

Explaining Turkish Party and Public Support for the EU

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Abstract: The three main Turkish political parties, the Justice and Development Party (AKP), the Republican People's Party (CHP) and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), each favor Turkish accession to the European Union, with varying degrees of reservations. Turkish public support for EU membership is also divided, with recent surveys showing only 50% of the population views the EU positively. In this paper, we first evaluate the extent of support for European integration among Turkish mainstream and minor parties using Chapel Hill Expert Survey data and case studies. Next, building from the vast literature on public and party support for the EU in western European states, we develop utilitarian and identity hypotheses to explain public support. Using Eurobarometer data, we test these explanations. In this analysis, we compare Turkish parties and public to their counterparts in eastern and western Europe.

I. Introduction

What explains the levels of mass and elite support toward European integration in Turkey? To what extent do the established theories of public and elite attitudes toward integration explain the Turkish case? Can we integrate our findings to the comparative scope of the literature, or is Turkish exceptionalism a reality?

During the era of permissive consensus, European integration was an elite-driven process. But the recent literature on attitudes toward European integration has established that the era of permissive consensus (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970) is over (Carrubba 2001, Hooghe and Marks 2005, De Vries and Edwards 2009); in other words, Euroskepticism should be studied at the mass level along with the elite level.

Corresponding to this new reality, public opinion research has received greater interest in the period following the Maastricht Treaty and, especially, during and after the French and Dutch referendums on the Constitutional Treaty. Scholars have focused on how the voters' economic calculus and concerns on national identity affect their attitudes on European integration, as well as the linkage mechanisms between the public and the political elites, at the national and European levels (cf. Gabel 1998a, Gabel 1998b, Carrubba 2001, McLaren 2002, Carey 2002, Brinegar and Jolly 2005, Hooghe 2007, Herzog and Tucker 2009). Similarly, party system scholars have isolated the ideological and strategic factors driving party support for the EU (cf. Taggart 1998, Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002, Ray 2003, Taggart and Szczerbiak 2004, Marks et al. 2006, de Vries and Edwards 2009)

As far as the geographical focus of these studies is concerned, a majority of them focused on Western Europe (Eichenberg and Dalton 1993, Gabel 1998a, Gabel 1998b,

Taggart 1998, Carey 2002, McLaren 2002, Ray 2003). With the Central and Eastern European countries' membership bids, however, this focus began to shift to the east and studies adopted a more comparative perspective (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2004, Marks et al. 2006, Herzog and Tucker 2009).

In order to expand the geographical scope as well as the theoretical generalizability of this literature, we argue that Turkey needs to be included in this comparative approach to explaining public and elite attitudes toward the EU. Turkey's lengthy and ongoing pursuit of full membership and its critical socio-economic and cultural profile make the country an important case for analysis. To that end, the purpose of this study is two-fold. First, we evaluate the extent of support for European integration among Turkish mainstream and minor parties. We then develop and test utilitarian and identity-based hypotheses using the 2007 Eurobarometer data (EB 67.2).

The outline of the paper will be the following. First we evaluate the level of support for the EU across major and minor Turkish political parties. The next section will give a brief review of the literature on party-level support for the European Union, focusing on the main ideological and strategic explanations. Third, we present our findings on Turkey regarding this relationship, based on the Chapel Hill Expert Survey data from 2007. We conclude the first part of the paper by an in-depth analysis of party attitudes toward the EU by using party manifestos in the fourth section. The second part of the paper looks at Turkish mass attitudes toward the EU. The fifth section begins with a brief review of the literature on mass attitudes toward the EU. In the sixth section we use the 2007 Eurobarometer (EB 67.2) data to test utilitarian and identity-based theories

of EU support and present our results. In the last section we present concluding remarks and avenues for further research.

II. Studying party-level support for the European Union:

In the literature on party support for European integration, hypotheses revolve around mainstream and niche parties. For both ideological and strategic reasons, non-mainstream parties are typically Euroskeptic (Taggart 1998; Taggart and Szczerbiak 2001; Aspinwall 2002; Marks 2004; Jolly 2007). Ideologically, both extremes have reason to be skeptical of European integration. Radical Leftists combine elements of anti-market and anti-centralist ideologies (Aspinwall 2002, 86). Radical Right politicians, on the other hand, focus on nationalism. In their view, the European Union is an economic and identity threat to state autonomy and independence (Aspinwall 2002, 87). In contrast, Centrist parties support the European integration project.

Analyzing party positions in 2002, Marks et al. (2006) find further evidence to support these propositions in the East and West for both the standard Left-Right dimension (e.g. economic redistribution, welfare, regulation) and a New Politics dimension they label GAL-TAN (Green/Alternative/Libertarian-Traditional/Authoritarian/Nationalist). In the West, these two dimensions are strongly correlated (-0.64), with 83% of parties either Left-GAL or Right-TAN. This dimension matches what Kitschelt (1993) labeled the Left/Libertarian-Right/Authoritarian dimension. In a simple regression, Marks et al. (2006) demonstrate that Right-wing and TAN parties tend to be more Euroskeptic (i.e. a negative linear relationship), but that extremism also matters so that far-Left and GAL parties also tend to be Euroskeptic in the West.

In Central and Eastern Europe, the relationship between Left-Right and GAL-TAN is reversed, with Left parties also being TAN and Right parties leaning GAL. The correlation between the two dimensions (0.45) is not nearly as strong as in the West, yet 68% of parties are in either the Left-TAN or Right-GAL quadrants in the two-dimensional space (Marks et al. 2006). Though the relationship between the two dimensions is different between the East and West, the simple models explaining EU support are surprisingly similar. In both regions in 2002, Rightist and TAN parties are more Euroskeptical (Marks et al. 2006). Further, extreme parties, on either end of the spectrums, tend to be Euroskeptical. Hooghe et al. (2002, 968) go so far as to call this inverted U-curve relationship between ideology and EU support an uncontested fact. Theoretically and empirically, ideology, and especially extreme ideological positions, offers a useful starting point in an analysis of Turkish party support for European integration.

However, ideological concerns, in isolation, are not sufficient to explain opposition to European integration (Taggart 1998). We must also consider strategic behavior by non-mainstream parties. Precisely because they are less successful under the current party competition structure, fringe parties typically need to set themselves apart to voters (Taggart 1998, 382; Hooghe et al. 2002, 968).

In this framework, fringe parties can be viewed in either ideological (e.g. extreme Left or Right) or competitive (e.g. low vote share or government opposition) terms. As with ideological extremism, fringe electoral parties also tend to be Euroskeptical. Using regression models, both Marks et al. (2002) and Jolly (2007) show that Western European parties with greater electoral support are more supportive of the European

Union. Turning to the East, Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004, 15) demonstrate that parties in government, while sometimes expressing ‘soft Euroskepticism,’ are not ‘hard Euroskeptics.’ In fact, “all hard Euroskeptic parties are peripheral to their party systems” (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2004, 16). For both Eastern and Western European parties, this empirical regularity makes intuitive sense. As Hix (2007, 137) argues, the parties in government are the same parties that control the policy agenda and represent the states at the European level; thus, far more than their fringe party colleagues, mainstream parties are able to “shape policy outcomes at the European level in their preferred direction.” This agenda-setting power at the European level contributes to mainstream party support for the EU.

Thus, the key hypotheses focus on non-mainstream parties, parties that are either ideologically extreme or electorally fringe. In the next few pages, we evaluate whether these hypotheses help make sense of the Turkish party system. In this section, we use the Chapel Hill Expert Survey data (Hooghe et al. 2010). Conducted in 2007, this survey asks country experts to evaluate each party’s position on the left-right dimension, the new politics or GAL-TAN dimension, and support for the European Union, along with several more specific policies.

Thus far, Turkey has not received much attention in the literature either on public or elite opinion on European integration (Çarkoğlu 2003, Senyuva 2006, Kentmen 2008). One problem contributing to this lack of research, especially on elite attitudes toward the European Union, is that it is difficult to map Turkish political parties across the conventional two-dimensional policy space that we use for European political parties.

Çarkoğlu and Hinich (2006) point to this difficulty of placing political parties

across the policy space. In their attempt to construct a two-dimensional space of party positions for Turkey based on party preferences, the authors find that Turkish party system is significantly different from both Eastern and Western Europe. Rather than the economic (left-right) and non-economic axes that build the two-dimensional policy space in Europe (Marks et al. 2006), the authors find that an economic left-right axis is relatively unimportant in the Turkish party system. Instead, they find that the policy space in this country is defined along the axes of secularism – pro-Islamism and pro-Kurdism – anti-Kurdism. They also find that religiosity is the main determinant of voter choice and that the electorate is overwhelmingly centrist.

