

The EU Policy of the Republican People's Party: An Inquiry on the Opposition Party and Euro-Skepticism In Turkey

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ABSTRACT *This study will put the EU policy of the Republican People's Party (CHP) under scrutiny by focusing on two main determinants, namely the attitude of the EU towards Turkey and the EU policy of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). Through analysis of the reactions of party officials to the EU harmonization process, the main EU documents such as the progress report of the European Commission in 2004, and the results of a survey of CHP deputies regarding their views on the EU, whether the CHP adopts a Euro-skeptic policy understanding pertinent to its EU policy will be determined.*

Introduction

Turkey's aspirations to be part of the European integration process have been alive since the early 1960s. As a policy, this objective has always populated the main foreign-policy agenda of Turkish politics. Presently, the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) government declared membership of the European Union (EU) as the primary goal of its foreign policy and currently pursues policies to this end.

The Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP), the main opposition party in Turkish parliament, has also expressed its willingness for Turkey to join the EU. CHP officials base their membership policy on the Association Agreement, which started Turkey's European process in 1963. It was İsmet İnönü, the CHP leader and the prime minister at the time, who signed the agreement. İnönü declared that they had signed a treaty that would tie Turkey with Europe forever and that this would be the most valuable legacy to new generations.¹ The CHP of today claims that they have always been in favor of Turkish membership, ever since signing the Association Agreement.² The CHP asserts that it is the legitimate right of Turkey to become an

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EU member,³ and this issue is the primary concern for Turkey.⁴ Yet in the party program, Turkey's full membership is supported only as long as national interests are protected.⁵ Concomitantly, CHP officials have raised criticism against both the AKP and the EU. Accordingly, the CHP claims that the mentalities of both the AKP government and the EU will hamper Turkey's chances for full membership. In this respect, the question arises: does the CHP adopt Euro-skepticism? Hence, this study will analyze the EU policy of the main opposition party in Turkey and discuss whether the CHP pursues a Euro-skeptic policy while at the same time declaring itself in favor of Turkish membership of the EU. Since academic research on Euro-skepticism in the present candidate countries is limited,⁶ this article aims to contribute to the academic literature by highlighting the Euro-skepticism of the opposition party in Turkey. Accordingly, after a concise theoretical analysis of Euro-skepticism, the CHP's EU policy will be scrutinized with reference to the core documents of the EU and the survey on the views of CHP deputies concerning Turkey's EU membership.

Definition and Classification of Euro-skepticism

Paul Taggart's definition⁷ of Euro-skepticism "expresses the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration." In this regard, Paul Taggart and Aleks Szczerbiak divide Euro-skepticism into two categories, namely, hard and soft Euro-skepticisms. Accordingly, hard Euro-skepticism means the "outright" and "unqualified" rejection of European integration both in economic and political terms. Hence, hard Euro-skepticism is against the very idea of European integration.⁸ On the other hand, soft Euro-skepticism implies "contingent and qualified opposition to European integration." This means that those adopting soft Euro-skepticism oppose a certain policy within the integration process, for instance, opposition to the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).⁹ Likewise, soft Euro-skeptic policies could also be pursued by exerting opposition with the motivation of preserving the national interest while generally in favor of European integration.¹⁰ For example, since the candidate countries experience very difficult negotiations during the accession process, opposition within these countries might arise with the aim of preserving national interests.¹¹

Finding hard and soft Euro-skepticisms to be too broad as terms, Petr Kopecky and Cas Mudde suggest a different classification. In this respect, they argue that there are two dimensions determining the extent of support for and opposition against European integration. The first dimension foresees the separation between Europhiles and Europhobes. In this regard, while Europhiles represent support for European integration, Europhobes indicate opposition to the idea of integration.¹² The second dimension is the separation between Euro-optimists and Euro-pessimists. Accordingly, Euro-optimists are confident and optimistic about the future of European integration while Euro-pessimists "are pessimistic about the [current and/or future] direction of its development."¹³ Regarding all these concepts, Kopecky and Mudde define Euro-skepticism as the combination of Europhiles and Euro-pessimists. Accordingly, "Euro-skeptics are not against what they see as realistic advantageous cooperation

among various groups of European states for greater peace and prosperity.”¹⁴ However, they are pessimistic about the current and/or future direction towards which European integration is heading. Furthermore, Kopecky and Mudde differentiate Euro-skepticism from the “hard” Euro-skepticism concept of Taggart and Szczerbiak and attribute a different name to it, calling it Euro-rejects, the combination of Europhobes and Euro-pessimists. The reason behind this assertion is that, according to Kopecky and Mudde, all Euro-skeptics are in fact Europhiles favoring the idea of the European integration.¹⁵ Hence, outright rejection of European political and economic integration will imply a different concept, namely Euro-rejects.

