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Editorial

A record low turnout of 43% marked this year's elections to the European Parliament. Either of disinterest in European affairs or of dissatisfaction with European politics, only a minority of European citizens considered it worthwhile to vote. The European Parliament, the natural institution to connect European people(s) to political Europe, still seems to have problems to really reach the hearts and minds of people. In the meantime, the "democratic deficit" of the European Union looms on. Nonetheless, the elections have brought about the first major political change within the European Union this year.

Another change that will impact European policy making even more in the future will be the final word of Irish voters on the Treaty of Lisbon in October. The treaty is supposed to replace the Treaty of Nice end of this year. Although the ratification process is still pending, one of the last major obstacles has already been removed in summer: the German Constitutional Court cleared the way for ratification in the last of the EEC's founding member states, despite certain conditions formulated in the court's decision.

Closely linked to the ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon and the elections to the European Parliament is the nomination of a new Commission, with the current five-year term of José Manuel Barroso and his team ending soon. Looking back at the Commission's performance in enlargement policy over the past five years, publicly dominated by the "Turkish question", this issue of the *ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor* features an interview with Olli Rehn, Commissioner for Enlargement. Olli Rehn reflects on past accomplishments, current challenges and the implications of enlargement policy in the wider context of EU foreign policy.

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In June 2009, citizens across Europe went to the polls to elect their representatives in the European Parliament (EP). Despite the low turnout, the EP still is one of the central institutions to guarantee the democratic legitimacy of European policy making. However, the chamber and some of its practices are not uncritisised - the convention to hold plenary meetings in Strasbourg and not in Brussels is increasingly questioned. Photo European Parliament

The Seventh Election to the European Parliament

Reflections on the campaigns and electoral results

Jared Sonnicksen

"Europe has voted…at least a small part of it has". These were the opening words, loosely translated, of the evening news report of the German public broadcaster ARD on Monday, 8 June 2009, following the elections to the European Parliament. With results emerging on Sunday evening, the elections turned out a number of winners and of course losers, though the turnout itself was anything but encouraging for the EP or the EU in general. At a European wide participation rate of approximately 43 %, it would seem that the true winner of the European elections was the voice of the non-voter. On the other hand, while "silence speaks volumes", the message behind the widespread voter abstention can hardly be viewed as monotone. Indeed, a multitude of factors lie in the nature of how European parliamentary elections are held, perceived, and attended.

First of all, the European Parliament constitutes the sole directly elected institution of the European Union and thus the key democratic-representative anchor of European governance. Moreover, with each treaty revision, from Maastricht to Nice as well as the yet-to-be ratified Treaty of Lisbon, the EP has seen its competences and scope of responsibilities expanded continuously. The EP has evolved from a debating assembly with mere consultative powers, more or less its institutional status upon the eve of the first direct elections in 1979, to an influential legislative authority in European politics with co-equal decision-making rights in an ever increasing amount of policy areas. From both a democratic and institutional standpoint, the EP has become a truly significant part of European policymaking. Consequently, its elections bear a substantial relevance and one could in turn expect a corresponding interest on the part of the citizens of the Union as well as the

parties competing for their support.

All the more puzzling would seem then not only the comparatively low voter mobilisation when contrasted with national elections, but also the relatively high electoral successes gained by Euro-sceptic and even anti-EU parties this year. But what appears to be a contradiction at first glance is rather the expression of a complex relationship between European leaders or politicians and European citizens. Their linkage is predominantly carried out via national politicians, parties and media – which has long been the case in previous European elections and certainly played a role in the failed ratification process of the European Constitutional Treaty.[1] Despite its enhanced position, the national parties and leaders ultimately responsible for organising European elections still tend to neglect the European Parliament and the way the elections are generally carried out reflect this.[2] And, on the whole, this underlying theme well applies to the seventh election to the European Parliament and the results it produced.

Campaigning for the European Elections – Still a national affair?

Since the introduction of direct EP elections and, in response, the increased social scientific research addressing them, the European elections have come to be viewed as "second-order" elections. This term refers to two basic attributes of the EP elections: they are widely considered secondary in importance to national elections and they are not conducted as a primarily European competition, but rather contested with national issues and by national parties.[3] This is reinforced by the fact that the European election is actually held, not under one uniform electoral system, but separately according to the electoral systems of the Member States, with some of the elections taking place on different days. In other words, for the current EU, that means there are 27 elections held under the electoral systems of the 27 Member States. As such, the campaigns can take on the character of "mid-term" elections, where the national governing party or coalition is challenged by the opposition party or parties, both from the perspective of the parties and the voters.

