

TURKEY'S ENCOUNTERS WITH THE NEW EUROPE: MULTIPLE TRANSFORMATIONS, INHERENT DILEMMAS AND THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

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Introduction

From a comparative standpoint, Turkey constitutes an interesting case for studying alternative paths to modernity. The irony of the Turkish experience is that the Turkish elites have unambiguously adopted the West as their reference point and modernization has typically been interpreted as being identical to Westernization. Developing close, organic relations with Europe was a natural corollary of this style of modernization.¹ Westernization, in the Turkish context meant a commitment to reach not only the standards of economic, scientific and technological development of the West but to establish a secular and democratic political order. Yet, the process of top-down modernization that Turkey experienced has created not only tensions domestically within a predominantly Muslim society, but also in her encounters with Europe. Turkey's long-standing aspiration to become part of Europe has been the source of a tense relationship, creating divisions and conflicts not only within Turkey but also within Europe itself. During the successive waves of enlargement of the European Community-more recently the European Union- there has not been a case comparable to Turkey that has generated heated debate about the nature of European identity and the very boundaries of modern Europe. Turkey was a rather unique case which appeared to differ from the core of Europe in civilizational terms, but at the same time wished to develop deep relations with Europe.

In spite of the rather unusual tensions underlying this relationship which was present on both sides, a dense set of interactions with a primary emphasis on the economic dimension developed over successive decades. The nature of this relationship, however, was not sufficiently strong to produce a far-reaching impact on Turkish economy and Turkish democracy, the kind of impact that countries like Spain, Portugal and Greece experienced during the course of the 1980s and the 1990s. More recently, following the key decision by the EU to provide formal endorsement to Turkey's claims for full-membership, the impact of the Europeanization process on Turkey has been quite phenomenal. Although the process cannot be explained simply on the basis of a changing set of external dynamics, nevertheless, there is no doubt that the more credible commitments made by the EU have rendered the adoption of the Copenhagen criteria a powerful mechanism for transforming the Turkish economy as well Turkish democracy and foreign policy behavior.

What is interesting is that the relationship during the recent era has been taking a bi-directional form. As Turkey increasingly approached European norms, the relevance of the 21st Century Turkish Model, as a model of a secular, multi-cultural society appeared to increase particularly in the novel global context of the post September 11 era during which cross-civilizational dialogue was perceived by the European or the Western elites all the more imperative for global peace and security. Whilst Europe has been helping to transform Turkey, Turkey's active inclusion in the future of Europe will have influence on the future shape of Europe itself particularly in relation to questions such as whether Europe will have the capacity to establish a genuinely inclusive, multi-cultural society and whether it will be able to play the role of a global actor influencing developments in the Middle East and in other parts of the world. Whilst Turkey-EU relations have been moving to a new trajectory in recent years, the relationship is still in flux. Although the EU has taken the historic decision to open up accession negotiations in December 2004, the debate surrounding deep integration with Turkey is likely to remain a source of conflict and active debate for many years to come.

The central thesis of the article is that the extent of support for Turkey's EU membership, at the elite level, should not be underestimated. Indeed, an attempt is made to identify the key sources of the Pro-Turkey coalition in the EU whilst recognizing that there exist deep differences between the elites and general public over the question of Turkish

membership. The article suggests that Turkey's own performance in the political, economic and foreign policy realms will be critical in terms of enlarging the existing coalition of support. If Turkey is able to display the political will necessary to maintain the momentum of the reform process, it will be increasingly difficult for the EU to resist Turkey's claims for full-membership, particularly in the kind of global context that the EU finds itself in the post-September 11 environment.

Turkish Modernization and the European Union: Historical Perspective

The Kemalist or the republican model of modernization in the twentieth century had a number of important achievements to its credit.² It was able to accomplish significant industrialization and economic development. Through its brand of secularist ideology or laicism, it was able to exclude the alternative, the Islamic political order, in a predominantly Muslim society. Certainly, the progressively more moderate course that the Islamists have been adopting in Turkey in recent years reflects, in part, the impact of the Kemalist modernization project with its strong emphasis on the principle of secularism. Within the broad parameters of this modernization project, Turkey was able to make a transition to a democratic political order in the immediate post-war period. The key institutions of representative democracy have been established and despite periodic breakdowns and military interludes, parliamentary democracy has remained the norm throughout the post-war period. In comparative terms, this constitutes a considerable achievements judged by the standards of countries in other parts of the world notably in Latin America, East Asia and Eastern Europe at similar stages of economic development.

By the 1990s, however, the Turkish model of modernization had reached a certain impasse. On the economic front, the pace of development was not enough to produce a dramatic increase in living standards that would produce rapid convergence with Western Europe over a short space of time. Turkey experienced a dualistic pattern of economic growth involving a co-existence of rich regions with substantial pockets of poverty in the presence of rapid population growth. On the political front, the existing democratic order increasingly failed to accommodate societal demands for greater recognition and participation. The

combination of hyper-nationalism and hyper-secularism on which the Kemalist modernization project was based effectively excluded significant segments of Turkish society from active engagement in the formal political space. A rigid interpretation of the principles of secularism and national identity limited its capacity to incorporate the demands of groups that wished an extension of the boundaries of the political space on the grounds of religious and ethnic identity. Hence, by the end of the 1990s, the Turkish modernization was confronted with two major challenges. First, there was a need to reform the “soft state” in the economic realm so that economic development could proceed more rapidly and equitably without costly crises and interruptions. Secondly, there was a demand to reform the “hard state” in the political realm, creating a space for political opening for those groups that favored an extension of religious freedoms or the practice of their minority rights within the broad parameters of a secular and unitary nation state.

In the Kemalist modernization project, modernization and Westernization were largely synonymous terms. In this context, developing close relations with Europe was a natural counterpart of the broader project of Westernization. Indeed, Turkey was one of the countries that tried to involve itself with the formal process of European integration, right from its formative stages, becoming an associate member in 1963. The depth of the relationship that developed during the period 1963-1999, until the time when Turkey was formally recognized as a candidate for full-membership, should not be underestimated. Important trade and investment links were forged over time between Turkey and the Community culminating with the signing of the Customs Union Agreement which became effective at the end of 1995. There is no doubt that the strong links that developed in the economic realm had a counterpart in the political sphere. The ultimate interest of Turkish elites in full membership of the Community also had a conditioning effect on Turkish democracy. Arguably, the presence of the European anchor was one of the factors that kept the periodic military interludes in Turkey short of Latin American standards.

