

**THE ACCESSION OF TURKEY TO THE EUROPEAN
UNION:
THE POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS ON TURKEY IN
THE NETHERLANDS**

Ms. S. Hollander

WEBPUBLICATIONS 29

The Hague, June 2007

The Webpublications series comprises studies carried out as part of the activities of the WRR. Responsibility for the content and views expressed rests with the authors. A list of all Webpublications can be found on the WRR website (www.wrr.nl).

CONTENTS

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Historical and contextual background.....	8
2.1	History of EU-Turkey relations.....	8
2.2	Turkey's EU-Membership and the EU's 'Enlargement Fatigue'.....	10
3	The embedding of Turkey's EU-membership in Dutch politics	16
3.1	The position of the Dutch Government	16
3.2	Positions taken up by Dutch political parties	19
4	The embedding of Turkey's EU-membership in Dutch society	24
4.1	Public Opinion on Turkey's EU-Membership	25
4.1.1	Public Support	25
4.1.2	Public Perceptions	30
4.2	Communication on Turkey's EU-Membership	33
4.2.1	Media-Coverage	34
4.2.2	Media-Content	35
5	Turkey's EU-membership in the foreign debates: A comparison with Germany and the United Kingdom	40
5.1	The debate on Turkey's EU-Membership in Germany.....	41
5.1.1	Political Embedding	41
5.1.2	Societal Embedding.....	42
5.2	The debate on Turkey's EU-Membership in the United Kingdom	46
5.2.1	Political Embedding	46
5.2.2	Societal Embedding.....	46
6	The political decision-making process on Turkey in the Netherlands: Conclusion and discussion.....	52
6.1	Problems of Legitimization	53
6.2	Discussion: How a different political or societal embedding could have made a difference?.....	56
	References	60

1 INTRODUCTION

After keeping Turkey on the waiting list for at least four decades, Brussels finally opened the accession negotiations with Turkey on the 3rd of October 2005. This decision has not been a process without difficulties, and even until one day before the negotiations had to be symbolically opened, it remained uncertain whether the foreign ministers of the European Union (EU) were able to come to agreement. Main obstacle was the firm attitude of the Austrian minister of foreign affairs Plassnik, who consistently opposed a possible Turkish EU-accession and instead opted for a looser association without the explicit perspective of full EU membership. However, the Turkish Prime-Minister severely opposed this option of a 'privileged partnership' for Turkey and stated that 'anything besides full EU Membership is unacceptable' (Turkish Press Review, September 2005). After intense bilateral negotiations between the EU Presidency (which was then held by the United Kingdom (UK)) and Austria, and interference of the United States (US), the – at that time – 25 EU member-states finally ended the long-lasting deadlock. Hence, as mandated by the European Council during the summit of December 2004, the EU officials agreed upon the text of a 'negotiating framework', consisting of the ground rules for the negotiation process between the EU and Turkey. Yet still, whereas such a negotiation process usually leads to an offer of full membership, it has been made explicitly clear that with respect to Turkey 'these negotiations are an open-ended process, the outcome of which cannot be guaranteed beforehand' (Negotiating Framework for Turkey 2005: 1).

During the process, the Dutch government had been an important advocate of Turkey's bid for EU-membership. In fact, the Dutch Prime-Minister Balkenende and minister of foreign affairs Bot played an important mediating role during the European Council summit on the 16th and 17th of December in 2004, when under the Dutch Presidency agreement was reached upon the conditions to start the negotiations with Turkey on the 3rd of October in 2005. In fact, completely in line with the recommendations of the European Commission (European Commission 2004), the Dutch government has consistently declared that when Turkey sufficiently fulfils the political Copenhagen criteria, it would have no objections to start the accession talks. Hence, after the Council agreement of October 2005, the Dutch delegation expressed their support for the reached agreement. This supportive attitude was confirmed by the Dutch state secretary of European Affairs Nicolai, who stated that: 'The EU, with Turkey inside it, will be stronger in the fight against terrorism and more influential in transatlantic relations' and 'the EU leaders shouldn't hesitate about Turkey's membership' (Turkish Press Review, October 2005).

Whereas the Dutch government formally took on a supportive position towards Turkey during the European Council in December 2004, it is remarkable that the agreement to open the negotiations by the end of 2005 has led to considerable dissent in the Dutch public arena. According to Eurobarometer public opinion polls, only 39% of the Dutch citizens were fully in favour of a Turkish accession to the EU, whereas 53% said to be against (European Commission 2005a). Moreover, following opinion polls from the Dutch public opinion researcher de Hond (2005a), 52% of the Dutch citizens firmly disagreed with the decision to start the accession talks with Turkey in October 2005, and another 52% said to be dissatisfied with the way in which the Dutch government handled the issue. In addition, an in-depth study of the motivations behind the Dutch rejection of the European Constitution on the 1st of June 2005 shows that the possibility of a Turkish EU-Membership was one of the issues that citizens seemed to have taken into consideration when making up their mind about their vote (Thomassen 2005: 64, in: Aarts en van der Kolk 2005).

This scepticism of the Dutch public towards the possible Turkish EU-accession can be considered remarkable. It has been argued that citizens of the EU founding member-states were characterized by a so-called 'permissive consensus' (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970), supportive of most EU-policies and relying on the political elites in driving the integration process forward. As a result, Dutch EU policies were traditionally being depoliticized and technocratized and the Dutch citizenry was usually not very interested in expressing its point of view. However, given the current lack of Dutch public support for Turkey's possible EU membership, it can be questioned whether the traditional way of Dutch EU policy-making still offers legitimate policy-decisions, and whether the position of the Dutch government to support the December-2004 agreement was being sufficiently legitimized.

The question comes up whether a better political and/or societal embedding of the Turkish issue could have turned around either Dutch public opinion or the position and actions of the Dutch government, so that the apparent gap between the government and the Dutch public would have been minimized or even solved. However, taken into consideration the lack of public support for a Turkish accession that is currently present in most EU-countries, it cannot be ignored that the possibility of Turkey's EU-Membership touches upon such fundamental issues that it might be that Dutch politicians would never have been able to successfully communicate their point of view to their electorate. As such, the mismatch between the Dutch government and citizens raises questions not only about the extent to which the issue was embedded in Dutch politics and society, but also about the character of this political and societal embedding and the specific issues related to Turkey's possible accession that are perceived as fundamental within the Dutch political and public debate.

Hence, the research question of this paper is fourfold:

- 1) How did the position of the Dutch government to support the December-2004 agreement on Turkey develop?
- 2) How has the question of Turkey's possible EU-Membership been perceived by the Dutch public and the media?
- 3) To what extent were there legitimacy problems concerning the formal Dutch position regarding Turkey's aspiration to join the EU?
- 4) Could a different type of embedding of the issue of the possible Turkish accession have led to a more legitimized position of the Dutch government?

The first question will be addressed in paragraph 3, which provides an overview of the way in which the Dutch position came into being and how the decision-making process on Turkey evolved. Paragraph 4 focuses on the second question, in which an analysis will be conducted on the character of both the Dutch public and media debate. In order to determine the specificity of the character of the Dutch debate, paragraph 5 offers a comparison between the Turkey-debate in the Netherlands and the political and societal debate on this issue in two other EU-countries, namely Germany and the UK. Finally, questions 3 and 4 will be addressed in paragraph 6, in which it will be outlined whether the Dutch EU policy-making regarding Turkey suffered from apparent legitimacy problems and some insights will be provided on the question of what might have prevented these problems. However, first, in the next paragraph an overview will be presented of the historical context of the December 2004 decision to open the accession negotiations on the 3rd of October 2005, and the obstacles and concerns that appeared to be relevant during the process.

2 HISTORICAL AND CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

The relationship between the EU and Turkey is characterized by a long history and started in 1963, when Turkey officially became an associate member of the European Economic Community (EEC). Moreover, this relationship is characterized by sequences of ups and downs and after a long period of uncertainty with which both Turkey and the EU had to deal, an important step forward was made at the time when the accession negotiations were officially opened in October 2005. Yet, the path to full membership can still be considered long and depends on Turkey's fulfilment of some important accession requirements. In fact, Brussels has made it explicitly clear that if Turkey will ever become a full EU-member, this will not take place before 2014 at the earliest (Negotiation Framework for Turkey 2005: 5).

To understand the difficulties surrounding the Turkey-EU relations, this section provides a short overview of the main events during the process that started in the early 1960s and got more geared towards a membership-perspective with the agreement to open the accession negotiations on the 3rd of October in 2005 (see Table 1 for short time-line). In addition, as concerns are being expressed about the possible impacts of a Turkish accession, it is necessary to shed some light on the main contextual issues that are attached to Turkey's EU membership, and how these issues relate to the general debate on EU enlargement.

2.1 History of EU-Turkey relations

The history of the EU-Turkey relationship dates back to 1963, when Turkey signed the Association Agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC), which provided Turkey with a first membership perspective. However, during the 1970s Turkey's political and economic situation was characterized by problems in terms of instability, civil unrest and the Cyprus-crisis, which resulted in a problematic drawback in the EU-Turkey relationship. In the 1980s, the relations between Brussels and Turkey were temporarily frozen, after a military coup d'état in the early 1980s. Yet, after considerable economic and political structural reforms, Turkey officially applied for full EC-Membership in 1987. Whereas the EC declared that at that time, Turkey was not yet ready to join the Community, the EC chose the strategic position of keeping the relations with Turkey strong by wishing to set up a Customs Union with Turkey, when at the time postponing full membership (Erdogdu 2002: 4). This Customs Union was set up in 1995, enabling the free movement of goods between the two entities. In 1999, the EU-Turkey relationship obtained a new character, when Turkey was granted the official EU candidate status. This decision indicated that the question of whether Turkey could *in principle* join the EU was positively answered by the governments of the EU member-states of that time.

Table 1: Time-line EU-Turkey relations 1963-2005

1963	Turkey signs Association-Agreement with the EEC
1974	Turkey invades Cyprus after failure of diplomatic efforts to solve the problem between Greece and Turkey
1980	The Turkish army gains the power, as reaction the EU freezes all relations with Turkey
1983	Turkish-Cyprus declares its independence and ends its military rule
1987	Turkey officially applies for EU-membership
1989	The EU declares that Turkey is not ready for accession
1995	The EU and Turkey set up a Customs Union
1997	The EU declares that the ten Central and Eastern European countries can join the Union, but that Turkey is still not ready. Turkey freezes the relations with the EU
1999	The European Council officially recognizes Turkey as official candidate for EU-membership
2001	The EU formally asks Turkey to limit the political power of the Turkish army
2002	Election of the AKP government (of Prime-Minister Erdogan), under which Turkey has undergone considerable political reforms
2004	Turkey signs Treaty to abolish death penalty October: European Commission presents positive report on Turkey's political reforms December: European Council decides that the accession negotiations with Turkey are to be officially opened on the 3rd of October 2005
2005	October: accession talks with Turkey symbolically opened

Hence, the Turkish perspective towards an EU-Membership indicated a slow and steady progress. During the European Council in Copenhagen in 2002, it was concluded that 'if the European Council in December 2004, on the basis of a report and a recommendation from the Commission, decides that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria, the European Union will open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay' (Presidency Conclusions Copenhagen European Council, 12 and 13 December 2002: 5). This recommendation-report was provided by the Commission in October 2004 and was considerably positive towards Turkey's progress on the political Copenhagen criteria. It presented a three-dimensional strategy of reinforcing and supporting the reform process in Turkey, setting out the indications for the conduct of accession negotiations and strengthening the dialogue between the European Union and Turkey (European Commission 2004).

As a result of this positive Commission-report, the Dutch EU-Presidency was able to conclude that 'the European Council welcomed the decisive progress made by Turkey in its far-reaching reform process and expressed its confidence that Turkey will sustain that process of reform. Furthermore, it expects Turkey to actively pursue its efforts to bring into force the six specific items of legislation identified by the Commission' and that 'in the light of the above and of the Commission report and recommendation, Turkey sufficiently fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria to open accession negotiations provided that it brings into force these specific pieces of legislation' (Presidency Conclusions Brussels European Council, 16 and 17 December 2004: 6). On the basis of a negotiating framework which was approved by the then 25 EU member-states and Turkey, and which consists of the ground rules for the negotiation process, accession negotiations were finally opened on the 3rd of October 2005. Yet, as stated in the framework: 'These negotiations are an open-ended process, the outcome of which cannot be guaranteed beforehand' (Negotiating Framework Turkey 2005: 1).

2.2 Turkey's EU-Membership and the EU's 'Enlargement Fatigue'

The political and public debate on the possible EU-accession of Turkey and the concerns that are being expressed with respect to the question of whether Turkey is able to join the EU, reflect broader doubts about EU enlargement in general (Economist 2005a). Whereas previous enlargement rounds are perceived as being truly European success stories, it seems as if the EU is losing its appetite for further enlargement. Brussels suspended the first stage of the accession talks with Serbia, and whereas both countries eventually joined the EU by the beginning of this year, the decision on the EU-accessions of Bulgaria and Rumania had been gradually postponed. In fact, after the accession of the ten Central and Eastern European countries, and especially after the public rejection of the European Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands, many EU member-states are faced with growing concerns on the future and limits of European enlargement (Economist 2005b). Recent public opinion polls of the Eurobarometer also show that European citizens are becoming more critical towards further EU expansion, as in the autumn of 2005 only 49% of the respondents in the 25 current member states are in favour of further enlargement (European Commission 2005b: 29).

As the recent Eastward enlargement shifted the EU borders far to the East, concerns are expressed about the finality of EU expansion and questions are raised about whether the borders of the EU should coincide with the borders of the European continent, while leaving unanswered the question of where these borders are situated (Zielonka 2002: 1). According to the EU Constitutional Treaty 'the Union shall be open to all *European states* which respect its values and are committed to promoting them together' (Article 1 Constitutional Treaty).

However, it could be argued that it remains unclear what – geographically, historically or culturally – defines a *European* state, and hence, the EU seems to be unable to outline the finality of its expansion. As Zielonka (2002: 7) argues: ‘On the one hand, there is no ‘natural’ border of Europe based on history, geography or culture that the Union could simply adopt as originally stipulated by the Treaty of Rome. On the other hand, fixing borders through a process of political bargaining is complex, costly and conflict-ridden’.

Already in 1993, the EU member-states made an attempt to overcome these problems by developing formal criteria on the basis of which it could be determined whether or not a country can join the EU. According to these Copenhagen-criteria, EU enlargement depends on a country’s fulfilment of certain political requirements as having a well functioning democracy, rule of law and respect for human and minorities rights; the fulfilment of the economic criterion of having a well functioning market-economy; and a country’s full implementation of the *acquis*. However, as the EU has expanded its vision further to the East with the start of the accession negotiations with Turkey, and in addition, Albania, Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina as potential future candidate countries, questions are raised about whether these criteria form a sufficient basis to decide whether a country is inherently European and whether it could *in principle* become an EU-member.

In fact, as the debate on the possible accession of Turkey shows, despite such well defined and clearly stated criteria, Turkey is being evaluated in a much more critical and strict way, and the debate on Turkey’s bid for EU-Membership is obscured by concerns that even go beyond these objective accession criteria (Boudewijn en van Grinsven 2004: 437). In order to contextualize and balance the debate on Turkey’s EU-membership, this paragraph offers an overview of the argumentations that are being adopted by both the advocates and opponents of Turkey’s EU-accession.

Geography

As the debate on the geographical borders of Europe has not been solved, there remains considerable confusion about whether Turkey *geographically* belongs to the European continent. Whereas Turkey was accepted into the Atlantic Alliance – which would suggest that Turkey is believed to be positioned on the European continent – Turkey was also accepted into the Central Treaty Organization, which stretches eastwards across Iraq and Iran to Pakistan (Wallace 2002, in: Zielonka 2002: 79). This confusion about the continental positioning of Turkey has made opponents of a Turkish accession argue that Turkey is not fully European in geographical terms, but only slightly European, as the largest part of Turkey is situated on the Asian continent.

Democratization and Human Rights

In the period leading up to the December-2004 agreement, most emphasis was being put on Turkey's fulfilment of the political Copenhagen-criterion. As stated, the political criterion requires that a candidate state must have the institutions to preserve and protect democratic governance, rule of law, human rights and minority rights. As the Commission published a positive report on Turkey's progress on these policy areas (European Commission 2005c), accession negotiations with Turkey have been opened in October 2005. Whereas this would imply that with respect to these issues, Turkey meets the European standards, concerns are still raised about the actual implementation and the functioning of Turkey's adopted laws. In addition, continuous difficulties as Turkey's consistent refusal to recognize the Armenian genocide in the beginning of the 20th century and continuous violations of the Kurdish minority rights have resulted in principle objections against Turkey's EU membership.

In addition, the Cyprus question remains to play a significant role in both the political and public debate. In fact, Cyprus has been – and still is – one of the main obstacles to the relationship between the EU and Turkey, as Turkey continues to refuse the formal recognition of the state of Cyprus. Whereas the Ankara-agreement for setting up a Customs-Union between Turkey and the EU member-states of course implicitly requires the recognition on behalf of Turkey, problems are not solved, as for many countries it remains inadmissible that Turkey does not recognize all members of the Union.

Institutions

Another central issue in the enlargement-debate is the concern that EU-expansion will make the EU politically and institutionally unmanageable. For example Christian Noyer, former vice-President of the European Central Bank (ECB), stated that an enlarged EU faces severe problems in terms of decision-making, as the interests of 'newcomers' may diverge significantly from the existing member-states (Noyer 2000: 1). This concern was one of the main motivations behind the last bid for EU Treaty reform with the Constitutional Treaty. As the Laeken Declaration clearly states, the main challenge that the EU faces is how to 'improve the efficiency of decision-making and the workings of the institutions in a Union of some thirty Member States'. These concerns tap into the 'deepening and widening' debate of the EU, as it is feared that 'an enlarged European Union might lead to a standstill in integration or even an unravelling of the degree of deepening achieved so far' (Noyer 2000: 2). In fact, with the French and Dutch public rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in 2005, future enlargement could imply serious risks of *overstretch* as it would be the first time that the EU is faced with 'widening' without any perspective on 'deepening' within the near future.

The political-institutional concerns about the *absorption power* of the EU are extremely relevant when it comes to the debate on the accession of Turkey, as negotiations with Turkey are shaped by 'the Union's capacity to absorb Turkey' (Negotiating Framework for Turkey, 2005: 3). Hence, whereas this condition was not explicitly set during the 1993 Copenhagen summit, the ability of the EU to remain effective and coherent after enlargement, is set as additional criterion when it comes to the accession of Turkey. As Turkey would become the EU's largest member state in population terms, soon after accession (Hughes 2004: ii), concerns are being expressed about the political institutional impacts. Questions are raised of whether the Union is ready for such a big country to join (Economist 2005c), and what the impact will be on the voting procedures in the Council and the European Parliament (Boudewijn en van Grinsven 2004: 437).

