
Turkey's Accession to the European Union: The Geopolitics of Enlargement

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Abstract: An American geographer specializing in southeast Europe and the Middle East examines Turkey's prospects for membership in the European Union, a process that recently received a positive recommendation by the European Commission. Of particular importance in the debate over Turkish accession are claims that cultural differences divide Europe and Turkey, and overshadow both their shared history and practical economic and geopolitical considerations. The author argues that two issues of great interest to the European Union and the domestic politics of its member states—immigration and regional security—relate directly to Turkey's geopolitical situation, complicating its bid for full membership. *Journal of Economic Literature*, Classification Numbers: F20, J61, O10, O52. 3 figures, 3 tables, 53 references. Key words: Turkey, European Union, enlargement, cultural politics, geopolitics.

INTRODUCTION

In October 2004, the European Commission called on the European Union to begin negotiations with Turkey on accession, re-igniting a debate across Europe about enlargement, the meaning of membership, and Turkey's qualifications (e.g., Economist, 2004a). In making its recommendation, the Commission reported that Turkey had made significant progress in the last three years toward meeting the political and economic criteria established by the European Union for applicant states. The announcement was seen as something of a tipping point towards eventual membership, a momentous event in that country's often strained relations with the European Union. Still, Turkey faces several obstacles to membership. For example, the Commission indicated that accession would not come before 2014, some 26 years after Turkey first made application to join—a long wait considering that the enlargement of May 2004 included countries that were in the Warsaw Pact only 13 years before.² Furthermore, and most frustrating for Ankara, several European leaders announced plans to put the issue of Turkish accession to national referenda—a serious threat considering that any one member state's veto would bar membership.

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²The European Union (EU), known as the European Community prior to its new name in 1993, comprises France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, which joined in 1951; Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom, admitted in 1973; Greece (1981); Portugal and Spain (1986); and Austria, Finland, and Sweden, which rounded out the membership at a total of 15 countries in 1995. Thereafter, 10 new members were added on May 1, 2004: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia (for a brief comparison between the 10 new member states and those in place in 1995 [the EU-15], see Greene and Holmes, 2004).

While there is no typical or automatic accession to the European Union, Turkey's candidacy has faced closer scrutiny than that of other applicants. At stake are competing visions of what the European Union will be and how Turkey may or may not match those expectations. On the one hand, Turkish membership would significantly emphasize the meaning of the European Union as "an ever closer union" promoting regional political stability and economic development. It would also erode the rather artificial geographical divide between Europe and Turkey, a map that has often highlighted cultural differences, both real and imagined, while discounting a shared history. On the other hand, should Turkey fail to gain admission to the European Union, it may lend credence to a competing, exclusionary vision of Europe based on putative cultural homogeneity. It would, in part, give added weight to a vision common in European media and public opinion of a civilizational divide between Turkey and the rest of Europe—an irreconcilable difference captured in the well-rehearsed tagline, "a large poor Muslim nation." From this viewpoint, "Muslim" equates to fears of immigration, overpopulation, poverty and extremist politics, an inversion of the qualities that are supposed to define Europe. Neither of these visions, however, fully captures the actual issues facing Turkey's candidacy nor the larger implications for the European Union's unique experiment, though both visions impinge upon the decision currently facing EU member states.

This paper examines more closely these two competing visions of Turkey in Europe, which might be termed the ideal and the ideological, to assess more accurately the challenges facing Turkey in its accession bid. The next section provides an overview of the modernist orientation shared by Turkey and many European states, and recalls Turkey's place in post-war Europe, both as a security ally and would-be community member. The section that follows turns to the ideological debate that seeks to define Europe to the exclusion of Turkey, which was expressed in the 1990s in terms of a Huntingtonian "clash of civilizations." What emerges from this period marked by changing relations between Ankara and Brussels is less a civilizational divide than a cultural politics of accession. More importantly, Turkey's candidacy brings to the fore a set of economic and geopolitical problems associated with enlargement, challenging its future in the idealist vision of Europe. Another section considers these issues as they relate to the accession criteria and the practical geopolitical decisions facing the European Union, issues less publicly discussed though comprising the substantive measure of progress toward membership. Here I argue that the long-standing crisis in the Kurdish southeast and resulting migration flows to Europe drive much of the popular cultural politics of resentment to Turkey's candidacy. At the same time, the country's geopolitical location produces multiple security dilemmas for Europe that may yet prove valuable to the European Union, much as it has as a NATO ally. The concluding section examines the prospects for Turkish membership in light of its popular and practical challenges, and considers what Turkey's accession might mean for the European Union itself.

TURKEY IN EUROPE

Rather than start from the position that Turkey is outside Europe and trying to get in, it is useful to consider the idea of Europe as a starting point in understanding the relationship between the two. Any discussion of Europe must acknowledge from the outset that its definition is a historically contingent and socially constructed one; a geography that has changed in areal extent and political significance over the centuries (Lewis and Wigen, 1997; van der Wusten, 2000). More importantly, the idea of Europe as coterminous with Christendom or, later, with liberalism is poorly served by examples to the contrary, both within and beyond the continent. Instead, relational approaches to defining regional identities often better serve

to highlight how such identities are developed in contrast with others. In this way, the meaning of Europe is understood to have emerged in opposition to what it saw in its neighbors, especially the cultures of Eastern Europe and the Near East, regardless of their similarities (Said, 1979; Wolff, 1994). Europe's identity today is further shaped by its experience with the projects of modernity, especially with liberal market-democracies that inform the ideals of the European Union and which it, in turn, projects as European ideals in contrast to others.

Despite perceptions to the contrary, Turkey shares with Europe the long 20th-century experiment with modernization and the eventual embrace of a market-democratic form. Even before the formation of the Republic in 1923, the 19th-century Ottoman bureaucracy implemented reforms during the *Tanzimat* period³ to check the excesses of the Sultan's imperial state, borrowing from European political and economic philosophies. The late Ottoman state centralized power over and against local feudal notables, promoted a more secular public life, and adopted cultural attitudes shared by Western Europe. Together, it provided a reformist agenda, which extended through the Young Turk period and into the new republic (Faroqi et al., 1994, pp. 765-766). Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's vision of the republic was founded on principles of reform, secularism, and modernism, elements of what Atatürk saw in European political projects as guarantees for the republic's survival in overcoming both domestic and foreign challenges. The early Turkish republic was further defined as a nationalist and populist project, though one concerned by the crisis in liberal states during the first half of the century (Ahmad, 1993). Sharing as it did with Europe the larger project of modernization and eventually emerging as a liberal democracy, Turkey mirrors in many aspects the experiences of other European states in the 20th century.

More recently and better known has been Turkey's desire to be part of the post-war European community. Turkey maintained a Western orientation throughout the Cold War and joined the NATO alliance in 1952 as a "southern flank" to contain the Soviet Union, which, combined with good US-Iranian relations during the Shah's reign, served to limit Moscow's reach into the Middle East. Specifically, Turkey was geostrategically important for keeping the Soviet fleet out of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus Straits, thus sealing off its only western warm-water ports on the Black Sea. Turkey also provided a forward position toward the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Persian Gulf states. At the same time, Ankara was careful to avoid regional conflicts, which it saw as a threat to the Republic's stability. The only exceptions to Turkey's pro-Western and risk-averse foreign policy came with the Cyprus crises of 1963-1964 and 1973-1974, the first effectively vetoed by the United States and the second resulting in Turkish military occupation of the northern half of the island (Çelik, 1999). Both episodes were followed by Ankara's realignment with Western foreign policy goals. To that end, Turkey has yet to satisfactorily resolve its Cyprus dilemma, demonstrating its regard for its alliances over its national passions. While military cooperation with the West helped Turkey manage external relations and regional threats, Ankara sought further alliances to promote its domestic socio-economic development.