Nevertheless, a central point to emphasize is that the kind of relationship that developed between Turkey and Europe over the 1963-1999 was not sufficiently deep or powerful enough to make a dramatic impact on the Turkish economy or the Turkish democracy. The European elites during this period basically wanted to keep Turkey at arm’s length focusing their

attention on the economic side of the relationship. Whilst the prospect of eventual full-membership of the European Union was not ruled out completely, the European elites were reluctant to offer Turkey a firm prospect of full-membership. Their negative attitudes appeared to rest on a number of different considerations ranging from the country's size, level of development, religion as well as failure to conform to European norms of democracy and human rights.³ The willingness of the European Union to accommodate the membership demands of Eastern European countries recently relieved from a long period of communist rule, whilst setting aside the membership claims of Turkey to some unspecified date in the future rendered the relationship between Turkey and Europe increasingly tense during the course of the 1990s.

This brief historical survey allows one to make the following generalisations. First, potential Turkish membership raised the kind of fundamental questions over the nature and boundaries of European identity that were not present at the time of the entry of the Eastern European countries was concerned. Second, the ability of the European Union to accomplish a dramatic transformation in improving the economies and the democratic credentials of countries located on her periphery tend to be rather limited if a firm prospect of early membership is not provided in the first place. In the absence of such a commitment, the EU anchor for domestic political and economic change loses its credibility, strengthening the hand of the anti-reform coalition in the process.⁴ There is no doubt that the EU, with its growing emphasis on the quality of democracy and human rights standards, was consciously trying to generate both economic and political change in Turkey throughout the 1990s. However, EU conditionality was not sufficiently powerful or credible to generate the kind of outcome desired. In other words, the mix of conditions and incentives that accompanied the signing of the Customs Union agreement without the definitive prospect of full-membership was much less favourable to Turkey compared with her Eastern European counterparts. This, in turn, was not enough for engineering the kind of large-scale shock tilting the balance of power within the Turkish society effectively away from the anti-reform forces in the direction of the pro-reform coalition. Consequently, the 1990s was, moreover, a period of intense turmoil in Turkey both in the economic and the political spheres, a period characterized by economic instability, Islamic resurgence and violent ethnic conflict. Turkey's encounters with Europe during this

period were important but not sufficiently deep enough in helping to resolve these deep-seated problems and tensions in a relatively smooth manner.

The transformative impact of the EU on Turkish modernization: The post-Helsinki context

Turkey's relations with the EU took a radically different turn following the Helsinki Summit of 1999. The fact that Turkey was given a formal candidate status at Helsinki had a dramatic impact in terms of increasing the credibility of EU conditionality in the minds of both the policy-making elites and the public at large. The improved mix of incentives and conditions, in turn, was instrumental in accelerating the reform process both in the economic and the political spheres. Consequently, Turkey was able to experience an unprecedented degree of democratic opening over a relatively short space of time, notably during the course of the 2002-2004 period. These set of reforms reforms, though by no means complete, have set off a process whereby Turkey has been able to make significant progress in terms of consolidating its democracy and accomplishing a genuinely open, pluralistic and multi-cultural political order. Reforms have been particularly striking in key areas such as human rights, protection of minorities, improvement of the judicial system and the role of the military. Within the broad area of human rights, significant progress has been achieved with respect to fight against torture and ill-treatment in prisons, the freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly and association. Within the domain of minority protection, important strides have been made in terms of extending cultural rights for the Kurds as well as non-Muslim minorities. More recently, changes have been taking place which have the potential of radically altering the military-civilian balance in Turkish society.⁵

The fact that membership option became far more credible after 1999 contributed to a process whereby the pro-reform or the pro-EU coalition became increasingly stronger and more vocal in Turkish politics. The pro-EU coalition, meaning groups in Turkish society which not only favored EU membership as an abstract idea in itself but also displayed a strong commitment to undertake reform, had already gathered momentum during the course of the

1990s. Civil society organizations rather than political parties have emerged as the forerunners of the pro-EU coalition and within the civil society itself business-based civil society organization have played a particularly active role.⁶ After the Helsinki decision, civil initiatives have become much more pronounced. Indeed, the very base of the pro-EU coalition became increasingly broader and included key segments of the state bureaucracy. The Europeanization process in Turkey during the 1990s had produced a rift between state and business elites. The Europeanization process in Turkey after 1999, however, helped to create major divisions within the Turkish state itself helping to tilt the balance in favor of the pro-EU coalition. It is quite striking that the main agents of the political order, namely political parties, have joined the queue with a certain time lag. One of the paradoxical features of the Turkish experience after 1999 was that the coalition government in power during the 1999-2002 era, dominated by two highly nationalistic parties on the left and the right of the political spectrum were actually quite lukewarm in their approach towards the EU related reform agenda.⁷ Nevertheless, given the magnetism of the EU, the coalition government was not able to swim against the tide and, at the end of the day, it was responsible for some of the most far-reaching reforms in Turkish history.⁸ It was only after the elections of November 2002, however, that the dominant political force of the new era, the Justice and Development Party (the AKP), was able to take over the leadership role in the pro-EU coalition.

The dynamic process initiated by the Helsinki decision also helped to diminish the power and resilience of the Euro-skeptic elements or, stated somewhat differently the anti-EU coalition, in Turkish society. The term Euro-skeptic or anti-EU coalition embodies a specific meaning in the Turkish context. It refers to those segments of the state, the society or the party system that are not against the idea of EU membership, in principle but nevertheless, are against the implementation of key components of the Copenhagen criteria (such as education and broadcasting in Kurdish language) on the grounds that such reforms would undermine national sovereignty, leading to the break-up of the Turkish state.⁹ In retrospect, a series of unexpected shocks have helped this process to occur at an accelerated speed than what would otherwise have been the case. For example, the major economic crisis that Turkey experienced in November 2000 and in February 2001 had a major unintended consequence in terms of changing the balance of power quite drastically in favor of the pro-EU coalition.¹⁰ Given the magnitude of the crisis, which created a massive wave of unemployment and bankruptcies,

hitting all sections of the society, rendered the potential material benefits of EU membership all the more attractive.¹¹ Furthermore, following the economic crisis, key domestic economic actors, especially big business, as well as the international investors placed even greater emphasis than before on the need for a permanent EU anchor as opposed to simply relying on temporary IMF discipline for establishing durable economic growth and avoiding future financial crises. Consequently, behavior of market participants increasingly depended on the country's ability to undertake EU-related reforms, both on the economic and political fronts. It was perhaps ironic that the periodic reports of key international banks or financial institutions focused on political developments and the implementation of the political component of the Copenhagen criteria as a means of interpreting the current state of the Turkish economy and conveying information to potential investors. In this kind of environment, key elements of the anti-EU coalition found themselves in a highly defensive fashion.

