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On the project

Due to the new treaty provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and the economic crises the enlarged EU of 27 member states is on the search for a new modus operandi while also continuing membership talks with candidate countries. The EU-27 Watch project is mapping out discourses on these and more issues in European policies all over Europe. Research institutes from all 27 member states and the four candidate countries give overviews on the discourses in their respective countries.

The reports focus on a **reporting period from December 2009 until May 2010**. This survey was conducted on the basis of a questionnaire that has been elaborated in March and April 2010. Most of the 31 reports were delivered in May 2010. This issue and all previous issues are available on the EU-27 Watch website: www.EU-27Watch.org.

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Turkey**Implications for Turkey: a full-fledged accession strategy needed**

Zerrin Torun*

In Turkey, the Lisbon Treaty was regarded as a necessary step for an EU that is less introspective and more open to challenges which may arise from enlargement.¹ It was argued that the treaty would bring the EU closer to a political unity, which would be in the interest of each and every candidate country, with the warning that Turkey now needs a full-fledged accession strategy, as the political identity of the Union is getting stronger.²

However, it is hard to say that the implications of the treaty for Turkey received significant attention in the press or in the public debate. Factors leading to this lack of attention were listed as the failure of the former Constitutional Treaty and the perception that the Lisbon Treaty is a watered-down version of it; changes in Turkish foreign policy, which shifted Turkey's attention elsewhere, mainly to the Middle East and Asia; the frustration and disappointment with the EU, as well as a general feeling of aloofness from the EU and Europe resulting from the problems in the Turkish accession process to the EU.³ Analyses of the results of the Lisbon Treaty and their implications for Turkey came from research institutes and think tanks, mostly focusing on future enlargement. In an exception by the Turkish parliament's external relations and protocol administration's briefing report, the treaty was seen as necessary for the Union to adjust its institutional structure for new enlargements, while attention was also drawn to the system of enhanced cooperation as a potential tool in the hands of those who argue in favour of a privileged partnership with Turkey instead of full Turkish membership to the EU.⁴ For instance, a report by the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) argued that the double majority voting system brought about by the treaty could alleviate some of the concerns regarding Turkey's "potential weight" in the Council. In addition, increasing involvement of national parliaments in the EU's decision-making received a positive note in the report, as this would work towards calming down a segment of Turkish society which associates EU membership with loss of sovereignty,⁵ but this was also seen as something that might obstruct Turkish accession to the EU in the aforementioned briefing report. Another commentary, however, drew attention to the potential impact of the double majority voting on Turkish accession to the EU, arguing that the system would prevent the votes against Turkish EU membership of any three of the four larger EU member states (France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Italy) from prevailing.⁶

As for the new faces of the Union, referring to the President of the European Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the decision in favour of Herman Van Rompuy was seen as a victory of those in the Union who argue for a privileged partnership with Turkey instead of its full membership to the EU. His past statements against Turkish EU membership, which also included the view that Turkish membership to the EU would undermine current universal values in Europe which are also fundamental Christian values, received major attention. His appointment led to comments that even regarded this as a confirmation of the idea that the EU is a civilisation project in which Turkey's belonging is questioned.⁷ In an interview, the deputy secretary-general of the Economic Development Foundation (IKV) has pointed out that Van Rompuy's personal ideas on Turkey may make a difference, especially at critical junctures when important decisions concerning Turkey are to be given, since even his neutrality or abstaining from influencing the European Council's decisions may be interpreted as a negative sign.⁸ The ideas of Van Rompuy were interpreted as "the textbook definition of anachronism", which will exacerbate the problems of Europe in the 21st Century.⁹ In addition, Van Rompuy's appointment as President of the European Council was seen as a choice for a low-profile, moderate voice that would prioritise the role of a moderator within the EU instead of being the leader the EU needs in order to have a greater say in global affairs.¹⁰

As for Catherine Ashton as the High Representative, her statement before the European Parliament before her appointment received attention, as she referred to Turkey as just one of the important countries with which the EU has to engage in an effective cooperation.¹¹ On the other hand, an earlier analysis of the implications of the treaty for the Common Security and Defence Policy of the EU drew attention to the possibility of conflict between the High Representative of the Union (due to the role

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within the European Commission) and the President of the European Council in terms of blurred lines of authority in representing the Union.¹²

The “Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service”¹³ and the European Commission proposal defining the rules and procedures for the European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI)¹⁴ received limited attention in the form of informative news. It can be safely concluded that the aforementioned factors which led to the lack of attention towards the implications of the Lisbon Treaty also resulted in the lack of attention towards the subsequent new working style and structure of the EU in Turkey.