Ankara applied for membership in the European Economic Community in 1959 and became an associate member in 1963. Later, under Prime Minister Turgut Özal, Turkey applied for membership to the European Community in 1987. Decision on this application was delayed while Europe sought to deepen the community's common market, although some community members were clearly averse to accepting a very large and poor country

³The *Tanzimat* (reordering) period of Ottoman reforms dated from the 1840s to 1870s, during which time state administrators sought to centralize powers and modernize legal, military, and social institutions according to Enlightenment precepts.

with significant domestic problems in civilian democratic governance and human rights, particularly in dealing with its Kurdish minority. Nevertheless, there were and remain important reasons for accepting Turkey's application, if only to open further the large Turkish market to EU exports while encouraging its pro-Western stance, which serves an important function in European security. In 1996, an impatient Turkey was accepted into a Customs Union with Europe, which, some argue, was meant to further delay membership while supporting and maintaining good relations with Turkey's pro-Europe parties, because an outright rejection might give support to Islamist parties within Turkey (Kuniholm, 2001; Dunér and Deverell, 2001). The move toward a Customs Union was heavily favored and promoted by the United States, whose NATO-centered Near East policy requires the maintenance of a secular, Western-oriented Turkey in the post-Cold War world (Ginsberg, 2001, pp. 239-240). This pressure from the United States, however, made it possible for NATO ally Greece to use its EU veto power as leverage in gaining accession clearance for Greek Cyprus in exchange for a Customs Union with Turkey (Kuniholm, 2001, pp. 27-28).

Within a year of the Custom Union, however, relations between Ankara and Brussels were severely strained when the EU removed Turkey from the "short list" for enlargement, citing its continued problems of macroeconomic instability, weak democratic governance, and poor human rights record. The following two-year period was marked by mutual diplomatic rebuff and a more active foreign policy for Ankara, pursuing interests to its East and, more significantly, capturing Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan*, or PKK). Ironically, this period of high-risk foreign policy, including deep military incursions into Iraq, permitted Turkey to address internal and external security concerns. First, Turkey solidified a military and security alliance with Israel, giving considerable pause to the idea that Turkey has strong Islamist tendencies. This gave Turkey an advantage in dealing with regional risks, especially Syria, which harbored PKK fighters and maintained claims against Turkey's upstream water withdrawals on the Euphrates (Olson, 2001). Second, the capture of Öcalan and the consequent disorganization of the PKK rebellion initiated an enormous shift in Turkey's political and financial priorities, further permitting Ankara to redress its Kurdish problem in ways more palatable to the EU and to Turkish self-interest.

This brief period also provided unexpected changes promoting Turkey's position in Europe. First, relations with Greece improved after devastating earthquakes in 1999 initiated bilateral humanitarian aid efforts, leading in time to wider political and military rapprochement. Second, the political defeat of Helmut Kohl, a vocal opponent to Turkish membership in the EU, provided U.S. and EU supporters of Turkey an opportunity to press for its reinstatement in the enlargement program during the Helsinki Council meeting in 1999. The reinstatement of Turkey's application might have gained added momentum from the parallel enlargement of NATO into Eastern Europe (Fig. 1), which faced Ankara's likely veto in the absence of accession progress in the European Union. At the same meeting in Helsinki, however, Cyprus was further removed from Ankara's diplomatic ambit when the EU confirmed that the island's accession could move forward without a political settlement between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. In 2001, the European Council adopted Turkey's Accession Partnership, which organizes pre-accession aid and harmonization support, and set a deadline of December 2004 for EU officials to finally decide whether Turkey had met the criteria for accession negotiations to begin (i.e., to start the final steps to membership).

The criteria by which Turkey has been judged are the European Union's so-called "Copenhagen criteria," established in 1993 to guide the accession of formerly socialist states in Central and Eastern Europe and detail the requirements for would-be members (European

Commission, 2004b). These criteria, which also apply to Turkey, require that applicant states demonstrate stable market economies, the capacity to adopt common EU laws and policies, and, most importantly, democratic political institutions. In terms of economic criteria, the European Union expects that member states will participate in the European common market, which requires adoption of neo-liberal economic policies while demonstrating that their economies can withstand competitive pressure. The EU Commission recognizes that Turkey's recent economic reforms have shown it capable of lowering inflation and promoting enterprise growth while weathering two recent, regional economic shocks (European Commission, 2004a). Furthermore, the Customs Union has served the Turkish economy very well while demonstrating the country's ability to compete in the European market. The recent trade patterns presented in Table 1, based on data provided by Turkish authorities, indicates that over 50 percent of all Turkish exports go to the European Union and only 10–12 percent flow to Middle Eastern countries. Imports to Turkey display a similar pattern, with about 45 percent arriving from EU members and less than 10 percent from the Middle East (DEI, 2003; 2004).⁴ Turkey's trade relations with Europe are clearly the most important, contributing very heavily to both the country's GDP and its employment. As agricultural production has declined in economic significance over the least several decades, Turkey's predominantly consumer-oriented manufacturing sector now accounts for over 90 percent of export value, 25 percent of GDP, and 20 percent of employment (Economist, 2004b; DEI, 2003, 2004).

In contrast to the Copenhagen economic criteria, Turkey has moved more slowly toward adopting the *acquis communautaire*, the laws and policies common among member states, through a series of legal and institutional reforms. Actual adoption and implementation of national policies aligned with EU norms has been limited, with many policy areas requiring further adjustment. The European Union also requires that candidate states develop sufficient administrative and judicial capacity to enforce European regulatory and legal standards. To support the development of *acquis* capacity among applicant states, a program of "twinning" dispatches EU civil servants on long-term secondment or periodic expert missions to assist in transferring relevant expertise. More importantly, the *acquis* also includes, *inter alia*, cooperation on the free movement of persons, economic and monetary policies, common defense and security, and agriculture, each of which makes Turkey a difficult country for other EU member states to digest. Some of these issues are further addressed below in relation to Turkey's geopolitical situation.

The European Commission's largest concern over Turkish accession, however, remains whether Turkey would fulfill Copenhagen's political criteria. In particular, the political criteria require that would-be member states demonstrate "stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities." As

⁴In 2003, manufactured exports accounted for \$43.6 billion (93 percent of the total) with the largest trade in textiles, heavy machinery, and electrical equipment. The agricultural sector (5.2 percent of exports) produces both processed and unprocessed fruits, vegetables, and nuts. These exports largely flow to Western European countries, largest among them Germany (providing the market for 16 percent of Turkish exports), the United Kingdom (8 percent), and Italy (7 percent), whereas the United States receives 8 percent and the Russian Federation 3 percent of Turkish exports. Iraq, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and Iran each take in between one and two percent. Just over half of Turkey's exports are consumable items and 40 percent are intermediate goods. In contrast, the largest value imports are primarily semi-finished goods (e.g., textiles, engine parts) that are assembled and finished by low-wage Turkish labor before being re-exported (e.g., as apparel and machinery). Other imports include \$11.4 billion of distilled mineral fuels and oils, \$10 billion of heavy machinery, and \$4.7 billion of petroleum products. Its major import partners mostly reflect its export flows, with Germany (14 percent), Italy (8 percent), and the Russian Federation (8 percent) topping the list (DEI, 2003, pp. 1-12; 2004, pp. 1-12).