The next key turning point in this dynamic process was the War on Iraq. Previously the military-security establishment in Turkey, a key segment of the anti-EU coalition, had often perceived the US-Israel-Turkey triangle as an alternative line of axis to the EU, being rather unreceptive to some key political reforms proposed by the EU.¹² However, the deterioration of relations with the United States following the failure of the Turkish Parliament to endorse the decision involving the passage of American troops across the Turkish border to Iraq helped weaken significantly the long-standing strategic alliance linking Turkey to the United States. Turkey's decision to abstain from the war effort and also not allow the passage of American troops across her border had the unintended repercussion of bringing Turkey closer to Europe and notably to the position held by the core Franco-German alliance.¹³ With the United States firmly based in the Middle East, the military was no longer in a position to intervene in Northern Iraq on the grounds of a major security threat. This chain of events had the impact of changing the balance of power in Turkish politics in favor of civilian elements. This, in turn, paved the way for a number of important changes centering on the status of the military in Turkish politics involving limitations over the powers of the National Security Council and controls over defense expenditures.¹⁴ The military-security establishment has been undergoing a learning process during the recent era, like other key actors in Turkish politics. As a result of this, it has been shedding off its hard-liner posture aside and adopting a somewhat more favourable stance towards EU conditionality. This is clearly a novel phenomenon and has also

been very much in evidence in the relatively passive or neutral approach that the military elites have adopted with respect to proposals involving the resolution of the Cyprus dispute along the lines of the “Annan Plan”, a position that makes a certain contrast with their heavily nationalistic attitude in the past. At this point, it might be too early to conclude that the military has undergone a complete transformation. Certainly, there is a strong line of continuity with the past notably with respect to the single-minded commitment to the principle of secularism. Furthermore, developments concerning the Kurdish and Cyprus issues continue to be approached with considerable caution and reservations. In spite of these qualifications, it is fair to say that the military in Turkey has been changing in such a way that it no longer makes sense to place it firmly within the Euro-skeptic camp.

It is perhaps not that these surprising these dramatic and unexpected set of developments in Turkey’s domestic front has helped to add another dimension to post-Helsinki dynamics. Opinions in Europe regarding Turkish membership started to alter. In the same way that the pro-EU coalition has been strengthening in Turkey, the pro-Turkey coalition in Europe has also been gathering momentum at the elite level if not at the popular level. Key elements of the European society which have historically viewed Turkish membership for quite different reasons ranging from cultural arguments to failure to conform democratic norms have gradually become more receptive to the idea of Turkish membership. Hence, one can detect the development of a virtuous circle whereby more powerful and credible signals from the EU have helped to accelerate the reform process in Turkey. The very pace and intensity of the reform effort in Turkey, in turn, have helped to reshape elite opinion in Europe towards the desirability of Turkish membership.

The Turkish alternative to Christian Democracy? The importance of the AKP experience

The emergence of the Justice and Development Party (the AKP) as the dominant force in Turkish politics in the elections of November 2002 represented yet another landmark in Turkey-EU relations.¹⁵ From a comparative perspective, what rendered the AKP experiment interesting was that it was a new party with strong Islamist roots but nevertheless far more

moderate and centrist in terms of outlook compared with its predecessors, the Welfare and the Virtue Parties (the RP and the FP) . Even more interesting was the fact that the party presented itself as an active and vocal supporter of EU membership. Indeed, the party in office pursued the EU related reform agenda with a far greater degree of consistency and commitment than the previous coalition government. It is fair to argue, therefore, that the AKP established itself as the dominant component of the pro-EU coalition after November 2002. The degree of commitment displayed by the party to the EU related reform agenda was also important in terms of contributing towards the development of a sizable pro-Turkey coalition within the European Union itself.

The AKP itself is a hybrid political formation. The fact that key leaders of the party as well as its core electoral support have been associated with the Islamist parties of the past resulted in considerable scepticism on the part of the secular segments of the Turkish state and society as well as the broader international community in the immediate aftermath of the elections of November 2002. Nevertheless, it became quite clear after a while that the party was far more moderate in outlook judged by the standards of its predecessors. From a political science perspective, it is hard to locate the party on the conventional left-right political axis. There is no doubt that a strong conservative streak exists in the party's make-up with a major emphasis on religion, morals and the need to preserve traditional values. The conservatism of the party manifests itself rather vividly in issues relating to women's rights and gender equality. Indeed, the party's own self-description is that of "conservative democrats" identifying a close affinity in the process with their Christian democratic counterparts in Western Europe.¹⁶ Furthermore, the electoral base of the party is made of a cross-class coalition that includes small and medium sized enterprises as significant beneficiaries of the neo-liberal globalization process. The fact that business is an important component of the party's electoral base is another attribute that naturally leads many commentators to interpret the party as a party of the center-right.

At the same time, however, it is possible to identify certain parallels between the AKP and the "third way" style European social democratic parties in Europe given the party's apparent commitment to the principles and values of multi-culturalism, social justice and a properly regulated market economy.¹⁷ A benign view of the AKP is that it is a party

committed to multi-culturalism at least in the narrow sense that one of its objectives is to extend the boundaries of religious freedom and encourage religious diversity as opposed to challenging the notion of secularism itself. At the same time, the party appears to pay more attention to redistribution of income and the plight of the poorest compared with its rivals although what it can actually accomplish in this sphere is severely limited by the financial disciplines imposed through the IMF program that the country has been applying in recent years. It is also important to take into account that social democratic parties of the recent vintage are typically based on a cross-class electoral alliance of which small and medium-sized businesses constitute a key component.

What is striking in the present context is that the AKP has effectively captured the ground which was previously occupied by both the center-right and the center-left parties in Turkish politics. There is no doubt that the major economic crisis that Turkey experienced had a devastating impact on the electoral fortunes of the established political parties. Hence, the AKP as a novel hybrid formation with a cross-class electoral appeal, representing a unique synthesis of reformism and conservatism, was able to capitalize on the failures of the previous parties in office. In office, the party was able to consolidate its power and popularity, both in the domestic and international circles, even further by displaying a mixture of pragmatism in implementing fiscal discipline and economic reforms and radicalism in implementing the EU related political reforms. The result was a mixture of economic recovery and a further opening of the political space for democratic participation in Turkey. Admittedly, the favourable pattern described had started earlier; but, the AKP by accelerating the momentum of this process was able to capture much of the credit in a way that increasingly enhanced its electoral dominance marginalizing the opposition parties of the both the right and the left in the process.