Concerning political parties, Euro-skepticism is mostly seen as an opposition party phenomenon in order to gain ground against governments,¹⁶ though not only peripheral parties but also mainstream parties might pursue Euro-skeptic policies, as the British Conservative Party does.¹⁷ On the other hand, according to Taggart and Szczerbiak, the position of parties along the left-right spectrum is not related to their adoption of Euro-skepticism.¹⁸ Accordingly, a leftist or communist party might adopt Euro-skepticism just as a far right party does. For instance, in the Czech Republic the Republican Party of Czechoslovakia is a far right party, while the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia is a communist party and the Civic Democratic Party is a liberal conservative party; yet all of them are deemed Euro-skeptic.¹⁹ Moreover, in Latvia, the Latvian Social Democratic Alliance is a social democratic party, and it pursues Euro-skeptic policies too.²⁰

The Harmonization Process and the Reactions of the CHP

Right after the Copenhagen European Council Summit in December 2002 Turkey was given a roadmap in order to comply with the *acquis communautaire*. In this regard, the task was to adjust Turkey to the political and legal standards of the EU. Thus, over the course of two years the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, TBMM) discussed and adopted harmonization packages consisting of legislative and constitutional reforms. Numerous laws were enacted and amended with the joint initiative of all the parties in parliament.

The harmonization of the penal code and the civil code to EU standards were crucial for the Turkish legal system. Moreover, the political role of the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) was one of the main concerns raised by the EU, and Turkey took steps to decrease the role of the military in administrative affairs. For example, the number of civilian members of the National Security Council was increased. A civilian bureaucrat was for the first time appointed as the Council's secretary general. Moreover, military representatives in civilian bodies such as the High Education Board (YÖK) and the High Audio-Visual Board (RTÜK) were removed.

Although the harmonization process was supported by the CHP, party officials criticized the government on certain issues. The CHP accused the governing party of attempting to use the excuse of EU harmonization to redefine the secularism principle and bolster the domination of a religious way of life over Turkish society. CHP leader Deniz Baykal claimed that some proposals for the amendment of the

laws were being introduced by the AKP as if they were the obligations dictated by the EU. However, these proposals had nothing to do with the actual packages.²¹ Baykal gave the example of a proposal foreseeing the opening of small mosques in apartments. He stated that only after the CHP's strong reaction did the AKP pull the proposal out of the package. Another example is the discussion of the admittance of female students who wear the headscarf onto university campuses. Favoring an amendment in the Constitution for lifting the headscarf ban, Ali Babacan, the minister of foreign affairs, asserted that Turkey would dismiss the ban in order to comply with EU norms.²² However, EU officials replied that they had not recommended that the Turkish government lift the headscarf ban since the applications of the headscarf issue vary from one member state to another.²³

The discussion of the AKP's policies pertaining to religion intensified with the adultery issue in the new Turkish penal code. According to Islam, adultery is a major offense, and in accordance with Shari'a law, the punishment is the death penalty. In the Turkish penal code, adultery used to be a criminal act until the Constitutional Court repealed it in 1996. While preparing the new penal code, the AKP introduced a proposal for recriminalizing adultery. The intriguing thing was that the CHP did not oppose this proposal at first. The AKP committee visited Baykal and his aides at CHP headquarters, and they negotiated the new penal code along with the adultery issue. The AKP officials stated that they had hundreds of letters from the public urging for adultery to be recriminalized.²⁴ Baykal, the CHP leader, did not reject the proposal for an amendment on adultery but declared that the idea and the responsibility belonged to the AKP.²⁵

On the other hand, the reactions of the European officials played a determining role in the withdrawal of the proposal. Günther Verheugen, the commissioner in charge of European enlargement, stated that he found the adultery issue as a "very worrying development."²⁶ Jack Straw, the British minister of foreign affairs of the time, who was in favor of Turkish membership, argued that adoption of the proposal would create difficulties for Turkey's membership.²⁷ Upon these reactions, the AKP withdrew the proposal.