In the 2009 EP elections, the campaigns were organized, as in the past, by the national parties. In the EP for instance, the parliamentary members organize as party groups as opposed to national "delegations". These EP party groups, by and large, are linked to corresponding European party families. In the run-up to this election, the largest party families also published electoral manifestos.[4] Judging by the content of the electoral programmes, the European political parties indeed presented coherent political alternatives, reflecting the overall increasing organisational consolidation of these party families. But, as mentioned above, how the campaigns are run lies in the hands of the national member parties, which poses the question of whether the party programme composed by, say, the Party of European Socialists, played a significant role in the campaign of the French *Parti Socialiste*. Overall, it would seem that national parties' platforms demonstrated substantial compatibility with the manifestos of their respective European party family, much more so than has been the case in the past,[5] with liberal parties calling for a 'liberal' market and policy approach in the EU, the Greens proposing a "Green new deal" and socialist or social-democratic parties demanding a more "social Europe". While this is a promising development toward truly European elections, the European party families continue to have virtually no influence in the selection of candidates for the party lists and maintain little control of setting the electoral agenda.

The personnel side of the elections illustrates clearly the high degree of national orientation that still dominates European elections. Though that applies to all member states, this was shown especially in Germany, which is in the midst of an election year with national elections to be held in September. Here for example campaign posters of the Social Democratic Party featured their candidate for Chancellor, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, together with their top MEP candidate Martin Schulz. The Christian Democratic Union also frequently had pictures of Angela Merkel, the current Chancellor as representing the "voice of Germany in Europe". But this is striking, not only because she of course is not competing for a seat in the EP, but also because of the blatant lack of interest in putting someone like Hans-Gert Pöttering (also a CDU member) at the forefront, the latter having served for the past several years as the President of the European Parliament. Particularly dramatic were the events in Italy, where Prime Minister Berlusconi's list of candidates, not to mention the allegations against him of having an extra-marital affair, caused an uproar in the campaign and European issues essentially fell from the agenda. Other general themes in the campaigns of parties across the member states included the "testing ground" of the EP election for upcoming national or local elections, as in Germany, but also Portugal and the Czech Republic, as well as utilizing the opportunity to criticize governing parties as in Estonia, Ireland, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Sweden or general tests for the support of the opposition party leaders as with the conservatives in the U.K. and Spain.[6]

On the other hand, for some countries more than others, European issues were of high prominence in the campaigns. Particularly in Cyprus, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Slovenia, the competition between the various national parties overwhelmingly revolved around European issues, though one predominant theme in several countries concerned further EU enlargement. The latter was of particular importance in Cyprus with regard to the island's division or the politicization of the potential membership of Croatia and, most controversial, of Turkey, with a number of parties demanding referendums in the future before any new round of EU enlargement. Moreover, numerous parties mobilized their campaigns on Euro-sceptic or even anti-EU platforms. Ironically, precisely these parties ran the most "Europeanised" campaigns in the sense that they were EU-oriented. Across all member states, the economic crisis seemed to be of grave concern for voters, and with that related issues such as unemployment, economic growth, social insecurity (e.g. pensions), but also the fight against terrorism and climate change,[7] representing issues where EU and national responsibilities blend to various degrees.

Electoral Results – Ups and Downs, Winners and Losers

Determining who won or lost the 2009 European elections depends on the perspective. Of course, this can be said of most elections in general, but it applies particularly to EP elections, one factor being that in the EU, there is no "government" formed, countered by a more or less fixed opposition like in typical parliamentary systems. The conservative, Christian-democratic parties that form the EPP party group in the EP have won the election in the sense that they gained the largest amount of seats. But, their percentage of the vote dropped by approximately 1% compared to the previous election in 2004. On the other hand, this drop in percentage of vote/seats reflects the loss of the U.K. Conservative Party and the Czech ODS, who left the EPP-ED, which may not be a "loss" at all in terms of party cohesion. In contrast to the conservatives, the socialists/social-democratic parties had to accept a substantial defeat in the vast majority of member states with the PES group shrinking by almost 6% compared to 2004. A particularly bitter loss came to the Labour Party in the U.K., where the national scandal concerning the abuse of expense accounts on the part of the Labour government there nearly dominated the public debate leading up to this year's elections. And in other countries such as France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Portugal, social democrats there experienced up to 50% losses vis-à-vis the 2004 vote, with the social democrats of Estonia attaining less than one-third of the vote they received previously. In the Czech Republic, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, and Malta however, they fared slightly better.