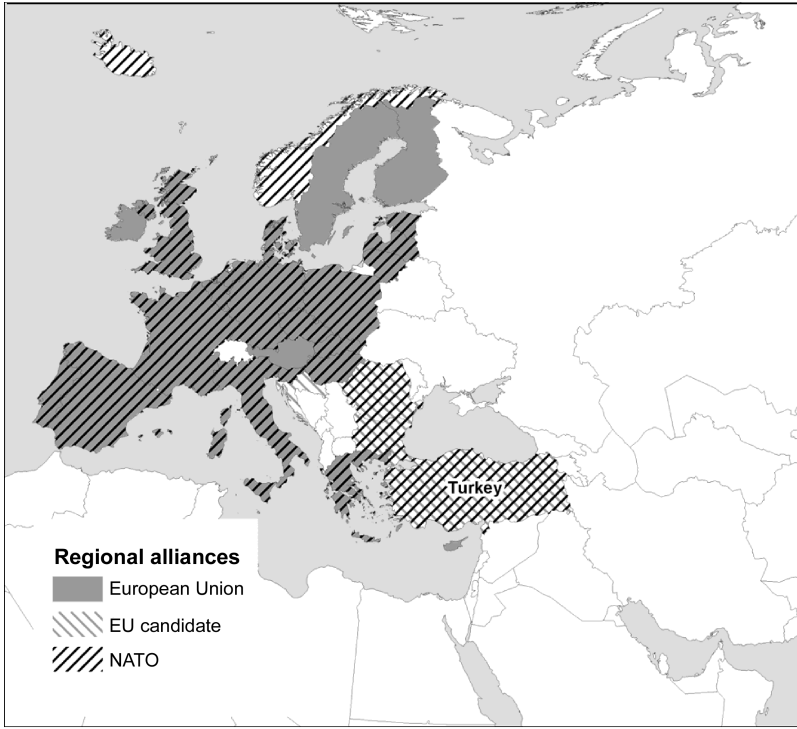


Fig. 1. Turkey and Europe's regional alliances.

they relate to Turkey, these criteria address a number of geopolitical problems that have traditionally been sensitive topics in Ankara. In a series of annual reports on Turkish accession published by the European Commission since 1998, the political criteria facing the country have included: improved human rights, including social, economic, and political rights, minority rights, prohibition of the death penalty, and prison reform; reforms toward an independent judiciary; elimination of corruption; social and economic development for the largely Kurdish southeast; greater civilian control over the military; and resolution of disputes over Cyprus and Turkey's borders with Greece (e.g., see European Commission, 2001, 2004a).

In the last several years, Turkey has made progress in addressing several of these issues, moving forward with necessary changes. For example, these changes include significant legislation on capital punishment, which Turkey outlawed even though it meant commuting the sentence for captured PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan to life in prison. Improved relations with Greece and limited progress with negotiations on Cyprus have contributed greatly to Turkey's standing in the European Union. On other issues, such as cultural and social rights, Turkey has made necessary legal adjustments or, in the case of torture, is signatory to international treaty. Remarkably, Turkey's progress in eliminating systematic torture was noted by Leyla Zana, a Kurdish human rights campaigner recently freed from a Turkish prison, when she was in Brussels to receive the EU's Sakharov Prize (Kirk, 2004).⁵

⁵Ms. Zana had been awarded the Prize in 1995, but was then serving a 15-year prison sentence for speaking Kurdish during the oath-taking ceremony that was to install her as the first woman elected to a seat in the Turkish Parliament.

Table 1. Turkey's Major Trading Partners by Country Group, 2002-2003

Country groups	2002 value, \$US	Pct.	2003 value, \$US	Pct.	Change (pct.)
Exports					
OECD countries	\$23,553,076,762	65.3	\$30,262,888,541	64.6	28.5
European Community (EC) ^a	18,458,533,096	51.2	24,349,699,919	51.9	31.9
EFTA countries	409,042,618	1.1	532,987,597	1.1	30.3
Other OECD countries	4,685,501,048	13.0	5,380,201,025	11.5	14.8
Free trade zones in Turkey	1,438,476,982	4.0	1,892,612,326	4.0	31.6
Non-OECD countries	11,067,535,285	30.7	14,722,097,490	31.4	33.0
European countries	3,447,414,654	9.6	4,680,500,827	10.0	35.8
African countries	1,696,656,456	4.7	2,111,166,216	4.5	24.4
American countries	241,165,433	0.7	255,427,711	0.5	5.9
Middle East countries	3,575,709,952	9.9	5,036,831,709	10.7	40.9
Other Asian countries	1,939,840,955	5.4	2,577,455,669	5.5	32.9
Other countries	166,747,835	0.5	60,715,358	0.1	-63.6
Total exports	\$36,059,089,029	100.0	\$46,877,598,357	100.0	30.0
Imports					
OECD countries	\$32,984,463,122	64.0	\$43,543,668,784	63.4	32.0
European Community (EC)	23,321,035,440	45.2	31,495,473,585	45.8	35.1
EFTA countries	2,511,999,053	4.9	3,355,285,919	4.9	33.6
Other OECD countries	7,151,428,629	13.9	8,692,909,280	12.6	21.6
Free trade zones in Turkey	574,503,795	1.1	586,427,935	0.9	2.1
Non-OECD countries	17,994,830,411	34.9	24,603,973,594	35.8	36.7
European countries	6,342,809,610	12.3	8,818,294,383	12.8	39.0
African countries	2,696,177,070	5.2	3,243,984,297	4.7	20.3
American countries	592,313,738	1.1	1,069,974,729	1.6	80.6
Middle East countries	3,681,504,597	7.1	4,333,663,373	6.3	17.7
Other Asian countries	4,366,521,120	8.5	6,764,508,703	9.8	54.9
Other countries	315,504,276	0.6	373,548,109	0.5	18.4
Total imports	\$51,553,797,328	100.0	\$68,734,070,313	100.0	33.3

aThe European Community (EC) is the common market provided for as part of the European Union.

Source: Compiled by author from DEI, 2003, pp. 1-12; DEI, 2004, pp. 1-12.

The October 2004 report of the European Commission, mentioned above, acknowledged that Turkey had made sufficient progress on political criteria and recommended that the European Council approve the start of accession negotiations when it meets in December 2004. The Commission's recommendation may not, however, be sufficient to sway all the member states to approve Turkish accession, a decision that must be taken unanimously. In addition to the Commission's recommendation, the Council is to receive the assent of the European Parliament, which has scheduled a vote for December. Regardless of the Commission recommendation and Parliamentary assent, the EU is not bound to accept a

country but can do so only if all member states agree. European Union diplomats frequently stress this point with aspirant states, especially Turkey, since the ultimate decision on membership is taken by government leaders who must bear in mind their own constituencies and separate national interests. As Turkey is successfully integrating into the European market and shows all signs of conforming to EU policies and standards, what will permit or prevent Turkish accession are the cultural politics of accession and practical geopolitics of enlargement.

TURKEY AND THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF ACCESSION

According to one vision of Europe, Turkey does not meet the standards of what it means to be European, although such standards are nowhere defined or even easily agreed upon. The May 2004 enlargement, for example, brought with it countries that challenge any neat definition of Europe, at least on geographical grounds, as in the case of Malta and Cyprus. Moreover, the incorporation of Eastern European states whose recent social, economic, and political history diverges markedly from Western Europe suggests that their inclusion is based, in part, on underlying cultural assumptions about the meaning of Europe and, by extension, the EU experiment. Since Turkey's formal application for full membership in 1987, the main question of accession has frequently returned to the question of whether Europe's project for an "ever closer union" could extend to Turkey, a large, poor and predominantly Muslim state. Notwithstanding the practical issues facing Turkish accession, the doubts expressed by some European leaders and segments of their national populations suggests that Turkish accession would necessitate changing the idea of Europe itself. As given voice by German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, the problem of Turkey in Europe was one of cultural and religious difference. For Schmidt, Turkey's Muslim population meant that the country was more a part of Asia and Africa than of Europe (Dunér and Deverell, 2001). Again in 1997, statements by Helmut Kohl and Belgian leaders claimed that Europe was a "civilizational project" in which Turkey had no part to play, to which Kohl added that Germany must remain "a bastion of Christian civilization" (Drozdiak, 1997). Former Belgian Prime Minister Wilfried Martens added that "The EU is in the process of building a civilisation in which Turkey has no place" (Economist, 1997). Former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing voiced similar reservations in 1999 on the grounds that Turkey was an Asian country and could not be a full member of the EU. He repeated his views in 2002, saying that Turkey's accession would mean "the end of the European Union."

