ankara, whilst strengthening ties with Moscow, succeeded in performing a delicate balancing act that enabled it to receive substantial economic aid from the USSR at a time when Turkey was undergoing great economic difficulties, and to maintain a balanced policy towards adjoining oil-producing Arab countries. While Turkey normalized relations with the Soviet Union and received multiple benefits as

<sup>14</sup> DDSR, D.n.: CK3100144868, "Memorandum of conversation between President Jimmy Carter and Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit of Turkey. Topics include: US economic assistance; dispute with Greece over the island of Cyprus; Turkey military strength; US relation with Turkey", White House, May 31, 1978.EUI.

a result, it simultaneously remained dependent on the United States for its defence and continued to be anchored in NATO. In a period of great internal fragility and of strained relations with the US, Turkey performed a political balancing act within the context of international détente with the primary purpose of defending its national interests.

Relations with the USSR were themselves fraught with conflict and moments of closure. However, what is interesting is the fact that the “East – West question”, so central to Turkey’s current future, has long been a constant of the country’s foreign policy.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, there is the “perception question”, which is strongly connected to the “euroscepticism” that increasingly prevails in the Turkish population and whose origin again dates back to the 70s. The perception is widespread and regards European integration as something distant, complex and far from linear. Distorted perceptions and communication difficulties have frequently plagued relations between the two parts. To resolve the perception question, it will be necessary to promote better mutual understanding and to develop strong cultural, academic and social ties.

The findings of current research, aided by new documentary sources, could constitute the starting point for a thorough re-reading of relations between Turkey - EC/EU relations. Any such re-reading would do well to target the 70s as the source of the central and unresolved questions that characterize the complex relationship between Europe and Turkey.

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper should be seen as a work in progress, a starting point towards a historical reconstruction of Turkey-EC relations that identifies transition and evolution, rather than mere cyclicity. In this context, the 70s are of extraordinary interest, for it is in these years that the seeds of some of the principal transformations that have progressively changed the relations between Turkey and the EC/EU were sown.

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<sup>15</sup> DDSR, D.n.: CK3100151950, “Memorandum to Zbigniew Brzezinski from Paul Henze regarding political stability in Turkey, the effect of Iran’s deterioration on Turkey, and ways the US can maintain Turkey as a viable, democratic member of the Western community”. National Security Council, December 15, 1979, EUI.

This paper identifies the origins of some of the great “unresolved questions”, questions that still form an obstacle to a complete and in-depth understanding of the relations between Turkey and the European Union. Firstly, the “identity-evolution question”, which, since the 70s, has led to the idea, that the two protagonists are non-heterogeneous and, subject to profound changes and, secondly, that this continuous evolution has, over the years, necessitated “mutual recognition”. Secondly, the “religious” question: Turkish history denotes a complex and “multifaceted” relationship between the State and Islam, the two symbiotic parts of a common historical development that has given rise to modern Turkey. Understanding the complexity of the delicate equilibrium between Islam and the secular State is by no means easy for the EU. However, the EU could play an important and far-sighted role in helping to stabilize the balance between Turkish religion and Turkish secularism.

Thirdly, the “geopolitical and strategic” question concerns Turkey’s role with the East and West. It too is ascribable to Turkey’s first responses to the new climate of détente that began to prevail from the end of the 60s. Today, this question is at the centre of academic analysis and debate, and it is the origin of current considerations on Turkey’s new regional role and its presence on the International scene. Last but not least there is the question of “perception”. This is probably the most progressive area that Turkey and Europe will have to work on. This question is about the role of civil society, the media, the universities, culture and education, and it concerns the capacity for mutual participation and comprehension, the meaning of citizenship and the growth and strengthening of democracy. Today, it is this area that may prove to be the most fertile and “experimental” area from which to re-launch and re-formulate the complex relations between Turkey and Europe.

Retracing the 50 year history of Turkish- EC/EU relations, and introducing the evolutionary 70s as the key to current interpretation of these relations, could enhance our comprehension and analysis of these great “unresolved questions” .

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# Membership of Turkey to the European Union: An Added Value, not a Burden

Firat Bayar<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

The debate about Turkey-European Union (EU) relations and Turkey's membership to the EU should be conducted as part of a much broader debate on the prospective role of the EU in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Turkey wants to be part of a Europe which has the "supranationalist" vision and be a member to the EU which has weight in the international system, leads global economy and is integrated in the culture of humanity. Moreover, this is the EU which Turkey can contribute the most. On that basis, the accession of Turkey will be an added value, not a burden to the EU. This is valid in a variety of fields such as politics and foreign policy, military and security, economics, energy and socio-culture.

## KEYWORDS

European Union, Turkish membership to the European Union, Turkey's contributions to the EU

## INTRODUCTION

The debate about Turkey-European Union (EU) relations and Turkey's membership to the EU should be conducted as part of a much broader debate on the prospective role of the EU in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As Alessandri

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The views expressed in this paper belong entirely to the author.

The author thanks to the anonymous referees for their valuable comments.

ISSN 1855-7694 © 2011 European Perspectives, UDK: 327 (4)

has reasonably put it, the future of Turkey-EU relations is directly linked to the question of what EU wants to become (Alessandri, 2010: 14).

The future of the EU will flourish based on either of two alternative scenarios. These are namely the “sovereignist” and “supranationalist” visions. The “sovereignist” alternative foresees European integration restricted only to the spheres of economics and trade, in which an “ever closer Union”, envisaging a stronger political, military, social or cultural integration is not desirable or operative. In this vision, EU consists of the group of individual nation states in the traditional sense of the latter (Derviş, 2004).

On the other hand, the “supranationalist” vision refers to the supranational forms of multilevel governance that will empower the EU to offer solid and lasting solutions to the variety of challenges of the 21st century, as a dominant political actor in world affairs, driving force of the world economy, and promoter of universal values of multiculturalism and “unity in diversity” (Derviş, 2004).

This envisioning of the EU in the “supranationalist” sense has three core superiorities (Davutoğlu, 2009).

The first of these is related to the political domain. This refers to the perspective that the EU becomes an influential international actor which takes active position, reflecting a powerful political accumulation. In that way, the EU will be a provider of security, peace, stability and prosperity not only to its neighborhood but also the entire world.

Second refers to the economic field. Recent economic and financial crisis, like elsewhere, demonstrated the vulnerability and fragility of the European economy. Therefore, Europe’s economy, which has been the engine of world economy since the Industrial Revolution, should maintain its viability and attraction throughout the globe via preserving its economic superiority.

Last but not least is the cultural aspect, which refers to the view of consolidating rather than dividing different cultures. This is the imagination of a Europe, which has high level of communication with all varied cultures all over the world based on the principles of “common good” and “ethics of coexistence”.

**MEMBERSHIP OF TURKEY TO THE EUROPEAN UNION: AN ADDED VALUE,  
NOT A BURDEN**

“Supranationalism” is indeed the vision, that Europeans and EU should unfold the sails, especially in the aftermath of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009. With the latter, EU has entered into a new phase in its entire life. Lisbon Treaty provides EU a great many of opportunities, easing for it to evolve in the direction of the “supranationalist” vision.

Within this framework, Turkey wants to be part of a Europe which has this “supranationalist” vision and be a member to the EU which has weight in the international system, leads global economy and is integrated in the culture of humanity. Moreover, this is the EU which Turkey can contribute the most. Thus the debate about Turkish membership to the EU is to be better conducted within the parameters of this theoretical spectrum.

**BREAKING THE DEADLOCK IN ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS:  
TURKEY’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EU**

The objective of Turkey to be a member of the EU dates back to 1950s. Turkey’s first application to the European Economic Community (EEC) was done in 1959, which was concluded by the Ankara Agreement in 1963.

Table 1: Timeline: Turkey’s European/EU Integration

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>
<b>1949</b>	Turkey became a full member of the Council of Europe
<b>1952</b>	Turkey became a full member of NATO
<b>1959</b>	Turkey applied to the European Economic Community (EEC) to become an associate member
<b>1963</b>	Turkey became an associate member of EEC (Ankara Agreement)
<b>1987</b>	Turkey applied to the European Community (EC) to become a full member
<b>1989</b>	EC refused to start accession negotiations with Turkey
<b>1996</b>	Customs Union between Turkey and EU entered into force
<b>1999</b>	The EU Summit in Helsinki recognized Turkey as a “candidate country” to join the EU
<b>2005</b>	Official membership negotiations started between Turkey and the EU

In 1987, Turkey applied to the European Community (EC) and two years later in 1989 came the negative decision of the EC that prevented the inception of accession negotiations between the two sides. Following that, in 1996, Customs Union between Turkey and EU entered into force which

still prevails. Successively, the EU Summit in Helsinki recognized Turkey as a “candidate country” in 1999 to join the EU and finally in 2005, after 46 years from the date of the first application, official membership negotiations began between the two parties.

When we analyze the current state of accession negotiations, we could simply argue that the situation is not so encouraging. Since 2005 (opening of the accession negotiations), 13 Chapters were opened and 1 Chapter was temporarily closed. As of today, among a total of 35 chapters, 8 Chapters are blocked by the European Council due to the Cyprus problem, 5 Chapters are blocked by France because of their so-called “direct bearing on full membership” (One of these Chapters is also blocked by the European Council) and 6 Chapters are blocked by the Greek Cypriots unilaterally, based on their veto power. In sum, 18 Chapters are blocked with political considerations. Therefore, only 3 Chapters can be opened at present, which are namely competition policy, public procurement, and social policy and employment.

This situation has been the one and only case in the history of enlargement of the EU. As the Independent Commission on Turkey has clearly argued, this attitude by the EU is in contradiction to its prior commitments to Turkey and put into question the principle of *pacta sunt servanda*, one of the basic principles of international law (The Independent Commission on Turkey, 2009: 9). This situation is being interpreted by the Turkish public as unfair and discriminatory which is accompanied with a sharp loss of credibility of EU in Turkey. Turkish public support for EU membership, which was about 70 percent in 2004, recently dipped below 40 percent (The Independent Commission on Turkey, 2009: 11).

However, this deadlock at the accession negotiations is certainly not inevitable or irreversible. It could soon be overcome easily, once foresighted European leaders realize more extensively and in an accelerating fashion the benefits that Turkey’s membership will bring to the club itself. The accession of Turkey will be an added value, not a burden to the EU on the way towards its “supranationalist” transformation, discussed above. This will be valid in a variety of fields such as politics and foreign policy, military and security, economics, energy and socio-culture.

The following sections elaborate in details about these variety of contributions of Turkey to the EU.

### **i. Political and Foreign Policy Related Benefits**

Especially during the Cold War, Turkey has been assessed with the characterization of a “bridge” and “wing” country. The bridge here referred to the fact that, taking into consideration its geo-strategic positioning and socio-cultural fabric, Turkey fulfilled the function of a link that combined the Western with the Eastern World. Similarly, Turkey was to a large extent seen as a “wing” country under NATO’s strategic framework, lying on the utmost frontier and perimeter of the Western alliance. These perceptions have at times created an unfortunate image for Turkey trying to impose the viewpoints of one on the other in the eyes of both Westerners and Easterners (Davutoğlu, 2010; 2004).

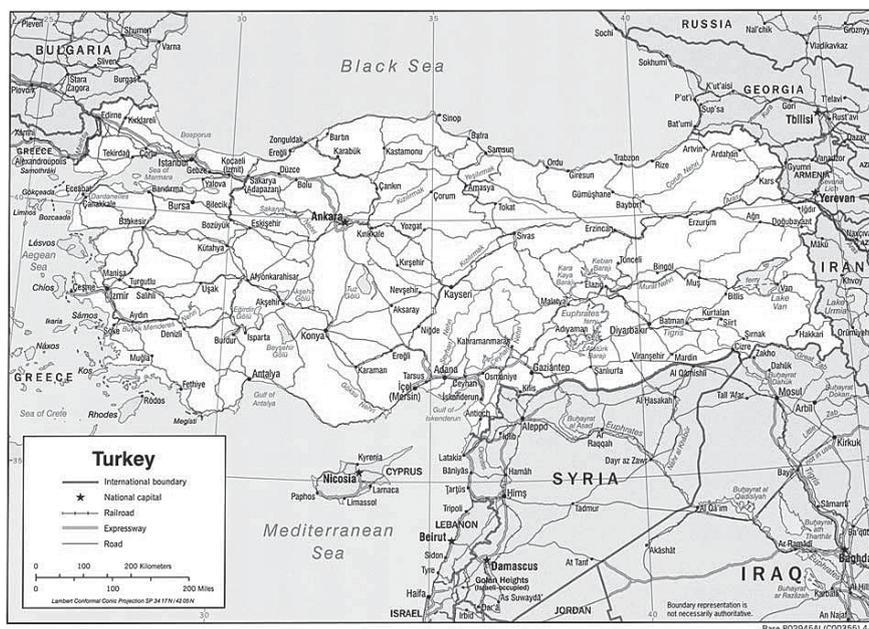
Today, Turkey is no more a “bridge” or a “wing” country. Instead, it plays a central role in the conduct of international relations and foreign policy at regional and global levels. This means that Turkey has a greater weight and voice in global political arena, and can act in a more pro-active, pre-emptive and self confident manner. Naturally, this new positioning of Turkey has significant effects in the design and implementation of as well as reputation and respect for its foreign policy.

On that basis, Turkish Foreign Policy at present is based on three methodological and six operational principles (Davutoğlu, 2010; 2004). The methodological principles are (1) Visionary approach, (2) Consistent and systematic framework and (3) A new diplomatic style.

Whereas, the operational principles are (1) Balance between security and democracy, (2) “Zero problems” with neighbours, (3) Pro-active and pre-emptive diplomacy, (4) Multi-dimensional foreign policy and complementarity with global actors, (5) Effective use of international fora and new initiatives and (6) “Rhythmic” diplomacy.

Based on these principles, Turkey pursues a multi-faceted foreign policy which aims to contribute to the improvement of security, stability and welfare both in its immediate neighborhood and wider region. Turkey tries to produce solutions to frozen or shelved political conflicts through engagement and dialogue. Overcoming various crises in Iraq and the Balkans, as well as the progress recorded in Afghanistan-Pakistan relations are some concrete reflections of this policy (Turkish Foreign Ministry).

Figure 1: Neighborhood of Turkey



Source: International Crisis Group

In that context, Turkey's recent active involvement and participation in various international platforms is noteworthy. Being a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2009-2010 term, undertaking the chairmanship-in-office of the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) for 2009 and 2010, chairmanship of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) for 2010-2012 and chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for 2010-2011, membership to G-20, maintaining observer status in the African Union, joining the strategic dialogue mechanism with the Gulf Cooperation Council, participation in the Arab League, opening new embassies in Africa and Latin America have all been important steps lately in demonstrating Turkey's rising role in global political affairs and foreign policy.

Turkey has close relations and historical ties with the countries of the Middle East, Balkans, Central Asia and Caucasus. As a secular country with a predominantly Muslim population; a co-sponsor of the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative; member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

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(OECD), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Council of Europe (CoE), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Developing 8 (D-8), South East European Cooperation Process (SEECF) and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), and in the midst of negotiations for acceding to the EU, concurrent with her membership to the Organization for Islamic Conference (OIC), Turkey belongs to both the West and the East, and considers itself well-placed to offer its valuable contribution to the promotion of a genuine inter-cultural dialogue between these two civilizations.

Once Turkey is in the EU, the latter will fully benefit from all these assets in various ways. An EU that includes Turkey will be better equipped to address the current challenges to security such as terrorism, organized crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), xenophobia and racism (Demiralp, 2004: 5).

Similarly, the argument that an EU member Turkey bordering with the Middle Eastern countries will be a liability for the EU is not satisfactory as Turkey is pushing ongoing problems in this region away from Europe. This is especially important with regards to the ongoing developments in the Middle East and North African countries. As Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet has recently argued, the “Arab Spring” led to ponder how EU could help these countries in their democratic transition and Turkey’s help in that respect is useful as its soft power to influence the situation will be more effective than the EU or US alone (Paet, 2011).

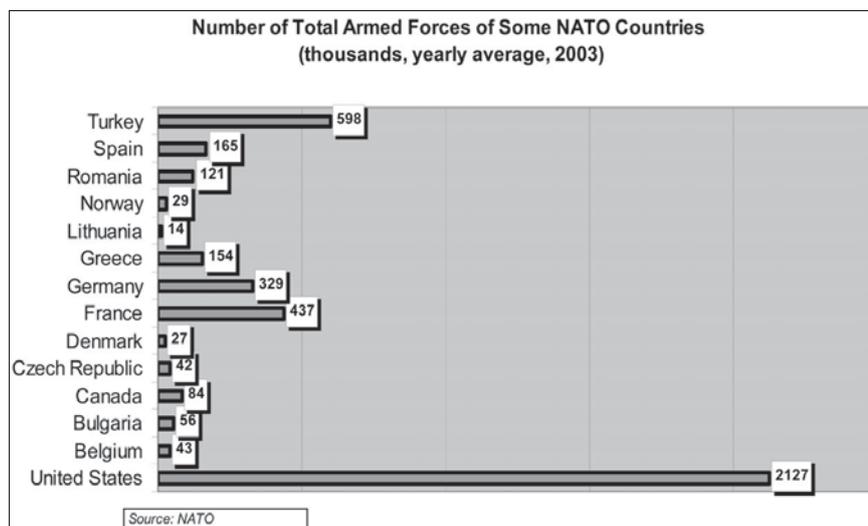
Likewise, a Union with Turkey will be much more influential in all neighboring geographies. Regional and global reach of European values will extend immensely with Turkey’s presence. Turkey seeks to establish peace, stability and security in the Middle East and North Africa and assist these countries in their transition to democracy, further integrate the Balkans with the Euro-Atlantic community, bolster democracy and peaceful resolution of conflicts in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and strengthen security and stability in Afghanistan and South Asia. So does the EU. Therefore the viewpoint and interests of the two sides are truly complementary (Gül, 2011; Independent Commission on Turkey, 2009: 7, 29). This partnership will eventually bring in many tools for the EU on its way towards being a global power along with its “supranational” transformation.

**ii. Military and Security Related Benefits**

Turkey has the second biggest armed forces among NATO members after the United States. It possesses a highly modernized arms technology and has extensive military experience. Turkey is also one of the greatest contributors to the international military operations in Europe and elsewhere such as Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, etc.

As the International Crisis Group (ICG) has stated, Turkey’s role is particularly important as it creates an élite peace-keeper brigade, as well as a logistical support unit and a humanitarian brigade in these operations. For decades, Turkish perception of its security interests was identical to Europe’s. The peacekeeping operations joined by Turkey were run by NATO, however they were part of the EU strategy. Turks “adopted 90 percent of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)” (ICG, 2007: 5, 6).

Figure 2: Number of Total Armed Forces



At present, Turkey supplies a total number of about 2800 troops to the ongoing NATO missions and operations in three continents and makes extensive contributions in soft security terms reaching out to Central Asia, Caucasus, Middle East and Northern Africa through NATO’s partnership mechanisms. In Afghanistan, Turkey has doubled its troop presence following the assumption of the Regional Command in Kabul in 2009.

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Currently, Turkey has around 1800 troops deployed under NATO-led ISAF Operation. The level of deployment under NATO Training Mission (NTM-A) in this country is around 190 personnel. Likewise, 740 military personnel are currently taking part in NATO operation KFOR in Kosovo. Moreover, Turkey actively contributes to the international counter-piracy efforts as a founding member of the Contact Group. Turkey is taking part in the NATO's Operation Ocean Shield (OOS). Similarly, Turkey attaches particular importance to ensuring peace and stability in the African continent and contributes to six of the United Nations missions deployed in Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Ivory Coast and Liberia (Turkish Foreign Ministry).

Table 2: Turkey's Contributions to Peacekeeping and Police Mission Operations

UN Temporary Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)
UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG)
UN Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL)
Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH)
UN Mission in Kosovo Civil Police Force (UNMIK-CIVPOL)
UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)
UN Congo Monitoring Delegation Civil Police Mission (MONUC-CIVPOL)
UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)
UN Operation in Ivory Coast (UNOCI)
UN Mission for Stability in Haiti (MINUSTAH)
UN Mission in Burundi (ONUB)
UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS)
UN Aid Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA)
EUFOR (EULEX) Operation
Bosnia and Herzegovina Police Mission (EUPM)
European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX)
ISAF in Afghanistan
NATO Training Mission (NTM-A)
KFOR in Kosovo
NATO Training Mission (NTM-1) in Iraq
Operation Ocean Shield (OOS)
Operation Active Endeavor (OAE)

Source: Turkish Prime Ministry

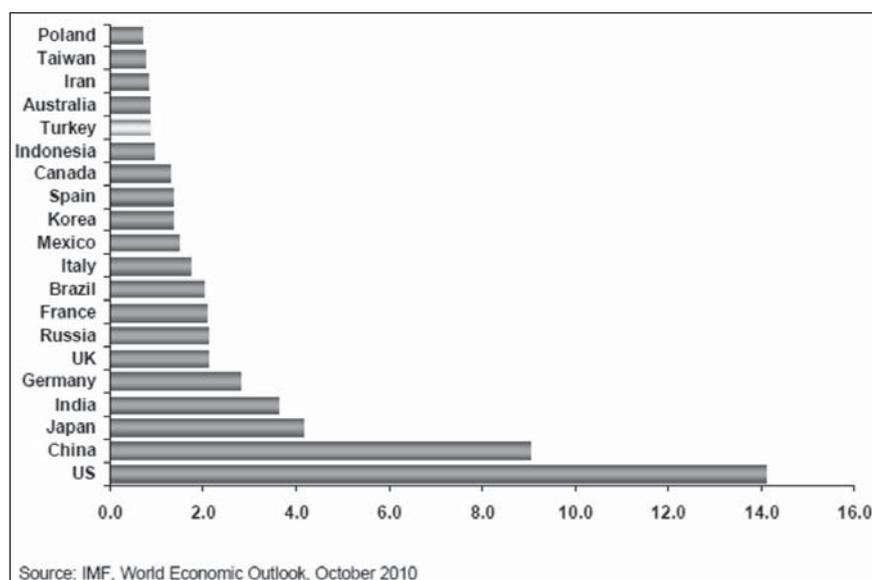
To sum up, Turkey is well situated to become the forward base for EU's security and defence policy, military logistics and credibility of EU in the region (Derviş, Emerson, Gros and Ülgen, 2004: 46). Turkey's military capabilities and experience will certainly provide the EU great assets for the emerging European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP).

As a strong NATO member and with a clear orientation towards ESDP, Turkey will probably be a great value for the European military and security system.

### iii. Economical Benefits

Turkey is currently the 16th largest economy in the world and 6th in Europe which was referred by the British Prime Minister David Cameron as the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) of Europe. It is the fastest growing economy in G-20 after China and Turkish economy is projected to be the 2nd largest economy in Europe by 2050. The country currently meets the Maastricht criteria of European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in terms of budget deficit (below 3% of GDP) and public debt (below 60% of GDP) (Chislett, 2011: 5).

Fig. 3: World's Biggest Economies  
(GDP based on purchasing power parity, Trillion US Dollars, 2009)



Turkey aims at increasing its overall GDP to the level of 1 trillion US Dollars. GDP per capita on the other hand, which was around 3.500 US Dollars in 2002, is currently over 10.000 US Dollars. GDP per capita is expected to exceed the level of 12.000 US Dollars by 2013 (Turkish Prime Ministry State Planning Organization).

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Just to give some snapshots on Turkish economy, Turkey is the world's;

- 6<sup>th</sup> biggest cement producer
- 2<sup>nd</sup> jewellery exporter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> flat glass producer
- 1<sup>st</sup> boron mineral producer
- 16<sup>th</sup> motor vehicles producer
- 8<sup>th</sup> in exports of refrigerators, 6<sup>th</sup> in exports of washing machines and 14<sup>th</sup> in exports of dishwashing machines
- 7<sup>th</sup> cotton producer
- 6<sup>th</sup> clothing manufacturer (Turkish Foreign Ministry, 2010; Kaleağası, 2010)

Furthermore, Turkey is Europe's;

- 1<sup>st</sup> TV manufacturer
- 4<sup>th</sup> automotive parts manufacturer
- 1<sup>st</sup> auto-car/bus manufacturer
- 3<sup>rd</sup> commercial vehicle manufacturer
- 3<sup>rd</sup> iron and steel producer
- 3<sup>rd</sup> ceramic tile manufacturer
- 6<sup>th</sup> refrigerator manufacturer
- 4<sup>th</sup> largest telecom market
- 3<sup>rd</sup> big yacht and 8<sup>th</sup> ship builder (Kaleağası, 2010)

Turkey has been lately being so called as a “trading state” which refers to the fact that the share of trade in overall GDP is continuously increasing and foreign policy is being increasingly shaped by economic considerations. Turkey's foreign trade has grown from less than 20 billion US Dollars in 1985 to more than 330 billion US Dollars in 2008. The proportion of manufactured goods in the country's exports increased from 1.4% in 1950 and 18.4% in 1970 to 94.2% in 2003. Moreover, Turkey's trade with its neighbors has expanded from 4 billion US Dollars in 1991 to 82 billion US Dollars in 2008. This refers to an increase from 11.5% to about 25% of Turkey's overall trade (Kirişçi, 2011: 37). In that framework, EU is Turkey's biggest trade partner and EU's share in Turkish exports and imports are about 46% and 40 % respectively (Turkish Prime Ministry, Secretariat General for EU Affairs). Especially, with the entry into force of the Customs Union between the two parties in 1996, the trade volume has increased dramatically.

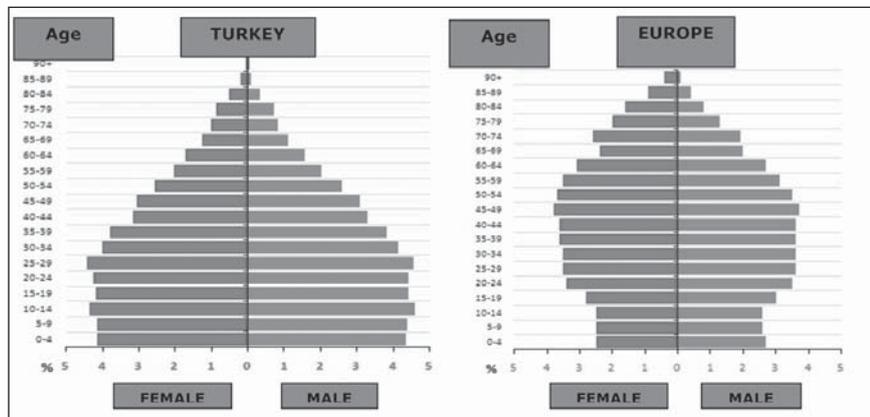
Besides, with its dynamic open-market economy and competitive industry, Turkey is an attractive country for European investors as well. Since

2003, the total inflow of foreign direct investments has reached to 93.6 billion dollars (Turkish Foreign Ministry). Between 2008 and 2010, Turkey was the most attractive destination of FDI and more than three-quarters of that comes from the EU countries (Chislett, 2011: 5).

Another important economic benefit of Turkish accession to the EU will most probably stem from the country's favorable demographic conditions. Europe is rapidly aging and by 2050, Europe's workforce is expected to be decreased by 70 million (Solana, 2011). In that context, Turkey presents a vital opportunity to offset this critical problem of EU with its young labor power.

According to the year 2010 data, the total population of Turkey is 73.7 million and 61% of this population (approximately 45 million people) is under the age of 34. As Fig. 4 below clearly demonstrates, this symbolizes a major difference with the European situation (Turkish Foreign Ministry). When we combine this with the fact that Turkish universities are giving around 500 thousand graduates every year, we could easily deduce that Turkey could make an important contribution and provide well-trained and highly qualified workforce for the EU countries.

Fig. 4: Demographic Advantages of Turkey



Source: Turkish Foreign Ministry

Moreover, Turkey is currently in the midst of its demographic transition, reflecting a fairly rapid decline of the population growth rate, from the 2.5 to 3% range in the 1950s and 1960s, to close to the 1.4% neighborhood, at the beginning of the new century. This implies a rising proportion of the 15 to 64 age group in the total population, starting from a low base, as fewer

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new babies are born to fill the below-15 age group, and as life expectation, while lengthening, is not yet long enough to result in a large proportion of the total population above age 64. This refers to the demographic bonus of Turkey compared to the EU member states, whose demographic transition occurred a generation earlier (Dervis, Gros, Oztrak, Bayar, Isik, 2004: 4). Some analysts refer to this process as the “golden age” for Turkey, similar to those experienced by the East Asian tigers in the past (Hughes, 2004: 15).

On the other hand, with over 68 million mobile phone subscribers and about 37 million wideband Internet users, Turkey has also a drastically expanding information society. This sector has a growing market of 30 billion US Dollars, constituting 4% of GDP of the country. Turkish software market recorded a growth rate of 100% in recent years and attained the volume of 2 billion US Dollars as of 2009. Research and development (R&D) expenditures has tripled between 2003 and 2008 up to 8,5 billion US Dollars. Private sector’s R&D and innovation expenditures increased five-fold between 2003 and 2009. Full-time employment in R&D sector doubled in the same period, making Turkey the fourth fastest growing country in this field. The number of techno parks reached 39 in 2010, from 2 in 2002. A total of 1.450 firms are active in these parks, which add 540 million US Dollars to Turkish exports. Turkey overtook four countries in academic publishing in 2009, reaching the 18<sup>th</sup> position in the world. Between 2003 and 2009, domestic intellectual property right applications and licensing increased five-fold. In the same period, Turkey left seven countries behind in international intellectual property right applications (Turkish Foreign Ministry, 2011).

