Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki Era

Ziya Öniş

Available online: 08 Sep 2010

To cite this article: Ziya Öniş (2003): Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki Era, Turkish Studies, 4:1, 9-34

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/714005718
Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki Era

ZİYA ÖNİŞ

Potential European Union (EU) membership creates both conditions and incentives, constituting a powerful engine of democratization and economic transformation in candidate countries in the process. If the mix of conditions and incentives is inappropriate, however, and the emphasis is primarily on conditions or “negative incentives,” this will tend to slow down the process of domestic political change in the candidate country. It will also help to strengthen those groups both within and outside the state who are likely to oppose democratic opening as well as the loss of sovereignty in certain key areas of policy that eventual EU membership naturally entails. Whilst an external anchor, such as potential EU membership, constitutes a powerful driving force for change, the primary impetus for change, nonetheless, needs to originate from domestic actors. Within this broad perspective, the present contribution attempts to provide a critical investigation of Turkey-EU relations in the post-Helsinki era.

The decision of the European Council to accept Turkey officially as a candidate country at its Helsinki summit of December 1999 represented a fundamental turning point in Turkey-EU relations. Previously, Turkey had become a member of the Customs Union by the beginning of 1996. Without in any way underestimating the impact of the Customs Union, it is fair to argue in retrospect, that the Customs Union per se failed to provide an appropriate mix of conditions and incentives to induce a major transformation in Turkey’s domestic politics and economy. Clearly, though, following the Helsinki decision, the incentives to undertake reform have increased considerably. The pressures to conform to EU norms, as well as to global norms specified by multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), have created major avenues for change in the recent Turkish context in both the economic and the political realms. This has been the case in spite of the historical legacy
of a highly entrenched state tradition as well as the peculiarities of the Turkish modernization experience.\(^2\)

Nevertheless, a powerful bloc that opposes the wider democratization agenda remains a persistent feature of the Turkish political system. This particular bloc played a key part in modifying the contents of the “National Report,” a key document prepared to meet the accession criteria for full membership. It also played an important role in terms of delaying the passing of legislation on key elements of political reform in the more recent context. An attempt is made here to analyze the underlying reasons for widespread resistance to notions such as “liberal internationalism” and “cosmopolitan democracy” in the Turkish setting. This contribution also probes the question of whether the EU itself is doing enough to provide the kind of “signals” needed to create a virtuous cycle whereby domestic political and economic change and external inducements tend to reinforce one another. Special attention is given to economic considerations that constitute a vital component of Turkey-EU relations, particularly in view of the deep and recurrent economic crises experienced by Turkey in recent years.

**TRANSNATIONALIZATION, CONDITIONALITY AND THE TRANSITION TO A “POST-MODERN STATE:” THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EU ANCHOR IN NEW DEMOCRACIES**

The EU possesses an institutionalized regional framework which readily transmits the kind of influences and pressures that affect the course of democratization. Unlike other regional agreements such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), meeting certain democratic credentials has been a prerequisite for EU (formerly the European Community—EC) membership ever since its very inception. More recently, in the course of the 1980s and the 1990s, “the New Europe” has placed even more emphasis on human rights and the quality of democratization as part of its emerging identity.\(^3\) The positive role that the EC played in the process of democratic consolidation of the Southern European trio of Spain, Greece and Portugal during the course of the 1980s as part of the Mediterranean enlargement process has been widely documented. The EU has clearly helped consolidate nascent democracies in Southern Europe through a mix of political conditions and economic incentives over a relatively short period. Access to the Community’s regional funds on a significant scale has helped to build the basic economic infrastructure in such states.

The positive signals provided by EU membership (initially potential, then actual) have enabled the countries concerned to attract considerable
amounts of foreign direct investment. Rapid economic growth fuelled by expansion of foreign trade and investment has exerted a positive impact on the process of democratic consolidation in the domestic political sphere. The emergence of stable democracies, in turn, has contributed to economic stability and progress. Hence, favorable economic and political developments seem to have reinforced one another and have helped generate vibrant economies and mature democracies in recent decades. Similar processes have been at work, perhaps with a lower degree of intensity, in post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe as countries like Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic line up for EU membership in the early years of the new century.

It is also important to emphasize in this context that the European integration process involves a considerable “pooling of sovereignty,” meaning a relocation of authority away from the individual nation-state to the supranational institutions of the EU. At the same time, there is a parallel process working in the direction of decentralization, involving a relocation of authority in a downward direction towards local and regional authorities. In addition, the domestic politics of individual nations are increasingly transnationalized as external actors—both states and increasingly non-state actors such as transnational civil society groups—become heavily involved in the domestic politics of individual states. Whilst the processes described are, in broad terms, a product of the globalization process itself, the impact of these forces is more evident in countries involved in the European integration process.

The various processes described clearly present major challenges to the individual nation-state and create resentment among national elites—particularly in candidate countries—given the fact that their privileged positions are likely to be undermined by these processes. Stated somewhat differently, the economic benefits of integration for the society as a whole may be extremely high. However, at the same time, the costs of integration in political terms for particular groups might be considerable. Clearly, the groups concerned would be unwilling to relinquish their “sovereignty” over key areas of policy that would directly undermine their privileged positions or interests.

It is increasingly recognized that the European integration process is associated with a vision of a “post-modern state” with its emphasis on the pooling of sovereignty and decentralization at the same time. A hallmark of this kind of post-modern state is recognition of multiple identities with a strong emphasis on the promotion of minority rights. This vision of a post-modern state and the associated notions of liberal internationalism come into direct conflict with the earlier vision of modernist or
authoritarian visions of nationalism based on a single identity, creating significant tensions in the process. Nationalistic reactions to the European integration process are certainly not unique to Turkey. Indeed, such reactions are evident, though with varying degrees of intensity, in most states in both the Western European core and the Eastern European periphery. Nonetheless, it is fair to say that the tensions described are even more pronounced in the Turkish context given the country’s historical legacies and the peculiarities of its nation-building experience.

THE HELSINKI SUMMIT AS A TURNING POINT: OFFICIAL REACTIONS AND THE IMPETUS TO REFORM

It is undoubtedly the case that the decision taken at the Helsinki summit has accelerated the momentum of political and economic reforms in the subsequent era. The process of change was actively initiated by the European Commission through the publication of its Accession Partnership (AP), which was made public in March 2000. The AP highlighted the short- and medium-term priorities where radical steps had to be undertaken in order to satisfy the Copenhagen criteria in both the political and economic arenas. In the political arena the AP identified a rather comprehensive set of changes involving the extension of citizenship rights and the elimination of human rights violations. The targets set ranged from freedom of expression and freedom of association in the fullest sense of the term, elimination of torture practices to changing legal practices as a way of combating human rights violations. Reforms envisaged included improvements in the functioning and efficiency of the judiciary (including state security courts) as well as the removal of legal provisions forbidding the education of Turkish citizens in their mother tongue or the use of their native language in television and radio broadcasting. Finally, finding a comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus problem was delineated as a fundamental priority.