In addition to important initiatives undertaken on the economic and the democratization fronts, the AKP government displayed a significant shift of foreign policy behavior away from a hard-line nationalistic stance towards a more balanced and pragmatic approach. This was clearly evident in the government approach to the Cyprus problem which has constituted a long-standing obstacle to Turkey's aspirations for EU membership. The AKP government was effectively the first government that welcomed a compromise solution which would bring the dispute to a peaceful conclusion. Similar forms of balanced foreign behavior were displayed

with respect to the Iraq War and relations with the United States as well as relations with Israel and the Arab World. Relations with all neighboring countries continued to improve. Clearly, Turkey during this period, in line with the process of democratization at home, started to make a transition from a coercive to a benign regional power effectively countering the criticisms that Turkey would be more of a security liability rather than a security asset for Europe, in the process.¹⁸

Putting the AKP experiment in broader context, Turkey's Islamic identity had previously been identified as a source of difference, providing an argument for exclusion from the European Union. The typical line of argument, based on a Huntington style strong East versus West dichotomy, was that Turkey's true Islamic identity would be lost through the process of closer integration with Europe.¹⁹ The recent experience makes a sharp contrast with this line of reasoning in the sense that a party, with a moderate Islamist orientation, has been the key political force in bringing secular Turkey closer to the center of the European project. Indeed, one is able to uncover an underlying paradox here: the moderate Islamists in Turkey have seen the importance of EU membership for Turkey as a means of consolidating and solidifying their own position against possible threats from the hyper-secularism of the established state elites as well as key sections of Turkish society, helping to expand the boundaries of religious freedoms in the process. Hence, the European integration in a rather unexpected fashion became a mechanism for preserving Turkey's Islamic identity and making it more compatible with a secular, democratic and pluralistic political order.

Having gone through a process of radical reforms and having experienced the paradoxical era of the early years of the AKP government, one is perhaps on more secure grounds to claim that Turkish synthesis of secularism and democracy in a predominantly Muslim setting can offer a credible alternative to the rest of the Muslim world. An obvious qualification is called for in the sense that the secularism versus Islam divide and the debate involving the boundaries of secularism are far from being settled issues in Turkey. Moreover, in spite of the AKP's alleged moderate credentials, there still exists a major problem of trust in Turkish society and significant elements both within the state and the society at large continue to view the party's moderate image with considerable suspicion. Indeed, any attempts to advance identity claims such as the wearing of head-scarves by women in public spaces

generates major tensions and resistance, as a consequence of which the government has by and large sidelined these issues to the background in order to avoid serious conflict.²⁰ Perhaps, it is fair to say that, in spite of certain initial reservations, the international community has been far more receptive to the AKP government, whereas serious divisions continue to exist within the domestic sphere.

What is also critical in this context is that while the European Union places a very high premium on secularism it does not offer a single blueprint for concrete practice. Indeed, within the European Union there exists a variety of national models concerning the translation of the principle of secularism to actual implementation. Hence, the EU has helped to push Islamists in Turkey in a more moderate dimension by restricting the space within which they could operate. However, this does not mean that EU membership alone will be able to resolve completely the secularism-Islam divide in the Turkish context. One would expect that this issue is likely to be an important and lively source of public debate and contestation both in Turkey and in Europe over the coming years.

The debate on Turkish membership as the mirror image of contending visions of the future of the EU

At the time when the critical decision concerning Turkey's candidacy was taken in the Helsinki Summit of December 1999, the actual membership of Turkey looked a rather distant prospect. The European leaders could safely ignore the thorny questions that potential Turkish membership would entail for the future of Europe based on the assumption that it would take Turkey many years to accomplish the demanding set of political and economic reforms. The unexpectedly rapid pace of the reform process in Turkey meant, however, that the deep questions and challenges posed by Turkish membership for the future of Europe itself could no longer be postponed. Indeed, the EU's Copenhagen Summit of December 2002 marked an important turning point in this respect. From that point onwards, the issue of how Turkey would be accommodated as a potential member of the EU became a concrete source of debate within the European policy-making circles. What is interesting in this context is that the Huntingtonian logic has been effectively turned upside down. The prospect of EU membership has helped to narrow down the existing divisions within the Turkish society whilst at the same

time helping to accentuate the underlying divisions and tensions within Europe itself. It also became increasingly apparent that the key issue at stake was not the question of Turkish membership *per se* but the future shape of the European Union itself.

To be more precise, the question of Turkish membership has helped to bring into the forefront a number of overlapping cleavages in Europe, cleavages which have increasingly come onto the surface as the reform process in Turkey gathered momentum and Turkey's claims for membership could no longer be set aside on an indefinite basis. One of these cleavages centered on the left-right axis and involved the conflict between the social democratic parties of the third way on the left and the Christian democrats on the right concerning the future shape of the European project. Turkish membership appeared to make much more sense for most if not all social democrats given their vision of a multi-cultural Europe as long as an essential pre-condition was satisfied, the pre-condition that Turkey conformed to European norms of democracy and human rights. It was perhaps not a coincidence that Turkish governments in the past encountered greater difficulties in their dealings with the European social democrats for the simple reason that the state elites in Turkey were unwilling to undertake the kind of political reforms that would enlarge the boundaries of political participation on the ground that such reforms would undermine the very basis of national sovereignty. The Christian Democrats, with their differing vision of the European project as an essentially civilization project based on a common history, religion and culture with rather definitive boundaries naturally preferred to adopt "an arms length" approach to Turkey. From a Christian democratic perspective, Turkey was an important country with which economic and security links could be developed, but these links would lead to a loose set of relationships falling considerably short of full-membership. This kind of vision with Europe conceived of as a Christian club with precise boundaries clearly meant that Turkey would be an important outsider rather than a natural insider in the European integration process. Fortunately, from the Turkish point of view, the balance of political forces in Europe with a clear swing in favor of social democrats particularly in key countries such as Germany, France and Britain was an important factor in itself in securing Turkish candidacy in 1999.