Last but not least, in the field of tourism, Turkey is one of the top 10 destinations across the globe. Istanbul is the 7<sup>th</sup> most visited city in the world. Ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in terms of visiting tourists and 8<sup>th</sup> in terms of tourism revenues in the world, Turkey possesses not only an infrastructure for seaside tourism, but also for health, culture, faith, spa, congress, winter sports, outdoor sports, hunting and archeological tourism (Turkish Foreign Ministry, Turkish Prime Ministry, Secretariat General for EU Affairs).

#### **iv. Energy Related Benefits**

Europe’s demand for energy is increasing. The European Commission estimated that the overall import dependency of EU on energy will increase

from 53% to about 70% in 2026 (Chislett, 2011: 6). Therefore, Europe is faced with the acute problem of diversification of its energy routes and source countries.

Turkey is in close proximity to the 70 percent of world's energy resources and strategically situated along the energy corridor between Central Asia and Europe. It functions as an energy hub and transit country between the source countries and consumer markets. Thus the role of Turkey in energy diplomacy, in particular for EU, is critical. Major pipeline projects realized and others under construction, which will inevitably contribute to Europe's energy supply security, are enhancing Turkey's role as an important transit country on the Eurasia energy axis and energy hub in the region (Turkish Foreign Ministry, 2009).

As International Crisis Group has mentioned likewise, Turkey's geo-strategic position straddling East and West suits it to act as an ally in the EU's quest for energy security. It already provides crucial transit of oil by pipeline from Azerbaijan and Iraq, as well as for tankers of oil loaded at Black Sea ports and passing through the Bosphorus, with the total amount in excess of four million barrels per day. Turkey could also aid the EU to reduce its reliance on the monopolistic Russian natural gas, by allowing the transport of gas from alternative sources (ICG; 2007: 7).

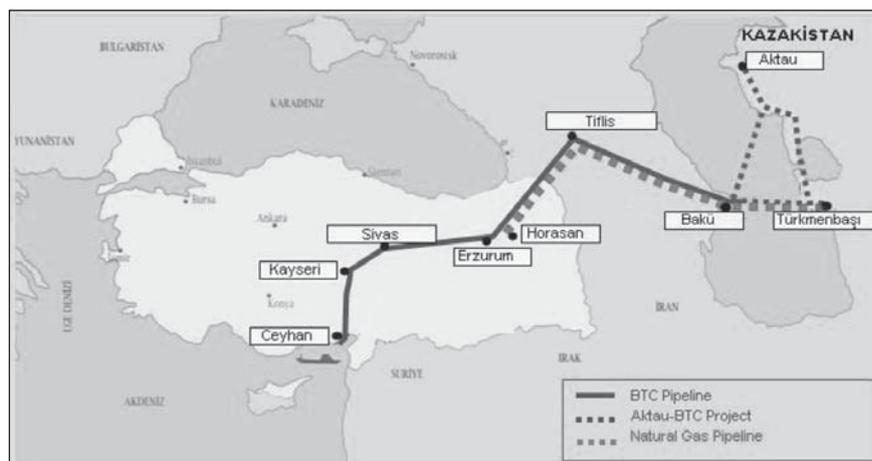
To this end, Turkey has concentrated its efforts for the transportation of Caspian oil and gas reserves to Western markets on the realization of the East-West Energy Corridor, often referred to as the Silk Road of the 21st Century. The pipeline projects linking the Caucasus and Central Asia to Europe will be essential for the region's integration with the West. Secure and commercially profitable pipelines will help bring stability and prosperity to the region as well (Turkish Foreign Ministry, 2009).

One of the core components of the East-West Energy Corridor is the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline. BTC is a dedicated crude oil pipeline system that extends from the Azeri-Chirag-Deepwater Gunashli (ACG) field through Azerbaijan and Georgia to a terminal at Ceyhan on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey, bypassing the environmentally sensitive Black Sea and the Turkish Straits. The pipeline can transport up to 1 million barrels per day (approximately 1.5% of the world's oil supply), and at 1760 kilometers is the second longest of its kind in the world. The first cargo of oil, which had traveled through the BTC pipeline to Ceyhan,

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has been loaded onto a tanker on 4 June 2006 (Turkish Foreign Ministry, 2009).

Fig. 5: Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) pipelines



Source: Turkish Foreign Ministry

The second major component of the East-West Energy Corridor is the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) Natural Gas Pipeline. BTE became operational as of 3 July 2007. Designed to transport natural gas from the Shah Deniz field in the Azerbaijan sector of the Caspian Sea, through Georgia and on to the Georgia-Turkey border, it is envisaged that the pipeline will export 6.6 billion cubic meters a year. It is also considered as the first leg of the Trans-Caspian Natural Gas Pipeline Project which will tap into the world's 4<sup>th</sup> largest natural gas reserves located in Turkmenistan and those in Kazakhstan. The Trans-Caspian Natural Gas Project is of particular urgency as it will contribute to the further diversification of routes and resources (Turkish Foreign Ministry, 2009).

Nabucco pipeline is also very important from European perspective as it will bring natural gas from Central Asia (especially Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan with whom Turkey has close relations) to Austria via Turkey. The agreement was signed in Ankara in 2009 and construction is due to start in 2012. It is 3,300 km long and bypasses the dependency on Russia for European states as it does not pass from Russian territory (Chislett, 2011: 7-8).

Blue Stream Project that enables Russian supply of natural gas to Turkey also materialized in 2003. Other important projects are Turkey-Greece

Interconnector, Southern Europe Gas Ring Project and Arab Natural Gas Pipeline. Turkey is also interested in the development of Iraqi natural gas reserves (Turkish Foreign Ministry, 2009).

Turkey's objective is to become Europe's fourth main artery of energy supply following Norway, Russia and Algeria through realization of these projects. This will open up a new avenue for cooperation between Turkey and the EU that will also reinforce Europe's ties to Asia. After the Blue Stream Natural Gas Pipeline, Turkey is now working on the Samsun-Ceyhan By-Pass Oil Pipeline and the Turkey-Israel Energy Corridor projects. Moreover, through the completion of the projects cited above and more, it is anticipated that 6 to 7% of global oil supply will transit Turkey by 2012 and that Ceyhan will become a major energy hub and the largest oil outlet terminal in the Eastern Mediterranean (Turkish Foreign Ministry, 2009).

Last but not least, Turkey is one of the richest countries with regard to renewable energy resources (5<sup>th</sup> in geothermal and 8<sup>th</sup> in hydroelectric resources). Therefore, Turkey's membership in the EU will certainly help the latter to increase the share of its renewable sources in its energy consumption (Turkish Prime Ministry, Secretariat General for EU Affairs).

#### **v. Socio-Cultural Benefits**

On the way towards its "supranationalist" transformation, Europe and the EU of the future should be based upon the philosophy of consolidation rather than the division of cultures. This is the basic imagination of a Europe, which has a high level of communication with all different societies all over the world, based on the principles of "common good" and "ethics of coexistence".

This will simply be the clear proof of the view that EU is an inclusive and tolerant community, based not on a common religion but universal values of liberty, democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights.

Exactly at that point, Turkish membership in the EU steps in the picture as a concrete indicator of the fact that the EU is not a "Christian" club. Turkish accession will mean that the EU is a secular body, blind to religion with respect to its membership. This will be a strong message to the entire

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world that the “Clash of Civilizations” theory is not valid and constitute the most visible evidence of the compatibility of Islam and democracy (The Independent Commission on Turkey, 2004: 16).

Being a co-sponsor of the Alliance of Civilizations (AOC) Initiative together with Spain, Turkey aims to facilitate dialogue between different cultures via fighting against biases, prejudices, misperceptions and stereotypes among them (Bayar: 2006). Hence Turkish membership to the EU will be a powerful symbol of this positive universalism. Indeed, many in the Muslim world will assess this process as the triumph of universal values, multi-culturalism and tolerance. They will be persuaded that cultural or religious differences do not prevent societies from embracing each other and charting towards a common future on the basis of universal values (Bayar, 2011).

As Mr. Stefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy has recently stated, the ongoing events in the Middle East and North Africa have highlighted Turkey’s democracy, stability and prosperity and the citizens living in these countries are watching Turkey, advocating the standards and values that they are fighting for now (Füle, 2011: 3). According to the results of a public opinion survey, 61% of respondents from seven Arab countries take Turkey as a model country for the Arab world (Chislett, 2011: 17). Similarly current Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet has recently mentioned that, reform minded Arab leaders will more likely look at Turkey and Turkey’s influence will be more persuasive to the peoples of these countries than the messages of some EU members (Paet, 2011).

Once these countries will see Turkey inside the club, this will significantly promote the prestige and reputation of the EU in their eyes. This will provide EU the tools to reach these countries in a more direct and effective way. As Bobinski argued, if EU continues to drag its feet on Turkey’s accession negotiations, then it would not only lose a country which the Arab world views as a successful example of a Muslim democracy but also forgoes the opportunity to avail itself of Turkey’s historical imagination and the sensitivities to the Middle East and North Africa which that brings (Bobinski, 2011: 12). Similarly, former EU Commissioner and Hungarian Foreign Minister Balazs stated that given the most recent events across the Arab region, consolidation and stabilization of the situation, and the exclusion of any dangerous fundamentalist influence is a high priority on

the European agenda. In that context, Turkey could play an extremely important role as a potential mediator. This is simply the proof that not only Turkey needs Europe for its further modernization and welfare, but Europe needs Turkey as well for its stability and security (Balazs, 2011: 3).

## CONCLUSION

Due to its geo-strategic position and with its current principles on foreign policy, Turkey will add vital contribution to EU's foreign and neighborhood policy and provide new opportunities for Europe. Likewise, as a strong NATO member and with its considerable military capabilities, Turkey is a great value for the emerging European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). Similarly, as the 16th largest economy in the world and 6th in Europe as well as with its young, well-trained and highly qualified workforce, Turkey presents a crucial opportunity to offset the ageing EU societies. Regarding the energy related benefits, as an energy hub and transit country in close proximity to the 70 percent of world energy resources, Turkey's membership to the EU will significantly provide the latter to diversify its energy routes and source countries. Last but not least, as a country belonging to both to the Western and Eastern culture and civilizations, Turkish membership will promote the prestige of EU in the eyes of the world community as the champion of respect for universal values and multi-culturalism.

EU's former High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy and former Secretary General of NATO, Javier Solana recently said that if Europe wants to be an active global power instead of a museum, it needs the fresh perspective and energy of the people of Turkey (Solana, 2011). In 2004, EU has promised full membership of Turkey to EU. Therefore, offering alternative forms of membership in the aftermath of this decision is totally against the principle of *pacta sunt servanda*. Rules of the game cannot be changed in the middle of the game, *ex proprio vigore*. As the Reflection Group has clearly mentioned, "the Union must honor its commitments with regard to the current official candidates, including Turkey, and carry on with the negotiation process" (The Reflection Group, 2010: 36).

Therefore, rather than politically exploiting the Turkish membership issue in internal discussions or using it as a proxy for popular concerns on immigration, fear of Islam, unemployment and general dissatisfaction with

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EU (The Independent Commission on Turkey, 2009: 8), European leaders should figure out and internalize the variety of benefits that Turkey's accession will bring in the club and act in a visionary manner for the good of both parties.

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# European Political Elites’ Discourses on the Accession of Turkey to the EU: Discussing Europe through Turkish Spectacles?

Luis Bouza Garcia<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Debates about the accession of Turkey to the European Union (EU) are often analysed from an internal politics perspective by putting emphasis on the manipulation of the fears of public about immigration and cultural diversity. This article analyses discourses by leaders of 3 member states, the United Kingdom, Spain and France, in order to understand how positions towards Turkish accession are justified by political elites. The analysis suggests that positions towards Turkey do not depend primarily on considerations on Turkey *per se* but rather on how political actors perceive the position of their country within the European Union. Although the validity of this conclusion could be challenged by pointing out that obviously Turkey’s cultural difference does play a role in the construction of public opinion in some countries such as the Netherlands, Germany and Austria, the article argues that the positions of political elites in these countries are still formed depending on their positions of these actors in the EU field. Although the analysis does not reveal a pan European debate as there is no common framing, it appears that the result of Turkey’s membership application does not essentially depend on the negative attitudes of some public opinions but rather on its perception within the EU political field.

## KEYWORDS

Discourse analysis, European political field, Turkish accession to the EU, European public opinion

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ISSN 1855-7694 © 2011 European Perspectives, UDK: 327 (4)

## **INTRODUCTION**

The history of the relations between the European Union (EU) and Turkey is already a long one. This simple remark must be borne in mind when addressing the many paradoxes of this relation: the EU and Turkey have undergone massive change since the signature of the Ankara Agreement back in the 1960s. This can partly explain the evolution of the European public opinion and political elites on the question of the Turkish accession: whereas the economic benefits of Turkey joining the EU are generally perceived positively, the EU is no longer perceived as an economic project. Thus, this application is a source of political contention.

This article addresses the question of how EU leaders form their positions towards the accession of Turkey to the EU. The article argues that political elites' positions are influenced by their conceptions of the nature of the European integration project and their position in the EU political field rather than by the need to satisfy national public opinions.

The first section outlines the functions that discourses about Turkey fulfil within the European political field and discusses the methodological approach followed throughout this analysis. The second section discusses the importance of the contexts under which discourses were produced as a way to consider the discursive strategies of the actors. The third section presents the essential aspects of the three actors' discourses on the Turkish accession, by considering both the internal structure of these as well as the references to other aspects of European integration that are useful to understand their positions on Turkey. The last section before the conclusion discusses the possible influence of the cases selection method on the findings.

## **DEBATING TURKEY, OR DEBATING EUROPE? ANALYSIS METHODS**

This article addresses the way in which EU leaders speak about the accession of Turkey to the EU in order to contribute to the analysis of the reasons why the Turkish application has become a contentious issue in EU politics. This approach is coherent with some recent sociological studies considering the role of political actors in the construction of the Turkish application (Tekin 2008, Visier 2009). This approach assumes that there are no "natural reasons" for the process to become contentious. This article takes an institutionalist approach and hypothesises that the positions of

EU member states' leaders on Turkey are a consequence of their position and their role within the EU political field, which is itself dependent to a large extent to that of their country.

#### **a. Elites' discourse about the Turkish accession**

The article builds on an analysis of discourses on the accession of Turkey to the EU by Nicolas Sarkozy (France), José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (Spain) and David Miliband (United Kingdom - UK). These are speeches, texts in critical discourse analysis terminology (Fairlough 2003) by 3 EU member states key political actors, produced in different contexts. Reference to the context in which the discourse is produced is an important piece of information that could be ignored by focusing exclusively on the transcripts of speeches. The actors whose discourses are analysed here come from France, Spain and Britain. The choice of these countries corresponds both to a methodological and practical rationale. The methodological rationale is that the positions of the actors are very different, both concerning the position towards the Turkish accession as concerning the kinds of discourses and the actors' position in the EU field. This allows a comparison and analysis of how divergences in positions in the field influence the stakes' taking on Turkish accession. The three political actors whose discourse is analysed seem today to be pretty much on the decay: David Miliband is no longer the UK's foreign minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero will cease his mandate as Spanish President no later than March 2012 and Nicolas Sarkozy's popularity is much weaker than on the day of his election. However, these texts remain equally interesting in themselves and in particular in relation to each other. They were all produced in the period going from 2007 to 2009, when the debate on the accession of Turkey to the EU was certainly at its highest point. Additionally, the interesting thing is that they provide an interesting case of study of the functioning of an elite public, in that these leaders' discourses are, the article argues, essentially aimed at other political leaders and elites. In this sense, although they do not reflect the most recent evolutions of the debate on Turkey in these countries or the EU overall, they provide both sufficient distance from the concrete events and a very clear case for analysing them as a whole. Regarding the practical rationale, these discourses are produced in languages spoken by the author and they can thus be analysed in depth.

The discourses by Nicolas Sarkozy that are considered here are his speech on the Mediterranean Union delivered in Toulon in February 2007 (Sarkozy 2007 a) and his speech on the future of Europe delivered in Nîmes in May 2009 (Sarkozy 2009). None of these is a speech specifically on Turkey, although they elaborate Sarkozy's position about Turkey. It is thus noticeable that Sarkozy's positions on Turkey are elaborated as part of a wider political or geopolitical vision, in the first case on a project for the future of the Mediterranean and in the second on the vision of Europe. In general, Sarkozy's position on Turkey is said to be a cultural one: Turkey is presented as either not a European country or incompatible with European identity, which is largely Christian (Sarkozy 2009). However, the analysis below demonstrates that considering the place of Turkey within the frame of these specific speeches allows considering alternative discursive strategies motivated by a vision of the EU and his own position within that field. Quite importantly, these discourses are pronounced in a context of high political salience and symbolism. This could play for an interpretation pointing out that Sarkozy is playing internal politics on this issue. However, it must be considered that the discourse uttered in these circumstances is addressed as well to other political actors, including those outside the French political field.

On the contrary José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero discourse about Turkish membership has never been made through a speech on the future of Europe but rather on the occasion of bilateral meetings, particularly concerning the "Alliance of civilisations" project. The study focuses on 4 speeches by Rodríguez Zapatero on the occasion of a meeting of Turkish and Spanish businessmen (Rodríguez Zapatero 2008), at the opening of the Academic Year at Bahçeşehir University (Rodríguez Zapatero, 2009 b), at a meeting with AKP officials for the dinner at the end of the Ramadan (Rodríguez Zapatero 2009 c) and at a bilateral conference in Istanbul (Rodríguez Zapatero 2009 a). The Spanish President argues that his position in favour of Turkey joining the EU derives of his pro-European attitude and his concern for the stability of the Mediterranean and the role of the EU in the world.

The UK is usually considered a pro-enlargement country, both because its free trade tradition but also as a way to counterbalance the deepening of European integration. The case of the UK's political elite is interesting both by their strong support of Turkey and on the other hand the small relevance of the issue. In fact, there were very few references by Gordon

Brown to the Turkish application, and the strongest support came from his Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, whose speeches are considered here. Three speeches by David Miliband will be analysed. The first is a speech at the opening of the Academic Year at the College of Europe in November 2007 (Miliband 2007), the second a press conference after a bilateral meeting between Miliband and the then Turkish Foreign Affairs Minister Babacan in November 2008 (Miliband 2008) and the third is a press conference delivered after a recent official visit to Turkey in May 2009 (2009). The context of these speeches is similar to those by Rodríguez Zapatero. They were delivered on the occasion of bilateral meetings or in an academic context, although in the latter case, the speech concerns the future of the European Union, rather than bilateral relations.

#### **b. Analysing discourses about Turkey as a way to take affirm positions in the EU political field**

According to Jorgensen and Phillips (2002), discourse has become a fashionable term. This obliges analysts to be clear as to what they mean by this notion. Discourse is understood here as “a particular way of talking about and understanding [...] an aspect of the world” (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002) that operates as “means for different forces to advance their interests and projects” (Howarth 2000). Statements and texts about the Turkish accession to the European Union are extremely rich and very diverse. Those analysed here are a small, though fairly coherent, sample, which suggests that they belong to the same “discursive formation” (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 12) or “order of discourse” (Fairclough 2003: 24).

According to the institutionalist approach mentioned, this article relies on field theory (Martin 2003) and particularly on Pierre Bourdieu's conception of the political field (Bourdieu 2002), discourse will be approached in a dualist analytical way akin to that of Norman Fairclough's (2003). In this sense, positions towards Turkey are not considered as exclusively discursive, since discourses are decisively influenced by the position of the actors within their social structure. The article considers the positions about Turkey as an expression of a competition over a sufficiently relevant stake for the EU level political field to take part in it.

The article intends to test the hypothesis that top EU political actors' discourses about the accession of Turkey to the EU are a way to affirm a

position within the EU political field. This field is considered as a space of positions which is structured by the struggle between the actors over these positions. The actors' position depend of their own political capital endowment, their relative location "vis à vis" the other actors of the field and towards the fields issues at stake. Thus, discourses about Turkey must be analysed in relation to the actors' position in the struggle for power in the EU, rather as a result of an ideological perspective on the specifics of Turkey as large Muslim country in the southern flank of the EU. In this sense, the decisive factors for actors' position taking are the views on the future of the EU and secondly the position, both their own and of their country, in the EU's power field.

Without going as far as saying that public opinion does not exist (Bourdieu 2002: 222-235), there is a disconnection between general publics' and elites discourses on the EU in general and in particular regarding the accession of Turkey. Whether the disconnection of different publics is typical of the European Union's public sphere (Eriksen 2007), in the case of the debate about the accession of Turkey it may be tempting to point out that in this case the rejection of the Turkish application by some EU leaders corresponds to their electorates concerns about the integration of a large Muslim country into the EU (Tekin 2008).

However, this article adopts the opposite argument: it is elite discourses that shape public opinions' attitudes towards the accession of Turkey. The evidence for supporting this point is that in some countries, such as Spain or the UK, public opinion is either relatively less interested than the political elite or only partially in agreement, as it is the case in the Netherlands or Germany. The case of Angela Merkel is a good example: although her personal position coincides with that of France's Nicolas Sarkozy, that is, that Turkey should be offered a special partnership but no full EU membership, the official position of the German chancellor is that Turkey's application could result in full membership as result of the principle "*pacta sunt servanda*" (European Stability Initiative 2006 b). This is the consequence of Germany's foreign policy tendency to be the product of a general consensus between the various political forces of the country<sup>2</sup>.

The following section analyses these discourses paying particular attention to specific sections of the texts which are quoted here in the original

<sup>2</sup> I'm grateful to Dr. Senem Aydin Düzgit for raising that point during the debate in the International Workshop in Istanbul in October 2009.

languages. Translations into English for these short quotes by Sarkozy and Zapatero are included in the footnotes.

## **ANALYSING REFERENCES TO EUROPE IN DISCOURSES ON TURKEY**

### **c. Nicolas Sarkozy – France**

In his speeches Sarkozy rejects the Turkish application by arguing that it does not qualify for EU membership for substantial reasons. In his discourse of Toulon, as in other circumstances, Sarkozy argues that Turkey “is not a European country”. In particular, Sarkozy has used a geographical argument in many occasions, and argued that every school child knows that Turkey is not in Europe but in Asia Minor (Sarkozy 2007b). Additionally, in his discourse in Nîmes, Sarkozy argues that the EU should be proud of its Christian heritage<sup>3</sup>, thus closing any possible enlargement to Turkey.

However, the main arguments of the French president are these “culturalist” opinions. In both discourses, Sarkozy uses the French word “vocation”, similar to German’s “beruf” in that it applies to what a person is destined to become. The use of this notion makes Sarkozy’s discourse more nuanced, as in his view the EU should reject Turkey both for identity reasons but more importantly, and somehow typical of French political approach to identity since Ernest Renan, because Turkey cannot be reconciled with the EU’s common project and vision of the world. Sarkozy does deliberately not elaborate on that so as to let the audience come to its own conclusions on why Turkey does not share this project. That said, Sarkozy’s discourse offers many revealing aspects as to the reasons why Turkey does not fit into the project.

Firstly, as mentioned earlier, in Sarkozy’s speeches Turkey appears in the context of a broader discussion. In both speeches Turkey’s application is framed as part of a strategy seeking to weaken Europe by denying its specific identity. Moreover, the rejection of Turkey is made in parallel to the call for strengthening Europe’s will, that is, govern, steer and foster its

<sup>3</sup> Sarkozy (2009) says that Europe must not repent of its Christian heritage in the oral performance of the Nîmes speech, at 21:59, video available at [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x97cyo\\_discours-nicolas-sarkozy-nimes-6-ma\\_news](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x97cyo_discours-nicolas-sarkozy-nimes-6-ma_news) consulted last on 07/08/2010.

unity. Consequently, Turkey is associated with Europe losing control over itself and its application is rejected for the sake of a stronger European unity. This view is synthetically but clearly stated in his speech in Toulon, still as candidate to France's presidency:

«L'Europe ne peut pas s'étendre indéfiniment. L'Europe si elle veut avoir une identité doit avoir des frontières et donc des limites. L'Europe si elle veut avoir une puissance ne peut pas se diluer sans cesse. L'Europe si elle veut pouvoir fonctionner ne peut pas s'élargir sans arrêt.»<sup>4</sup>

This section does fit well into the general frame elaborated in the introduction of the speech which denounces that the political elite has been defeatist for a long time, letting social situations be degraded and France's role diminished. Sarkozy argues that times are come for action, and even blunt action where necessary.

The speech delivered in Nîmes at the beginning of the EU 2009 election campaign elaborates more on this view. The speech is build around a notion that structures the whole discourse, the reinforcement of Europe's will, which needs that some structural conditions be met. This notion appears at the beginning of the section where the Turkish application is addressed, so as to point out that having clear borders is necessary to have a strong political will. The relation between enlargement and Europe's weakening is put bluntly in this section: "Europe is diluted in an endless enlargement" (Sarkozy 2009). Europe's identity and will to act depend on setting a clear border and friendly relations with the neighbours.

Sarkozy argues that his vision of Europe is not that of a closed fortress, and argues that Europe's openness is demonstrated by overseas Commonwealths and America and the Mediterranean, as well as, remarkably, the universal heritage of Greece, Rome and Christianity (Sarkozy 2009). The last word is stressed. Diversity is the reason why France wants to create the Union for the Mediterranean. However, diversity cannot be used to dilute Europe's will and unity. The paragraph elaborates on the consequences of these divergent views. All that justifies the opposition to any further enlargement in the following paragraph, since EU institutions are already too inefficient due to increased membership:

<sup>4</sup> Sarkozy (2007): "Europe cannot extend itself endlessly. If Europe wants to have an identity, it must have borders and thus limits. If Europe wants to have power it must stopping diluting itself endlessly. If Europe wants to be able to operate it cannot enlarge without stop."

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« Pour que l'Europe veuille quelque chose, il faut aussi qu'elle puisse être gouvernée. Il faut que ses procédures, que ses institutions ne la réduisent pas à l'impuissance. C'est pourquoi la France a voulu sortir de la crise ouverte par le rejet de la Constitution Européenne. Il fallait débloquent l'Europe. »<sup>5</sup>

So in Sarkozy's discourse Turkey is rejected not because it is absolutely different, as a first reading would imply, but because letting it join the EU would mean more diversity and thus a reduction of the ability to govern Europe (see Goulard 2004 and Winkler 2007 for the elaboration of this point, or Nicolaïdis 2007 for the opposing view). This association with France's will to carry out the Lisbon Treaty leaves the following conclusion ready for the "bon entendeur": further enlargement, let alone to a country so big as Turkey, risks to undermine France's role and power in Europe.

Most interestingly, Sarkozy, as other opponents of Turkey's EU accession in France (Tekin 2008), argues that he is a good friend of Turkey and this is why he is voicing his opposition frankly. In his own words:

« Ce n'est pas respecter ses amis que de leur faire des promesses que l'on ne tiendra jamais. »<sup>6</sup>

Sarkozy is saying that the EU, collectively, is not going to uphold its promises. In this sense, Sarkozy is introducing the following theme: most EU leaders are opposed to Turkish membership but do not say it, as they hope Turkey will give up at a certain point. So by saying that he is telling the uncomfortable truth he builds his position on the EU field: he offers a possible alternative (union for the Mediterranean) and can point out that the position of other actors is less responsible or realist than his own.

In this sense, Sarkozy's arguments can be clearly put in the context not only of his vision and project for the European Union, but on his own stance within the EU political field. In this sense, Sarkozy stands for a Europe with a more active role but where at the same time, states keep control of the agenda and more decisions are taken in intergovernmental features. In this

<sup>5</sup> Sarkozy (2009): "For Europe to want something, it is necessary that it can be governed. Its procedures, its institutions must not make it powerless. That's why France wanted to get out of the crisis open by the rejection of the European Constitution. De-blocking Europe was necessary"

<sup>6</sup> Sarkozy (2009), "Making promises that you will never uphold is not to respect your friends."

view, large member states have a main role to play. This view is clearly set in the Lisbon Treaty: the European Council acquires an increased role via the nomination of a president and foreign affairs “non-minister” and large member states have a bigger voting power in the Council of Ministers. In this sense, Sarkozy directly claims authorship for this “working Europe”. Enlargement in his view displaces the efforts of the EU to integrate more diversity, which in turn makes the EU more difficult to govern. So in this sense, Turkey is a paramount obstacle: not only it encompasses extreme diversity (Muslim, poorer, largely agriculture oriented and turned towards the Mediterranean and the Middle East) but it is a large member state that could actually totally change EU politics.

So by rejecting Turkish application Sarkozy is refusing to share decision making power and seeks to defend his own role as a promoter of a form of a “core Europe” more integrated EU.

#### **d. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero - Spain**

For the Spanish president (Spanish constitutional term for Prime Minister), the application of Turkey is advantageous for both sides, in economic and strategic terms. Moreover, he considers that the EU must accept Turkey’s application out of respect for some of its own values such as peace, international cooperation and cultural diversity. A detailed analysis of Zapatero’s discourse reveals that together with these, Spain’s own economic interests and strategic considerations are key aspects of his position.

Firstly, contrary to Sarkozy, he considers that it is possible to stand for more European integration and further enlargement. Turkey would not only enrich the European Union, but it would be an essential feature for a stronger Europe in the world. Firstly, Turkey is an important regional actor in military and diplomatic terms. But most importantly, Zapatero considers that Turkish membership of the EU would be a working example of how to solve some of the embedded world conflicts.

When it comes to values, Zapatero considers that these are not given, but that they are firstly shared by populations and elites and then implemented in long, and sometimes harsh, accession negotiations. He proposes the example of the Spanish accession to the EU as evidence for this.

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So, as in the case of Sarkozy, Zapatero's position on Turkey derives directly of his vision of the European project. As for Sarkozy, his discourse must be understood in the context of his and Spain's position in the EU political field. So he does not refrain from saying that Turkey and Spain share some regional interests and that Turkey's membership would serve the Spanish national interest directly and indirectly:

“Para España, Turquía es un país de importancia estratégica en nuestras relaciones, no sólo por la amistad que nos une, sino por intereses compartidos. Somos países mediterráneos, sensibles a la estabilidad y prosperidad de esta región y a la promoción del proceso de paz en Oriente Medio. España reconoce en Turquía a un actor regional de primer orden y valora su contribución a las iniciativas multilaterales.”<sup>7</sup>

This is particularly clear when it comes to bilateral trade and investment flows.