While not necessarily representative of European opinion, such public discourse against Turkey has provided nationalists, fundamentalists, and xenophobes in Europe and Turkey alike a popular and evocative discursive toolkit with which to build domestic agendas based on suspicion and exclusion.⁶ Kuus (2004) has shown how EU policy toward Central and Eastern Europe was shaped by an Orientalist discourse, assuming a lack of "Europeanness" in its accession partners. A similar process may be seen operating in relation to Turkey, although one drawing on far deeper cultural antipathies to Muslims (Cardini, 2001; Said, 1979; Wheat-

⁶Political opposition to immigration is not restricted to Europe's "new right" parties, but they are its most outspoken proponents. Moreover, xenophobia is only one expression of the new right movements that tend to include Euroskeptics, nationalists, and, in some cases, neo-fascists. Notable parties espousing strong anti-immigration measures and their share of votes in recent parliamentary elections are: Belgium's Flemish Block (9.9 percent); Jörg Haider's Austria Freedom Party (27 percent); the Danish People's Party (12 percent); the Dutch Lijst Pim Fortuyn (5.7 percent); Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front (17 percent in first round presidential voting); Italy's Northern League and the post-fascist National Alliance (in Berlusconi's coalition government); and the British National Party.

croft, 1993). This is not to say that official Turkish discourse failed to respond in kind. For most of the 1990s, Turkish political leaders responded by accusing Europe of trying to form a "Christian club," from which Muslim countries would be excluded. Alternately, Turkish diplomats acknowledged the geographical separation of Turkey from Europe while arguing that the ideals of Europe could be translated across those boundaries. Bilgin (2004) has argued that in fighting the apparent civilizational divide between Europe and Turkey, Ankara unintentionally reinscribed those divisions it was trying to overcome. In contrast to the more precisely defined criteria set out in the Commission's accession reports, the popular geopolitical vision of Europe expressed by both EU and Turkish leadership became subsumed into Huntington's civilizational thesis, thus bolstering arguments against Turkish membership.

Synthesizing the debate over Turkish accession in a highly generalized account of contemporary geopolitics, Samuel Huntington described the world in terms of a clash of civilizations (1993). According to him, the deep-seated and incommensurable worldviews marked by meta-cultural differences will contribute to a post-Cold War realignment of global space. In what looks like a redux of Cold War geopolitics, however, Huntington maps the new cleavage zones, which are remarkably similar to those in previous geopolitical worldviews (Ó Tuathail, 1996, pp. 240-249). In between civilizational spaces Huntington identifies "torn countries" that "have a fair degree of cultural homogeneity but are divided over whether their society belongs to one civilization or another" (Huntington, 1993, p. 42). Turkey is one of Huntington's primary examples of a torn country, in which the Kemalist elites have sought to attain European standards of a modern secular state while a populist Islamic culture gives lie to Turkey as "basically a Middle Eastern Muslim society" (*ibid.*, p. 42). In his reading of Turkish history and its European aspirations, Huntington suggests that Turkey's problems are functions of an Islamic non-Europeanness, ignoring the possibility of a modernist Muslim compromise.

In his simplification of Turkish society, Huntington is at fault for both conceptual and practical reasons. At a conceptual level, civilization geopolitics contains an ecological fallacy that stems from a highly reductive theory of geopolitical power. Stated briefly, Huntington presumes that states are comprised of elite and mass non-elite segments with the former reflecting the latter. In dealing with civilizational issues, e.g., economic or geopolitical relations, elites cannot maintain positions that are out of alignment with the meta-cultural tenants of the masses. In effect, elites must align with civilizational precepts or they will be removed, presumably by election or popular rebellion. In this, Huntington assumes that such a thing as cultural homogeneity exists and further that it necessarily maps to spatial and geopolitical formations called civilizations. Absent, too, is any appreciable recognition of the diverse political ideologies and complex class relations present in the actual societies he addresses. Huntington sees societies, especially those outside the West, as unidimensional products of a cultural process that are ultimately determined by historically calcified ethno-religious identity, as in his treatment of Islam.

His summary of Turkey as "basically a Middle Eastern Muslim society" commits all these errors. Absent in his rendering is any comprehension of Turkey's multi-ethnic tensions, the complexity of its inter- and intra-confessional differences, as well as its institutions of secular modernism. Huntington also ignores the multi-layered political spectra in modern Turkish politics, along with its Europhile and Euro-skeptic variants and the tremendous disparity among both classes and regions within Turkey (Dunér and Devereil, 2001; Secor, 2001). The irony in Huntington's errors is that he exemplifies the civilizational divide between Turkey and Europe by quoting Özal, who accused European leaders of creating a Christian Club. However, Özal's statement was primarily a rhetorical move designed to

highlight Turkey's complaint that, in exchange for having served the security interests of Europe during the Cold War it, should not be left out of the new European project.

One must recognize that Huntington's civilizational argument about Turks is not only wrong in theory but also wrong in fact. A civilizational thesis presumes demographic purity, namely that there is no commingling of ethnic or religious identities within a civilizational area. Just as Huntington ignores the complexity of the actual conditions in the "torn countries," he misses the point in the supposedly homogenous West, as well. To the contrary, 42 percent of Turks identify as at least partly European, a number comparable to the EU average (56 percent) and, in fact, higher than in Britain (35 percent), Sweden (41 percent), Finland (40 percent), Hungary (37 percent), and Lithuania (41 percent) (Eurobarometer, 2004). Furthermore, there has been for decades a considerable presence of persons from Turkey residing in Europe. By 1976 Germany was already host to 600,000 Turkish immigrants, while Europe today is home to over two million Turkish citizens, living throughout the European Union.⁷ Between 1997 and 2001, approximately 800,000 persons from Turkey became citizens of EU-15 countries, Switzerland, and Norway (Table 2). Recent changes in Germany's citizenship laws ensure that Turks and Kurds, having contributed to the country's economic growth and living under its laws, will continue to help shape that society, a situation shared by other European countries. Yet Huntington gives no weight to these facts. Conceptually untenable, Huntington's ideological distortions are ultimately founded on conflating cultural and spatial purity, ideals pursued to disastrous ends during the 20th century.

At a practical level, a civilizational thesis explains neither the past and present relations between Turkey and Europe nor the future strategic interests of the states involved. Although the civilizational discourse of the 1990s charged popular opinion and played into the hands of both Euro-skeptics and new right political parties, European leaders seem ready to move beyond it. For example, in a 2003 meeting with German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan made explicit reference to the clash of civilizations thesis, which Turkish accession would disprove: "We do not see the EU as a Christian club or a cultural group. We believe that it is a unity of strategic and political values" (*Turkish Daily News*, 2003, p. 1). Nevertheless, there remains in Europe, as in Turkey, a cultural politics of accession, one partly informed by the careless discourse of the 1990s but one also resonating from the effects of immigration, which has its roots in Turkey's geopolitical location and to which we turn next.

TURKEY AND THE PRACTICAL POLITICS OF ENLARGEMENT

Following from Erdoğan's vision of Europe as one of shared "strategic and political values," Turkey's difficulties in gaining EU membership might be better understood as practical geopolitical problems associated with enlargement. Two such areas of concern are examined below, the first focusing on the Kurds, human rights and migration to Europe, and the second, Turkey's regional situation. The first relates importantly to the cultural politics of

⁷Persons born in Turkey make up 1 to 2.4 percent of the population in several parts of London and the regions of: Zuid-Holland, Netherlands; Île de France and Rhône Alpes, France; Wien, Austria; and Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Detmold, Braunschweig, Bremen, Hannover, Freiburg, Schwaben, and Mittelfranken in Germany. They also comprise 2.5 to 3.9 percent of the population in the German regions of Rheinhessen-Pfalz, Karlsruhe, and Tübingen, and 4 to 8.5 percent in the regions of Köln, Düsseldorf, Münster, Arnsberg, Darmstadt, Stuttgart, Oberbayern, and Berlin (OECD, 2004, p. 103).