Yet another major line of cleavage concerns the divisions between the various nation states that constitute the EU. The key dividing element in this context is whether the EU will

evolve in the direction of a comparatively loose collection of relatively autonomous states or in the opposite direction of a highly coherent supranational entity where the nation states have effectively delegated a major component of their autonomous powers to key Brussels institutions. It is a well-known fact that a number of countries in Europe led by Britain and the Scandinavian countries favor the first path. The Eastern European newcomers to the Union in May 2004 also subscribe to a similar vision of a comparatively loose, intergovernmental Europe. In contrast, another group of countries led by the core Franco-German alliance which has historically played a critical role in the simultaneous and widening of the European integration process prefer a process of further deepening resulting in the creation of a genuinely supra-national entity.²¹ Again it is no surprise to observe that potential Turkish membership conforms rather closely to the underlying vision of the first group. Indeed, Britain has emerged as a strong and vocal supporter of Turkish membership in recent years. This support not only reflects basic economic interests but also the dominant vision in Britain concerning the future shape of Europe itself. What is also striking is that these sharply contrasting visions of the future shape of Europe have become even more pronounced following the tragic events of September 11 and the subsequent American unilateralism and the war on Iraq. The divisions between the two camps have intensified as the group led by Britain, Spain and the new Eastern European members favored an independent line of foreign policy with a strong emphasis on the continuation of the transatlantic alliance at all cost whereas the core Franco-German alliance took an extremely critical position against the unilateral intervention by the US on Iraq in the absence of support by the UN and a broad-based international coalition. Turkey, with her strong security ties to the United States, was clearly an attractive potential member that would help to increase the weight of the first group of in the community against the core Franco-German alliance.

The fact that the debate over Turkish membership has become an important battle ground for contending visions of the EU had an interesting corollary. A sizeable pro-Turkey coalition emerged within the EU which was no doubt instrumental in securing a favorable decision in the EU Council of December 2004 in the direction of initiating a formal process of access negotiations. The diverse elements of this pro-Turkey coalition and their principal agendas concerning the future direction of the EU are summarized in Table 1. The negative

side of this picture, however, is that opposition to Turkish membership became the focal point or the rallying ground for states and/or political movements whose visions concerning the future of the EU sharply deviated from the kind of visions or agendas outlined above. The strong opposition to Turkish membership across the whole of the political spectrum in France makes perfect sense in this context in the sense that France has typically been a supporter of “deep integration” both in a cultural and economic sense of the term. In this context, Turkish membership has been seen both from the right and from the left as something which would dilute or loosen the process of European integration.

Indeed, the alliance between the French, across the whole of the political spectrum, and the German Christian Democrats have become the focal point of resistance to Turkish membership in recent years with the German Christian Democratic leader Angela Merkel and the French Interior Minister Nicholas Sarkozy emerging as the principal spokespersons for a “privileged partnership” status. A close examination suggests that the argument which states that Turkey’s accession as a full member is inherently inconsistent with the EU as a “deep integration” project contains three quite distinct layers. The first layer is an essentially culturalist argument which states that, by definition, Turkey is not part of the European civilization and culture. This is the kind of argument traditionally associated with the former French President Valerie Giscard Destaing, although Sarkozy has also made similar remarks recently arguing that Turkey as “an Asian country” has no place in the EU as a full-member.²² The second layer is that the inclusion of a large country like Turkey would upset the internal cohesion of an entity like the EU with the Franco-German axis at the very center of the project.²³ The third layer of the argument is that both because of its size and relative underdevelopment, Turkey would be very difficult to absorb economically and would constitute a major economic burden on the EU which is already facing serious problems in its current status.

Finally, Turkey has become the reference point for those who feel that the EU has been a top-down elitist project right from its very inception with too much powers bestowed upon Community institutions and too limited involvement of the individual citizen in the decision making process. It is possible to detect an interesting dichotomy in this context. In the Turkish context the elites and the public at large have converged on the common ideal of full-

membership whereas there appears to be a deep division in the EU itself between the elites and the individual citizens on the issue of Turkish membership.

Table 1: Elements of the “pro-Turkey coalition” and their principal agendas

<p>Social Democrats</p>	<p>The vision of Europe as a political rather than a culturally bounded project; A vision of a multicultural Europe which particularly relevant in the context of the post-September 11 global environment where cross-civilizational dialogue assumes more relevance than ever not only in terms of Europe’s external relations but also in terms of integrating its own Muslim minorities; the vision of Europe as an outward-oriented global power.</p>
<p>Intergovernmentalists</p>	<p>States in the EU which are skeptical about the speed and depth of integration; countries which feel that there is a need to maintain flexibility, diversity and multi-speed integration which allows considerable autonomy for individual nation states; Britain, Scandinavian countries and the new member states from Eastern Europe are the prime examples of this approach.</p>
<p>Transatlanticists</p>	<p>States in the EU which would prefer a close rather than an arm’s length relationship with the United States and a deep version of the Transatlantic Alliance; there is close overlap with the former group with Britain and the new Eastern European member states being the prime constituents of the “ Transatlanticist alliance”</p>
<p>EU as A Security Actor</p>	<p>States which favour a global role for the EU not only as a “ soft power” but also as an important actor in the realm of security provision through development of military</p>

	capabilities; Britain again is the prime example in this category
Mediterranean Powers	States which favour a strong Mediterranean presence and influence in the EU which also involve the development of close relationship with the Mediterranean non-member countries; Spain and Italy are the prime examples of such states. Greece is also a key state in this context not only as a Mediterranean power but as a country that sees Turkish membership as a necessary condition for its own security and the resolution of long standing bilateral disputes.
Supranational Institutionalists	This group includes those who favour greater role for the supra-national EU Institutions such as the European Commission in the decision making process. Since the Commission has played an important role in pushing for Turkish membership in the first place Turkish membership has become an important test case for the relative powers and influence of key Community institutions
Corporate Business	Key non-state actors favourable to Turkish membership on the basis of investment and trade opportunities, influential in terms of their impact on individual state and Community institutions.

The consequences of the constitutional stalemate: Is it necessarily negative?