Their analysis of the Turkish party system is especially critical for the comparative study of party-based Euroskepticism in Europe, which looks at economic as well as non-economic explanations to understand attitudes toward European integration. While ideology is a powerful explanatory factor in both the West and East, we should expect left-right ideology to play a smaller role in Turkey.

In the next part of the paper we intend to make contributions to the literature by analyzing the levels of Euroskepticism at the elite level in Turkey and see where the Turkish case fits in the comparative scheme of the literature. Expert data will enable us to situate Turkish parties next to their European counterparts and facilitate cross-regional comparison.

III. Turkish Parties in Comparative Context:

In this section, we consider Turkish political parties in comparative context. Utilizing the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES), which estimates party positions on ideological dimensions as well as European integration, we provide an overview of the

Turkish system and then compare party positions in Turkey with party positions in Western and Eastern Europe. At the most basic level, we ask which Turkish parties favor European Union membership. But more significantly, do the standard explanations developed in Western and Eastern Europe help us understand the variation?

In the most recent election, fourteen political parties contested the election, but only three parties won enough votes under proportional representation voting rules to overcome the 10% threshold and earn seats. The Justice and Development Party (AKP) won a large plurality of votes (46.7%) and a clear majority of seats (62%). The disproportionality between votes and seats for AKP can largely be attributed to wasted votes due to the 10% threshold used in the proportional representation system. Table 1 presents the vote and seat shares for each of the main parties.

Table 1. 2007 Parliamentary Election Results, Turkey

Parties	Vote Share	Seats
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	46.7%	341
Republican People's Party (CHP)	20.9%	112
Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)	14.3%	71
Democratic Party (DP) ¹	5.4%	0
Independents ²	5.2%	26
Youth Party (GP)	3.0%	0
Others (9 parties)	4.5%	0
Total	100%	550

Source:

<http://secim2007.ntvmsnbc.com>

¹ The Democratic Party (DP) is the successor party to the True Path Party (DYP), which changed its name prior to the 2007 election. Taken prior to the election, the Chapel Hill Expert Survey still refers to the True Path Party. In this paper, the two will be used interchangeably, though we try to use the more recent Democratic Party name.

² The Independents are predominantly the Kurdish candidates who coordinated but did not compete under a party organization in order to circumvent the 10% national threshold. Since the threshold only applies to political parties and not individuals, Kurdish candidates ran as independents during the election and formed their own party group in the parliament (Democratic Society Party – DTP) once they got elected.

In the following pages, we focus on these five parties and their attitudes toward European integration, with particular emphasis on the three parties that won seats.

The CHES survey encompasses 227 national political parties in 29 countries. For our purposes, the survey is especially useful because it evaluates both current and potential EU members, including Turkey. In 2006, the survey contacted 632 experts and had a response rate of 42.9% (Hooghe et al. 2010, 692).³

First, consider the electoral strategic argument. In both Eastern and Western Europe, smaller parties tend to be more Euroskeptical. Does this trend hold in Turkey as well? In the Chapel Hill expert survey, the membership support question evaluates the “overall orientation of the party leadership towards European membership in 2007.” The experts used a 7-point scale, with 1 denoting strong opposition to major domestic reforms to qualify for EU membership as soon as possible and 7 denoting strong support.⁴

³ Hooghe et al. (2010) validate the data by comparing the CHES with data from party manifestos, public opinion surveys, and elite surveys (especially MPs and MEPs). In a separate study, Marks et. al (2007) cross-validate the expert survey data with the manifesto project data (Budge et al. 2001), the European election survey (Eijk et al. 2002), and the 1996 Political Representation in Europe survey of members of national and members of European parliaments (Katz et al., 1999). Using factor analysis, they determine that the four measures share a common structure, and they determine that variance in the expert data set is very similar to the variance found in this common factor (Marks et al. 2007, 25).³ Nevertheless, as these articles discuss, each type of data has advantages and disadvantages; thus, we do not rely solely on expert survey data but delve more deeply into the party positions by evaluating individual party manifestos in the next section.

⁴ The question wording is as follows:

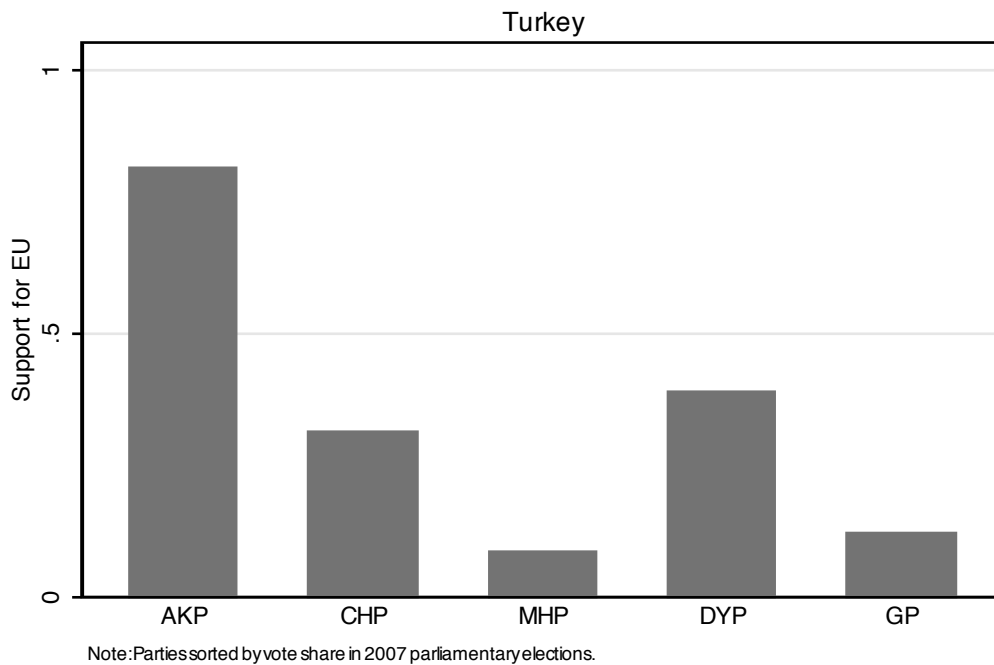
Q1. Consider EU membership for Turkey. Where did the party leadership of the following parties stand in 2007?

1. Strongly opposes major domestic reforms to qualify for EU membership as soon as possible
2. Opposes major domestic reforms to qualify
3. Somewhat opposes
4. Neutral
5. Somewhat favors

Following Marks et al. (2002), we rescale the variable from 0 to 1 for ease of interpretation.

Figure 1 shows that the largest party, AKP, is by far the most pro-Europe party, with the main opposition parties, the CHP and MHP, progressively more Euroskeptical. The political parties in Figure 1 are ordered from largest to smallest vote share (see Table 1 for vote shares), with the GP registering a mere 3% of the vote and 0 seats. With only the DYP/DP as a partial exception, the smaller parties in Turkey tend to be far more skeptical of EU membership than AKP, suggesting the strategic hypothesis may have some validity in Turkey.

Figure 1. Party Support for European Union (2007)



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6. Favors major domestic reforms to qualify
 7. Strongly favors major domestic reforms to qualify for EU membership as soon as possible

Next, consider the ideological arguments based on Economic Left-Right and GAL-TAN. In both the East and West, a curvilinear pattern is expected. Based on CHES data from 2006, Figures 2 and 3 provide scatterplots of the unweighted party positions and a simple curve reflecting a prediction for EU support from a linear regression of EU support on Economic Left-Right and Economic Left-Right squared, with confidence intervals (Stata `qfitci` command).⁵

Figure 2 focuses on the Western European parties. Figure 2 shows that support is clustered in the middle of the ideological spectrum, with major opposition at the Left and Right extremes. The simple `qfit` curve supports the extremism arguments so prevalent in the literature, with fairly narrow confidence intervals; however, it should be noted that compared to a general left-right ideological dimension, economic left-right has a less dramatic inverted U-shape, with Euroskepticism more evident in the Economic Leftists than the Rightists.

⁵ For the figures Western Europe includes the EU-15 countries (except Luxembourg): Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, UK, Portugal, Austria, Finland and Sweden. Eastern Europe includes the following countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The survey question on EU support in member states is simpler than in Turkey:

Q1: How would you describe the general position on European integration that the party leadership took over the course of 2006?

