

From the Desk of the Editor

As the decision of the European Council in December 2004 draws nearer, Turkish Policy Quarterly is delving into the political implications of Turkey's would-be membership, ranging from how Turkey's culture or religion will affect the European identity to the projected nature of migration from, to, and through Turkey. We look to the future, assessing the effectiveness of the evolving foreign policies of both the EU and Turkey and analyzing the advantages Turkey's joining would bring to the Union. As always, the opinions included in this issue of TPQ not only vary but also at times clash.

All themes taken up by Turkish Policy Quarterly in 2004 have been slanted towards Turkey's bid for EU membership. Be it the relationship between religion and politics or the new threats faced by the transatlantic alliance, we have tried to tackle topics from the perspective of Turkey's eventual membership or lack thereof. Our winter issue will focus on the economic aspects of Turkey's EU odyssey. We hope that from 2005 onwards we will be able to take up themes debated in Brussels, not as a courtier but as a stakeholder.

Looking from a global perspective, Foreign Minister Gül points out Turkey's potential contribution to the transatlantic relationship and for the stabilization of the regions it borders. Foreign Minister Fischer states his view that Turkey's fulfillment of the reform goals should be met by the fulfillment of the EU's pledges because of the political benefits for the EU of Turkey's membership process. Focusing on the OSCE, Minister Passy points out the transformations in Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall and in light of the evolving international environment to outline the adaptations required by international organizations.

The debate in Europe regarding Turkey's membership is often in fact a debate about the future of the EU and the global role which the EU will assume. Contrary to the idea that enlargement is at the expense of deepening for the EU, Strauss-Kahn states that they are complimentary and that the EU needs not only to deepen but also to enlarge in order to influence the future of the international system. He evaluates Turkey's eventual membership in this framework, as a step forward in the right direction. Derviş emphasizes the need for a vision for the future of the EU that will mobilize grassroots enthusiasm, embrace diversity, and render the EU a major actor in establishing a more democratic global order. Along these lines, Karlsson focuses on the importance of including Turkey in this project in order to overcome the civilizational divide between the Muslim world and the West which has the possibility of posing serious global repercussions. Aydın and Açıkmese conclude that Turkey's added value to the EU is more significant than the potential costs of its eventual membership and factor in the costs for the EU of an alienated Turkey. Kirişçi and Erzan, in their joint contribution, negate some of the common assumptions about expected immigration from Turkey held among Europeans and lay the foundations for more objective projections. Şen offers his views as to the impact of Turkey's eventual membership in light of the transformation taking place in both EU structures and in Turkey itself.

Emerson and Tocci analyze how Turkey's experiences, capabilities and cultural affinities will be an asset to the EU's external policies in the pre-accession period and beyond. The evolution of Turkey's foreign policy in light of EU membership prospects and the added value Turkey can have for ESDP is outlined by Buharalı.

In their article, Keyman and Aydın argue that rather than religion, culture or geography, the principle of fairness and objectivity should be the basis of EU's decision concerning Turkey.

According to the authors, negotiations for Turkey's full membership should be initiated in light of these principles and in the recognition that democratization is a dynamic and never-ending process for all states. Crossick, on the other hand, claims that satisfying the political criteria is a prerequisite to entry and not to opening the negotiations.

Europeanization cannot be evaluated merely by passing and implementing laws. Seyrek focuses on the role of Turkish NGOs in European integration while Santagostino relates the progress made by Turkey's academic institutions with regard to European studies. The shortcomings in these spheres are also pointed out, as well as suggestions for the steps ahead. Özdemir reflects the opinions of the young people in Turkey concerning relations with the EU and relates the results of the largest survey conducted on this issue in Turkey. He elaborates on the implications of the findings and provides a perspective of the young population of Turkey, which is a high percentage of the entire population, sometimes constituting a concern for some in the EU, yet also viewed as a potential asset.

We hope you enjoy this issue and continue to follow Turkey's odyssey.

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