In recent years, Turkey's attempts to advance its claims for full membership has taken place against the background of the EU constitutional debate which was considered to be yet

another landmark in the process of accomplishing deeper and deeper integration. The fact that the proposed Constitutional Treaty was rejected by the French and Dutch in their respective referenda during the Summer of 2005 was interpreted in some circles both as an end to the deep integration project in Europe as well as an end to Turkey's membership aspirations. There is no doubt that the rejection of the proposed Constitutional Treaty in two countries which have been closely committed to the process of deep integration right from the very inception of the Community is likely to embody serious implications for the future trajectory of the EU as well as Turkey's path to EU membership. It would be rather ahistorical, however, to claim that the outcome of the referenda imply a collapse of the EU as project of deep integration. Significant setbacks have occurred and are likely to occur again in the process of accomplishing deepening and widening at the same time. Similarly, in the Turkish context, a decision has already been made to open up accession negotiations and the outcome of the referenda will not alter the basic decision making structure of the Union concerning Turkish membership. Another important point to emphasize is that the rejection of Turkish membership was an integral not the major element in the rejection of the proposed Constitutional Treaty. Public reaction notably in France was much more against the retrenchment of the idea of a neo-liberal Europe with a parallel weakening of its social component.²⁴

The outcome of the referenda, however, means that the European Union will engage in a process of rethinking about its future which, in turn, means that it will be less enthusiastic enlargement towards the East. This may not significantly affect the prospects of countries like Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia which are already lined up for accession, but may prolong the already lengthy transition process envisaged for the Turkish case. Indeed, Turkey may find itself in a situation of becoming a member of the EU at a stage when the EU feels capable of absorbing the bulk of the Balkans do not currently enjoy candidate country status. From a longer term perspective, the current constitutional stalemate may turn out to be an advantage to Turkey if member countries feel that there are limits to deep integration and a looser, more flexible pattern of integration is the more desirable path to follow. Indeed, it is not a coincidence that the strongest and the most vocal supporter of Turkish membership in recent years, Britain, have been actively promoting the vision of a more flexible style of integration for Europe.

Perhaps much more significant for the future European course of Turkey than the constitutional stalemate is the pronounced shift that has been taking place in the European political landscape from third way social democracy to Christian democracy. One has to remember that the German Social Democrats under the leadership of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder have been the principal force promoting Turkish candidacy in the first instance in December 1999. A change of government in Germany in favor of Christian Democrats are likely to tilt the balance in Europe in favor of those groups who favour a kind of special status position for Turkey falling significantly short of full-membership. This does not mean that the Christian Democrats in Germany and elsewhere are likely to block the opening up of accession negotiations in the first instance. What is more likely is that they will attempt to shape the outcome of the negotiations in the direction of a special status position. Certainly, the way that the EU Council Decision of December 2004 has been framed, notably the clause involving the possibility of “permanent safeguards” against free mobility of labour, is sufficiently ambiguous in itself to produce the kind of outcome where Turkey might end up as a full-member but without necessarily enjoying the full benefits of membership. In fact, it is not surprising that it is this very possibility of “permanent” as opposed to transitional safeguards which has generated serious criticism from Turkish policy-makers and the public at large although the actual decision involving the opening up of accession negotiations was widely welcomed.²⁵

Challenges facing Turkey during the new era of accession negotiations

In spite of the significant transformations that Turkey has been experiencing in recent years, the process is far from being consolidated. Table 2 illustrates that the process of deepening democracy in Turkey has significant achievements to its credit and yet there are areas where progress has been quite limited. Similar observations are valid for the economic realm. Turkey has been moving in the direction of a sustainable growth trajectory following successful implementation of fiscal discipline and the reduction of inflation to single digit levels for the first time since the early 1970s. Foreign direct investment which has been low by the standards of other “emerging markets” has also started to pick up and the inflows are expected to increase by a considerable margin over the coming years. Yet, it is too early to

state that the process of inflation free growth that Turkey has been experiencing in the aftermath of the 2001 crisis represents a state of new equilibrium which represents a real break from an earlier era of periodic crises and the resultant encounters with the IMF.

Table 2: The balance sheet of democratization in Turkey: achievements and limitations²⁶

Achievements	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant improvements in fundamental rights and liberties involving individual liberty and security • Significant enlargements in the space for freedom of religion, expression, freedom of press, freedom of association • Extensions in the realms of freedom of association and assembly • Fair trial, prevention of torture, abolition of death penalty • Equality of sexes and expropriation • Increasing importance of civil society • Tighter regulation involving the financial activities of political parties • Decreasing role of military in politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women rights and equality of women in social, political and judicial spheres. • Minority issues: problems of implementation in some reforms such as broadcasting and education in mother tongue. • The issue of religious minorities and their rights in Turkey such as properties of minority foundations • The situation of displaced Kurds is a cause for concern • Translating legal changes into actual practice continues to be a problem in many areas • The practice of torture has not been fully eliminated; problems encountered in the implementation of new

<p>through diminishing influence of the National Security Council and increasing number of civilians in the NSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of social rights • New amendments concerning the rights of minorities to acquire property. 	<p>regulations concerning civil liberties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of speech and freedom of thought are still subject to certain limitations • The development of civil society is still below European norms; civil society plays a limited role in the governance process • The military continues to be an important political actor; it is still not fully under civilian control
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The new era of accession negotiations are likely to generate a new set of economic challenges with significant political ramifications. The Turkish economy is confronted with serious problems of adjustment as it will have to implement the EU's social and environmental norms and at the same time to engineer a major restructuring of its agricultural sector which is currently characterized by a massive labour surplus.²⁷ Clearly, Turkey's ability to graduate towards full membership will depend critically on its ability to maintain high rates of economic growth on a sustainable basis. If the optimistic, high growth scenario is realized then the cost-benefit calculations in Europe will tilt towards Turkish membership helping to eliminate the kinds of fears concerning mass migration from Turkey which are quite endemic in many European countries.²⁸ It is not only the performance of the Turkish economy that matters in this context. If the core European economies remain stagnant with a heavy dose of unemployment their ability and willingness to absorb Turkey will remain correspondingly limited. It is quite clear, therefore, that the economic realm both in Turkey and in Europe will emerge as a critical and decisive element in influencing Turkey's membership prospects over the course of the next decade. Furthermore, if social democrats are to continue to be a prime supporter of a multi-cultural vision of Europe with Turkey as a natural counterpart of this vision economic success will be a crucial ingredient. Otherwise, in a state of stagnation and heavy unemployment, the pendulum is likely to swing to further to the right and the idea of a multi-cultural Europe is likely to become a secondary and marginal item on the agendas of the European social democrats as they try to tackle immediate problems of employment

generation, a situation that very much characterizes the dilemma that SPD under Schröder has been confronted in the recent German context.