Geo-Politics

An important argument of the advocates of Turkey's EU-membership, for example expressed by President of the US, has been the possible bridge-function that Turkey could fulfil between the EU and the Middle East (Boudewijn en van Grinsven 2004: 436). Hence, following this argument, it is exactly because of Turkey's borders with the Middle-East, Caucasus and the Black Sea that it could fulfil a bridge-function, which will increase the Union's range of interests in these 'difficult' regions (Hughes 2004: ii). In addition, as the EU's enlargement policy is considered to fulfil an important pushing role in Turkey's process of democratization, it is believed that Turkey's democratic reforms might spill-over to the Middle-East, creating more stability and security in the region.

However, there is no consensus with respect to this line of reasoning and the same geopolitical argumentation is used by opponents to point out that Turkey should not join the EU because of the geopolitical challenges of Turkey's continental positioning. As Guérot, official from the German Marshall Funds of the US has stated: 'Further enlargements would bring the EU to the border of some unstable and dangerous regions and, thus, create a need and opportunity for the EU to act as a peaceful and prosperous anchor of stability' (Guérot 2004: 2).

Economics

Whereas Turkey has accomplished considerable economic progress, widespread poverty and regional inequality are two main challenges that the country faces and Turkey does not yet fully meet the economic Copenhagen criterion of having a well functioning market economy (Hughes 2004: 10). This has raised concerns about the economic impact of a Turkish accession. It is feared that the accession of Turkey would be extremely costly for the current

EU Member-States, as Turkey's economic situation will make it eligible for significant budget transfers from the Union (Hughes 2004: ii). It is for this reason that Guérot comes to argue that 'Turkey can be a member of a geo-strategic EU, but not of the redistributive EU as it exists now' (Guérot 2004: 2).

However, in its advice to the Dutch government, the AIV stated that whereas the macro-effects of a Turkish accession would be limited, the micro-positive-effects would be considerable as regional trade and investment will grow (AIV 2004: 22). In addition, the SER (2004) published a report on the economic implications of a Turkish accession, and came to the conclusion that from a socio-economic perspective, there are no serious objections to a Turkish EU-accession. In particular, the EU could benefit from the young Turkish population, as many EU member-states are faced with a growing ageing population. Yet, whereas potential migration could be seen as a positive effect of the Turkish accession, migration is a sensitive political issue in the former EU-15, with 'public opinion easily stirred against it' (Hughes 2004: 16). Whereas many European leaders have stated that with respect to Turkey, there might be long transition periods to some policy-areas (i.e. free movement of persons) concerns about huge migration flows from Turkey to the richer European member-states are still deeply rooted (European Commission 2005a: 161).

Culture

It could however be argued that the debate on Turkey has been predominantly shaped by cultural motivations. In fact, as official criteria such as geography or the economic and political Copenhagen criteria seem to provide no definite answer to the question of whether Turkey could be considered as a European state allowed to join the EU, other criteria such as Turkey's history and culture, play an extremely important role in the discussion on Turkey's bid for EU-Membership. In this context, opponents of a Turkish accession refer to Huntington, who has argued that cultural norms and values are important for the effectiveness and survival of any form of regional cooperation, as they provide feelings of mutual trust on which cooperation is essentially based (Huntington 2003: 139). According to this view, the EU derives its existence from the shared norms and values that it inhibits, and on the basis of which the identity of its members is formed. With respect to the question on the borders of Europe and the limits of EU expansion, EU Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn, seems to share this cultural perspective, as he stated that 'the map of Europe is defined in the mind, not just on the ground. Geography sets the frame, but fundamentally it is values that make the borders of Europe' (Rehn 2005).

In his book 'The Clash of Civilizations', Huntington (c.f. 1996, 2003), provides a clear benchmark to determine these European borders, as he states that 'Europe ends where Western Christianity ends and where the Islam and Orthodox Christianity begin' (1996: 170). In fact, Huntington points to a 'clash' between the Christian Western civilization and the Islamic civilization, as the Islamic tradition is argued to be inherently incompatible with Western norms and values as democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights (2003: 199). And indeed, the Huntington-thesis has been consistently interpreted to motivate that Turkey – with a predominantly Muslim population – does not belong to the EU.

As widespread as this argumentation may be, the question is whether it can be appropriately applied to Turkey's EU-accession. Even if the EU has long left the stage of being a mere functional form of international cooperation, it constitutes at most an (imperfect) political Union and not a cultural 'community of values' as such. While some argue that a shared European identity is required to sustain the EU as a political community, it is clear that at present this is absent, as the current EU member-states seem more heterogeneous than a 'community of values' would allow. As indicated in article 6.1 of the TEU: 'The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States'. These are political principles that appear independent from specific culture or religion. Such a reading is reinforced by article 10 of the EU Charter of Basic Rights that asserts the 'freedom of thought, conscience and religion'. Indeed, Burgdorf (2004) even argues that exactly these fundamental political principles that are so expressly embraced by the Union would be put at stake were it to neglect its moral duty to fulfil its previous promises towards Turkey.

Concluding Remarks

In this section, concerns about Turkey's EU membership were placed within the context of the more general debate on EU-enlargement and emphasis has been put on specific issues at stake when discussing Turkey's chances of becoming an EU member. Notwithstanding the official accession criteria, it became clear that Turkey is being evaluated on many other criteria that have no clear role in the formal decision-making. In fact, whereas the question of whether Turkey inherently belongs to Europe was already answered during the 1993 Helsinki summit, this issue is still raising many principle concerns within the public and political debate. In addition, although religion should not be a benchmark according the European Treaties, questions are being raised about the compatibility of the Turkish Islamic tradition with the European values. Moreover, the fact that such issues as geography and religion remain to play an important role within the political and public debate on Turkey, suggests that these are persistent and of a more principle nature.

3 THE EMBEDDING OF TURKEY'S EU-MEMBERSHIP IN DUTCH POLITICS

As citizens of the EU's founding member-states were long characterized by a so-called 'permissive consensus' (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970) and mainly relied on the political elites in developing their opinion on European issues, Dutch EU policies were long depoliticized and technocratized and agreed upon without thorough public consultation and contestation. However, in the months before and after the Referendum on the European Constitutional Treaty, concerns were being raised about this way of Dutch EU policy-making, and it was suggested that the Dutch political elites could no longer be supportive of all EU policy, without taken into account concerns of its electorates (Thomassen 2005: 64-65). In fact, as currently the Dutch public does not seem to be very supportive of Turkey's possible EU membership and the issue of Turkey seems to be deeply 'embedded' and contested within Dutch public debate, it could be questioned whether traditional processes of depoliticization still offer legitimate decisions on this specific issue of the Turkish EU-accession.

According to Hix (2006, in: Hix and Bartolini 2006: 10) politicization of European issues has some important positive side-effects by enhancing the accountability and legitimacy of the EU. In fact, political competition allows citizens to identify the leading and rival policy positions of the political elites and provides them with choice, which could be seen as a precondition for the democratic process. As Hix claims: 'Without battles and the potential of losing, citizens cannot distinguish between rival leaders, and so cannot work out which leaders they sympathise with, and so hope will win the battle, and which they loathe, and so hope will lose' (Hix 2006, in: Hix and Bartolini 2006: 10). Following this line of argumentation, it would be interesting to identify the level of politicization of the Turkish issue within the Dutch political arena. Therefore, the focus of this paragraph is twofold. In the first section an in-depth analysis will be provided of the way in which the government position to support the start of the accession talks came into being. Secondly, it will be identified whether the Dutch political parties in general provided the Dutch electorate with clear choices, and hence, whether clear political battles on the Turkish issue did take place.

3.1 The position of the Dutch Government

As decided during the Copenhagen summit on the 13th of December 2002, the EU had to agree upon a date on which the accession negotiations were to be started by the end of 2004 – provided that at that date, Turkey sufficiently fulfilled the political Copenhagen criteria. Knowing that at that time, the Netherlands would hold the EU Presidency, the Dutch Prime-Minister Balkenende – who was not very supportive of explicitly setting a date on which negotiations could start, and consistently declared that Turkey must first meet the political

Copenhagen criteria (Wynia 2005: 2) – knew beforehand that he had to shoulder the responsibility to make a big step forward in the Turkey-EU relations. Yet, the role of the EU-Presidency put the Dutch delegation into an ambiguous position, as on the one hand being the guardian of the national interests and obliged to take into account public opinion, and on the other hand, of being responsible to lead the December negotiations to a successful end. And indeed, the role of EU-Presidency provided the Dutch delegation with an advantageous bargaining position in the decision-making process on the EU-level, by putting pressure on the Commission to include some of the Dutch cabinet's reserves¹ with regard to Turkey's progress on the political and economic Copenhagen criteria in its October-report (Wynia 2005: 3). However, the fact that Balkenende was responsible for the EU-agreement on Turkey, made it legitimate for him to be selective towards public opinion, as at all time during the EU-negotiations, the Dutch reputation as consensus-builder was at stake.

This ambiguous and advantageous double position of the Dutch Prime-Minister during the EU decision-making process enabled the Dutch government to await the Commission's report on Turkey in October 2004 and to not express any political position on the issue before that time. In fact, coming up with an explicit Dutch strategy on Turkey could have seriously undermined the Dutch bargaining position during its Presidency, as the Dutch cabinet was deeply divided on the Turkish issue. In fact, as a report of the European Stability Institute (ESI) (2006) concludes, the Dutch (governmental) debate on Turkey is best understood as a process of consensus-building, which resulted in a very moderate position towards Turkey's EU-membership – known as the 'strict but fair approach' (ESI 2006: 2) – of supporting an eventual Turkish EU accession, but at the same time critically monitoring and assessing the progress that the country makes with respect to the Copenhagen criteria.

Indeed, in the period between February and December 2004, the accession of Turkey has been point of severe discussion within the Dutch cabinet (Wynia 2005: 3), as the Dutch ministers firmly disagreed on the question of whether the EU should open negotiations with Turkey in the nearby future. Main supporter of Turkey's EU-membership was Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Bot, who had been ambassador in Ankara from 1986 to 1989 and retained strong ties with the country (ESI Report 2006: 3). Bot was assisted by his colleague, state secretary of European Affairs, Atzo Nicolai, who was also considerably supportive of a Turkish EU-membership. Nicolai consistently stated that because of the long history that Turkey and the EU member-states share, it would be improper if the negotiations would not be followed up by eventual membership (Nicolai 2004a). In a speech at the symposium 'Turkey and the EU: Looking Beyond Prejudice' on the 4th of April 2004, Nicolai clearly outlined the position that the Dutch cabinet would carry out during the summit in December

of that year, stating that: 'Turkey can count on the Netherlands, during its Presidency, to do its utmost to ensure a fair and objective decision. Religion will not be an issue. Our motto will be, "a deal is a deal" ' (Nicolai 2004b: 4).

However, despite of these promising words, other members of the Dutch cabinet were not convinced by this message, and some even consistently opposed a Turkish accession. Whereas Veerman (Agriculture) and de Geus (Social Affairs) – both members of the Christian Democratic Party (CDA) – argued that the accession of such a big Islamic country as Turkey was inconsistent with the with the European Christian heritage, Remkes (Internal Affairs), Hoogevorst (Health Policy) and Zalm (Financial Affairs) – all members of the VVD – opposed a Turkish accession out of economic motivations, as they feared the possibility of huge migration flows from Turkey to the current EU member-states and extremely high costs for the richer EU member-states (Volkskrant 2004b: 2).

To some extent, it is remarkable that the divisions within the Dutch cabinet were crosscutting the parties themselves, and hence, a clash between the parties did not take place. Nonetheless, Prime-Minister Balkenende faced a serious problem with not having his cabinet on one line, as agreement on Turkey had to be reached during the December summit. Within the Christian Democratic Party (CDA), Balkenende had to take away the principal concerns about Turkish Islamic tradition. In a speech to the EP, Balkenende moved away from these concerns and stated that: 'We must not allow ourselves to be guided by fear, e.g. of Islam. Raising barriers to any particular religion does not fit in with Europe's shared values. Our opposition should be directed not against religions but against people and groups misusing their religion to get their way by force. Islam is not the problem. Muslims, Christians and people of other beliefs can live together perfectly well. The problem is not religion but misuse of religion to sow hatred and intolerance and to repress women' (Balkenende 2004: 6). This vision was shared by state secretary Nicolai, who stated that: 'the dividing line between Christianity and Islam does not coincide with the borders of Europe' (Nicolai 2004b: 2).

To some extent, the clear rejection of religion as criteria against which Turkey should be judged, has been clearly formed by a report of the WRR 'The European Union, Turkey and the Islam', published in June 2004, which took up the question of whether the fact that the majority of the Turkish population is Muslim, raises barriers for the accession of Turkey into the EU. Basic conclusion of the WRR advice is that it is improper to exclude Turkey of membership on the basis of religious motivations (WRR 2004: 166). In addition, practical concerns that played a role in the political and public debate about Turkey's fulfilment of the political and economic criteria, as also expressed by some of the ministers, were indeed taken

up by the Dutch government. In fact, in a letter to the Dutch Parliament, Bot and Nicolaï spoke out their appreciation towards the Commission-report – published in October – and agreed on the special criteria – as long transition periods with respect to some policy-areas, as for example the free movement of labour – that were requested by the Commission (TK 23987, nr. 41). In addition, both the AIV (Advisory Council on International Affairs) (2004) and the SER (Social Economic Council) (2004) published reports on the economic implications of a Turkish accession, and came to the conclusion that from a socio-economic perspective, there would be no serious objections to a Turkish accession.

As the December summit approached, divisions within the Dutch cabinet were restrained, and consensual agreement was reached on the conditions by which the Dutch cabinet was willing to support the start of the negotiations. In a speech to the EP Balkenende stated that ‘the decision must be arrived at honestly, under the ground rules to which we previously, in 2002, firmly committed ourselves. That means strict application of the criteria laid down, but without inventing any new criteria’ (Balkenende 2004: 6). In a letter to the Dutch Parliament, the cabinet stated that it followed the Turkey-Report of the Commission, and that the negotiations would take a long time and a date for accession is by not guaranteed. Only when Turkey implements six specific pieces of legislation, Turkey would sufficiently fulfil the Copenhagen criteria and negotiations can be opened (TK 29800 V, nr. 61). Whereas this position was much more moderate than Bot and Nicolaï consistently carried out, it was a founded position, on which consensus could be reached within Dutch politics and by which the Dutch Presidency was able to reach agreement among the EU-leaders (Wynia 2005).

3.2 Positions taken up by Dutch political parties

The issue of the Turkish EU accession came to be only slowly politicized within the Dutch parliamentary debate, as it was only in November 2004 that the first debate within the Dutch Parliament took place that explicitly dealt with the accession of Turkey. Moreover, a short glance at the positions taken on by political parties on the decision to start the negotiations with Turkey, shows that the most intensive debate and competition took place *within* each of the mainstream political parties and less *between* political parties. In fact, whereas the parties in government appeared to be clearly internally divided on the issue – only D66 consistently supported Turkey’s EU membership – it is remarkable that the political parties in opposition did take on a clear position of either consistently supporting or opposing Turkey’s EU membership. To provide a more in-depth analysis of the debate on the Turkish issue in Dutch politics, this section presents a short overview of the positioning on Turkey of the Dutch political parties.

The Christian Democratic Party (CDA)

Whereas Prime-Minister Balkenende and Minister of Foreign Affairs Bot – both members of the Dutch Christian Democratic Party – were consistently supportive of Turkey's EU membership, other members of the CDA were much more critical towards a Turkish accession. However, whereas opposition of the CDA in the Dutch cabinet was mainly motivated by religious concerns and some CDA colleagues in the cabinet openly expressed some principle concerns about the predominant Muslim population, opposition of the CDA parliamentary fraction was predominantly motivated by political issues. In fact, the fundamental concerns was explicitly rejected by the CDA colleagues in parliament and the chairman of the parliamentary fraction, at that time Verhagen, clearly stated that religion *should* not play a role in the debate on Turkey's EU accession (Volkskrant 2004a: 2).

Nonetheless, the Parliamentary fraction of the CDA remained critical towards Turkey's progress on policy areas as human rights, respect for – religious – minorities and democratization. In the parliamentary debate on the state of affairs in the EU in November 2004, member of the CDA parliamentary fraction van Dijk stated that whereas the fraction of the CDA does not have any principal objections against Turkey's EU-membership, it would indeed oppose the intention of the Dutch government to support the start of the negotiations with Turkey, as, according to van Dijk, the time is not right for such a big step forward (TK 21ste Vergadering: 1219). This critical attitude towards Turkey's EU-Membership was shared in a report published by the Foreign Policy Commission of the Christian Democrats, in which it was stated that whereas Turkey's EU-membership is a fair possibility, Turkey's reforms with respect to the political Copenhagen criteria, still lack thorough progress (CDA Foreign Policy Commission 2004). Yet, whereas the report – which was carried out by Member of the European People's Party in the European Parliament (EP) Eurlings – was subject to severe criticism and amending in the European Parliament, this critical attitude characterized the view of the CDA in the months before the European council in December 2004.

However, after the triumph that party-prominents Balkenende and Bot had accomplished during the December summit, it seemed no longer appropriate for the parliamentary fraction of the Christian Democrats to not openly commit to the position taken on by the Dutch EU-Presidency. Hence, whereas the parliamentary fraction expressed its regret with regard to its perception that the Dutch delegation made too little efforts to push for the additional political criteria that were pleaded by the fraction, the fraction openly complimented and congratulated the Dutch cabinet with the December-agreement, indicating a clear shift in the Christian Democratic parliamentary fraction.

The Liberal Party (VVD)

The other main party in government, the VVD, was also clearly divided on the Turkish issue. Whereas state secretary of European Affairs Nicolai consistently supported Turkey's EU membership, and played an important mediating role during the December European Council – stating that 'a deal is a deal' (Nicolai 2004b: 4) – some of his colleagues in both the cabinet and the Liberal Parliamentary fraction were not convinced, by pointing to the high financial costs that Turkey's membership would bring about (Trouw 2004: 14).

However, besides clear economic concerns about the Turkish accession, other members of the liberal party expressed more fundamental concerns either about Turkey's geo-political positioning, the institutional implications or Turkey's cultural heritage. In this sense, former European Commissioner Bolkestein became the prominent opponent of Turkey's EU membership, arguing that: 'The Accession of Turkey is important in itself but also for the consequences. For if one lets on Turkey, how could one refuse the Ukraine, Belorussia and Moldova, which surely are more European than it. Enlargement may therefore well lead to a European Union of close to forty members. What sort of Union would that be?' (Bolkestein 2004: 5).

Within the parliamentary fraction there were also clear divisions between supporters and opponents of a Turkish EU accession. In fact, in September 2004, the Turkish issue was one of the main reasons why for Wilders, former MP for the VVD, left the party as he refused to support the pro-attitude of his party-associates. Fraction leader van Aartsen clearly moved away from the anti-Turkey sentiments, stating that his party did not have any principal objections against Turkey's EU membership (Van Aartsen 2004, in: NRC Handelsblad 10 September 2004).