¹ The Journal of Turkish Weekly: The Failure of the Lisbon Treaty? Consequences for Turkey’s Accession Process, 28 June 2008, available at: <http://www.turkishweekly.net/print.asp?type=3&id=2381> (last access: 26 April 2010).

² Bahadır Kaleağası (Coordinator of the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association (TUSIAD) quoted in Hürriyet Daily News, 19 November 2009.

³ IKV’s Nas: EU Future with Lisbon Treaty Should Concern Turkey, Interview with Çiğdem Nas by Yasemin Poyraz Doğan, Today’s Zaman, 21 December 2009, available at: <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/news-196138-8-ikvs-nas-eus-future-with-lisbon-treaty-should-concern-turkey.html> (last access: 17 May 2010).

⁴ Sumru Bilcen: AB’de Önemli Bir Adım: Lisbon Antlaşması, TBMM Dış İlişkiler ve Protokol Müdürlüğü, 24 April 2010.

⁵ Nilgün Arısan Eralp: Lisbon Treaty and Turkey at a First Glance, TEPAV Evaluation Note, December 2009.

⁶ Cuneyt Yuksel: Lisbon’dan Sonraki Birlik ve Türkiye, 16 October 2009, available at:

<http://www.abhaber.com/ozelhaber.php?id=4457> (last access: 26 April 2010).

⁷ Hilmi Yavuz: Avrupa Birliği Bir Medeniyet Projesidir, Zaman Online, 22 November 2009,

<http://www.zaman.com.tr/yazar.do?yazino=918811> (last access: 26 April 2010).

⁸ IKV’s Nas: EU Future with Lisbon Treaty Should Concern Turkey, Interview with Çiğdem Nas by Yasemin Poyraz Doğan, Today’s Zaman, 21 December 2009, available at: <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/news-196138-8-ikvs-nas-eus-future-with-lisbon-treaty-should-concern-turkey.html> (last access: 17 May 2010).

⁹ Mustafa Kutlay: A New EU in the Making: Reflections from Turkey, The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 23 November 2009, available at: <http://www.turkishweekly.net/columnist/3230/a-new-eu-in-the-making-reflections-from-turkey.html.%20last%20access%2012%20July2010> (last access: 12 July 2010).

¹⁰ Hilmi Yavuz: Avrupa Birliği Bir Medeniyet Projesidir, Zaman Online, 22 November 2009, available at:

<http://www.zaman.com.tr/yazar.do?yazino=918811> (last access: 26 April 2010).

¹¹ AP’den Catherine Ashton’a Onay, 12 January 2010, available at:

http://www.euroacademic.org.tr/index.php?act=show&code=guncel&resume=0&id=506&id_page=0 (last access: 17 May 2010).

¹² Ömer Kurtbağ: ATAUM AB Analiz, 26 November 2009, available at: <http://www.ataum.tk> (last access: 26 April 2010).

¹³ Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service, 25 March 2010, available at: http://eeas.europa.eu/docs/eeas_draft_decision_250310_en.pdf (last access: 30 March 2010).

¹⁴ European Commission: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the citizens’ initiative, COM (2010) 119, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/citizens_initiative/docs/com_2010_119_en.pdf (last access: 6 April 2010).