As for the liberal parties represented in the EP by the ALDE group, the European elections brought a minor loss of nearly 2% from 2004, translating into the loss of 20 seats in the EP. In most EU countries, the liberal parties experienced single digit drops in their percentage of the vote, though in Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands for example, they were able to gain additional seats in the EP. The Green parties on the whole gained nearly across the board; they increased their percentage of the vote by almost 1 ½% EU-wide, though one should note that the Greens competed in only 14 – i.e. slightly more than half – of the 27 member states. In France for instance, the Green party won perhaps their most sensational electoral victory, gaining the third highest amount of votes (16.3%), placing just below the socialists, while overall, with the exception of Austria, the Greens were able to increase their percentage of the vote in every country they competed. On the left, the United European Left parties lost 0.8% of the vote with only 4.3%, though not nearly as drastic as the social democratic losses, while on the right, the nationalist parties associated

with the Union for Europe of Nations lost 0.7% compared to 2004, gaining 4.8% of the entire vote.

By far, the largest (relative) winner however is perhaps the most worrisome, namely the group of "others" or non-affiliated parties, who increased their vote by almost 9%. While this includes the British Conservatives and Czech Civic Democratic Party as of now, these figures also represent the electoral gains by a highly eclectic group of parties such as the Pirate Party from Sweden (1 seat) – though it has by now joined the Green Party Group in the EP – , the Spanish Union for Progress and Democracy, but also EU-sceptic parties like the Hans-Peter Martin's List from Austria. In the Netherlands, the rightwing populist Party for Freedom founded by Geert Wilders even finished second, also beating out the social democrats. They will be joined with other national or ultra-nationalist parties in the EP such as the radical, Anti-Semitic Hungarian Jobbik, the Greater Romanian Party, the white-supremacist British National Party, the Slovak National Party, and the True Finns.

EP Election Results 2009

Political party group	*Number of seats**	*Percentage of vote*	*Win/Loss to 2004 (%)*
EPP	264	35.9	(-) 1.0
PES	161	21.9	(-) 5.7
ALDE	83	10.9	(-) 1.8
Greens/EFA	53	7.2	(+) 1.4
UEN	35	4.8	(-) 0.8
GUEL/NGL	32	4.3	(-) 0.7
IND/DEM	18	2.4	(-) 0.2
Other	93	12.6	(+) 8.8

Source: European Parliament. Available at: http://www.elections2009-results.eu; tentative results. * Total: 736

As a result, the EP will have more Eurosceptic and nationalistic parties represented than ever before, controlling up to 15% of the parliament's seats. On the other hand, the party group of Independence/Democracy lost slightly in these elections and may no longer be able to form as a group in the next EP period, despite the success of the U.K. Independence Party, who even finished ahead of the Labour Party there. Moreover, interestingly the Libertas-Party, headed by Declan Ganley, who led the campaign against the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in Ireland, experienced a bitter electoral defeat, gaining only one seat in the EP through France.

Prospects for the next legislative period of the EP

In June 2009, the largest transnational election of all time was held among the 27 member states of the European Union. While the low turnout relative to participation rates in national elections is discouraging and grounds for reflection, it is by no means cause for panic. The participation rates are quite similar to voter (and non-voter) behaviour during mid-term elections. Moreover, there is a range of turnout rates varying from member state to member state, and indeed, in a number of countries, considerably "Europeanised" campaigns were held. Hence, there are a variety of messages to be read out of this year's election, including dissatisfaction with the EU, but also "satisfaction" with European integration, but a perception of low importance vis-à-vis the EP, among other things.[8] But a sobering outcome has been born by this election, namely the unprecedented amount of nationalistic, anti-EU parties and politicians elected to the EP. On the other hand, the EP has had Euro-sceptic parties represented for quite some time and, although they make up the third largest "group", the "other" category is a veritable hodgepodge of parties with a cavernously low amount of cohesiveness between them. Furthermore, their numbers may dwindle in the course of the legislative period, depending on which groups are newly formed, such as a new Reform Group to be headed by the British conservatives, or which "others" join an already-established group. Particularly the latter makes it difficult to say how large the various party groups in the EP will ultimately be, with some "newcomers" contemplating joining party groups as may be the case with the Italian Democratic Party joining the PES or the Cypriot Democrat Party switching from the ALDE to the PES, which will even change its name as a result of its growing diversity to the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (PASD). The UEN in contrast probably will lose its party group status all together in the EP after losing members such as the Italian National Alliance to the EPP and possibly the Irish Fianna Fáil to the ALDE.