Political Parties in Opposition

In contrast to the main governing parties, the parties in opposition did take on clear and consistent positions on Turkey's bid for EU membership. The parties on the left, the Socialist Party (SP), GroenLinks and the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA), were clear supporters of a Turkish EU accession, arguing that Turkey should be firmly assisted in achieving the Copenhagen criteria (TK 21ste Vergadering). In contrast, the smaller conservative parties, the ChristenUnie and the Reformist Party (SGP), consistently rejected Turkey's EU membership because of religious motivations. In addition, the LPF argued that the Turkish Islamic religion would even enhance the insecurity in the region and eventually in the EU (TK 21ste Vergadering: 1233). However, the most prominent opponent of Turkey's bid for EU

membership has been Wilders, who created his own political party (Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV)) after leaving the liberal party. Wilders consistently stated that Turkey is too big, too poor and too Muslim, and not even geographically and historically belonging to Europe (TK 30309, nr. 6). In addition, Wilders consistently proclaimed that the Referendum on the European Constitution in June 2005 should be connected with the question of the possible Turkish accession (NRC Handelsblad 2004a: 3).

Concluding Remarks

Hence, whereas Turkey's aspirations to join the EU have led to firm political dissent within the Dutch political arena, it is striking that the political debate on the Turkish issue only started in November 2004. Moreover, during this parliamentary debate many political parties still focused on the question of whether Turkey could in principle join the EU, whereas it could well be argued that at that time this question was highly irrelevant. This view was clearly expressed by Rouvoet, fraction leader of the ChristenUnie, who expressed its regret to the fact that the questions about the borders of the EU and about whether Turkey is inherently European were already discussed during the 1999 summit in Helsinki, when the decision was made to offer Turkey the candidate status (TK 21ste Vergadering: 1225). All main political parties agreed upon these conditions and exceptions by which negotiations could be started, providing the Dutch cabinet with a clear mandate for the December 2004 summit.

4 THE EMBEDDING OF TURKEY'S EU-MEMBERSHIP IN DUTCH SOCIETY

At the time when the Dutch EU-Presidency was charged with the responsibility to lead the negotiations on the Turkish-issue to a successful end, the Dutch government faced a citizenry that was rather sceptic towards a Turkish EU-accession. Whereas the role of the EU-Presidency had provided the Dutch government with important opportunities to put pressure on the Commission to take up some serious concerns of the Dutch public in its October-report, the Dutch citizens did not at all seem convinced about the role played by their government in welcoming Turkey into the accession negotiations (Wynia 2005: 4). In fact, according to opinion polls from the Dutch public opinion researcher de Hond (2005a), 52% of the Dutch citizens were dissatisfied with the way in which the Dutch government handled the issue of Turkey during its EU-Presidency. In addition, earlier opinion polls indicated that 42% of the citizens held the opinion that the Dutch citizens should have been consulted by way of a Referendum before the actual negotiations would have started (de Hond 2005b).

Yet, in order to give some insights into how the issue of the accession of Turkey was embedded in Dutch society, this paragraph offers an overview of Dutch public opinion – both in terms of general *support* and public *perceptions* – towards the accession of Turkey and of how the decision to start the negotiations was being communicated – both in terms of general media *attention* and the *content* of the coverage – to the Dutch citizens². To analyse the structure of the public perceptions and the content of media-coverage, it is examined to what extent specific *frames* can be identified that were dominant in both debates. As already argued in paragraph 2.2., a first inductive focus on the debate on Turkey's possible EU-Membership shows that the possible EU-accession of Turkey has a multiple-dimensional character, and both supporters and opponents refer to the same dimensions by when expressing their opinion on the issue. In this paper, these dimensions are referred to as *frames*, which, following Gamson and Modigliani (1989: 3), are defined as 'a central organizing idea (..) for making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is at issue'. Hence, in this paper, I argue that with respect to the Turkish issue, these *frames* are being used by both citizens and the media to understand and make sense of this specific issue. On the basis of the first inductive analysis on the issues that are related to Turkey's EU-Membership, I have established ten frames, each highlighting a specific dimension (economic, institutional, geo-political, political or cultural) and a value-judgement in terms of a positive or negative evaluation. In paragraph 4.1.2 and 4.2.2 it will be analysed to what extent these frames were present in both the public and media debate (for operationalization see appendix 1 and 2).

4.1 Public Opinion on Turkey's EU-Membership

Since 1973, the European Commission has been monitoring the evolution of public opinion in the Member States towards an extensive amount of topics, in the form of Eurobarometer surveys which are published two times a year in spring and in the autumn³. In the past few years the topic of EU-enlargement has gained considerable attention and from 1999 onwards special emphasis was put on the possible enlargement with Turkey. In this section, these Eurobarometer surveys will be used as main source to identify how Dutch public opinion towards EU-enlargement with Turkey was structured, both in terms of their general support for Turkey's possible EU-Membership (4.1.1.) and in terms of the perceptions that Dutch citizens held towards the issue (4.1.2.). In addition to the Eurobarometer surveys, some opinion polls of the Dutch public opinion researcher De Hond are used, since they provide additional information on the Dutch perceptions towards Turkey. A last source of information is provided by the results of the survey that was done at the request of the Dutch government, 'Nederland in Europa' (hereafter: NiE), in which Dutch citizens were asked about their opinion towards the EU, and in which special emphasis was put on the issue of EU-enlargement.

4.1.1 Public Support

As it shows in figure 1, in the period between 2001 and 2004 a majority of the Dutch public has been supportive of EU enlargement. What is more, Dutch public support for EU-enlargement had always been around or slightly above EU-average. However, from 2001 onwards, the Standard Eurobarometer surveys indicate a gradually decline in support and whereas the Dutch citizens are still much more supportive of the EU's enlargement policy than citizens of for example France and Austria (European Commission 2005b, Annexes QA32.4), from the autumn of 2004 onwards, the Dutch citizenry even seem to be slightly more opposed towards EU-enlargement than the average European citizen⁴. In addition, as figure 1 also shows, whereas both the Dutch citizens and the EU citizens in general appeared to be considerably divided on the enlargement issue in the period between 2001 and 2002, the distance between the supporters and opponents gradual decreased from 2003 onwards. In addition, in the Netherlands, the amount of respondents that seemed to be indifference towards the enlargement question decreased considerably and in 2005, only 6% of the respondents did not know what to respond to the EB enlargement-question, indicating that in the Netherlands most citizens have developed a well established opinion towards EU-enlargement.

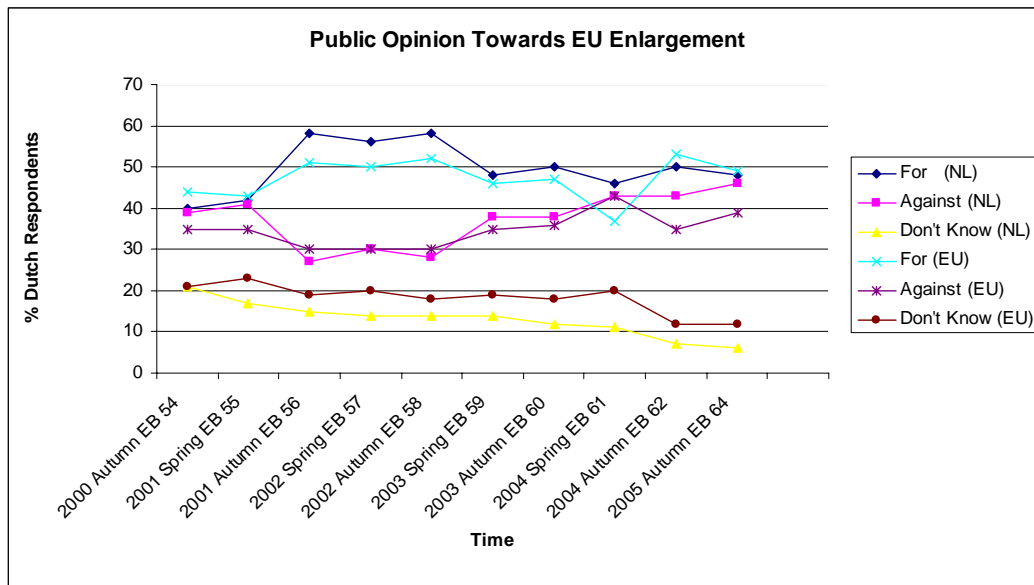


Figure 1: Public Opinion towards EU-Enlargement

In fact, according to the Flash Eurobarometer survey on the results of the Referendum on the European Constitution on the 1st of June in 2005, EU-enlargement was one of the issues that the Dutch citizens took into account in casting their vote. Moreover, 6% of the Dutch respondents even said to have rejected the Constitution because they opposed further EU-enlargement (European Commission 2005d: 15). This sceptic attitude towards further EU-enlargement is supported by the ‘Nederland in Europa’ survey, published in May 2006, in which it is emphasized that Dutch citizens cast serious doubts on the EU’s enlargement policy and believe that the time is not right for further enlargement (NiE 2006: 18).

However, with regard to EU-enlargement Dutch citizens are highly selective and the Eurobarometer surveys show huge variations in support for various possible accessing-countries (figure 2). Whereas in 2005, Dutch support for EU-memberships of Norway and Switzerland – who are not even likely to join the Union – lay around the 90%, only around 50% of the Dutch respondents said to be in favour of the accessions of Bulgaria and Rumania, who have in fact joined the EU in 2007. Moreover, among all presented countries in the Eurobarometer 64 survey, Dutch support for the accession of Turkey is lowest and lies around the 40%, which is even lower than support for countries as The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, this negative Dutch perception towards Turkey’s EU-membership is supported by the ‘Nederland in Europa’-survey that was done by request of the Dutch government, according to which 52% of the respondents said to be opposed to Turkey’s EU-membership, even when Turkey fulfils all the Copenhagen-criteria (NiE 2006: p. 21).

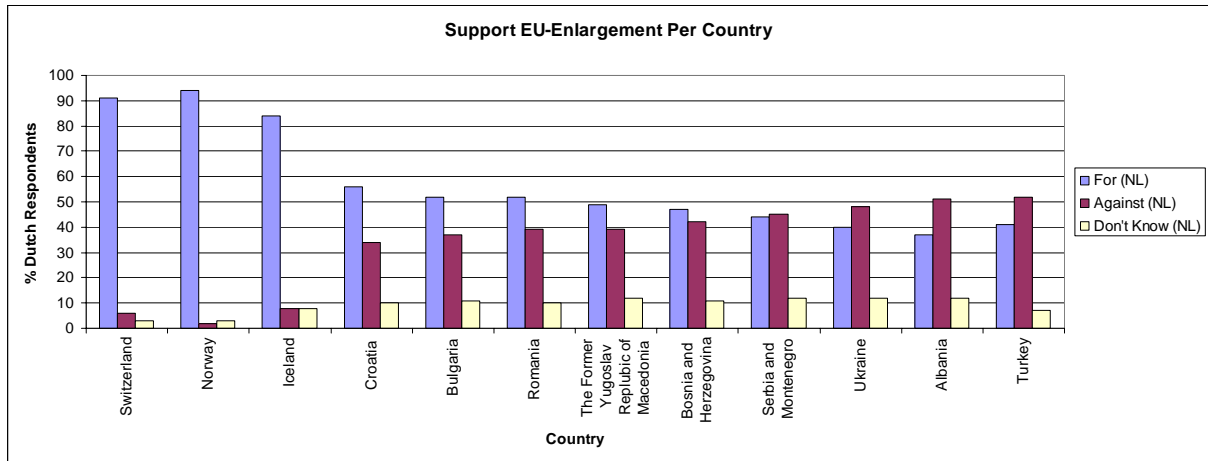


Figure 2: Support for EU-Enlargement per country, Source Standard EB 64 (Autumn 2005)

As indicated in figure 3 on the over-time-development of Dutch public opinion towards the accession of Turkey, Dutch support for Turkey's EU-membership has still always been slightly above EU-average and mainly consistent over time. However, whereas in 2000 the amounts of respondents supportive of and opposed to Turkey's membership were almost equally divided, the differences between supporters and opponents slightly increased from 2001 onwards. As it also shows in figure 3, at the same time the amount of respondents that were not able to answer the EB enlargement-question decreased, indicating that in the Netherlands most citizens have developed a more explicit opinion towards Turkey's possible EU-Membership.

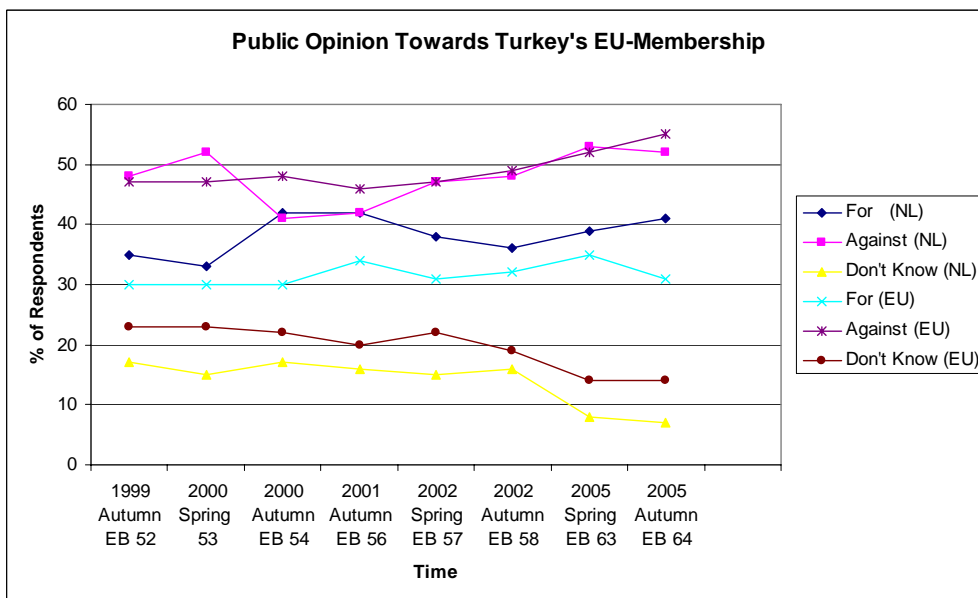


Figure 3: Public Opinion towards Turkey's EU-Membership

The above presented pattern is supported by opinion surveys on the possible Turkish EU accession from the Dutch public opinion researcher De Hond – which were held in 2004 and 2005 – in which Dutch respondents were asked in-depth about their attitude towards the Turkish issue. According to these opinion polls, opposition towards a Turkish accession has consistently been around the 55%, whereas only around 30% of the Dutch respondents said to be in favour of Turkey’s EU-membership (figure 4). However, similar to the Eurobarometer surveys, it seems that as the December summit of the European Council approached, Dutch citizens have become more able to express an explicit opinion on the possible Turkish accession, indicating that the issue of Turkey became more embedded.

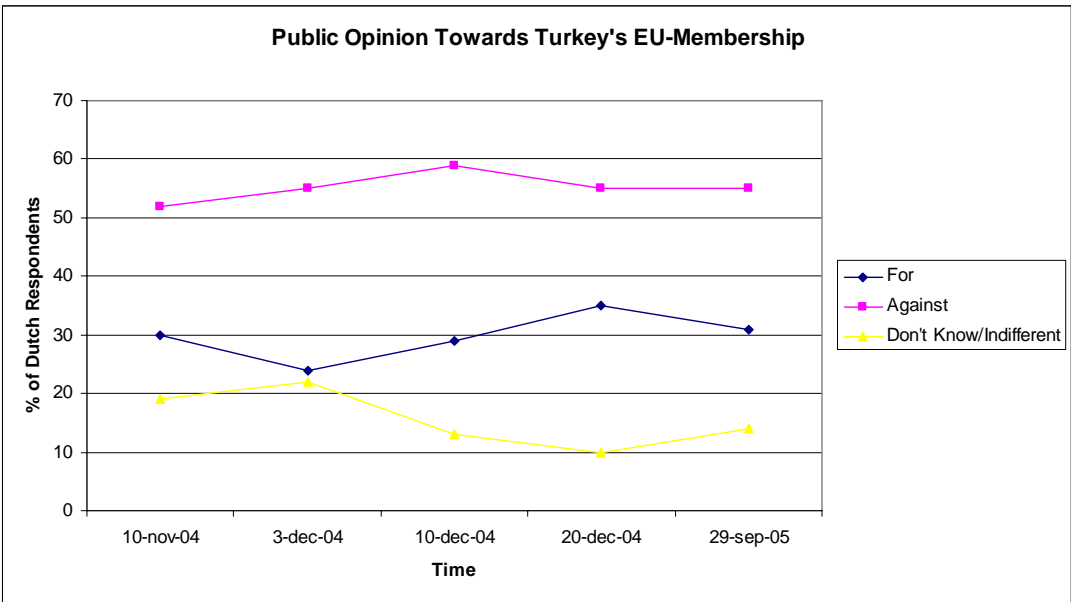


Figure 4: Public Opinion Towards Turkey’s EU-Membership, Source: Maurice de Hond: www.peil.nl

Furthermore, the opinion polls from De Hond provide an overview of the relationship between support for the Turkish accession and party-voting behaviour. As it shows in figure 5, support for Turkey’s EU-membership was highest among voters of D66 and GroenLinks. In addition, besides voters of Wilders and the LPF, the PvdA-, VVD- CDA-voters appeared to be the most critical towards the possible Turkish accession. These findings can be considered as striking, as the political debate within both the VVD and the CDA was eventually geared towards a positive position on Turkey’s EU-membership and the PvdA had always been explicitly supportive towards the Turkish issue. Hence, with respect to Turkey’s possible EU-Membership it can be argued that there appeared to be a serious gap between the main political parties and their electorates.

De Hond also specifically asked the respondents about their opinion towards the decision to start the negotiations with Turkey on the 3rd of October in 2005. As it shows in figure 6, there is not much difference between support for Turkey’s EU-membership and for the actual decision to start the negotiations with Turkey on the 3rd of October. Remarkably, whereas voters of the CDA were rather sceptic or even explicitly opposed to the possible Turkish EU-accession, they appeared to be in favour of the decision to start the negotiations. Of course, this could well be related to the fact that the decision was reached under the Dutch Presidency after intense mediating and negotiating of both Prime-Minister Balkenende and Minister of Foreign Affairs Bot – both members of the CDA. This view is supported by another poll of de Hond, which shows that 67% of the CDA-voters agreed that the reached agreement on the date on which to start the negotiations could be considered as an important success of Prime-Minister Balkenende (De Hond 2004d).