Turkey**Union for the Mediterranean must not be an alternative to Turkish membership**

Çiğdem Üstün*

Enlargement

Turkey started its accession negotiations in 2005 and since then Turkey has been more interested in its accession process than the enlargement debate regarding other countries, i.e., Iceland and Croatia. It has been perceived that Turkey's accession to the EU is not considered part of any previous enlargement rounds (i.e., 2004, 2007) or any future enlargements either. In this framework, Iceland's membership to the EU was not widely discussed in Turkey. Iceland's membership has been seen as a consequence of the economic crisis affecting the whole world and Europe as part of it. It has been argued that Iceland's integration to the EU would have a minimum effect on the EU's governance structures due to its small size. The main problems seen in the accession negotiations are related to agricultural and fisheries policies due to the common market and regulations on fishing, i.e., whales.¹

Turkey has been supportive of the EU's enlargement to the Balkans, and, therefore, Croatia's membership to the EU has been perceived as a positive step towards unifying Europe. However, Croatia's faster accession negotiations have been disappointing for Turkey. As Croatia and Turkey started the accession negotiations at the same time, there had been hesitation and negotiations came to a halt frequently in Turkey's case. It has been argued that the main reasons for slowing down Turkey's accession negotiations and speeding up Croatia's are: population, relatively easy integration of Croatia in the EU, cultural and religious values, and identity.²

European Neighbourhood Policy

Turkey has been attentive to European Union's policies towards the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions. When the Mediterranean Union debates started after Nicolas Sarkozy suggested a separate union for the Mediterranean countries, Turkey perceived this as an alternative to its EU membership and opposed this idea. The Turkish government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, civil society organisations and the public in general criticised the Mediterranean Union. Sarkozy's opposition to Turkish membership in the EU and Sarkozy's statements, such as "Turkey would instead form the backbone of the new Mediterranean Union", created discomfort and disappointment in Turkey. Turkish President Abdullah Gül stated, "Turkey is a country that has started [accession] negotiations with the European Union. The negotiations started on the basis of a [European Union] decision which was taken unanimously, including France."³ However, after France gave assurance that the Mediterranean Union is not an alternative for Turkey and would not hamper Turkey's accession negotiations, Turkey, as a Mediterranean country which does not want to be excluded from the regional cooperation mechanisms, decided to join the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). In the statement given by the Prime Ministry of Turkey it is clearly stated that the UfM is a continuation of the Barcelona Process and that "Turkey decided to participate in the Barcelona Process and the Union for the Mediterranean project, which has been established by the EU for rendering the Barcelona Process stronger and more effective."⁴ Although Turkey has accepted to participate in the UfM, the criticism over this mechanism continues. The assurances given by Sarkozy and the French government are not perceived as totally convincing;⁵ however, as a Mediterranean country, Turkey feels it necessary to participate in international mechanisms such as the UfM.

Regarding the Black Sea region, Turkey welcomed the EU's efforts to establish more cooperative relations with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) as part of the Black Sea Synergy which was initiated in 2008. It has been argued that stronger cooperation between the EU and the BSEC could bring stable relations between EU and non-EU Black sea countries, including Russia and the Caucasus. However, the EU's ensuing steps establishing the Eastern Partnership (EaP) have been criticised by Turkey because the partnership initially excluded Turkey and Russia. It has been the general perception that any policy which excludes these two countries is doomed to be unsuccessful. After negotiations between Turkey and the EU, the EU decided to include Turkey as well as Russia in some projects. However, this attempt by the EU was not enough to change the Turkish attitude

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towards the EaP. Turkey still supports the Black Sea Synergy and closer relations between the EU and BSEC in the region. It has been argued that it is important to keep the relations between the EU and Black Sea regions at an institutional level, which would not disturb any of the countries' interests in the region, including Russia. Turkey's policies towards the region aimed to keep the status quo which prevents the EU from creating a sphere of influence around its borders which may clash with the interests of Russia and create disturbances in the region as a whole.

¹ AB Haber EU-Turkey News Network: İzlanda AB Yolunda, available at: <http://www.abhaber.com/haber.php?id=26752> (last access: 31 May 2010).

² S. İdiz: Hırvatistan AB'de niçin Türkiye'nin önüne geçti?, Milliyet, available at: <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/06/02/yazar/idiz.html> (last access: 31 May 2010).

³ Renata Goldirova: Turkey Slams Sarko's "Mediterranean Union", businessweek.com, 18 May 2007, available at: http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/content/may2007/gb20070518_262522.htm?campaign_id=rss_daily (last access: 31 May 2010).

⁴ Turkey assured, ready to join Mediterranean Union, 12 July 2008, available at: <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=147343> (last access: 31 May 2010).