The second aspect of the CHP's reaction to the AKP was the claim raised by CHP officials that the AKP was inclined to accept all the provisions of the EU without scrutinizing them in detail. Prime Minister Erdoğan's comment concerning the EU Commission's progress report on October 6, 2004, as "balanced and positive" was an important example according to the CHP. The report was 187 pages long, and Erdoğan made the speech only couple of hours after its release, so practically it was almost impossible to have evaluated the report comprehensively. According to Baykal, Erdoğan's statement implied consent for the report without a thorough analysis, and hence Turkey would lose its bargaining power when it would come to change some parts of the report in Turkey's favor afterwards.²⁸

To conclude, during the harmonization process the CHP has generally criticized the EU policy of the AKP government in terms of two aspects. First, according to the CHP, the AKP government tends to use the excuse of EU harmonization to liberalize the secularism principle and foster the domination of a religious way of

life over Turkish society. Second, the CHP claims that the AKP is too enthusiastic to attain membership without paying sufficient attention to the EU documents, thus jeopardizing Turkey's national interests. In this regard, the CHP's expostulations against the AKP could be understood in two terms. First, these critiques might indicate the CHP's willingness for Turkish membership to the EU. It could be argued that the CHP reflects concerns that the EU policy of the AKP might be harmful to Turkey's accession. Second, it could be also claimed that the CHP, as an opposition party, exploits the EU membership issue in order to gain ground against the government, stressing concerns over national interests.

In the following sections, the study will discuss core documents, such as the progress report and the negotiating framework document, and dwell on the objections raised by the CHP over them.

The EU Commission's Progress Report

The EU Commission's Progress Report of 2004²⁹ was composed of three main documents. The first part was the progress report itself (186 pages). The second was the paper on "Issues Arising from Turkey's Membership Perspective" (52 pages). The final document was the "Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession" (18 pages). The report welcomed the reforms that had been made by Turkey, mostly with the cooperation of both the AKP and the CHP. The Commission congratulated Turkey for adopting 261 new laws from October 2003 to July 2004. It was stated that with the adoption of the reform packages, a remarkable improvement was observed in fundamental rights and freedoms. The abolishment of both the death penalty and the State Security Courts were appreciated. According to the report, however, the implementation of the reforms was not at a desired level. For example, it was stated that physical and psychological violence against women continued to be at a concerning level, as were the continued "honor killings." The report also claimed that ill-treatment was still widespread, and religious freedoms, especially those of non-Muslims, were not provided sufficiently. According to the report, Alevis and Kurds were still not recognized as minorities. It also stated that corruption continued in the country, and the military's autonomy and influence in civil affairs still existed.

Regarding economic policy, the report noted that Turkey worked hard to reach a functioning market economy. Accordingly, important steps had been taken for achieving economic stability since the 2001 crisis. However, implementation was yet to be seen, as was the case for the political issues.

On foreign policy matters, the report welcomed the efforts taken by Turkey, especially regarding the resolution of the Cyprus problem. That was because Turkey supported the Annan Plan, which favored a unified island and the improvement of relations with Greece. Moreover, it was stated that Turkey complied with its commitment to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), especially by paying compensation to Ms. Loizidou³⁰ and releasing the former pro-Kurdish deputy Leyla Zana and her friends.³¹

In the second document, the possible future effects of Turkey's accession to the EU were discussed. Thus, the report evaluated that the effects of Turkish membership on the EU would be considerable. Given the size of Turkey's population, the report stated that there would be a considerable economic cost to the EU once Turkey became an EU member.

The recommendation document was the most critical one. First of all, the document reflected the willingness of the EU to open accession negotiations with Turkey. On the other hand, in the document there were expressions that were considered, especially by the CHP, as unacceptable. First, the negotiation process was stated to be open-ended, which meant it would not necessarily have to end in full membership. Whatever the result of the negotiations, it urged that Turkey be deeply anchored in the EU. Second, it was specified that in certain areas, such as structural policies and agriculture, permanent safeguards could be applied. These measures were interpreted to be against the free movement of Turkish workers within the EU in order to avoid serious difficulties for the EU labor market. Third, it was remarked that the Union had an absorption capacity for EU enlargement. Thus, according to the document, this would also be a significant factor affecting the outcome of the accession process for Turkey. Finally, in the case of a permanent breach of rule of law, democracy, or human rights, the Commission would recommend a suspension of the negotiations, which would be decided by qualified majority voting.