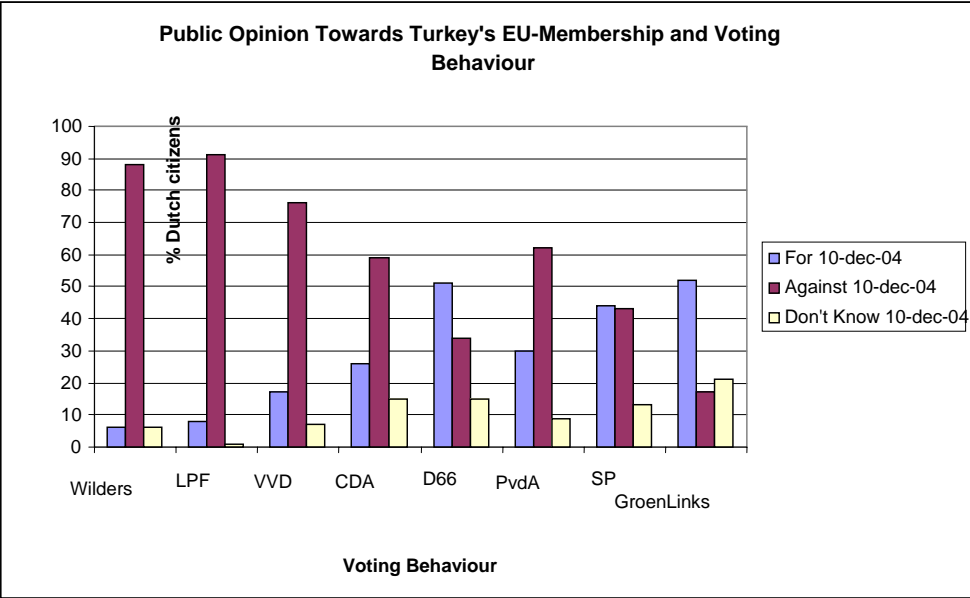


Figure 5: Public Opinion towards Turkey’s EU-Membership and Voting Behaviour. Source: Maurice de Hond, 10 December 2004 www.peil.nl

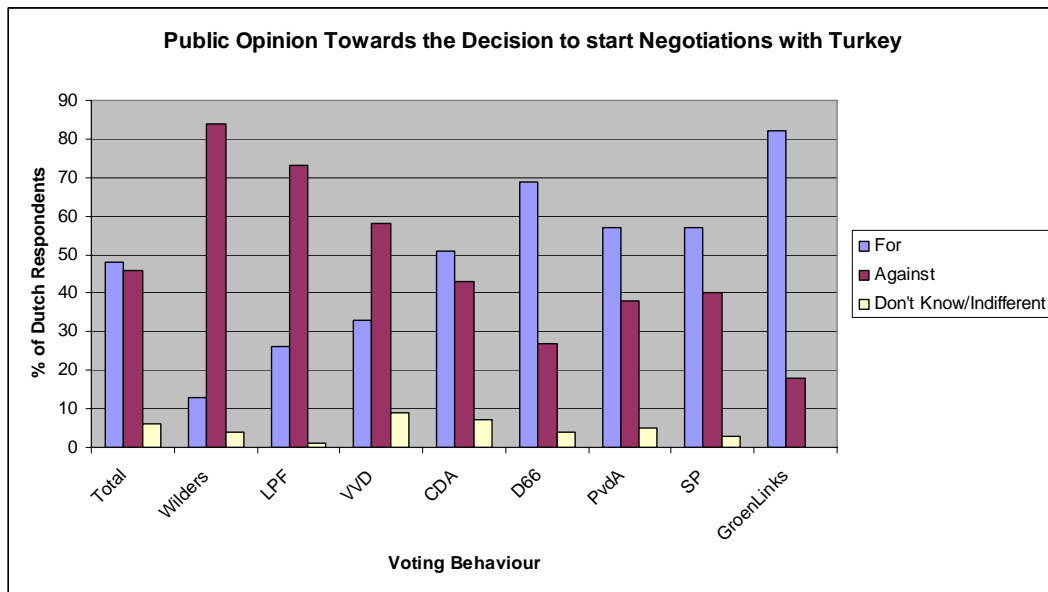


Figure 6: Public Opinion towards the Decision to start the Negotiations with Turkey. Source: Maurice de Hond, 20 December 2004 www.peil.nl

4.1.2 Public Perceptions

In the spring of 2005, the European Commission conducted an in-depth analysis on citizens' perceptions towards the possible Turkish accession (European Commission 2005a). The results are shown in figure 7. As the figure shows, the main concerns of the Dutch respondents were related to Turkey's fulfilment of the political and economic Copenhagen criteria. Over 90% of the respondents agreed that Turkey must improve its human rights situation. In addition, economic concerns appear to be widespread as more than 80% agreed that the country must improve the state of its economy. In addition, the Dutch respondents did not seem convinced by the strict limitations on the free movement of labour from Turkey that were imposed at the request of the Dutch government, or by the argumentation that potential immigration can be beneficial to preserving the Dutch generous social security system, as 60% of the respondents expressed concerns about increasing immigration, and a same amount of respondents did not see the benefit of a rejuvenation of the European population. In addition to these political and economic reserves, the Dutch public also appeared to be rather sceptic about Turkey's cultural heritage and the question of whether Turkey is inherently a truly European country. In fact, 60% of the respondents felt that Turkey does not historically belong to Europe and half of the respondents agreed that the cultural differences between Turkey and the EU are too significant to allow for its accession.

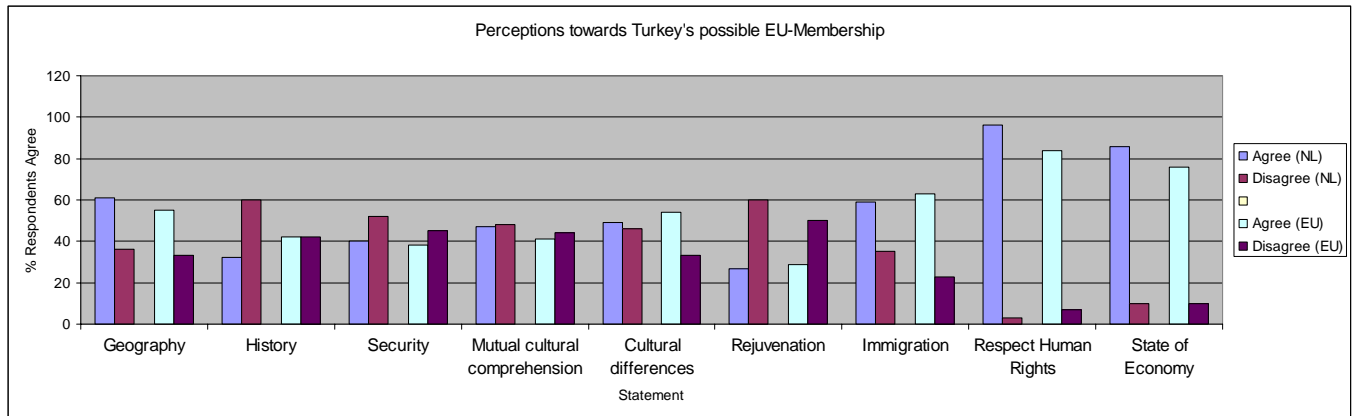


Figure 7: Public Perceptions towards Turkey's possible EU-Membership

This strong focus on the negative cultural frame is supported by the results of the surveys conducted by Dutch public opinion researcher De Hond. As it shows in figure 8, De Hond's opinion polls suggest that opposition towards Turkey's EU-Membership was mainly motivated by a strong belief that the Turkish culture and religion are incompatible with the European norms and values and that Turkey is not inherently European. This broad concern about the Islamic character of Turkey could be subscribed to the terrorist attacks on New York and Madrid, and of course the murder of Theo van Gogh, which all had a negative impact on the public perception towards the Islam (NRC Handelsblad 2004b: 9). In line with the results of the Eurobarometer survey, a third broadly shared concern was related to the perceived potential for increased immigration.

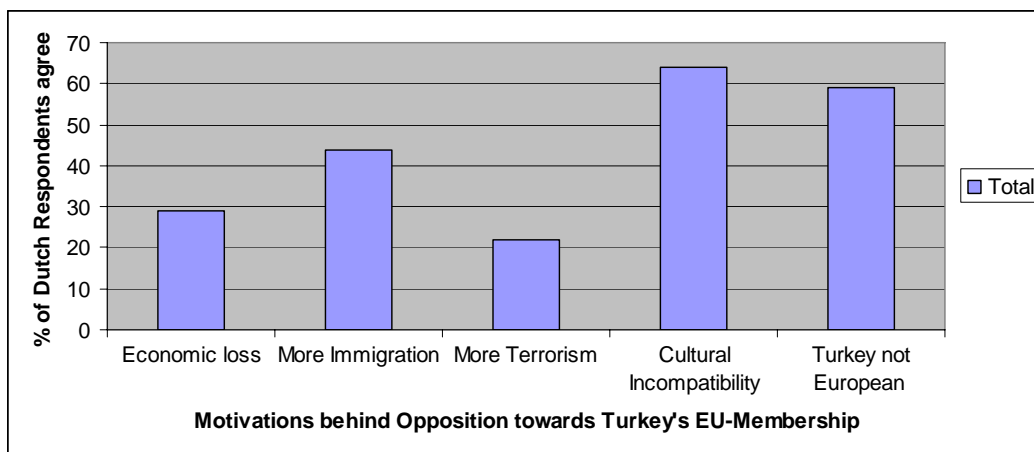


Figure 8: Public Motivations behind Opposition towards Turkey's possible EU-Membership

Source: Maurice de Hond, 20 December 2004, www.peil.nl

Finally, the NiE-survey, conducted at the request of the Dutch government after the public rejection of the European Constitution, also asked about the respondents' motivations whether or not to support a possible Turkish EU-Membership. Interestingly, according to the NiE-survey, most concerns expressed by the Dutch public were related to the impact that a Turkish accession might have on the EU decision-making process, as 54% of the respondents agreed that the decision-making procedure should be changed before Turkey can join the Union (NiE 2006: 22). In line with the results of both the Eurobarometer-survey and the polls of De Hond, the Dutch respondents were also concerned about the economic implications of the accession of such a poor country as Turkey, as 47% agreed that a Turkish accession would put considerable pressure on the Dutch EU-budget share (NiE 2006: 22). Furthermore, the NiE-survey provides a more nuanced view on Dutch concerns about the cultural aspect of the Turkish issue, as 41% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Turkey can never join the Union because of its Islamic character, whereas another 41% disagreed with this statement. In fact, a differentiated look at the data shows that concerns related to the incompatibility between the European and the Turkish culture are mainly expressed by older male respondents and older low-educated respondents (NiE 2006: 22).

Concluding Remarks

In this section, it became clear that although in the Netherlands public support for Turkey's possible EU-Membership appeared to be much higher than in other EU member-states, Dutch citizens are still rather sceptic towards a Turkish accession. In addition, whereas the main political parties in the Dutch political arena were overwhelmingly supportive of Turkey's possible EU-Membership, the electorate appeared to be much more critical towards the Turkish issue. It is striking that support for Turkey remains low even when Turkey will eventually fulfil the Copenhagen criteria. In fact, this might indicate that the issue of Turkey touches upon some principle concerns, which go beyond Turkey's fulfilment of the objective accession criteria.

These concerns become clear when we take into consideration the perceptions that were held by the Dutch citizenry. When we take together the public opinion surveys of the Eurobarometer, de Hond and the NiE, the following remarks can be made. First, it became clear that Dutch public opinion was characterized by a strong focus on the negative economic frame, as economic concerns played a significant role in the Dutch public debate on the Turkish issue. Dutch citizens seemed to be convinced that a Turkish accession would foster immigration and would imply increasing costs to the European budget and did not seem to believe in the potential economic benefits that a Turkish EU-Membership could imply. In addition, whereas both de Hond and the NiE did not make reference to the Dutch public

evaluation of Turkey's fulfilment of the political Copenhagen-criteria, the Eurobarometer survey revealed a dominance of the negative political frame, indicating a considerable public attachment to Turkey's performance with respect to human rights protection. Finally, the surveys offered an inconsistent image of the Dutch attachment to cultural motivations. Whereas according to de Hond, the lack of public support for Turkey's EU-Membership is mainly due to the cultural character of Turkey, and the public perception that the Turkish Islamic tradition is incompatible with the European norms and values, both the Eurobarometer and the NiE surveys provided a more nuanced view, as the latter indicated that whereas these considerations are indeed extremely important, such a perception is mainly shared by older male and low-educated respondents.

4.2 Communication on Turkey's EU-Membership

In contemporary democracies, media-communication plays an important role in processes of public opinion formation (Habermas 1990). By reading newspapers and watching television, citizens become aware of the issues at stake and the various perceptions that actors have with regard to these issues. Hence, in order to understand more specifically how the issue of the possible Turkish accession was embedded in Dutch society, it is interesting to identify how the debate on Turkey was structured in the Dutch media.

In order to present the nature of the Dutch media-debate and the types of frames used to report on Turkey's possible EU-Membership, I selected three prominent Dutch daily-newspapers, which offer a representative sample of political orientation: the *Volkscrant* (Qualitative national daily newspaper, left-centrist political orientation), *NRC Handelsblad* (Qualitative national daily newspaper, right-centrist political orientation) and the *Telegraaf* (The Netherlands' mostly read national daily newspaper, right-centrist political orientation). For these newspapers, I conducted an electronic search in *LexisNexis*, which offers a comprehensive database on world-wide newspapers, by using the searching-terms *Turkey* and the *European Union* for the period of January-December 2004, as it can be expected that in this period leading up to the European December summit, the national debate on Turkey got to be considerably shaped.

Firstly, in paragraph 4.2.1. it is examined how many newspaper articles were dedicated to the Turkish issue, and whether interesting peaks in media-attention can be identified. Secondly, section 4.2.2. will focus on the content of the news stories that were published in December 2004, and will address the question of to what extent a neutral debate on the possible accession of Turkey took place. Thereafter, those articles that included a certain value-judgement – either positive or negative – will be further analyzed to examine to what extent

the Dutch media presented the Turkish issue along the ten identified frames (see for operationalization appendix 2). For this analysis, I included informative articles as well as articles including readers' opinions, since I believe that in this way both my data-set is maximized and that it will provide a full presentation of the national media-debate on the Turkish EU-accession. In this way, I coded 162 newspaper articles. Finally, paragraph 4.2.3. will go beyond the specific focus on the presence of certain intrinsic frames and examines the extent to which the role and performance of Dutch politicians were discussed in the media.

4.2.1 Media-Coverage

Figure 9 shows the media-coverage of the Turkish accession in the Netherlands in 2004. As it shows, the issue of Turkey gradually gained more media-attention. The first peak in attention can be identified in September, which might be due to the fact that in that month former MP for the VVD, Geert Wilders, left the party because of divisions over Turkey's possible EU-Membership. After September, attention to the Turkish issue dropped. However, in December media-coverage of the possible Turkish EU-accession increased to slightly over 160 articles. In addition, as the figure shows, some variation in media-coverage between the three different newspapers can be identified. In general, the NRC paid the most attention to the possible Turkish accession to the EU, whereas media-coverage of the issue was lowest in the Telegraaf.

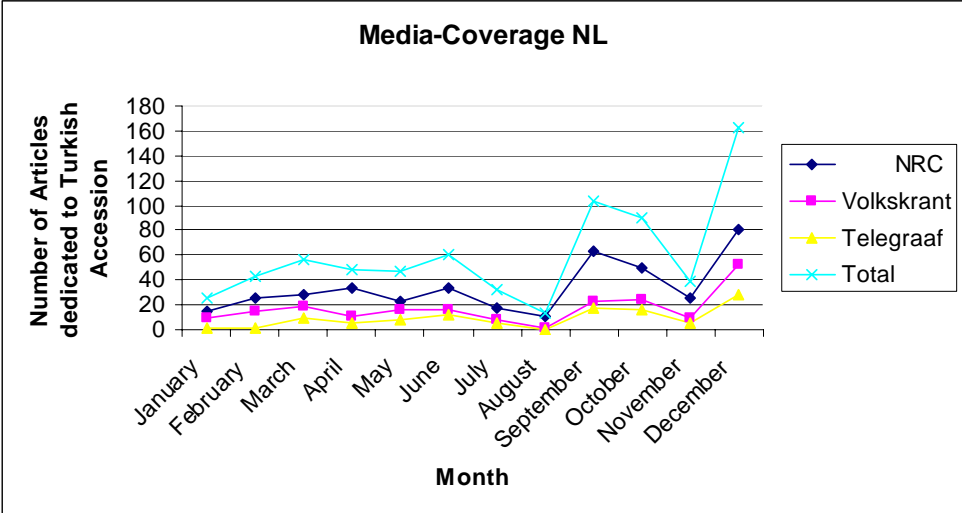


Figure 9: Dutch media-coverage of the possible Turkish accession

4.2.2 Media-Content

The content-analysis of the news-stories on the possible Turkish EU-accession in the month December provides some interesting insights in the character of the Dutch media-debate on Turkey. First of all, as it shows in figure 10, from the ample 160 articles that were published in December 2004 and which explicitly dealt with the Turkey-EU relationship, almost 60% could be considered as neutral, thus highlighting the state of affairs without explicitly referring to a value-judgement in terms of good or bad, or adopting a certain frame. In contrast, 43% of the articles did contain a frame – and hence contained a certain idea on Turkey's EU-Membership. In fact, 15% of the newspaper articles was predominantly positively framed and 28% predominantly negative. In addition, as is also shown in figure 10 this picture appeared to be more or less similar across the various newspapers.

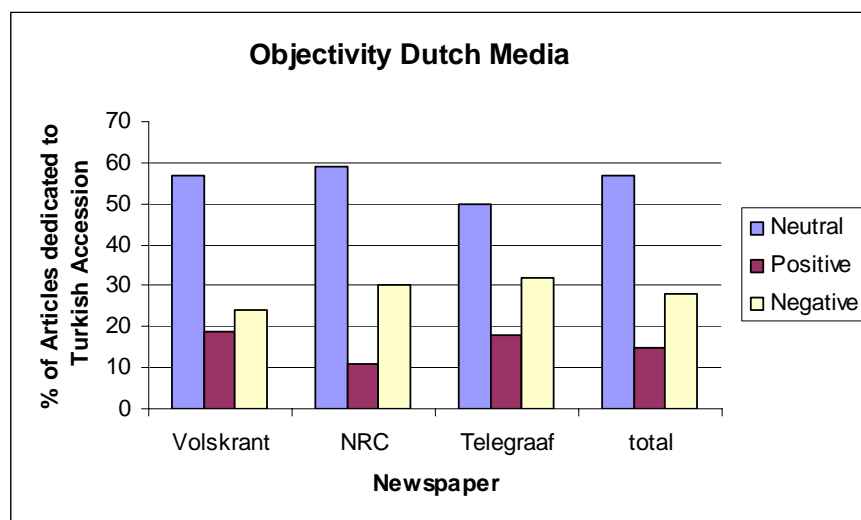


Figure 10: Objectivity of the Dutch Media

It is interesting to examine the tone of those news articles that did contain a certain frame. Figure 11 provides an overview of the various aspects that were being highlighted in the four analysed newspapers. As it shows, the Dutch media debate was mainly framed in terms of Turkey's perceived poor situation with regard to the political Copenhagen criteria and recognition of Cyprus, as more than 35% of articles that included a frame in the Dutch media was dedicated to these issues. For example, the NRC of 17 December 2004 headed 'EU clashes heavily with Turkey over Cyprus; Recognition obstacle at European summit'⁵ and the NRC of 11 December 'Turkish Prime-Minister: No gesture to Cyprus'⁶. Also Turkey's progress on the political Copenhagen criteria was an important issue in the Dutch media-debate. This issue has been predominantly framed in a negative way. For example the Volkskrant of 8 December 2004 (p.6) headed 'the Netherlands demand end of torture'⁷ and the Telegraaf of 20 December 2004 (p.5): 'Christians in Turkey between hope and fear'⁸. At the same time, a

considerable amount of articles was dedicated to counterbalance these perceptions, as 15% of the articles that included a certain frame, was framed in terms of Turkey's progress on the political Copenhagen criteria and highlighted Turkey's accomplished progress on the reforms. Some articles nuanced the picture by arguing that the current EU member-states have little right to make any judgements about Turkey's perceived lack of protection of human rights as for example the Volkskrant of 24 December 2004 headed 'European Union hypocrite about human rights'⁹.