1. Strongly opposed
2. Opposed
3. Somewhat opposed
4. Neutral
5. Somewhat in favor
6. In favor
7. Strongly in favor

As with the Turkey support question, we rescale the variable from 0 to 1.

Figure 2. Party Support for European Union (2006)

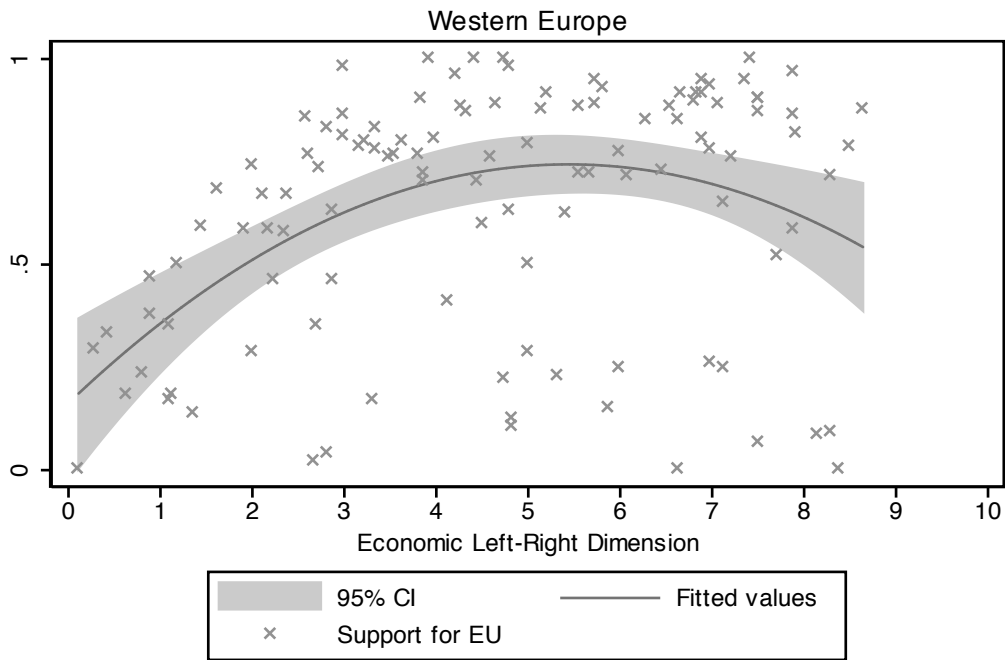


Figure 3 focuses on Eastern Europe. As in the West, it is the Economic Leftists that are more Euroskeptical, though the model supports a slight curvilinear shape. Again, the Centrist parties are still heavily clustered in support of the EU. In both cases, it also seems clear that the simplest regression model (Economic Left-Right ideology and extremism) leaves much variance to be explained.

Figure 3. Party Support for European Union (2006)

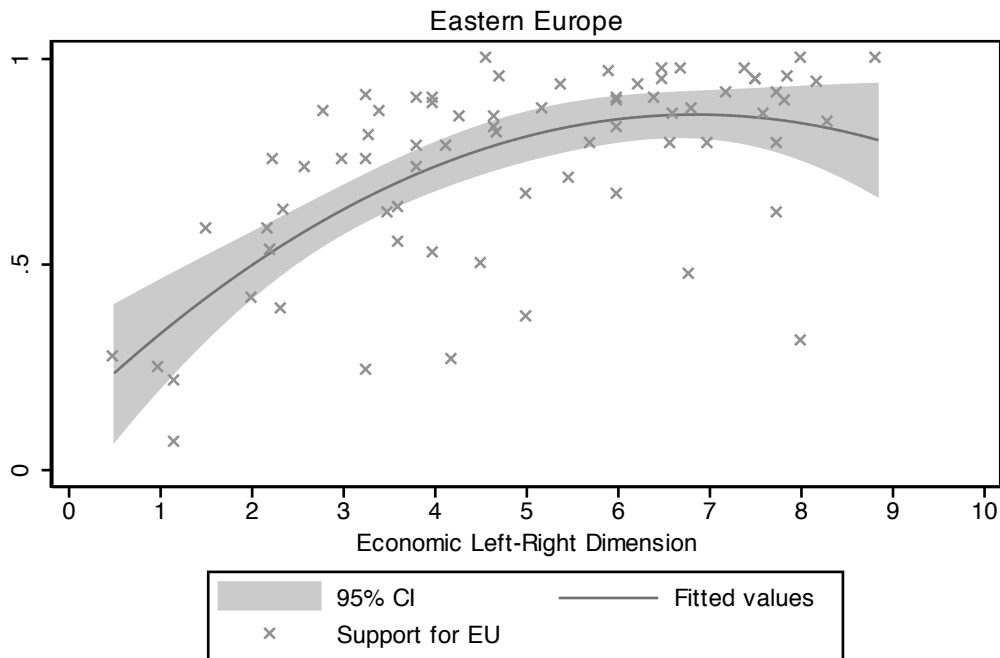
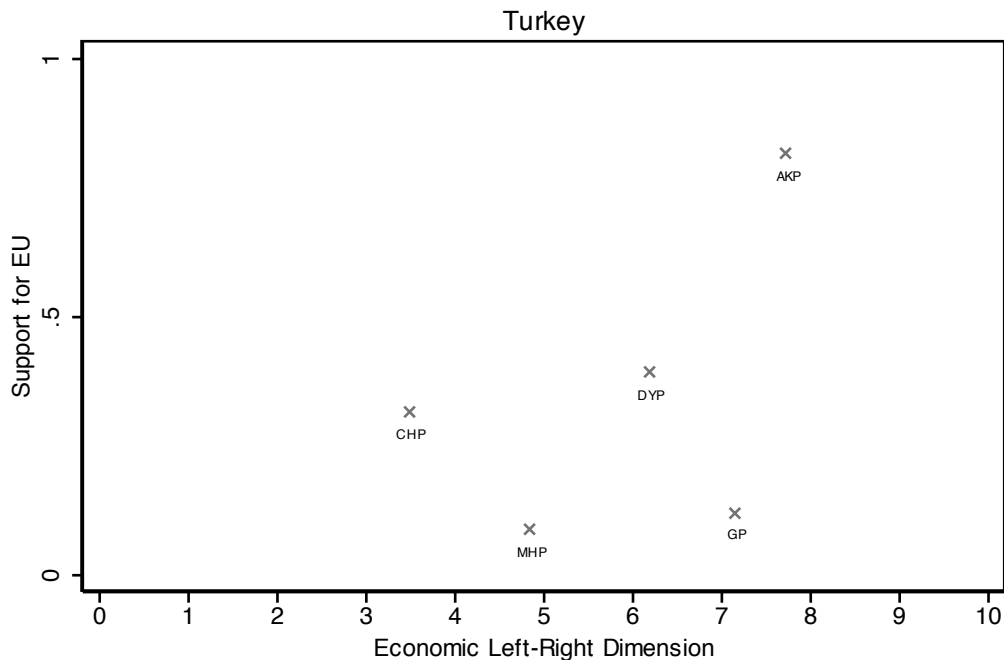


Figure 4 presents the Turkish parties in a scatterplot with Economic Left-Right ideology on the X-axis and EU Support on the Y-axis. Compared to both the East and West, the Economic Left-Right ideological scale appears more censored. There simply are not parties on the far Left end of the Left-Right scale. In fact, the unweighted mean for Economic Left-Right is 5.9, compared to 5.0 in the East and 4.6 in the West. Nevertheless, there is a positive correlation between Left-Right and Support (0.46), as in the West and East.