On the whole, the next legislative period could see a continuation of growing party cohesiveness within the established party groups. But given the distribution of seats on account of the electoral result, the EP will not be able to bring forth a stable centre-right or centre-left coalition, but rather will in all likelihood see, as in the past, the building of ad-hoc coalitions among the largest party groups, often involving "grand coalitions" between the EPP and the PES (in future, the PASD) in cooperation with the liberals. The first weeks after the election have already proven interesting and somewhat surprising as well, with the parties on both sides of the political spectrum jockeying for position concerning the election of the Parliamentary President and the Commission President.[9] With regard to the EP President, such a "grand coalition" was formed as the PES/PASD entered an agreement with the EPP to elect Jerzy Buzek (EPP) of Poland as the first Eastern European in that position, with the understanding the socialists can place one of "their" candidates in the office for the second half of the five-year legislative period – an EPP-PES arrangement frequently practiced in previous EP terms. As for electing the Commission President, here the liberals are especially torn between supporting the EPP's (and the majority of the Member States') choice, namely a second term for conservative Commission President Barroso, or the former Belgian Prime Minister, Guy Verhofstadt, a liberal himself. At the same time, the social democrats and Greens (in particular their party co-leader Daniel Cohn-Bendit) have voiced opposition to a second term for Barroso, but a coalition sufficient for the necessary absolute majority is yet to be reached. Beyond the pending personnel decisions to be made by the EP, the Commission election having been postponed to September, the parliament's work in the next legislative period will most likely demonstrate substantial continuity in cross-party cooperation, despite or, perhaps more accurately, due to the growing diversity of its members.

1) L. Kühnhardt (2005) 'Quo vadis Europa', in: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte 36, pp. 3-7.
2) See E. Morruci (2009) 'Why leaders don't speak about Europe', 8 June 2009, available at http://www.euractiv.com/en/eu-elections/leaders-speak-europe/article-182979.
3) F. Decker (2002) 'Governance beyond the nation-state. Reflections on the democratic deficit of the European Union', in: Journal of European Public Policy 9(2), pp. 256-272, here pp. 260-263.
4) With regard to the 2009 electoral manifestos, see e.g. for the European People's Party:, http://www.eppwarsaw2009.eu/content.php?hmID=1824&smID=1585; for the Party of European Socialists: http://elections2009.pes.org/en/your-manifesto; for the European Liberal and Democratic Reform Party: http://www.eldr.org/pdf/manifeste/eldr-manifeste-electoral-en.pdf; for the party of European Greens: http://europeangreens.eu/fileadmin/logos/pdf/manifesto_EUROPEAN_GREENS.pdf.
5) See interview with Hermann Schmitt, David Earnshaw and Sebastian Kurpas at: http://www.euractiv.com/en/eu-elections/2009-european-party-manifestos-glance/article-181980.
6) For an excellent overview of campaigns in the EU member states, see: C. Deloy (2009) 'A Round Up of the European Electoral Campaigns before the European Elections (4th-7th June 2009)', in: European Elections Monitor, http://www.robert-schuman.org/oee.php?num=575.
7) See: European Parliament (2009) 'European Elections 2009: Pre-Electoral Survey. First Wave Analytical Survey', at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/pre_electoral/pre_electoral_analytical_synthesis_en.pdf.
8) For an analysis on voter behaviour at European elections, see: R. Flickinger / D. Studlar (2007) 'One Europe, Many Electorates?: Models of turnout in European Parliament elections after 2004', in: Comparative Political Studies 40(4): 383-404.
9) See: 'No majority in Parliament for Barroso vote' (25 June 2009) at: http://www.euractiv.com/en/eu-elections/majority-parliament-barroso-vote/article-183483

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European Parliament Elections 2009

Absence of enlargement promotion

Deniz Devrim and Evelina Schulz

"People who voiced opposition to Turkey today might change their position later (...). What matters is the opinion of the Turkish and European public.[1] *Abdullah Gül*

No promotion of EU enlargement during the election campaigns 2009

Enlargement policy has become unpopular among governments in the EU member states and among its citizens. Whereas in the beginning of this century enlargement was still considered as a very successful political issue to debate on, today a so called *enlargement fatigue* makes enlargement a difficult product to sell. This fatigue has also reached the traditional supporters of enlargement: the institutions of the European Union.

During the campaigns for the European elections in 2009, European political parties have been increasingly reluctant in promoting this topic in their discourses. Conservative politicians such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel or French President Nicolas Sarkozy campaigned with stances against Turkish membership and promoted the privileged partnership. When tackled during the election campaigns in 2009, enlargement was treated rather negatively than underlined as a success story of the European integration project. The election programmes of the different parties rejected further enlargement, reflected cautious standpoints concerning EU enlargement or neglected the topic in general. This observation presents a major qualitative change to the European election campaigns in 2004. Even though the upcoming Council presidencies of Sweden, Spain and Poland are in general rather favourable towards further enlargements, the overall atmosphere in the European Union gives priority to consolidation and puts enlargement last.