“Turquía es un país estratégico para nuestras relaciones económicas. El Gobierno de España considera que una política exterior para nuestro país ha de contar, de manera singular, con lo que representa Turquía y, de manera singular, en el ámbito económico y de servicio a las empresas. Adelante, hagan negocios.”<sup>8</sup>

In the case of the strategic orientation, Zapatero considers that the contribution by Turkey may be particularly relevant to Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). However, it is in the field of intercultural understanding where he considers that the EU needs Turkey the most. In this sense, Turkish membership could be a good example for the Mediterranean and Middle East region. This is clearly expressed by the project of an Alliance of civilisations.

Occasionally, Zapatero insists that the accession process presents sufficient safeguards to ensure that Turkey will only join after complying with EU values and political standards. The question of an alternative to

<sup>7</sup> Rodríguez Zapatero (2009 c) “Turkey is a country of strategic importance for Spain in our relations, not only because of the friendship that unites us, but because of our shared interests. We are Mediterranean countries, sensitive to the stability and prosperity of this region and to the promotion of the peace process in the Middle East. Spain finds in Turkey a regional actor of prime importance and appreciates its contribution to regional initiatives.”

<sup>8</sup> Rodríguez Zapatero (2008), “Turkey is a strategic country for our economic relationships. The Spanish Government considers that our country's foreign policy must take into consideration what Turkey represents today, and particularly in the domains of economy and services to companies. Let's go, make business.”

enlargement is not given thought, as Turkey is considered to be ready for enlargement since it is following a fast modernisation track and shares EU values.

Turkey appears in Zapatero's discourse as a strategic and business opportunity that additionally can contribute to appease relations between the EU and the Muslim world. This goes in hand with Zapatero's and Spain role in the EU: a peripheral actor seeking to use the EU to maximise its role in the region. Moreover, supporting Turkey's application is coherent with the way in which Zapatero has sought to build his profile as a European leader and international actor, that of an actor seeking to mediate between cultures and trying to avoid confrontations.

#### **e. David Miliband – United Kingdom**

Finally, David Miliband's speeches are very interesting and strongly reflect British preferences for European integration. The discourse on Turkey is thus characterised by two aspects: the first is the support to Turkish accession in that it reinforces the preferred version of EU integration for the UK and the second is an effort to "normalise" the issue and to focus on the importance of the process.

In the speeches chosen David Miliband references to Turkey are always associated to the UK's traditional pro-enlargement attitudes. Traditionally the UK has supported enlargement as a way to balance what it sees as federalist tendencies. Thus, referring to Margaret Thatcher's fears on the emergence of a European superstate, Mr Miliband argues that:

"Open markets, subsidiarity, better regulation and enlargement are now far more part of the conventional vocabulary of European debate than a United States of Europe, centralised taxation or a common industrial policy. The truth is that the EU has enlarged, remodelled and opened up. It is not and is not going to become a superstate."<sup>9</sup>

The UK supports enlargement not only by its inherent benefits (see below) but particularly because it shapes the EU in the sense the UK prefers. The previous quote associates enlargement with economic liberalisation and openness to the world. In fact, contrary to Nicolas Sarkozy, Mr Miliband

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<sup>9</sup> Miliband 2007

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does not see a need to define Europe's borders. He does rather support a process where the distinction between EU members and non members is increasingly blurred.

“The goal must be a multilateral free-trade zone around our periphery – a version of the European Free Trade Association that could gradually bring the countries of the Mahgreb, the Middle-East and Eastern Europe in line with the single-market, not as an alternative to membership, but potentially as a step towards it.”<sup>10</sup>

Thus Turkish membership appears just as an epitome of this openness towards the neighbours able to end in enlargement. The reference to the European Free Trade Association, EFTA, launched by the UK in the 60s as a way to counterbalance the then EEC is remarkable in this sense.

The UK does not just support enlargement as a way to shape the EU. It sees inherent benefits in the process:

“It's right for us and it is right for you and it is right for Europe. I think that the benefits will be political and cultural as well as economic.”<sup>11</sup>

For Miliband the EU needs to be open in order to be successful in a global world, and accepting Turkey as a member is an example of the necessary openness.

“I think that the economic and social changes that we've seen around the world [...] reinforce the case for Europe being open and Europe looking outwards, and I think they reinforce the case for the shared vision of Turkey as a full and equal member of the European Union.”<sup>12</sup>

In the last quote the reference to Turkey as an equal member is irrelevant, in that no references to inequality appear in the discourse, if one does not understand it in the context of a debate about a possible “special partnership”, proposed by Merkel and Sarkozy.

Among the political benefits, one appears particularly relevant to David Miliband: the accession of Turkey to the EU would be a bridge between Europe and the Muslim world.

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<sup>10</sup> Miliband 2007

<sup>11</sup> Miliband 2009

<sup>12</sup> Miliband 2009

“If we fail to keep our promises to Turkey, it will signal a deep and dangerous divide between east and west.”<sup>13</sup>

The second dimension of the discourse of David Miliband on Turkey seeks to address the problems raised by the Turkish application. It is interesting to note that in doing so he proceeds by avoiding the political objections related to Turkey’s identity and instead pointing out that the EU’s enlargement process offers ways to address any eventual shortcoming.

“I think it’s very important that we send a loud message that now is an important time for imagination and confidence, not for hesitation and blame.”<sup>14</sup>

In this sense, Miliband is trying to “normalise” the application and say that the only criteria that Turkey has to comply with is successful internal reform in agreement with the Copenhagen criteria and successful achievement of the accession negotiations. Thus keeping the ongoing process open appears as the best way to solve existing problems, including the Cyprus controversy.

“Beyond that, we must keep the door open, retaining the incentive for change that the prospect of membership provides. Being part of Europe should be about abiding by the shared rules – the *acquis* – that embody our shared values by respecting our separate identities and traditions.”<sup>15</sup>

Finally, David Miliband does not explicitly speak about the implications of the application of Turkey to the European Union. However, in his discourse it appears that rejecting Turkey would have as a consequence that EU identity would be a closed one.

“[...] the message to the people of Turkey is that there are people in the European Union committed to make sure that we are not an inward-looking, closed club.”<sup>16</sup>

All in all, David Miliband’s discourse is that of a relatively isolated actor. Although he engages in arguments opposed to those of the other actors, he is not directly involved in the same field as Zapatero or Sarkozy. In this sense, the fact that the Prime Minister is not directly involved in the

<sup>13</sup> Miliband, 2007

<sup>14</sup> Miliband, 2009

<sup>15</sup> Miliband 2007

<sup>16</sup> Miliband 2008

issue implies that it is not perceived as a major power issue by the UK, although it could mean that the UK does not want to overpoliticise the issue. Secondly, the discourse on Turkey is somehow isolated in that it remains deeply rooted in the UK's preferences, which are those of a peripheral actor, preferring a reduced level of integration but the largest possible extension of the borders for economic and geopolitical reasons.

**f. Public opinion matters, doesn't it? The cases of the Netherlands, Germany and the Armenian Genocide legislation in France**

The analysis outlined above could be criticised by pointing out a bias in the fact that only one country where public opinion polls indicate strong opposition to the accession of Turkey to the European Union has been considered, that is France (Barysch 2007), and that in other countries such as Germany or the Netherlands political elites discourses on the accession of Turkey are decisively influenced by public opinions. This criticism will be addressed in a double way. Firstly, the situation in the two countries mentioned above will be considered in order to analyse whether political elites position taking follows public opinion, although as said in section 2 the authors' linguistic skills impedes going. It will be argued that as it is the case in the 3 countries analysed above, even in the case of countries with very strong opposition the discourse of political elites remains relatively independent from the considerations among public opinions. Secondly, the case of France will be reconsidered, with particular reference to this country's elites' attitudes towards the Armenian genocide. It will be argued that the first aim of the debates on this matter is not to satisfy this country's large Armenian community, but to define particular standards for Turkey's accession to the EU.

In the Netherlands, the approach of political parties is typical of the consociational system of the country. Positions by political parties concerning the Turkish application process are elaborated in a low profile environment and treated as a subject relating to different policies and influenced by a long tradition of support for enlargement. Along these lines, political parties seem to take sides along the lines of their traditional positions towards enlargement and the EU (European Stability Initiative 2006 a), rather than on the issue of internal identity considerations, contrary to the issues raised by some populist parties. The participation of a party in consultations on foreign policy seems to be the key factor explaining favourable

positions of its elites towards Turkey's EU accession. In this sense, there seems to be a strong pressure from the field to adapt behaviours by the agents. Interestingly, the most notable sceptical attitude among the "main parties" is the former Dutch Commissioner Bolkenstein. His position in Brussels trying to gain a voice from outside the Dutch political field may be an explanation of this attitude.

The picture in Germany is that of a still more important divide between government and the rest of the elite. In this sense it is notable that the Chancellor herself has been against Turkish accession, but accepted to continue the negotiation process because of a sense of responsibility towards the government's foreign policy. It must be noted that this position is not that of the majority in her party. This position does not seem to have changed after the government agreement with the liberals.

Finally, the case of France deserves particular attention. The scepticism of French elites concerning the accession of Turkey to the EU is quite salient. It has been used by some actors such as Giscard d'Estaing, who have sought to politicise European integration (Visier 2009), in particular in the context of the referendum on the European constitution, which has been related to the banalisation of extreme right discourses (Tekin 2008). Another manifestation of this politicisation would be France's legislation recognising the crimes against the Armenians in 1915 as genocide. The latter matter could be considered as evidence for the fact that French elites are using the Turkish accession as a matter of internal politics, in particular for satisfying the Armenian community.

However, this matter can be analysed with the same grid taken in the previous section. To start with, France's recognition of the Armenian genocide is not limited to internal politics. Indeed, French elites have sought to establish the recognition by Turkey of the 1915 events as a genocide as an additional condition for Turkey's accession to the EU. In this sense, Presidents Chirac and Sarkozy, as well as Michel Barnier, former Foreign Affairs minister and serving EU Commissioner, have put forward that Turkey would have to recognise the Armenian genocide in order to join the EU. By adding a sort of 4<sup>th</sup> post Copenhagen criterion, French elites have sought to create a frame justifying the rejection of the Turkish accession. This is clear when the time frame is considered: it was not until Turkey was recognised as a candidate in Helsinki in 1999 that the Armenian genocide was recognised in France in 2001, and subsequently turned into an

additional accession criterion. Discursively, these actors have sought to justify this position in European terms, by pointing out that, inasmuch as it would have been impossible to proceed with European integration in the 50s had Germany not recognised its responsibilities in the Second World War, it would be impossible for Turkey to contribute to the EU without fulfilling its “memory duties”.

Although it is impossible to extend the analysis further, it seems that both in the case of France as in the Netherlands and Germany, elite positions on the accession of Turkey to the EU are relatively independent from those of the public opinion, and do rather depend on the actors' position in the political field and their role in the formulation of their countries European policies.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis above shows that, contrary to what is suggested in some debates, the fears of national public opinions (LaGro and Jørgensen 2007, Tekin 2008) are not the systematic reason behind the formation of the political elites' positions towards the Turkish application but rather depends on the position of political actors in the EU political field. The analysis carried out seems to confirm this for the three cases analysed in detail. This is not to say that these discourses are not addressed to national public opinions. Although EU leaders behave according to their situation on the EU field when making their attitudes towards the accession of Turkey, this is far from meaning that there is a European debate on the issue, although it appears that in some cases EU leaders reply to each others arguments. National public opinion remains the main addressees of the discourses. However, this does not mean that leaders are using Turkey as a way to take positions on internal issues like immigration or multiculturalism (LaGro and Jørgensen 2007, Tekin 2008). They are rather using discourses about Turkey as a way to put forward their view on the future of the EU to their national publics (Visier 2009). So the EU leaders' discourses about Turkey are a way to promote visions of the EU that are coherent with their positions in the EU political field.

Concerning the cases of the Netherlands and Germany, the position of political elites in the European political field seems to play an indirect influence, via an effect on the preferences retained by the actors in internal decisions. Consequently, it is the internal configuration of the political

field which seems decisive there, although previous compromises and traditional policy preferences seem important for triggering the logic of appropriateness among the actors.

The motivations behind elites discourses revealed by this analysis are quite telling about the structure of the emerging European public sphere. On the one hand, positions on the accession of Turkey to the EU are essentially motivated by the political capital endowment of actors at the national level. In this sense, it is their position within the national political field and their interpretation of their country's European policies that influence their positions against or in favour of the accession of Turkey to the EU. On the other hand, it appears quite clearly that the 3 discourses on the accession of Turkey to the EU that have been analysed in detail here are European discourses in the sense that they put forward 3 different visions of the future of the EU and how the Turkish accession would affect them.

Does that correspond to any form of trans-European debate? It appears that the actors considered are challenging each others arguments, although this is only a minor part of their discourse. However, although the discourses are European, in that one could agree with any of them without sharing the nationality of the speaker and that they correspond to visions of the EU, they are not addressed to a pan European general public. In this sense, none of these discourses, with the possible exception of Sarkozy's, aims to create a pan-European debate that would serve the actor to advance his preferences. However, this does not mean that elite discourses on Turkey are made only for their peers in European fields. Even if these discourses do not contribute to the emergence of a European public space, they do contribute to the Europeanisation of national debates, as discourses on Turkey convey a number of messages on the EU. In this sense the politisation of the Turkish candidacy (Visier 2009) provides a series of frames for the political interpretation of the EU by the general public.

However, it must be asked to what extent this division between elite and public views is sustainable in a democratic Union. Without implying that elites should change their discourse to encompass general public's fears, it is up to political scientists to research why in the particular case of Turkey this drift seems so difficult to overcome.

The conclusion of this analysis may be that despite the evolution of public opinions, European elites do still consider the Turkish application on

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its own merits, rather than on the grounds of identity politics. This implies that there is a margin for breakthroughs in the accession process, and that the argument of public opinion scepticism which is used by both parts to slow down the process is not as substantial as it seems on the first view. Discouraging as it may be from the point of view of a supporter of the emergence of a pan-European public space, the matter of the accession of Turkey to the EU is still largely a matter for elites and diplomats to discuss.

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# Turkey's EU Cross Border Cooperation Experiences: From Western Borders to Eastern Borders

Füsun Özerdem<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Turkey's pre-EU membership process has presented a number of regional development opportunities through Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) Programmes, which have involved a great variety of actors from local government to civil society organisations in border regions. Although there is a high level of scepticism about the future of Turkey's EU membership aspirations in certain political circles both in Turkey and EU, in the event of such a membership the EU's borders will be expanded to the Caucasus and Middle East regions. In other words, with its long land borders to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq and Syria; Turkey would also likely to become the key EU country for the bloc's European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) programmes. Therefore the paper undertakes a comparative analysis of Turkey's relations with the Balkans, Caucasus and the Middle East and what these relations mean from the perspective of CBC programmes.

## KEY WORDS

European Union, Turkey, Cross border cooperation, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey's east and south borders

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This paper is published with the support of The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK).

ISSN 1855-7694 © 2011 European Perspectives, UDK: 327 (4)

## INTRODUCTION

Cross border cooperation (CBC) is a form of international cooperation exercised bilaterally or trilaterally among nations who share common borders and distributive policy that provides funds to the Union's border regions (Heidbreder, 2011: 103). Due to the geographical proximity, CBC is a more direct form of international cooperation and as such provides more opportunities for extensive and substantive applications of friendship and cooperation. Cross border cooperation is a promising strategy to exploit opportunities in border territories relatively untouched in recent years by capitalism (Perkmann and Sum, 2002: 1). In most cases, the initiative was taken by local and regional authorities in the attempt either to create links with global arenas or to mobilise additional resources offered by supranational and international bodies in exchange for cooperating with their counterparts located in contiguous areas (Jessop, 1995).

A considerable canon of work has developed which offers varying explanations for why and how states cooperate over time (Milner, 1992). As Helen Milner indicates in a comprehensive review of this thinking, scholars have managed to develop a consensus definition of "cooperation" as well as a general framework to understand the causal factors that may lead to it (1992). That definition, Milner suggests, is dominated by the thinking of Robert Keohane extracted from Lindblom "when actors adjust their behaviour to the actual or anticipated preferences of others, through a process of policy coordination" (1984). The process of cooperation, Milner notes, generally involves rational decision making by actors that seek cooperation fundamentally to serve their own interests. Accounts of the normative structure of international politics offer alternative explanations, for instance, as to why states cooperate in areas (Reus-Smit, 2003).

Greece became a full member of the EU in 1981 and 10 Central and Eastern European States, as well as Malta and Cyprus, joined the EU in 2004. Finally the last round of enlargement was in 2007 with Romania and Bulgaria. Consequently, today Turkey has common borders with two EU members. When the Schengen Agreement was signed on 14 June 1985 its main objective was a borderless Europe. Greece became a member of Schengen only on 26 March 2000. Furthermore, EU Home Affairs Ministers were set to postpone enlarging the Schengen border-free area for an indefinite period on 9 June 2011, despite calls to the contrary from the European Parliament, which voted overwhelmingly in favour of Bulgaria and Romania's accession

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to the EU's passport-free zone ([www.europarl.europa.eu](http://www.europarl.europa.eu)). According to the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry, Bulgaria expects to get a date for accession to the Schengen Area at the upcoming External Affairs EU Council 22 September 2011 ([www.novinite.com](http://www.novinite.com))<sup>2</sup>. If the European Interior Ministers fail to reach an agreement on Bulgaria's Schengen entry on September 22, the Government projects that the decision will be delayed until the end of the 2011 at the latest ([www.sofiaecho.com](http://www.sofiaecho.com)). However, the Greek authorities believe that with the entry of Bulgaria into the Schengen Zone, there will be an increase of pressure on the Greek-Turkish border as more immigrants would like to use the border as a potential crossing point to the EU ([www.novinite.com](http://www.novinite.com)). Nevertheless, with Wider Europe and its long-term commitment to support local and regional initiatives of CBC, the question as to whether border regions can function as laboratories of cooperation. CBC is a very selective project of networking and region-building (Scott, 2006: 4). Local and regional CBC and other forms of societal interaction between states are seen as important aspects of EU integration and have acquired considerable political significance as a mechanism for deepening relations with non-EU neighbours (Anderson, O'Donnell, Wilson 2003; Scott, 1999).

### TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

Turkey's relationship with the European Union (EU) dates back to 1959, when the first application was made to European Economic Community (EEC), and following this the Agreement Establishing an Association Between the European Economic Community and Turkey (signed at Ankara, 12 September 1963), known as Ankara Agreement, which came into force on 1 December 1964, which aimed at the full membership of Turkey. This treaty was foreseeing Turkey to go through a five year preparation stage, which was going to be followed by a transition stage for becoming a member.

The relationship of EU and Turkey has started with the promise of full integration if only a certain perspective is fulfilled and supported appropriately with the statement of the then Commission President, Walter Hallstein, as "Turkey is a part of Europe" (extracted from Olli Rehn, 2008). However, such a positive inception of the process could not save its progress due to

<sup>2</sup> Bulgaria who joined 2007, was expected to enter Schengen in the spring of 2011, but their accession was blocked by a number of older member states, such as France and Germany.

the political events of 1960's and 1970's in Turkey. A review of all these stages shows that they took much longer than expected, and it was only in 1996 that Turkey was able to qualify for the Customs' Union framework.

In the 1970's, although the road to fulfil the membership criterion was clearer together with the complicated political environment of Turkey, the deadlock in the decision making bodies of the two parties, and the international economic crisis followed by the OPEC's oil embargo slowed down the development of relations between Turkey and EU. Following the military coup in Turkey in 1980, the relations were frozen until the political environment started to turn to normality, with the multiparty elections in 1983.

Turkey applied for full membership in 1987, for which the Union completed its opinion in 1989, and stated, as "*it would be inappropriate for the Community - which is itself undergoing major changes while the whole of Europe is in a state of flux - to become involved in new accession negotiations at this stage*" (Commission opinion on Turkey's request for accession to the Community). It continued that "*furthermore, the political and economic situation in Turkey leads the Commission to believe that it would not be useful to open accession negotiations with Turkey straight away*" (Commission opinion on Turkey's request for accession to the Community). This statement, expressing that neither Turkey nor European Community was ready for Turkey's membership, indicated the possibility of Customs' Union as foreseen in Ankara Agreement. The decision with the Customs' Union that was taken on 1995, March 6, once again raised the hope on the Turkish side for a further integration.

However in 1997, in Agenda 2000, Turkey's name was not pronounced as to be transferred to the state of being a candidate country among the applicant countries in the enlargement process. On the other hand, also in Luxembourg Summit in December 1997, Turkey was excluded from the enlargement process. Nevertheless, the importance of the relationship in this time period should not be under evaluated and clearly the EU economic sphere together with the interest of Turkish economic and political elites' interest in the Union had an important effect in the normalisation of Turkish democracy and in other good governance issues.

In 1999, with the Helsinki Summit in December, Turkey's position was finally promoted from being an applicant country to a candidate country,

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being officially included in the enlargement process. In November 2000, the European Union adopted the Accession Partnership Document for Turkey's membership and Turkey submitted its first National Programme to the EU in March 2001.

It is argued that post-Helsinki process has changed Turkey's efforts in the sense of making serious reforms in order to adapt to *Acquis*. It was clear that certain reforms should be done in order to catch the train of Europe, as heard in many public discussions. The reforms were needed to re-structure several social, economical and political areas (Dağı, 1996). Since 1999, several packages for harmonisation process were passed as a result of these restructuring efforts including some major ones such as the abolition of death penalty in 2002.

In November 2002, Justice and Development Party (AKP-*Adalet ve Kalkınma*) which is considered as an "Islamist" party came to power with a majority in Parliament. The significance of this for Turkey – EU relations, could not actually be guessed at the time, but the AKP stated EU membership as one of their priorities. As quoted from Taniyıcı (2003), Tayyip Erdoğan as the leader of AKP and the Prime Minister of Turkey, has affirmed that meeting Copenhagen Political criteria is not only an obligation for Turkey in the EU membership process, but an objective to reach for Turkey's modernisation in any case.

In 2002, during the Copenhagen Summit, the Union decided to review Turkey's candidacy. In Summit of December 2004 the decision was taken to open accession negotiations with Turkey in October 2005 and consequently, the accession negotiations officially started on 3 October 2005. Following, the examination of the *Acquis Communautaire* began in June 2006; with the unresolved issues of Cyprus in relation to the use of Turkish ports and airports.

Due to these unresolved issues, in specific lack of progress on the Cyprus issue, the partial suspension of membership negotiations was stated as of 29 November 2006. On 11 December 2006, eight out of 35 negotiation headlines have been suspended ([www.euractiv.com](http://www.euractiv.com)).

Since the end of 2001, the assistance to Turkey, as the case with all candidate countries, is gathered under one budget item and called "Pre-Accession Financial Assistance". Financial assistance that is oriented for the support

of the Accession strategy, and is prepared and planned according to the Accession Partnership Document and National Programme, respectively, is administrated by the Decentralized Implementation System. According to this System, under the control of the European Commission the management of projects is assigned to the authorized persons in the countries concerned. In 2001, Turkey formed the National Aid Coordinator, Central Finance and Contracts Unit and National Fund, which are necessary for this System, and the authority of contract making is transferred to Turkey by the Commission in 2003 ([www.cfcu.gov.tr](http://www.cfcu.gov.tr)). The Pre-Accession Financial Assistance to Turkey is implemented in the area of institutional building that supports the activities towards the implementation of *Acquis* and the harmonisation with the EU policies such as the areas of economic and social cohesion and within the framework of the investments which are undertaken to structure and strengthen regulatory infrastructure and for the economic and social cohesion (Özerdem, 2007: v). In the framework of the Programme, it is necessary to develop projects in order to benefit from the Grants and Community Programmes, which are open to the country.

#### **TURKEY'S CURRENT CROSS BORDER COOPERATION MECHANISMS AND EXPERIENCES WITH GREECE AND BULGARIA**

For the reflection of Turkey, the EU assistance had two-fold focus with respect to EU supported CBC/Interreg programmes: capacity building activities supported under the technical assistance components integrated into the relevant programmes and cooperation with EU member and accession countries in the fields of infrastructure, economic development, environmental protection and local cooperation.

In this framework, The European Union was financing/co-financing two CBC/ Interreg programmes whose coordinator is General Directorate of Regional Development and Structural Adjustment (DGRDSA) in State Planning Organization (DPT):

- Cross Border Cooperation Programme between Turkey and Bulgaria
- Interreg III/A Greece-Turkey Programme

As an accession country Turkey needs to establish and develop cooperative networks with the neighbouring regions of EU and create linkages of these networks with the ones in wider EU area. Bulgaria also needs to establish and develop cooperative networks with its relatively isolated regions to the

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neighbouring regions of Turkey. Border regions usually suffer from low levels of infrastructure; strong dependence on interstate relations; ageing population and out-migration; and low level of attraction to businesses due to fear from border conflicts (Bacsi and Kovács, 2006: 487). Therefore, the Bulgaria-Turkey CBC Programme is designed to support the existing co-operation of Turkey with Bulgaria's border regions via EU funds and co-financed by Turkish and Bulgarian budget. The CBC Programme would be implemented within the framework of a "Joint Programming Document" (JPD), which includes strategies, priorities and measures for the period 2004-2006. The CBC Programme aimed at strengthening relations between the border regions of Bulgaria and Turkey by promoting joint activities for achieving economic and social development and for overcoming problems deriving from the specific conditions of these regions, in a manner compatible with the protection of the environment (Joint Programming Document, 2004: 3).

Apart from the CBC Bulgaria-Turkey Programme, Turkey and Greece initiated a special bilateral cooperation in the context of Community Initiative Programme (CIP) INTERREG III/A. In the context of this special Programme four priorities had been chosen as infrastructure; economic development and employment; quality of life/environment/culture; and technical assistance for the purpose of supporting bilateral cooperation and promoting economic development of the neighbouring regions. The purpose of the Programme is to strengthen of economic activity and encouraging initiatives for addressing unemployment; to upgrade quality of life of citizens, to improve environmental management and management of cultural resources and to improve accessibility and communication (Project Fiche CBC with Greece: 1). The strategy of the Programme must contribute to the balanced and sustainable development of the neighbouring areas, improving the economic potentials and reinforcing their socio economic issue for the benefit of all citizens in the neighbouring area. Therefore, Turkey needed to strengthen integrated mechanisms for the development and implementation of regional policy and the institutional capacity for the management and coordination of regional development policies and the implementation of projects supported with EU Funds.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Development Plan, covering the period of 2001-2005 and the Preliminary Development Plan (pNDP), covering the period of 2004-2006, emphasized the positive contribution of CBC to the regional development (The Eight Five-Year Development Plan, 2001: 64). The pNDP

articulated about the contributions of CBC and Interreg programmes to regional development and their special importance for the EU aims by referring to reinforcement of economic, social and cultural links between neighbouring countries and contribution to the improvement of economic potential of the relevant programme regions (Preliminary National Development Programme, 2003: 137). According to Decentralised Implementation System (DIS), following structures were responsible for the programme management and implementation:

The Central Finance and Contracts Unit (CFCU) represented by the Program Authorizing Officer (PAO), was the Contracting Authority and was the Implementing Agency responsible for all contractual and financial issues - tendering, contracting (contracts with applicants/ beneficiaries), financial administration, payments, (including payments to beneficiaries).

State Planning Organization (DPT) was responsible for the management, technical implementation of the grant schemes, coordination and programming of CBC and Interreg programmes and the projects under these programmes. In this regard, the General Director of Regional Development and Structural Adjustment (DGRDSA) in DPT had taken the position of Senior Programme Officer (SPO) for EU supported regional development, CBC and Interreg programmes to ensure that programme inputs were efficiently and effectively used to produce the expected results and achieve the expected objectives. In order to fulfil these responsibilities effectively, the SPO had delegated part of his/her responsibilities to the two department heads within the same General Directorate. As far as EU supported regional development, CBC and Interreg programmes were concerned; the head of Department of EU Regional Programmes (DEURP) was responsible for technical management of the programmes until signing of the grant contracts and the head of Department of Monitoring and Evaluation (DME) was responsible for monitoring and evaluation after signing of grant contracts. The DEURP was established in 2003 for coordination activities in that field within the DGRDSA of DPT. Considering the importance, DME was constituted in 2004 so as to establish an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism for regional programmes.

Before the approval of 2004-2006 Turkey-Bulgaria JPD, a pilot project was determined to be launched to improve cooperation between border regions of both countries and gain experience in CBC. The concerned pilot project, Joint Small Projects Fund (JSPF), thought as a separate initiative from the

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2004-2006 CBC Programme. JSPF played a useful role in the process of preparation of Turkey and Bulgaria for accession, in particular through the improvement of the administrative capacity of local and regional actors to implement grant schemes (Standard Summary Project Fiche: 1). The project supported the social and economic integration between the border regions of candidate countries. The JSPF also responded to the priority areas of the regional development medium-term strategy of National Development Plan. It was in line with the objectives of Development Axis 4 of pNDP.

At the end of the first Call for Proposals (CfP) of Joint Small Projects Fund, 11 projects from Bulgaria, 9 projects from Turkey were selected for the grant<sup>3</sup>. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> CfPs total 25 projects were granted respectively. For the last CfP just Turkey projects were granted with the number of 17.

The common Bulgarian – Turkish border stretches along 288 km and includes 5 administrative units: 3 districts in Bulgaria and 2 provinces in Turkey, which correspond to NUTS level III (EUROSTAT) in accordance with the requirements of the related EC Regulations.