The CHP's Concerns with the Progress Report

While the report was perceived as a positive development for Turkey's EU membership process by the AKP, the main opposition party criticized certain aspects of the report. According to CHP officials, the progress report contained unacceptable terms that had never been introduced to any other candidates. According to Baykal, the expression of "an open-ended process" and the statement that negotiations could be suspended by a qualified majority vote while negotiations would only start with a unanimous vote might mean that the membership prospects of Turkey was not clear.³¹ Concerning permanent safeguards, he stressed that the free movement of labor was a founding principle of the EU project. Hence, in his argument, these limitations would drive Turkey onto a different path from EU membership. By the same token, Onur Öymen, vice chairman of the CHP, asserted that the permanent prohibition of the free movement of Turkish labor would mean something short of full membership. He argued that Turkey should not accept such an inferior position.³²

Another unacceptable term in the report was about the way the term "minority" had been used. Baykal criticized that the EU named people as minorities although they refused to be recognized as such. He claimed that in Turkey, almost every family was mixed with at least one different ethnic root, since the Ottomans had gathered numerous ethnic groups under one umbrella. Thus, he argued that almost everybody in Turkey could demand recognition of minority rights, which was practically impossible.³³ According to Öymen, the terms in the report concerning minorities were against the provisions of the Lausanne Treaty, the founding treaty of the

Turkish Republic. Moreover, he argued that these people did not accept being labeled as a minority.³⁴

The absorption capacity of the EU was another main concern of the CHP. According to Baykal, this meant that even if Turkey successfully finished the negotiations, the EU could reject Turkey's accession to the Union. He asserted that this was against the provisions of the Helsinki Summit. He recalled the decision of the summit, which stated that once Turkey fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria, it would become a member of the Union, as had been the case for all other members.³⁵ In addition, he pointed out the constitutional amendment in France that would submit EU enlargement to a referendum.³⁶ Baykal metaphorically claimed that Turkey would rescue the princess kept as prisoner in a giant's house, which was on the seventh floor of a cave on the highest mountain and get through all the traps to climb down. However, at that point the EU would say: "Let's ask what the French people think."³⁷ Moreover, Onur Öymen demanded to know why France did not implement such legislation before accepting 10 other countries as members in 2004. Finally, he asked why they did not extend this referendum issue to Bulgaria and Romania, whose accessions were scheduled for 2007, but only to Turkey.³⁸

Finally, the CHP criticized the section of the EU Commission Progress report regarding issues raised by Turkey's membership:

A key issue in the region is access to water for development and irrigation. Water in the Middle East will increasingly become a strategic issue in the years to come, and with Turkey's accession one could expect international management of water resources and infrastructures (dams and irrigation schemes in the Euphrates and Tigris river basins, cross border water cooperation between Israel and its neighboring countries) to become a major issue for the EU.³⁹

The CHP claimed that this expression meant international management of the Euphrates and Tigris river basins, which would jeopardize Turkey's national sovereignty.⁴⁰ The AKP, on the other hand, argued that the CHP was wrong in its interpretation,⁴¹ and Abdullah Gül, the minister of foreign affairs at the time, accused the CHP of giving incorrect information to the public.⁴²

Regarding the criticism raised by party officials concerning the progress report, it could be argued that the CHP has mostly opposed the conditions put forward by the EU that, according to the CHP, will jeopardize Turkey's EU membership and hence are against Turkey's national interests.

Negotiating the Framework Document to Open Negotiations and the Reactions of the CHP

On October 3, 2005, the EU states, in spite of Austria's objection, agreed to start negotiations with Turkey. Jack Straw, the British foreign minister, happily declared that they were making history.⁴³ The EU issued a negotiating framework, determining the ultimate details of the negotiation process. The framework document included almost all the conditions that had been previously debated. Technically, the

document laid out the 35 chapters of the negotiations. There would be a shift from one chapter to the next before finishing the first, and the Council would unanimously decide when to close one chapter in order to open another.

The CHP again expressed its discontent with the results. Baykal stated that there was no reason for him to be pleased about the adopted document.⁴⁴ He criticized the government for not consulting with the CHP concerning the provisions in the document.⁴⁵ Baykal blamed the government of inflicting a *fait accompli* to Turkish people about one of the most critical issues for their future. Regarding the framework document, Baykal argued that it was much worse than the previous documents in terms of its provisions for Turkey.⁴⁶ In his view, all the debated expressions remained along with more unacceptable conditions. He argued that even if the expression “privileged partnership” did not appear, it was still implied. According to him, with all the expressions ranging from “open-ended process” to “permanent safeguards,” the “privileged partnership” perspective was already present in the document.