In the economic sphere, the requirements were very much in line with the expectations of the IMF program, involving disinflation and structural reforms initiated in December 1999. EU attention focused explicitly on control of public expenditure, financial sector reforms to establish transparency and surveillance, the reform of agricultural subsidies and further progress with privatization. The reforms aimed, essentially, at a dual transformation of the Turkish state. In the political sphere, the reforms proposed—including a more liberal and pluralistic political order—presented a major challenge to the principles associated with “hard-core Republicanism” underlying the highly centralized Turkish state.
economic sphere, the objective was to transform the “soft state” characterized by populism, corruption and endemic fiscal instability to an effective regulatory state. This objective appeared to be crucial in terms of laying the foundations of sustained economic growth in a crisis-free environment.9

In response to the AP, the Turkish authorities prepared “The Turkish National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis,” a document which was submitted to the EU Commission in March the following year (2001). The National Program (NPAA) represented an attempt on the part of the political authorities in Turkey to strike a balance between the need to meet the Copenhagen criteria and the unwillingness to implement reforms on the most sensitive issues in the short-term.10 The reactions of the European Parliament and the Commission to the NPAA, outlined in their respective reports, were reasonably favorable.11 Both institutions made it abundantly clear, however, that the actions proposed in the NPAA fell rather short of the expectations outlined in the Accession Partnership document. From the EU perspective, the NPAA represented significant progress, although the scale of transformation envisaged in the report failed to reach the threshold level set by the Community to open the critical accession negotiations for full membership. One should bear in mind that the EU is concerned not only with adoption of laws but also with their implementation. Hence, the adoption of the NPAA and the associated changes in the legal process do not necessarily mean that the EU is sufficiently satisfied with the implementation process to open negotiations.

Immediately following the official approval of the NPAA, the authorities initiated a process of implementation which involved the translation of the proposals embodied in the document into concrete action. Indeed, a record number of 34 Constitutional Amendments have been accomplished. These in turn were followed by “Harmonization Laws” designed to translate the Constitutional Amendments concerned into concrete action as part of the process of bringing Turkish law into line with the European acquis. Hence, the period from the beginning of 2000 onwards could be described as a period of profound and momentous change in Turkish history, a process that was ironically engineered by a relatively weak coalition government. Clearly, a change of this magnitude would have been impossible in the absence of a powerful and highly institutionalized EU anchor in the direction of full membership. During the summer of 2002, the process of change appeared to gather further momentum with the controversial harmonization laws having been approved by the parliament over an unexpectedly short period of time considering the depth of resistance involved. Particularly striking in this
context was the August 2002 removal of the death penalty, including for those convicted of terrorist activity. This particular element of reform encountered major opposition from the military and nationalist parties, notably the ultra-nationalist Nationalist Action Party (Miliyetçi Hareket Partisi—MHP). Indeed, the MHP has been playing a major role as a key member of the coalition government in terms of explicitly blocking some of the major political reforms needed to meet the EU’s democratic norms in the post-1999 era. Another major element of progress involved allowing broadcasting and education in the mother tongues of minorities as well as the liberalization of laws restricting freedom of speech and association. This also constituted a remarkable development in the sense that the extension of the cultural rights of “minority groups” had presented particular difficulties in the Turkish context.

In spite of the significant progress recorded in terms of satisfying EU criteria over a relatively short period of time, four basic areas could be identified where—at the time when the present study was completed—considerable progress needed to be achieved in order to satisfy EU expectations. In broad terms, these included the Cyprus issue, the extension of the cultural rights of “minority groups” in practice, the role of the military and the performance of the economy. In retrospect, the failure to tackle the Cyprus issue constituted a major limitation of the NPAA: it appears to have largely ignored this issue. Clearly, unless an acceptable compromise is reached among the actors involved, the Cyprus issue will continue to present a major obstacle to Turkey’s prospects for full membership.

In the sphere of minority rights, the fact that a major hurdle has been overcome by allowing minorities mother-tongue language education and broadcasting rights in principle should not be interpreted as a final state of affairs where all the difficulties have been resolved. In practice, in terms of the extension of cultural rights of “minority” groups, education in the mother tongue seems to be presenting particular difficulties. Indeed, this issue is likely to remain a considerable source of friction given the apparently irreconcilable differences between the official Turkey and EU positions on this issue. The EU has been rather insistent on the promotion of “minority rights,” whereas a major component of the Turkish political system, notably the ultra-nationalist MHP, has traditionally been heavily opposed to any kind of change in this sphere.

Part of the problem lies with the definition of “minority rights.” The official Turkish definition of “minority,” which is in line with the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, recognizes non-Muslim groups as groups that should enjoy certain minority rights. According to this definition, non-Turkish minorities become part of the mainstream Muslim majority.
Hence, being part of the majority, ethnic Muslim minorities cannot benefit from the minority rights given to Greeks, Armenians and Jews, who enjoy the right to establish their own schools (within the parameters of the guidelines established by the Ministry of Education). The debate on this issue has generated considerable polarization in the political spectrum. Yet, even the more liberal wing of Turkish politics, represented—for example—by the right-of-center Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi—ANAP), has been in favor of limited opening in this context in the form of providing extra language courses in the mother tongue. This in itself illustrates the weak foundations of liberal politics in the Turkish context. Moreover, nationalistic elements in Turkish society have interpreted even this kind of limited flexibility as an inherent threat to the unity of the Republic. Overall, it is fair to say that the vast majority of politicians in Turkey continue to support the idea that mother-tongue education can only be held in Turkish. Hence, the idea of instituting primary schools where only Kurdish or Arabic, for example, are taught will continue to generate widespread resentment. Even strictly limited proposals such as establishing individual courses to teach these languages as minor elements in the overall curriculum continue to elicit vigorous opposition from the nationalistic bloc, notably the MHP and the security establishment. One should not be surprised, therefore, if more radical demands by the Kurds to establish their own secondary schools encounter intense opposition in the coming years.