The CBC BG-TR regional coverage is illustrated on the map below:



Map 1<sup>4</sup>



Map 2<sup>5</sup>

The CBC programme with Bulgaria-Turkey (2004-2006) was under the responsibility of a Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC), which would ensure a policy and financial overview of the operation of the programme, and

<sup>3</sup> The Call for Proposals was done between 26 October 2004-3 January 2005 but this was 2003 budget year.

<sup>4</sup> <http://geology.com/world/bulgaria-satellite-image.shtml>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.trakyabook.tr/gg/>

of a Joint Steering Committee (JSC), which would be responsible for the selection of the projects. A JCC - as described in Article 7 of Regulation 2760/98 for the CBC Programme - has been set up consisting of national, regional and local representatives of both countries concerned and of representatives of the European Commission.

As mentioned in the previous section, DPT was responsible for the management and coordination of CBC and Interreg programmes. DPT was assisted in the management of these programmes by Local Technical Secretariats (LTS) established in the governorships of the provinces included in the programme regions of the concerned Programmes. For the Interreg Programme, there had also been established a Regional Technical Secretariat (RTS) responsible for the coordination of LTSs of the Programme. Concerning the Bulgaria-Turkey CBC Programme, The LTSs established in the Governorships of Edirne and Kırklareli consist of one responsible Deputy Governor and relevant experts<sup>6</sup>.

The programme INTERREG III/A Greece-Turkey intended to support the social and economic integration between the neighbouring regions of Greece as a EU member and Turkey being a candidate country. The programme also represented an important element in Turkey's preparation for the adoption of the Structural Funds Acquis, considering that economic co-operation activities would be implemented in line with Structural Funds instruments and methodologies. The total resources of Programme amount in € 66,018,843, from which € 46,664,004 concern the Greek side (€ 34,998,000 the participation of ERDF) and € 19,354,839 Turkish side (€ 15,000,000 the participation of financial pre-accession instrument for 2004).

The INTERREG III/A Greece-Turkey Programme intended to contribute to all of the priorities in the pNDP, medium-term Regional Development Strategy at national level in the context of the programme region and to the extent that the budget of programme allows.

The eligible region covers the entire land and maritime neighbouring areas of Greece and Turkey, an area of 81.215 km<sup>2</sup>. The Programme covers Aydın, Balıkesir, Çanakkale, Edirne, İzmir and Muğla from Turkey and Eastern Macedonia-Tracia Region (Evros Province), North Aegean (Samos, Lesbos, Chios Islands) and South Aegean (The Dodacanese Islands) from Greece.

<sup>6</sup> The author of the paper was a Founder Coordinator of European Union Coordination Centre in Governorship of Edirne.

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Map 3<sup>7</sup>

The countries participating in the Programme had agreed on the following structures for the management and monitoring of the INTERREG III/A Greece - Turkey Programme:

- Joint Monitoring & Steering Committee (JMSC),
- Managing Authority,
- Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS).

JMSC met at least twice a year. Whenever necessary, the countries that participated in the Programme were obliged to call an extra-ordinary meeting of the Monitoring Committee. JMSC co-chaired from the Greek side by the Secretary General for Investment and Development of the Ministry of Economy and Finance; from the Turkish side by the Deputy Undersecretary of State Planning Organization. The Committee consisted of national, regional and local representatives of both countries concerned and of representatives of the EC and ECD. For the selection of the projects jointly, the JTS had been established. The JTS consisted of three parts; the Greek, the Turkish and the joint part. The Turkish part of the JTS was composed of six Local Technical Secretariats in each NUTS III region covered by the Programme and one Regional Technical Secretariat.

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.hko.gov.hk/wxinfo/climat/world/eng/europe/gr\\_tu/tu\\_gr\\_e.jpg](http://www.hko.gov.hk/wxinfo/climat/world/eng/europe/gr_tu/tu_gr_e.jpg)

Also on the Turkish side, the Inter Ministerial Coordination Committee had been established in order to provide better coordination among the relevant Turkish public institutions for the implementation and selection of the pre-identified projects for 2006 programming year.

The Managing Authority had been established in Greece in the Ministry of Economy and Finance that is entitled as “Managing Authority of the Community Initiative Programme Interreg” and anticipated the responsibility of the INTERREG III/A Greece-Turkey Programme. On the Turkish side, the State Planning Organization (DPT) had the responsibility of management and acting as the Managing Authority. The CFCU was the paying authority for the Turkish side. Concerning the INTERREG III/A GR-TR Programme, one Regional and six Local Technical Secretariats established in the Governorships of Edirne, Çanakkale, Balıkesir, İzmir, Aydın and Muğla consist of one responsible Deputy Governor and expert/experts.

On the other hand, several problems were faced in the programme and therefore it could not be implemented. For example the Greek side had launched eight Call for Proposals (CfP). Among them three CfP had been notified to Turkey shortly before the launch dates. The others were notified to Turkish side only after their launch date. The Greek side did not share the guidelines and provisions for the CfP. This lack of coordination had seriously affected the successful implementation of the CfP, which envisaged partnerships at the project level. In the CfP whose rules were not laid down and shared with the Turkish side, Greek project beneficiaries were forced to receive partnership statements from Turkish counterparts either for operational partnership, financial commitment or for the justification of mutual impact. Differences in the programming periods (as 2003-2006 in Greece and, 2004-2006 in Turkey) and imbalance of the budget allocations as (in Greece € 45 million and in Turkey € 15 million) led to serious difficulties in the synchronization of activities. There was a considerable lack of capacity to operate EU programmes particularly in the Programme region on the Turkish side. The eligible institutions for the CfP were also different between the two sides. While the governmental institutions were regarded as eligible on the Greek side, they were not eligible on the Turkish side.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> In the Calls for Proposals covered by the South Eastern Anatolia Development Programme, the governmental institutions had been regarded as eligible, only if it was declared in the project as the monthly costs, personnel costs and other current expenditures of the institutions were not covered by the grant. However, the ECD had negatively assessed the eligibility of governmental institutions for the Calls for Proposals covered by the other regional development, cross border and Interreg programmes.

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For 2007-2013 Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) Cross Border Cooperation (CBC)<sup>9</sup> operates on both sides of the border on the basis of “one set” of rules which means that both member states and potential candidate/candidate countries will have equal opportunity for programming and decision-making. On 20 December 2007 the European Commission approved a CBC Programme between Bulgaria and Turkey for the period 2007-2013, which is adopted under and co-financed by the cross border cooperation component of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). The programme involves Community support for five Bulgarian and Turkish regions that lie along their common border: the Bulgarian regions of Burgas, Yambol and Haskovo and Turkish regions Edirne and Kırklareli. Community funding for the programme over the period 2007-2009 is worth around € 10 million, supplemented in turn by about € 1.8 million of national funding from the two participating countries. The programme's total value therefore is approximately € 11.8 million. This programme builds on previous experiences and interventions allocated to the Bulgarian-Turkish border region in the framework of the EU financial support<sup>10</sup> because the border area development is affected by the long-term confrontation and nowadays by constituting as external EU border after becoming Bulgaria EU member in 2007 (Stoyanov, 2010: 198).

### **TURKISH CROSS BORDER RELATIONS WITH ARMENIA, GEORGIA AND AZERBAIJAN**

European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) Black Sea Basin Cross Border Cooperation Programme (2007-2013) is one of the two cross border cooperation programmes in the course of financial cooperation between Turkey-European Union. This multilateral cooperation

<sup>9</sup> The Programme's legal basis is Council Regulation (EC) No 1985/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA); Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 [OJ L 170 from 29.06.2007] implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA); Bulgaria-Turkey IPA Cross Border Programme approved by the European Commission on 20 December 2007 with programme reference number C (2007) 6477. The Managing Authority for the Programme is the Bulgarian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works having as counterpart the Prime Ministry, Secretariat General for EU Affairs (EUSG). (Before EUSG, Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency was the National Authority).

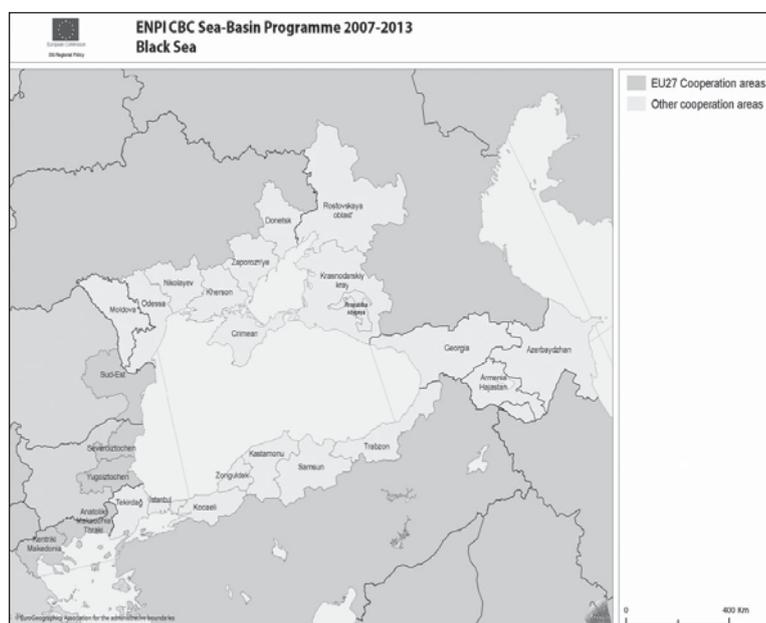
<sup>10</sup> The Bulgaria-Turkey IPA Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 subdivides into the following priorities: Priority 1: Sustainable social and economic development [approximately 40% of total funding], Priority 2: Improvement of the quality of life [approximately 50% of total funding], Priority 3: Technical assistance [approximately 10% of total funding]

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programme involves eight countries, namely Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine, and it is jointly financed from ENPI (for participant countries excluding Turkey) and IPA (for Turkey) funds.

The Joint Managing Authority (JMA) has been established in Romania by the Ministry for Development, Public Works and Housing. The Operating Structure in Turkey is designated with Prime Ministry's the then Secretariat General for EU Affairs (Ministry of EU Affairs currently) as the National Authority and Finance and Contracts Unit as the Implementing Agency.

The programme, which aims to provide a stronger and sustainable economic and social development of the regions of the Black Sea Basin, is a framework to finance the projects that meets the following criteria: to be implemented in cooperation with partners from other countries and to have a cross border impact. In Turkey, Programme's eligible area covers 25 provinces: İstanbul, Tekirdağ, Edirne, Kırklareli, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Düzce, Bolu, Yalova, Zonguldak, Karabük, Bartın, Kastamonu, Çankırı, Sinop, Samsun, Tokat, Çorum, Amasya, Trabzon, Ordu, Giresun, Rize, Artvin, Gümüşhane.



Map 4<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.pao-armenia.am/en/cbc\\_general\\_information/](http://www.pao-armenia.am/en/cbc_general_information/)

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The objectives of the grants to be awarded under this programme are promoting economic and social development in the border areas; working together to address common challenges; and promoting local, people-to-people type actions ([www.abgs.gov.tr](http://www.abgs.gov.tr)).

Within the scope of the programme, the first call for proposals was launched on 30 July 2009, and project applications were submitted by the announced deadline. Following the expiration of the application period, the projects to be financed were selected by independent assessors. However, the information on selected projects and their owners, can not be declared, due to delay in the conclusion of the contracts between the selected project owners and Joint Managing Authority of the Programme ([www.abgs.gov.tr](http://www.abgs.gov.tr)).

Apart from ENPI Black Sea Basin Cross Border Cooperation Programme, there are some cross border cooperation initiatives between Turkey and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.



Map 5<sup>12</sup>

Relations between Armenia and Turkey are constrained by the two countries' histories and more contemporary conflicts. Armenian-Turkish relations worsened in 1988, at the start of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the status of the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave. As a result of the fighting, while Turkey was imposing a blockade on all overland trade and transportation with Armenia, it meant the country's main trade routes with Europe were cut off. In accordance with the political will for solving

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.c-r.org/our-work/caucasus/images/caucasus-map500-2.gif>

bilateral issues and establishing normal and good-neighbourly relations with Armenia, the process has entered a new phase with the signing the Protocols on “Establishment of Diplomatic Relations” and “Development of Bilateral Relations” in Switzerland on 10 October 2009.

On the other hand, some civil society groups, business people, local government and journalists in Armenia and Turkey have already established cross border contacts and in some cases have jointly implemented programmes.

The Armenia-Turkey Cross-Border Dialogue and Cooperation Programme, launched in 2006 by Eurasia Partnership Foundation (EPF)<sup>13</sup>, could in fact, contribute to the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey by strengthening the capacities of non-government, local government and business sectors to develop and maintain cross border partnerships. The programme would also inform the general public of the potential impact of a border opening and support initiatives for the establishment of cross border links. Together with the International Center for Human Development, EPF organized a series of town hall meetings in Armenia in 2009. Attended by more than 1,300 people in seven cities, the meetings gave citizens an opportunity to ask questions and voice their opinions and concerns (Eurasian Foundation, 2010).

EPF provided support to seven civil society organizations and media associations to establish partnership with Turkish counterparts and to jointly implement cross border activities. These partnership projects support cultural and youth exchange programmes as well as cross border media projects ([www.epfound.am](http://www.epfound.am)). Here are some project examples: The “Photo Bridge Across the Border” project was developed with the collaboration of Patker Limited Liability Company and Nar Photo Agency in 2007. The project consisted of a cycle of cross-border exchange trips by Turkish and Armenian photographers and published and distributed the photographic material produced in both print and electronic modes. In 2007-2008 with the collaboration of Urban Sustainable Development Foundation and Istanbul Policy Center at the Sabancı University, the project “Armenia-Turkey Cross Border Dialogue in Light of European Integration” was implemented. The partners provided a short-term intellectually rigorous cross border platform for youth activists and expert communities from Armenia

<sup>13</sup> Eurasia Partnership Foundation (EPF) is comprised of three locally registered offices in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

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and Turkey to discuss issues of mutual concern. In particular, the project partners conducted Vox Populi, interviewing random people on the streets both in Armenia and Turkey to reflect on the wider public opinion in the two countries with respect to the European integration processes and the prospects for improving the Armenia-Turkey dialogue and cooperation ([www.epfound.am](http://www.epfound.am)). Between 2001-2010 period, 41 projects were implemented by the organizations but not just within the CBC<sup>14</sup>. Moreover these projects were not funded by the EU because between Armenia and Turkey, there is not any agreement for EU funded programmes.

The three-year restoration of the tenth-century Armenian church on the island of Akdamar (in Armenian, Aghtamar) in Lake Van that ended in 2007 was another good example of such an initiative, though Armenian officials say it did not go far enough<sup>15</sup>.

If and when the border opens, local administrations on both sides of the border should proactively encourage cross border activities to build on what civil society has already achieved, including links between schools, businesses and tourism agencies. Indeed, the above steps could be taken even if the border is not officially opened (Crisis Group Europe Report, 2009: 30). On the other hand, the meaning of border opening will be good for both sides. It will be good for Turkey for increasing penetration to the Common Wealth of Independent States (CIS<sup>16</sup>) Market and regional development problems will be tackled. As a short term impact, more trade from border provinces will be occurred and as a result of this development, new jobs will be created. It will be good for Armenia because increasing the feasible set of economic operations is good and competition brings welfare enhancement.

The relations with Georgia from the view of cross border cooperation are more various. Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV<sup>17</sup>)

<sup>14</sup> Other CBC projects are called "Armenia-Turkish Youth Club", "Musical Bridge across the Armenia-Turkey Border", "My Beloved Brother", "Armenian-Turkish Team Reporting", "Building Linkages between Analytical Communities of Armenia and Turkey".

<sup>15</sup> Crisis Group interview, senior official, Armenian foreign ministry, Yerevan, February 2009. The Turkish authorities did not allow a new cross to be installed on the steeple, however, viewing the building as a museum, not a place of worship.

<sup>16</sup> Common Wealth of Independent States the countries that includes are Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine.

<sup>17</sup> Established in 2004, with the support of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) as an independent, non partisan think tank in Ankara.

intends to develop the cooperation between Turkey and South Caucasus<sup>18</sup> countries. The Foundation prepares a packet of confidence building measures which will support the resolution of political conflict while obtaining Turkey as an attraction centre. Within the scope of Programme, Turkey envisages to accomplish the cross border cooperation projects between Turkey and Azerbaijan (included Nakhchivan), Armenia and Georgia. At the first level the projects focus on transportation-border passing and tourism areas. The final aim of the Programme is contributing to increase economic activities and environment of confidence ([www.tepav.org.tr](http://www.tepav.org.tr)).

On 12 February 2010, the panel entitled “Turkish-Armenian Relations and Cross Border Regionalism” was organized by TEPAV and AmCham in Erivan. Armenia Prime Minister Mr Tigran Sargsyan and USA Ambassador Mrs Marie L. Yovanovitch attended to this panel and the importance of trade especially between the neighbours in the financial crisis time was highlighted ([www.tepav.org.tr](http://www.tepav.org.tr)).

Another successful project entitled “Enhancing Conservation in the West Lesser Caucasus through Trans-boundary Cooperation and Establishing a Training Program on Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) Conservation” was implemented by Georgian Center for the Conservation of Wildlife and Conservation International, Center for Applied Biodiversity Science between 1 July 2006 and 31 December 2008. The project aimed at improving human resources for the conservation of KBAs in the West Lesser Caucasus and enhancing the baseline information and scientific standards for the conservation of KBAs in the corridor having delivered strategic conservation outputs through trans-boundary cooperation between Turkey and Georgia. (Final Project Completion Report, 2009).

Another successful project entitled “Development of an Important Bird Areas (IBA) Caretaker Network in the Priority Corridors” was implemented by Armenian Society for the Protection of Birds, Azerbaijan Ornithological Society, Georgian Center for the Conservation of Wildlife and Doğa Derneği (Turkey) between 1 June 2005 and 30 June 2008. The

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<sup>18</sup> South Caucasus, also referred to as Transcaucasia or Transcaucasus, is the southern area of the Caucasus region between Europe and Asia, going to the Turkish and Iranian borders, between the Black and Caspian Seas. All of Armenia is in South Caucasus; the majority of Georgia and Azerbaijan, including the exclave of Nakhchivan, fall within this area. The region is one the most complicated in the post-Soviet area, and has three heavily disputed areas – Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, and Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan.

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project aimed at creating a coordinated network of people, living at or near 31 sites (20 sites [13 IBAs] in Azerbaijan, 5 sites in Armenia [7 IBAs], 5 sites in Georgia, one site in Turkey [7 IBAs]), identified for one or more globally threatened bird species within the priority corridors. (Final Project Completion Report, 2008).

In March 2010, the Governors of Ardahan, Kars and Artvin (from Turkey) attended a cross border cooperation meeting in Bakuriani, Georgia on the subject of border trade-border management and foreign investments. At the end of this meeting, it is decided that to establish a cross border businessmen union, to prepare common projects on agriculture, stockbreeding, tourism, culture and education ([www.ardahanhaberi.com](http://www.ardahanhaberi.com)).

Borderlands, where Turkish, Georgian and Armenian identities and culture intermingle can be placed at the heart of the Caucasian communication hub. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline project executed by the cooperation between Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey is the largest CBC project of the region. The Shah Deniz Natural Gas reserves were discovered in 1999 and are estimated to contain more than 400 billion cubic meters of gas. Negotiations which started in October 2000 for the supply of natural gas from Shah Sea in Azerbaijan were finalized in March 2001 and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Natural Gas Pipeline was signed by the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Turkey and the Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan on 12 March 2001 (Güney-Özdemir, 2011: 139). Kars-Tbilisi Railway project is the second significant CBC that will increase the convergence between related countries. In response to the Abkhaz and South Ossetian separatism started in the 1990s, Turkey has been pursuing a policy in support of the preservation of Georgia's territorial integrity and finding a peaceful solution to these conflicts within the internationally recognized borders of Georgia. A project called Economic Cooperation between Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey (Let's Meet in Kura) is proposed by Governorship of Ardahan to Azerbaijan and Georgia. The aim of the project is obtaining fast and sustainable development in the region. The project's objectives are supporting sustainable economic development; enhancing social development and providing social cohesion between people and protection of natural-cultural-historical heritage ([www.ardahan.gov.tr](http://www.ardahan.gov.tr)).

The relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan are the least problematic ones in this region. Turkey is the premier foreign investor in the non-oil

sector in Azerbaijan and Turkish businesses have pioneered the services and distribution sectors. Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, constituting the sole border connection between Turkey and Azerbaijan, comprises an important aspect of bilateral relations with Azerbaijan. Turkey acts in solidarity with Azerbaijan on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which is Azerbaijan's most important foreign policy issue and actively participates in the work of the Minsk Group established under the auspices of OSCE for finding a peaceful, just and lasting solution to this issue without further delay. Private sector development in the region should also be considered as a key component of the regional transformation process. It is not only about governments but direct communication among peoples to do business. Regional disparities among provinces could be tackled through development of cross border economic clusters.

#### **THE MIDDLE EAST COOPERATION**

Turkey has been playing an active regional role over the last 10 years. This appears to reflect a decision by Turkish policy-makers that it is not in Turkey's interests to have frozen conflicts on or near its own borders, and that it wants to direct its own destiny rather than be buffeted by the ongoing crises in its immediate neighbourhood ([www.chathamhouse.org](http://www.chathamhouse.org)). Furthermore, in line with its declared "zero problems with neighbours" policy, Turkey's "visa diplomacy" has removed travel restrictions with Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iran, among others.

The CIA World Factbook estimates Iranian Azeris as comprising 24 percent of Iran's population ([www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)). Iranian Azeris have played a key role in Iranian nationalist freedom movements throughout the twentieth century. Today, the Azeri city of Tabriz is widely acknowledged as the host of the most active and progressive student democracy movement outside of Tehran, carrying on a long tradition of Tabriz-Tehran nationalist-democratic opposition dating back to Iran's 1905-1911 Constitutional Revolution. Shaffer challenges the widely held view in contemporary Iranian scholarship that a broad Iranian identity supersedes ethnic identities (2002: 208). Azerbaijan and Iran have a great potential for developing relations in various fields, including cultural, religious and historical spheres. Security and stability on the border between two countries depends on the will of the Azerbaijani and Iranian leaderships to strengthen bilateral relations.

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Turkey had enjoyed broadly cooperative economic and political relations with Iraq both before and since the 1990-1991 Gulf War. Developments in Iraqi Kurdistan subsequent to the 1990-1991 Gulf War constitute a major consideration for Ankara's policy makers. After the 1991 uprising against Saddam failed, there was a flood of approximately half a million Iraqi Kurds to a zone near the Turkish border. Turkey's present domestic political context added an additional dimension to the country's antiwar sentiment. Up to half of all ethnic Kurds, who straddle the Turkish, Iraqi, Iranian and Syrian borders, live in Turkey. Over the years, Turkish troops have launched substantial raids across the border and it has even cooperated with Iraqi Kurdish forces in tracking down the separatist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) operatives in Iraq (Park, 2003: 12-13).

Turkey achieved a remarkable progress in pursuing the zero problem policy with neighbours such as Iran and Syria in 2009 as part of endeavors to revive its regional influence. The policy was aimed at maximum cooperation with its neighbours and minimum problems in the region. The most significant development in international relations for Turkey was the signing of two protocols with Armenia, a country that has no diplomatic or economic ties with Turkey since its independence in 1991. On the other hand, Iraq tops the agenda of the Turkish government. Turkish President Abdullah Gül became the first Turkish president to visit Baghdad in 33 years, in a sign of close relations with Iraq. Turkey initiated a new era with Syria and the two countries signed 51 agreements in 2010. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Foreign Minister of Turkey, has said that Turkey and Syria have a new shared slogan: "Common Destiny, Common History, Common Future" ([www.sundayszaman.com](http://www.sundayszaman.com)). Turkey and Iran also signed a number of cooperation agreements, exchanged high level visits and improve their relations. With Turkey's various good neighbourhood initiatives oriented towards the Middle East, serious discussions arose over whether Turkey has turned its axis. However, Turkey denied the allegation, saying that Turkey should improve its relations with both West and East countries. Davutoğlu said that, "We don't have the luxury to turn against Europe or U.S. or Middle East or Middle Asia. The stronger a country that has a geography like Turkey bows its arrow, the farthest arrow goes towards Europe. Where is the axis? Axis is in Ankara" (Svet, 2006: 71-78; [www.aa.com.tr](http://www.aa.com.tr)). Turkey, which was absent in the Middle East in the past decades due to its former foreign policy now is a shining star in the old and known geography. Moreover the hardest and the most complicated problems of the world are now in the Middle East region and it is reasonable

that this case is more interesting to Turkey than other European countries (Özerdem, 2011: 110).

Iran, as a neighbouring country, is one of the traditional trading partners of Turkey. Between the two countries there are some bilateral economic mechanisms such as on border trade and economic cooperation among border provinces. Turkey and Iran have opened a third border crossing at Kapıköy in eastern Turkey's Van province, in what the foreign ministers of both countries called "a symbol of friendship amid increased regional cooperation efforts". There is also a formal initiative to launch trilateral regional cooperation among Iran, Azerbaijan and Turkey. The opening ceremony of the first trilateral meeting was occurred in Orumiyeh in April 2011. A new framework for trilateral cooperation will be in culture, trade, industry and investment sectors.

Iraq's preservation of its territorial integrity and national unity is of paramount importance for peace, stability and prosperity in the Middle East. There is currently only one border gate between Turkey and Iraq and there is not any cross border cooperation programmes with Iraq. Iraq-Turkey Crude Oil Pipeline (also known Kirkuk-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline) is the Iraq's largest crude oil export pipeline. The Pipeline System which was commissioned in 1976, transports the oil produced in Kirkuk and other areas of Iraq to the Ceyhan (Yumurtalık) Marine Terminal an annual transport capacity of 35 million tons ([www.mfa.gov.tr](http://www.mfa.gov.tr))<sup>19</sup>. Meanwhile, Turkish diplomats are reaching out to Kurdish Autonomous Region to build a secure and stable Iraq. In March 2011 Prime Minister of Turkey visited Iraq's Kurdish region and attended the opening of Arbil's new airport. Turkish investment in the Kurdish autonomous region in Iraq is strong and the airport was built by a Turkish construction firm.

<sup>19</sup> The capacity of the line was increased to 46.5 Million tons/year through the First Expansion Project, the construction of which was started in 1983 and completed in 1984. With the completion of the Second Pipeline, which is parallel to the first one, the annual capacity reached 70.9 Million tons as of 1987. It is served by two pipelines. Total length of the pipeline is 1.876 km. 1st Line 345 km in Iraq plus 641 km in Turkey and 2nd Line 234 km in Iraq plus 656 km in Turkey. The operation of the pipeline system was suspended on August 1990, in conjunction with the embargo imposed on Iraq by the United Nations. The suspension was ceased under the agreement of UN and Iraq on May 1996 and limited oil export was allowed. Crude oil loading activities was started on December 16, 1996 according to the UN Resolution 986. 285,715,626 barrels (38,747,770 tons) of oil was transported in 2000 by Iraq-Turkey Crude Oil Pipeline. A total of 1,008,767,195 barrels (136,077,798 ton) of Iraqi oil have been transported between December 1996 and December 2000. 230.855 Thousand barrels of oil was transported by this line in 2001.

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Relations between the State Planning Commission of Syria and the State Planning Organization of Turkey started in 2004. The first meeting of the Joint Monitoring and Steering Committee was held in 2005 and an agreement was reached on the implementation of the projects on the fields of infrastructure, technical cooperation, capacity building, supporting entrepreneurship and culture-tourism under Turkey-Syria Interregional Cooperation Programme. In the development of these close cooperation activities Turkey seems to have been reflecting on the experiences gained from the Bulgaria-Turkey Cross Border Cooperation Programme. There are many similarities between the Bulgaria-Turkey programme and Turkey's cooperation with Syria. Under the 1st CfP 26 projects, 2nd CfP 16 projects and 3rd CfP 13 projects were funded from Turkey. The 4th of CfP closed on 5th of April 2010 and 85 project proposal applications have been handed and the evaluation process is still in process. From Syria, under the 1st CfP 11 projects, 2nd CfP 18 projects and 3rd CfP 18 projects selected for granting ([www.projekoordinasyon.org](http://www.projekoordinasyon.org)). The fleeing of many Syrian refugees across the border into Turkey as a result of the recent popular uprising in Syria shows perhaps why CBC is such an important political issue. There were five tent cities in Turkey in June 2011 and the number of refugees have reached nearly to 10,000 ([www.dailytimes.com.pk](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk)). Turkey also helps over 10,000 Syrians who have been waiting at the Syrian side of the border.

### CONCLUSION

Border regions are often the most excluded regions and also the regions of poverty, having very limited network relations in the market and also being far away from the intervention areas of central governments. The intensifying cross border relations established between bordering political economies constituted a special kind of regional economy through network relations, which is charged by interdependence, interaction and cooperation between two or more political regions. Therefore border areas, which accomplished to set powerful network relations with the other side of the border, have transformed from arid corridors to regions of socially and economically united twin sisters as zones of cooperation in many parts of EU. Shared social customs and history, increasing social relations had generally nourished the process, facilitating the benefiting from complementarities reciprocally and constituting comparative advantages through the opportunities gained by these networks. However, sometimes the process can be hindered by the issues like an environment of lack of

trust, insufficient infrastructures, and differences between governmental approaches. Interestingly, the world experiences have shown that both of these dynamics can be observed in each border region, at the beginning or somewhere during the process. Thus, a cross border society can be best defined through their commonalities and conflicts.