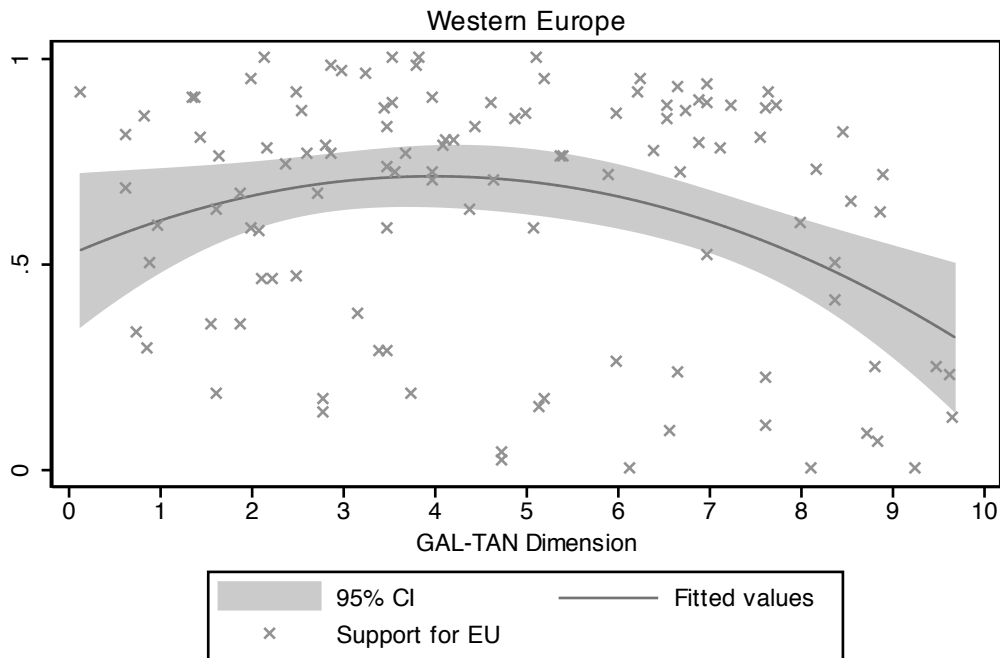
Figure 4. Party Support for European Union (2007)



The New Politics dimension, or GAL-TAN, should behave similarly, with extremists especially Euroskeptical. Figure 5 and 6 present scatterplots of party positions with a curve reflecting a prediction for EU support from a linear regression of EU support on GAL-TAN and GAL-TAN squared, with confidence intervals (Stata `qfitci` command).

In the West, the correlation between Economic Left-Right and GAL-TAN is 0.56, suggesting that most Left parties are GAL while more Rightist parties are TAN. And yet, despite this high correlation, the scatterplot in Figure 5 looks much different than Figure 2. In particular, no extreme Left parties are pro-Europe while multiple extreme GAL parties support the EU. This difference is reflected in the different shape of the curve. The Left-Right curve in Figure 2 clearly shows that Leftist parties are more Euroskeptical than Rightist, while the curve in Figure 5 has wider confidence intervals and predicted support is higher for extreme-GAL parties than for extreme-TAN parties.

Figure 5. Party Support for European Union (2006)



The difference between Left-Right and GAL-TAN is even more dramatic among Eastern European parties, as seen in Figure 6. Again, the curvilinear relationship is hardly evident at all, with a clear downward trend showing that TAN parties are far more Euroskeptical than their GAL competitors. In fact, no extreme GAL parties are Euroskeptical, based on the 2007 CHES. In contrast to the West, the few Leftist parties that oppose the EU are not in the GAL side of the spectrum, but rather on the TAN side.

Figure 6. Party Support for European Union (2006)

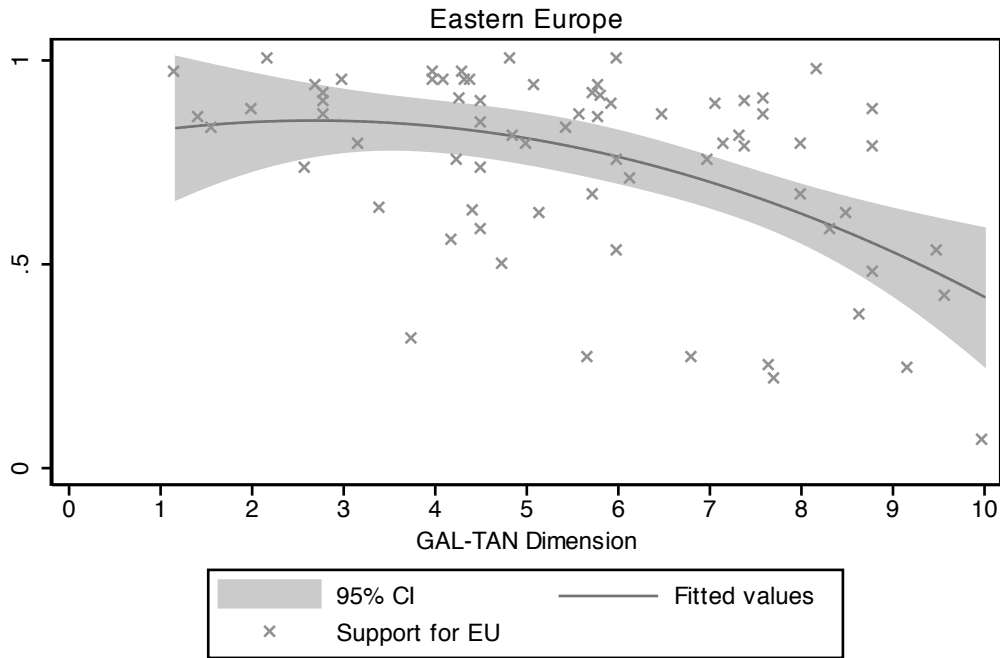
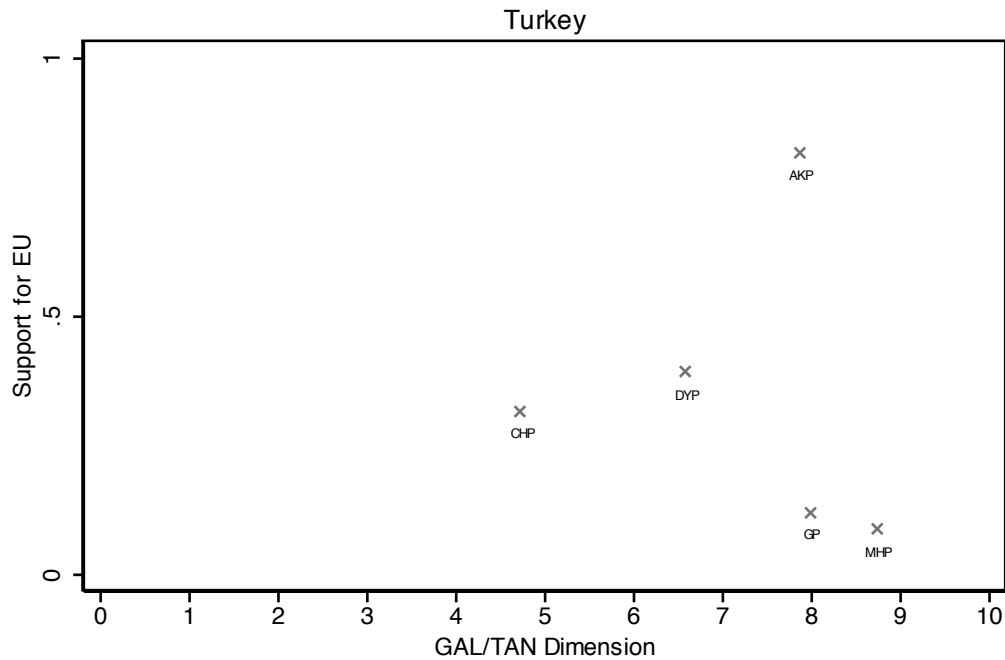


Figure 7 shows the Turkish parties, with GAL-TAN along the X-axis and support for the EU along the Y-axis. Noticeably, Figure 4 and Figure 7 are very similar, at least for the two biggest parties, AKP and CHP. In both cases, the AKP is to the right of CHP. The correlation between Economic Left-Right and GAL-TAN in Turkey is 0.59, slightly

higher than in the West (0.56) and in the opposite direction from the East (-0.28).

Figure 7. Party Support for European Union (2007)



As with Left-Right, the GAL-TAN or extremism variable does not especially illuminate support for the EU. For Turkish party system scholars, this will not be surprising.

Çarkoğlu and Hinich (2006) argued that the conventional left-right ideological framework is not as useful in analyzing Turkish party politics as it is in EU member countries. In contrast, their ideological map reflects an Islamist-Secularist dimension and a nationalist dimension (Çarkoğlu and Hinich 2006). This is not an argument for Turkish exceptionalism, since these dimensions match the classic Lipset and Rokkan (1967) center-periphery cleavage. Rather, it is a warning to take context seriously and not simply assume that economic left-right ideological divisions drive politics everywhere.

While useful, especially for cross-national comparisons, the general expert survey party placements on support for European integration can be usefully supplemented with more detailed analysis. In particular, the general party positions do not differentiate

between different varieties of support or opposition. As Taggart (1998) argues, parties can be skeptical of the whole European integration project or they can be skeptical of the institutional form of the EU. Though CHES asks experts for information on specific aspects of integration regarding current EU members, candidate country experts have broader questions to answer. To isolate the types of elite support and opposition among Turkish parties, we therefore turn to case studies of the main parties.