A third important frame in the Dutch media appeared to be the negative cultural frame. However, the differences between negative and positive framing of the cultural aspects are not that significant as in the case of the political frame. As figure 5.1.3 shows, around 15% of the articles that contained a certain value-judgement explicitly highlighted the negative aspects of the Turkish Islam or made reference to a perceived incompatibility between the Islamic tradition and the European culture. In the NRC of 16 December 2004 (p.5), Turkey was considered to be the new 'Trojan Horse of the Islamic World', forecasting considerable problems with respect to the Western-Muslim relationship. However, to some extent these negative images were nuanced by news-items that attempted to counterbalance these perceptions, as for example the NRC of 9 December 2004 (p.9) headed 'Turkish Islam no Threat'¹⁰, and proclaimed that the EU should be open-minded towards the Turkish culture.

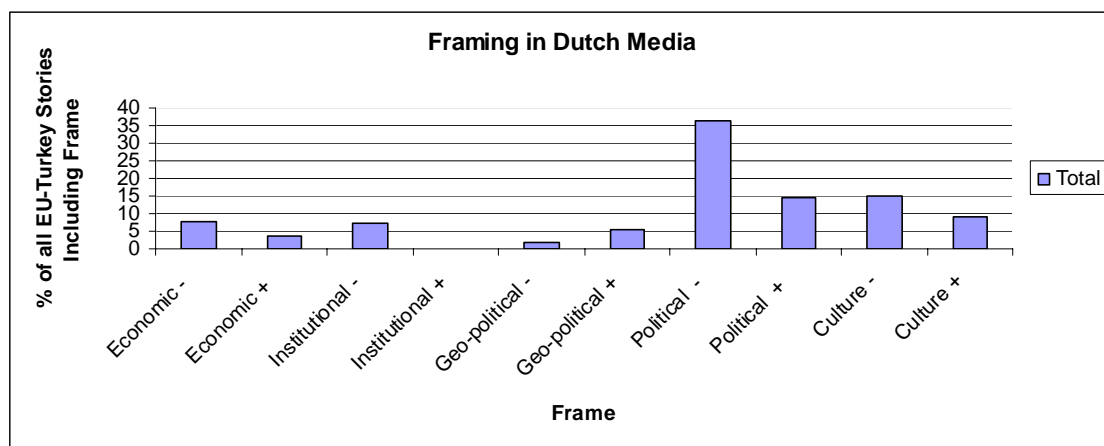


Figure 11: Representation of the various issues highlighted in the Dutch Media

It is interesting to take a short glance at the variations in framing between the different newspapers. As figure 12 shows, there are some interesting differences in the types of frames being adopted by the different newspapers. Whereas the perceived political and cultural implications appeared to be dominant in all three newspapers, and overall these issues were predominantly negatively framed, the Telegraaf appeared to be much more critical towards these issues.

Whereas all newspapers put emphasis on Turkey’s perceived problematic political situation, the Volkskrant focused relatively more on Turkey’s progress on the political Copenhagen criteria. In addition, only the NRC seemed to have made a serious attempt to counterbalance negative cultural perceptions as over 10% of the NRC articles including a frame were dedicated to highlighting either positive aspects of the Turkish Islam or to argue against the perceived incompatibleness between the Turkish and the European norms and values. Interestingly, whereas both the Volkskrant and the Telegraaf were predominantly positive on the geo-political implications (with respectively 10 and 7 % of the articles dedicated to these issues), only the NRC appeared to be predominantly negative on this specific issue (however with only less than 5% of the articles dedicated to this issue). In contrast, whereas economic implications appeared to be of little interest in both the Volkskrant and the Telegraaf, the NRC predominantly negatively emphasised the economic implications of a Turkish EU-accession, as the paper for example headed on 17 December 2004 (p.13) headed ‘Fragile economy, structural problems’¹¹.

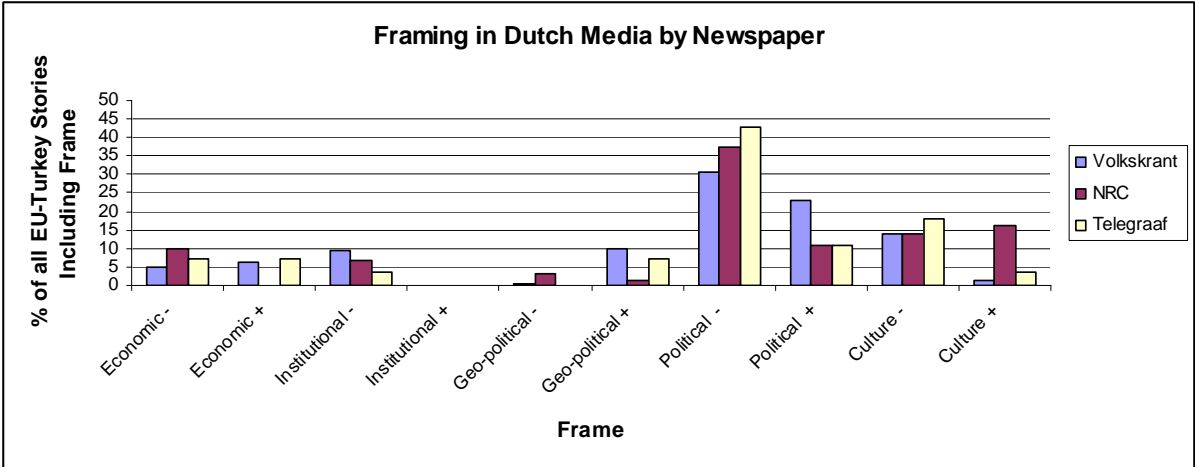


Figure 12: Representation of the various issues highlighted in the Dutch Media

An interesting remark is that the debate on Turkey in the Dutch media was considerably framed in terms of the performance of the Dutch EU-Presidency and the divisions within political parties. For example, the Volkskrant of 30 January 2004 (p.1) headed: ‘Cabinet deeply divided on Turkey: many Ministers against accession to the EU’¹² and the NRC of 16 October 2004 (p.1): ‘Issue of Turkey divides cabinet’¹³. Emphasis was put on the divisions within the VVD, by explicitly highlighting sceptic remarks of Bolkestein and Zalm and former MP for VVD, Wilders (for example Telegraaf 3 September 2004). The divisions within the CDA were also presented, and emphasis was put on both the supportive attitude of Balkenende in the light of the role of the EU-Presidency and the doubts of some CDA-ministers and CDA fraction towards Turkey’s progress on the political Copenhagen criteria.

Concluding Remarks

The coverage of Turkey's possible EU-Membership in the Dutch media gradually increased in 2004, and peaked in the months September and December. As the debate within the media appeared to be rather neutral, there was a small negative bias. Of all articles that did contain a value-judgement, these were generally negative towards Turkey, focusing predominantly on the Cyprus-issue and Turkey's assumed lack of progress on the political Copenhagen criteria. The Dutch media also stressed concerns regarding the compatibleness between the Turkish Islam and the European culture. Positive value-judgements remained to be rather absent and were slightly visible when counterbalancing perceptions towards the negative political and cultural threat frame. Remarkably, many articles highlighted the Turkish case in terms of specificities in the Dutch political context, like the performance of the Dutch EU-Presidency and the divisions in the Dutch cabinet on the Turkish accession.

5 TURKEY'S EU-MEMBERSHIP IN THE FOREIGN DEBATES: A COMPARISON WITH GERMANY AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

Dutch citizens were not exceptional in their scepticism towards Turkey's possible EU-Membership. At the time when the European leaders decided to start the EU-Turkey accession negotiations, European citizens were overwhelmingly negative towards a Turkish accession. Among the European governments, only France and Austria appeared to be the most consistent opponents of Turkey's EU-Membership, as the latter even opted for a looser alternative for full EU-Membership in the form of a 'privileged partnership'. However, in general, the gap between the government position and the views on Turkey as expressed in the public debate, which was apparent in the case of Netherlands, seems to apply for the EU in general, as most governments in the EU explicitly supported an eventual accession of Turkey to the EU, while at the same time facing a sceptical electorate.

This section will outline the national debates on Turkey in two EU-countries, Germany and the United Kingdom (UK), in order to compare and determine the specificity of the character of the Dutch debate and apparent problems with legitimizing the decision to start the accession negotiations in the Netherlands¹⁴. Germany and the UK, since in these countries public support for both the process of European integration and EU-Enlargement varies and differs from public support for these issues in the Netherlands.¹⁵ Given this variation, it is expected that this case-selection offers a representative sample of the general discourse on the EU in the member-states. For each these countries, it will be examined how both public opinion and the debate in the media was structured, in order to determine possible differences with the Dutch debate on Turkey and to identify possible problems of legitimizing the Turkey-decision in these countries.

For these cases, support for Turkey's possible EU-Membership is identified by using the Standard Eurobarometer surveys (numbers 52-64). In addition, attitudes towards Turkey are identified by the in-depth analysis of the perceptions towards the issue as presented in the Standard Eurobarometer 64. For the media-debate, a content-analysis was conducted by using LexisNexis. For each country, I selected the three most prominent daily-newspapers - for Germany: *Die Welt*, *Die Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Frankfurter Rundschau*, and for the UK: *the Times*, *the Guardian* and *the Daily Telegraph* – which offer a representative sample of political orientation (see appendix 3). In this way, I coded 216 German newspaper articles and 34 British newspaper articles.

5.1 The debate on Turkey's EU-Membership in Germany

5.1.1 Political Embedding

The former government of the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (SPD) and the *Grünen*, under the leadership of federal chancellor Gerhard Schröder, had been a consistent supporter of a Turkish EU-Membership. In fact, Germany even opted for an early opening of the accession negotiations in July 2005. This supportive attitude of the German government was predominantly exposed by Schröder and the green foreign minister Fischer and was mainly based on the belief that an accession of Turkey to the EU would form a buffer for fundamental Islamic forces in Turkey (Stiller 2003: 3). As Schröder argued: 'a democratic Turkey committed to European values would be clear proof that there is no contradiction between Islamic faith and an enlightened, modern society' (Expatica 2004). The SPD also pointed to the economic advantages of a Turkish EU-Membership, as Turkey would potentially be a huge market for German exports (Expatica 2004). Yet, whereas the official position of the German government was supportive of a Turkish EU-accession, the main government party the SPD was rather divided on the cultural based motivations of Schröder and Fischer, and some foreign experts within the SPD stated that the 'civil society' in Turkey might not be ready for a full and early EU-Membership. Nevertheless, Schröder successfully kept the cabinet to speak with one voice, and the German cabinet was referred to by the Turkish Prime-Minister Erdogan as fulfilling a key role in the Turkish accession process (Grosse Hüttmann 2005: 35, in: Giannakopoulos and Maras 2005).

The main German opposition party, the CDU, firmly opposed starting the accession negotiations with Turkey. The party leader of that time, Angela Merkel, even opposed full EU-Membership, and instead opted for a looser relationship between Turkey and the EU in the form of a 'privileged partnership' (Stiller 2003). Party prominent Edmund Stoiber even went further in his opposition against Turkey's EU-Membership by arguing that the EU-accession of Turkey would damage the process of political integration within the EU. The opposition of these both CDU-politicians was mainly based on cultural motivations, as they explicitly linked the debate on Turkey's EU-Membership to the perceived failure of the societal integration of the Turkish population in Germany (Expatica 2004). Another argument of the German opponents had been the claim that after Turkey's accession to the EU, Germany would no longer be the biggest EU-member (NOS 2004a). At the same time, as within the SPD, there were also divisions within the CDU, as some CDU-politicians argued that the significant amount of Turkish voters within Germany should not be alienated (Stiller 2003).

5.1.2 Societal Embedding

German public opinion

Figure 13 shows the development of German public support for the Turkish accession. As it shows, opposition to the Turkish accession has consistently been high, and higher than EU-average. In the spring of 2005, opposition increased considerably in comparison to 2002, and lay around the 75%. In addition, the percentage of citizens supportive of Turkey's EU-Membership was much lower, and even below EU-average. In fact, in the spring of 2005, only 20% of the German respondents said to be in favour of a possible Turkish EU-accession. Furthermore, at that time, the percentage of respondents that was indifferent towards the Turkish issue declined considerably as only 5% of the respondents did not know what to respond to the EB-question on Turkey's EU-Membership.

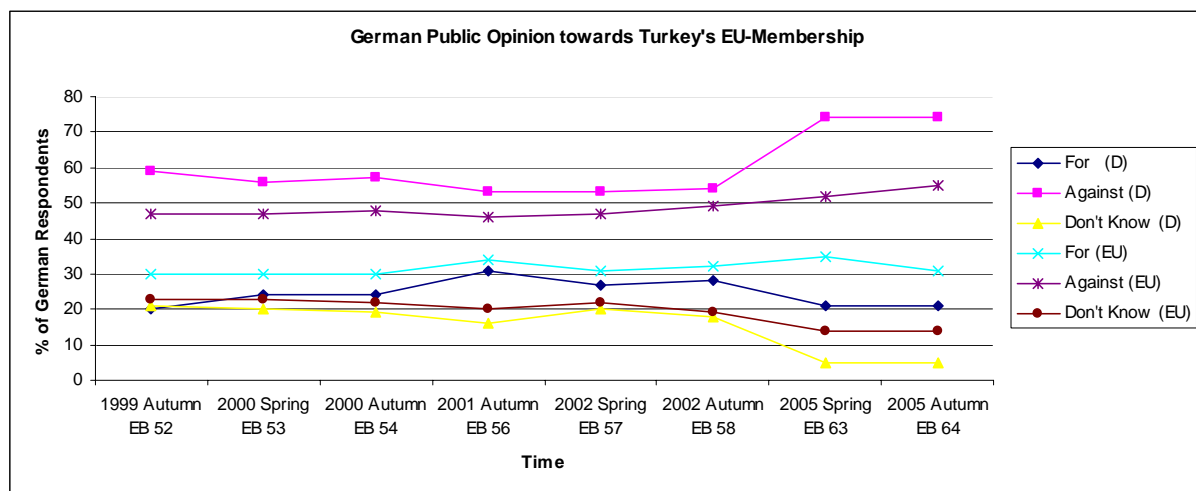


Figure 13: German support for Turkish EU-Membership

Figure 14 presents an overview of German attitudes towards Turkey's EU-Membership as highlighted in the EB 63 survey of spring 2005. The figure supports the picture presented in the previous figure on German public support for the Turkish accession, as agreement on the negative statements is much higher than on the positive statements. Both economic concerns in terms of Turkey's economic situation and possible Turkish migration flows, and concerns about Turkey's fulfilment of the political Copenhagen criteria are well-expressed in German public opinion towards its possible accession. In addition, the cultural dimension of the Turkish accession seems to have played a dominant role as 66% agreed that the cultural differences between Turkey and the EU are too significant to allow for its accession. Also, 60% of the respondents both did not perceive Turkey as historically European and did not feel that a Turkish accession would foster an intercultural understanding and respect between the European cultural and Turkey's Islamic tradition.

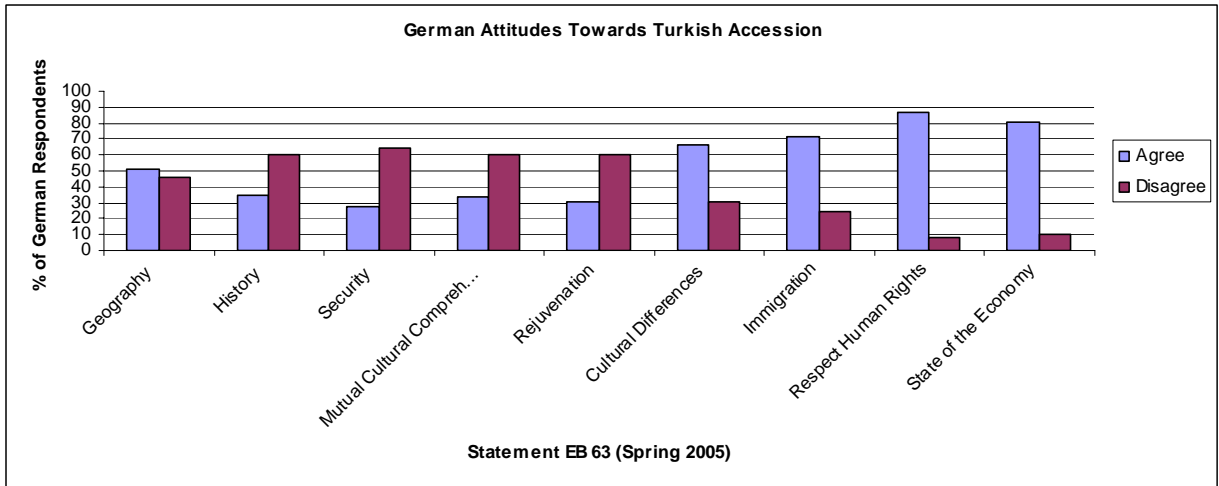


Figure 14: German attitudes towards Turkish EU-Membership

Turkey in the German media

Figure 15 shows the media-coverage of the Turkish accession in Germany in 2004.

As it shows, the accession of Turkey gained gradually more attention in the German media. In addition, the first peak of attention was in October, which was the month in which the European Commission published its report of recommendation on Turkey. In December, media-attention peaked again and in this month, around 215 articles were published that explicitly dealt with the possible accession of Turkey to the EU. However, as it shows, the peak in October was much greater, as in that month over 300 news articles were published on Turkey’s EU-Membership.

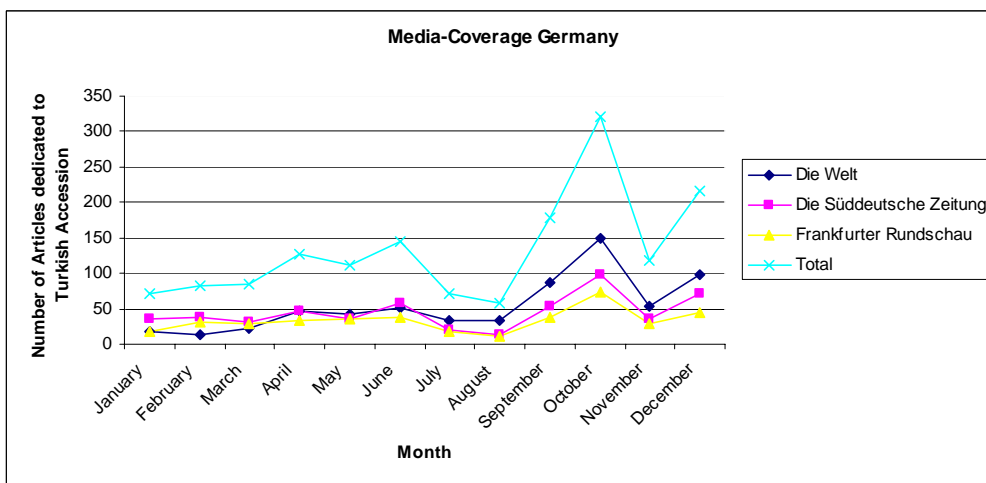


Figure 15: Media-coverage in Germany

The content-analysis of the German newspaper articles in the month December provides an overview of the way in which the German media debate on the Turkish accession developed. As it shows in figure 16, over 50% of the German newspaper articles on the accession of Turkey in the three selected newspapers can be considered as neutral. Of the other 47% of the articles, 18% was framed positively and 29% negatively. In addition, as it also shows in the figure, this picture is remarkably similar across the three selected newspapers.