⁵ Mensur Akgün: Akdeniz Birliği'ne katılmasak ne olur?, Referans Daily, available at: http://www.referansgazetesi.com/haber.aspx?HBR_KOD=99276&YZR_KOD=11 (last access 31 May 2010).

Turkey
Turkey one step ahead due to 2001 crisis experience

 Başak Kale*

Being an immediate neighbour to Turkey, the economic crisis that Greece is experiencing raises significant concerns in Turkey both at the public level as well as at the governmental level. The official visit of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Greece on 14-15 May 2010 demonstrates the importance given to this issue by Turkey.¹ The general debate in Turkey relating to the Greek economic crisis centres on its potential impact on the economic situation within the EU while having prospective implications on the Turkish economy or its accession to the EU. Although the global financial crisis affected Turkey within a relatively limited scope due to Turkey's reformed financial and banking regulations after Turkey's 2001 financial crisis,² it is still feared that the Greek economic crisis may have a negative influence on Turkey's prospective membership. It is argued that, with significant financial and economic concerns at the top of the EU's agenda, both issues relating to enlargement and to Turkey's membership may lose priority on the EU's agenda. The finance package for Greece discussed outside the formal agenda of the European Council on 25/26 March 2010³ received moderate attention in Turkey. Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to Greece raised attention with respect to developing prospective approaches on enhancing economic relations between Greece and Turkey.⁴

The Greek financial and economic crisis clearly demonstrates the importance of economic stability to sustain growth in the EU member states and Turkey.⁵ The lessons drawn from the Greek case for the reform of the Stability and Growth Pact can be listed as follows: European economies are getting increasingly interconnected and crisis in one economy has inevitable consequences on all EU member states.⁶ This shows the importance of developing an overall stability and growth strategy with stronger financial control mechanisms and discipline at the EU level. The reform of the Stability and Growth Pact, with the ultimate target of financial discipline, a mechanism of long-term financial sustainability, and a focus on public finance quality and debt ratios rather than budgetary deficits, strengthens the pact's economic logic.⁷

The idea of "a strong coordination of economic policies in Europe" is perceived positively by the business community in Turkey. A solid cooperation of economic policies in Europe can be an indicator of a strengthened EU economy. It is perceived that, with a strong economy at home, the EU and the EU member states can focus their attention on deepening issues such as the EU constitution and EU enlargement, which have close correlation with Turkey's accession to the EU. The issue of competitiveness in the EU markets has prior importance for Turkey. While the EU is going through these difficult times, it is accepted that Turkey should utilise the opportunities that this period brings.⁸

The Europe 2020 Strategy and its key elements received minor interest from the Turkish public and modest coverage from the Turkish media.⁹ This modest interest directly corresponds with the loss of momentum on Turkey's accession process to the EU, and the Turkish public's indifference to issues relating to the EU's future. Issues and debates directly corresponding to the EU's future or the EU's prospective agenda are considered to be topics relating to the EU's internal policy. These subjects are perceived as not having a direct impact on the EU's relations with Turkey. Therefore, these questions constitute secondary importance on public and media agendas. In general, this is a matter of perception that is effective in shaping EU related public debate in Turkey. The target for high employment levels was the key element of the Europe 2020 Strategy prioritised by different policy sectors within Turkish public debate.¹⁰

¹ Outkou Kırılı Ntokme: Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to Greece under the shadow of the Greek Economic Crisis, available at: <http://www.ataum.tk/haberdetay.asp?ID=204> (last access: 20 May 2010); Everybody talks about the Financial Crisis in Greece, available at: <http://www.cnnturk.com/2009/ekonomi/dunya/12/15/yunanistanda.herkes.krizi.konusuyor/555548.0/index.html> (last access: 20 May 2010); Mehmet Ali Birand: Turkey should stay cold to the EU, available at: http://www.posta.com.tr/siyaset/YazarHaberDetay/ Turkiye_Avrupa_Birligi_nden_soqumamali_.htm?ArticleID=29608 (last access: 18 May, 2010).

² Kanalturk: Turkey is laughing at the EU, available at: <http://www.kanalturk.com.tr/haber-detay/26313-turkiye-ab-ye-kis-kis-guluyor-haberi.aspx> (last access: 9 May 2010).