IV. Different shades of grey? Turkish party attitudes on the European Union:

In this section we research party manifestos of major and minor political parties to discuss their varying levels of Euroskepticism and thus supplement our findings from the CHES data. We define “major political parties” as those which have a credible chance of winning the parliamentary elections to form a government or becoming a coalition partner in the government, and “minor parties” as those which come closest to the 10 percent national electoral threshold in the most recent parliamentary elections. With these definitions, we limit the set of parties to Justice and Development Party (AKP), Republican People’s Party (CHP), Nationalist Action Party (MHP), True Path Party (DYP) and Young Party (GP), where the AKP, the CHP and the MHP are the major parties and the DYP/DP and the GP are the minor.⁶

Taggart (1998: 366) argues that Euroskepticism “expresses the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration.” In a subsequent work Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004) clarify this definition by introducing the concepts of “hard Euroskepticism” and “soft Euroskepticism”, where hard Euroskepticism implies “outright rejection of the

⁶ These are the same parties evaluated by the experts in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey.

entire project of European political and economic integration” and soft Euroskepticism “involves contingent or qualified opposition” (2004: 3-4).

As such, all major and minor Turkish political parties in this study qualify as soft Euroskeptics. While generally supportive of Turkey’s bid for full membership with the AKP being the most supportive, they qualify their positions by stressing their concerns over specific issues that the EU requires Turkey to fulfill, as expressed in documents such as the European Commission’s yearly progress reports. Furthermore, as we move away from the mainstream toward the electorally fringe parties at the left and the right we find that the level of Euroskepticism in these parties increases.

In the case studies, where we classify Turkish political parties according to the scheme proposed by Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004: 4) we find that they mostly fall into the group of “national-interest Euroskeptics,” which refer to “employing the rhetoric of defending or standing up for the national interest.” Nevertheless, issues such as the enactment of possible benchmarks on “the four freedoms” following the accession push these parties over to “policy Euroskepticism,” that “results from opposition to measures designed to deepen significantly European political and economic integration,” although these are not voiced frequently in party manifestos since membership is not yet in horizon. The only exception to this trend is Cyprus, which is evaluated more on the basis of national interest rather than policy Euroskepticism by the parties.

Taggart (1998) also classifies political parties by looking at the ways in which Euroskepticism is manifested in them. Of the four types (single-issue Euroskeptic parties, protest-based parties with Euroskepticism, established party with Euroskeptical position, Euroskeptical factions within the party) our initial analysis shows that except for the

Young Party (GP) which was a “protest-based party” established prior to the 2002 national elections, all political parties that this paper looks at are “established parties with Euroskeptical positions”. The rest of this section will evaluate the manifestos of the political parties in focus and make initial conclusions on the extent to which Turkish parties are comparable to their counterparts in Western and in Central and Eastern Europe.

Justice and Development Party (AKP): Since its foundation in 2002, the AKP singlehandedly redefined the dynamics of competition in Turkish politics by emphasizing the importance of political and cultural liberties and a flourishing democracy that the European Union would also appreciate. The Justice and Development Party is serving its second consecutive government term, and recent polls suggest that it should handily win the June 2011 elections.

As the major mainstream party located at the core of the political system, the AKP is the least Euroskeptical of the Turkish parties. Although it does not state clearly in its party manifesto that the party supports full membership and rejects any alternative schemes of cooperation,⁷ it states that Turkey will be dedicated to fulfilling the promises and the conditions “which the EU also expects other candidate countries to fulfill” for full membership (emphasis added). In other words, the AKP rejects those conditions that the EU introduces unless the same conditions also apply to other candidate countries.

Yearly progress reports released by the European Commission (EC) are useful

⁷ Unlike any other mainstream party, the AKP website provides a separate Frequently Asked Questions section on Turkish – EU relations, where the party clearly states that it demands full membership, believes that EU membership will benefit Turkish economy, and that it does not take seriously the opinions about the EU inherently opposing Turkish membership for historical or cultural reasons. (Source: http://www.akparti.org.tr/disiliskiler/turkiye-avrupa-birligi-iliskileri_1140.html)

guides to these conditions. Three main themes are commonly referred to by the EC. The first is improvements on the cultural and political rights of minorities. More specifically, the EU expects the Turkish state to grant a) the Kurds “full rights and freedoms,” including the right to education in their mother tongue as well as the right to political association and b) let the Greek Orthodox train their own clergy in their private seminary and let the Patriarch use the ecumenical title (EC 2007, 17-23). Second, the EU expects Turkey to open its border to Armenia and establish good neighborly relations (EC 2007: 74) both of which are still under the shadow of the genocide accusations of 1915. Finally, the EU expects Turkey to apply the clauses of the Additional Protocol of the 1963 Association Agreement without discriminating against the Republic of Cyprus, which became a member in 2004 (EC 2007: 24).

This third theme is particularly problematic: Turkey is accused of not implementing policy obligations secured by earlier bilateral agreements with the EU. But the AKP manifesto makes it clear that the party takes the “Cyprus problem as one that concerns the identity, existence and future of Turks on the island, and that Cyprus’ membership in the EU will only make the problem more complicated” (AKP Party Program, section on Foreign Policy: http://www.akparti.org.tr/vi-dis-politika-_79.html?pID=50).

For all three of these themes, the AKP takes these issues—most importantly the Cyprus problem—as issues of national interest rather than policy-based reasons for Euroskepticism. Nevertheless, it should be reemphasized that the tone and saliency of these themes in the manifesto is extremely low. The AKP is by and large supportive of Turkish membership in the EU, and the most supportive of the Turkish parties. This evidence buttresses the results from Section III and the general strategic arguments about

party positioning on the EU.

Republican People's Party (CHP): Located to the left of the AKP in the political spectrum,⁸ the CHP also supports Turkey's EU membership on the level of national interest rather than specific policies. Whereas the AKP's support for EU membership is defined in terms of Turkish democratic consolidation, however, the CHP supports EU membership with the belief that the EU is the final destination in Turkey's journey toward Westernization. The understanding that Turkey will complete its historical modernization-Westernization process by becoming a full member of the EU provides the backbone of CHP's positive attitudes toward membership. To that end, the CHP openly states that their "primary demand is Turkey's full, decent and unconditional membership that respects the foundational values of the Republic" (CHP Party Program, http://www.chp.org.tr/?page_id=70).

Having said that, the CHP manifesto is visibly more Euroskeptical in tone than that of the AKP, matching the expert evaluations from the CHES. Whereas the AKP refrains in its manifesto from making negative statements about EU policies or possible frictions that might arise during the negotiation process, the CHP clearly states what it can and cannot accept in Turkey's relations with the EU.

Another difference between the two parties is that the CHP shows traits of both national interest Euroskepticism and policy Euroskepticism. For example, the manifesto states that the CHP "demands that the EU lifts the permanent limitations on free movement, agricultural subsidies and development, and that EU's bilateral agreements with third parties are simultaneously transformed into parallel agreements between

⁸ Whether we take the main axis of competition to be Left-Right, or secularism-Islamism, the CHP still stands to the left of the AKP.

Turkey and said parties.”

As far as national interest-based Euroskepticism goes, the CHP states that “Turkey will reconsider its obligations under the Customs Union agreement and take the necessary steps to protect our national interest in the event that subjective policy opinions that exclude Turkey based on geographical or cultural differences become the EU’s official position.” Moreover, the CHP seems to be especially sensitive to the Cyprus issue. The manifesto reads that the party “refuses to make Turkey’s accession process conditional upon the Cyprus issue and on the one-sided concessions that Turkey is expected to make (...) [The party] is absolutely opposed to the understanding that the Republic of Cyprus represents the entire Cypriot community at the EU.” In sum, the CHP is more conditional on its support for the EU and its party manifesto shows that it is also more vocal than the AKP.

Nationalist Action Party (MHP): Located at the far right of the political spectrum, the MHP is the most Euroskeptical of the major parties that this study looks at. In stark contrast to the CHP and the AKP, the MHP contends that the party “does not view Turkey’s relations with the EU as a matter of identity and destiny” and defends the position that “Turkey is not doomed to, nor does it have to orbit the EU at any cost” (MHP Party Program 2009, http://mhp.org.tr/mhp_parti_programi.php).

Nevertheless, the MHP states that it is supportive of Turkey’s full membership, although this support is conditional – the party supports EU membership only to the extent that “the EU’s approach towards Turkey’s national and territorial unity, its fight against terrorism and separatism, as well as the issues concerning Cyprus, Greece and Armenia do not jeopardize Turkey’s national interests. The respect that EU members will

show to our national concerns will provide the basis of our relations with these countries.”

