Europeanization of Turkey
Europeanization of Turkey

1. Europeanization mechanisms
Europeanization means:

- The implementation of EU standards/norms
  - Polity level: e.g. Independence of judiciary
  - Politics level: e.g. State society relations
  - Policy level: adoption of EU laws (acquis)
  - Cognitive level: European Identity
Europeanization mechanism/EU driven

• External incentive model (Schimmelfennig):
  – Political reward in return for compliance
  – Compliance if benefits of membership are higher than adoption costs – strategic compliance
  – Adaption costs: electorate, veto players, economical costs

• Social learning model:
  – Convinced of the legitimacy of the EU demand
  – Identification with the EU community
Europeanization mechanism/Domestic

• Lesson Drawing:
  – Policy shift explained by domestic needs, EU as a role model
  – Policy shift triggered by changed policy paradigms or identities

• Changed opportunity structure:
  – EU serves as an “external ally” (Tocci 2005: 81) for the domestic agenda of some actors
  – EU adds legitimacy to the position of these actors
Europeanization of Turkey

2. Europeanization processes in Turkey
Turkey’s Europeanization: EU as trigger and anchor for reform

- **Conditionality**: Opening of accession talks as external incentive for political reform
- **Political costs**: reform in sensitive policy area necessary (nationalist doctrine)
- **AKP**: EU commitment as a tool to raise its legitimacy and achieve more religious freedom
- **Civil Society**: EU as an external ally
- **Military**: Credible EU accession prospects raised the readiness to step out of politics
Recent development in Turkey: Declining EU enthusiasm in Turkey

• Negative discourse of Turkey skeptics did not achieve to change the rule of the game

• But had a negative impact on public opinion in Turkey
  – 80 % after the opening of accession talks
  – Below 50% in 2010
  – EU-skepticism has grown in the party system.
Low public support makes it more difficult to push reforms

• **Political costs**: opposition frames EU demands as a sellout of national interests

• **Economical costs**: The lack of a clear path to membership makes harmonization to EU standards more difficult
  – Adoption of environmental law: €140bn
  – Opening of public procurement market – worth €60bn
Turkey’s new strategic options as regional power

• Proactive and multilateral foreign policy in Turkey’s wider neighborhood
  – Stabilization efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan
  – Mediation between Washington and Teheran
  – Caucasus Security and Cooperation together with Russia

• Growing role as energy hub: signed EU backed Nabucco pipeline and Russian backed blue stream pipeline projects
Turkey’s role as regional actor facilitated by its economic strength

• 17th largest economy, member of G20, average growth rate of 6% between 2002 and 2006, per capita income tripped

• Increased trade with East in 2008:
  – Syria $ 1.1bn (+40% in comparison to 2007)
  – Iran $ 10bn (1999: $ 0.3 bn)

• Ratio of trade with EU decreased from 55% (2003) to 41% (2008)
The EU’s transformative power in Turkey is weaker than in the CEEC

• Membership incentive is less credible
• Turkey has alternative strategic options
Why does the reform process continue despite uncertainty of EU accession?

• Benefits of modernisation/democratization independent of EU membership – Copenhagen criteria labeled as Ankara criteria

• However, also drawbacks, e.g. freedom of press

• Alternative EU incentives: Monetary support (Pre-accession aid, twinning projects), visa facilitation/liberalization
Europeanization of Turkey

3. Case Study Border Management, Readmission Agreement and visa liberalization
Despite high costs and uncertain rewards, Turkey is ready for a readmission agreement.

- Agreement would oblige Turkey to take back illegal immigrants who have used Turkey as transit country.
- High costs: main route for illegal immigrants, no readmission agreements with origin countries.
- Low incentives: EU membership uncertain, visa liberalization for Turks rejected by Germany and France.
Turkey as main transit route for illegal migration into the EU
My argument: Interplay of external incentives and domestic factors

- Cost-benefit calculation of AKP gvt strongly influenced by the strategic action of the Commission which offered visa liberalisation talks in return for a readmission agreement despite the reluctance of some member states
- New salience of migration led to reform of border management – independent of EU
- Border management, readmission agreement and visa exemption are tied
The membership incentive

- Readmission agreement is a benchmark for the opening of chapter 24
- However unilateral decision of Republic of Cyprus to block opening of this chapter
- Freezing of negotiation chapters and ongoing opposition in Europe weakened credibility of membership incentive
- Turkey’s response: Continue harmonization to EU acquis in all chapters if it is beneficial for the modernization of the country — but problematic issues should be postponed
As negotiations with third countries progressed slowly visa facilitation and liberalization offered as incentive to Balkan countries and Russia/Ukraine

Visa facilitation offer of the Commission was not a strong enough incentive for Turkey:
- Reference to Ankara Agreement/Customs Union
- Visa code enables already visa facilitations
The visa incentive (2)

- European Commission finally accepted to apply the same linkage as in the case of the Balkan states: Start of a visa liberalization talk once the readmission agreement is signed
- 24 February 2011: Council of Interior Ministers gave green light for a visa dialogue – but visa exemption not mentioned as target
Domestic Factors

- Increased numbers of illegal immigrants in Turkey – Turkey needs to improve border management, EU funds may be available
- Govt plans a new civilian border agency (instead of Jandarma and Land Forces)
- Govt present border management reform as a precondition (together with the readmission agreement) for the visa liberalization - helps to weaken the opposition against the new border agency
Conclusion

• New readiness for a readmission agreement explained by interplay of domestic factors and external incentives
• Commission and Turkey as advocacy coalition against some member states
• Constructive negotiations of the readmission text can create new mutual trust
• The necessity to cooperate with Turkey in migration issues plus Court decisions in favor of the visa exemptions for Turks increase the pressure to abolish the visa obligation