The role of the military is an issue that the EU is particularly sensitive about and one on which major emphasis is placed in its attempts to monitor Turkey’s progress towards a more open and democratic polity. The EU clearly visualizes a system whereby the military’s role in Turkish politics is substantially reduced and placed under full civilian control. A major institution that attracts EU attention and criticism in this context is the National Security Council (NSC), a military-dominated institution that has been a major organ of decisionmaking in the course of the past two decades. One concrete response to EU criticisms in this sphere in the context of the National Program has been to increase the number of civilians in the Council. Further civilianization of the institution alone, however, is unlikely to represent an acceptable alternative to EU demands.

Clearly, a number of rather subtle issues are involved in this context, but the underlying objective is to reduce the military’s power. It is not obvious, however, that this could be achieved solely by institutionally limiting the presence of the military in executive circles. It is a far more complicated issue than is portrayed by the EU standards. A critical question in this context is how to reduce the weight of the military in the
economic sphere. It is interesting that the EU itself has somewhat de-emphasized this issue in the past couple of years, perhaps coming to the conclusion that institutional arrangements are just the tip of the iceberg in Turkey. There also appears to be a realization on the part of the EU that an overemphasis on this issue in the short-run may achieve nothing more than simply alienating the military from the EU.

Last but not least, the performance of the economy is likely to pose a serious threat to Turkey’s aspirations to become a full member of the EU. In spite of significant efforts aimed at reforming the Turkish economy in recent years, with pressures emanating from both the IMF and the EU, the Turkish economy has not been able to overcome its traditional problems of endemic instability and recurrent crises. The performance of the economy in recent years has been characterized by a low-growth, high-inflation equilibrium. Clearly, Turkey has not been able to generate the kind of performance in the economic sphere which would be synonymous with a steady convergence to EU norms in terms of per capita income and level of development over a reasonable period. All the work that goes towards satisfying the political components of the Copenhagen criteria will be severely undermined if the economic reform process is subject to further reversals and the economy fails to develop a certain momentum of rapid growth.

The four elements identified are likely to pose formidable challenges in the years ahead. In spite of the significant progress already made, major progress in all these areas must be accomplished before accession negotiations can even be initiated. It is obvious that softening the “hard state” in the political realm and hardening the “soft state” in the economic realm are unlikely to unfold themselves as inherently smooth processes.

REALIGNMENTS IN DOMESTIC POLITICS AND CHALLENGES FACING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A GENUINELY LIBERAL AND PLURALISTIC POLITICAL ORDER IN THE POST-HELSINKI ERA

The process of institutionalized dialogue initiated by the Helsinki process and the resultant impetus to reform has exercised a profound impact on Turkey’s domestic politics. What is also interesting in this context is that the kind of realignments that have taken place cannot be simply explained with reference to the traditional left/right axis. It would be interesting to examine the way that the positions of the principal political parties, interest associations and public opinion at large are transformed in Turkey following the critical turning point at the Helsinki summit.

Westernization has been a central objective of the Turkish political elite since the inception of the Turkish Republic in 1923. Indeed, the roots of
the westernization drive can be traced back to Ottoman reforms of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the post-War period, and especially from the early 1960s onward, eventual membership in the EU has been interpreted as a necessary counterpart of the westernization and modernization drive, which itself has been proclaimed as official state ideology. Hence, it is fair to say that almost all of the major political parties in Turkey displayed a certain vague commitment towards the goal of EU membership. Even the Islamists in Turkey, who have traditionally looked towards the Middle East and the Islamic world as the natural point of Turkish foreign policy interests, appear to have shifted their position in favor of an active pro-EU stand in recent years. Similarly, ultranationalist parties like the MHP have traditionally looked towards the former Soviet Union and the Turkic world as their primary point of reference. Nonetheless, even the MHP has not opposed EU membership in principle. Yet, the striking pattern in the pre-Helsinki era was that none of the major political parties on the right or left of the political spectrum actively pushed for the kind of reforms needed—notably in the political arena—to satisfy the conditions set by the EU. Indeed, none of the major political parties were able or willing to challenge the fundamental precepts of state ideology on key issues of concern such as “cultural rights” or “the Cyprus problem”—issues which appeared to lie beyond the parameters of the normal political debate.

The intense process of interaction and pressure for reform initiated by the Helsinki summit, however, appear to have resulted in certain realignments in domestic politics, a process which has also forced individual political parties to develop sharper and more precise positions regarding their stand on the EU. What is quite striking in this context is that the center-right ANAP, under the leadership of former prime minister Mesut Yılmaz, has assumed a leadership role in pushing for EU membership and the associated reforms. ANAP, a representative of urban middle-class interests and a minor coalition partner since 1999, has been much more willing, relative to its competitors, to tackle the kind of sensitive issues related to EU conditionality. Hence, among the political parties, ANAP could be considered a key member of the emerging pro-EU coalition in Turkey, notably during the course of 2002. Indeed, the party leader’s active stand on EU membership, not only in principle but also in terms of an underlying commitment to reforms, has generated widespread resistance from Turkey’s military and security establishment as well as other components of the hardline Republican or nationalist bloc. Yet, it is fair to say that ANAP has started to play this role only very recently and its ability to play this particular role has been handicapped by its heavily
nationalistic legacy. It is a striking fact that ANAP, as the principal party in opposition in 1994–95, had opposed the Customs Union as a tactic against its arch rival, the True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi—DYP). This episode clearly added to its lack of credibility. Furthermore, the party has been associated with a number of alleged corruption episodes in recent years, which have contributed to the dramatic decline in its popularity towards the end of the 1990s. Finally, it was the party leader himself who took an active position on EU-related reforms. There is no firm indication that his pronouncements elicited the unified support of the party. Moreover, Yılmaz himself can be criticized for not being sufficiently consistent and vigorous in presenting and defending his case in favor of EU-related reforms, although admittedly he has played an instrumental role in the passing of the harmonization laws in August 2002.

At the opposite end of the political party spectrum, the ultra-nationalist MHP, a key member of the ruling coalition government, emerged as a leading element of the powerful “anti-EU coalition.” This particular party, whilst not rejecting EU membership in principle, has vehemently opposed the type of reforms demanded by the EU, highlighting the threats posed by such reforms to national sovereignty and security. Indeed, one can immediately detect an exact correspondence between the basic perspectives of the MHP and the military-security establishment on EU-related issues. Other major political parties in Turkey could easily be located between the two extremes identified. None of them actively opposed the reform process as openly as the MHP, nor have they actively promoted EU-related reforms as vocally as ANAP did during the recent period. Even ANAP has been somewhat constrained in its actions on sensitive issues such as education in ethnic languages and the kinds of compromises needed to resolve the Cyprus dispute.