With respect to Cyprus, the MHP maintains the strongest position in arguing that it is “the most important national interest.” In short, the MHP differs from the other two major parties in Turkey in two ways. First, it is much more vocal than either of the other two parties in its skeptical view of the European Union. Second, its source of Euroskepticism is based on defending the national interest rather than concerns over specific policies of European integration. Here it is important to underline that as we move away from the AKP toward the electorally less successful major parties both on the left and on the right, Euroskepticism increases and becomes more vocal in the manifestos.

True Path Party (DYP): The DYP is the reincarnation of the Democratic Party (DP), which was founded by Adnan Menderes and competed in the first multiparty elections against the CHP in 1945. Although it has been one of the staples of Turkish party system following the military intervention in 1997 that caused the resignation of the centre-right/Islamist DYP – RP coalition government the DYP was never able to get back on its feet. The last election that it competed under this name was in 2002, in which it was only .5% short of entering the parliament. In the run up to the 2007 elections it agreed to merge with another centre-right party, Motherland (ANAP) under a single new name, Democratic Party. However, ANAP dropped out of the electoral coalition and the new DP ran alone, this time receiving less than 6% of total votes. In 2007, though, the DP was still a visible minor party in the political system.

The DP party manifesto⁹ makes no reference to Turkey's relations with the European Union, which is striking. In the lengthy section on its foreign policy vision the party mentions its attitudes toward the US and NATO, the Middle East and the Muslim world, the Black Sea region and Eurasia, but leaves the European Union outside of this vast geographical scope (DP Party Program 2010, <http://www.demokratparti.tv/gorsel/DP.Yeni.Program.pdf>). The erratic changes in party leadership and the party structure over the last couple of years resulted in a lack of visionary foreign policy in the DYP/DP.

Young Party (GP): Leading up to the 2002 elections, Cem Uzan, a former media and telecommunications mogul, founded the Young Party. Although the party had a narrow time frame for a national election campaign it was able to get a significant amount of protest votes in the elections and almost made it to the 10 percent threshold. Indeed, the GP neatly falls into the category of the “protest-based Euroskeptical party” (Taggart 1998). Ironically, its ideological positioning fits the Left-Right and gal-tan policy space that characterizes party systems in Western Europe better than any other Turkish party: in its economic approach it was a Rightist party that supported liberal market economy and deregulation, while along the non-economic axis it was extremely traditional and nationalistic.

In its approach toward the EU the GP supported full membership and the economic benefits of integration but it was opposed to the EU's regulatory policies. It was still largely Euroskeptical, however, in the sense that it believed that “Turkey should not entirely depend on the full membership of the EU” (GP Party Program 2002,

⁹ We could not locate the DYP manifesto from 2002 so we used the DP manifesto of 2010.

<http://www.belgenet.com/parti/program/gp-1.html>). The GP had a significantly weak party manifesto that did not clearly signal the position of the party on the EU either from a policy or a national interest perspective. The primary reason for this gap in the manifesto was that the party was a one-man show who was politically very inexperienced as opposed to similar new parties such as the AKP whose members were veteran figures in Turkish politics.

In sum, a detailed analysis of party manifestos shows that the level of support for European integration at the party level varies between mainstream and minor parties both to the left and the right of the political spectrum. This finding is not only supportive of our findings from the CHES data, but also of the findings of the existing literature.

Our analysis also implies that Turkish party attitudes toward European integration are comparable to those presented in Taggart (1998), Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004) as well as Herzog and Tucker (2009)'s analyses on Western and Central and Eastern European party-based Euroskepticism.

First, with regard to party-based attitudes on European Union the Turkish party system seems to resemble its counterparts in Central and Eastern Europe. In their study on Central and Eastern Europe Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004) find out that unlike what Taggart (1998) found in Western Europe, in this region there do exist central parties that are Euroskeptic. Indeed in Turkey one of the most vocal Euroskeptical parties, the MHP, is a major party in the political system.

Second, Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004) claim that hard Euroskepticism is likely to be less evident than soft Euroskepticism in candidate states. As a candidate country Turkey supports this proposition. None of the political parties we look at are hard

euroskeptics, including those which are electorally fringe parties.

In addition, Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004: 3) argue that “in the case of candidate countries, we suggest that some parties might adopt Euroskeptic language in terms of detailed and specific issues, as well as in their rhetoric, while still maintaining a nominal commitment to action.” This is also supported in our analysis. Despite their Euroskeptic tone in their party manifestos, all the parties in our study show at least an average commitment to full membership.

Third, Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004) also find that Euroskepticism transcends the left-right spectrum in Central and Eastern Europe. We find that this conclusion is also supported by the Turkish party system where all political parties, regardless of their position in the system, show some minimal level of Euroskepticism, not to mention the fact that most of these parties are skewed to the center and right of the political spectrum.

Fourth, Herzog and Tucker’s (2009) economic winners thesis does not find support in our analysis of party manifestos. Although the most visibly capitalist party is the AKP, its manifesto remains silent on the economic benefits of EU membership, though it does highlight these benefits on its website (see footnote 7). Three reasons for this might be that a) economic left-right dimension as we find in Europe is not a salient dimension of political competition in Turkey (as Çarkoğlu and Hinich also argue); b) the EU is mostly understood as a political agenda item rather than an economic one, and since the economic dimension of membership does not find salience in domestic political competition, it is also absent from party manifestos; or c) since membership is not yet in the horizon neither of the political parties highlights the economic costs and benefits of membership to their respective constituencies.

Finally, Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004) argue that experiences of state building cause Euroskepticism to be associated with the defense of national identity in Central and Eastern European countries. The recurring rhetoric on the protection of national interests vis-à-vis European integration across all political parties included in this study might point to a similar causality in Turkey. More specifically, the emphasis of the Turkish elite on national interest-based Euroskepticism could be a reflection of the historical grievances of Turkish elites and masses against the idea of “the West”. This, however, needs to be investigated further with elite and public interviews, which we leave outside the scope of our study.

In order to grasp the full picture of attitudes toward European integration in Turkey, we believe that we must move beyond the elite level and support our analysis with public opinion data. The second part of the paper will first give a brief picture of the current state of the literature and then discuss the level of public support for the EU by utilizing Eurobarometer data from 2007.

V. Public support for European integration: The state of the literature in Turkey

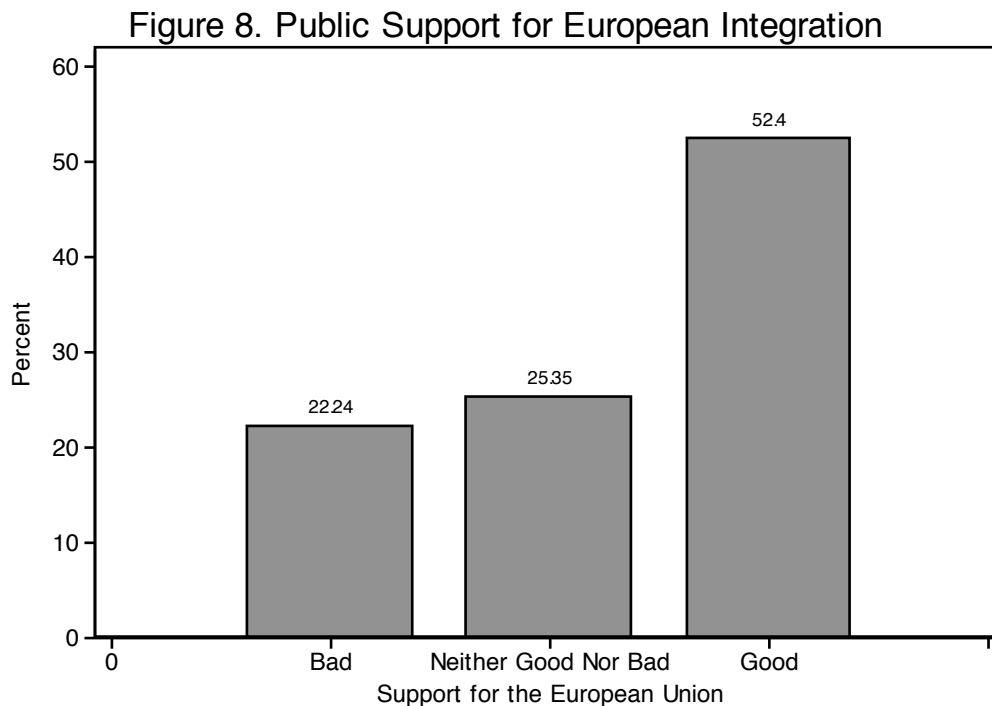
For political parties, ideology explains less of the variation in support for European integration than does a mainstream/fringe party argument or an argument based on national interest or identity. In this section, we turn our attention to the public. Do the standard explanations found in Western and Eastern Europe help explain Turkish public support for the EU? In particular, do utilitarian or identity theories better explain public attitudes?