Chronology

compiled by Volkan Altintas

1 May 2009: Ahmet Davutoğlu is appointed Foreign Minister of Turkey. Having served as chief advisor to PM Erdogan since 2002, Davutoğlu is regarded as the intellectual architect of Turkish foreign policy under Erdogan.

8 June 2009: Centre-right parties triumph in the seventh direct elections to the European Parliament.

30 June 2009: The chapter on taxation is opened for negotiations in the intergovernmental conference dealing with Turkey's accession to the EU.

1 July 2009: Sweden takes over the Council Presidency from the Czech.

13 July 2009: Turkey and the EU sign the transit agreement for the Nabucco gas pipeline. With Nabucco, the EU aims at reducing its dependence on Russia.

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The Enlargement discourse in the 2004 elections

Besides the hesitant attitudes among the EU member states, nowadays the EU institutions avoid giving new commitments to future candidate states or to set clear timetables for further accessions. Within the EU an overall positive assessment of enlargement is lacking, and it is therefore not surprising that enlargement policy was not a principal subject for the electoral campaigns in 2009.

Back in the European election campaigns of 2004, EU enlargement was still a very important and salient issue. First, the timing of the elections was favourable for the general idea of enlargement. The June 2004 European election took place just after the big Eastern enlargement round on 1 May 2004. In addition, the accessions of Bulgaria and Romania were still pending. Second, the *success story* of enlargement - giving the opportunity to reunify the European continent with former communist states and therefore to achieve a historical triumph - was still on everybody's mind and generally considered necessary for the EU integration project. Third, campaigning for future enlargement (Bulgaria and Romania, Western Balkans and Turkey) gave the different political parties the possibility to continue the narration of enlargement as a success story. They presented themselves as contributors to this achievement and used the issue of enlargement in order to differentiate their political programmes from one another. Fourth, the project of a Constitution for the European Union was about to be accomplished in order to prepare the EU to have the capacity to become a true global actor in international politics.

In the 2004 European elections, especially European Greens, Liberals and Socialists underlined enlargement as a success and promoted enlargement beyond the EU-25 in their election programmes, namely the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, acknowledging Turkey and Croatia as candidate countries and promoting the membership perspectives of the Western Balkan countries. The Liberals' election programme of 2004 used a very positive wording on future enlargements and even the title itself of the programme emphasised the idea of enlargement ("*A new enlarged Europe open to its citizens and open to the world*"). In contrary, the Conservatives acted much stronger as advocates of an enlargement "break" and a phase of consolidation of the European Union, promoting alternatives to further enlargement rounds. While for example the German Socialists (SPD) focussed in their election programme in 2004 on Eastern enlargement and did not actively tackle the debate about Turkish EU accession, the German Conservatives (CDU) presented already in 2004 their rejection of Turkish EU accession as a pivotal point in their programme.

No enlargement without consolidation

In EU´s history, there had always been an ongoing debate to what extent enlargement of the EU would be compatible with EU´s deepening. Whereas enlargement stands for the gradual expansion of the EU by welcoming new acceding states who adopt the EU´s *acquis communautaire*, deepening in general means the extension or facilitation of decision-making powers of the EU institutions and the institutional consolidation of EU policies. Since the European Council of Copenhagen in 1993, deepening has been understood as the "absorption" or "integration capacity" of the EU.

The debate on widening versus deepening was particularly intense in the beginning of 2000, when the historically, economically and politically most important enlargement round was being prepared. More and more voices claimed that deepening should take place before further widening of the EU. Nevertheless, still back in 2004, enlargement was considered a historic necessity and remained en vogue. After the European election in 2004, this very positive attitude seemed to shift. The institutional consolidation of the EU caused more difficulties than expected. After the setback of the French and Dutch "No's" to the Constitutional Treaty in 2005, the general consensus on enlargement as a success began to dissipate. The Irish rejection of the Lisbon Treaty in June 2008 presented another opportunity to question future enlargements. Concerns regarding the enlargement process were expressed by political leaders more often. Even though pro-enlargement parties generally acknowledged that the given commitments towards candidate countries should be kept and that the enlargement process should be continued, the EU's need to consolidate prior to further expansion was frequently underlined. The possibility of conducting both processes - enlargement and deepening - in parallel has been questioned more and more and priority is almost unanimously given to consolidation. Even the German Socialists claim more often than before "No deepening, no enlargement".