To an external observer, what is striking about the recent realignments in Turkish politics along a pro-EU versus anti-EU axis concerns the positions of the left-of-center social democratic parties. It is interesting to note that the Left has taken a highly nationalistic stand on many of the key issues involved. For a variety of historical reasons that require a separate treatment, parties of the center-left in Turkey do not appear to have been particularly influenced by debates on multiculturalism, liberal internationalism and third way politics, which seem to have occupied the European social democratic left during the recent era. Clearly, the reluctance of the Left in Turkey to transform itself and establish itself as a major component of the pro-EU coalition constitutes a factor that seems to be limiting the pace of progress on the path to EU membership. There are signs, however, that this pattern might change somewhat following the deep divisions that
emerged within the left-wing, nationalist Democratic Left Party (Demokratik Sol Parti—DSP)—the premier member of the coalition government in office—during the summer of 2002. The substantial number of MPs who resigned from the party is characterized by their pro-EU outlook, whereas those who remained within the party can be distinguished by their strongly nationalistic outlook, which is perhaps not fundamentally distinct from the standpoint of the MHP on a number of the key issues involved.

An equally paradoxical feature of recent Turkish politics concerns the role of interest associations. Perhaps more than any political party, the principal pressure for EU-related democratic reforms originated from civil society organizations and, notably, from the representatives of the business community. Indeed, perhaps the single most vocal element in this context has been the voluntary association of big business in Turkey, namely TÜSİAD (Türkiye Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği—Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association).¹⁸ TÜSİAD’s plea for the promotion of civil and human rights as well as for better governance in fact preceded the Helsinki summit. The organization published a highly controversial report in 1997 which outlined a series of needed major political reforms.¹⁹ In addition to its activities in the domestic political sphere, TÜSİAD also played an active role of lobbying at Brussels and, in part, contributed to the favorable outcome of the Helsinki summit. The report on democratization published by the association, however, elicited widespread resentment and criticism from the military and other segments of the state. Consequently, TÜSİAD’s push for democratic reforms has been somewhat subdued in the immediate aftermath of the Helsinki summit. On the other hand, the organization once again became extremely vocal during the course of 2002, stressing the urgency of the need to make progress on highly controversial issues such as the extension of cultural rights and a mutually acceptable resolution of the Cyprus dispute. In its widespread media campaigns to influence both the policymakers and the public opinion at large, the association has drawn increasing attention to the economic benefits of joining the EU for the population as a whole and has tried to justify political reforms as a necessary step in capitalizing on the economic benefits of the Union. The instrumental nature of TÜSİAD’s commitment to the democratization agenda should not lead one to underestimate the fact that significant components of the business community embraced democratic reforms for their intrinsic benefit.

The pressures emanating from civil society have not been confined to TÜSİAD alone. Other organizations, primarily those with certain links to the private sector—notably the Economic Development Foundation
İktisadi ve Kalkınma Vakfı—IKV—and the liberal think-tank organization, TESEV (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation—Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı)—have also been quite active in using the media to point towards the urgency of economic and political reforms. Indeed, IKV has been trying to promote closer relations with the EU for three decades. Perhaps the major contribution of the IKV recently, with the principal impetus coming from the chairman of the organization, Meral Gezgin Erış, has been its leadership role in creating an unprecedented broad-based civil movement in Turkey under the umbrella of Avrupa Hareketi 2002 (Movement for Europe 2002). Avrupa 2002 (Europe 2002) constituted a broad platform that mobilized 175 civil society organizations to take collective action in favor of Turkey’s accession to the EU in June 2002. Clearly, the EU can play an instrumental role in this context by providing material support to broad-based civil initiatives, such as Avrupa 2002, and grass-roots initiatives, which are of critical importance of building mass support for EU membership in the Turkish context.

One should not be misled to believe that all the pressure for EU-related reforms originating from the NGOs stems from the business community. Yet, it is interesting to draw attention to an anomaly of Turkish politics, which, to some extent, duplicates our observations regarding political parties of the center-left variety in Turkey. Major labor unions in Turkey, such as TÜRK-İŞ (Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu—Confederation of Turkish Labor Unions) have continued to be heavily nationalistic in outlook and, as a result, have excluded themselves rather decisively from the active pro-EU coalition. Their arguments appear to be heavily grounded in the loss of national autonomy/sovereignty discourse, arguments which look suspiciously similar to the kind of discourse presented by the ultra-nationalist MHP.

From a broader analytical perspective, a striking aspect of the Helsinki decision to transform the possibility of EU membership from a vague promise to a concrete reality helped accentuate the divisions within the ruling power bloc, divisions that had already been evident in the late 1990s. There has been a close overlap between the economic interests of big business and the military-security arm of the state in Turkey, a relationship that has been steadily strengthened from the import-substitution era onwards. Nonetheless, the concrete possibility of EU membership has resulted in a series of divisions within what could be described as the “ruling bloc” or the “power elite.” What could be described as the “transnational business elites,” including domestic business and the external investor community with an interest in the
Turkish economy, increasingly saw the EU anchor as a means of consolidating the kind of economic environment conducive to their long-term interests. In contrast, the privileged position of the military-security establishment, both in terms of its economic weight and social status, appeared to be particularly threatened by the kind of reforms proposed by the EU.

During the summer of 2002, the military, security and foreign policy wing of the traditional power bloc appeared to be somewhat on the defensive side as pressures from the EU and the transnational coalition of business interests mounted. It would be naive to suppose, however, that divisions within the ruling bloc have resulted in a complete rupture. A considerable overlap of economic interests remains intact between the two segments of the power bloc. It is a well-known fact that the military is an important economic actor in Turkish society and many private firms depend on contracts originating from the state or the military. This, in turn, limits the extent of the push for reforms originating from the large-scale business community and its constituent associations. The key inference that follows is that one should not underestimate the power of the anti-EU coalition in Turkey, of which the military-security arm of the state is one component, and its ability to resist the kind of reforms promoted by the EU.