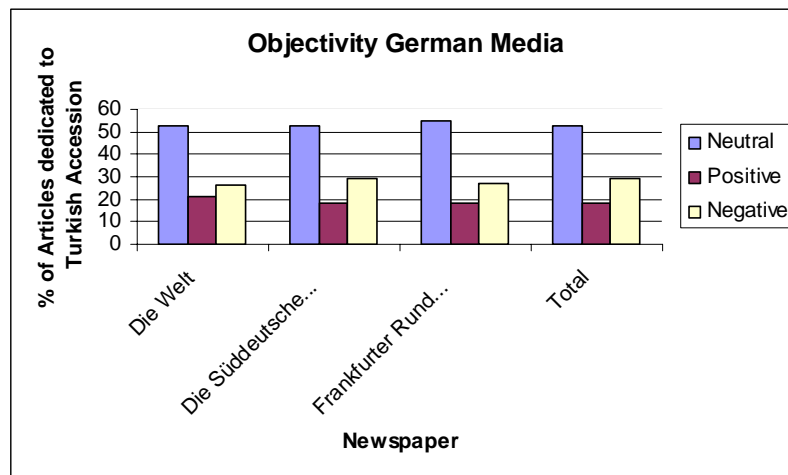


Figure 16: Objectivity German Media

Figure 17 provides an overview of the various aspects that were explicitly being highlighted in the 47% of the articles that did contain a certain value-judgement. As it shows, the debate on Turkey was mainly framed in terms of negative political issues (23%) and negative cultural issues (19%). Articles including the negative political frame put emphasis on Turkey's perceived lack of compliance with the political Copenhagen criteria and its problematic relationship with Cyprus. For example, Die Welt of 19 December (p.7) headed 'Brussels compromise in the last minute: Turkey has to make a lot of impediments'¹⁶ and Die Süddeutsche Zeitung of 17 December (p.1) headed 'On the flying carpet.....does Turkey come to Europe: the road will still be long and difficult'¹⁷. In addition, strong emphasis was put on the cultural aspects of a Turkish accession and perceived problems with the Turkish Islamic tradition. For example, Die Welt of 21 December (p.9) headed 'Authoritarian traditions are not sacrosanct'¹⁸. At the same time, both the negative political and negative cultural frames were considerably counterbalanced, as respectively 10% and 12% of the articles included a positive political and cultural frame.

Whereas some articles pointed to a perceived incompatibility between the Turkish Islam and the European culture, most emphasis was being put on the question what a Turkish accession would imply for the integration of the Turkish Muslim population in Germany, and not so much in the EU in general. This was also the case when the cultural dimension was framed positively (Frankfurter Rundschau, 4 December (p.7) 'Integration: Turkish community criticizes debate'¹⁹). This picture is also identifiable when looking at the negative and positive economic frame, in which respectively 6% and 10% of the articles were framed. In fact, in both cases, the accession of Turkey was mainly perceived in terms of its implications – either positive or negative – for the German economy and business. For example, Frankfurter Rundschau headed on 28 December 2004 (p.13) 'Firms encourage EU- accession Turkey'²⁰ and on 17 December (p.9) 'Economy grows from enlargement-impuls'²¹.

Remarkably, many articles in the German media emphasized the position of the German CDU-CSU, which took a contrasting position to the German Chancellor Schröder. Especially the positions of party-officials Merkel and Stoiber were highlighted. Moreover, many articles highlighted the Turkish case in terms of specificities in the German political context, as for example the German elections in 2005 (Die Welt 15 December 2004, p. 5) and the call of the CDU-CSU for a 'privileged partnership' and German political divisions in this respect (Die Süddeutsche Zeitung 17 December, p. 1).

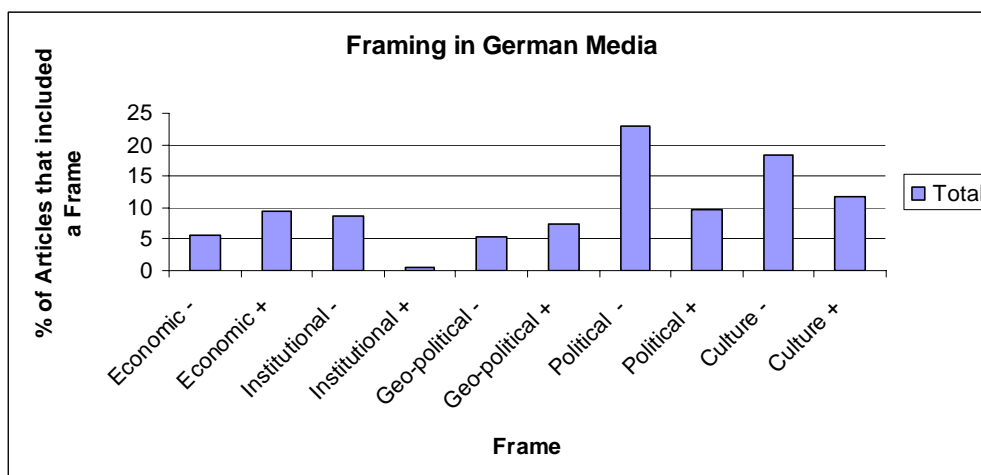


Figure 17: Framing in the German media

Concluding Remarks

The German political arena was deeply divided on the Turkish issue. There had been an intense debate between the government and opposition party, in which the possibility of Turkey's EU-Membership was in-depthly discussed on many controversies and issues (Grosse Hüttmann 2005: 35, in: Giannakopoulos and Maras 2005). In fact, the strong

divisions between the SPD and the CDU resulted in the fact that the issue of Turkey became an important election issue during the Bundestag elections in 2005. In contrast to the Dutch case, divisions *within* the main political parties were successfully 'solved' by the leadership of Schröder and Merkel, and were not explicitly highlighted in the media. Instead, the media debate was characterized by an emphasis on the content of the Turkish issue, with a strong dominant focus on the cultural implications of Turkey's possible EU-Membership. In fact, in both the political and societal debate, these cultural issues played a significant and dominant role and concerns were being expressed about both the compatibility between the Turkish and European culture and the specific implication for the integration of the Turkish Muslim population in Germany as such.

5.2 The debate on Turkey's EU-Membership in the United Kingdom

5.2.1 Political Embedding

The British political arena was characterized by a broad support of a Turkish EU-accession, and both the Labour and the Conservative party backed the December 2004 decision to start the accession negotiations with Turkey in October 2005. In general, the British Labour government had been a consistent advocate of Turkey's possible EU-Membership and played a key role in facilitating the start of the accession negotiations at the agreed date (October 2005). When the accession negotiations were officially opened on the 3rd of October 2005, the UK foreign secretary Jack Straw called it 'truly historic day for Europe and the whole of the international community' (BBC news, 4 October 2005). With this vision, Straw underlined the formal position of the British government, who consistently placed the Turkish issues within the frame of geo-political issues, political stabilization in Turkey, the Balkan and the Middle-East, the transatlantic relations and the global war against terrorism. In British parliament there has been no lively debate on the Turkish accession, and even the Eurosceptic Conservatives explicitly supported Turkey's possible EU-Membership (NOS 2004b).

5.2.2 Societal Embedding

British public opinion

Figure 18 shows the development of British support for Turkey's possible EU-Membership. Whereas the UK has consistently been slightly less supportive of EU-Enlargement than EU-average, it is remarkable that British citizens are generally much more supportive of the Turkish accession than the average EU-citizen. Whereas in the EU-25 opposition against Turkey's Membership is on average much higher than support, this picture has been the other way around for the UK. In the spring of 2005, almost 50% of the British citizens

seemed supportive of a Turkish accession. However, the gap between supporters and opponents was not that high. Furthermore, the amount of 'don't knows' is much higher than EU-average and whereas this number is indeed gradually declining, it might indicate that many British citizens do not have an outstanding opinion towards the issue.

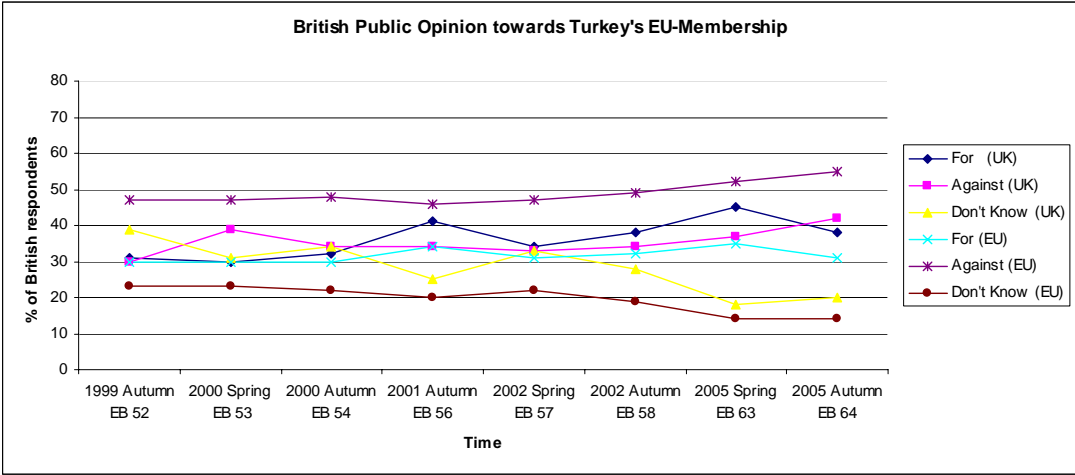


Figure 18: British support for Turkish EU-Membership

Figure 19 presents an overview of British attitudes towards Turkey’s EU-Membership as highlighted in the EB-63 survey. As it shows, the British citizens agreed with both positive and negative statements, confirming the above presented picture that British citizens did not have such an outstanding opinion towards the Turkish accession. Concerns about the Turkish issue were primarily related to Turkey’s progress on the political and economic Copenhagen criteria, as around 80% of the British citizens agreed that Turkey has to improve its human rights situation, and almost 70% agreed that the country should strengthen the state of its economy. However, positive perceptions were also well-expressed in the UK, as a considerable percentage of respondents agreed that a Turkish accession would enhance security in the region. In addition, the British citizens seemed to be fairly positive about the cultural implications of Turkey’s EU-Membership, as 45% of the British respondents agreed that it would lead to a mutual cultural understanding and respect between the European cultural and Turkey’s Islamic tradition. British citizens also seem to be concerned with the institutional implications of enlargement as almost 60% agrees that after enlargement decision-making will be more difficult and institutional reform is necessary.

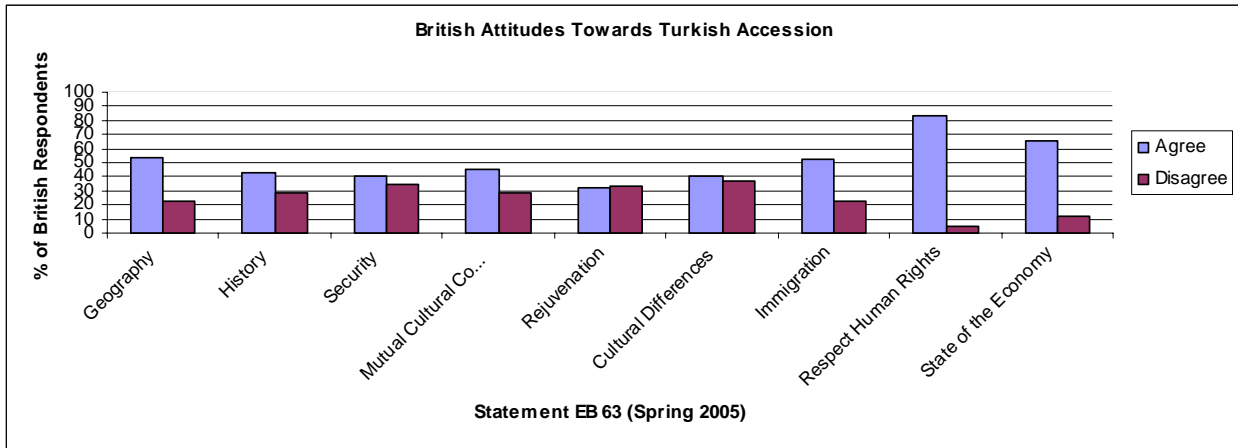


Figure 19: British attitudes towards Turkish EU-Membership

Turkey in the British media

Figure 20 shows the media-coverage in the UK. As it shows, attention to the Turkish accession has been considerably low, and in December only 34 articles were dedicated to Turkey’s possible EU-Membership. However, in the months April, June and October this coverage was slightly higher, and lay around the 45 articles in the three selected newspapers. However, in the other months, extensive media-coverage of the Turkish issue could be considered absent. In addition, there are no considerable differences between the three newspapers, and only the Daily Telegraph produced slightly less news stories on the Turkish accession.

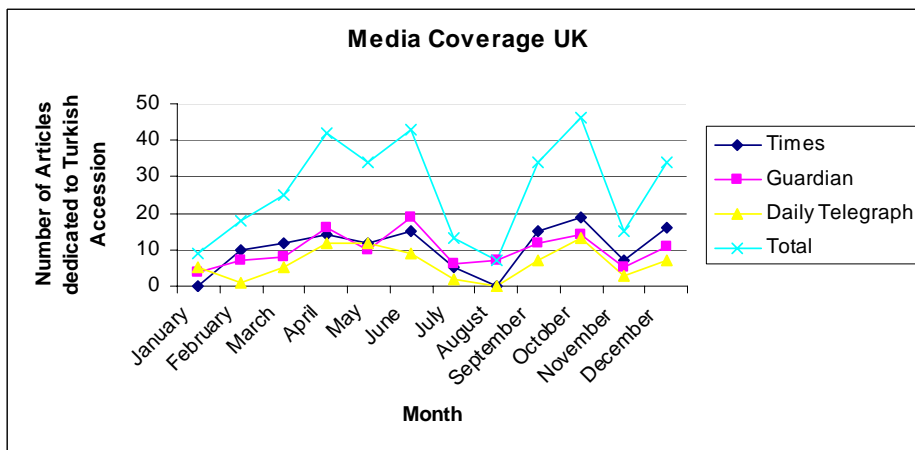


Figure 20: Media-coverage in the UK

A content-analysis of the British newspaper articles in the month December provides an overview of the way in which the British media debate on the Turkish accession developed. It must be mentioned though that these results could be biased, due to the small amount of articles dedicated to the Turkish accession. Figure 21 shows the level of objectivity of the British media. Because of the small amount of articles in British newspapers, the figure only shows the total amount of articles in the three newspapers and will not differentiate between the three newspapers. As it shows, the British media appeared to be rather neutral. Whereas indeed, 30% of the articles were completely neutral and another 70% included a value-judgement, almost 40% was framed positive and around the 30% negatively.

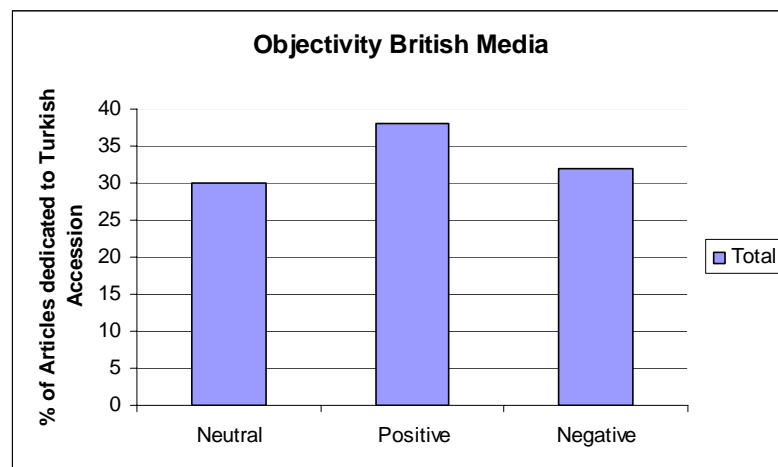


Figure 21: Objectivity British Media

In order to examine the content of the 70% framed articles, figure 22 presents an overview of the adopted frames. As the figure shows, the Turkish debate in the British media was predominantly framed in terms of the geo-political advantages, as around the 22% of the framed British articles included this frame. As it shows, also political and cultural issues appeared to be important points of reference in the British debate, and they were slightly more framed in a negative way. As it shows, the negative political frame was adopted in 15% of the framed British stories on Turkey, and around the 12% adopted the cultural disadvantages frame. However, still an almost equal percentage of articles were dedicated to counterbalance these negative perceptions.

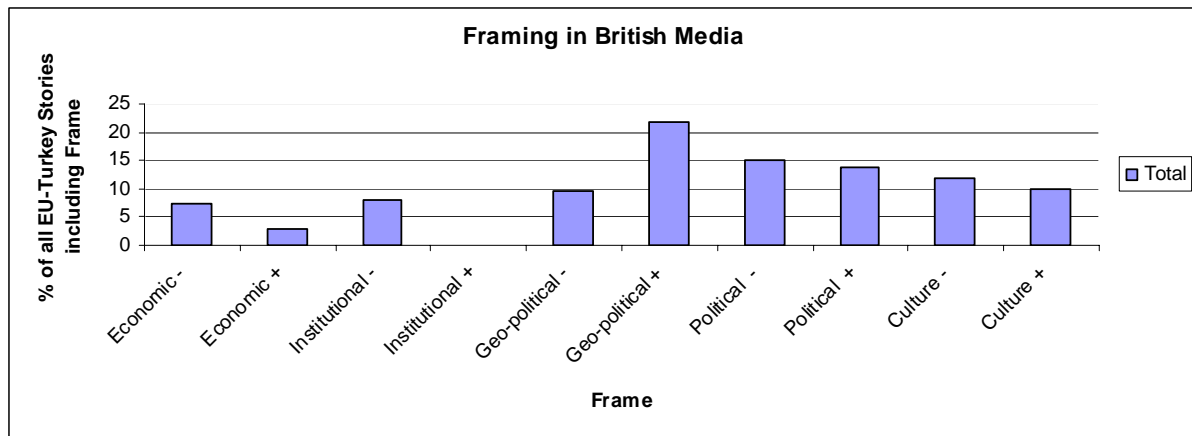


Figure 22: Framing in the British media

Since the coverage of the Turkish issue in the British media was rather low, it is interesting to analyze the content of British news on Turkey in a more qualitative way and yet, a more in-depth look at the content of the British media-coverage of the Turkish issue provides some interesting insights. As it shows in figure 22, a relatively small amount of articles was dedicated to economic and institutional issues. A more qualitative look at the content of the articles that included these frames shows that many articles were framed by a similar constellation of frames, and highlighted Turkey's large, poor and overwhelmingly Muslim population (Times 22 December, p. 30; Daily Telegraph 16 December, p. 11). However, at the same time, this did not imply that the overall tone of the article was negative, as the articles also emphasized the supportive attitude of the British government and the geo-political advantages of Turkey's EU-Membership. In fact, when the articles did include a negative economic, institutional, political or religious frame, they were always highlighted as argumentations of other EU member-states and not of British concern.