³ European Council: European Council 25/26 March 2010. Conclusions, Doc. EUCO 7/10, available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/113591.pdf (last access: 19 May 2010).

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- ⁴ Beril Dedeoğlu: Breaking the Vicious Circle, available at: <http://www.stargazete.com/gazete/yazar/beril-dedeoglu/turkiye-yunanistan-kisir-donguyu-kirmak-263221.htm> (last access: 18 May 2010).
- ⁵ EU will reconsider national budgets, available at: <http://www.taraf.com.tr/haber/ab-ulusal-butceleri-gozden-gecirecek.htm> (last access: 18 May 2010).
- ⁶ Budgetary debt discussion within the EU, available at: <http://www.turkiyeavrupavakfi.org/index.php/genel-haberler/1779-butce-acigi.html> (last access: 10 May 2010).
- ⁷ Durukan Payzanoğlu: Stability and Growth Pact Rules: Will it let Turkey's Debt Continuity?, available at: <http://www3.tcmb.gov.tr/kutuphane/TURKCE/tezler/durukanpayzanoğlu.pdf> (last access: 20 May 2010).
- ⁸ Bahadır Kaleağası: Economy is not going well, available at: <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=147634> (18 May 2010).
- ⁹ Undersecretary of Foreign Trade, available at: <http://www.dtm.gov.tr/dtmadmin/upload/AB/sanayisektorDb/abzirve.pdf> (last access: 18 May 2010).
- ¹⁰ See: http://www.tisk.org.tr/isveren_sayfa.asp?yazi_id=2733&id (last access: 18 May 2010); <http://www.tubisad.org.tr/Tr/News/Sayfalar/AB2020Stratejisi.aspx> (last access: 18 May 2010); <http://www.ataum.tk/haberdetay.asp?ID=216> (last access: 18 May 2010).

Turkey**Turkey becomes an energy hub**

Çiğdem Üstün*

Climate

Although climate change does not hold an important place in the Turkish domestic debate, the environmentalist groups criticised the results of the Copenhagen meeting, which has been perceived as a disappointment regarding the EU's efforts in environmental issues. It has been argued that the failure of the Copenhagen Accord is mainly due to the developed western countries' aloof attitude towards climate change and the environmental problems that people are facing.¹ It has been argued by civil society organisations and the environmentalist groups that the deadlock has been created because of big market economy countries, such as the USA, China and India, refusing to sign a binding agreement which may affect their economic growth and interests in a global crisis situation. Also, it has been debated that the developing countries' requests regarding funding and technological assistance have not been welcomed by developed countries, including EU member states.²

Energy policy

Regarding energy policies, Turkey emphasised the insecurity that is created by over-dependency on a single source and, therefore, Turkey has been active in energy relations with its neighbours in recent years to diversify its energy resources as much as possible. This is not done only to secure its energy supplies, but it is also perceived that an increased Turkish role in the region regarding the energy pipelines and agreements would increase Turkey's role in European security. It is a fact that today the EU is producing less than its consumption and there is an urgent need to focus on an energy security and solidarity action plan for infrastructure needs, diversification of supplies, external energy relations, oil and gas stocks, crisis response mechanisms, best use of indigenous resources, and energy efficiency. In this framework, the geo-political situation of Turkey has been perceived not only as an important asset in securing energy supply for Europe, but also as a crucial tool for increasing Turkey's say in energy policies in the region even though it is not an energy producing country. There are different views on Turkey's policies in relation to the EU policies. One of the arguments is that Turkey's policy is not in line with the EU's expectations because Turkey realised that this can be a bargaining chip in its relations with the EU. On the other hand, it is argued that the pipeline projects such as Baku-Tiflis-Ceyhan (BTC), Nabucco, and Samsun-Ceyhan show that Turkey's supply sources are diversified geographically, ranging from west to east and north to south, and diversified in terms of the type of supply as well, i.e., liquefied natural gas (LNG), oil, gas and natural gas. Therefore, Turkey's main policy is the energy hub policy which is demonstrated through Turkey's efforts to link Turkish pipelines with European ones, i.e., Turkey-Greece-Italy. The main policy in this framework has been increasing the use of potential in Iran, Iraq, Turkmenistan and Shah Deniz, although political problems in the region are preventing faster cooperation.