The cross border experiences of EU suggest a critical example in which all factors of cooperation is implemented through a governance approach depending on the social and economic integration. Both through the project development and implementation processes, it puts forward a compromising participation culture through symmetric relations and socio-economic cohesions; and the importance of supranational body's facilitator role. EU has aimed to reach a competitive Europe and hinder the conflicts through establishing cross border networks. This multilevel governance network offers new opportunities for existing actors and provides the emergence of new ones; and supports these cooperations through community initiative funds.

The underdevelopment of border regions is a common problem for Turkey, which increases the significance of the probability to use cross border cooperation as a tool for providing regional and local development. The dichotomy between eastern and western border regions of Turkey clearly supports the idea that being in a network would enhance development. In other words, Turkey provides an interesting case study of border regions due to its geographical location offering a rich diversity of relations. Turkey's relations with neighbours have diversified due to their different economic, political and social characteristics. The western border regions have always benefited from their proximity to Istanbul and from being on the major trade routes. Together with the cross border cooperation projects with Greece and Bulgaria, a new period has begun for their development trajectories since 2003.

Border relations with western neighbours depend on the EU policies, and a number of important CBC projects have been developed since 2003. However, the instable political structure and increasing terror problems in South-eastern region challenges those border policies depending on security issues. Unfortunately, the security problem impedes the increase of relations with Syria, which has shown a high level of advancement through joint projects in the last few years. The Armenian border has been closed since 1988, due to the political problems. The radical political and

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economic changes experienced in Georgia, the north-eastern neighbour, had been the determining factors of reciprocal relation with Georgia since 1989. Especially after 2002, the Turkish government's changing policies developed the reciprocal relations between the two countries further. The joint cross border projects in the western border regions, the opening of border trade centres, the clearance of landmines and the joint industrial projects with Syria in this area; the economic integration on the Georgian border, are all positive developments of this era. Together with these developments, the improving reciprocal relations with Syria offers new opportunities for border populations.

The lessons learned from Turkey's western border CBC programmes have been taken into consideration during the elaboration of Turkey's intention to use the CBC programmes with its Eastern neighbours. The priorities of common interest set in the CBC Programmes do not contradict one another and are complementary to the development priorities of the countries.

In short, the globalization effects and Turkey's being candidate to EU are the external factors that lead border regions to establish cross border relations with their neighbours. Thus, Turkey needs new strategies for its border regions, which should provide them develop cross border relations surpassing borderlines, and act within their true economic and social hinterlands.

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# Bridging the Gender Gap in Turkish Politics: The Actors Promoting Female Representation

Nazlı Çağın Bilgili<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Gender gap is still persistent in Turkey in different areas despite the fact that policies and measures pertaining to gender equality have been improved in the past couple of years. Believing in the prominence of gender gap in politics due to the authority of decision-making that belongs to the political figures, this article focuses on the increase –although slow- in female representation in the Turkish Parliament with a special focus on the last two general elections that were held under the influence of massive campaigns by women’s organizations. The last general elections held on June 12, 2011 marked an approximately 60% increase in the number of women parliamentarians which rose from 48 to 78. The article argues that three actors –civic actors, international actors namely the EU and the representatives of the Kurdish movement- have been influential in this increase by raising media and public attention on the topic. The campaigns that attracted great attention in the media, the emphasis of the EU progress reports on gender equality and the 40% gender quota applied among the Kurdish parliamentarians are some of the topics discussed with regard to their influence on the recent increase in female representation in Turkey.

## KEYWORDS

Women’s underrepresentation, Political gender gap, Civic attempts, Gender equality, Gender quota

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## INTRODUCTION

Gender gap –that refers to differences between men and women in different aspects of life- has been interpreted to be a significant obstacle on the way of complete democratization<sup>2</sup>. Despite the fact that gender gap is problematic in all areas including participation in labor force or living conditions, the underrepresentation of women in politics has aroused a larger discussion due to several reasons. Besides the wide scope of the problem throughout the world, the significance of the area of politics which is the locus of decision-making has led to these discussions. The expectation has been that equal representation in decision making would mean the making of egalitarian laws that would bridge the gender gap in all different areas. Problematizing the underrepresentation of women in politics, various studies (e.g. Norris – Inglehart 2001; Matland – Studlar 1996; Matland 1998) have been conducted –making either area studies or comparative analyses- to explore ways to increase female representation in political positions. A brief overview of the literature on the factors leading to more egalitarian representation shows that the factors put forward are time and energy consuming and hence are hard to adopt<sup>3</sup>. Pointing to the increase in female representation experienced in the last two general elections (2007 and 2011) in Turkey, the aim of this article is to provide alternative ways to bridge the political gender gap by influencing the political parties through a common agenda sensitive to gender inequality. Common agenda influences the tendencies of political parties because the parties are aware of the fact that the public expects them to respond to the issues included in

<sup>2</sup> Democracies are expected to attribute equal respect and value to each and every human being they serve, regardless of differences in race, sex or any other personal attribute. A democratic society is made up of equal individuals who make autonomous and responsible choices. Any discrimination, including sexual discrimination, definitely contradicts with the main rationale of democracy. (For details see McDonagh 2002; Rose 1995; Sen 1999) This was not the case in the first examples of democratic governance, as historically the idea of gender equality emerged much later than democracy itself. The first democracies totally excluded women from the political process. However; “democracy is not a static concept” and changes according to the circumstances of the time. The definition of democracy has evolved over time becoming more and more inclusive and gender equality has become one of the main constituents of democracy (Inglehart - Welzel 2005: 273-274).

<sup>3</sup> The literature on methods to increase female participation in politics focuses mainly on three sets of factors; structural, institutional and cultural factors. While the structural factors emphasize the significance of socio-economic development level of a society, the institutional factors represent the role of electoral and party systems. Cultural factors, on the other hand, are explained as factors that shape the attitudes of both the women and the public in general. The arguments on the roles played by these sets of factors in terms of determining the level of female representation will be discussed below.

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the agenda. This analysis focuses on the significance of civic actors, international actors and role models in bridging the political gender gap by setting an agenda sensitive to gender inequality and forcing the parties to respond.

**WOMEN'S UNDERREPRESENTATION IN POLITICS AND WAYS TO  
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Historically, politics has excluded women (Frost-Knappman – Cullen-DuPont 2005:5; Pateman 1988). Even the first democratic experiences and the social and political developments paving the way to these experiments did not attribute political roles to women (Simpson 1990; Sachikonye 2002:2). Today, representative democracy theoretically accepts integration of women in politics; yet, serious problems still exist in practice. As of May 2011, the percentage of women in single houses or lower houses of 188 countries throughout the world is reported to be 19,5 %<sup>4</sup>. This percentage is interpreted to be highly problematic as it is far from reflecting the percentage of women in the world's population. The ideal in this regard is explained to be women constituting half of the decision-making as they constitute half of the world's population.

When the percentages are analyzed on a regional basis, it is obviously seen that the Nordic countries are the closest to the ideal with 42, 1 % of the legislative seats occupied by women and all the others, except for some exceptional countries such as Rwanda –which is at the moment under the dictatorship of Paul Kagame- that is observed to be the country with the highest percentage of women in its national parliament- lag considerably behind. Rwanda, ranking the first among the 188 countries compared, regionally belongs to Africa which ranks only the fifth among the eight regions formed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Leaving these exceptions aside, the statistics overall suggest that women's underrepresentation in politics is a problem throughout the world except for the Nordic countries. Even the highly developed Western countries are observed to be far behind

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<sup>4</sup> The Inter-Parliamentary Union established in 1889 is a focal point of dialogue with world-wide parliaments and works for peace and co-operation among peoples and for the firm establishment of representative democracy. It collects detailed data from national parliaments in 188 countries and presents the statistics in its website. For further information, see <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>.

the ideal equality; the United Kingdom with 22 %, France with 18, 9 % and the United States with 17, 3 %<sup>5</sup>.

The wide scope of the problem motivated many scholars for analyses on the factors that lead to this underrepresentation and hence ways to overcome it. These analyses have displayed the significance of a large number of factors that can be grouped into three main categories; political factors, cultural factors and socio-economic factors which are also known as structural factors. The political factors extensively focus on the characteristics of the political regime in a country. The structure of the parliament, for instance the number of legislative seats, the party system and the electoral system are included in this category. Among all the political factors, the richest literature has been generated on the impact of electoral system with the broadly accepted conclusion that proportional representation leads to higher percentages of women in parliaments compared to plurality/majority systems (Lovenduski - Hills 1981; Rule 1987, 1994a, 1994b; Norris 1985, 1997, 2006). Another political regulation that has been accepted to have direct influence on women's political representation is the gender quotas. As a method of positive discrimination, gender quotas aim to counteract the discrimination imposed upon female candidates in practice. Depending on the type of quota, this political regulation ensures that a certain percentage of women take place in party lists or directly in the legislative organ (Dahlerup 2006; Krook 2004).

The role of culture in shaping social and political phenomena is usually explained through two different indicators; religious affiliation and traditional attitudes. Several cultural factors have been found significant in determining women's political representation; yet the emphasis has been on religious orientations and views on gender-based social roles. Protestantism and egalitarian gender roles have been identified with women's easier access to political positions (Norris - Inglehart 2001; Paxton 1997; Reynolds 1999; Tremblay 2007). A number of studies have already suggested that cultural factors are more important than even the political factors; some of them making the argument that it is these cultural factors that, most of the time, shape the other set of –political and socio-economic- indicators (Paxton - Kunovich 2003). Another important point with regard to the significance of cultural factors is their two-fold impact. The elements of a political culture influence not only the attitudes of the men or of the power-holders in the society but women

<sup>5</sup> The percentages of women in national parliaments of 188 countries in the World and the ranking among them can be found at <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

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themselves are also under the influence of these cultural values. Hence; if an anti-egalitarian culture is dominant in a society, while the public in general would not prefer female candidates, the women themselves would not be willing to take place in politics as well (Norris – Inglehart 2001).

The last set of variables that have been found important for female representation in politics indicate the interrelatedness of gender gap in different areas. Socio-economic development of both the society at large and the women in particular is interpreted to be influential in increasing the supply of female candidates in politics; pointing to the association between socio-economic and political development. Unequal distribution of resources in the society creates serious obstacles for women as women do not have much chance to succeed in political competitions due to the shortage of money, time and of even the civic skills –due to the patriarchal structures dominant in most societies of the world- they face (Paxton – Hughes 2007). Thus, besides the societal indicators such as per capita Gross National Product (GNP) and the Human Development Index (HDI), studies focusing on the significance of this set of factors have paid special attention also to average education level of women in the society and women participation in labor market as the candidates for political offices are usually recruited from the higher echelons of the society (Matland 1998).

The factors mentioned above have been empirically proved to be important in determining the level of women's political representation. The problem with these factors; however, is that they are not easy to accomplish due to their macro-level orientations targeting electoral systems, cultural traditions or development levels. To make changes in these dimensions; i.e. restructuring the electoral system, increasing the socio-economic development level, reshaping the cultural orientation, needs too much time, energy and commitment at least by the government and even by the society at large. The Turkish experience of increasing female representation in politics in the last two general elections; however, suggests that there are easier ways to bridge the gender gap in politics –although slowly- as no political reorganization has been committed in Turkey, social problems –especially the ones related to violence against women<sup>6</sup>- seem to maintain

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<sup>6</sup> Statistical information announced in November 2010 aroused fierce discussions on women's right to life and security in Turkey. The information was that in the last seven years violence against women –including physical violence, sexual harassment, rape and murder- in Turkey has gone up 1400 %. 25 % of women in Turkey are reported to be subject to physical violence and 75 % out of them experience violence by their husbands. Another data specifically on January 2011 reported that 17

their significance and the percentage of women in labor force is observed to be in decline<sup>7</sup>.

The analysis on the last two general elections in Turkey puts forward that shaping the political parties is an easier way –due to the competitive political environment- of bridging the political gender gap. Political parties might be more easily influenced by public discussions compared to the government, the state or the public in general as they have to care about the salient issues in the country in order not to be left out of the competition. Political parties are shaped in different aspects through agenda-setting. The constraining common agenda forces parties to respond to certain issues that attract public attention just because they expect other parties to do so. They aim to give the message that they are aware of the issue and care about it. By addressing these issues, parties try to reinforce their status on the agenda. They take the issues in the common agenda seriously because they know that these are actually the major criteria through which they are judged by the public. The parties are aware of the fact that declining from responding to the issues in the common agenda would leave them out of the competition and would make them loose ground<sup>8</sup>.

The attempt of the analysis below is to figure out the actors that play a role in shaping the common agenda in such a way that it prioritizes women's political representation in Turkey. The analysis leads to the argument that the impression that the proportion of women in their lists is watched is enough for the political parties to develop themselves in this respect. Once political parties believe in the importance of this criterion, increasing women's representation might be possible before the ruling party is

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women were killed, 9 women and 1 child were injured, 34 women and 7 children were subject to sexual harassment and 4 women and 15 children were raped in this month. ("Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Şiddet, Tecavüz Ve Kadın Cinayetleri Oranı Yüzde 1400 Arttı (Violence against women, rape and murdering of women has gone up 1400 % in Turkey)", 07 March 2011)

<sup>7</sup> Female labor force participation is accepted to be an important indicator of both gender equality and economic development in a country. The data on Turkey suggests that Turkey does not have a successful record in these regards. The percentage of women in the Turkish labor force has been decreasing since 1955 when 72 % of Turkish women participated in the labor force. The proportion fell to 22 % in 2008 indicating a 50 % change in 53 years. In 1988, the percentage has already fallen to 34 % and the following 20 years experienced a considerably smaller decrease of 12 %. The problem with the Turkish case can be summarized very briefly as a problem of integrating women –who used to work in rural areas- in urban labor force. For more information on the topic, see Tansel 2002.

<sup>8</sup> For more information on agenda-setting and the restrictive nature of the common agenda, see Green-Pedersen – Mortensen 2010.

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persuaded to make political changes, before the country experiences a socio-economic development or before the cultural tradition of the society changes. The actors emphasized below are the ones that led the political parties in Turkey realize that women representation is considered as an important issue in Turkish social and political life and that they are being monitored in this respect. Even though these actors have been usually ignored in the literature, the Turkish experience strongly suggests that these are important factors leading to an easier and quicker increase in female representation in politics.

### **THE HISTORY OF TURKISH WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION**

In terms of women's representation in Turkish politics, the most frequently repeated fact is that Turkish women received political rights even before most of their Western European counterparts. Turkish women received the right to vote and run for office for the first time in 1930 local elections and in 1935 general elections following it. At that point in history, French women, for instance, lacked these rights and the women in England were not as successful as the Turkish women in gaining seats in the parliament. After the first general elections they could run for office, the Turkish women occupied 4,5 % of the parliament while the percentage of female parliamentarians in England varied between 0,1 % and 2,4 % in the same period (Tekeli 1981:299).

Before proceeding with the history of Turkish women's experience in politics, an important delusion in the way this historical success is interpreted has to be discussed. The general intention in Turkey –especially among the secularist circles- is to attribute this significant achievement solely to the Republican reforms and even to Ataturk himself, ignoring the effort of the Turkish women. The struggle of the Turkish women to improve their status in the society and the reforms to meet these demands started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the modernization attempts of the Ottoman Empire and the attempts for individual liberation accompanying them. It was back in 1876 that primary education became compulsory for both girls and boys (Gökçimen 2008:10). In 1915, an institution providing higher education for girls was established and in the same year it was decided that girls could be educated with boys in the Istanbul Faculty of Literature (Gökçimen 2008:10). The reforms in education were definitely important as educated

women would be able to pave their way to important social, economic and political positions. Turkish women started to take their place in paid labor force in 1897 and the proportion of these women increased with the scarcity of male labor due to male majority joining the army for wars. It was in 1913 when the first Turkish woman started to work as a civil servant (Gökçimen 2008:11). The Turkish women, who started to make their voices heard in 1800s through the journals and newspapers they published, established the first feminist association in 1913. This association was also important because it brought the issue of women’s political rights to the agenda in 1921. In the following years, the dominant discourse among the feminist women was that political rights would provide them with the opportunity to exercise their social rights as well (Gökçimen 2008:14-22; see also Çakır 1996 for the details of these pre-Republican efforts). The early constitutional guarantee of women’s political rights in Turkey needs to be interpreted as a development taking place under these circumstances.

Turning back to the history of women’s political representation in the Turkish Republic, the situation can be interpreted as a story that started gloriously but could not have continued as such. The percentage of women in the Turkish parliament displayed a diverging trend throughout history but could not exceed the percentage in 1935 until the 2007 general elections. A proportion similar to the one in 1935 was observed only in 1999 with 4, 2 %. While no significant change could be recorded in 2002 elections, the percentage of women in the parliament doubled in the 2007 elections, when 9, 1 % of the legislative seats could be filled with female representatives (Sayarı – Hasanov 2008: 353). Another success could be achieved in 2011 general elections even though 14 % is never interpreted to be enough for gender equality in political representation (see “Basına ve Kamuoyuna (To the Press and to the Public Opinion)”, 13 June, 2011 for an evaluation of the 2011 election results through a gender perspective). Even though the discussions in general revolve around the distribution of seats in the parliament, other dimensions of female representation also point to a serious political gender gap in Turkey. According to the results of the 2009 local elections, there are no women mayors in 16 metropolitan municipalities and only 28 women (0,9 %) among 2093 mayors throughout Turkey (Bilhan 2011:11). Only 2 of the 24 ministries in Turkey are led by women (Bilhan 2011:15). Among the 81 governors, on the other hand, there is no single woman. An overall interpretation of these numbers indicates that the problem in Turkey is that women are absent especially in positions of decision-making. For instance, women are not underrepresented

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in primary education in Turkey. Women constitute more than 50 % of the primary school teachers. However, when the number of headmasters is taken into account, the proportion of women is found to be only 9 % (Bilhan 2011:11). As the statistics indicate, Turkey needs a mentality change in this regard and last two general elections, marking an improvement in women's political representation in Turkey, nurtured the hopes for the Turkish society and politics in general.

**THE MAJOR ACTORS THAT HELP BRIDGE THE POLITICAL GENDER GAP IN TURKEY**

An analysis on the political environment before and after the last two general elections in Turkey suggests that civic actors, international actors and political role models have the power to influence the political parties, that in return play an important role in increasing women's political representation. Thus, rather than sticking with the significance of solely the structural, political and cultural factors, the analysis below aims to concentrate on the roles played by these actors in shaping the attitudes of the political parties as a way of fostering female representation. Below, these actors –specifically the women's organizations, the EU and the Kurdish political parties- and their significance in agenda-setting, in arousing public attention and in creating a response among the political parties will be discussed in detail.

**i. Civic Actors**

The significance of civic actors in building public awareness and in shaping political actors is the major discussion of the civil society literature. The non-governmental organizations –also known as civil society in total- emphasize the relevance of different issues to the social and political development of a country. Triggering public discussions on the topics they emphasize, civic actors play an influential role in agenda setting.

In Turkey, there are a lot of women's associations working for women's rights and gender equality in different dimensions. The most influential association active in the political field is KA-DER (Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates). Founded in 1997, KA-DER focuses on equal representation of women in all different fields with a

special focus on representation in politics and decision-making positions. Although KA-DER has been functioning for fourteen years, it has been publicly visible and hence influential only in the last two elections thanks to the salient campaigns they organized.

It was before the 2007 general elections when KA-DER for the first time aroused public discussions on the underrepresentation of women in Turkish politics. Use of attractive slogans and famous figures played an important role in gaining public attention to the issue. The first slogan used was based on a question asking “is it mandatory to be male to enter the parliament?”. The question was accompanied by pictures of publically known women –artists, businesswomen etc.- with moustaches and ties drawn on the pictures (Örer 15 March, 2007). The second slogan used in the following attempts, again before the 2007 general elections, was “this parliament needs women”. KA-DER asked each political party in Turkey –especially the three parties that were expected to receive the highest percentage of votes in the elections – to devote at least one-third of their candidate lists to women. (For the campaign of KA-DER before the 2007 elections, see “22 Temmuz 2007 Genel Seçim Kampanyası (22 July 2007 General Elections Campaign)”) Having benefited from these campaigns and succeeded in increasing the percentage of women in the parliament by 100 %, KA-DER continued to make use of famous women and catchy slogans before the 2011 elections. This time; however, the parties were asked to equally include men and women in their lists.

Establishing a platform –Women’s Platform for Equality Mechanisms (*Haklı Kadın Platformu*)- with the aim of bringing different women’s associations and famous and successful women who care about gender equality together, KA-DER increased its influence even more prior to the 2011 general elections. Founded under the leadership of KA-DER, the platform included many publically known women in higher positions; i.e. Meral Tamer (an important years-long columnist), Vuslat Dođan Sabancı (Hurriyet’s –a widely read newspaper in Turkey- CEO and board member), Ümit Boyner (the Chairman of the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association). The significance of the support by these women and news channels like NTV and CNN Turk was undeniable in creating a very quick media and hence public awareness on the topic (For the 2011 campaigns of KA-DER, see “KA.DER Genel Başkanı Çiđdem Aydın: 2011 Genel Seçimlerinde talebimiz yüzde 50 kadın temsili (The Chairman of KA.DER Çiđdem Aydın: Our demand for the 2011 general elections is 50

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% female representation)”also visit the website <http://www.haklikadinplatformu.org/> for the names providing support for the platform ).

Numerous women’s associations interested in women’s rights in different areas of life and embracing different ideologies provided their support for the platform. This beyond-ideologies standing also helped the success of the platform. The significance of this standing would be obvious once the Turkish feminist movement is analyzed through a historical perspective. The secular Islamist divide that has dominated the Turkish social and political scene since the establishment of the Republic but more after 1990 has had its reflection in the feminist movement as well. While the Islamist women fought for their rights –especially against the headscarf ban-, they felt that they were left alone and even prevented by their secular counterparts. The secularist feminists, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of the Republican regime and its reforms and believed that the Islamist women were being deceived in the name of Islam (see White 2003; Arat 2005 for the discussion on secularist and Islamic feminisms in Turkey). The Women’s Platform for Equality Mechanisms presented itself as an attempt to bring together women from different ideological orientations thanks to the participation by Bengisu Karaca, a headscarved columnist, in the campaigns and meetings of the platform. This time, rather than, focusing on the role of Islam or the vices of the Republican regime, feminist women directly focused on the underrepresentation of women (“Başörtülü Vekil Bir Kadın Meselesidir (Veiled MP is a Women’s Issue)”, 25 March, 2011). “For equal representation, for real democracy, for the new constitution and to overcome the obstacles, we want to see 275 female parliamentarians” was the full text of the slogan of the platform. As the expression used suggested explicitly, an important factor making the 2011 elections significant for Turkish political life was that the new parliament would prepare the new constitution as almost all the social and political actors have reached a consensus upon the need for such a change. The women made clear that a constitution prepared only by men would be deficient (“KADER’den “275 kadın milletvekili” kampanyası (“275 women MPs” Campaign from KADER)”, 2 March, 2011).

KA-DER also prepared a viral campaign on the internet that attracted too much attention due to the pictures used as part of it. In this campaign, the leaders of the political parties were pictured as women with the expression “what if you were a woman”. Calling to the leaders of the biggest three parties in Turkey, KA-DER warned them that if they were women, they would

host their guests and cook pastry for them, look after the children and prepare baby food or knit instead of making politics. Aiming to encourage party leaders to empathize with the lives of women in Turkey, this campaign criticized the political structure in Turkey in a funny way.(For the details of this viral campaign and its pictures see “Ya Kadın Olsaydın Tayyip Bey? KADER’in Kampanyası Çok Konuşulacak! (What if you were a woman Mr. Tayyip? The Campaign of KADER will be discussed a lot)”, 28 March, 2011)

The significance of these campaigns becomes especially clear when the media discussions before and after the 2007 and 2011 elections are analyzed. Such an analysis on the media organs and the internet would prove the role of civic actors in attracting media and public attention to a certain issue to which political parties feel obliged to respond to. When the candidate lists were announced by the party leaders before the elections, one of the first things that attracted the media attention was the number of women candidates in the to-be-elected rankings. This has not been the case in Turkey in the previous elections. After the elections, special attention has also been paid to the female parliamentarians who were even counted by name one by one in some news sources.

As the slogan used in the 2011 elections also suggested, the civic actors in Turkey have usually referred to Western standards –“for real democracy”- to empower their discourse on women’s rights. The strongest representative of the Western standards in Turkey is the European Union as the Turkish political history is –at least partly- based on the struggle to enter the EU. The criteria put forward by the EU act as the major benchmarks of the Western standards for Turkey.

## ii. International Actors – The European Union

Gender equality is an inherent aspect of the EU Law, called the *Acquis Communautaire*, which acts as the benchmark for the legislative restructuring of the candidate states. In the accession process, every country needs to take the necessary measures, including legal establishment of gender equality, to bring its legislation in line with the major principles of the *Acquis*<sup>9</sup>. Turkey received the status of a candidate country in 1999 after a

<sup>9</sup> See for instance the Treaty of Lisbon which reinforces the principle of equality between women and men by including gender equality in the values and objectives of the Union. The Treaty also promotes gender mainstreaming in all EU policies.

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long history of applications and rejections. Since that time, the EU has acted as the most powerful mover of reforms in Turkey. Especially the period between 1999 and 2005 was marked by quick and significant reforms that include amendments in laws, constitutional changes and the eight harmonization packages. In the four years between 2001-2005, totally 49 items of the constitution were amended. Regulations regarding gender equality and women's rights constitute a significant portion of these legislative changes.

Important legal steps have been taken to establish gender equality in Turkey. In 2001, gender equality in marriage was introduced. Equality in marriage was provided through several regulations; men and women would share the goods and properties accrued during the marriage equally, men would not be officially considered the head of family any more, women would be free to use their family surname after marriage, the couple would together decide where to live and women would not need to ask their husbands' permission to work anymore (For the amendments in the Civil Code, see Doğan 2003). With regard to violence against women, important decisions were taken in 2004. The most important of all, reduced sentences for honor killings were stopped. Moreover, definition of sexual assault and criminalized sexual harassment were widened (For a brief overview of the amendments in the Penal Code from a gender perspective, see "Women's Human Rights in the New Turkish Penal Code: The Success of the Campaign for the Reform of the Turkish Penal Code From a Gender Perspective"). Another area of legislative change on the way to full gender equality was the Labor Law that was renewed in 2003. Women were provided with the right to 16 weeks maternal leave with this amendment. Besides these changes in laws, gender equality was enacted in the constitution with the new amendments. The expression that "Men and women have equal rights. The state shall have the obligation to ensure that this equality exists in practice and may use any positive measures to this end." was added to the Article 10 of the Constitution. In the Article 41, on the other hand, it is stated that the family is the foundation of the Turkish society and that it is based on equality between men and women<sup>10</sup> ("Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası'nın Bazı Maddelerinin Değiştirilmesi Hakkında Kanun (Law on Amendments to Some Articles of the Constitution of Turkey)", 17 October, 2001).

<sup>10</sup> For a detailed explanation on all these amendments in English, see "Turkish Civil and Penal Code Reforms from a Gender Perspective: The Success of Two Nationwide Campaigns", 2005.

The timing and the speed, in which all these reforms have been undertaken, point to the impact of the EU on this process. It is known that the EU monitors the situation and the improvements in the candidate countries carefully and does not open the way for membership unless the necessary criteria are met. Then the discussion moves forward to the question “how does the EU create this impact?”. Although the EU uses other methods<sup>11</sup> as well, the major tool used by the Union is the Progress Reports prepared by the European Commission. Reports for all candidate countries are prepared every year to put forward their potential for membership in the Union. The reports are prepared as a result of a very careful monitoring process and hence include a detailed account of the situation in these countries in terms of fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria, focusing on both the improvements and the problems. The Progress Reports talk about women’s rights and gender equality –an element of the Copenhagen criteria- in its different dimensions; i.e. equality in family life, in politics, in labor force and also topics such as violence against women with a special focus on honor killings. Below is a brief overview of the 13 reports<sup>12</sup> prepared on Turkey with regard to the gender equality and women’s rights, especially to women representation in politics.

The first two reports prepared in 1998 and 1999 (see Turkey Progress Report 1998 and Turkey Progress Report 1999) did not even use the term “gender” and talked only about legal regulations in Turkey regarding discrimination faced by women. Even though the reports did not contain details on the issue, the area of focus was domestic violence. Women’s underrepresentation was not mentioned at all. The term “gender” started to be used in 2000 in talking about gender disparity in equal opportunities. The 2000 report (see Turkey Progress Report 2000) suggested that the opportunities of women in education and employment should be improved. The analysis that the Turkish problem is not in the legal structure but in its implementation began to be used in this report and an overall analysis shows that it has been repeated every year especially after the further legislative steps taken in the first half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

<sup>11</sup> Another important instrument the EU uses to enhance gender equality in Turkey is the projects in which the EU acts both as a partner and also as the financial sponsor. An example is the EU funded Project titled “Promoting Gender Equality in Working Life” which is undertaken by the Turkish Prime Ministry’s General Directorate on the Status of Women, or KSGM, and the Turkish Ministry of Labor. See, “Turkey steps up gender equality cooperation with EU”, 18 December, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Progress Reports on Turkey started to be prepared in 1998 even though Turkey became an official candidate to the Union only in 1999. The Progress Reports can be reached at the official website of the European Commission on a yearly basis. Necessary links will be provided below for each year’s report.

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The major difference observed in years among these reports with regard to the discussion on gender equality and women's rights is the space attributed to this discussion. There are several reasons behind EU's increasing the length of this discussion especially with the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Certainly, the first factor is that the EU started to attribute higher importance to the issue. Having adopted gender mainstreaming approach in 1996 and formalized the commitment to gender mainstreaming in 1997 with the Treaty of Amsterdam<sup>13</sup>, the EU increased its interest in the gender issues. Hence; in years the issue started to be discussed in a higher number of dimensions. Beginning with a special focus on family life and violence against women, the scope of the evaluations extended first to the proportion of women in labor force and then lastly to women's representation in politics which was mentioned only in the 2002 report (Turkey Progress Report 2002) for the first time.