In Article 10 of the negotiating framework, the *acquis* that would be implemented by Turkey upon accession were outlined. The part Baykal criticized was the implementation of acts within the framework of the EU no matter if they were legally binding or not. These acts were written as “interinstitutional agreements, resolutions, statements, recommendations, and guidelines.” Baykal claimed that with these expressions Turkey would be bound by the resolutions and recommendations of the European Parliament, which were not legally binding. All in all, according to his argument, the EU would render Turkey an eternal EU candidate.⁴⁷ For the EU, he claimed, the best Turkey was candidate Turkey.⁴⁸

Article 11 of the document urged Turkey as a member state to terminate all its bilateral or multilateral agreements that were “incompatible with the obligations of membership.” Öymen claimed that the London and Zurich treaties that had established the Republic of Cyprus in 1960 would be treated in accordance with this article. He also argued that the Lausanne Treaty, the founding document of Turkish Republic, would fall within the scope of this article, since some provisions of the Lausanne Treaty, such as the minority issue, had been criticized in the progress report.⁴⁹

In addition, Onur Öymen was of the opinion that the AKP tried to manage the EU process alone.⁵⁰ He claimed that all member states had brought the membership issue to their parliaments. According to Öymen, both the opposition and the governing parties discussed and came up with joint decisions during the EU membership process of previous candidate countries. However, according to Öymen, the AKP government bypassed parliament during this process.⁵¹

The Views of the CHP Deputies

Concerning EU–Turkey relations, Baykal and Öymen specifically expressed the views of the CHP. Furthermore, the author conducted a questionnaire experiment on CHP deputies, asking their preferences concerning the European Union.⁵² The main motivation behind the survey was to discover whether the views of the deputies were similar with or different from the views of the top officials. Accordingly, from

November 2005 to May 2006, questionnaire sheets were handed out to the deputies and then collected. Regarding the 42 deputies who did not want to answer the questionnaire, the author conducted personal interviews and asked the very same questions directly. Consequently, 102 out of 154 CHP deputies answered the questions. The respondents were free to give more than one answer to the questions; thus, for some questions the total sum of answers exceeds 100 percent.

The respondents were asked six questions. First, the respondents were asked to which cultural identity Turkey was closest. In this respect, as a 2006 study presents, the identity of Turkey as European is questioned in Europe.⁵³ Furthermore, the French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, and the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, are resolutely against Turkey's EU membership. In this regard, the questionnaire sought to find out whether the CHP deputies perceived Turkey as a European country or not. Accordingly, 55 percent of the respondents answered that Turkey was closer to a European cultural identity, while 46 percent replied Western, 42 percent Eurasian, and 26 percent Islamic, and 23 percent responded that Turkey was closer to a Middle Eastern cultural identity. In this respect, it could be argued that according to the CHP deputies, European and Western values play an important role in Turkish cultural identity, since half the CHP deputies believe that Turkey is European and Western and at the same time Eurasian. On the other hand, the respondents did not deny the effect of Islamic and Middle Eastern culture on Turkey's cultural identity. In this regard, a quarter of the deputies responded that Turkey was closer to Islamic and Middle Eastern culture. Consequently, the belief in European identity might indicate an inclination towards being Europhile, as pointed out by Kopecky and Mudde.⁵⁴

Pertinent to the second question, the respondents were asked to outline the reasons behind the rejection of the EU Constitution in France and Holland in 2005. This question was crucial, since the popular rejection of the Constitution in the two member states started a discussion in academic circles regarding whether or not the integration of Europe would be in question.⁵⁵ Moreover, according to some observers, these rejections of the Constitution might imply the EU's incapacity to absorb Turkey as a full member.⁵⁶ Hence, the purpose of putting forward this question was an attempt to reveal the perceptions of the CHP deputies with regard to the rejection of the Constitution. Accordingly, 53 percent of the respondents answered that by rejecting the EU Constitution, France and Holland rejected the EU's enlargement process, and 50 percent replied that the rejection was against Turkey's EU membership. On the other hand, 38 percent responded that it was the rejection of the EU's political integration, and 30 percent stated that the rejection indicated discomfort with the EU's economic integration. Finally, 20 percent asserted that it was against the EU's deepening process. Thus, it might be suggested that most of the CHP deputies have a tendency to conceive the rejection of the Constitution as a refusal of the EU enlargement in a broader sense and of Turkey's EU membership in particular. This belief shared by the CHP deputies might be adopted as an example of the Euro-pessimism defined by Kopecky and Mudde.⁵⁷