Many observers commenting on the future of Turkey-EU relations in the immediate aftermath of the Helsinki summit, including this author, have focused their attention primarily on domestic political constraints and have placed much less emphasis on purely economic considerations in the process. The twin economic crises experienced by Turkey in November 2000 and February 2001, however, have brought economic considerations onto the center stage. This was something which was not anticipated by analysts of Turkey-EU relations in early 2000 given that the economic program supported by the IMF appeared to be intact during that period.24 Arguably, the deepest economic crisis that Turkey experienced during the post-War period, with the Helsinki decision in the background, had some rather unexpected consequences in terms of accelerating the kind of changes in Turkey’s domestic politics that have already been highlighted. In immediate terms, the economic crisis seemed to have aggravated the prospects of becoming a full member of the EU over a reasonably short period. From a longer-term perspective, however, the economic crisis seems to have contributed quite dramatically to the emergence of a vocal pro-EU coalition. Increasingly, the transnational coalition of business interests conceived of the EU anchor as a necessary double anchor from the point of view of consolidating the kind of reforms pushed by the IMF in the Turkish context. Hence, the kind of explicitly political conditions
proposed, on top of the economic conditions, were increasingly favored by the transnational business elites and representatives of the international financial community, primarily based on the positive economic impact of such reforms through ultimate EU membership. In other words, the implicit fear was that the economic reform process itself could easily be reversed in the absence of EU membership. Clearly, the actors concerned favored the presence of a permanent external anchor such as membership of the EU as a means of locking-in the reform process in Turkey. It is fascinating to observe the extent to which the EU-related political reforms are explicitly linked to the process whereby external investors and their representative agencies view and evaluate the prospects for the Turkish economy in the post-crisis period. Apart from amplifying the support of business interests, the economic crisis was also instrumental in generating broader public support for the reform process. For the average citizen, the concrete material benefits associated with EU membership became even more appealing during a period of deep economic crisis.

It is becoming increasingly clear that overall public opinion is likely to play a progressively more important role in terms of influencing the outcome of the game played out by the different components of the power elite. The results of major public opinion surveys conducted in Turkey during the recent era convey interesting information in this respect. The most recent among these surveys is one undertaken by TESEV, the results of which are quite illuminating and deserve some comment in the present context. The TESEV survey is instructive in terms of showing broad support among the Turkish electorate for EU membership in rather general terms. Much more significant, however, is the result that shows the widespread demand for political reforms. Ninety percent of respondents appear to be extremely unhappy about the workings of Turkey’s democracy and 74 percent indicate that the right to use ethnic languages should be allowed under all circumstances.

Yet, it is also quite interesting that the measures required for EU Copenhagen criteria receive mixed support: 52 percent do not support the removal of the death penalty in all cases and 58 percent would not support education and broadcasting in ethnic languages in the context of EU entry. There also appears to be deep suspicion about the EU itself, with 49 percent of the respondents viewing it as a “Christian club.”

Putting all these elements together, there has clearly been a pronounced shift in Turkey’s domestic politics recently in terms of the emergence of a genuinely pro-active, pro-EU coalition. Moreover, a key component of this coalition is transnational business interests, drawing attention to the increasingly globalized nature of “domestic politics” in the present age.
genuinely pro-EU coalition means not only a commitment to EU membership in general terms but also a concrete commitment to undertake the kind of reforms specified as necessary conditions, even if these imply a certain loss of autonomy over critical policy areas. It is also the case, however, that a powerful anti-EU bloc continues to flourish in Turkey and presents a formidable obstacle to the reform process. Hence, there appears to be a stalemate, a pattern that seems to be consistent with the rather ambivalent results emerging from the recent public opinion surveys. Practical questions that need to be addressed, therefore, are how this stalemate could be resolved and what role the EU itself could play in this process.

THE RESOLUTION OF THE CYPRUS CONFLICT AS A KEY CHALLENGE FACING THE EMERGING PRO-EU COALITION IN TURKEY: IS THE EU DOING ENOUGH TO HELP?

Bilateral conflict with an EU member constitutes a natural barrier to full membership. Without overestimating its importance, it is fair to say that Greece’s early membership in the EU has acted as an important constraint on the smooth development of Turkey-EU relations. The Greek veto, for example, meant that Turkey could not benefit from financial assistance, which became available in principle through membership in the Customs Union. Clearly, this represents a dilemma unique to Turkey, one that is not applicable to other candidate countries currently lined up for full membership. Indeed, there has been certain improvement in Greek-Turkish relations preceding the Helsinki summit. However, this recent rapprochement has not yet resulted in major progress with respect to the grand disputes involving the two countries, in which the Cyprus dispute occupies a very special role in this context. A detailed consideration of the Cyprus dispute lies beyond the scope of the present analysis. What is significant for our purposes is the impact of the Cyprus dispute on Turkey’s domestic politics considering that it is probably the single overriding constraint on Turkey’s progress to full membership and is also the issue area where the anti-EU coalition is perhaps least willing to compromise.

Taking into account the current stalemate in the relative powers of the emerging pro-EU coalition and the highly entrenched anti-EU coalition in Turkey, the EU, in principle, could play a decisive role in this context. In concrete terms, the EU could create the kind of incentives that would help to resolve the problem to the satisfaction of the various actors involved. This, in turn, would help tilt the balance of power within Turkey’s
domestic politics in favor of the pro-EU coalition. The current approach of
the EU, however, has not been very helpful in this respect. The EU is in
the process of completing accession negotiations with the Republic of
Cyprus (RoC). The successful completion of the negotiations will mean
the accession of “Southern Cyprus” as the sole representative of the island.
As might be expected given the limited population and high per capita
income of the RoC relative to other candidate countries, the accession
negotiations have not presented any major problems. With the deadline for
the end of negotiations set as December 2002, the membership of Southern
Cyprus is likely to be realized over a short space of time.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the EU has not attached any
conditions that would help pressure RoC to resolve its dispute with the
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). The absence of explicit
conditionality related to this issue with respect to the accession of Southern
Cyprus has contributed to a certain asymmetry in power relations. This has
increasingly rendered it more difficult for both parties to reach a workable
compromise concerning the future of the island, a solution that is also of
primary importance for the future of Turkey-EU relations. Clearly, this
constitutes an area where the mix of conditions and incentives provided by
the EU could have been more favorable to Turkey, in terms of facilitating
Turkey’s smooth transition to full membership. Given the crucial impact of
the signals provided by the EU on Turkey’s domestic politics, a more
balanced approach on the part of the EU to the Cyprus issue would have
made a major contribution towards the resolution of the dispute, which, in
turn, would help jeopardize the position of the powerful anti-EU coalition
in Turkey.27 A more balanced approach on the part of the EU would mean
setting explicit standards for Southern Cyprus to resolve its disputes with
the North as a necessary step for accession to full membership.