Turkish priorities in energy policies have been identified as secure supply and sustainability, competitive market creation and being an energy corridor. It is difficult to see any divergences between the opposition and the government sides regarding these priorities. However, regarding nuclear energy, there are some opposing views from the environmentalist groups and civil society organisations due to the pollution that would be created by the nuclear energy terminals. However, the government has been active in intensifying its relations, especially with Russia, to increase the number of nuclear power plants in Turkey.

One of the main policies of Turkey, which had been widely discussed in May 2010, was the agreement between Iran, Turkey and Brazil to send 1,200 kilograms of low-enriched uranium to Turkey as part of an exchange for more refined nuclear material from other countries. According to the agreement Iran will ship its low enriched uranium to Turkey in exchange for 20-percent uranium under a nuclear fuel swap. This has been perceived as demonstration of Turkey's efforts to act as a bridge between east and west by using its geopolitical, identity related, cultural and religious assets.

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¹ Kopenhag'dan sonra umut 'yerel liderlerde', 21 December 2009, available at: <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetay&ArticleID=970395&Date=11.04.2010&CategoryID=85> (last access: 31 May 2010).

² Sertaç Aktan: Türkiye Kopenhag'da herhangi bir hedef açıklamayacak, available at: <http://www.iha.com.tr/haber/detay.aspx?nid=101163&cid=758> (last access: 31 May 2010).

Turkey**The democratic initiative, the constitutional package and change of leadership in the opposing CHP****Sait Akşit and Özgehan Şenyuva***

In 2010, three major issues and events have occurred affecting the competition and position among the political parties. First, a human rights and minority rights reform initiative proposed by the ruling Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP) in summer 2009, which was initially called the “Kurdish initiative” and was later expanded to include various other aspects and thus came to be known as the “democratic initiative”; second, the constitutional package proposed by the AKP with an aim to expand democratisation efforts; and, third, the resignation of the Republican People’s Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi – CHP) leader Deniz Baykal in early May 2010 under very controversial conditions.

The Turkish political scene has been dominated by four major political parties since the 2002 general elections. There has been a very tense and sometimes confrontational competition between the governing AKP and the opposing CHP and Nationalist Action Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi – MHP). Another party which is also represented in the parliament, the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi – BDP, formerly known as the Democratic Society Party (Demokratik Toplum Partisi – DTP) is the other major actor in the Turkish political scene.¹

The democratic initiative of the AKP is a very controversial topic, and has been dominating the political agenda since summer 2009 when it was first announced.² The main problem of this initiative was related with the lack of clarity in its contents. Despite creating a lot of controversy within Turkish politics and dominating the discourse in the first half of 2010, its full scope and contents still remain unclear. Despite some changes done to the constitution by parliament (with severe opposition and objection by CHP, MHP and BDP) it seems that the democratic initiative is still short of satisfying any party or group involved in the process. In the course of 2010, the government tried to raise support for their initiative and was engaged in PR activity. To serve this purpose, different events were organised. Among these events, the ones that raised most attention and controversy were the breakfast meetings with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. So far, there have been different breakfast meetings with socialites and even celebrities consisting of movie and theatre stars, authors and poets, and even sports figures, including footballers and technical directors of football clubs. While the government stated the purpose of these meetings was to share the contents of the initiative with society and to raise support for different segments of society, the main public interest remained poor or distorted, focusing on who attended these meetings and who protested or even what food was served. In short, these efforts seem to work against the government, taking the focus away from the content of the initiative and its related actions by putting a tabloid spin on it. On the other hand, the real content of the initiative still remains unknown to larger segments of society and it is impossible to speak of a public consensus or support for this initiative. One should also note that objection by the opposition remains strong for different reasons.