Concerning the third question, the CHP deputies were asked to define the term "honorable EU membership," which was mostly used by the CHP itself. Accordingly,

82 percent defined the term as not experiencing a process different from other candidate countries. Sixty-eight percent responded that it means having equal rights with other EU members. In this respect, it could be stated that CHP deputies mostly define “honorable membership” as being treated equally both during the membership process and also after becoming an EU member. Hence, it could be implied that they would like to be treated equally by the EU. On the other hand, 45 percent defined the concept as becoming an EU member by preserving the unitary structure of the country and without having to consult with the EU. Seventeen percent defined it as becoming an EU member but with an economic policy free from EU interference. In this respect it could also be inferred that the CHP deputies also tend to perceive the “honorable EU membership” as becoming a member, preserving total political and economic freedom. However, the logic of European integration foresees a certain degree of delegation of member state powers to the institutions of the EU.⁵⁸ As the party program also indicates, the CHP’s understanding of EU membership tends to maintain national sovereignty, which is parallel to the “soft” Euro-skepticism principle raised by Taggart and Szczerbiak.⁵⁹ Hence, the CHP’s understanding of EU membership might be taken as a source of Euro-skepticism within the party.

Regarding the fourth question, the CHP deputies were asked to express their views on the AKP’s foreign policy. Accordingly, 74 percent of the respondents claimed that the AKP government made irreversible concessions for the sake of the EU membership perspective. Thirty-nine percent asserted that the AKP government greatly damaged Turkey’s stability and prestige by making radical changes in all areas of Turkish foreign policy. On the other hand, 19 percent believe that with the support of the CHP, the government made great progress, particularly towards EU membership. Hence, the overwhelming majority of the CHP deputies share the official view of the party, which is that the AKP is undermining national interests for the sake of obtaining EU membership. On the other hand, one-fifth of the respondents believe that the AKP has been successful in its EU policy. This might imply that there are people within the party who do not share the official view in terms of Turkey–EU relations.

With regard to the fifth question, the respondents were asked whether Turkey should become an EU member. Seventy-one percent of the deputies answered that Turkey should be a member, while 26 percent replied that Turkey definitely should be an EU member. Hence, only three percent of the respondents claimed that Turkey should not be an EU member, while 97 percent responded that Turkey should or definitely should become an EU member. This result might indicate the willingness of the CHP to favor Turkey’s EU membership and supports the Europhile concept of Kopecky and Mudde. On the other hand, the concept of Euro-pessimism put forward by Kopecky and Mudde might have limits, when the result of the last question in the survey is analyzed.

Accordingly, the CHP deputies were asked to state whether Turkey will become an EU member. Fifty-two percent responded that Turkey will probably become an EU member, and 13 percent stated that it will definitely become one. On the other hand, 28 percent claimed that it probably will not be able to become a member, and four percent said Turkey definitely will not be able to become a member. Thus, 65 percent of the CHP deputies are optimistic about Turkey’s

accession to the EU. This result does not support the claim of Kopecky and Mudde stating that Euro-pessimists are pessimistic about the future of the European integration.⁶⁰ Hence, although CHP deputies show signs of pessimism concerning Turkey–EU relations, being mostly optimistic about Turkey's EU membership, the CHP deputies do not conform to the Euro-pessimism concept of Kopecky and Mudde.

Regarding the results of the survey in general, in one sense it might be stated that the views of the CHP deputies are mostly not detached from the official EU policy of the CHP. Accordingly, most of the deputies are in favor of Turkey's EU membership and share the reservations of the party concerning the mentality of the EU and the AKP during Turkey's membership process. In another sense, it could be argued that there are diverse opinions within the party, since one-fifth of the deputies believe that the EU policy of the AKP is instrumental to Turkey's membership process. Moreover, the majority of the CHP deputies reflect an optimism concerning Turkey's EU membership, although party officials assert that the policies of the EU and the AKP will hamper Turkish membership of the EU.

Conclusion

According to Maurice Duverger, opposition parties who remain too much in the opposition tend to act more violently and extravagantly.⁶¹ Indeed, the CHP has not been the actual ruling power since the late 1970s, and in the present case, the EU policy of the party could be deemed as reactive and dissident. In this respect, the party officials first criticized the EU because of the uneven negotiation process inflicted upon Turkey by the EU. The CHP argued that this inequality would prevent Turkey from becoming a full EU member. Second, the CHP criticized the EU policy of the AKP government since, according to the party officials, the AKP was too eager for membership, adopting the core documents without paying sufficient attention to them at the expense of Turkish national interests. In the CHP's view, the government also used the excuse of EU harmonization to liberalize the secularism principle and support the domination of a religious way of life over Turkish society.