The problems with the political rights of women in Turkey found more space in the reports prepared in the years of elections. In 2004 (Turkey Progress Report 2004), the year of the local elections in Turkey, for instance, it was stated that only 25 female mayors were elected compared to 3209 male mayors. The increase in the number of female parliamentarians in the 2007 general elections and the campaigns held by KA-DER before the elections were discussed in the 2007 Progress Report (Turkey Progress Report 2007). The attempts of KA-DER were interpreted to be successful in raising public-awareness on the issue. In 2009, the attention again shifted to the proportion of female mayors due to the local elections held in the same year and it was stated that the number of elected female mayors were very low. The 2009 report (Turkey Progress Report 2009) mentioned that "the legal framework is broadly in place" and this needed to be implemented in practice. The lack of effective dialogue between the civil society and the government on gender-related issues was also criticized in this regard. These statements by the European Commission can be easily interpreted to point to the significance of civic actors in awareness-raising on the women's underrepresentation in politics that would lead to improvements in practice as well.

Progress Reports display careful monitoring by the EU. Besides the official steps taken for legislative restructuring, social happenings are also watched. Appreciating the improvements in Turkey; i.e. the constitutional

<sup>13</sup> Available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/treaty/pdf/amst-en.pdf>

changes and amendments in the Civil Code and the Penal Code, the EU has pointed to the problematic areas and implementations as well.

The monitoring by the EU institutions has acted as a “driving force for reforms amending decades old legal provisions that discriminate against women” (Berktaş 2004:163) in Turkey. Exactly at this point, the relations between two of the actors analyzed in this article, need to be emphasized. The EU empowers the civic actors against the political authorities in asking for change. The demands of the women’s organizations are put forward as important steps to take for a modern, developed and Westernized Turkey. This integration of different discourses makes it possible to put higher pressure on decision-making mechanisms (Berktaş 2004:163). Tunkrova (2010) defines the impact of the EU on the flourishing of civil society in Turkey as “EU providing an opportunity structure” and explains that the EU establishes an opportunity window for these organizations as “the government becomes within the accession process more responsive to their demands and starts to implement some very important reforms” (11-12).

Besides the integrative impact of the civic and international actors, role models that are ahead of the other political parties in Turkey also heat up the competition in terms of providing gender equality and hence contribute to women’s representation in politics. The next section will focus on the role of Kurdish politicians as role models using the quota system and other tools to remedy women’s underrepresentation.

### **iii. The Kurdish Political Movement as the Role Model**

The significance of civic and international actors in shaping the political parties, in both their policies and internal organizations, is an undeniable fact; however, the role of political parties in influencing each other should also be evaluated carefully. The major factor that provides the political parties with such leading roles is the competitive political environment available. Competing for higher public support, political parties do not accept to stay ignorant of any item in the common agenda. The non-governmental organizations and international actors are powerful in agenda-setting in accordance with their considerations thanks to the media attention and other tools they successfully use to reach the public. On the other hand, the discourse and regulations of a certain political party might also raise public-attention on a certain issue. Once the members of a political party start a discussion

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and talk about the party's achievements in this respect, present themselves as the model in other words, the issue becomes a part of the common agenda. The other parties, then, feel the need to respond so that they do not fall out of the competition. Then the party turns into a role model especially if the issue is considered to be important by the public at large.

Parties and candidates representing the Kurdish movement<sup>14</sup> have recently started to play such a leading role in women's representation in Turkey. Women have a significant place in public presentations of the movement and women's rights deserve a special attention within the party discourse. Besides these examples in practice, the official intra-party regulations of BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) point to the leading role of the movement in this respect. TÜSİAD's (Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association) Gender Equality Working Group also emphasized the significance of the attempts by the BDP and stated before the 2011 general elections that BDP acted as a model in its attitudes towards gender equality and that women of the party should tell their counterparts in other political parties how they had achieved this success ("TÜSAİD: Bu İşin Sırrı Ne? (TUSIAD: What is the formula of this success?).").

It was back at the very end of 1990s, when the movement was represented by HADEP in the political sphere, that 25 % quota for women was stated in the party charter. In years the percentage of the quota has been increased. It became 35 % with DEHAP and 40 % with DTP in 2002 (Çağlayan 2005). However; this regulation by these parties attracted public attention only after the 2007 general elections when the 8 among the elected 20 parliamentarians of the movement were women. The female representation overall in the parliament at that period was limited to 9 % while it was 40 % among the BDP parliamentarians (Tamer 2011). This large difference attracted the attention of the media, the public and the political analysts who started to emphasize the importance of a pioneering role to be played by

<sup>14</sup> An analysis on the Kurdish movement includes several party names due to the fact the Kurdish parties have been repeatedly closed by the Constitutional Court with the explanation that they make divisive ethnic politics and have been reopened immediately with a different name. The Turkish political history can be read as a cycle of party –especially Kurdish and Islamist parties- closures. Besides that in the last two elections, these parties decided to run as independent candidates in the elections so that they can overcome the major obstacle they face, namely the 10 % electoral threshold. That is why this article prefers to talk about the pro-Kurdish parties –in plural- and independent candidates as the representatives of the Kurdish movement. The names of the pro-Kurdish parties in a historical perspective are; HEP (People's Work Party), DEP (Democracy Party), HADEP (People's Democracy Party), DEHAP (Democratic People's Party), DTP (Democratic Society Party), BDP (Peace and Democracy Party).

the BDP. An important aspect of the quota system of the BDP is that they prefer to call it gender quota rather than women quota and suggest that neither men nor women should exceed 40 % in any organ of the party or in any candidate lists prepared by the party. The quota system in BDP has a wide scope which is not only limited to the parliamentary seats. Besides the candidates for legislative seats, those for mayoralty, for city councils and for provincial councils are all determined with respect to this quota. The party is found to be highly successful in implementing legal regulations into practice. 14 of the 28 female mayors in Turkey are members of the BDP (Belge 2010).

Besides the quota system, co-chairman system is also used by the BDP. The party, different from all the other political parties in Turkey, has two co-chairs, one male and one female, and the decision has been taken that these people act as the chairman of the party in turn –one year for each (Belge 2010). The co-chairman system is used in some provincial organizations of the party as well. Among the 47 cities in which BDP has been organized, 19 have provincial co-chairs; again one male and one female. The significance of having a female co-chair in provincial organizations is explained by Mrs. Kışanak, the female co-chair of the party, as a way to make women feel more comfortable in entering the BDP buildings in provinces. “If they know that the chair is a man, women usually shy at entering the building”, (4 February, 2010) says Mrs. Kışanak. She explains that their plan is to extend the use of this method to all the 47 cities. Another practice peculiar to the party provides positive discrimination for female candidates. If two candidates receive the same amount of votes in any elections, the female candidate is accepted to win (“BDP’de Kadın Kotasına İlave Erkeklere de Kota (In addition to the female quota, quota for men in the BDP”).

Besides occupying important positions, the aim of the women in the party is to make women have a say in the decisions taken. In BDP, in the issues directly related to women, female members have a priority in voting and decision-making. Another, perhaps a more strict, intraparty regulation is that the decisions taken in the meetings to which no women could have attended are not binding on women. The female members of the party present this regulation as a reflection of the past experience. They say that they aimed to prevent the male members of the party take serious decisions without their participation by scheduling the meetings so that they coincide with some events organized by the women’s organizations. They

want the program of the Women's Assembly<sup>15</sup> to be taken into account before the meetings are organized (Tamer 2011).

All these information strongly suggest that the BDP, or the Kurdish movement in general, has covered a long distance on equality in representation and decision-making compared to the other parties in Turkey. They call their struggle as an attempt to democratize the Turkish politics and argue that representation of all have-been-excluded groups would be a significant contribution to this end. In the 2011 elections, they aimed to show the broader perspective they have regarding the excluded groups and included Armenian and Assyrian candidates besides the pro-Kurdish ones in their independent candidate lists. The inclusion of these different groups; however, decreased the proportion of women among the BDP MPs to 30 %. Yet still the female representation among the BDP parliamentarians at least doubled all the other parties in the new parliament; the percentages among the AKP and CHP seats remained at approximately 14 % and among the MHP even below 6% ("TBMM'nin Kadın Vekilleri (The Women Representatives in the Parliament)", 27 July, 2011).

All the statistics on women's representation in Turkish politics across political parties suggest that BDP has the potential to act as the role model. The members of the BDP are also aware of their pioneering role in Turkish politics in this regard and frequently emphasize their attempts to bridge the political gender gap in Turkey as a way of stressing their pro-democracy stance. Repeated mentioning of women's underrepresentation in politics by the members of the movement –especially by the publically visible female members- forced the other political parties to respond at least by restructuring their party organizations if not through their statements.

## CONCLUSION

This article is an attempt to propose alternative and easier ways to bridge the political gender gap. The factors that have been argued, in the literature, to make higher female representation possible all focus on macro-level systemic aspects such as the electoral system, socio-economic development

<sup>15</sup> The BDP started to use the expression Women's Assembly rather than Women's Branch in 2002 to indicate female organization in the party in order to give the impression that it is a free and democratic environment open to participation and that it is open to all women outside the party as well (Tamer 2011).

level or cultural characteristics. However the increase in women's representation experienced with the 2007 and 2011 general elections in Turkey suggest that change is also possible with micro-level political differences. A careful analysis of the Turkish case displays that arousing media and public attention on the issue makes a big difference because the political parties, aware that they are being monitored in this respect, try to improve themselves in terms of the opportunities they provide for higher female representation.

Although no significant systemic change has been experienced in Turkey, the percentage of female parliamentarians rose from 4 % to 14 % after the two elections. This observation suggests that once women's underrepresentation is brought to the agenda, all the political parties feel obliged to adopt both their discourses and intra-party organizations in line with gender equality even though no systemic restructuring forces them to do so. The competitive political environment makes the political parties responsive to the issues raised by the public. Then, the most significant roles in bridging the political gender gap –in a rather easier and quicker way- are played by the actors who have the power to set the agenda and to raise-awareness. Under the light of the Turkish experience, this article argues that these actors are civic actors -that make use of public campaigns and become influential with the use of famous figures and the media tools-, international actors -the EU in the Turkish case due to the extra effort Turkey has long been spending to become a member of the Union- and role models -the representatives of the Kurdish movement in the Turkish case due to their official regulations encouraging women's representation. Certainly, further research in different contexts is needed to transform these findings into a theory of actors bridging the political gender gap.

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# Post-Secular Society and the Multi-Vocal Religious Sphere in Turkey

Alper Bilgili<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Secularism in Turkey has been an area of fierce discussions driven primarily by the existence of a state institution regulating religious affairs, the Directorate of Religious Affairs (The *Diyanet*). Having emerged as a product of ideas and developments of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the new post-secular society in Turkey is spearheading a multi-vocal religious sphere that is providing areas of influence to religious communities (*cemaats*). The significant question with regard to this changing structure in Turkey is whether this increasing influence of the *cemaats* will lead to an Islamicized Turkey. To answer this question, the article argues that the emerging multi-vocal religious sphere is a result of the democratic climate that has been created out of the possibilities offered by globalization and European Union accession. Thus, multi-vocality should be interpreted as a normalization process that will redress the problems created by the hyper-secularist practices of the early republican era, rather than an attack against the democratic pillars of the Republic.

## KEYWORDS

Islamic communities, Diyanet, *cemaat*, Secularism, Post-secularism

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I would like to thank Dr. Nazlı Çağın Bilgili and Yunus Dogan Telliel for their valuable comments on a draft of this paper.

## INTRODUCTION

Ever since the allegedly Islamist AKP (The Justice and Development Party) came to power in 2002, Turkish secularists have been talking about an inherent danger, a danger they envision as an Iran-like Turkey that will be governed by a version of *Sharia* law. This fear was so ubiquitous in secular circles that in the 2007 general elections the opposition party CHP (The Republican People's Party) based its election strategy solely on their perceived threat of an Islamic state. Four years later, in the 2011 elections, this same party abandoned its earlier secular-state-in-danger rhetoric, a step that can be interpreted as a sign of a paradigmatic shift being experienced by Turkish society and its politics. We may term this shift a normalization process that is replacing the hyper-secularist paradigm with a moderate one. This paper dwells on this change and tries to grasp the factors that led to it. The new secularism in Turkey will be analyzed with a special focus on the main domestic actors such as the *Diyanet* and the *cemaats*, as well as the European Union as an influent international actor. The implications of such a redefinition of secularism in Turkey will be addressed at the end of the paper.

## SECULARISM À LA TURCA

The journey of Turkish secularism begins with a belief in the universal applicability of Western experience. The secularization thesis, assuming the replacement of religious worldviews with rational thought, was embraced by the late Ottoman intellectuals and early Republican cadres. The pro-secular cadres of Turkey used terms like “enlightenment” and “darkness” – that they borrowed from the West- to illustrate their position vis-à-vis the pro-Islamists'. As Atatürk, the founding father of Turkish Republic, claimed in the opening ceremony of the parliament in 1937, the party programme of his party would replace the books that were assumed to be revealed from God (“Atatürk'ün Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisinin V. Dönem 3. Yasama Yılına Açış Konuşmaları” 1937). The extensive role attributed to Islam was used as a scapegoat in explanations for the underdevelopment of the Turkish state, and the remedies for development included a harsh version of secularism that would secularize not only the state but also the society as a whole. Yet, the prescriptions should have been different, for the problems that gave birth to secularism in Europe were not the same as those of the Turkish state. The secularism,

as a European invention, aimed to curb social power of the Church and achieve peace in a society which was threatened by confessional wars (Habermas 2008: 22). This was certainly far different from the issues Turkey faced in the early republican era and the historical experience suggests that in Turkey the religious authority never constituted a rival to the political authority.

First of all, the Ottoman Empire lacked a Church-like institution that could mobilize the masses against the political authority (Gözaydın 2009: 15). The title of *caliph*, which was described as “the shadow of God” and “the successor of the prophet”, was held by the Sultan himself, and thus could not pose a threat to Sultan’s authority. Besides, despite the existence of an *Alevi*<sup>2</sup> minority in Anatolia, there was no sign of a confessional war in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Thus, the conditions that paved the way to secularism in the West were absent in the Turkish case. Still, the Turkish state elites who designed the republican state interpreted secularism as essential in creating solidarity along nationalist lines. Gökalp, who shaped the minds of the early republican intellectuals, argued that nationalism would be the triumphant ideology of modern times and it should have replaced religious ideologies in creating solidarity. (2007, 76) The Arab revolts of World War I<sup>3</sup> were used as proofs of the need to immediately inculcate nationalist sensibilities. This forced the republican cadres to accelerate the establishment of a secular state, rather than testing the validity of the idea that religion would wither away in the socio-political spheres without any intervention.

The abolishment of the caliphate in 1924 was a necessary -but not necessarily sufficient- condition to the establishment of a secular society along western lines, as was the adopting of secular rules or of the Latin alphabet. The secular state was aware that it had to ease any potential religious discontent that could trigger a religious counter-revolution -especially after banning the Islamic communities (*cemaats*)<sup>4</sup> in 1924- and chose to do this

<sup>2</sup> Alevis constitute a non-Sunni Muslim community, which is interpreted to be similar to Shia Islam in certain respects. It is by far the largest Muslim minority in Turkey. In this respect see Çarkoğlu, Bilgili 2011 for a detailed analysis of the Alevis.

<sup>3</sup> The Arab revolts had a deep impact on Turkish cultural memory. Although various other nations revolted against the Ottoman Empire especially starting with the 19th century, the Islamist ideology that Islam could unite Muslims lost ground after the Arab revolts. This, certainly, strengthened the nationalist and secular claims of the state elite.

<sup>4</sup> Islamic communities (*cemaats*), very crudely speaking, refer to hierarchical religious organizations that are mostly influenced by a religious authority. The *cemaats* aim to perform religious rituals and

by satisfying the religious needs of the masses. The *Diyanet*<sup>5</sup>, paradoxically enough, was invented by secular cadres to protect the secular state from those religious threats. The state planned to teach its own understanding of Islam, whose borders, at least partly, were drawn by secularism, nationalism and modernity. The potential of multi-vocality within Islam was present in the first decades of the Republic, so the *Diyanet* was used to curb the “radical” voices and thus lead people to an understanding of Islam that it viewed as “convenient.” The *Diyanet*, which bears responsibility for providing public religious services, has been functioning as a state institution ever since. Indeed, until quite recently, it alone could decide what is “truly Islamic” and what is not. The paradigmatic shift that we will focus on broke up this monopoly of the *Diyanet* and created a space for alternative groups and their interpretations of Islam.

The *Diyanet* continues even today to play a guiding role in religious issues. It issues *fatwas* (legal statements in Islam) and provides commentary on contemporary issues. The important point that should be underlined is that the *Diyanet* functions within boundaries defined by the secular state. A research on the Friday *hutbas* (sermons) prepared by the *Diyanet* between 2003 and 2005 illustrates this point. While the subject of “the love of Allah” was used five times as a *hutba* topic, “the love of fatherland” was used six times (Gözyayın 2009: 166). Another example of this statist tendency is the *hutba* titled “Republic is a virtue,” which argues that a democratic republic is the form of government that best accords with Islam (“Cumhuriyet Fazilettir” 1999). Further examples can be found in the speeches given by *Diyanet* officials on television, speeches praising Atatürk and referring to his views that underline the importance of religion for a healthy society -though the idea sounds quite Comteian. In an interview I conducted with İzzet Er, the former Deputy Director of the *Diyanet*, the *Diyanet*’s official view was explicitly stressed: “We try to reconcile Islam with secularism” (Interview with İzzet Er, February 11, 2010).

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social-religious activities as well as creating solidarity among its members.

<sup>5</sup> Article 136 of the Turkish constitution defines the *Diyanet*’s responsibilities. As a state organization the *Diyanet* is “responsible for the execution of the duties specified in the special law in order to provide national unity and solidarity, and remain separate from all political views and thoughts in accordance with the principle of secularism”. The duties mentioned in the constitution are explained in the special law as follows: “to execute the works concerning the beliefs, worship, and ethics of Islam, enlighten the public about their religion, and administer the sacred worshipping places.” See <http://www.diyamet.gov.tr/english/tanitim.asp?id=13> for more information on the *Diyanet*’s basic principles, aims and objectives.

This exceptional secular design has been criticized by secularists as well as by Islamic fundamentalists, while certainly for different reasons. Secularists argue that in genuine secular countries the state is indifferent to all beliefs -including disbelief. The *Diyanet*, however, acts to solely satisfy the religious needs of Sunni Muslims, although it is funded by the state rather than the believers of this sect. The religious demands of Alevis, Caferis<sup>6</sup> and other non-Sunni Muslims are not satisfied by the *Diyanet*, let alone the demands of other communities. If the *Diyanet* singles out the Sunni Muslims as the only orthodox and acceptable group, then the rest should have a right to choose not to fund such kind of an organization. On the other side of the coin, the fact that the *Diyanet* focuses on Sunni Islam does not please all Sunni Muslims since this focus is interpreted to be the result of a control-or-perish mentality. The state is aware of the fact that Sunni Muslim communities are eager to step in if the state withdraws from satisfying religious needs and hence feels the need to exercise such a control. Theologian Kemaleddin Taş, for that reason, argues that leaving the religious affairs to *cemaats* will endanger the solidarity of the country, since in such a scenario the mosques would be shared by different religious communities espousing different beliefs (Taş 2007: 508). In another interview, Mustafa Çağrı, the *Mufti* of Istanbul, claimed that the *Diyanet* prevents radical ideas and brings about unity. To support his claim he gives the example of Pakistan – a country that lacks such a central religious institution and thus ended up with fragmentation and turmoil (Interview with Mustafa Çağrı, January 18 2010). This kind of a unity, doubtless to say, is not welcomed by all the *cemaats* -especially by those with differing interpretations of Islam. All in all, the state's ambition to prevent potential religious reactionary movements by promoting its own understanding of Islam has been criticized by two different groups, namely secularists and "unorthodox" Muslims (a group that also includes radical Muslim groups) even though both base their uneasiness on totally different reasons. That is secularism *à la Turca*.

## TOWARDS A POST-SECULAR, MULTI-VOCAL TURKISH SOCIETY

The republican elites have never interpreted secularism –whether it refers to a separation of Church and State or the decreasing role of religions in everyday life of individuals- as a temporary phase in the history of mankind,

<sup>6</sup> Caferis belong to the Shia Islam as well and do not have any representation in *Diyanet* despite their similarity to the Sunnis in religious rituals.

but praise it as a universal and eternal human virtue. The concept of secularism has been by far the most treasured of Atatürk's principles and is so emphasized that any and all other principles –including democracy– can be sacrificed for its sake. Some of the experiences that support this argument are the military coups of 1960 and 1997. Those coups should be analyzed –at least in part– to have an idea of the robustness of the secularism in Turkey.

The Republican People's Party, the founding party of Turkey, ruled the country for more than 20 years without any free and fair elections.<sup>7</sup> It was held that free elections carried the threat of ending republican rule, since the reforms needed time to be embraced by the masses. Thus, as mentioned before, the secular state sacrificed certain Western values to become Western sooner. Yet, international politics forced the Turkish elite to revise their to-do list. Upon the defeat of Germany in the Second World War, the Turkish elite realized that it had no option but to pursue reforms that would enhance a more democratic state. With the introduction of a multi-party system in the mid-1940s, the radical secular policies of the Republican People's Party were curbed by the threat of a defeat in the 1950 elections. Yet, the secularists' efforts to change their image were futile and in the first fair elections, they lost their governing position to the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party's success was interpreted by the masses to be a victory for Islam (Tunaya 1991: 206). The Democratic Party, despite the fact that its members were recruited from secular cadres of the Republican People's Party, pursued various populist policies –such as restoring the use of Arabic as the language of the call to prayer, a step that touched a nerve with some secularists. The military, a staunch defender of secular principles, interpreted the Democratic Party's policies as exploitation of religious feelings and intervened in politics in 1960. The moderate policies of the Democratic Party towards religion resulted in a coup d'état that diminished the role of religion in social life. A similar incident was experienced in 1997. The pro-Islamist stance of the ruling Welfare Party was punished with a post-modern coup<sup>8</sup>, by which the military dictated its demands to the government to stop further Islamization of the country. In both cases, the regime's attachment

<sup>7</sup> See Zürcher 1993, for a detailed analysis of the Kemalist one-party rule between 1925 and 1945.

<sup>8</sup> The coup is defined as post-modern, since the military forced the government to resign rather than directly seizing the political power. The government was replaced with another civilian coalition government which did not pose, according to the military officials, any threat for the secular values of the Republic.

to secular principles was put to the test and its robustness was proved at the expense of democracy.

Still, it is an oversimplification to argue that these interventions enhanced the utopia in secularists' mind. Despite the bans on religious activities and communities, the *cemaats* have managed to survive in different circumstances. In a Darwinian sense, those that adapted to the changing circumstances better increased their influence in the society, while others that resisted changes dictated by globalization, modernization and westernization paid the price by losing ground in society and turning into marginal groups.<sup>9</sup> The *cemaats*, which expect certain benefits from globalization, have lent their support to this development (Kuru 2005: 273), despite the fact that this support does not come without any costs. Today, the *cemaats* are far different from the same *cemaats* of the pre-globalization period.

An understanding of these changes requires an understanding of the factors that have been catalyzing those changes: the globalization process, the European Union, civil society and the military, among others. Despite the latitude of factors that are contributing to the re-formation of Turkish secularism, none of these can be analyzed in isolation<sup>10</sup>. For instance, the military, as a noteworthy actor, has to consider both the European Union's views, as well as the possible reactions of the civil society, reactions that are indeed partly shaped by the globalization process. Among these factors, globalization and the impact of the European Union towards further democratization deserve special attention. Before focusing on the liberal-democratic values promoted by the European Union, the complicated concept of "globalization" should be touched upon.

Turkey, especially starting with the 1980s, began to experience a fundamental globalization process. Turgut Özal, a conservative liberal politician who served as Turkey's prime minister between 1983 and 1989 was the leading actor in this change. He worked for the World Bank and was aware of the fact that Turkey's isolation from the Western World would exacerbate the economic and social conditions that led to either military coups

<sup>9</sup> One such example is the Mahmut Efendi community. The followers of Mahmut Efendi resist the modern, global and western values -even list watching TV as a sin. It goes without saying that, with an anti-globalization attitude as such, Mahmut Efendi's followers could not compete with other *cemaats* which make use of virtually every opportunity provided by the contemporary media technology.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmet Kuru, for example, argues that, the support of a *cemaat* to Turkey's European Union membership is a sign of its being pro-globalization. (2005: 257)

or economic crisis. He thus embraced both neo-liberal economic policies that would increase wealth and enhanced political rights that would create a civil society that could criticize the status quo. This was a unique moment in Turkish history as it marked the emergence for the first time of a genuine civil society that could oppose any and all kinds of secular fanaticism. Generally speaking, the *cemaats* increased their social and economic capital during this period and began to use this capital for diverse religious and social activities. The economic development of the *cemaats* enhanced ideological emancipation as well. They established their own private schools, TV stations, and newspapers, thus breaking the monopoly of secular ideology. The Islamic bourgeoisie created by neo-liberal policies and globalization began in turn to affect the political agenda. Many argue that the AKP would not have been able to come to power without this support of the bourgeoisie class (Taslaman 2011: 173). The *cemaats* used civil society to increase their popularity among the masses and indeed they were quite successful in creating sympathy despite -or maybe because of- the ban on religious communities. The Justice and Development Party's assumption of power in 2002 was, for many, a reaction of the masses to the post-modern coup d'état launched in 1997.

There is another aspect of globalization that might be related to the secularism/post-secularism debate. Globalization and the post-modern values that it has disseminated throughout the world resulted in the "secularization of secularism," which is the idea that secularism should not be spared from criticism (Kyrlezhev 2008: 29). The underlying idea is that there are no absolutes in the world. This critical approach towards secularism has been accompanied with an increasing popularity of search for a meaning in life. Secularism could not offer anything that could replace the ontology of religion in answering existentialist questions that would make life more meaningful.

As a result of these motivations, religions and religious communities regained the power that they had lost in the post-World War II era (Habermas 2008: 17). Western societies can no longer be defined as secular societies, for religion has become an important mechanism in rallying the masses for social and political purposes. In this sense, the post-secularism phase that Western societies are currently passing through is reminiscent of the secularization process in the 1750s. The language, symbols, concepts and the understanding of the dominant ideology are being re-evaluated and history is being re-interpreted, this time, through post-secular lenses (Morozov

2008: 41). The Turkish experience of post-secularism is definitely being affected by the trend that the (post)modern world has been undergoing. By the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the same period that globalization became more and more important in shaping people's minds, new criticisms of Kemalist secular ideology began to emerge. These criticisms have been primarily based on the futility of this system in creating a meaning for life. Although it may be a bit of an exaggeration to assert that globalization has been the main factor leading people to question secular ideology, its impact should not be ignored.

As previously stated, globalization has increased the capacity of the *cemaats* to access the masses. In addition to this, the rise of post-modern values has also devalued the secular ideology. Finally, the Islamic communities, which lacked legitimacy for decades, gained serious public approval during the globalization process. Yet, in the eyes of the secular actors, public approval is of no worth. The masses, secularists argue, do not have the ability to evaluate the indispensability of secular principles. As in the post-modern coup of 1997, the masses had to be reminded that secular ideology would be protected by the military whenever necessary. Indeed, without the protection of a supreme authority, the *cemaats* were vulnerable to military intervention. The European Union filled the need for such an authority.

### **THE EUROPEAN UNION'S IMPACT ON DEMOCRACY AND THE SECULARISM DEBATE**

The role that is being played by the European Union in redefining the boundaries of secularism should be seen as part of a larger democratization process. The Union, without any doubt, has been the most eminent advocate of democracy and pro-democratic policies in Turkey, especially since 1999 (Bac 2005: 17). The strengthening of civil society is –at least partly– a natural result of this democratization process. Moreover, the European Union is also crucial for its contribution to the improvement of civil groups –including the *cemaats*– to react to unjust laws –such as those enacted after the coup d'états.

A vast literature exists on the relationship between secularism and democracy. Here, we will focus on the “twin tolerations,” a concept introduced by Alfred Stepan. He defined the concept as “the minimal boundaries of

freedom of action that must somehow be crafted for political institutions vis-à-vis religious authorities, and for religious individuals and groups vis-à-vis political institutions” (Stepan 2000: 37). Thus, according to this argument, in a true democracy, religious institutions should have boundaries that should not be violated by politicians for any reason. Stepan further argues that, contrary to what secularists argue, a strict separation of church from the state is not the case even in the most advanced democracies of the world. He gives the examples of European democracies with established churches, religious-based parties, religious schools funded by the state, etc (Stepan 2000: 41). Religious organizations and groups should not be forced to function in private life, Stepan argues, but have the right to organize in civil society and should even be allowed to organize political activities (2000: 42). Actually it is not only Stepan who claims that a genuine democracy should include the element of tolerating others’ views even if they have religious origins. Lipset, for instance, argues that for a healthy democracy different beliefs should be tolerated and freedom of religion should be enhanced (1994: 3).