A less optimistic, low growth scenario accompanied by a heavy dose of youth unemployment are also likely to generate nationalist backlashes which can seriously jeopardize the process of democratic consolidation in Turkey and present an important setback to Turkey's membership hopes. This kind of nationalistic backlash is likely to be aggravated further if the signals from the EU are perceived to be particularly negative. Indeed, elements of such a nationalistic backlash are already apparent in the context of 2005 of 2006. Frequent references to the alleged Armenian genocide and weak popular support for Turkish membership in major European circles and the recent resurgence of violent ethnic nationalism in the South-east of Turkey have been contributing to rising Euro-scepticism in Turkey. This is also evident from the fact that popular support for EU membership has been declining in the course of 2005 and 2006 although nearly two thirds of the population continue to provide support for full-membership.²⁹ Clearly, one of the key challenges that Turkey will face over the next few years is how to extend democratic rights to its Kurdish citizens and deal with the resurgence with the violent forms separatism at the same at a time when the situation in Northern Iraq remains in a continued state of flux.

Concluding Observations

Turkey-EU relations historically tend to move in terms of cycles. However, the completion of each cycle tends to bring Turkey closer to the heart of Europe. The positive signals provided by the EU after the Helsinki Summit have played an important role in terms of contributing to a deepening of democracy and improvement of economic performance in Turkey. The very pace of the reform process in Turkey has ironically generated a process of convergence between key segments of the Turkish side. The fault lines dividing "Secularists" and "Islamists" have considerably softened, if not completely disappeared. As the prospect of Turkish membership became more concrete, however, the underlying fault lines within Europe itself have become much more onto the surface. Indeed, the question of Turkish membership has increasingly become the focal point of internal European debates concerning the nature and trajectory of the European integration process in the coming decades.

The positive side effect of this development has been the emergence of a sizable and vocal pro-Turkey coalition in Europe which Turkey, through further improvements on the economic and democratization fronts, could enlarge further during the era of accession negotiations. There is clearly the problem of translating the support among certain components at the level of the European elites to broader political support for Turkish membership at the level of individual citizens and the public large. The recent constitutional stalemate, in this context, is likely to provide a temporary setback. However, it is unlikely to reverse the essentially optimistic scenario in this essay concerning the long-term trajectory of Turkish membership. This is not to suggest, however, that Turkey's progress towards full-membership is likely to be characterized to be setbacks and reversals. Whilst the accession negotiations process in all national contexts is to some extent open-ended and ambiguity, the degree of ambiguity is likely to be greater in the Turkish context and Turkey's progress to full-membership is likely to be more of an uphill struggle. Nevertheless, if Turkey is able to display the political will necessary to maintain the pace of the political and economic reforms, it will be increasingly difficult for the balances of forces within the European political landscape to resist Turkey's claims for full-membership particularly in the kind of post-September 11 global environment that the EU is increasingly confronted with.

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¹ Obviously one needs to distinguish between European modernity and American modernity." Hence, "Europeanization" and "Westernization" are distinct categories. However, from the perspective of Turkish political elites such differences tend to be deemphasized.

² On the "Kemalist" or the "Republican" model of modernization in Turkey, see Şerif Mardin, *Türk Modernleşmesi*, (İstanbul, İletisim Yayınları, 1994); also Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba, *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1997).

³ For an elaboration of these points see Ziya Öniş, "An Awkward Partnership: Turkey's Relations with the European Union in Comparative-Historical Perspective," *Journal of European Integration History*, 7, 13 (2001): 105-121. For a detailed historical survey of Turkey-EU relations, see Meltem Müftüler-Baç, *Turkey's Relation with A Changing Europe* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1997).

⁴ See in this context Frank Schimmelfennig, “Costs, Commitment and Compliance: The Impact of EU Democratic Conditionality on Latvia, Slovakia and Turkey,” *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41, 3 (June 2003), 495-518; Mehmet Uğur, *The European Union and Turkey: An Anchor/Credibility Dilemma* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999) and Paul Kubicek “Turkish Accession to the EU in Comparative Perspective,” *St. Anthony’s College Oxford, Occasional Paper*, No.1/04 (May 2004).

⁵ For the details of the reform initiatives see Senem Aydin and Fuat Keyman, “European Integration and the Transformation of Turkish Democracy,” *Centre for European Policy Studies, EU-Turkey Working Papers*, no. 2 (August 2004). For the EU’s role in democratization see Paul J. Kubicek, *The European Union and Democratization* (New York, Routledge, 2003).

⁶ Perhaps the most influential organization in this respect was TÜSIAD, the association that represented the interests of big business in Turkey. TÜSIAD published a report outlining a blue-print for democratic reforms notably with respect to the extension of minority rights in 1997 which generated considerable controversy and generated critical reaction from key sections of the state establishment. Bülent Tanör, *Perspectives on Democratization in Turkey*, TÜSIAD Reports, TY/171/1997 (January 1997), available at: <http://www.tusiad.org/english/rapor/demokratik/index.html> (02.09.2004)

. Other major business associations such as MUSIAD, representative of “Islamic Business” in Turkey followed TÜSIAD’s lead towards the end of the decade.

⁷ The parties concerned were left-nationalist the Democratic Left Party (the DSP) and the ultra-nationalist, The Nationalist Action Party (the MHP).

⁸ A fair assessment has to point out the minor member of the coalition government; the Motherland Party (the ANAP) was quite vocal in its support for the reform process. This particular party could, therefore, be considered as the first major political party in Turkey during the recent era that actually established itself as an active member of the pro-EU coalition.

⁹ On the nature and depth of Euro-skepticism in Turkish society see Gamze Avci “Turkish Political Parties and the EU discourse in the post-Helsinki period: a case of Europeanization,” in Mehmet Uğur and Nergis Canefe, *Turkey and European Integration: Accession Prospects and Issues* (London and New York, Routledge, 2004) and Hakan Yılmaz, “Euro-skepticism in Turkey” paper presented at the Johns Hopkins University Bologna Center, Second Pan-European Conference 24-26 June 2004. The term “soft Euro-skeptics” is better characterization of the dominant form of Euro-skepticism in the Turkish setting. These elements are quite receptive to the idea of Turkey’s integration with Europe on the grounds of modernization and Westernization; yet; what they actually desire is a form of integration on their own terms which essentially means integration without reform.

¹⁰ On the origins and nature of the economic crises in 2000 and 2001, see the collection of essays in Ziya Öniş and Barry Rubin, *The Turkish Economy in Crisis* (London, Frank Cass Publishers, 2003).

¹¹ Opinion polls conducted during 2002 indicated that 74 percent of Turkish public were in favor of EU membership. The main motivation for this appears to be pragmatic considerations relating to higher living standards. For evidence, see Ali Çarkoğlu, “Who wants Full Membership?: Characteristics of Turkish Public Support for EU Membership,” in Ali Çarkoğlu, Barry Rubin, *Turkey and European Union: Domestic Politics, Economic Integration and International Dynamics* (London, Frank Cass Publishers, 2003).