In order to conceptualize this policy stance, Euro-skepticism might be instrumental. Accordingly, the CHP could be regarded as "soft Euro-skeptic," a concept conceived by Taggart and Szczerbiak. In this respect, it could be stated that the CHP raises concerns about Turkey's national interests with the pretext of being treated unequally by the EU while claiming to be in favor of Turkey's EU membership. It could also be argued that the CHP has a precondition for becoming an EU member and it is controversial, since both the party program and the opinions of the deputies of the party reflect the fact that the CHP supports EU membership on the condition of preserving Turkey's full national sovereignty. However, the member states are supposed to delegate a degree of national sovereignty to the EU. Hence, the CHP's membership perception could be deemed as a major source of Euro-skepticism in its policies.

The EU policy of the CHP also conforms to the Euro-skepticism concept of Kopecky and Mudde, comprising "Europhile" and "Euro-pessimist" concepts.⁶² Accordingly, the party might be assumed to be Europhile, as it supports Turkey's EU

membership. Regarding the survey, the deputies of the party mostly consider themselves to be European, and a majority of them support Turkish membership to the EU. Moreover, the CHP could be presumed to be Euro-pessimist, since party officials are concerned about uneven conditions imposed on Turkey by the EU, which would hamper Turkey's membership. Furthermore, the survey results suggest that CHP deputies are mostly of the opinion that the rejection of the constitutional referendums in France and Holland might mean the rejection of Turkey as an EU member by the electorate in those countries. However, Euro-pessimism may have limits at the individual level, if not at the official level, since most of the CHP deputies are optimistic regarding Turkey's chances for becoming an EU member. This optimism might also imply a divergence from the official policy of the party, since the official statements appear more pessimistic about the outcome of the Turkish accession process. Moreover, one-fifth of the deputies consider the EU policy of the AKP to have been successful. This reflects a clear detachment from the official stance of the party.

The criticism by the CHP directed against the EU policy of the AKP might uphold the assumption that Euro-skepticism is embraced by opposition parties in order to gain ground against governments. Moreover, the claim that mainstream parties as well as periphery parties might adopt a Euro-skeptic attitude could be adjusted to the case of the CHP. Accordingly, the CHP might be counted as a mainstream party, having obtained 20.85 percent of the total votes in 2007 general elections, which makes it the second major party in Turkish parliament. Finally, the CHP case also confirms the view that not only far right parties but also parties on the left of the spectrum might be Euro-skeptic. The party is a member of the Socialist International, a worldwide organization composed of social democrat and labor parties.

In the present agenda, however, the success of the Euro-skeptic policy adopted by the CHP is open to debate, since according to the results of the 2007 elections the CHP could only retain its main opposition position while the AKP increased its votes to 46.66 percent and achieved a landslide victory again.