Indeed, what Stepan argues has important practical lessons for Turkish politics. First of all, in Turkey, religious communities do not have the right to express their identities, establish social organizations or political parties. The Justice and Development Party, for instance, was accused of having an Islamic agenda. The *chief* prosecutor of the Supreme Court claimed that Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan and President Abdullah Gül should be banned from politics as well. Although the Constitutional Court did not close down the party, it announced that the party was the focal-point for anti-secular activities. This was not the first time that a political party was accused of using democracy to reach their hidden goal, the establishment of an Islamic state in Turkey. In the Turkish experience, groups with religious motivations are not allowed to organize political institutions. Indeed, the law banning the existence of religious communities is still on the books. Despite the existence and public recognition of many *cemaat*-related charity organizations, universities and TV channels, there are laws forbidding any such “anti-secular” establishments. This is certainly far from the twin tolerations of Stepan since in Turkey the state has -at least in theory- the right to violate the boundaries and does not have any sympathy for a civil society enriched by the existence of religiously-based organizations. Kemalists dream of a religion that is a matter of conscience, one that does not have any social or political function (Gözaydın 2009: 236-237). Indeed, that is not something they hoped for, that is what they believed,

which is quite contrary to the realities of contemporary societies. Religious institutions and groups with their potential to fight against crime and to solve social problems as well as to enhance welfare, became a supporter of civil society especially starting with the 1990s and Turkish society is no exception. (Cromartie, Loconte 2007: 35).

All these have resulted in paradoxical situations in Turkey. While moderate Islamists support the membership of Turkey to the European Union, at least the process of accession, Kemalists oppose it due to the freedoms Islamists gain within this period (Taslaman 2011: 179). Muslim communities see the Union as a way to break down the secularist dictatorship and trust the European Union more than they do the Turkish Constitutional Court (Yavuz 2005: 336). This is paradoxical in that it has always been argued that it is the Kemalists who have embraced Western societies as role models for modern Turkey.

As mentioned above, the European Union's emphasis on further democratization has been an important factor that has increased the visibility of religious communities in social and even in political spheres. The European Union's harsh criticisms of the military's intention to shape politics have certainly strengthened the religious communities' position. According to Turkey's 2008 Progress Report, "the armed forces have continued to exercise significant political influence via formal and informal mechanisms." Secularism is one of the issues, in which the military has been intervening (EC Progress Report 2008: 9). Additionally, Muslim communities in Turkey often point to examples of European secularism and try to defend their position vis-à-vis allegedly pro-European Kemalists. References are made to the European authorities -Members of European Parliament, academics and etc.- and mostly end by emphasizing that this is the case "even in France" (Gültaşlı 2006).

Yet, it is not easy to find a direct reference to Muslim communities in the European Commission's Progress Reports on Turkey. Under the heading of freedom of religion, the discussion focuses on the freedom of religion of either non-Muslim communities or that of the *Alevi* minority. While the developments on the public use of the Ecumenical Patriarch as a title (EC Progress Report 2006: 16) or the status of *Alevi* worship places (EC Progress Report 2008: 18) have been scrutinized by the European Union in almost all of these reports, there has been virtually no reference to the problems faced by Muslim communities. Still, it is widely understood that

the expansion of religious freedom in general will also improve and legitimize the social visibility of Muslim communities. Thus, although the impact of the European Union on the redefinition of secularism has been indirect, it is significant due to the reasons previously explained.

### DOES POST-SECULARISM POSE A THREAT FOR TURKEY?

The redefinition of the borders of secularism in Turkey is a complicated and on-going process that should not be interpreted as an extension of reactionary Islam. The actors who are undertaking the redefinition process are not the same actors of the pre-1980 period. Islam is not a static religion; on the contrary, it is open to re-interpretations and it is influenced by modern values. (Göle 2000: 94) There are several reasons why the *cemaats*, in particular, have undergone a major change process. First of all, these groups noticed the success of moderate religious communities -especially that of *Nurcus*<sup>11</sup>- and embraced the same attitude towards secular forces of Turkey. Those who openly opposed the quasi-sacred secular values of the Republic were eliminated or remain marginal. Second, the possibilities offered by globalization forced the *cemaats* to change their attitudes. The *cemaats* abandoned some of their conservative beliefs whenever they were found to contradict with their interests in the process of spreading their beliefs. There is apparently a paradox here, since the common beliefs are changed in order that these same beliefs will be shared with a larger audience. To illustrate, TV stations belonging to the *cemaats* frequently broadcast Hollywood movies in an attempt to increase and draw viewers, despite the fact that the message in these films may not be in line with the ideals of the *cemaat*. Indeed these attitudes cannot be explained by simply terming them hypocritical, since the members of the *cemaats* seem to internalize the values that they declare regarding the democratic and secular state and the values that they disseminate with movies or TV shows. The attitude of these *cemaats* regarding the headscarf issue seems to prove the point that the opinions of the followers of the *cemaats* are far from being static, and indeed they are ready to change due to the trends of globalization, democratization and modernization embraced by the *cemaats*. Instead of discussing the headscarf issue on religious grounds, the followers of the *cemaats* adopt a discourse that perceives the problem as a violation of a basic

<sup>11</sup> *Nurcus* constitute the largest Sunni-Muslim *cemaat* in Turkey. Especially, those who follow Fethullah Gülen are known for their moderate stance and activities in virtually every sphere of modern social life. His followers prefer to name their community as *Hizmet* (Service).

human right. The *cemaats* have internalized liberal values, even if that was not their intent. Today, there are only a handful of *cemaats* that continue to espouse fundamentalist goals in Turkey. The popularity that they gained during the Islamist Revolution of Iran began to wane in the mid-1990s (Çarkoğlu, Bilgili 2010: 413). Indeed, it is the moderate Muslim communities that hold a more fundamental position in redefining secularism rather than the radical ones. Thus, it is not possible to argue that the increasing visibility of the *cemaats* will pose a threat for the regime. On the contrary, moving away from the Turkish hyper-secularism can be interpreted as a normalization process, which may further curb the marginal ideas against the regime.

Before ending this section two further implications of the emerging multi-vocal religious sphere should be noted: As previously mentioned, the *Diyanet* was designed by the secularists to be the only legitimate religious organization. Yet, the globalization process and the European Union have changed the rules of the game by strengthening the position of the *cemaats* that were previously forced to function as underground communities. The rise of a robust civil society also has had other by-products along with the strengthening the existing *cemaats*: the emergence of non-orthodox Islamic communities. One of these non-Orthodox Islamic communities is the Quranist movement, which was started in the United States and introduced to Turkey especially during the 1990s. The movement argues that Quran should be taken as the sole source of Islam and the other sources should be seen as Arab traditions that lack any sort of divine foundation (Kuran Araştırmaları Grubu 2000: 24). Indeed, the rise of new sects is a global phenomenon and, as is the case in all post-secular societies, the plurality of communities is a problem that traditional religions -or religious communities- have to face (Kyrlezhev 2008: 28).

Secondly, the increasing popularity of the *cemaats* has also had an impact on the *Diyanet*. *Diyanet* officials now maintain that they should not limit their activities to prayer leading. They feel that they have to go outside and compete with religious communities in order to be taken seriously by the masses. One such attempt is the *Diyanetspor*, a sports team established by the *Diyanet* in 2007 (“*Diyanet Gençlik Spor Klubü Derneği*” 2007). Thus, the increasing visibility of the *cemaats* in social life has forced the *Diyanet* to become active in spheres that do not seem religious or sacred. The paradigmatic shift taking place in Turkey is not only bringing about new actors, but also changing the attitudes of the already existing actors

in the game. The most important point about this change is its direction: more moderate, more liberal religious institutions and communities will survive and shape the post-secular regime in Turkey, while radicals will fade away.

## CONCLUSION

This essay has argued that the *Diyanet* lost its monopoly in religious affairs as a result of the changes that have been taking place during, especially, the last three decades. The changes in Turkey cannot be explained solely by domestic factors, but, on the contrary, are products of the globalization and the European Union accession processes. These processes triggered the emergence of a civil society in Turkey in which liberal and democratic values have flourished. Hence, the secularist actors, especially the military, have lost their potential to shape the boundaries of religion in social -and even to some extent in political- life. Herein lies another contribution of the European Union, since the norms that flourished in the civil society need a legitimate base in order to be immune from any kind of military interventions. The European Union taught Turkey that secularism is not a virtue for which the rest of democratic values should be sacrificed. Democracy is a combination of values and none of its elements should be valued at the expense of the other. Not only the discourse of the European Union but also the Western experience prove this claim. As Stepan illustrates, Western European democracies have multi-vocal religious spheres that cannot be indoctrinated by a statist institution like the *Diyanet*.

It is further argued that this paradigmatic shift does not pose a threat for Turkish democracy. The *cemaats* are aware of the fact that those who espouse radical interpretations of Islam have no chance of increasing their visibility in social life. There are several reasons behind that belief. First, they remain fearful of a secularist intervention that can be launched by the military. In addition, the *cemaats* know that the masses demand moderate interpretations of Islam rather than radical ones. This is the awareness that the *cemaats* developed in order to survive. Still, there is a more important point that should be stressed: the internalization of liberal and democratic values by the *cemaats*. This attitude, as previously mentioned, can be observed in discussions revolving around secularism. The *cemaats* tried on the liberal-democratic glasses and seem to be satisfied with them.

A further point should be noted about the relationship between the *Diyanet* and the *cemaats*. Despite the diminishing influence -and thus importance- of the *Diyanet* vis-à-vis the *cemaats*, it may be wrong to interpret their relation solely from a competitive perspective. With, especially, the moderation that is evidenced in the interpretations of the *cemaats* and the elimination of those communities with radical views, the *cemaats* seem to share more common beliefs than ever with the *Diyanet*. To illustrate, both the *Diyanet* and the *cemaats* oppose any kind of top-down Islamization of Turkey. Despite their desire to increase the role of Islam in social life, the *cemaats* prefer to persuade people about the necessity of faith and religion rather than seizing the state and implementing top-down “Islamist” policies.

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# Illegal Migration in Turkey- EU Relations: An Issue of Political Bargaining or Political Cooperation?

Janja Vukašinić<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Since the beginning of Turkey-EU accession process, migration has been one of the most challenging aspects of the negotiation process. In regard to illegal migration, Turkey distinguishes itself from other countries on the EU's external borders because of its size, long and porous borders, and its bridging position between Europe, Asia and Middle East. Politically and economically, Turkey is a relatively stable country in its wider region, and therefore largely affected by influx of illegal migrants. Addressing illegal migration has been a central part of development of the EU's common migration policy that is often criticized as being restrictive, securitized and externalized. Turkey, as a candidate state, is faced with an increasing political pressure to deal with the phenomenon of illegal migration under the EU rules. However, the EU requirements are often in conflict with the Turkish migration policy of "deliberate indifference". This article tries to see how illegal immigration and transit migration are viewed in Turkish context and it analyses the dynamics behind Turkish policy-making during its accession process to the EU. It is obvious that illegal migration is a complex phenomenon that requires joint management policies, therefore this paper tries to assess current nature of cooperation between Turkey and the EU in this field.

## KEYWORDS

Illegal migration, Turkey, European union, Accession process, Migration policy

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## INTRODUCTION

The history of modern Turkey has been marked by various population movements, including the immigration of ethnic Turks from former territories of the Ottoman Empire after establishment of Turkish Republic in 1923 and large-scale Turkish labour emigration to Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. The political, social and economic events since 1980s, such as conflicts in the Middle East, collapse of the Soviet Union, and increasing economic problems in Asia and Africa, contributed to the increase of immigration to Turkey. Due to its geographical location, growing economy and construction of “fortress Europe”, Turkey has become attractive for people from neighbouring countries.

Since the early 1990s, Turkey has been witnessing new forms of migration that include transit migrants, illegal migrant workers, asylum seekers and refugees, professionals, European students and retirees. At the same time, illegal migration<sup>2</sup> has become an immanent feature of contemporary world and state governments started to increase efforts to legalize migration flows and to gain control over illegal migration; hence they pursue migration management at the bilateral, regional, and (to lesser extent) multilateral levels. Turkish government, however, has not been eager to establish migration policy aimed at dealing with contemporary migration flows until recent years. However, the rise in number of illegal migrants in Turkey over the past two decades and especially Turkey’s drive for EU membership played important role in inducing major changes to Turkish migration policies. Illegal migration issue is very high on political agenda of EU-Turkey relations and consequently there is “EU pressure” on Turkey for better management of migration. Starting from this point, this article examines to what extent political cooperation functions in the area of illegal migration with respect to Turkey’s accession process to the EU.

In its first part, article analyses external dimension of Justice and Home Affairs and the impact of the EU on domestic change in non-member

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<sup>2</sup> Various authors criticize the use of the term “illegal migration” because it connects immigrants with crime (Bogusz et al. 2004; Koser 2005; Triandafyllidou 2010). These authors are suggesting to replace the term ‘illegal’ with alternative terms, such as ‘irregular’, ‘unauthorized’, ‘undocumented’, and ‘clandestine’ migration which are as problematic as the term ‘illegal’ (Schrover et al. 2009). In addition, the term illegal migration is commonly accepted in the EU institutions, therefore it is used in this article which analyses illegal migration in Turkey’s accession process to the EU.

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states by considering the role of EU conditionality and the models of EU external governance. The second part of the article looks at the characteristics of illegal immigration and transit migration in Turkish context. In its empirical part, the article critically analyses progress and shortcomings in alignment of Turkish legislation and policy with the EU accession requirements.

During accession negotiations, Turkey is expected to implement the EU *acquis* related to cooperation in the field of Justice and Home Affairs. In this context, an important obligation for candidate countries is to take on the EU *acquis* and policies as part of conditionality for full membership. However, proper coordination between authorities is of crucial importance. In the absence of such cooperation, it is reasonable to assume that the accession negotiations can proceed into hard political bargaining on the different aspects of the *acquis*.

The analysis of these processes shows that migration in EU-Turkey relations in general and illegal migration in particular have been a source of tension between Turkey and the EU in the last couple of years. The EU, on the one hand, is criticizing Turkey for not doing enough to tackle illegal migration and too slow pace of reforms, and Turkey, on the other hand, is resisting to align its legislation with the EU *acquis* in the area of migration. Illegal migration in EU-Turkey relations is at the stage of unpalatable political bargaining that slows down the process of reforms and their cooperation on migration issues.

## **JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS: ILLEGAL MIGRATION AND ENLARGEMENT**

Over the last three decades, harmonisation towards the common EU migration policy has become one of the most important issues of European integration. The establishment of the free single market with the principles of free circulation of goods, persons, services and capital under the Single European Act (1986) and the first stages in the creation of a borderless Europe under the Schengen agreement (1985) have brought to the fore the issue of external immigration into the EU (Huysmans 2000: 755). Inevitably it is being recognised that there is a need to establish a common EU migration policy to replace fragmented and inconsistent national regimes. The EU policy on illegal migration emerged as a part of general migration

policies at EU level, especially through the five-years programmes<sup>3</sup> for closer cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs (Triandafyllidou 2010).

The shift “upwards” towards cooperation among member states was stimulated less by the goal of a truly supranational migration policy (Lavenex 2006: 332). Instead, migration became a part of foreign policy and was sustained as an external dimension of the EU cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs (Boswell 2003: 619). With the concern for controlling common borders, the migration policy rapidly turned into an external area focussing on the border controls linked with security issues, such as organized crime, terrorism, human smuggling and trafficking. The externalization approach involves forms of cooperation that essentially externalize traditional tools of domestic or EU migration control. The logic here is to engage sending and transit countries in strengthening border controls, combating illegal entry, migrant smuggling and trafficking, or readmitting migrants who have crossed into the EU illegally (Aubarell - Zapata-Barrero - Aragall 2009).

Despite the fact that the EU member states have not yet agreed on a common migration policy, an impressive level of EU *acquis* has been developed and candidate countries are expected to harmonise their legislation and abide by it. In this context, a condition of membership for candidate countries is the full implementation of the EU *acquis* on illegal migration. Perhaps the most visible component of the EU’s Justice and Home Affairs policies is the Schengen *acquis*<sup>4</sup> that entails the lifting of internal border controls within the EU which, according to the Schengen ‘compensatory’ logic, requires the parallel development of a strong external border.

The EU’s relations with the candidates countries represent the case of Europeanization beyond the formal borders of the EU (Schimmelfennig 2010). According to Radaelli’s (2003: 30) comprehensive definition, Europeanization is consisting of “processes of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures,

<sup>3</sup> The Tampere Programme (1999-2004), the Hague Programme (2004-2009), and the Stockholm Programme (2009-2014).

<sup>4</sup> The Schengen *acquis* results from the Schengen Agreement signed in 1985 and includes measures regarding external border controls, visa, asylum, immigration, police, customs and judicial cooperation, data exchange and data protection. Created outside the European legal framework, the Schengen Agreement, its convention of implementation and subsequent decisions were integrated into the legal framework of the EU by the Treaty of Amsterdam which came into effect in May 1999 (Europa 2009).

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policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things', and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public policies". The domestic level should not overall be understood within the sole context of EU member states, rather the term is generally conceptualized as also covering the consequences of fulfillment of EU requirements and of voluntary orientation towards EU standards in candidate states. The literature on Europeanization and policy transfer shows that the external effects of European policies take place along a continuum that runs from fully voluntary to more constrained forms of adaptation. The scope and shape of policy transfer is conditioned by existing institutional links between the EU and the third countries concerned, the latter's domestic situation at hand, and the costs of non-adaptation associated with an EU policy (Lavenex - Uçarer 2004: 417).

Through the Eastern enlargement, a wide range of literature (Grabbe 2001; Schimmelfennig - Sedelmeier 2004) explored the impact of the EU on domestic change in candidate countries. Hence, research on EU conditionality has become the main explanatory power for domestic change in candidate countries. However, Trauner (2007: 4) argues that the literature on Europeanization and the impact of the EU conditionality on domestic change does not sufficiently acknowledge theoretical consideration concerning domestic reactions to European demands and conditions. To fill this gap, scholars have drafted different models of EU external governance aimed at theorizing under what conditions EU rule transfer to non-member states is the most effective.

Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004: 671-676) explain successful rule adoption according to three different models of external governance in non-member states. Their preference is for the "external incentive model", in which the EU follows a strategy of reinforcement by reward in which EU rules are set as conditions that candidate countries have to fulfil in order to receive EU rewards (assistance and institutional ties). In this model, size and speed of rewards, credibility of conditionality and the size of domestic adoption costs are crucial for explaining the rule adoption. According to the "social learning model", the different actors are motivated by internalised identities, values and norms and choose the most appropriate or legitimate one. Therefore, domestic actors adopt EU rules if they are persuaded of their appropriateness. Finally, according to the "lesson-drawing model"

non-member states may adopt EU rules without EU incentives but rather due to dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Comparative studies of Central and Eastern European countries suggest that rule transfer from the EU to the candidate countries is the best explained by an external incentives model of governance (Schimmelfennig - Sedelmeier 2004). Contrary to the accession process of the Central and Eastern European countries, the accession negotiations of Turkey differs in one important aspect, namely Turkey is less certain when or even if it will receive the ultimate reward of EU accession. However, the migration *acquis* is an obligation of membership and Turkey, as a candidate country, is expected to establish a migration management system which is compatible with its European counterparts.

#### **TURKEY AS A COUNTRY OF IMMIGRATION AND TRANSIT**

Modern Turkey has been traditionally considered a country of emigration but it has also long history of immigration. In the context of nation-building, policies pursued by the newly established Republic welcomed the immigration of Muslim and Turkic populations living outside of Turkish borders in neighboring countries. "The period of government-supported major immigration into Turkey lasted until about the early 1970s, after which immigration began to be discouraged on the grounds that Turkey's population had grown enough and that land to distribute to immigrants had become scarce." (Apap - Carrera - Kirişçi 2004: 18). Since 1980s, Turkey has received flows of different migrant groups from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds migrating for various purposes. Thus, Turkey turned into a country of immigration and transit while emigration continued.

These new migratory movements to Turkey are closely related to Turkey's geographical proximity to Europe, Middle East and Asia. Due to its geographical positioning as a port of easy access, many migrants use Turkey as a transit country for migrating to their destinations in the developed countries of the West. In addition, economic, political and security problems arising in neighbouring countries are among the main reasons that drive their citizens to migrate to Turkey. İçduygu (2003, 2009: 7-8) distinguishes four main types of inflow of foreign nationals to Turkey:

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1. regular migrants who are registered and include professionals, students and retirees from the West;
2. asylum seekers and refugees coming from countries of Africa, Asia and the Middle East;
3. illegal transit migrants who are heading for Europe or other parts of the developed world through Turkey;
4. illegal labour migrants from Commonwealth of Independent States that come with the intention of working illegally in Turkey for a limited period of time.

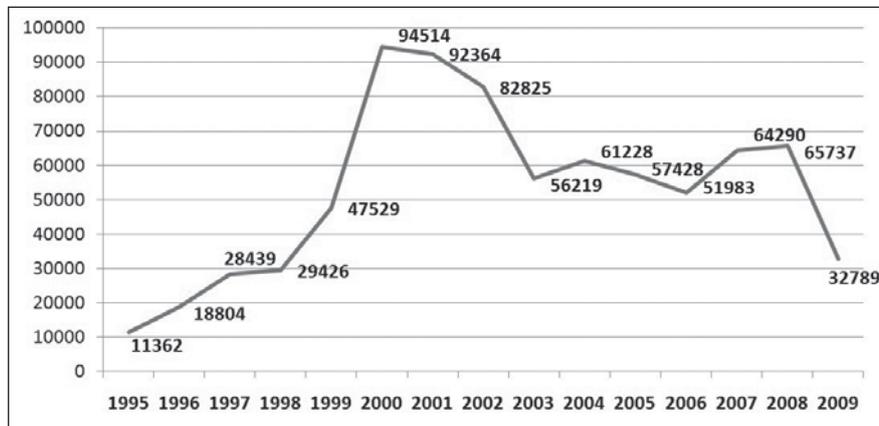
Figure 1 below provides statistics on the number of apprehended illegal migrants in Turkey. Between 1995 and 2009, almost 795.000 illegal migrants were apprehended<sup>5</sup>. The figures have substantially accelerated from the mid-1990s through the year 2000 when nearly 95.000 illegal migrants were apprehended by Turkish security authorities. Since 2001, the number of apprehended illegal migrants showed a decreasing trend and fell below 52.000 in 2006. The rising trend has continued in recent years when over 64.000 illegal migrants were apprehended in 2007, and nearly 66.000 in 2008. However, number of detained illegal migrants in 2009 decreased almost by half to nearly 33.000.

“In 2010, around 43.000 migrants and refugees transited Turkey and were apprehended in Greece” (Frontex quoted in Düvell 2011b). In most cases, apprehended illegal migrants originate from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and some African countries, such as Somalia and Uganda, and try to transit Turkey to reach their destination countries in Europe. As contemporary research shows (Içduygu - Sert 2010: 7) nearly half of illegal migrants who were apprehended in Turkey between 1996 and 2008 seemed to be transit migrants. Thus, it can be deduced from the above mentioned data that at the beginning of the 2000s, more than 50.000 migrants used Turkey as a transit country annually, while this number decreased to 20.000 to 30.000 today. Most transit migrants enter Turkey illegally with the help of human smugglers, and they attempt to leave in a similar way.

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<sup>5</sup> Since these figures represent only apprehended illegal migrants, it is clear that the scale of illegal migration through Turkey is greater than these numbers. In the early 2000s, İçduygu from the Migration Research Programme at Koç University in Turkey estimated number of illegal migrants in Turkey at between 150.000 and one million. However, in his recent research, İçduygu estimates that the actual number of illegal migrants is at least two or three times higher than the number apprehended (Içduygu 2003, 2009; İçduygu - Sert 2010).

Figure 1: Apprehended Illegal Migrants in Turkey (1995-2009)



Source: Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Turkey, data obtained from Karapınar Y. D. (International Organization for Migration - Turkey 2011).

One reason for transit migration to the EU via Turkey is “deterrent effect of more effective border controls between Western Africa and the Canary Islands, and between Libya and the Island of Lampedusa” (FRONTEX 2010: 3). Therefore, the Turkish-Greek border region has become one of the last loopholes for illegal entrants to Europe (Düvell 2011a). In addition, transit migration is to some extent driven by Turkey’s “geographical limitation” to 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the absence of immigrant or refugee integration policies. Turkey applies the original geographical limitation of the 1951 Refugee Convention whereby refugees from non-European countries cannot be accepted in Turkey but must be resettled (Düvell 2011b). Some asylum seekers are aware of the asylum system and choose to apply for refugee status in Turkey to acquire the chance to be resettled in a more prosperous countries of the West. As İçduygu (2009) notes, the migratory movements of asylum seekers, refugees, and transit illegal migrants sometimes intermingle. This is particularly related to the fact that the majority of persons in both groups enter the country illegally. Rejected asylum seekers are usually not deported and continue to stay or work illegally in Turkey or attempt to transit to a third country through illegal border crossings, rather than returning to their countries.

Turkey also serves as a destination country to immigrants coming from post-Soviet states that are mostly engaged in small scale business (suitcase

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trade) or employed on a temporary basis in the *3D* (*dirty, dangerous and difficult*) jobs. Their movements can be categorized as “circular or shuttle migration” for the purpose of trade and other economic activities. A majority of migrants enter Turkey legally, but some of them drift into illegality as they overstay their visa. The existence of a vibrant informal economy in Turkey does not only attract illegal migrant workers but also creates an environment in which the exploitation of some groups of illegal migrants is widespread, as Erder and Kaşka (2003) report in the case of trafficked women. İçduygu (2009: 11) estimates that the number of illegal migrant workers decreased from 50.000 annually in the early 2000s to below 25.000 in the recent years.

Looking at the important role of Turkey in international migration regimes, it is surprising that Turkey does not have a comprehensive migration and asylum law. Moreover, this lack of coherent and systematic legislation on migration can be attributed to the fact that Turkey does not officially admit to be a country of immigration. From the early years of the Republic the major legislation governing migration area in Turkey has been the 1934 Settlement Law (No. 2510, although put into a new form in 2006) that restricted immigration to Turkey to persons of ‘Turkish culture and descent’, and this approach still determines the rules concerning who can migrate and settle in Turkey<sup>6</sup>. However, there are large numbers of migrants with a non-Turkish background coming to Turkey and their immigration is one of the area of regulation of the Turkish state. In this sense, Turkey follows a highly ‘liberal’ migration policy or policy of “deliberate indifference” (Daniş D. 2011) toward illegal migrants that is in contrast with the European ‘quest for control’.

### MIGRATION ISSUES IN THE LIGHT OF EU-TURKISH RELATIONS

The case of Turkey is particularly relevant to the EU and its member states not only because Turkey is a sending country, but increasingly also a receiving country of migrants of various migration status. Turkey receives significant numbers of transit illegal migrants from poorer and conflict-

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<sup>6</sup> Other major legislation regulating immigration into Turkey are the Passport Law (No. 5682), Law on Residence and Travel of Aliens (No. 5683), Law on Work Permits for Aliens (No. 4817), the Citizenship Law (No. 5687) and Turkish Criminal Code (No. 5237). International documents covering this field includes the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.

ridden southern countries moving north. In addition, Turkey's location along these routes is emerging as a link between diverse migration systems, notably between Turkey and the EU countries and between Turkey and Middle Eastern, Maghreb and Sub-Saharan as well as some Central Asian and South Asian countries (Düvell 2011a). These migration flows have important implications in terms of the EU's efforts to manage and control illegal migration, therefore, the EU pressures on Turkey for compliance with the EU *acquis* in this area.

Despite the new migration pressures and the developments in the European context, Turkish migration system remained relatively stable prior the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 when the EU extended candidate status to Turkey. This decision reinforced the launch of a process of pre-accession, including a transitional period of adoption and harmonization of European level policies and EU *acquis*. Moreover, intensification of relations with the EU provided a major impetus for Turkey to introduce reforms in national migration policy and practice. Particularly in the run-up to the EU accession negotiations, Turkey came under increasing pressure to reform its legislative system and control illegal migration flows. In the context of the EU pre-accession process, on the one hand, Turkish state has implemented some solid measures toward harmonisation of migration policy with EU law, however, on the other hand, this process has been leading to hot debates on the nature of transformation of migration policies in Turkey.

Turkey's aspiration to become a member of the EU is one of the most important factors behind the changes that are taking place in regard to the reconsideration of migration policy. After the EU finally granted Turkey candidacy, Accession Partnership document<sup>7</sup> was adopted by the Council of the EU in 2001, which was revised in 2003, 2006 and 2008. In accordance with Accession Partnership, Turkey prepared its initial National Program for the Adoption of the *Acquis* in March 2001 that was revised in 2003 and 2008. In the Justice and Home Affairs Chapter of the National Program for the Adoption of the *Acquis* Turkey committed itself to reinforce the fight against illegal migration, and to the adoption and best practices on migration (admission, readmission, expulsion) with a view to preventing illegal migration in the medium term (Government of the Republic of Turkey

<sup>7</sup> The Accession Partnership detailed the reforms that needed to be adopted to meet the Copenhagen political criteria, enabling accession talks to start, and the legal harmonization for eventual membership.

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2005). In order to respond to these challenges, Turkey formed a special Task Force on Asylum, Migration and Border Protection<sup>8</sup> that prepared in 2003 Strategy Paper on the Protection of External Borders in Turkey, Asylum Strategy Paper, and Migration Strategy Paper.

Meanwhile, the National Action Plan on Migration and Asylum and the National Action Plan for Implementing Integrated Border Management Strategy have been prepared. Both National Action Plans cover legal arrangements that should be put into force within the harmonisation process and measures and investments essential for finalising administrative set up and physical infrastructure in order to align Turkish border, asylum and immigration legislation with the EU's. In line with the actions plans, Turkey set up a new *Bureau on Development and Implementation of the Legislation on Asylum and Migration and Administrative Capacity* under the Ministry of Interior in 2008. The Bureau is tasked with drafting and implementing the laws on asylum and aliens "which will redefine basic policies and significantly develop the system in the areas of asylum and migration" (Ministry of EU Affairs of the Republic of Turkey 2010: 6). The Law on Asylum and the Law on Foreigners were originally planned to be approved by 2012, however, negotiations with the EU have slowed down, and no legislation has been presented to Turkish Parliament.