The proposal on the constitutional package was another issue that received strong objections from the opposition. The constitutional package included, among other aspects, changes and amendments on making the closure of political parties difficult, the organisation and composition of the constitutional court and the supreme board of judges and prosecutors (Hakimler ve Savcılar Yüksek Kurulu – HSYK), the trial of military personnel in civilian courts for crimes other than military crimes. The package was criticised by the opposing CHP and MHP for being prepared hastily and untimely, for not involving other parties and groups in the formulation of changes, for trying to place the judiciary under the political hegemony of the ruling party and threatening its independence, and for trying to prepare a constitutional and political structure that would suit the ruling AKP.³ The BDP also put forward criticism on changes concerning the closure of political parties and lack of anything in the package concerning education in Kurdish.⁴ A joint approach was that the package would remain an AKP project, not embracing and meeting the expectations of any other group. As the package could not receive the necessary number of votes in parliament, it will be taken to a referendum on 12 September 2010. However, the position of the opposing parties remains a ‘No’ in the referendum. The position of one of the most important civil society organisations in Turkey, the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s

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Association (TUSIAD) and a group of intellectuals who are not affiliated with any party were also critical, calling for a more comprehensive and widely accepted change to the constitution. However, the package receives support from the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (MÜSİAD) and intellectuals who are closer to the AKP.

The third major event in Turkish politics revealed itself in a very controversial manner. On 10 May 2010, CHP leader Deniz Baykal announced his resignation. Considering that Baykal had led the party since 1992, this resignation was a very important turning point. However, the reason behind his resignation, the circulation of a video tape which allegedly showed Baykal in a bedroom with a female politician from his party, created a wide debate, especially following Baykal's accusations that the government was behind the circulation of the tape. Despite being declared fake and fabricated by different authorities later on, the tape and the following resignation of Baykal was seized as an opportunity by certain circles inside the CHP to end the eighteen year rule of Baykal.⁵

The AKP victory in the 2009 local elections, like the 2007 general elections, stimulated detailed analysis on the opposition parties and particularly criticism on their inability to offer a major alternative to the AKP. The major share of the criticism was directed towards the CHP and primarily towards its leader, Deniz Baykal. The other major opposition party, the nationalist MHP, and its leadership were free of a harsh reaction from its grassroots, mainly due to its strong hierarchy and leadership structure. However, the CHP and its leader were under severe criticism for not being able to increase their share of the vote and, according to some, being content with being in opposition.

A popular figure within the party, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, who had drawn attention through his popular campaign for the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality in the 2007 local elections, was elected in a landslide election at the party congress on 22 May 2010. A retired high level bureaucrat from the South East region of Turkey with Kurdish-Alavite roots, Kılıçdaroğlu has raised very high expectations from the party's loyal grassroots. Since his election, different surveys have been published by different sources indicating that the CHP, led by Kılıçdaroğlu, has the potential for an increase of votes. However, these surveys were not disclosed fully, thus leaving some scientific doubt on their findings. Kılıçdaroğlu, since his election, focused on the economic policies of the government and the corruption at local and national levels. This already indicated a difference with Baykal's dominant discourse on the ideological differences with the governing AKP and his preference for polarised pluralism, mainly on the religious-secularist divide. There are expectations that Kılıçdaroğlu will take the party to a more social-democratic stance and ease up on the nationalist and statist position of Baykal.⁶ Despite including some new names in his team, Kılıçdaroğlu also received severe criticism on his coalition with Önder Sav, the long-serving secretary-general of the party, who is considered by many as the mastermind behind the curtains. There have been critical voices saying that Sav's remaining in power would mean the continuation of old policies.

How much Kılıçdaroğlu will succeed in meeting the expectations, especially in the upcoming elections, still remains to be seen. While it is true that the resignation of Baykal created some momentum and excitement among the disillusioned party supporters, how many new voters Kılıçdaroğlu will attract and how much he could be affected from a potential internal party conflict is difficult to assess at this stage. On the other hand, one should not underestimate the influence and reach of Baykal inside the party, who did not fully back Kılıçdaroğlu. There is no guarantee that, at the first hint of electoral failure by Kılıçdaroğlu, Baykal will not try to reclaim the seat that he has occupied for almost two decades.

¹ On 11 December 2009, in an unanimous decision, Turkey's constitutional court decided to disband the DTP due to its links with the outlawed PKK. The decision was made in accordance with Articles 68 and 69 of the constitution. Party leader Ahmet Türk and Member of Parliament (MP) Aysel Tuğluk were barred from politics for five years, losing their seats as MPs. The remaining MPs of the DTP formed a new group under the newly established Peace and Democracy Party.