Notes

1. İlhan Turan, *İsmet İnönü: Konuşma, Demeç, Makale, Mesaj ve Söyleşileri 1961-1965* [İsmet İnönü: Speeches, Statements, Articles, Messages and Interviews] (Ankara: TBMM Printing House, 2004), p.399.
2. Deniz Baykal, speech to the CHP Parliamentary Group Reunion, July 1, 2003. See http://www.chp.org.tr/index.php?module=chpmain&page=show_speech&speech_id=133 (accessed July 16, 2008).
3. Ibid.
4. Deniz Baykal, speech to the CHP Parliamentary Group Reunion, June 3, 2003.
5. See http://www.secimmedyani.com/siyasi_partiler/chp/parti_programi/parti_programi_bolum_2.html (accessed March 9, 2008).
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22. "Turkey Told it Must Lift Headscarf Ban for EU," *International Herald Tribune*, February 2, 2008.
23. "AB: Türban telkinimiz yok" [The EU: We Don't Have Suggestions for Headscarf], *Milliyet*, February 8, 2008.
24. "AKP'nin 'Zina' Çıkmazı" [The 'Adultery' Deadlock of the AKP], *Vatan*, August 31, 2004.
25. Güngör Mengi, "Uçkur Mesaisi" [Waistband Work], *Vatan*, August 31, 2004.
26. Quoted in Graham Bowley, "EU Turns Up Heat on Turkey as Decision Looms," *International Herald Tribune*, September 18, 2004; and "Le ton monte entre la Turquie et l'UE sur la question de l'adultère," *Le Monde*, September 17, 2004.
27. Graham Bowley, "Envoy Rejects Criticism by EU Members: Turkey is Advised to Drop Adultery Law," *International Herald Tribune*, September 14, 2004.
28. Deniz Baykal, speech to the CHP Parliamentary Group Reunion, October 26, 2004. See http://www.chp.org.tr/index.php?module=chpmain&page=show_speech&speech_id=104 (accessed July 16, 2008)
29. See http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2004/tr_tr_2004_en.pdf (accessed July 16, 2008).
30. Ms. Loizidou, a Greek Cypriot national, sued Turkey under the allegation that she was deprived of the right to claim her immovable property in the Northern Cyprus. The ECHR found Turkey responsible for preventing Ms. Loizidou from claiming her property and decided that Turkey would pay her compensation. However, since Turkey did not recognize the Greek Cypriot state as the Republic of Cyprus, it refused to pay the compensation.
31. Leyla Zana, elected as a member of the Turkish parliament, was sent to prison in 1994 because she read the parliament vow in Kurdish instead of in Turkish. She and three other deputies in the same political party were found guilty of propagating separatist propaganda. However, in the case, *Zana and Others v. Turkey*, the ECHR found Turkey responsible for violating the rights of Zana and friends.
32. Deniz Baykal, press conference regarding the Progress Report, October 8, 2004. "Baykal: Bu rapor karşısında bayram yapmak kadar yanlış birşey yok" [Baykal: There is nothing more wrong than celebrating this report], *Milliyet* [Nationality], October 8, 2004. See <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2004/10/08/son/sonsiy/2.html> (accessed July 16, 2008).
33. Onur Öymen's speech in the seminar, "Turkey and the European Union," Grand National Assembly of Turkey, Ankara, November 1, 2004.
34. TV interview with Baykal, TRT 1, October 19, 2004.
35. Öymen, speech in EU seminar, Union of Turkish Parliamentarians.
36. Baykal, press conference regarding the Progress Report.

37. March 1, 2005 amendment of the French Constitution, TITLE XV—on the European Communities and the European Union, Art. 88-7: “Any legislative proposal authorising the ratification of a Treaty pertaining to the accession of a State to the European Union shall be submitted to referendum by the President of the Republic.”
38. Baykal, press conference regarding the Progress Report.
39. Öymen, speech in EU seminar, Union of Turkish Parliamentarians.
40. “Issues Arising from Turkey’s Membership Perspective,” *The EU Commission Progress Report*, October 6, 2004.
41. Deniz Baykal, speech in the plenary session of the TBMM , December 14, 2004.
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43. Erdal Şafak, “Dicle-Fırat ve AB’nin Talepleri” [Tigris-Euphrates and the Demands of the EU], *Sabah* [Morning], October 27, 2005.
44. Graham Bowley, “News Analysis: For Turkey, journey to EU is Just Starting,” *International Herald Tribune*, October 5, 2005.
45. Fikret Bila, “Baykal: Şimdi de müzakere basını” [Baykal: Now it is the Press of Negotiations], *Milliyet*, October 8, 2005.
46. Deniz Baykal, speech at the CHP Parliamentary Group Reunion, October 4, 2005. See http://www.chp.org.tr/index.php?module=chpmain&page=show_speech&speech_id=213 (accessed July 16, 2008).
47. Ibid.
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49. Ibid.
50. Onur Öymen, speech in the plenary session of the TBMM, October 5, 2005. See <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanak/donem22/yil4/bas/b003m.htm> (accessed July 16, 2008).
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. All the calculations and graphics material to this effect were prepared by the Statistics Society at Middle East Technical University, Ankara.
54. Riva Kastoryano, “Turkey/Europe: Space-Border-Identity,” *Constellations*, Vol.13, No.2 (2006), p.285.
55. Kopecky and Mudde, “The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe,” p.301.
56. See, Jan Erk, “Real Constitution, Formal Constitution and Democracy in the European Union,” *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.45, No.3, (September 2007); and George Tsebelis, “Thinking about the Recent Past and the Future of the EU,” *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.46, No.2 (March 2008).
57. John Redmond, “Turkey and the European Union: Troubled European or European Trouble?” *International Affairs*, Vol.83, No.2 (2007), p.306.
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