Enlargement discourse in 2009 elections

Due to the widely spread *enlargement fatigue* and scepticism in the EU and its political project in general (e.g. slow ratification process of the Lisbon Treaty or expected low turnout in European elections), political parties refrained from addressing the sensitive issue of enlargement in their 2009 election campaigns extensively.

In 2009, the election programmes rather focussed on the global financial crisis, growth and employment, the European political project in general and the need for institutional settlement. In the Socialist manifesto (PSE) for the 2009 European elections, enlargement, European Neighbourhood Policy and Russia were dealt with in one and the same paragraph. Back in 2004, the PSE gave special attention to enlargement by explicitly differentiating the countries concerned. The programme of the German liberals (FDP) was extremely cautious on enlargement, underlining that during the next mandate of the European Parliament (2009-2014) no decision about Turkey's accession had to be taken.

The observed tendency shows that, regarding a promotion of any future enlargement, political parties are very vigilant. In the 2009 elections, apart from marginalised or extremist political parties, only conservative parties used enlargement as a campaign subject, however, not to promote it as such but rather to

underline the shortcomings or expressing their rejection. Socialists and Liberals tried not to get into an enlargement debate, virtually ignoring this subject altogether. While extremist parties in old member states underlined the negative effects of former or future enlargements, instrumentalising and blaming it for negative consequences in the EU, the conservative parties promoted a rethinking of enlargement by proposing alternatives, especially concerning Turkey. Not only the fact that in the Netherlands the far right Freedom Party of Geert Wilders placed second (16,9%) and won four seats in the EP - basing its European election campaign on the promotion to expel Bulgaria and Romania from the EU, articulating anti-Islamic slogans and advocating the clear rejection of Turkey's EU membership - is particularly alarming, but also the nominal rise of MEPs being openly against Turkish membership. The promotion in favour of enlargement by political parties having been generally very minor, enlargement was not part of the principal campaign topics.

One can also observe continuity on the part of the conservative parties with regard to the enlargement discourse, promoting a privileged partnership for Turkey for example. On the contrary, other parties changed their positioning towards enlargement. While before, deepening and enlargement of the EU were seen as parallel processes, today even Socialists support the idea that a consolidation phase is necessary before further enlargement would be possible.

An enlargement-sceptic European Parliament in 2009-2014

After the negative outcome of the Irish referendum in August 2008 regarding the Lisbon Treaty, the European Parliament articulated a more strongly negative discourse on enlargement than previously. Members of the European Parliament even warned that without the Lisbon Treaty being ratified, no further enlargement could take place. The former consensus about both processes - enlargement and deepening - being possibly conducted in parallel seemed to have disappeared. Politicians from the European Parliament as well as from member states stressed the danger of an EU without any political clout, in case no institutional reform was undertaken prior to further expansion. Claims to consolidate the EU before further enlargement were also pronounced in the past. Nevertheless, the striking news is that referenda on further enlargements might actually be introduced as for example in France or Austria.

The recently elected European Parliament with its 736 members will have a less favourable voice towards future enlargements than the one of 2004-2009. The general shift in the area of enlargement policies will reinforce a trend already visible in the last years within the EP when MEPs were becoming more and more restrictive towards enlargement. The increasing number of votes received by nationalists, extreme right-wing parties and Euro-sceptics in some EU member states will have an effect on the European Parliament's stance on enlargement.

The success of the conservative party group (EPP) in the European elections 2009 will strengthen this tendency. With a relative majority in the EP (35,9%) belonging to the traditionally more enlargement-reluctant conservative group, an alarming number of nationalist members, and a more heterogeneous position on enlargement within the Socialist group, it is likely that more enlargement sceptical views will be promoted.

First signs of future marginalisation of enlargement within the European Parliament were given by the EPP president Joseph Daul (France) shortly after the elections. Daul gave a list with political EPP priorities to Commission President Barroso, in order to support him for another term as Commission President: apart from topics on economy, security, industry, energy and enterprises, the EPP list requested a general review of the enlargement strategy.

In the last European Parliament strong supporters of future enlargements were represented. Apart from MEPs with Turkish origins, such as Cem Özdemir from the Greens or Vural Öger and Emine Bozkurt from the Socialist group, other strong voices such as by the Green Joost Laagendijk from the Netherlands, Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Committee EU-Turkey, maintained a positive voice concerning future enlargements. The number of MEPs with Turkish origin, which was six in the 2004-2009 term, fell to four after the 2009 elections: Ismail Ertug, Social Democrats (Germany), Emine Bozkurt, Labour Party (Netherlands), Filiz Ismailova and Metin Kazak, Movement of Rights and Freedoms (Bulgaria).