Table 2. Turkish Nationals Living in Europe and Acquiring New Citizenship 1986–2001

Country	Turkish citizens living in Europe				Turks granted new citizenship, 1992-2001
	1986	1991	1996	2001	
European Union ^a					
Austria	— ^b	—	—	127,200	56,670
Belgium	76,100	88,400	78,500	45,900	75,791
Denmark	22,300	32,000	36,800	33,400	14,041
Finland	—	600	1,500	2,000	—
France ^c	122,300	197,700	—	208,000	39,918
Germany	1,434,300	1,779,600	2,049,100	1,912,200	406,272
Netherlands	160,600	214,800	127,000	100,300	167,251
Sweden	21,900	26,400	18,900	13,900	22,501
United Kingdom ^d	—	26,597	—	52,893	—
Total European Union	1,837,500	2,366,097	2,311,800	2,495,793	782,444
Norway	3,700	5,500	3,900	3,300	5,603
Switzerland	52,800	69,500	79,400	79,500	17,447

^aOnly EU member states reporting Turkish residents are listed.

^b—Not available.

^cData listed are from 1982, 1990 and 1999.

^dUK data drawn from 1991 and 2001 censuses using “place of birth.”

Source: Compiled by author from OECD, 2004, pp. 341-359 and <http://www.statistics.gov.uk>

accession in that Turkish migration to Europe, especially by Kurdish asylum seekers, brings criticism from both the European left, concerned over human rights abuses, and right, angered by immigration. The second touches more directly on Turkey's geopolitical location set against the backdrop of uncertainty over events in the Middle East, Western energy demands, and shifting transatlantic relations. In reviewing these practical issues, it becomes apparent that Turkey's geopolitical significance with respect to Europe is no longer dominated by its flanking position in the Cold War containment strategy. Instead, it occupies an uncertain position in relation to EU and U.S. interests that oscillates between three modes.

First, Turkey may be seen as a forward power position for Western security interests, extending NATO power into the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. In this mode, Turkey's eastern military bases and border reaches form a strategic frontier for its allies to project military presence well into the Russian sphere of influence and the strategic energy zone around the Persian Gulf states.

Second, Turkey provides a bridge into that same region, with an emphasis on energy transport and new geostrategic interests among its allies (Lesser, 1993; Kemp and Harkavy, 1997). In this mode, Turkey is seen as an energy and trade corridor with its regional neighbors. In a similar vein, Turkey provides a diplomatic bridge between European and U.S. interests, at one end, and the Muslims states of the Persian Gulf and the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, on the other. As explored below, Turkey serves as a model of a secular and democratic government in the Muslim world, serving to bridge multiple Western interests in reforming the Middle East.

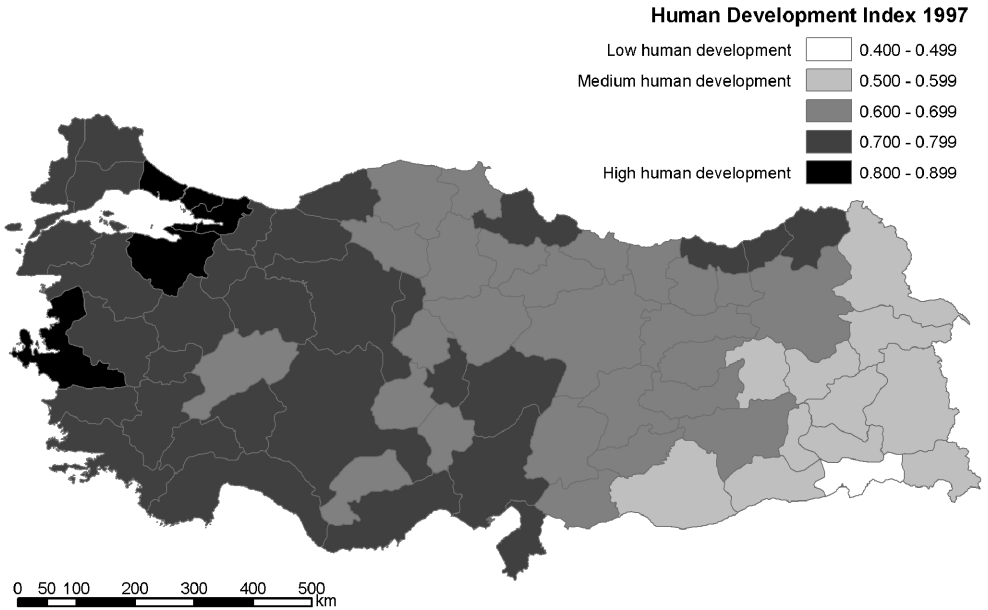


Fig. 2. Turkey's Human Development Index (HDI) by Province, 1997 (UNDP, 2001). The HDI combines measures of life expectancy, education, and standard of living into a composite number. The highest HDI in 2002 was Norway's (0.956), and the lowest Sierra Leone's (0.273), while Turkey ranked 88th in the world on this indicator (UNDP, 2004).

Third, Turkey also provides a buffer between Europe and the Middle East, serving as a geopolitical "grey area" that may be more or less incorporated into strategic plans depending on European and NATO interests vis-à-vis regional events. On several policy questions, Turkey may well find itself serving would-be EU allies as it did its NATO ones during the Cold War, as a frontline of defense for Europe. Should Turkey be asked to provide services for the EU during a lengthy wait to integrate, its mode as buffer state may alienate Turkish voters eager for the advantages of full membership.

The Kurds, Human Rights and Migration

The question of Turkish accession has long been discussed in terms of human rights, particularly relating to the Kurdish minority.⁸ Numbering approximately 13 million people, Kurds comprise about 20 percent of the Turkish population. Historically, Turkey's Kurds have been concentrated in the southeast, separated from other Kurdish populations in Iraq, Iran, and Syria by their four borders. Many Kurds left the region during the late 20th century to find work in western Turkey or abroad, as guest-workers, to escape from the continued poor socio-economic development of the southeast (Fig. 2, based on UNDP, 2001). So, too, did Kurds seek to leave the southeast during the violence unleashed by the PKK, which sought greater autonomy for the Kurds, and the subsequent oppressive state of emergency

⁸There are also questions over restrictions placed on some religious minority communities in Turkey, especially non-Muslims (Jews, Bahai, and Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Christians) and non-Sunni Muslims (Alevi), though these issues pale in comparison to the state's treatment of the Kurds.

imposed by the Turkish armed forces. During this period, the government adopted a village guard system, effectively conscripting local Kurds into military roles. Villagers were thus prone to attack by PKK forces if they cooperated with the government or by the Turkish military if they refused. This impossible situation began in the early 1980s; since then some 35,000 persons have been killed by the conflict. These pressures contributed to massive internal displacement, with more than half a million persons seeking asylum in Europe between 1980 and 1999 (Dahlman, 2002).

Labor and asylum in Europe are major foreign and domestic policy issues for EU member states, and attempts to harmonize policy involve deep-seated reservations among such states regarding issues of national identity and social burdens (Telöken, 1999; Guild, 1999). At the same time, much of Western Europe is open to internal migration among states party to the EU Schengen agreement, a free-movement zone designed to promote labor migration and trade.⁹ At the edges of this area, and involving a number of recently acceded or applicant states, “Fortress Europe” provides measures to reduce both labor and asylum migration into Europe, a politically expedient corollary to the freedom of movement within Europe (Geddes, 2000).¹⁰ Well beyond the limits of “Schengenland,” Turkish aspirations to join the EU are hampered by the significant numbers of labor and asylum-seeking migrants entering EU member states during recent decades. While Turkish labor migration has provided muscle for European economies during the decades of continental labor shortages, Turkey also has been among the top three sources of those seeking asylum in Europe since 1980 (UNHCR, 2000; see Table 3). In addition, Turkey serves as a major transit state for international migrants, a bridge for human trafficking between unstable countries of origin and European destinations (IOM, 1995). In these ways, Turkey’s accession figures prominently within the domestic politics of EU states, increasingly marked by public backlash against immigration, especially of Muslims and visible minorities, and casting doubt over further integration and enlargement.