Moreover, of the 34 articles on the accession of Turkey, almost half of them explicitly highlighted the supportive attitude of Britain in contrast to other EU-countries and the absence of British dissent towards the Turkish issue. This could well imply that in the UK the debate on Turkey's EU-Membership remained to be bounded to the geo-political advantages of Turkey's Membership and the economic, institutional, political and cultural argumentations that were addressed in other EU member-states, but that did not appear to be important issues within Britain as such. In addition, another interesting remark is that the Turkish accession was not framed by the British media as beneficial for the EU in particular, but more in general for world-peace and the Western – Middle-Eastern relationship. In fact, many British news stories on Turkey also highlighted the interference of the US in the debate and the common position of Britain and the US in this respect (for example the Guardian 14 December, p. 11).

Concluding remarks

The supportive British attitude towards the possible EU-accession of Turkey, must be mainly understood in terms of the British perception that Turkey's EU-membership will be beneficial for increasing peace and security in the world. Remarkably, this perception was shared within both the British political arena, and within the national public and media debate. However, it is questionable whether we can really speak of such a debate, as this positive attitude towards the Turkish issue has not (yet) been subject to clear public and political contestation. In fact, the consensus among the political elites on the advantages of a Turkish EU-Membership might even have prevented the development of a societal debate (Donnelly 2006). As a result, the debate on Turkey's EU-Membership remained to be bounded to the geo-political advantages of Turkey's Membership and the economic, institutional, political and cultural argumentations that were addressed in other EU member-states, like the Netherlands and Germany, did not appear to be important issues within the UK as such.

6 THE POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESS ON TURKEY IN THE NETHERLANDS: CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This paper examined the way in which the political decision-making process on Turkey's possible EU-Membership was embedded in Dutch politics and society. Some insights were provided to the extent to which the Dutch process was 'exceptional' and how it differed from the process in other EU member-states, namely Germany and the UK. In this section, an attempt will be made to connect this analysis to the question whether the Dutch position to support the decision to start the negotiations with Turkey was being sufficiently legitimized.

In line with the conceptualization of the 'Europe in the Netherlands'-project of the WRR, the concept of legitimacy inhibits four specific dimensions: *results*, *representation*, *accountability* and *identification*. Legitimization by *results*, also referred to as 'output legitimacy' (Scharpf 1999), implies that European policies are followed by a certain level of acceptance, in that they are both relevant and effective. Legitimization by *representation*, also referred to as 'input legitimacy' (Scharpf 1999), requires that the electorate is being represented with respect to the specific policy, and that as many relevant voices and interests as possible have been heard within the decision-making process. It inhibits the question of to what extent citizens have been provided with sufficient possibilities to influence the political process by mechanisms of political representation. Legitimization by *accountability* implies that political officials could be held accountable for reached decisions. Finally, legitimation by *identification* implies that there is a link between citizens and the policies that are made in the sense that citizens can in some way identify themselves with the issues at stake.

In order to outline whether the decision-making on Turkey by the Dutch government was marked by certain problems of legitimization, this section proceeds in two steps. First, an overview will be provided on the character of the problem, in the sense that the embedding of the Turkish issue in the Netherlands will be analysed along the three dimensions of legitimization. Emphasis will be put on both the possible legitimacy problems related to the content of the Dutch position to support the decision to start the negotiations with Turkey in October 2005 as well as on possible problems related to the way in which the Dutch position came into being and the identification with the issue. The second step is related to the question of what could have been done to come to a more legitimized position of the Dutch government, and possible counterfactuals are presented that highlight certain possibilities with regard to this question. At this stage of the research, the presented counterfactuals serve as indications of how apparent problems of legitimacy could have been prevented, without fully examining how these counterfactuals might have worked out.

6.1 Problems of Legitimization

Legitimization by Results

As already stated, a policy can be considered legitimate when it is reached with a certain level of public acceptance, and when the output does not disproportionately ignore the interests of minorities. Yet, this level of public acceptance for the position of the Dutch cabinet to support the decision to start the accession negotiations with Turkey in October 2005 appeared to be rather absent. Whereas in the last stage of the decision-making process the Dutch parties in government were overwhelmingly positive towards Turkey's possible EU-Membership and supported the decision to start the accession negotiations, this view was not shared by the majority of the Dutch population, which was overwhelmingly negative towards both issues.

There appeared to be a mismatch between the issues and argumentations addressed by the Dutch government and the aspects that were highlighted in the Dutch societal debate. In fact, the public debate was obscured by concerns and insecurities that have not been sufficiently addressed by the Dutch government. Moreover, there seems to be a broad concern among the Dutch citizens about where enlargement ends and whether Turkey fits into this EU. In addition, there was a general concern about perceived cultural differences and an incompatibility between the Turkish Islamic tradition and the European culture. To some extent, these concerns might be related to broader concerns about Islamic fundamentalism – fed by terrorist attacks in New York and Madrid in respectively 2001 and 2004 – as Bakker (2006: p. 165) has stated that of all European citizens, the Dutch feel the most threatened by the risk of terrorism. In addition, the Dutch public seems not very convinced about Turkey's fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria, and concerns are being expressed about Turkey's standards with respect to human rights protection, and the perceived economic implication of a Turkish accession in terms of increased immigration and excessive costs.

At the same time, it can well be argued that these concerns were not sufficiently being addressed by the Dutch government, which seemed to have been drained away in its own internal debate. Indeed, as the cabinet was internally divided on the Turkish-issue, there was no clear identifiable pro-camp, and the procedural approach of Dutch government of 'a deal is deal' have even might confirmed the notion of the European train that goes on without any reflection. When we compare the Dutch case with the debates in Germany and the United Kingdom, it can be concluded that this mismatch in perceptions was not present in the latter countries, as in both cases government – and politics in general – addressed the same issues as were being expressed in the societal debate.

Legitimization by Representation and Accountability

As it was stated, a policy can be considered democratically legitimate when citizens are being supplied with sufficient mechanisms of representation and possibilities to influence the political decision-making process and when as many relevant voices and interests as possible have been heard within the decision-making process. It entails that citizens have to be provided with the necessary tools in order to make their views heard and to participate in the political debate. In addition, it requires that citizens are provided with clear political choices with respect to a certain issues on which they are able to there vote during election-time. Moreover, mechanisms should be present by which voters can hold the political officials accountable for certain decisions and policies. Hence, in order to answer the question of whether the Dutch position on Turkey suffered from any legitimacy problems in terms of representation and accountability, it is necessary to analyse the extent to which Dutch public opinion was taken into consideration, whether the Dutch politicians provided the citizens with the necessary tools to come up with a well informed position towards Turkey and whether clear contrasting political views were being expressed on the basis on which voters could base their vote and hold the parties accountable.

In the previous sections of this paper it became clear that, with respect to the issue of Turkey's possible EU-membership, the Dutch political parties in general did not appear to be representative towards their electorates. Whereas the main political parties in the Dutch political arena appeared to be overwhelmingly supportive of Turkey's EU-Membership, the electorates of these parties appeared to be much more critical towards the issue. Hence, at least in this respect, it can be argued that there were considerable problems concerning the input legitimization of the Dutch position to support the December decision on opening the accession negotiations with Turkey. In addition, whereas indeed the Dutch government – enabled by the advantageous position of holding the EU-Presidency – was able to pressure the Commission to articulate some of the Dutch concerns within the October Commission Report on Turkey, the emphasis within the Dutch political arena was consistently put on the necessity to reach agreement in December 2004 and to take into consideration the Dutch reputation towards the European colleagues. As a consequence, less emphasis was put on the necessity to take into consideration the increasing scepticism of the Dutch citizenry.

Despite these suggested problems with regard to the formal representation on the Turkish issue, it is also interesting to identify whether the Dutch public was provided with the necessary tools to come up with a well-informed position towards Turkey and hence, how the processes of politicization and communication took place. In this respect, it is striking that politicization on the Turkish issue took place mainly *within* the main political parties, and

clear contestation between government and opposition parties did not take place. In the media, these internal party divisions on Turkey were explicitly highlighted, and strong emphasis was put on a possible split within the Dutch government. Furthermore, there was no clear neutral debate activated by the Dutch government in the sense that all the arguments and counterarguments with respect to Turkey's EU-Membership were equally addressed. In fact, in the media there was a focus on frames that did not coincide with the way in which the Dutch government addressed the issue. Whereas various official reports (WRR, SER, AIV) sought to provide all the arguments and counterarguments, these reports were not sufficiently communicated to the Dutch citizens, and hence, did not find much resonance on the public debate.

In this respect, the political and societal embedding of the Turkish issue in the Netherlands clearly differs from Germany and the UK. In Germany, one could speak of a clear contrast between the formal supportive position on Turkey that was held by the German government, and the position taken up by the main opposition party, the CDU, which was rather sceptical towards the Turkey's possible EU-accession. In addition, whereas indeed also in the German case, the Turkish issue was a cause of – soft – internal party divisions, these divisions were not explicitly highlighted in the German media, and it seems as if the strong leadership both Chancellor Schröder and CDU-leader Merkel, prevented that the divisions became a predominant concern in the societal debate. In the UK, there was a broad consensus among the political elites and the publics on advantages of a Turkish EU-Membership, in terms of international security and transatlantic relations²².

Hence, taking into consideration these international comparative insights, it seems as if the legitimacy problems in terms of representation and accountability can be traced back to clear specificities of the political and societal embedding of the Turkish issue in the Netherlands, where the key-mediating role of the EU-Presidency, internal party-divisions, a depoliticized call for awaiting and following the October Report of the Commission and a clear parliamentary majority supportive of the formal government position, prevented the cultivation of an intense political debate on the pro's and con's of a Turkish EU-accession. As a result, it can be argued that the avoidance of the substantial debate on the broadly shared public concerns, as discussed above, did not only damage the substantial legitimacy of the government's position towards Turkey, but was also highly unfavourable for the input-legitimacy of the position as such, both in terms of the level of representation and in terms of possibilities to hold political officials accountable on the basis of their Turkey-stance.

Legitimization by Identification

Legitimization by processes of identification refers to a broader social or cultural dimension of legitimization, and refers to the extent to which citizens can identify with certain policies and whether one could speak of a kind of relationship of linkage between citizens and the policy or decision that is reached. Hence, in the case of the Dutch political and societal embedding of the Turkish issue, it is interesting to examine to what extent the December decision to start the accession negotiations with Turkey was sufficiently backed by some process of identification, in terms of the social and cultural public connection to the issue as such. However, as these processes are extremely difficult – if not impossible – to measure, conclusions in this respect are based on the feelings of cultural compatibility and interconnectedness between Turkey and the EU, provided by the various public opinion surveys on Turkey as presented in section 4 of this paper.

To recall figure 7 (paragraph 4.1.2.), according to the Eurobarometer 63 report, Dutch citizens did not seem to be convinced about this compatibleness and interconnectedness between Turkey and the EU Member-States as 60% of the Eurobarometer respondents disagreed with the statement that Turkey historically belongs to Europe. In addition, almost half of the respondents even agreed that the cultural differences between Turkey and the European Member-States are too significant to allow for Turkey's EU-accession. As shown in section 4 of this paper, these findings were supported by both surveys from the Dutch public opinion researcher de Hond and the 'NiE'-survey, as both pointed to a lack of Dutch cultural engagement with Turkey and concerns about Turkey's Islamic cultural heritage. Hence, to the extent to which any conclusions can be drawn on the basis of these findings, it seems as if there is little evidence for the cultivation of processes of identification with the Turkish issue as such, which could well cause problems in terms of legitimizing the position of the Dutch government to support the December 2004 decision to start accession negotiations with Turkey in October 2005. In addition, in this respect, Dutch citizens did not differ from their EU counterparts, as both German and – to a lesser extent – British citizens appeared to be rather sceptic towards the cultural compatibleness and connectedness between Turkey and the EU.

6.2 Discussion: How a different political or societal embedding could have made a difference?

Considering the observed gap between the formal position of the Dutch government and the public, both in general support and perceptions towards Turkey's possible EU-Membership, the obvious question arises what could have been done to bring the two more in line with each other. One option would involve turning public opinion around. Alternatively, one can

consider the option that the Dutch government would have altered its formal position and handling of the issue.

Turning around the public: the difference of an ideal-typical debate?

Underlying the first option is the presumption that a different type of social and political embedding could have altered public opinion, and hence, made citizens less skeptic towards the possible Turkish EU accession. Typically, Hix (2006: p.10) suggests that the legitimacy and accountability of European issues can be enhanced when these issues are being more politicized. He argues that political competition allows citizens to identify the leading positions taken by the political elites and provides them with choices about rival policy positions, which could be seen as a precondition for the democratic process. As shown in the previous section, in the Netherlands, the Turkish issue was in fact of a highly politicized character. However, politicization took place *within* political parties and less *between* political parties. In fact, even within the government parties that were assumed to be supportive, criticism towards Turkey's EU-Membership was present. In addition, whereas the Dutch cabinet was pushed towards a unified position in the light of its role of holding the EU-Presidency during the December summit, sensitive issues that could have caused a split within the cabinet were being depoliticized by carefully awaiting and following the Report of the Commission.

However, in the light of Hix' argumentation, it could be argued that these conflict-issues within both the cabinet and the various political parties, have undermined the legitimacy of the Dutch position. Indeed, the fact that the issue of Turkey crosscuts the traditional political left-right dimension made it problematic for the Dutch electorate to identify the different positions held by the politicians. In fact, as Kleinnijenhuis, Takens and van Atteveldt (2005: p. 124) argue, when there is conflict within a camp that is considered unified, this will lead to public confusion about what to think of a certain issue, and hence, the argumentations of a unified camp of opponents will find more resonance. Indeed, how could we expect citizens to be supportive when even their representatives are divided on the issue?

An ideal-typical political debate on the issue of Turkish EU accession would have involved two crucial preconditions that seem to have been absent in the actual Dutch debate. First, it would involve the main political actors adopting a clear and unequivocal stance on the issue and them being willing and able to justify this position. Secondly, it would require a fair and open coverage of all possible arguments and counterarguments on the issue. It is by no means certain how such a debate would affect overall public opinion on the Turkish issue. In

fact, in Germany both conditions were present, but at the same time public opinion was extremely critical towards a Turkish accession. At the same time, British citizens were relatively positive towards the Turkish issue, while at the same time both conditions were strikingly absent. However, at chance, it could also be that the public would be more convinced by a government that presents all arguments and counterarguments. Hence, the benefits of such an activated balanced debate are by no means certain.

Turning around Dutch government: the shadow of holding the EU-Presidency?

The second route to consider is whether the Dutch government might have revised its own position to fall in line with its constituency and what room of manoeuvre it actually enjoyed to do so. As it became clear, the role of the EU-Presidency put the Dutch delegation into an ambiguous position. On the one hand, the cabinet was responsible to act as guardian of the national interests and hence obliged to take into account public opinion. However, on the other hand, the role of EU-Presidency made the Dutch government responsible to lead the December negotiations to a successful end, as the Dutch reputation as consensus-builder was clearly at stake. To some extent, these two roles interfered with each other, and it can be argued that the fact that Balkenende held the EU-Presidency at the time when agreement on Turkey had to be reached, has provided the Dutch cabinet with little freedom of manoeuvre to fully take into account the public concerns towards Turkey and to adopt a more reserved position during the December summit. Hence, in this respect, an interesting question would be whether a more legitimized policy position could have been developed, when the Dutch delegation had not been in charge of the EU-Presidency. However, taking into consideration the case of Germany, this counterfactual is also by no means certain, as the German government was not charged with the role of the EU-Presidency, but had indeed consistently supported Turkey's possible future EU-Membership. However, the analysis of the political and societal embedding of the Turkish issue in Germany shows that the government officials led more room open for an in-depth debate on the pro's and con's of a Turkish EU-accession, and did not prevent any issues to become politically debated.