Under the present rules governing the actions of the key actors
involved and the incentive structure provided by the EU, the continued
presence of the self-proclaimed Turkish Cypriot state on the northern part
of the island does not appear to be a viable long-term option, at least in so
far as Turkey’s full membership remains a serious possibility. Moreover,
the compromise solution proposed by the existing TRNC administration,
involving essentially two largely independent Cypriot states entering the
EU under a single umbrella, is not likely to elicit any kind of endorsement
from Southern Cyprus. Southern Cyprus, under the present scenario, faces
no such incentives to compromise. The key dilemma, however, is that
members of the anti-EU coalition in Turkey, who strongly back the
existing administration in the North, display no willingness whatsoever to
consider any kind of serious compromise on this issue.
Perhaps on a slightly more optimistic note, the EU has indirectly contributed towards the resolution of the problem by triggering a process of change. The process initiated may not appear favorable from the Turkish perspective in the short-run, but it may nevertheless contribute towards some kind of compromise solution in the future. The EU signals are creating pressure for change in this context in two key respects. First, the increasingly unambiguous signals transmitted to the emerging pro-EU coalition in Turkey is that some kind of compromise, falling short of full-autonomy for the North, might ultimately be necessary in order to achieve a political settlement on the island, leading to the island’s accession to the EU under a unified banner. This kind of signal has induced members of the pro-EU coalition in Turkey to exert increasing pressure on the government to revise the official policy stance. Indeed, key members of the pro-EU coalition such as TÜSİAD and, to a lesser extent, ANAP, have become increasingly vocal on this issue over the course of 2002. They have been making frequent public pronouncements, drawing attention to the urgency of finding a compromise solution, without actually being very precise about the nature of the compromise that needs to be made. Such pronouncements have, in turn, generated intense reactions and criticisms from key components of the “anti-EU coalition,” notably the military and the MHP. The debate seems to have acquired an additional urgency given the tight timetable facing the accession of Southern Cyprus to the EU and possible problems this poses to Turkey-EU relations in the future.

The second type of pressure brought about by EU action for change in the direction noted concerns the pressure upon Turkish Cypriots themselves. Clearly, there exists a major incentive on the part of Turkish Cypriots to be part of the EU as part of a unified Cypriot state, given the material and security benefits that such an arrangement would entail. The existing state of affairs—where the TRNC is not internationally recognized and its economy and security are dependent on mainland Turkey—surely does not constitute a durable and acceptable state of affairs from the perspective of the Turkish Cypriot Community. This EU pressure manifested itself in the resumption of negotiations between the representatives of the two communities on the island in November 2001, negotiations which had come to a complete standstill a few years beforehand. Although the series of negotiations conducted have so far failed to break the existing stalemate given the entrenched positions of the actors concerned, the opening of negotiations in itself might be interpreted as a sign of progress. The danger, however, is that if the Turkish Cypriot elites are unwilling to compromise, this will have significantly negative consequences in terms of strengthening the hand of the anti-EU factions in
Turkey. This negative possibility is unlikely to prevent Turkey’s full membership in the end; however, it will undoubtedly frustrate Turkey’s membership aspirations in the short-run.

The Cyprus dispute, therefore, is a clear case where the EU could have done much more to facilitate an equitable solution—taking into account the interests of all the actors involved—which would also pave the way for Turkey’s relatively smooth accession to the EU. Nonetheless, one should also acknowledge the fact that the pressures presented by the EU and the incentives created by EU action have facilitated a process of change that may eventually lead towards a political settlement, paving the road to Turkey’s full membership. From the Turkish perspective, however, one could anticipate a longer time frame and a less equitable outcome at the same time.

TOWARDS A CHANGE IN MUTUAL PERCEPTIONS AS A MEANS OF FOSTERING CLOSER TURKEY-EU RELATIONS

A typical argument frequently advanced by Turkey’s military-security establishment concerns Turkey’s unique importance for Europe from a geo-strategic perspective. The basic idea is that Turkey could make a significant contribution to European security through active participation in the emerging European Security and Defense architecture. The natural corollary of this argument is that there should be a major relaxation of the Copenhagen criteria in relation to sensitive areas such as cultural rights and the Cyprus dispute in return for the security advantages provided by Turkey’s accession.29

Clearly, this is a rather naive argument for a variety of reasons. First, it represents a certain misunderstanding of the true meaning of EU integration and the role of the EU as a “security community.”30 The underlying logic of the EU as a security community is that a process of mutual democratization and economic integration, rather than using direct force and the threat of military action, provides peace.

Second, the argument fails to take into account that, as Turkey is a NATO member, few security “carrots” exist on the part of the EU that could function as true incentives. Thirdly, it is a paradoxical argument for the nationalists to make in the sense that it implicitly conveys an underlying inferiority complex by suggesting that the only serious contribution Turkey could make to the EU is through improved security based on the size of its army and security forces.

This is not to suggest, however, that security conditions are not important and should be automatically minimized. The central point to
emphasize is that security considerations *per se* cannot act as a substitute for democratic reforms and, hence, such considerations cannot be used as a means for bypassing the Copenhagen criteria in the first place. Indeed, once Turkey experiences major democratic reforms and resolves its central internal and external dilemmas it will be in a much better position to contribute to European security as a full member of the Union. Resolution of the Cyprus dispute would be a proof that Turkish membership would be a concrete security asset. Otherwise, in the European mind, Turkey in its present mold would still be regarded as security consumer rather than a security provider. This perception, in turn, will naturally reduce the incentives on the part of the EU to admit Turkey as a full member.

The emerging pro-EU coalition in Turkey could make an important contribution by challenging the orthodox, security-conscious mindset in Turkey and conveying what EU integration is all about in the first place. It is also crucial that the reform process is “internalized” in the sense that the kind of reforms needed to satisfy Copenhagen criteria ought to be portrayed as reforms which are intrinsically valuable and not simply accomplished to meet EU criteria in purely instrumental fashion. The proponents of Turkey’s membership in the EU should also try to contemplate in a more positive fashion the possible contributions that Turkey could make to the broader integration process.

In terms of trade the Turkish economy is already heavily integrated into the European Union. Following the Helsinki summit, a number of new opportunities have emerged involving possibilities for active participation in Community-wide projects in education, technology and other areas.\(^{31}\) Clearly, the ability to benefit from such cooperative schemes depends heavily on Turkey’s own initiatives and internal capabilities. In a sense, substantial informal integration will have to precede formal association through full membership. Increased interaction through civil society networks and the participation of non-state actors are likely to play a central role in this kind of bottom-up integration process. Ultimately, Turkey’s attraction to the EU will rest heavily on her concrete achievements in such diverse areas as science, technology, education, culture, sports, communications and entrepreneurship, achievements which are likely to be far more important than its contribution in the narrowly defined security realm.