The enormous presence of Kurdish and other Turkish refugees in Europe also put on display Turkey’s domestic policies. Reports of how Turkish forces torched Kurdish villages, systematically used torture in dealing with citizens unfortunate enough to get caught between the Army and the PKK, and imprisoned anyone speaking the Kurdish language in public contributed to massive human rights campaigns. While European public reaction to Ankara’s policies toward the Kurds fueled anxieties that Turkey did not share Europe’s professed cultural values, other observers suggested that European reactions were merely moralistic cover for a more deep-seated xenophobia of both Turkish labor migrants and the Kurdish asylum seekers now moving through European capitals. Nonetheless, criticism of Turkey’s human rights record is well placed on a government that until recently equated threats to the state in both the armed PKK movement and in any expression of Kurdish cultural identity, even when unrelated to the former. Employing the language of human rights thus allowed Turkey’s EU interlocutors diplomatic latitude in addressing Kurdish mistreatment, while treating as separate Ankara’s entrenched “war on terrorism” against both PKK and Islamist

⁹The Schengen Treaty that entered into effect in 1995 creates a free movement area among participating states by lowering their shared internal borders while at the same time intensifying controls at their external borders. Parties to the treaty include the EU-15 member states, except Denmark, the United Kingdom, and Ireland, and include Iceland and Norway.

¹⁰The Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), focusing on issues related to European citizenship, freedom of movement, and internal migration controls, made significant changes to the Maastricht Treaty on the European Union (1992). In particular, it placed greater emphasis on European citizenship and EU-level parliamentary democracy while initiating the construction of a common foreign and security policy.

Table 3. Turkish Nationals Seeking Asylum in European Countries, 1993–2002

Country	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Total 1993–2002
EU-15											
Austria	— ^a	—	500	500	300	200	300	600	1,900	3,500	7,800
Belgium	723	723	723	723	n.d.	n.d.	500	800	900	1,000	6,094
Denmark ^b	71	71	71	71	66	66	66	66	66	—	614
Finland ^c	42	23	44	30	47	98	115	76	94	197	766
France	1,300	1,300	1,700	1,200	1,400	1,600	2,200	3,600	5,300	6,500	26,100
Germany	19,100	19,100	25,500	23,800	16,800	11,800	9,100	9,000	10,900	9,600	154,700
Greece	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Ireland	4	4	4	4	14	14	14	14	14	n.d.	84
Italy ^d	50	16	71	17	85	1,790	517	4,062	1,690	519	8,817
Luxembourg	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Netherlands	600	600	700	700	1,100	1,200	1,500	2,300	1,400	600	10,700
Portugal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0
Spain	35	35	35	35	22	22	22	22	22	—	249
Sweden	300	300	300	200	200	300	200	200	500	700	3,200
United Kingdom	1,500	2,000	1,800	1,500	1,400	2,000	2,900	4,000	3,700	2,800	23,600
Total EU-15	23,726	24,173	31,449	28,781	21,433	19,089	17,433	24,739	26,485	25,416	242,723
Switzerland	0	1,100	1,300	1,300	1,400	1,600	1,500	1,400	2,000	1,900	13,500

^a—Data not available or not released by national agencies.

^bFigures from 1993–1996 for Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, and Spain, and figures from 1997–2001 for Denmark, Ireland, and Spain are estimates based on aggregate counts divided evenly across reporting years.

^cFinnish data from Finland Directorate of Immigration.

^dData derived from UNHCR Statistical Yearbooks.

Source: Compiled by author from OECD, 2004, pp. 330–334; <http://www.uvi.fi>; and UNHCR [<http://www.unhcr.ch>].

groups. This explains, in part, the apparent hypocrisy in German foreign policy during the early 1990s when it criticized Ankara for its abuse of the Kurdish minority while simultaneously providing it military aid and hardware to fight the PKK.

For its part, the European Commission report on Turkish accession has always scrutinized problems in the southeast, calling on Turkey to bring its policies on minority rights into alignment with those of EU member states. The definition of human rights for EU enlargement is defined largely by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), its protocols, as well as a number of other conventions, frameworks, and treaties addressing everything from gender equity to worker's rights. Turkey has recently adopted several of the major instruments protecting and improving human rights as well as a series of reforms of its constitution in line with the EU's expectations, notably abolishing the death penalty. In its 2004 report, the EU Commission (European Commission, 2004a) noted that while Turkey's progress on human rights has been "significant," implementation remains weak with respect to displaced persons, cultural rights, and women's rights. Most importantly, Turkey ended in 2002 the state of emergency in the southeast that had been in force for 15 years, opening the way to social, economic, and political normalization of the region. Still, Turkey's Kurdish provinces remain the least well developed and marked by poverty, high unemployment, illiteracy, and inadequate infrastructure. At the same time that it dismantles the military state in the region, Ankara has forged ahead with the Southeast Anatolia Project (*Güney Dogu Projesi*, or GAP), a massive hydroelectric-irrigation complex based on a series of large dams along the Euphrates and Tigris headwaters.¹¹ Critics have suggested that the dams are ecologically and financially unsound and human rights advocates have protested against the displacement of many communities whose valley homes have been flooded (Multu, 1996).

Ankara has shifted its approach to the Kurdish region from one of general neglect before the PKK rebellion, to oppressive military operations during the PKK war, to developmental modernism in the last several years. This recent change has been possible since the capture of PKK leader Öcalan in 1999 and the partial dissolution of the PKK movement. Together with the relative freedom of greater cultural rights and greater access to European diplomats, Turkey's Kurds are enjoying better general conditions than at any point since Turkey's founding. Whether improved conditions will contribute to fewer asylum seekers leaving Turkey for Europe remains to be seen. Despite the easing of tensions in the southeast, Ankara continues to be concerned over events in Iraq, particularly over the prospect of a civil war leading to the establishment of an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq. The Turkish leadership has always looked askance at Kurdish political activities across its borders, at times intervening through direct or surreptitious means. Military leaders have never shied from incursions into northern Iraq to combat the PKK and continue to suggest they will intervene against an Iraqi Kurdish breakaway region (Wilkinson, 2004). Their choice to do so might come, however, at the expense of EU membership. Which they define as their greater national interest remains a matter of speculation and is addressed further in the next section.

Although Turkey makes progress on human rights and conditions in the southeast continue to improve, EU governments and voters will still regard Turkey as contributing to unwanted immigration. At the same time, Turkey will be expected to provide a frontline against transit-migration while resolving its own root causes of asylum migration. Within such a framework, Turkey would become a part of an expanded European immigration

¹¹GAP is centered on "several enormous hydroelectric dams connected to a series of massive irrigation corridors," and is principally intended to spur the development of southeastern Turkey by providing inexpensive power and infrastructure for irrigation agriculture (see Dahlman, 2002, p. 282 for a brief summary).

system, being transformed in essence from an unruly bridge state into a forward state in Europe's battle against unwanted migrants. Further still, although the Copenhagen criteria for accession requires the free movement of persons within each country, the European Commission has suggested that free movement of Turkish citizens into Europe may be limited. Turkey would thus contribute to European migration control at the same time that its citizens would be denied the right of unrestricted movement afforded other EU citizens. Consequently, Turkey would be more than a forward state in controlling migration; it would serve as a buffer between Europe and the Middle East, absorbing the risk of unwanted migration.