REFERENCES

- Aartsen, J. van (2004) 'De veerlui en de Bosporus', in: *NRC Handelsblad*, 10 september 2004, available at:
<http://www.vvd.nl/index.aspx?FilterId=974&ChapterId=1243&ContentId=3218>
- Adviesraad Internationale Vraagstukken (2004) *Advies Turkije: De weg naar het lidmaatschap van de Europese Unie*, Advies nummer 37, augustus 2004.
- Bakker, E. (2006) 'Het bangste volkje van Nederland', *Internationale Spectator*, jaargang 60, nr. 4
- Balkenende, J.P. (2004) Speech to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 21 July 2004, available at:
<http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/turkeynetherlands/Balkenende%20Speech%20EP%20Strasbourg%202004.pdf>
- BBC News (2005) 'EU hails Turkey membership talks', 4 October 2005, available at:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4307700.stm>
- Bolkestein, F. (2004) 'Values in Europe', Nexus Conference, Berlin, 18 October 2004, available at:
http://www.fritsbolkestein.com/docs/speeches/20041018_Values%20in%20Europe_en.doc
- Boudewijn, R. en P. van Grinsven (2004) 'Geloofwaardigheid boven sentimenten: EU toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije', *De Internationale Spectator*, september 2004, nr. 9, blz. 435-439.
- Burgdorf, W. (2004) 'Wij staan bij de Turken in het krijt: In Turkije stond de wieg van het christelijke Europa, het hoort in de Europese Unie thuis', in: *NRC Handelsblad*, 3 februari 2004.
- CDA Commissie Buitenland (2004) 'Turkije en de Europese Unie: CDA discussienotitie Commissie Buitenland', available at:
<http://www.cda.nl/domains/cda/content/downloads/internationaal/turkijeeneu.pdf>
- Donnelly, B. (2006) 'Britain's fractious political class at one over EU's "existential crisis"', *Europe's World*, spring 2006,
http://europesworld.link.be/europesworld/PDFs/Issue2/EW2_4.4_UK.pdf
- Economist (2005a) 'When to talk Turkey', 15 September 2005, available at:
http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=E1_QQDTDQP
- Economist (2005b) 'The End of enlargement', 14 July 2005, available at:
http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=E1_QTSQNDR
- Economist (2005c) 'Too big to handle', 23 June 2005, available at:

- http://www.economist.com/surveys/displaystory.cfm?story_id=E1_QTDDGQJ
- European Commission (2004) 'Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards Accession', October 2004, available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/enlargement/report_2004/pdf/tr_recommandation_en.pdf
- European Commission (2005a) *Standard Eurobarometer Report number 63*, available at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb63/eb63_en.pdf
- European Commission (2005b) *Standard Eurobarometer Report number 64*, available at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb64/eb64_first_en.pdf
- European Commission (2005c) *Turkey: 2005 Progress Report*, COM 2005, 561 final, available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2005/package/sec_1426_final_progress_report_tr_en.pdf
- European Commission (2005d) *Flash Eurobarometer, number 172*, 'The European Constitution: post-referendum survey in the Netherlands', June 2005, available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl172_en.pdf
- European Stability Initiative (ESI) (2006) 'Beyond Enlargement Fatigue: Part 1, The Dutch Debate on Turkish Accession', 24 April 2006, available at:
http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/esi_document_id_74.pdf
- Erdogdu, E. (2002) 'Turkey and the EU: Undivided but not United', *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 40-51.
- Expatica (2004) 'Turkey splits Germany', available at:
http://www.expatica.com/actual/article.asp?subchannel_id=52&story_id=15103
- Gamson, W.A. and A. Modigliani (1989) 'Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach', *The American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 59, no. 1, pp. 1-37.
- Grosse Hüttmann, M. (2005) 'Die Türkei ist anders als Europa: Die öffentliche Debatte um einem EU- Beitritt der Türkei in Deutschland', pp. 35-49 in: Giannakopoulos, A. and K. Maras (Hrsg.) (2005) *Die Türkei-Debatte in Europa: Ein Vergleich*, Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften/GWV Fachverlage GmbH.
- Guérot, U. (2004) 'The European Paradox: Deepening and Widening in the European Union', available at: <http://www.gmfus.org/publications/article.cfm?id=17>
- Habermas, J. (1990) *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Hix, S. (2006) 'Why the EU needs (Left-Right) politics? Policy reform and accountability are impossible without it', pp. 1-28 in: Hix, S. and S. Bartolini (2006) 'Politics: The right or the wrong sort of medicine for the EU?', *Notre Europe*, Policy Paper no. 19, available at:

- <http://www.unizar.es/euroconstitucion/library/working%20papers/Hix,%20Bartolini%202006.pdf>
- Hollander, S. (2006) 'Framing Turkey: The role of the media in national public discourses on Turkey's EU-Membership', Master-thesis: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.
- Hond, M. de (2004a) 'Turkije in de EU', 10 november 2004, available at: www.peil.nl
- Hond, M. de (2004b) 'Turkije in de EU', 3 december 2004, available at: www.peil.nl
- Hond, M. de (2004c) 'Toetreding Turkije tot de EU', 10 december 2004, available at: www.peil.nl
- Hond, M. de (2004d) 'Start onderhandelingen EU met Turkije', 20 december 2004, available at: www.peil.nl
- Hond, M. de (2005a) 'Start onderhandelingen Turkije in de EU', 5 oktober 2005, available at: <https://n4.noties.nl/peil.nl/>
- Hond, M. de (2005b) 'Turkije in de EU', 29 september 2005, available at: <https://n9.noties.nl/peil.nl/>
- Hughes, K. (2004) 'Turkey and the European Union: Just Another Enlargement', available at: <http://www.friendsofeurope.org/pdfs/TurkeyandtheEuropeanUnion-WorkingPaperFoE.pdf>
- Huntington, S. (1996) *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Huntington, S. (2003) *Botsende Beschavingen. Cultuur en conflict in de 21e eeuw*, Amsterdam: Anthos.
- Lindberg, L.N., and S.A. Scheingold (red.) (1970) *Europe's would-be polity: Patterns of change in the European Community*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
- Nederland in Europa (2006) Eindrapport Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, May 2006, New York and Amsterdam: Anker Solutions, available at: http://www.nederlandineuropa.nl/pdf/NEDERLANDINEUROPA_rapport.pdf
- Negotiating Framework for Turkey (2005), available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/docs/pdf/negotiating_framework_turkey.pdf
- Nicolai, A. (2004a) 'De EU, Turkije en de Islam', speech 5 July 2004, available at: http://www.minbuza.nl/nl/actueel/speeches,2004/07/de_eux_turkije_en_de_islam.html
- Nicolai, A. (2004b) 'Turkey and the EU', speech at the Symposium 'Turkey and the EU: looking beyond prejudice', 4 April 2004, available at: http://www.minbuza.nl/nl/actueel/speeches,2004/04/turkey_and_the_eu.html
- NOS (2004a) 'Turkije campagnethema in Duitsland', 20 maart 2004.

- NOS (2004) 'Britten willen een Unie waarin zij zich thuis voelen', 8 november 2004, http://www.nos.nl/archief/2005/nieuws/achtergronden/europeseunie/Turkije_correspondenten_bekhoven.html
- Noyer, C. (2000) 'How to combine a deepening and widening of the European Union', speech of 22 November 2000, available at: <http://www.ecb.int/press/key/date/2000/html/sp001122.en.html>
- NRC Handelsblad (2004a) 'Lof voor onwelgevallig besluit', 22 december 2004, pagina 3.
- NRC Handelsblad (2004b) 'Turkse Islam is geen bedreiging: Europa moet Turkije met open vizier tegemoet treden', 9 december 2004, pagina 9.
- Oktem, K. (2005) 'British perceptions on Turkey's EU accession prospects: Euroscepticism and Turcophilia?', Occasional Paper, no. 6/05, South East European Studies at Oxford, available at: <http://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/esc/esc-lectures/oktem.pdf>
- Presidency Conclusions Copenhagen European Council, 12 and 13 December 2002, available at: http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/73842.pdf
- Presidency Conclusions Brussels European Council, 16 and 17 December 2002, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/enlargement/turkey/pdf/presidency_conclusions16_17_12_04.pdf
- Rehn, O. (2005) 'Values define Europe, not borders', speech by Olli Rehn, member of the European Commission, Belgrade 24 January 2005, available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/32&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>
- Scharpf, F. (1999) *Governing in Europe. Effective and democratic?*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sociaal Economische Raad (2004) *De komende uitbreiding van de EU, in het bijzonder de toetreding van Turkije*, Advies nummer 04/12, 8 november 2004 .
- Stiller, S. (2003) 'Get them or keep them out', *Jason Magazine*, nr. 1 jaargang 28, blz. 3-7.
- Thomassen, J.J.A. (2005) 'Nederlanders en Europa. Een bekoelde liefde?', in: Aarts, K. en H. van der Kolk (2005) *Nederlanders en Europa: Het Referendum over de Europese Grondwet*, Amsterdam: Bert Bakker.
- Trouw (2004) 'Van stabiele factor tot zorgenkindje; het valt niet vol te houden dat alle onrust in de VVD alleen voor Wilders' rekening komt', 3 september 2004, available at: <http://archieftrouw.nl/artikel?REC=f92fb82793a36a4e1b40061408e5f704>
- Turkish Press Review (September 2005) 'Anything besides full EU Membership is unacceptable', available at: <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/CHR/ING2005/09/05x09x30.HTM#%2000>

- Turkish Press Review (October 2005) 'Dutch official voices support for Turkey's EU bid', available at:<http://www.byegm.gov.tr/yayinlarimiz/chr/ing2005/10/5>
- Tweede Kamer (2002-2003) Kamerstukken II, 2002/03, 23987, nr. 41.
- Tweede Kamer (2004) 'Vaststelling van de begrotingsstaten van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (V) voor het jaar 2005; Brief Minister en Staatssecretaris met standpunt Nederlandse regering inzake openen toetredingsonderhandelingen EU met Turkije', Kamerstukken V 29800, nr. 61, 8 november 2004.
- Tweede Kamer (2004) *21^{ste} Vergadering over de Staat van de Europese Unie*, Kamerstukken 29803, 10 november 2004.
- Tweede Kamer (2005-2006) 'Voorstel van wet van het lid Wilders betreffende het houden van een raadplegend referendum over de toetreding van Turkije tot de Europese Unie', Kamerstukken 30309, nr. 6.
- Volkskrant (2004a) 'Voorwaarde voor overleg Turkije: géén folteringen', 10 november 2004, available at:
<http://zoek.volkskrant.nl/artikel?text=verhagen%20turkije%20datum%20onderhandelingen&FDOC=0&SORT=date&PRD=20y&SEC=%2A&SO=%2A&DAT=%2A&ADOC=0>
- Volkskrant (2004b) 'Turkije bracht het kabinet op de rand van de afgrond', 21 december 2004, available at:
http://www.volkskrant.nl/den_haag/article190691.ece/Turkije_bracht_het_kabinet_op_de_rand_van_de_afgrond
- Wallace, W. (2002) 'Where does Europe end?: dilemmas of inclusion and exclusion', in: Zielonka, J. (2002) *Europe Unbound: Enlarging and Reshaping the Boundaries of the European Union*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (2004) *De Europese Unie, Turkije en de Islam*, Rapporten aan de Regering nr. 69, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Wynia, S. (2005) 'Succes met een staartje: Achter de schermen van het voorzitterschap van de Europese Unie: hoe premier Jan Peter Balkenende de Turken Europa binnenloodste', in: *Elsevier*, 22 januari 2005, p. 2-5.
- Zielonka, J. (2002) *Europe Unbound: Enlarging and Reshaping the Boundaries of the European Union*, London and New York: Routledge.

APPENDIX 1: OPERATIONALIZATION PUBLIC OPINION

Operationalization	Statement Eurobarometer 63 (p.161)	M. de Hond, 20 December 2004 (www.peil.nl)	'Nederland in Europa'-survey (p. 22)
Frame			
1.Economic Threat Frame	<p>- Turkey's accession would favour the rejuvenation of an ageing European population...Disagree</p> <p>- Turkey's joining could risk favouring immigration to more developed countries in the European Union....Agree</p> <p>- To join the European Union in about ten years, Turkey will have to significantly improve the state of its economy....Agree</p>	<p>- Turkey's accession would be bad for the Dutch and EU economy..Agree</p> <p>- Turkey's accession will lead to immigration flows from Turkey to the Netherlands...Agree</p>	<p>- Turkey can not join the EU, since it is a country with low welfare, which is only willing to join the EU to take away EU-money. The current member-states, as the Netherlands, will have to pay these costs....Agree</p> <p>- Turkey can only join the EU, when it is guaranteed that the Dutch labour market will be protected...Agree</p>
2.Economic Benefit Frame	<p>- Turkey's accession would favour the rejuvenation of an ageing European population...Agree</p> <p>- Turkey's joining could risk favouring immigration to more developed countries in the European Union...Disagree</p> <p>- To join the European Union in about ten years, Turkey will have to significantly improve</p>		<p>- Turkey can join the EU, because this will increase the economic market....Agree</p>

	the state of its economy....Disagree		
3.Institutional Threat Frame			- Turkey cannot join the EU, because it will get, due to its big population, too much power within the EU institutions....Agree - Before Turkey's accession, the EU decision-making procedures will have to be reformed...Agree
4.Institutional Benefit Frame			
5.Geo-strategical Threat Frame	- Turkey's accession to the European Union would strengthen the security in this region....Disagree	- Turkey's accession will lead to more terrorism in Europe...Agree	
6.Geo-strategical Benefit Frame	- Turkey's accession to the European Union would strengthen the security in this region....Disagree		- Turkey can join the EU, since this will be good for the stability in the Middle-East...Agree
7.Negative Political Frame	- To join the European Union in about ten years, Turkey will have to respect systematically Human Rights...Agree		
8.Positive Political Frame	- To join the European Union in about ten years, Turkey will have to respect systematically Human Rights...Disagree		
9.Cultural Threat Frame	- Turkey partly belongs to Europe by its history...Disagree	- Turkey is Islamic, and therefore does not fit into the EU...Agree	- Turkey cannot join the EU since it is an Islamic country...Agree

	<p>- Turkey's accession to the European Union would favour the mutual comprehension of European and Muslim values...Disagree</p> <p>- The cultural differences between Turkey and the European Union Member States are too significant to allow for this accession...Agree</p>	<p>- Turkey is not a European country...Agree</p>	
<p>10.Cultural benefit Frame</p>	<p>- Turkey partly belongs to Europe by its history.....Agree</p> <p>- Turkey's accession to the European Union would favour the mutual comprehension of European and Muslim values....Agree</p> <p>- The cultural differences between Turkey and the European Union Member States are too significant to allow for this accession...Disagree</p>		

APPENDIX 2: OPERATIONALIZATION AND CODING MEDIA

Operationalization	
Frame	Statement
1.Economic Threat Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the news story mention that the Turkish accession will pose a threat to or will have negative consequences for the economic prospects and well-being of the specific country? - Does the story mention that the Turkish accession will pose a threat to or will have negative consequences for the economic prospects of the EU as a whole? - Does the news story mention that the Turkish accession will pose a threat to or will have negative consequences for the country's or EU's job market? - Does the story mention that the Turkish accession will pose a threat to or will have negative consequences for the country's welfare system?
2.Economic Benefit Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the story mention that the Turkish accession will have positive effects on the economic prospects and well-being of the specific country? - Does the story mention that the Turkish accession will have positive effects on the economic prospects of the EU as a whole? - Does the story mention that immigration from Turkey will be positive for the social security system in the specific country or the EU in general due to the EU's aging populations? - Does the story mention that Turkey's skilled workforce is beneficial for or even needed in the specific country or EU in general?
3.Institutional Threat Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the story mention that the Turkish accession will pose a threat or will have negative consequences for the institutions or the decision-making in the EU? - Does the story mention negative institutional implications due to Turkey's big country size?
4.Institutional Benefit Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the story mention that the Turkish accession might strengthen institutional flexibility and respect for subsidiarity? - Does the story make an attempt to counterbalance negative institutional implications?
5.Geo-political Threat Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the story mention that Turkey's EU membership will pose a threat to the security situation in the EU, due to Turkey's geo-strategical positioning in the Middle-East? - Does the story mention that Turkey's EU membership will foster

	problems related to crime in the specific country or the EU in general?
6.Geo-political Benefit Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the story mention that the Turkish accession will have positive effects on the Middle-East region? - Does the story mention that Turkey might offer a bridge-function between the EU and the Middle-East? - Does the story mention that the Turkish accession might strengthen the military capacity of EU, or strengthen its geopolitical weight?
7.Negative Political Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the story mention that Turkey is doing a bad job in satisfying the political Copenhagen criteria, in terms of human rights protection, democratization etc.? - Does the story mention Turkey's problematic relationship with Cyprus as being the cause of Turkey's unwillingness to recognize the country?
8.Positive Political Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the story mention that Turkey is doing a good job in satisfying the political Copenhagen criteria, in terms of human rights protection, democratization etc.? - Does the story make an attempt to counterbalance claims that attribute problems between Turkey and Cyprus to Turkey's misbehaviour?
9.Cultural Threat Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the story mention that the country's culture or identity is challenged or threatened by Turkish immigrants? - Does the story make reference to unique shared European norms and values? - Does the story mention that immigrants from Turkey have to adopt to the country's or European culture? - Does the story offer a negative evaluation on the cultural differences between Turkey and the current EU member-states? - Does the story make reference to an incompatibility between European norms and values and the Turkish or Islamic culture?
10.Cultural benefit Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the story mention that the Turkish accession will lead to a cultural enrichment within the EU as a whole? - Does the story make an attempt to counterbalance any negative images of the incompatibility between the European and Turkish cultures?
Coding	<p>N.B. All articles will be coded by counting how much these statements were made. On the basis of this number, a value is computed for the frames used. However, some articles included more frames, so a constellation was made. If there was only one frame, then value=1. If there are two equal dominant frames, then both value=0,5. If there is one dominant and some subframes,</p>

	the subframes are expected to have an equal value. In this case the dominant frame has a value=0,6, and the other subframes: value=(1-0,6)/number of subframes.
--	---

APPENDIX 3: NEWSPAPER SELECTION BY COUNTRY

The Netherlands	
Volkskrant	Qualitative national daily newspaper, left-centrist political orientation
NRC Handelsblad (NRC)	Qualitative national daily newspaper, right-centrist political orientation
Telegraaf	The Netherlands' mostly read national daily newspaper, right-centrist political orientation
Germany	
Die Welt	Germany's mostly read regional daily newspaper, conservative political orientation
Die Süddeutsche Zeitung	Qualitative national (despite of its name 'Süddeutsche') daily newspaper, leftist-liberal political orientation
Frankfurter Rundschau	Daily newspaper, leftist-liberal political orientation
The United Kingdom	
The Times	Daily national newspaper, conservative political orientation
The Guardian	Daily national newspaper, left-centrist political orientation
The Daily Telegraph	Daily national newspaper, conservative political orientation

Sources: Lexis Nexis. <http://www.lexisnexis.nl/bronnen> and Wikipedia

NOTES

- ¹ Which were partly based on a report of the AIV: 'AIV Advies Turkije (2004) 'De weg naar het lidmaatschap van de Europese Unie', no. 37, Augustus 2004'.
- ² The analysis presented in this paper is based on research that has been conducted for my Master-thesis on the role of the media in national public discourses on Turkey's EU-Membership (Hollander 2006).
- ³ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm
- ⁴ Even after taking into account the fact that in May 2004, ten new countries from Central and Eastern Europe joined the Union, which could explain the dramatic increase in the average EU support for EU-enlargement.
- ⁵ Free translation. Original text: 'EU botst hard met Turkije over Cyprus; Erkenning struikelblok op Europese top'.
- ⁶ Free translation. Original text: 'Turkse premier: Geen gebaar richting Cyprus'
- ⁷ Free translation. Original text: 'Nederland eist eind aan martelingen'
- ⁸ Free translation. Original text: 'Christenen in Turkije tussen hoop en vrees'
- ⁹ Free translation. Original text: 'Europese Unie hypocriet over mensenrechten'
- ¹⁰ Free translation. Original text: 'Turkse Islam geen bedreiging'
- ¹¹ Free translation. Original text: 'Fragiele economie, structurele problemen'
- ¹² Free translation. Original text: 'Kabinet verdeeld over Turkije: Veel ministers tegen toetreding tot EU'
- ¹³ Free translation. Original text: 'Kwestie Turkije verdeelt kabinet'
- ¹⁴ Again, the analyses presented in this paper are based on research that has been conducted for my Master-thesis on the role of the media in national public discourses on Turkey's EU-Membership (Hollander 2006).
- ¹⁵ Data based on the Standard Eurobarometer reports numbers: 55, 57, 59, 61 and 63.
- ¹⁶ Free translation. Original text: 'Brüsseler Kompromiß in letzter Minute; Die Türkei hat noch viele Hürden zu nehmen'
- ¹⁷ Free translation. Original text: 'Auf dem fliegenden Teppich . . . kommt die Türkei nicht nach Europa. Der Weg wird noch ziemlich lang und mühevoll sein'
- ¹⁸ Free translation. Original text: '„Autoritäre Traditionen sind nicht sakrosankt'
- ¹⁹ Free translation. Original text: '„Integration ; Türkische Gemeinde kritisiert Debatte'
- ²⁰ Free translation. Original text: '„Firmen setzen auf EU-Beitritt der Türkei'
- ²¹ Free translation. Original text '„Wirtschaft setzt auf "Beitrittsimpuls'
- ²² However, some authors claim that contestation on Turkey in the UK will be just a matter of time, as British public opinion is quiescent rather than truly engaged with the Turkish issue. These authors claim that since there is a broad consensus among the British political elites, there is no political rallying point, and that hence, opposition or contrasting positions are not being articulated (Donnelly 2006). As Donnelly (2006: p. 178) argues: 'The possibility at that point of populist opposition to Turkish membership cannot be discounted'.