² For a detailed analysis on the issue and political parties' positions, see Ozgehan Senyuva: Opposition for the sake of opposition? Polarized pluralism in Turkish politics, Middle East Review of International Affairs, Vol. 13, No. 4, December 2009.

³ Ntvmsnbc.com: Baykal: Anayasa değil, Erdoğan projesi (Baykal: Not a Constitutional, Erdoğan Project), 19 April 2010; Ntvmsnbc.com: Bahçeli: Anayasa değişikliğine esastan kapalıyız (Bahçeli: We are against the Basis of Constitutional change), 30 March 2010.

⁴ Ntvmsnbc.com: Demirtaş: Anayasa tamamen değişmeli (Demirtaş: The Constitution should change completely), 23 March 2010; Ntvmsnbc.com: BDP'nin oyu: Hayır, hayır (BDP vote: no, no), 12 May 2010.

⁵ BBC: Turkish opposition leader quits over 'sex tape', 10 May 2010.

⁶ Euractiv: New opposition leader brings excitement to Turkish politics, 26 May 2010.

Questionnaire for EU-27 Watch, No. 9

Reporting period December 2009 until May 2010 – Deadline for country reports 21 May

All questions refer to the position/assessment of your country's government, opposition, political parties, civil society organisations, pressure groups, press/media, and public opinion. Please name sources wherever possible!

1. Implementation of the Lisbon Treaty

On the 1 December 2009 the EU-reform ended with the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty. However, the new treaty provisions still have to be implemented. Some procedures and conditions have to be determined. In other cases, procedures, power relations, and decision-making mechanisms will change due to the new provisions.

- How is the work of the new President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, assessed in your country? Which changes to the role of the rotating council presidency are expected?
- How is the work of the new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, assessed in your country? Please take into particular consideration both her role within the European Commission and her relationship to the Council of the European Union.
- On 25 March 2010 a "Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service" was presented. How is this concept perceived in your country? Which alternatives are discussed?
- On 31 March 2010 the European Commission presented a proposal defining the rules and procedures for the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). What are the expectations for the ECI in your country? What are the various positions concerning the rules and procedures?

2. Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

The European Commission has given its opinion on Iceland's application for EU-membership and a decision from the Council is expected before the end of June. Croatia seems to have settled its border dispute with Slovenia. Against this background:

- Which countries does your country expect to become members of the European Union in the next enlargement round? What are the opinions in your country on the membership of these countries?
- How are the membership perspectives of those countries discussed, which are not expected to become a member in the next enlargement round?

The Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean were the last major projects dealing with the European neighbourhood:

- How are these projects assessed in your country?

3. European economic policy and the financial and economic crisis

The European Council agreed on 25/26 March on the key elements of the Europe 2020 strategy, the successor of the Lisbon strategy. While not being on the formal agenda the economic and financial situation in Greece was discussed. The European Council agreed on a finance package combining bilateral loans from the eurozone and financing through the International Monetary Fund.

- How is the finance package for Greece assessed in your country? Are there any opinions on the process, how the agreement on the package was reached?
- Which lessons should be drawn from the Greek case for a reform of the Stability and Growth Pact?
- How is the idea of "a strong coordination of economic policies in Europe" perceived in your country? What concepts of an European economic governance are discussed in your country and which role do they assign to the Euro group?
- How is the Europe 2020 strategy discussed in your country? What are the priorities for the Europe 2020 strategy from your country's perspective?

4. Climate and energy policy

The climate conference in Copenhagen took note of the Copenhagen Accord but did not reach a binding agreement. The next conference of the parties (COP 16 & CMP 6) will take place at the end of November 2010.

- How is the Copenhagen conference assessed in your country? Please take into consideration the negotiation strategy of European Union and the results of the conference.
- Does the European Union need to change its own energy and climate policy in order to give a new impulse to the international negotiations?
- Is a global agreement within the UNFCCC the best strategy to fight climate change? If not, which alternative strategy should the European Union follow?
- What is your country's position on financing mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries?

5. Current issues and discourses in your country

Which other topics and discourses are highly salient in your country but not covered by this questionnaire?