Regional Geopolitics

Turkey is unique among states applying for EU membership through its long-standing bilateral relations with the United States, which has traditionally viewed Ankara as an important regional ally. Most importantly, as a NATO member, Turkey retains some leverage over EU plans to develop a separate European Security and Defense Force out of the dormant Western European Union of 1954. Turkey's position in these developments results largely from Europe's past and near-term dependence on NATO assets for any plan to develop a common defense pact. Like other NATO members, Turkey has veto power over the use of NATO assets, a point Ankara can make to support the argument that Europe is better served with Turkey in the European Union than outside it. Likewise, Turkey's strategic position in the Black Sea-Caucasus, Middle East, and Central Asian regions has ensured its central position in U.S. and Western European goals to contain the sphere of Russian influence. This is most visible in the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty signed in Istanbul in 1999, which yielded for Turkey, a "modernized arsenal 25 per cent bigger than when it had started the CFE process," largely the result of redistribution of NATO hardware (Hale, 2000, pp. 232-233). Turkey thus occupies a valuable strategic location considering NATO expansion and its operational capacity in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and most recently Afghanistan. In these ways, Turkey is well positioned to convert its former status as a flank state poised to contain the Soviet Union into a forward power position for NATO and allied interests.

Turkey's location has also brought with it considerable geopolitical risk, however, which Ankara began to address only when it threatened to overshadow its accession prospects. A significant concern for the European Union and for Turkey are the latter's relations with Greece and their 40-year stalemate over Cyprus. Although Brussels managed to parlay Greek and Turkish competition over Cyprus into UN negotiations that yielded limited progress, the accession of the southern half of the island gave Greek interests an advantage over Ankara. The accession of Cyprus means Turkey faces two local rivals (Greece and Cyprus) in the EU who hold veto power over Turkish accession, leaving Turkish Cypriots more isolated than ever before. This may be compounded by a split between Ankara and the Turkish Cypriot leadership, with the former demanding greater cooperation and approval of the UN-backed referendum and the latter taking an increasingly obdurate stance to negotiations. In overcoming the dispute, the European Union supported a United Nations' plan putting the question of reunification to direct referendum. Ironically, Turkish Cypriots accepted the UN plan but Greek Cypriots rejected reunification of the island, having already been assured of EU accession regardless of the outcome.

Regardless the EU's public frustration with Greek Cyprus, Turkey's softened position on Cyprus favors Ankara's efforts to satisfy Brussels. Indeed, the 2004 Commission accession report praises Turkey for its efforts to resolve the Cyprus question. Turkey also made progress in promoting bilateral cooperation with Greece following a 1996 crisis over

territorial claims in the Aegean Sea.¹² Cooperation between Athens and Ankara was enhanced in the wake of earthquakes in 1999, when the two countries began exchanging humanitarian and technical assistance. In time, this rapprochement contributed to many bilateral diplomatic exchanges and, notably, military cooperation over the Aegean Sea. Cooperation has also extended to a softening of the land border between the countries, including construction of the Egnatia highway that will connect eastern Greece to Istanbul and other Balkan capitals. Improved relations between Turkey and Greece, while not resolving the Cyprus question completely, have contributed immensely to Ankara's quest for removal of geopolitical obstacles to accession, refocusing EU attention on Turkey's eastern neighbors.

Turkey's strategic position in the Middle East cannot be underestimated, as it provides both a forward power position for Western interests in Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Lebanon and a large standing army of its own. This is perhaps best represented by the İncirlik Air Base near Adana, which is used by NATO allies, especially the United States.¹³ The GAP water project in Turkey's southeast, though putatively a regional development undertaking, also provides Turkey a substantial advantage in its regional relations, as the network of dams has the capacity of all but stopping water flow on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which feed Syria and Iraq. Although Ankara says it would never use such measures, if only because of the flooding it would cause in Turkey, the option of deploying water as a weapon remains. In the Caucasus, Turkey has taken advantage of improved commercial and diplomatic relations with Russia while extending regional alliances with Georgia and Azerbaijan (Sezer, 2000). Similarly, Ankara enjoys considerable influence in Central Asia, where Turkey recently experimented with an extended regional alliance based on a pan-Turkic identity. Although this period of eastward orientation was brief, it served to strengthen Turkish diplomatic links with its regional neighbors (Olson, 2004; Lesser, 1993).

In both the Caucasus and Central Asia, Turkey's strategic role for Europe and the United States is twofold (Winrow, 2000). First, Turkey has parlayed its unique geographical situation and geopolitical alliances into a secure east-west energy corridor. As Iraqi oil production struggles to return to pre-1991 commercial arrangements, the pipeline between Kirkuk in Iraq and Ceyhan on Turkey's Mediterranean coast highlights Turkey's role in petroleum transport. Likewise, the preferred route of the Caspian oil fields runs from Baku, through Tbilisi to the port at Ceyhan.¹⁴ When both pipelines are fully functional, Ceyhan would be a transit point for more than 2.5 million barrels per day. Other proposed pipelines may eventually increase daily oil flow through Ceyhan to more than 4 million bpd. Alternately, energy shipping through the Black Sea requires movement through Turkish waters in the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits. In any event, Western energy consumption patterns will continue to favor international cooperation with Ankara in securing its role as bridge to important energy-producing areas.

Second, U.S. and EU leaders have long held up Turkey as the model of a secular Muslim state in the region. Such encomia, however, rarely mention that it is Turkey's particular cultural and historical differences from the rest of the region that have limited the import of radical Islam. Specifically, the military has, since Atatürk, served to protect the Republic against threats from either end of the spectrum, including parties deemed too Islamist. Thus, the domestic strength of pro-Western, NATO-trained military officers has contributed most

¹²The Imia-Kardak crisis relates to a shipping accident in 1995 that highlighted the problematic maritime claims between the two countries.

¹³This base once housed U-2 spy planes and later launched warplanes during the 1991 Gulf War. Ankara refused a U.S. request to use İncirlik base for the 2003 war in Iraq.

¹⁴For additional information on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, see Saivetz (2003).

to what Turkey's Western allies value in their alliance: a strategic partner with predictable and unentangled foreign policy. On several occasions, the generals have run coups to remove from office those they considered a threat to the Kemalist state. For example, the military worked to ban Necmettin Erbakan's ruling Welfare Party in 1997, forcing it out of office for having strayed too far as an Islamist party. While this occurred near low ebb in EU-Turkish relations, Brussels has since made improved democratic civilian control a necessary condition to accession. The current ruling AK Party (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi*, or Justice and Development Party), elected in 2002, has supported EU membership for Turkey, which requires a stable and secular government, although the party's support comes from moderately conservative Muslims. Ironically, the success of the AKP comes at the peak of EU scrutiny into Turkish political life, providing an unusual opportunity for moderate pro-western Muslim politicians to gain a foothold in Turkey while the generals stand aside. This may well serve Western interests in securing Turkey's status as regional role model.

A greater challenge to Turkey's traditional alliances came with the events following September 11, 2001. Turkey offered the United States use of the air space and the Incirlik Air Base for its war in Afghanistan, while also sending troops to serve in a technical capacity. However, as the rift between Washington and its European allies grew larger in the run-up to the war in Iraq, Ankara was forced to confront new challenges. Not only was the Turkish decision on Iraq likely to alienate one or the other of its strategic alliances, domestic opinion on the war in Iraq had turned against cooperation with the U.S. invasion. Turkey's refusal to permit U.S. troops transit into northern Iraq remains a point of contention between the countries, although Ankara did eventually permit the use of Incirlik for subsequent allied transport. Although critics of Turkey's decision suggested it was the result of the AKP and pan-Muslim solidarity, it is far more likely that Ankara made a practical decision reverting to its long-standing policy of avoiding regional conflicts (Çelik, 1999). At the same time, Ankara cast its lot with the governments of Rumsfeld's "old Europe," who were likely to remain out of U.S. favor in the near term but who would surely view Turkish cooperation in the war as both a geopolitical risk and a sign of disloyalty. Indeed, the 2004 Commission was generally positive in reporting that "Turkey has broadly continued to position its foreign and security policy in line with that of the European Union" (European Commission, 2004a).