Turkey could also make a significant contribution towards the evolution of a genuinely multicultural Europe, a kind of Europe which is not only interested in what is happening within her own borders but extends her horizons to develop relations with the neighboring Islamic world. Europe has a greater incentive to develop such a close relationship
than the United States given that Europe is geographically closer to the Islamic world and contains a significant Islamic minority within its borders. Indeed, Turkey’s contribution to a multicultural Europe would transcend the realm of Islam and include the significant non-Islamic elements in her rich cultural heritage. For this vision to be meaningful, however, especially after September 11, two basic preconditions have to be satisfied. First, Turkey needs to transform itself into a genuinely democratic state if it wishes to present itself as a model of multiculturalism, both to Europe and to the Islamic world. Second, Europe needs to undergo a major transformation itself from being an inward-oriented entity towards a genuinely global actor, interested not only in its own internal dynamics but also in broader regional and global processes. The origins of the current problems in Turkey-EU relations are, to a certain extent, due to the inward-oriented nature of the EU. In such a scenario, a reformed Turkey—based on a role extending well beyond that of security provider—could claim to have importance for the EU in terms of having a stronghold in the strategically important Middle East and the former Soviet Union. Clearly, these are long-term visions and some drastic changes need to take place on both sides if such ideas are to have any concrete meaning. It is clear, for example, that Europe itself does not constitute a monolithic entity. Deep divisions exist between different elements of the political spectrum concerning the meaning and limits of multiculturalism in the European context. The idea of a genuinely multicultural Europe is close to the visions of the European Left but tends to generate considerable resentment from the European Right, which is very much on the ascendancy at present. Similarly, the vision of Europe as a unified global actor appears to be somewhat distant. The kinds of obstacles that Turkey itself, moreover, needs to overcome to conform to this long-term vision are quite formidable.

In the meantime, the EU in the present setting could contribute further to Turkey’s accession by improving the mix of conditions and incentives. Ambiguous signals provided by the EU and the vision of full membership as a long-term possibility tends to strengthen the position of the powerful anti-EU coalition in Turkey. Through improved financial assistance and diplomatic signaling, as well as greater support for broad-based civil initiatives in Turkey, the EU could significantly alter the balance of power in favor of the emerging pro-EU coalition, as has been the case in other candidate countries, both in the context of southern and eastern enlargement. Furthermore, greater sensitivity on the part of the EU to Turkey’s security concerns and a more balanced approach to its disputes with its neighbors are also likely to be particularly helpful in this context.
CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The Helsinki decision created a powerful set of incentives for change and reform in Turkey’s domestic politics. Previously, change had been under way, but was less pronounced given that membership in the Customs Union in and of itself failed to provide an appropriate mix of conditions and incentives. The end of the armed conflict in the southeast during the early part of 1999 also paved the way for significant change in the direction of political reforms. Observing the Turkish scene two-and-a-half years after the Helsinki summit, one can clearly detect the beginnings of an influential pro-EU coalition in Turkey committed to undertaking the kind of economic and political reforms necessary to facilitate full membership. It is fair to say that, hitherto, civil society associations, rather than political parties, have been the principal actors of this newly emerging pro-EU coalition. Key political parties are yet to establish themselves as active members of this coalition.

At the same time, one needs to take into account the formidable obstacles on the way to full membership in the presence of a highly entrenched anti-EU coalition. The term “anti-EU coalition” contains a precise meaning in the present context. It certainly does not mean that key constituencies making up this broad coalition are against EU membership at all cost. What it does mean is that members of this coalition do not like the conditions associated with full membership and are unwilling to delegate authority on what they consider to be key national decisions to a supranational authority like the EU. But by arguing that domestic politics should be totally independent from transnational influences, they clearly fail to diagnose the increasingly “post-modern” character of the EU in recent times. Ideally, they would like Turkey to become a member of the EU on their own terms, meaning the absence of any major change in the status quo in the domestic sphere. Members of the anti-EU coalition tend to exaggerate the internal and external security threats confronting Turkey and regard major political reform, such as the extension of cultural rights, as a major threat to the unity of the nation. Clearly, the EU itself can help break the existing deadlock and shift the balance in favor of the emerging pro-EU coalition as it has effectively done in the past in other national contexts. Incomplete commitment on the part of both Turkey and the EU at present seems to be slowing down the process of change in the direction of full membership, a process which would have been far smoother if both sides could display a greater degree of commitment to the key Helsinki decision.
Important developments have occurred in Turkey-EU relations in the aftermath of September 2002 when the present study was completed. The general elections of November 2002, the UN Plan for Cyprus, which became public during the same month, and the outcome of the European Council’s Copenhagen summit of December 2002 all represent critical turning points in the long-trajectory of Turkey-EU relations.

The Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi—AKP), emerged as the winner of the November elections and managed to form a majority government in Turkey for the first time since 1991. Although the party had strong Islamist roots, it presented itself as a center-right conservative party with moderate leanings and an underlying commitment to secularism. What is even more striking is that the AKP, much more than any political party of the previous era, demonstrated a high degree of commitment to the goal of full EU membership. Hence, the party constituted a key component of Turkey’s pro-EU coalition by the end of 2002. This not only showed its readiness to accelerate the reform process that had already gathered momentum during the course of the year, but also expressed its willingness to diverge from the official state line in resolving the Cyprus dispute, even before the UN Plan on Cyprus became public. The party was clearly willing to challenge the military-security establishment on a critical issue of Cyprus; something that political parties of the previous era, including ANAP, were not able to do. The AKP clearly faces a number of challenges. A major test of success will be in the economic sphere. Similarly, the party is confronted with major challenges in terms of staying within the boundaries of the secular constitutional order. Nonetheless, the fact that after November 2002 Turkey obtained a strong government with a deep commitment to EU membership clearly constituted a favorable development.