According to the European Commission's reports on progress made by Turkey, the most critical deviation in the area of migration and asylum remains the geographical limitation to the application of the Geneva Convention. EU *acquis* require every member to have in place the capacity to carry out their own status determination procedures and also to be able to integrate those asylum-seekers that are recognized as refugees and remain in the country (Kirişçi 2006: 186). Turkey indicated that lifting the geographical limitation would take place only in line with the completion of the EU accession negotiations. In National Action Plan on Asylum and Immigration, Turkey set two preconditions for lifting the geographical limitation, namely necessary amendment to the legislation and infrastructure<sup>9</sup>, and fair burden sharing among the EU and Turkey. Kirişçi

<sup>8</sup> Special Task force is composed of representatives from the Coast Guard, Gendarmerie, Military, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Undersecretary of Customs and Secretariat General for EU Affairs.

<sup>9</sup> The technical and physical infrastructure needs include establishing reception and removal centres for asylum seekers and refugees, training academy for training personnel working in the asylum field, establishing a country of origin and asylum information system, and a service building for the asylum unit. In July 2011, the EU twinning project on "Supporting Turkey's Capacity in Combating

(2005) says “Turkish officials are very conscious that the current EU *acquis* would make Turkey a major “first country of asylum” or turn Turkey into “safe third country”, in case membership fails. Hence, many fear of becoming a “buffer zone” unless convincing “burden sharing” mechanism is put into place.”

In the accession process to the EU, Turkey is also expected to rearrange its visa policy in accordance with EU legislation, especially with the Schengen visa regime. In this area, Turkey needs to apply a uniform policy towards all EU citizens as regards the visa obligation, to adopt the Schengen negative list, and to abolish visa-free travel for those countries that are on the EU’s negative list and the usage of “sticker visas” at border control points. The EU expects Turkey to introduce visa requirements for a number of states, specifically towards countries in the Middle East and Central Asia, however, “there is a reluctance to terminate the “sticker visa” that has been critical in helping Turkey to integrate with its neighborhood in cultural, economic, and political terms” (Kirişçi 2009: 5). Furthermore, in line with Turkey’s foreign policy approach of creating “zero problems with the neighbours”, Turkey is abolishing visas with its neighbouring or regional countries, such as Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, which are on the EU’s blacklist and subject to strict visa regulations.

When compared to the issue areas such as visa regimes, the Turkish state has given priority to cooperation with the EU on its border control (Kirişçi 2009). Turkey has a common land border with eight countries and coastal border on the Black Sea, Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean. Especially eastern mountainous border area and Greek-Turkish coastal border with its dozens of islands are porous and very difficult to monitor. Therefore, the EU requires Turkey to tighten its borders with Armenia, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. In addition, Turkey must allow EU-member states access to restricted information and border control operation. In cooperation with the EU, Turkey implemented Integrated Border Management Strategy in March 2006 in order to comply with the EU *acquis* on tackling illegal migration and trafficking in human beings. In this respect Turkey is expected to put in place a completely new civilian border guard unit replacing the current practice of policing borders with the military and the gendarmerie.

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Illegal Migration” was completed. Next to the institution building support, the ultimate aim of this twinning project is to set up at least six reception centres and two removal centres in Turkey.

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Despite implementation of new strategies to halt illegal and transit migration, Turkey is still condemned for leaving EU's border insecure. Especially Greece is concerned with Turkey's failures to control illegal migration and human trafficking<sup>10</sup>. On the other hand, Turkish authorities report that Greece violates bilateral and international agreements by leaving illegal migrants on Turkey's territory or on the coastal zone. The Greek-Turkish readmission agreement often creates tensions between both countries which are leading to unwanted human tragedies involving asylum seekers, refugees, and illegal migrants<sup>11</sup>. Considering the fact that most of the illegal departures are occurring through long Aegean Sea coast and Turkish-Greek land border, the primary concern of the EU has been to prevent the flow of illegal migrants in the EU via Turkey and in this context to negotiate a readmission agreement with Turkey.

In 2003, Turkey agreed to open negotiations on a readmission agreement with the EU, albeit reluctantly. As a country of origin and transit, Turkey argued for a long time that the readmission agreement with the EU can only be signed in the final phase of the accession negotiations and on the condition that Turkey will have infrastructural capacity to deal with an increased number of returned migrants and asylum seekers in addition to the conclusion of readmission agreements with the countries of origin<sup>12</sup> for illegal migrants and refugees. With a strong emphasis on the issues of border control and controlling illegal migration, the European Commission encourages Turkey to sign readmission agreement prior Turkey's accession. The negotiations on the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement were finalised in February 2011 when Justice and Home Affairs Ministers approved the readmission agreement text. Turkey had expected an agreement on visa facilitation to be authorised simultaneously, however, the EU interior ministers decided to start a

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<sup>10</sup> By letter dated 24 October 2010, Greece requested the assistance of Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABIT) indicating that despite its efforts and its ongoing collaboration with FRONTEX, it is facing an exceptional pressure due to the large number of persons crossing the border illegally. Since the RABIT operation was launched at the beginning of November 2010, a decrease in the flow of illegal entries has been witnessed at the Greek-Turkish land border. In October, prior to the operation, there were a total of 7.607 detected persons and until February 2011 the number of illegal crossings decreased to 1.632 (Europa 2011).

<sup>11</sup> For analysis of the treatment of migrants and detention conditions in Turkey and on the Greek-Turkish border see Human Rights Watch (2008), Amnesty International (2009), and European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2011) reports.

<sup>12</sup> Turkey has already concluded bilateral readmission agreements with Greece (2001), Syria (2001), Kyrgyzstan, Romania (2004), Ukraine (2005), Pakistan (2010) and Russia (2011).

“visa dialogue”<sup>13</sup> with Turkey by approving the readmission agreement. As a result, the Turkish Foreign Ministry has declared it will not sign and implement the readmission agreement without the originally proposed incentive, namely progress on visa liberalisation. Moreover, Turkey perceives the EU’s failure to take step on a visa facility for Turkish citizens as an unequal treatment of candidate countries.

Since human smugglers and traffickers are an integral part of transit migration, Turkey is also under heavy pressure from the EU to combat human smuggling and trafficking. Therefore, Turkey has made important legislative changes in an effort to address both phenomenons. First, it was among the initial signatories of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its two Additional Protocols<sup>14</sup>. In 2002, Turkish government amended the Penal Code which now criminalizes human smuggling and trafficking. “Article 79 of the new Penal Code Law, put into force in 2005, established punishments of three to eight years of imprisonment for migrant smuggling and provided coercive measures (confiscation of assets, etc.) against legal entities involved in human smuggling”<sup>15</sup> (Içduygu - Sert 2010: 9).

Furthermore, another domestic measure in the fight against illegal migration, the Law on Work Permits for Aliens of 2003, authorized the Ministry of Labor and Social Security to issue all types of work permits for foreigners to ensure the process is better managed to avoid employment of illegal migrants. One important aspect of this Law is to prevent the illegal employment of foreigners by issuing fines (Article 21). Finally, an amendment to Article 5 of the Citizenship Law which was made in June 2003 had implications for fighting against illegal migration and protecting immigrants rights. Previously, foreign women could acquire Turkish citizenship immediately by marrying a Turkish national, therefore, many

<sup>13</sup> The visa deal would facilitate visa procedures for students, business people, athletes and artists, and it would be expanded to all citizens in further stages. Instead of visa facilitation, the EU proposed visa dialogue that will focus mainly on legislative adjustments in Turkey, systematic use of multiple entry visas for business people and students and improving EU consular facilities in the country (Council of the European Union 2011).

<sup>14</sup> The Palermo Convention and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking, Especially Women and Children entered into force in September 2003 while Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air entered into force in January 2004 (Içduygu 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the Road Transportation Law (2003) and the Road Transportation Regulation (2004) provide that, if a person is sentenced for migrant smuggling, his/her transportation permits cannot be renewed for three years and their vehicle will be confiscated by Turkish authorities (Içduygu - Sert 2010).

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illegal women immigrants obtained their residence and work permits via arranged marriages. Under new legislation, foreigners who are married to Turkish citizens will be able to become citizens of the Turkish Republic three years after their marriage (Içduygu 2009).

Undoubtedly, the EU has played a very central role in reforms that Turkey has carried out in the area of Justice and Home Affairs, however, its alignment process with the EU remain imperfect. There are number of reasons for considerable resistance on the part of Turkey regarding adoption of the EU *acquis*, among which Kirişçi (2007, 2009) points out as the most significant distrust among both sides that is the result of “negative discourse on Turkish membership”<sup>16</sup> and absence of burden-sharing. Turkish officials complain that Turkey is left to its own devices with respect to combating illegal migration and to arranging for the return of the illegal migrants to their countries of origin. The EU’s offer to Turkey of its financial and technical assistance that is typically offered to ‘third countries’ in the area of migration, such as AENEAS programme, also represents a fundamental factor for the lack of confidence by the Turkish side on its ultimate “reward” of membership. To some extent, Turkey’s slow pace of progress in adopting the EU *acquis* in these areas can be attributed less to a lack of goodwill on the part of the Turkish authorities than to the fact that Turkey is not ready to carry out these tasks bureaucratically, organisationally and socio-economically. The EU’s policy to externalize its migration policies and its efforts to create a “fortress Europe” are further aggravating Turkey’s fear of becoming the EU’s buffer zone. Clearly, a Europe that tries to shift burden of illegal migrants does not set a good example for Turkey in terms of either harmonization or credibility.

The case of Turkey demonstrates the limited capability of the EU conditionality and three models of external governance for explaining the reform process in the area of illegal migration during Turkey’s accession negotiations. As analysis shows, the reforms in the area of migration are difficult to explain on the basis of the “external incentive model” of Schimmelfening and Sedelmeier and the importance they attribute to

<sup>16</sup> Various surveys show that Turkish public support for Turkey’s EU membership is decreasing and a good proportion of European public opinion is increasingly against the Turkish membership and further enlargement. This resistance has been accompanied by politicians who constantly emphasize the “cultural difference” and a “privileged partnership” instead of Turkey’s membership in the EU. Since the start of the open-ended accession negotiation process in 2005, the political debates also increasingly emphasised the EU’s “absorption capacity” regarding further enlargement that had never been invoked until the question of Turkish membership came up (Kirişçi 2007, 2009).

conditionality. For instance, the weakened credibility of EU rewards and considerations on high domestic adoption costs are capable of explaining the slow down in the reform process of Turkey. As described by Keser (2006: 130), “Europeanisation process in Justice and Home Affairs meant to be a rather technical/technological process for Turkey, concerning largely the mere transposition of the EU legislation. Acculturation and social learning effects have remained significantly at a low ebb.” In regard to the “lesson-drawing model”, Turkey has realized that improving border control is also contributing to its national security<sup>17</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

Criticism of Turkish migration policies and pressure on Turkey to implement reforms in this field have been greatest in the context of the EU accession process. The prospect of the EU enlargement and the geographical progression of the EU’s external borders to the East and South sparked a great concern in Western European political circles around illegal migration. Consequently, EU countries have engaged in a common effort to increase harmonisation of their policies to combat illegal migration from the East and South and committed themselves to develop common migration policy. These developments in the area of Justice and Home Affairs have led to an expanded EU *acquis* that the candidate countries need to implement in order to qualify for EU membership. The prospect of Turkey’s membership in the EU, together with its geographical position and high rates of illegal and transit migrants, has led EU countries to apply increasing pressure on Turkey to strengthen border controls and to tackle illegal migration flows on its territory.

This article has analysed the nature of cooperation and the impact of the EU on migration-related policy change in Turkey, especially in the area of illegal migration, during its accession negotiation. Predominantly as a result of aspirations for EU membership, the Turkish authorities have achieved some important improvements regarding institutional, legal

<sup>17</sup> Turkish policymakers envision illegal migration within an environment of insecurity where two different dynamics function simultaneously. On the one hand, border protection is a national security issue by its nature, and illicit border crossings violate the law of the Turkish state. The issue of illegal transit migration is even more complicated because the fact that these migrants intend to move on to third countries also makes the transit country accountable to final destination countries. In the case of Turkey, these migrant-receiving neighbours are members of the EU who increasingly view immigration as a national security threat (Içduygu - Sert 2010).

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and administrative frameworks and procedures in the area of migration, in line with EU requirements. Following the adoption of the Accession Partnership document in 2000, the Turkish Government issued a National Program for the Adoption of the *Acquis* covering a wide range of issues, including illegal migration, and set up a working group under Ministry of Interior to develop a comprehensive strategy to bring Turkish law and practice in line with the EU *acquis*. In the area of combating illegal migration, Turkey has achieved progress in respect to human trafficking, amended the Penal Code and Citizenship law, concluded readmission agreements with many origin countries of illegal migrants, and increased security measures at the borders. As a consequence of all of these factors, numbers of illegal migrants apprehended by Turkish security forces has increased steadily in the past few years.

Even though Turkey's efforts to align its migration policies and laws with the EU *acquis* and to tackle illegal migration represent an important step for the "Europeanization" process of Turkey, the analysis shows that a number of legal adoptions has still not occurred. For instance, progress has been particularly slow in areas such as visa policy, lifting of geographical limitation to 1951 Geneva Convention, and signing readmission agreement with the EU. There are a number of important political considerations which are slowing down the reform process in the migration field and Turkey's commitment to bring its policy and practice in line with those of the EU, such as weakening of EU conditionality and credibility of reward, and fairness of burden sharing. Due to these considerations and decreasing credibility of EU conditionality, Turkey is taking pragmatic steps in reform process in the migration field. Consequently, illegal migration in EU-Turkey relations represents more an area of unpalatable political bargaining with both sides blaming each other for the slow pace of implementing critical reforms than an area of close political cooperation. Dissolving suspicions on both sides and credible policy of EU conditionality are necessary not only to achieve any long-term solution to address illegal migration, but also to make substantial progress in aligning Turkish legislation with the *acquis* in this area.

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# reviews

**TURKEY DECODED**

Ann Dismorr

*Polona Mal*

**THE TURKS TODAY**

Andrew Mango

*Tom Hashimoto*

Polona Mal

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**Ann Dismorr**  
**TURKEY DECODED**

Saqi Books, London-San Francisco-Beirut, 2008

237 pages

ISBN 978-0-86356-656-1

Average European sees Turkey as different from European states, sometimes mythical, puzzling and last but not least, non-European. All this despite the fact that the Turks are one of the largest national minorities in EU and that Ottoman Empire was very much involved in European political arena less than century ago.

Ambassador Ann Dismorr, current Swedish ambassador to Kenya, tries to paint a picture of different Turkey in front of reader's eyes. Her extensive knowledge of Turkey and the region is of much help. She was Sweden's ambassador to Turkey from 2001 to 2005. Besides Turkey, Dismorr also lived in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Azerbaijan. She worked on the Middle East peace process, and served as Sweden's ambassador to Lebanon and Azerbaijan.

Dismorr's book *Turkey Decoded*, is largely based on her experiences

and observations she made during her diplomatic career, especially as Swedish ambassador to Turkey. *Turkey Decoded* primarily focuses on EU-Turkey complex relations that reflect some of the 21<sup>st</sup> century greatest challenges from widening gap between civilisations, especially the West and the Muslim world, terrorism, and the struggle for human rights and democratisation. Last part of the book also pays attention to the reforms initiated by the "moderate Islamist" Justice and Development Party, and to the career and policies of some main figures of the current ruling party. Book consists of twelve chapters and an introduction by the author.

In introduction, Dismorr outlines her main message – that Turkey is complex but also often deeply misunderstood, especially in Europe. She also sketches a complexity of Turkish society – a mixture of Islam, democracy, and secularism that make it the only functioning

showcase of their compatibility. She continues the narrative with chapter one, Turkish Identity, where she presents some of its components – from religion to language and ethnicity. With vivid examples of Mustafa Kemal – Atatürk’s behaviour towards western type of clothes she presents his endeavours for secularisation of Turkey in early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It is already in introduction where Dismorr outlines recent developments in EU–Turkey relations and the breakthroughs in negotiations for Turkish membership in EU – in 1999, when Turkey gained candidate status, and in 2004, when accession negotiations were given a green light. Author continues representing situation in EU–Turkey relations during her years of ambassadorship in chapters two, three and four. She stresses the main turning points in EU–Turkey relations in the last two decades, emphasising the role of granted candidate status in 1999 and a candidate status in 2004. An external dimension is put aside for most of the time; focus is on national politics. The Justice and Development Party victory on 2002 national elections brought many concerns – inside and outside Turkey – about the future EU perspectives, as the Justice and Development Party was labelled as non-secular, pro-Islamic. As ambassador Dismorr writes, EU

ambitions were not getting smaller. “Only a few days after the election, a dinner meeting was held between Tayyip Erdoğan and the EU ambassador in Ankara. /.../It was the first day of *Ramadan*, or *Ramazan* in Turkish, Islam’s holy month of fasting. It was significant that the top leaders of the AK Party, such as Erdoğan and Gül, chose to spend the first evening of breaking the fast at an EU meeting” (p. 84). Author further supports the EU ambitions of new leaders with other examples of Erdoğan’s and Gül’s activities in Turkey and Europe, including work on reforms of national legislation. At the end of chapter four author stresses the importance of 2004 candidacy status and the role of EU and Turkey in achieving this by writing that “2004 EU summit illustrated the joint power of pro-reform Turkish government and the EU as a positive catalyst in the process” (p. 97).

After a comprehensive writing on Turkish relations with EU Dismorr continues her book with more human rights themes; she writes about human rights deficit in chapter five, Kurdi question in chapter six, and about changing role of women in Turkish society in chapter seven. Dismorr marks the abolishment of the death penalty as a very important first step in reform of penal code and improving the state of human rights in the country. Author states,

that it is paradoxically, that a pro-Islamic conservative government was the one that really reached very immense reforms that were sweeping the country during 2002, 2003, and 2004. The main difference that Dismorr sees between the abolishment of death penalty and further reforms is in the mind-frame of the political leaders: it changed from “this is what EU wants” to “this is good for Turkish people”. Later on in chapters six and seven author represents the progress in the fields of Kurdi question and women’s rights. Dismorr states that the improvement of socio-economic situation in Kurdi regions as well as changing opinion of Kurds towards democratization of Turkey and decrease in their secessionist attitude paved the way for candidacy status.

In chapter seven, author extensively writes on the position of women in Turkish society. Dismorr sketches two different worlds in which Turkish women live. She puts much emphasis on so called ‘honour killings’ and their criminalization during the reforms in the last decade. On the other hand she also represents a picture of successful business women and intellectuals that are not different from their EU colleagues. In author’s belief much can be done with further reforms and socio-economic development in poverty-stricken regions of the country as well as with education.

Dismorr changes her focus again in chapters eight, nine and ten. In those chapters she focuses more on geopolitical position of Turkey. She represents it through the changing US-Turkish relations, through Turkish relations with the Middle East and through its geographical position as a bridge (or barrier) between the East and the West. In chapter eight, author sets the estrangement in US-Turkey relations in the context of the years from 2003 through 2005, the period of intensive reforms. The rift between the United States and Turkey began mainly between the militaries on the Turkish decision not to allow US troops to pass through the country before the beginning of the war in Iraq. Much later, it spilled over and created problems with the political administrations. In chapter nine, Dismarr focuses on development of Turkish foreign policy and its relations with neighbouring countries; it is active in the Middle East as well as in the southern Caucasus. There is a shift away from Europe – and also from US – towards the region and other emerging centres of power, author claims.

Author makes a shift towards the conclusion of the book and the future prospects of Turkey in chapter ten. She writes about Turkey as a possible bridge between the West and the Islam, as its building “might well turn out to be the biggest

challenge during this century” (p. 188). Turkey as a secular democracy with majority-Islamic population successfully combines both worlds. On the other hand, Turkey could also be a barrier to stronger cooperation between the East and the West if the shifting position of EU will not change and Turkish hope for EU membership will be proven vain.

Dismarr strengthens this message in chapter eleven, elaboration on the future of EU-Turkey relations. Author believes that Turkey will stay on the almost a century old course of secularisation, modernisation, and aiming for a Western model, despite the fact that reform pace has slowed down and that EU scepticism is growing inside Turkey as well as EU is not so eager to support Turkey on its way. A strong component of Turkish ambitions to stay on EU path is economic aspect as EU is its most important current and future trading partner, although turkey is strengthening its economic ties with other states.

In the last chapter Dismarr turns back to home politics of Turkey. She states that in the last decade Turkey has made firm first steps in the Post-Kemalist era, choosing

democracy over only secularisation. Author claims that Turkey is at very important crossroad since 2007. It is determined to continue building a proof that Islam and democracy can walk hand in hand. However, Turkey is not the only one facing challenges, author concludes that “[t]he EU is facing a historic choice of how to deal with Turkey /.../ The world is watching” (p. 226).

*Turkey Decoded* blends together personal yet also very objective picture of modern Turkey. Sometimes the author seems indecisive whether to take more objective tone and deepen the analysis or to be more personal and stress the personal experience. Her discoveries reflect the process Europeans have been going through in finding they really knew nothing about Turkey, and call attention to the contrary process of Turks abruptly having to unlearn what they thought they knew about Europe. Dismarr gives special attention to women, the Kurds, Turkish regional and international relations, and its function as an East-West bridge. I would recommend this book especially to those, interested in Turkey and its geopolitical position as well as its position towards the region.

Tom Hashimoto

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**Andrew Mango**  
**THE TURKS TODAY**

John Murray (Publishers), London 2004

292 pages

ISBN 9780719565953

Book reviews in academic journals often introduce the newest cutting-edge analyses, foreseeing the near-future discussions in the academic and professional world. Accompanying the special issue on Turkey, however, this commentary reviews a work published in 2004. Why? It is because that the year of 2004 marked the first wave of Eastern Enlargement, making Turkish accession to the EU a step closer – at least on the geopolitical logic. As the author of the book, Andrew Mango, expresses in his prologue, the integration process would take long time due to the size of population, lagged economic development, weak social capital, corruption, and so on. Yet, Mango is neither a pessimist nor Euro-sceptic: his analysis is full of energy and passion.

Consider an alternative title for the book: *Turkey Today*. In comparison, a glimpse of author's statement can be seen in the chosen title *The*

*Turks Today*: written in 2004 in the midst of Turkish hope to join the EU, the author casts light on the power of people – the social capital. Throughout the book, the author realistically admits Turkey's political and economic backwardness, especially in the eastern Anatolia as of 2004. The observation unfortunately seems to be confirmed even to this day in a lesser extent. Nevertheless, Mango's positivism derives from his belief in the openness of Turkish minds, which on one hand distinguishes the Turks from the 'Westerners' or 'Muslims' but on the other hand unites with both of them on the common ground. This flexibility of the Turks, perhaps well represented in the image of Atatürk, gives the book an enlightened touch compared to other works discussing the economic potentials of Turkey or the future of Turkish-EU unity.

Being the author himself distinguished by his renowned biography of Atatürk, his description of

Atatürk's policies, visions, and their consequences are beyond informative. It goes deep into the mentality of every social class in Turkey, with diverse geographic or social backgrounds. As a biographer, the author brings the detailed personal life of politicians, for example Erdoğan, being well-intertwined with their ideologies, beliefs, and even the popular expectation on them. Accompanied by detailed geopolitical trends in both South-East Europe and the Middle East, the readers are able to visualise options and decisions faced by Ankara and the Turks since the establishment of modern Turkish Republic.

That said, the book is not a mere historical story-telling. Firstly, his dictum and terminology are concise and accurate; the title of the chapter one, 'State Before Nation', is an example. Without giving dictionary-style definitions, the author succeeds to bring his deep knowledge of the subject in a precise manner without leaving the non-specialist readers behind the cloud of technical jargon. Imaginably, the author also introduces the Turkish words with picturesque nuances behind its euphony. For instance, in his chapter on economic development, he introduces the Turkish word *site* derived from the French word *cité*. With one word and nuances behind it, economic development, relative well-being of the middle class,

and thirst for prosperous European style of life are in front of our eyes. Likewise, when he returns to the theme of Turkish accession in chapter 11, he entitles the chapter with the 'Red Apple' which has been 'the ultimate objective [or symbol] of their endeavours' since the time of the Byzantine legend. Perhaps, it is not too far to picture Adam (Turkey) swallowing the apple (EU accession criteria) with struggle. This book is capable of stimulating the readers' intellectual imaginations beyond what is intended by the author.

The organisation of the book is relatively simple: prologue plus two parts followed by a chronology focused on the twentieth century. Prologue begins with a story of newly registered doctor who were assigned to a remote village. To illustrate Turkey, the author leads the readers through a personal story setting the environment of the book to emphasise on people. Following part I is entitled as 'Turkey Since the Death of Atatürk'. Chronologically, the author tells us the historical development of Turkey in the twentieth century. Throughout the part, he utilises the three step analysis: to identify initial problems people or leaders faced, to examine the solutions considered or provided, and to visualise a new set of problems. Unlike many history textbook authors, Mango is gifted to bring smiles on the readers' lips by

throwing anecdotes. For example, intelligentsia made fun of Akbulut who succeeded Özal and an anecdote goes that Akbulut was invited to *Swan Lake* to which he replied 'isn't it too cold for a swim?' The chronological part I ends with the rise of Erdoğan, to mark a possible new era – perhaps it is suited to be called as 'post-post-Kemalism'.

Part II is entitled as 'Turkey and the Turks Today': the main body of the book. Each chapter in this part has a thematic focus rather than the chronology to follow. Chapter 5 'Catching Up' deals with microeconomic development, while Chapter 6 'Economic Surprises' extends the argument to macroeconomic relations with IMF, OECD and so on. Chapter 7 'Education and Culture' links economic development and the educational system, somewhat positively, somewhat critically. Chapter 8 'Ankara Governs' and 9 'Istanbul Lives', as the names suggest, describe in details the two most populous cities in Turkey, their functions, perceptions, and expectations. In contrast, chapter 10 'Eastern Approaches' illustrates the life of Kurds and their Eastern Anatolia. All in all, the readers can visualise what can expect and can be expected by others according to social, political, economic, and geographical backgrounds. Chapter 12 'Progress and Pitfalls' concludes not only part II but also the entire

book. Perhaps due to strong picturesque writings of chapter 11 'Red Apple or Sour Grapes', conclusion seems to be weaker than expected. Besides optimism and belief in the Turkish people, no strong normative statement is seen at the end. On one hand, such neutralism attracts a wide range of readers, but on the other hand, it becomes bit short for constructive discussion.

Overall impression of the book, however, is excellent. It is a 'must-read' for anyone who is interested in Turkey, Middle East, or the EU. Theoretically, it symbolises the social power and institutions as the core of economic and political development. In the field of International Relations and Political Science, the book touches upon neo-Liberalism, Constructivism, and the English School. In Economics, perhaps, New Institutional Economics can be linked to the thesis of the book as the social capital can be strengthened or weakened depending on the given institutional arrangement, in accordance with Mango's implied statement about Turkey. Of course, Mango's work goes beyond disciplinary boundary of Political Science, International Relations, and Economics – Sociology, Anthropology and Geography to name a few. In this sense, the reviewer agrees with *Sunday Times* calling the book 'authoritative and illuminating'.

## CROQUIS



Cappadochia is a historical region in Central Anatolia, between the Black Sea, the Upper Euphrates, the Taurus Mountains and the river Halys. It is one of the world's top ten tourist destinations. This would have for sure not been the case hadn't it also been for its cultural, anthropological and core human messaging. Nature and humanity do go hand in hand.

### CAPPADOCHIA

It is a region of the exceptional natural wonders, characterized by fairy chimneys and a unique historical and cultural heritage. In fact, the relief consist of a high plateau over 1000 m in altitude that is pierced by volcanic peaks. Two volcanoes there, Erciyes and Hasan, erupted continually over many millions of years. The build-up of volcanic ash and lava over time created the foundation of Cappadochia; erosion has done the rest and the resultant artistic spires, undulating waves, giant natural fortresses and capped towers – all made of tuffa – are what made the region a natural wonder like no other place on earth. The rocks of Cappadochia near Göreme eroded into hundreds of spectacular pillars and minaret-like forms. Göreme became a monastic centre between 300 – 1200 AD.

Traditional Cappadochian houses and dovecotes carved into the stone show the uniqueness of the region. These houses are constructed at the foot of the mountain using rocks or cut stone. Dovecotes within the region are small structures constructed during the 18th century and at the end of the 19th century. Some of the dovecotes, which are important in showing Islamic art, are constructed on monasteries or churches. Surfaces of dovecotes are decorated with rich inscriptions and adornments by regional artists.

The Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadochia, together comprising an area of 9576 hectares were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985.

The early Christian frescoes that abound everywhere in the cave churches of Cappadochia date from the Byzantine era of the 4th to the 15th centuries. They remain fresh despite the intervening centuries. Beside, the rich past, spanning three millennia of human history (the Hittites, Assyrians, Persian, Romans, Christians, Arabs, Mongols and other peoples) embedded their cultures into the rocks of Cappadochia to main forms: underground cities (as Kaymakli and Derinkuyu), rock castles (as Uchisar, Ortahisar) cave churches and monasteries and rock-cut villages (Göreme, Mustafapasa).

The differences of Cappadochia offer also wide range of touristic attractions, from discovering the craft industries (weaving and knotting of Turkish carpets), the nomadic culture and imperial palaces. But, of course, it is the message of human sparkle, which stems from that unprecedented monument of nature.

Anja Fabiani

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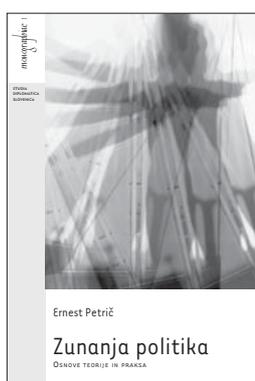
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2011/510 pages/ISBN 978-961-92173-0-6

Price: € 35



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ISSN 1855-7694



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