Despite recent posturing, Turkey will remain an important ally in U.S. and EU strategic planning. Less certain, however, is Ankara's long-standing alliance with the United States and NATO, the strength of which some European states would prefer to limit in any European defense initiative. It is difficult to predict at this early date how the US-Turkey-EU relationship can be mediated in a Europe that would increasingly favor a diminished U.S. role in Europe and among Europe's forward allies, especially Turkey. Given eastward expansion and desire for greater autonomy in all areas, Europe's regional security concerns will likely shift more frequently to issues in the Caucasus and Central Asia, creating a second zone of contact between the EU and Russia, and as well to the Middle East, where the U.S. will continue to pursue its interests. Turkey will not be alone, however, in serving two masters, the EU and US, in the regional geopolitics of the Middle East; Britain's general unfavorable view toward either widening or deepening the EU will likely slow any extension of common defense plans that would interfere with current Anglo-American policy.

CONCLUSION: THE LIMITS OF EUROPE

In his recent book, *The Limits of Europe*, EU Commissioner Frits Bolkestein warns against European overstretch. Turkish accession, he argues, would reduce Europe to a

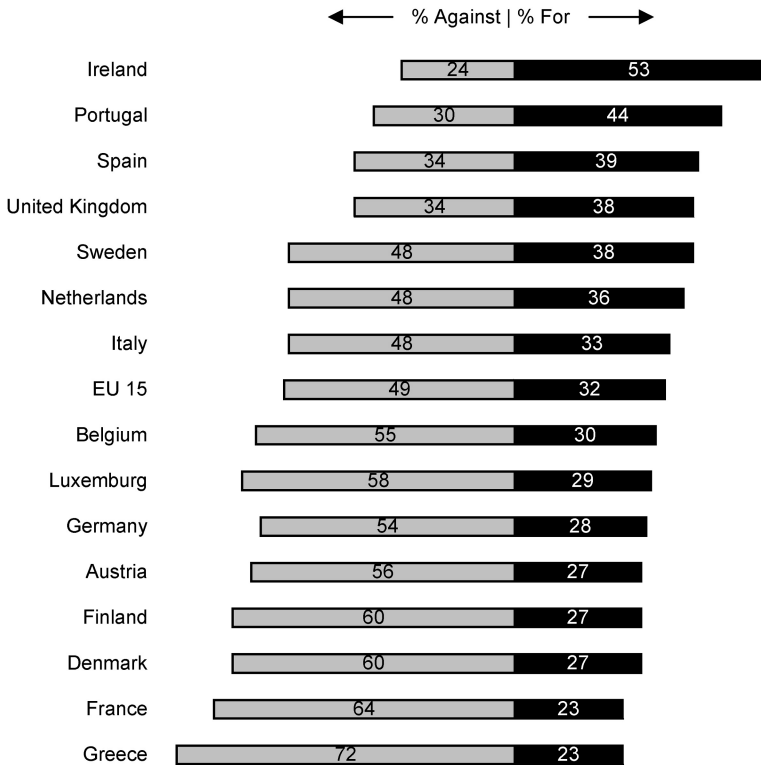


Fig. 3. Public support for Turkish accession within each EU member state (EU-15) (Eurobarometer, 2002).

glorified customs union, and create risks for the European project (Bolkestein, 2004). What Bolkestein meant, as he made clear in September 2004, was that Turkey's large population might well create a more Muslim Europe, either by intra-European migration or by EU voting mechanisms weighted by population size (Bowley, 2004). His vision for Europe is of two geopolitical buffer zones—one comprising Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine, separating Europe from Russia, and the other Turkey, shielding the EU from the Middle East. Without a "no" vote on Turkey and future enlargement, Bolkestein sees a EU of 40 members, the result of a Europe that lacks "confidence in ourselves" and "Foreign Ministers [who] just think of how to be nice" (Carter, 2004a). The advantages for an enlarged Europe, he argues, lie in exporting stability but at the risk of importing instability (Parker and Dempsey, 2004).

At the same time, the outgoing Dutch commissioner did not suggest that the EU reject Turkey, but that instead popular referenda be held to allow Europeans to decide the issue. His approach to the matter is shared among other European leaders, including members of the French delegation. French President Jacques Chirac has been making arguments in favor of Turkish accession while Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin stated that "neither Europe nor Turkey are ready for Turkey's joining," but both have called for a referendum (Carter, 2004b). Perhaps they know that opinion polls in France, detailed in Eurobarometer 2002, indicate that roughly two-thirds of the French are opposed to Turkish membership (Fig. 3). Some political parties in Germany likewise have argued for a "special relationship" with Turkey other than

membership, whereas several countries are considering whether to hold a referendum. The sudden affinity for direct referenda on an EU decision regarding Turkish accession is a sea change in the Union's process of enlargement and integration—a process often accused of moving forward with a democratic deficit. In light of the Commission's recommendation favoring Turkish accession, the move to referenda suggests that some EU leaders may not regard Turkey's geopolitical position to be worth the potential domestic political fallout.

To ameliorate just such risks associated with Turkish accession, the Commission's October 2004 report provided a number of mechanisms whereby the EU may further refine its overarching geopolitical interests in Turkey. Most importantly, by setting a distant date for accession the Commission provides nearly a decade for Turkey's geopolitical position to further develop, while also providing the EU an "escape clause" should Turkey's domestic or regional situation become unstable during the run-up to full membership. This lengthy accession period also provides time for changes in the EU to determine the shape and depth of the Union in light of eventual Turkish membership. For example, concerns over Turkish accession might accelerate the emergence of a "two-speed" Europe divided between more closely integrated countries and those opting to preserve national powers in reaction to public skepticism over enlargement. Although public opinion on a two-speed Europe remains unclear, enlargement to include Turkey will give pause in Europe's capitals currently considering the EU Constitution, which already faces stiff opposition and referenda in some member states.¹⁵ These decisions are also unfolding in a larger context of uncertainty caused by changing U.S. foreign policy and possible realignments, casting doubts on Europe's strategic alliances. With Turkey come certain geopolitical risks but perhaps also important strategic alliances in a region otherwise dominated by U.S. policies that may yet change the transatlantic alliance.

Geopolitical considerations aside, the candidacy process since 1999 has brought much-needed reforms in Turkey, encouraging it to strengthen multilateral ties and to resolve problems with Greece, while at the same time improving political and social conditions for its minorities. The Turkish public strongly supports membership, as does the current leadership and most of the country's political elites. According to a March 2004 poll, Turks regard EU membership much more favorably than the 10 new member states and almost all the EU-15 ones. Almost 3 in 4 Turks (71 percent) think that membership will be positive for their country, while only 9 percent think the opposite (Eurobarometer, 2004, pp. 4-8). Despite Turkey's internal reforms and regional geopolitical stance, much more than enlargement hangs in the balance for Europe. Indeed, the decision on Turkey, whether rendered by the European Council alone or additionally subjected to national referenda, will serve to define the idea of Europe and the project of the European Union. If the EU agrees to extend eventual membership to Turkey, it will affirm Europe as a set of political and economic ideals. If the EU rejects Turkey, however, it does not seem that this could be based on the political or economic criteria established at Copenhagen. The EU may very well turn down Turkey for practical geopolitical considerations but, given NATO expansion, rejection would seem incongruous with the existing alliance. Instead, a "no" vote on Turkish membership may be delivered through one or more national referenda, obscuring any clear rationale for rejection but perhaps marking the triumph of the right's quest to define Europe as a cultural project. Regardless of why the public might veto Turkey, such an outcome would add to the uncertainty of accession prospects for other would-be candidates while lessening EU influence in

¹⁵When asked in a recent EU survey, 31 percent of Europeans supported a two-speed Europe, 41 percent opposed it, and 28 percent were not sure (Eurobarometer, 2004, p. 78).

the Balkans and Eastern Europe. More counterproductive still, the muddled sound of the *vox populi* may very well be mistaken for a civilizational argument.

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