¹² “The Sevres Syndrome” is an appropriate way to characterize the behavior of the state elites that formed a key component of the Euro-skeptic coalition. This was based on a fear, historically conditioned by the memories of the post World War environment that Turkey found itself in, some of the key political reforms imposed by the EU would necessarily undermine the essential unity, leading to the break-up of the Turkish state. For a good discussion of this issue see Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkey,” in Stelios Starvidis, Theodore Coulombis, Thanos Veremis and Neville Waites, *The Foreign Policies of the European Union’s Mediterranean States and Applicant Countries in the 1990s* (London, Macmillan Press, 1999).

¹³ For a further elaboration of this argument, see Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz “Turkey-EU-US Triangle in Perspective: Transformation or Continuity?” *The Middle East Journal*, 59, 2 (2005): 265-284.

¹⁴ For the details of this process see Aydin and Keyman, “European Integration and the Transformation of Turkish Democracy.”

¹⁵ On the elections of November 2002 and the rise of the AKP, see Ziya Öniş and Fuat Keyman “A New Path Emerges” *Journal of Democracy*, 14, 2 (2003): 95-108; and Ali Çarkoğlu, “Turkey’s November 2002 Elections: A New Beginning?” *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 64 (December 2002).

¹⁶ On the ideological make-up of the AKP and the concept of “conservative democracy” see Yalçın Akdoğan, “AK Parti ve Muhafazakar Demokrasi,” available at <http://www.akparti.org.tr/muhazafakar.doc>. On the contrast between AKP’s vision of Muslim Democracy and Christian Democracy in Europe, see William Hale “Christian Democracy and the AKP: Parallels and Contrasts” *Turkish Studies*, 6, 2 (2005): 293-310. See also Vali Nasr “The Rise of ‘Muslim Democracy’” *Journal of Democracy*, 16, 2 (2005): 13-27.

¹⁷ On the principles underlying the “third” way European social democracy of the recent era, see Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way. The Renewal of Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

¹⁸ For the argument suggesting that given Turkey’s problematic relations with her neighbors, Turkey would be more of a security liability for the EU, see Dietrich Jung, “Securitising European Integration: Turkey and the EU,” in Stephano Guzzini and Dietrich Jung, *Contemporary Security Analysis and Copenhagen Peace Research* (London and New York, Routledge, 2004).

¹⁹ See Barry Buzan and Thomas Diez: “Turkey and the European Union,” *Survival*, 41, 1 (1999): 41-57 for this line of logic. What is rather ironic is that this kind of argument has also been advanced by those who would normally be placed on the center-left of the political spectrum. To be fair, Thomas Diez has recently changed his views on this issue. See Thomas Diez and Bahar Rumelili, “Turkey and the EU: Open the Door,” *The World Today*, 60, 8/9, (August-September 2004): 33-35.

²⁰ The only exception to this has been the introduction of the higher education bill an important element of which was the extension of the opportunities offered to religious secondary schools during May 2004. However, this proposal was shelved following fierce resistance.

²¹ Whilst it makes sense to talk about the core Franco-German alliance as an analytical category, one should not forget the deep differences between France and Germany, both historically and in the current context, concerning the nature of European integration.

²² For the arguments of Sarkozy concerning Turkey’s EU membership see the interview, “Sarkozy: Turkey is not European” *The Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 2005, 21 May. Sarkozy, however, has also emphasized the problems posed by Turkey’s size for the coherence and decision-making process of the EU.

²³ This kind of argument is not unique to conservatives or Christian Democrats. A leading social democrat, the former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt has opposed Turkish membership on similar grounds.

²⁴ The opinion polls explaining the outcome of French and Dutch referenda suggest that the issue of Turkish membership was of marginal importance with 6 percent and 3 percent of the respective public opinion in the two countries identifying Turkish membership as the prime reason for rejecting the EU Constitution. In France, the main problem was the feeling that Constitution will have negative effects on employment through relocation of French enterprises. On the other hand, the main problem, in Holland was that the public was not sufficiently informed about the Constitution. For more information see the EU Commission surveys after referenda in France and Holland available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/flash/fl171_en.pdf and http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/flash/fl172_en.pdf

²⁵ On December 2004 document of the EU Council 2004 found at: http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/83201.pdf. Also for an evaluation of the Council decision Kemal Kirişçi “The December 2004 European Council Decision on Turkey: Is It an Historic Turning Point?” *The Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 8, 4 (2004): Article 8 available at: <http://meria.idc.ac.il/>

²⁶ On the nature of democratization reforms during the last decade see Ergun Özbudun and Serap Yazıcı *Democratization Reforms in Turkey* Istanbul, TESEV Publications, 2004. Concerning the issue of pervasive gender inequality in Turkey see the Report of the European Parliament entitled “The Role of Women in Turkey in Social, Economic and Political Life”, (2005): available at

http://www.europarl.eu.int/hearings/20050316/femm/programme_en.pdf. Regarding freedom of thought and freedom of speech see TESEV’s declaration “Düşünce Özgürlüğü Olmadan Demokrasi de Olmaz” (May 2005): available at: <http://www.tesev.org.tr/etkinlik/bildiri.php>. On the issue of torture, see the recent declarations of Human Rights Association from the website: <http://www.ihd.org.tr/>.

²⁷ On the economic challenges facing Turkey during the era of accession negotiations, see Daniel Gros “Economic Aspects of Turkey’s Quest for EU Membership” *Insight Turkey*, 7, 1 (2005) 50-63. This paper is summary version of Kemal Derviş, Faik Öztrak, Daniel Gros, Fırat Bayar and Yusuf Işık “Relative Income Growth and Convergence” *CEPS EU-Turkey Working Paper* No. 8 (2005).

²⁸ Recent empirical studies suggest that the European fears concerning mass migration from Turkey are not justified. See in this context Refik Erzan *et al* “Growth and Migration Scenarios Turkey-EU” (2005) available at: <http://www.econ.boun.edu.tr/cee/cee/5>. There is no doubt, however, that a lot will depend on the performance of the Turkish economy over the next ten to fifteen years in terms determining the future magnitude of migration flows.

²⁹ According to the recent opinion poll conducted by ANMAR for the AKP, the support for EU membership appears to have declined from 70 percent to 63 percent.. For more information see “AB Desteği Gölgeledi” (2005), available at: <http://www.sabah.com.tr/2005/05/10/gnd101.html>