A voice in favour of enlargement might come from British members, but a British support for enlargement usually is also connected to the motive of including Turkey and other countries in order, not to strengthen, but to have a less integrated EU. Even though the European Greens - traditionally a pro-enlargement party - gained significant weight in the new Parliament (5,5% in 2004, 7,2% in 2009), the EP will overall be characterized by more enlargement sceptical members than before.

The composition of the new European Commission will eventually show how this policy field will be dealt with in the future. It is to be questioned if enlargement will remain a priority in the field of EU's external policy with a specialised Commissioner for enlargement (such as Günter Verheugen, 1999-2004, or Olli Rehn, 2004-2009) or if the marginalisation of enlargement will be institutionalised with the abolition of a specific portfolio for enlargement.

Communicating enlargement

During the 2009 electoral campaigns, enlargement was only used in the negative sense by conservative parties as a reaction to a generally existing *enlargement fatigue*. No political party has used this most successful tool of EU foreign policy as an argument in favour of Europe and EU integration in its election campaign. True advocates of enlargement were absent in the European elections 2009. As the slow ratification process of the Lisbon Treaty and the Irish referendum of 2008 reveal, EU institutions and the main political actors have to show extra efforts to better communicate with the EU citizens. Communication to the public is today the most important factor to ensure the EU's capacity to act and to move forward in its political integration project. Only if the EU can act efficiently will it have the capacity to integrate new member states to the EU and successfully promote European values such as democracy, rule of law and human rights on an international scale. While communicating enlargement, it will be important to underline that enlargement has to be seen as a process that requires time. The new 2009-2014 European Parliament might decide on Croatia's accession, once the border dispute between Slovenia is settled, open negotiations with Macedonia once the issue of the country's official name is solved, but more surely will tackle a possible membership application of Island, so badly hit by the global financial and economical crisis. Turkey's EU accession will not be decided in this new EP as it is a long term process. Making Turkey's EU membership a topic for elections in the manner it occurred this year should have been avoided. Considering its strategic and economic importance, Turkey should not be "misused" for election reasons. Any anti-Turkey election campaigning is much more populist than in line with political reality.

In addition, any direct causalities concluding "No treaty – no enlargement" are misleading. Internal political problems of the EU, such as the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in 2005 or the open future of the Lisbon Treaty, should not jeopardise the efforts candidate countries are undertaking on their way towards full EU membership. The institutional reforms of the EU and the enlargement process can be realized in parallel and do not exclude each other. In the upcoming months and years, the European Union will be confronted with one main challenge: Before any other big political project within the EU can be successfully concluded, the EU has to regain citizens' support.

Note:
1) Abdullah Gül commenting the European election during a reception in the presidential palace on 9 June 2009.

Sources:
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"Diaspora Turks"

Bridge or Barrier in the EU Process?

M. Murat Erdoğan

Centuries have gone by since the retreat of Turks, who once controlled the entire Southeast of Europe and who had once expanded their territory up to Vienna. "Europe" and "Turkey", once "mutual enemies", then saw themselves rallying on the same side during the Cold War, deleting the negative marks of the past to a large extent. At the same time, the ideological-political orientation of Turkey toward Europe was more and more institutionalized and a strong human dimension was eventually added as well. Participating as far as possible in Western European institutions had a strong Europeanising effect, making Turkey a part of Europe. Turkey's European commitment never seemed to perish despite the considerable challenges on the way to *full* participation in European institutions. Increasing "Europeanness" was not only limited to the state, it also established itself as one of the most important aspects of modern Turkish identity. "Europeanness" is a deliberate political choice of Turks and the efforts spent to reach this goal continue with great commitment.

The human factor, a dimension hardly taken into account at the beginning, became an ever more important issue with the start of substantial "workforce immigration", particularly to Germany, at the beginning of the 1960s. The agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany in 1961 was soon followed by other European countries. The process and its implications, which have been characterised by the famous phrase of Max Frisch ("We wanted workers, but we got people"), started almost half a century ago. Even though the conditions of the Cold War are no longer present, the process continues to carry on. The immigrants and their families, identifying themselves as European Turks, increasingly hold significant positions in the economic, cultural and political life of the countries they live in – especially after it had become apparent that most of them are not living in Europe on a "temporary" basis. More than 5 million Turkish migrants, with half of the population already being European citizens, are living example of this fundamental and qualitative change in European societies. The former "Gastarbeiter" identity, which meant "sitting on the baggage as if returning tomorrow", has practically been surpassed for the majority of Turks living in Europe. The economic, cultural and intellectual capacity of Turkish immigrants, having evolved into a "European Turkish middle class" as active participants in European societies, constitutes part of Europe's reality.