In her comprehensive survey of public opinion research on Turkish attitudes toward the EU, Senyuva (2006) argues that the scholarly literature on public attitudes

toward the EU is largely undeveloped. The literature suffers from data problems as well as a lack of theoretical depth (Senyuva 2006). These weaknesses are only exacerbated by the fact that Turkey was only included in Eurobarometer surveys in 2001, some 30 years after the initiation of the enterprise. In other words, a lack of a credible and continuous time series survey contributed to this lack of attention.

One of the most important works on Turkish public attitudes on the EU belongs to Çarkoğlu (2003), which Senyuva (2006) mentions. Arguing that public preferences in Turkey provide the “very background” of Turkey’s relations with the EU, Çarkoğlu utilizes a nationwide representative survey to show the rates of public support for the EU across a number of demographic, political and cultural dimensions, including gender, education, location, socio-economic status, party preferences and fragmentation at the individual and geographic levels, as well as religious and ethnic affiliations of individuals. He concludes that although political parties are polarized in their rhetoric towards the EU, the masses show overwhelming support for membership.

Since 2002, though, the prospects for membership have dimmed somewhat for Turkey, due in large part to rhetoric from Western European politicians worried about immigration and over-enlargement. Yet, using 2007 survey data, we find that Turkish public support for EU membership is still strong. In *Eurobarometer 67.2* (Papacostas 2010), 52.4% of respondents view membership in the EU as a good thing for Turkey, with a mere 22.4% viewing it as a bad thing. Figure 8 provides a histogram of these data.



In the 2007 Eurobarometer, this level of support is fairly consistent with current EU member countries. For comparison, 57.4% of respondents in EU-15 countries while 54.3% in the new 12 EU members viewed the EU as a good thing. In contrast, support among candidate countries varies dramatically. 74.7% in Macedonia and only 28.7% in Croatia support the EU in this question, leaving Turkey in the middle of candidate countries.

While support among Turkish respondents is similar to EU respondents, Çarkoğlu (2003) finds that many of the usual explanations for Euroskepticism do not explain variation in Turkey, but he leaves this analytical puzzle unresolved. Indeed, his study is largely a descriptive attempt at understanding the nature of public support toward the EU along with some preliminary reflections on the nature of party support for integration rather than testing the established theories of economic calculus and identity that began to dominate the literature elsewhere.

Moreover, the incredible pace of change in Turkey's foreign policy and domestic politics since 2002 and the corresponding deceleration of relations with the European Union justifies an updating of this research. AKP's regional diversification of Turkish foreign policy, the rejection of the Annan Plan in 2004 prior to the accession of Cyprus to the EU, the resurgence of Kurdish separatism in southeast Turkey, and the remarks from European capitals such as Paris and Berlin and the public's reaction to them require us to re-evaluate the extent of Turkish public support for the European Union.

More recently, Kentmen (2008) evaluated the effect of religion on public support toward EU membership. In this study, where she uses Eurobarometer data from 2001, 2002 and 2003, Kentmen tests utilitarian and identity explanations for Turkish public support for the European Union. She concludes that religiosity (Islamic devotion) does not affect attitudes toward the EU. Instead, utilitarian considerations and national identity provide much of the explanation.

In this section, we extend Kentmen's (2008) study in two ways. First, we use a more recent dataset, EB 67.2 (April – May 2007). Second, we choose to move beyond a narrow definition of identity based on religion and understand identity in terms of fears of cultural threat (McLaren 2002) as well as territorial attachment (Carey 2002). After briefly explaining the hypotheses, we test them across multiple models to show how well different conceptualizations of utilitarian and identity-based explanations do in predicting the public level of support toward European integration.

One version of the utilitarian model suggests that lower-skilled citizens are likely to be more Euroskeptical of the EU (Gabel 1998a, 1998b). In a fully integrated regional economy, lower-skilled workers are less competitive and more skeptical of job losses and

lost income. Following economic trade theory, Gabel's original formulation suggests that trade liberalization, a significant component of European integration, favors citizens with higher education and more occupational skills (Gabel 1998a, 43-44).

At the individual-level, we follow Kentmen (2008) (and Gabel 1998a) and use education to proxy for skill level. We create a series of dummy variables for low-education, low-mid education, high-mid education, and high education.¹⁰ Based on findings in the EU member states, we might expect higher skilled respondents to be more favorable to the EU; however, we offer a cautionary note in advance. We do not expect strong effects for the utilitarian variables. Turkey is a country with abundant labor vis-à-vis capital, and compared to the EU, abundant unskilled labor; thus, based on the Heckscher-Ohlin model, low skilled labor should benefit more from liberalization in Turkey than in most European countries (cf. Brinegar and Jolly 2005). The support gap between high and low-skilled citizens, therefore, may be muted.

Hypothesis 1: Higher educated respondents should be more supportive of European integration.

In addition to skill levels, we also include occupational dummies (manual, professional, student, unemployed) to test the utilitarian model.¹¹ As with skill, based on

¹⁰ Respondents are counted as Low Education if their education stopped before age 15; Mid-Low Education if education stopped between ages 15 and 19; Mid-High Education if education stopped at age 20 or 21; and High Education if the respondents attended school after age 21. If respondents were still in school, the skill variable was simply recoded as their current age.

¹¹ The coding follows Hooghe and Marks (2004) and Kentmen (2008). Professional includes self-employed, employed professionals, business professionals, general managers, desk workers, directors, top management, middle management and professionals. Manual worker includes farmers, fishermen, craftsmen, skilled and unskilled workers, travelling employees, service jobs, and supervisors. We include a student dummy variable, but students were excluded in Kentmen (2008). Unemployed includes those persons responsible for housework, unemployed, retired and unable to

the literature in the EU member states, we expect the professionals to be more supportive, but, like skill, we also expect this relationship to be modest.

A second utilitarian argument turns from ego-centric concerns to socio-tropic ones. In this argument, respondents may be more concerned about how European integration will affect the national economy (Brinegar et al. 2004). Using 2001-2003 Eurobarometer data, Kentmen (2008) finds support for this argument. In the Eurobarometer 67.2, respondents are asked whether “we would be more stable economically if Turkey would be a member of the EU.” We use this question to test hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 2: Respondents who think EU membership will improve the Turkish economy will be more supportive of the EU.

Beyond the utilitarian starting point, more recent work focuses on identity issues (cf. McLaren 2002, Hooghe and Marks 2005, Kentmen 2008). Hooghe and Marks (2005), in particular, make a strong case that an exclusive national identity contributes to Euroskepticism. In this context, exclusive national identity favors attachment to the home state over other territorial identities (e.g. the EU). Individuals with exclusive national identity, not surprisingly, are expected to oppose regional integration; Hooghe and Marks (2005) find significant evidence for this hypothesis in Western Europe. In the Turkish context, Kentmen (2008) tests this argument and also finds it significant.¹²

Since the identical question used in Kentmen (2008) is not available, we constructed a dummy variable using two attachment variables, whether respondents feel attached to the state and to the EU. The new exclusive national identity variable is coded

work. We do not include income variables, another common utilitarian variable, because the survey did not ask these questions.

¹² Kentmen (2008) also tests whether Islamic identity affects Euroskepticism, but finds it has no statistically significant effect. Unfortunately, the Eurobarometer 67.2 does not include religiosity questions so we cannot replicate this interesting null finding.

as 0 if respondents either feel fairly or very attached to the EU, or if they do not feel attached to Turkey. Otherwise, respondents are coded as having exclusive national identity. In Turkey, this measure captures 73% of respondents. Building on the previous literature, we expect exclusive national identity to be a powerful determinant of support.

Hypothesis 3: Respondents with exclusive national identities will be more Euroskeptical.

Finally, we consider cultural threat. McLaren (2002) argued that fear of cultural threat must be included alongside any objective or subjective utilitarian variables. She found significant evidence that cultural threat was a powerful determinant of public Euroskepticism. Previous work on Turkish public opinion ignores this argument, but it seems to be as plausible in Turkey as in the West, especially with how enlargement has been politicized in Turkey and in the EU. In a series of questions, Eurobarometer 67.2 asks what the EU means to the respondents. One response is loss of cultural identity. In contrast to the exclusive national identity, only 17% of respondents fall into this category. But we expect these respondents to be especially leery of regional integration.