The second major turning point involved the comprehensive plan prepared by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to settle the Cyprus conflict. Most commentators would agree that the “Annan Plan” represents a critical step towards resolving the Cyprus dispute. The plan clearly satisfies the basic demands of the Turkish and Greek communities on the island, as well as the major states involved. The plan offers the Turkish community political equality with the Greek Cypriots and envisages the formation of a common state composed of politically equal component states enjoying legal equality with the central level and exercising sovereign powers in their respective spheres of jurisdiction. It also allows for the continuation of a Turkish military presence on the
island, although on a reduced scale. The Greek community will also gain from the reunification of the island and will obtain control over a larger proportion of the island’s territory.\textsuperscript{13}

It is interesting that the main impetus for an equitable solution to the Cyprus dispute originated not from the EU, but from the UN under the explicit pressure of the United States. Nonetheless, one could argue that the EU triggered this process by offering Southern Cyprus the possibility of full membership and encouraging the process of reunification and the entry of a united Cyprus into the EU. Yet there remains considerable resistance to the Annan Plan both from the leadership of TRNC as well as the military-security establishment in Turkey. Although the anti-EU coalition was on the defensive towards the end of 2002, the Cyprus issue will undoubtedly emerge as the real test of the respective strengths of the pro- and anti-EU coalitions in Turkey during the next phase of Turkey-EU relations.

Finally, the EU’s Copenhagen summit held in December 2002 was of critical importance. The key outcome of the meeting involved the offer of a firm date (December 2004) for opening up accession negotiations with Turkey, provided that Turkey could satisfy all aspects of EU conditionality by then. The agreement on this date means that the mix of conditions and incentives has improved for Turkey although, admittedly, the EU could have improved the mix further by offering an earlier target date of December 2003. Arguably, an early target date could play an instrumental role in shifting the balance of power in Turkish society even more rapidly in favor of the pro-EU coalition. This, in turn, would help to accelerate the process whereby the reforms are successfully accomplished and the Cyprus conflict is resolved.

NOTES

The author would like to thank Ali Çarkoğlu, Dietrich Jung, Wolfango Piccoli and Kamil Yılmaz for their valuable comments on an early version of the essay and Hatice Burcu Şahin for her able assistance. An earlier version of this essay was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association held in Washington DC, November 23–26, 2002.

Turkey and the European Union


5. On the transnationalization of domestic politics in response to pressures from globalization in general—and for specific countries from the EU per se—see Grugel (1999).

6. On the post-modern state in Europe, see Thomas Diez (ed.), The European Union and the Cyprus Conflict: Modern Conflict, Postmodern Integration (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).


10. For the details of the National Report, see the Turkish National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis at <http://www.deltur.cec.eu.int/english/nationalprogtr.html>.

11. For clear evidence on this issue see Sedat Ergin, “312’nın Bu Şekliyle Geçmesinde Karalıyız” [We are Determined that the Relevant Constitutional Amendment Should be Approved by Parliament Without Further Revisions], NTV <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com> (Jan. 26, 2002).


16. The left-of-center Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) was perhaps the forerunner of change in this sphere in the sense that it developed a wide democratization agenda. This included advocating the extension of cultural rights leading up to the general elections of 1991. However, the party has subsequently abandoned this agenda. Indeed, its successor, the Republican People’s Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi—CHP) recently became rather indistinguishable from its nationalistic counterparts.

17. A major qualification is called for in the sense that one may question the desirability of a customs union agreement on purely economic grounds. Indeed, many candidate countries have chosen a less restrictive free trade agreement with the EU, as opposed to a customs union agreement. Turkey preferred the Customs Union in order to demonstrate her strong economic commitment to the EU as a substitute for her lack of political commitment. The Turkish political elites at the time were clearly reluctant to abide by these conditions after a major economic crisis in 2001 and towards the end of the deadline.


19. TÜSİAD’s democratization report of 1997 is available at <http://www.tusiad.org.tr>. Subsequent reports on democratic reforms, both in general and in relation to EU membership, have also been published. See TÜSİAD, Türkiye’de Demokratik Standartların Yükseltilmesi: Tartışmalar ve Son Gelişmeler [Raising Democratic Standards in Turkey: Debates and Recent Developments] (Istanbul: Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association, 1999); TÜSİAD, Avrupa Birliği’ne Uyum Sürecine Doğru Siyasal Kistalar ve Uyum Süreci [Political Conditions Attached to EU Membership and the Process of Adjustment to EU Norms] (Istanbul: Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association, 1999); and TÜSİAD, Türkiye’de Demokratikleşme Perspektifi AB Kopenhag Siyasal Kriterleri [A Perspective on Democratization in Turkey and the Political Components of the EU’s Copenhagen Criteria, Vols.1 and 2] (Istanbul: Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association, 2001), also available at <http://www.tusiad.org.tr>.

20. For a comparative analysis of the role of business associations in relation to democratization and EU membership, see Öniş and Türem (2001), pp.94–120.

21. In fact, not all business associations are equally enthusiastic about this project. The semi-official “Union of Turkish Chambers and Stock Exchanges” (TOBB) and “Turkish Employers’ Federation” (TISK) are examples of two associations which displayed a somewhat lukewarm attitude towards EU-related reforms, if not directly towards EU membership.

22. The TÜRK-İŞ (Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Federasyonu—Confederation of Turkish Labor Unions) report entitled AB Türkiye’den Ne İstiyor? [What Does the EU Demand from Turkey?] is available at <http://www.turkis.org.tr/AB%20RAPORU.doc>.


27. For an elaboration of this perspective see Ziya Öniş, “Greek-Turkish Relations and the European Union: A Critical Perspective,” Mediterranean Politics, Vol.6, No.3 (Autumn
34

Turkey and the European Union

2001), pp.31–45. For a series of diverse perspectives on Greek-Turkish relations and the Cyprus Conflict, see Dimitris Keridis and Dimitrios Triantaphyllou (eds.), Greek-Turkey Relations in the Era of Globalization (Herndon, VA: Brassey’s, 2001).

28. For an innovative proposal involving the integration of a bi-communal Cyprus to the EU along the lines of the Belgian model, see Michael Emerson and Nathalie Tocci, Cyprus as a Lighthouse of the Eastern Mediterranean (Belgium: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2002), also available at <http://www.ceps.be>.

29. For an articulate exposition of this frequently advanced, but highly problematic, thesis see Onur Öymen, Türkiye’nin Gücü [Turkey’s Power] (Istanbul: AD Kitapçılık A.Ş, 1998).

30. For a powerful argument along these lines, see Dietrich Jung, “Turkey and Europe: Ongoing Hypocrisy?” (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Peace Research Institute Working Papers), No.35 (2001), also available at <http://www.copri.dk>.


32. At least this was the case until the general elections of November 3, 2002 that marked another crucial turning point in the trajectory of Turkey-EU relations.

33. Details of the UN Plan on Cyprus are available at <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ad/annan.doc>.