Hypothesis 4: Respondents who fear that EU membership will lead to a loss of cultural will be more Euroskeptical.

To test these hypotheses, we utilize the *Eurobarometer 67.2*, a survey taken in 2007 (Papacostas 2010). Included are all respondents in Turkey aged 15 and older, yielding a sample size of 998. Because we eventually want to test mass-elite linkage arguments, we chose a 2007 Eurobarometer to match the Chapel Hill expert survey data. Unfortunately, the 2007 Eurobarometers do not ask respondents for party vote intention or any indicator of party support, which complicates mass-elite linkage tests. We will return to this issue in the discussion section below.

For the dependent variable, we utilize the standard good/bad question, used by Gabel (1998) and most studies since. The question is modified for Turkish respondents to reflect its candidate status: “Generally speaking, do you think that Turkey's membership of the European Union would be a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?” Following standard practice, the responses are reordered (1-3) so higher scores indicate support for the EU.¹³

Table 2 presents a series of simple OLS regression models, with age and gender controls alongside the variables of theoretical interest. Model 1 represents a basic utilitarian model, with the skill and occupational variables testing Hypothesis 1.¹⁴

¹³ For this preliminary analysis, we simply coded the “don’t knows” as being in the middle, along with “neither good nor bad.” For reference, only 88/998 respondents answered “don’t know.” But in future tests, we will test the results for robustness by dropping these respondents and by imputing these missing data.

¹⁴ The number of observations is reduced in Models 1, 2 and 4 due to missing responses to the education question.

Table 2. OLS Results for Support for EU Membership in Turkey

	Model 1 Utilitarian	Model 2 Utilitarian 2	Model 3 Identity	Model 4 Utilitarian + Identity
Variable	Coefficient (Std Error)			
EU Help National Economy		0.76*** (0.05)		0.64*** (0.05)
Manual	-0.03 (0.08)	0.01 (0.07)		0.06 (0.06)
Professional	-0.08 (0.13)	-0.06 (0.11)		-0.03 (0.11)
Student	-0.18 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.11)		-0.01 (0.10)
Exclusive National Identity			-0.52*** (0.05)	-0.33*** (0.06)
Age	-0.004* (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)		-0.001 (0.002)
Low Education	0.02 (0.12)	0.05 (0.11)		0.00 (0.10)
Low-Mid Education	0.05 (0.12)	0.06 (0.11)		0.04 (0.10)
High-Mid Education	-0.12 (0.16)	-0.12 (0.14)		-0.14 (0.14)
Female	0.03 (0.07)	0.11 (0.06)		0.11 (0.06)
EU Hurts Culture			-0.52*** (0.06)	-0.49*** (0.06)
Constant	2.44*** (0.17)	1.80*** (0.15)	2.78*** (0.05)	2.19*** (0.15)
Observations	868	868	998	868
Adjusted R2	0.0028	0.2055	0.1588	0.2947

Note: * Significant at .05 level; ** Significant at .01 level; *** Significant at .001 level. The base categories are unemployed, male and high education.

Clearly, Model 1 does a poor job explaining individual attitude. Age is the only statistically significant predictor and its effect is substantively negligible. This finding supports Kentmen's (2008) results from the earlier time period, and provides evidence that *Hypothesis 1* is inadequate by itself.

Simply adding one socio-tropic variable, though, changes the picture significantly. In Model 2, we add the question that asks respondents whether joining the EU will benefit the Turkish economy. The variable is statistically and substantively significant. Recall that this variable is dichotomous, so the interpretation is straightforward. The dependent variable is coded on a 3-point scale, with a mean of 2.3 and a standard deviation of 0.81, so a coefficient of 0.76 is dramatic. Further, the R^2 increases dramatically, from 0.00 to 0.21. Clearly, perceptions that the EU will benefit the state's economy are a significant predictor of public support for the EU.

Before moving to a fully specified model, we tested the identity variables alone. In Model 3, both identity variables (Exclusive National Identity and EU Hurts Culture) are statistically significant and in the predicted direction, supporting *Hypotheses 3 and 4*. Consistent with earlier work on Western Europe, respondents with exclusive senses of identity are far more likely to be Euroskeptical than respondents who are either less attached to Turkey or who feel attachment to the EU in addition to Turkey. Further, if Turkish citizens view the EU as a threat to the country's culture, then support for the EU falls.

In the final model, we combine the utilitarian and identity models and fully test the four hypotheses. The explanatory power of the model increases significantly. Even in the fully specified model, only the socio-tropic variable and the two identity questions are significant. In fact, if all the insignificant variables are dropped from Model 4, the adjusted R^2 only drops from 0.295 to 0.293.

When discussing *Hypothesis 1*, we considered the possibility that objective measures of the utilitarian model may have little effect; this expectation is supported by

the regression results. Higher-skilled workers have less to fear, on average, from liberalization than lower-skilled workers because their skill level allows them to adapt to new markets. But lower-skilled workers in Turkey also have little to fear from liberalization, offering some evidence that the abundant resource of Turkey vis-à-vis the EU recognizes that it will benefit from regional integration.¹⁵

In contrast to the objective utilitarian measures, national identity behaves as predicted. Citizens with an exclusive sense of national identity are less supportive of European Union membership; however, the substantive significance of the coefficient (-0.33) is less than either of the other two main variables.

Subjective perceptions clearly matter. Citizens who view the EU as a means to stabilize the economy support EU membership whereas citizens who fear a loss of their cultural identity in an enlarged Europe are far more Euroskeptical. It is exactly in these perceptions that political parties play a crucial role. Indeed, EU membership is largely, almost entirely, framed on the basis of identity in Turkey and, to a lesser extent, on the basis of free movement. Business organizations and the AKP do emphasize the economic benefits of joining the single market (Turkey will provide the much needed labor force) but such statements remain at the level of rhetoric once they start phrasing it in terms of "Europe needs us."

¹⁵ Alternatively, as Herzog and Tucker (2009) argue, the winners-losers gap is simply less relevant when there is not yet a realistic prospect of membership. In the current political environment, the Turkish public views the prospect of membership as distant. Perhaps if membership becomes more plausible, the winners-losers gap based on utilitarian measures will become more relevant for explaining Turkish public attitudes, and lower-skilled workers' attitudes may become more skeptical of the EU.

How political parties frame the EU will affect whether the public continues to support European Union membership, or whether Euroskepticism rises, as it has in many EU member countries.

VI. Discussion

For both political parties and the public in Turkey, support for the EU is driven by national interest and identity. Even the most pro-EU party, the AKP, is skeptical of many EU conditions that threaten Turkish interests. Similarly, citizens are driven more by identity concerns and socio-tropic concerns about Turkey than their own utilitarian, ego-centric concerns.

In Central and Eastern Europe, public Euroskepticism has not led to support for explicitly Euroskeptical parties. Mainstream parties remain very pro-EU (Taggart 1998, Taggart and Szczerbiak 2004). In contrast, the Turkish party system reflects more diversity, with the two main opposition parties evaluated as far more Euroskeptical than most mainstream parties in EU member states. But another finding from Eastern Europe seems to be relevant to Turkey, namely that the EU is a second-order issue in national elections. Given its rhetorical importance in many EU countries, it appears to be less salient in Turkey than it was in Eastern Europe prior to accession.

Taggart and Szczerbiak (2004) argue that the rarity of hard Euroskepticism corresponds to the elite consensus over the overall advantages of accession. Indeed, this might well be the case in Turkey also, but this fact may change if the accession process is continually delayed.

Similar to the political parties, the Turkish public is largely supportive of European Union membership, but Euroskepticism exists and it is based on identity and economic

concerns. Coincidentally, it is also identity and economic concerns that affect whether EU citizens oppose Turkish accession.

This paper offers some preliminary analysis of elite and mass support for European Union membership in Turkey. Yet, clearly, much work remains. First, we need to connect the elite and mass sections of the paper both theoretically and empirically. The overarching theoretical argument is whether economic concerns or identity better explains Euroskepticism in Turkey.

Second, in this initial analysis, we did not link the public opinion to the elite preferences, and that is an area we want to develop. Third, we need to more systematically compare our findings to those in Central and Eastern Europe as well as Western Europe in order to assess the extent to which Turkish public opinion differs from these regions in terms of the relationship between party positions, public attitudes and EU integration.

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