Although impacting first and foremost the countries with substantial Turkish immigration over the past fifty years, the process has always been linked to European integration as well. Mass immigration of Turks to Europe and relations between Turkey and the EEC developed hand in hand, although there is no organic bond between the two. However, the lack of workforce in revitalised post war Europe played an important role in the association of Turkey to the European Economic Community. However, the charm of cheap labour seemed to decrease for the EC in the 1980s. Ironically, one of the most contested issues between Turkey and the EC became the questions related to the free movement of persons and European efforts to stop admissions or even to send back, if possible, people already living in Europe. Accordingly, Turks were eventually not granted the right of free movement, although this had been foreseen before.

For Turkey, the migration of workforce meant a contribution to European growth, helping foreign countries to solve their notorious lack of labour. The revenue sent back to Turkey initially constituted an important source of income but gradually lost its importance because of the economic developments in Turkey and the decision of many migrants to eventually rather invest money in the country they live in. Whereas in 1995 transfers still amounted to 5 billion USD, they dropped to an estimated 1 billion USD in 2009. Accordingly, after the 1990s, for Turkey the significance of Turks living in Europe shifted from the economic to politics. The main change in migrant Turks' attitudes in this context was illustrated by a considerable number of them turning from Turkish migrants into citizens of European countries. Turkish citizens in Europe were more and more perceived as a politically relevant entity, not only by Turkey but also by EU politicians, especially after 1993: The discussions on the new EU architecture and the establishment of a Customs Union between the EU and Turkey created an important atmosphere for European Turks to become part of the European equation. Accordingly, the group that had been cause for concern due to the problems attached to the free movement of persons became – anew – an important factor for Turkey. Now European Turks were more and more considered "Turkish Diaspora", expected to help Turkey to reach its goals in foreign and domestic politics, going well beyond the significance formerly attached to workers' transfers of money. In 1997, Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz even demanded of German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to "define his attitude" towards Turkey and its EU ambitions ahead of the 1998 general elections.

Many discussions and debates have accompanied the process ever since the workforce agreement with Germany in 1961. Despite all problems, half a century of common history has demonstrated that Turks in general have integrated well into the norms of Europe.[1] Turks, who were expected to have a rather

Current Negotiating Status

No.	*Title of Chapter*	
1	Free movement of goods	(●)
2	Freedom of movement for workers	●
3	Right of establishment and freedom to provide services	(●)
4	Free movement of capital	●
5	Public procurement	●
6	Company law	●
7	Intellectual property law	●
8	Competition policy	●
9	Financial services	(●)
10	Information society and media	●
11	Agriculture and rural development	(●)
12	Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy	●
13	Fisheries	(●)
14	Transport policy	(●)
15	Energy	●
16	Taxation	●
17	Economic and monetary policy	●
18	Statistics	●
19	Social policy and employment	●
20	Enterprise and industrial policy	●
21	Trans-European networks	●
22	Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments	●
23	Judiciary and fundamental rights	●
24	Justice, freedom and security	●
25	Science and research	●
26	Education and culture	●
27	Environment	●
28	Consumer and health protection	●
29	Customs union	(●)
30	External relations	(●)
31	Foreign, security and defence policy	●
32	Financial control	●
33	Financial and budgetary provisions	●
34	Institutions	●
35	Other issues	●

Legend: ● not yet opened (●) suspended ● opened ● provisionally closed

Data as of August 2009

hard time fitting into European culture and lifestyle, never became a source of massive disruption in the countries where – initially – they were outsiders. On the contrary, they were the kind of group who contributed to the development of these countries by their labour and taxes, respecting the laws and integrating into the societies they live in. On the occasion of an international symposium, commemorating and discussing "Turks Abroad: Immigration and Integration in 50 Years" in Ankara in May 2009, Minister of State Faruk Çelik, in charge of migrant Turks, opposed the popular view that "Turks will create imbalance due to their cultural differences." To the contrary, he stressed that "the existence of our citizens on European land and their contributions to Europe are the most meaningful response to those opposing the membership of Turkey in the EU". An environment of symbiosis creates new dynamics, but the positive potential of this situation outweighs the negative ones and could be seen as an asset for Turkey on its way to the EU. At the same event, Egemen Bağış, Minister of State for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, clearly highlighted the important role of the Turkish "Diaspora" in this context: "We are, thanks to you, already in the EU and I see each one of you as our ambassador in our EU efforts". These words clearly illustrate Turkey's new policy towards "its European citizens". According to recent declarations by Turkish politicians "integration that does not turn into assimilation" shall generate a win-win-situation for both, Europe and Turkey – only if Turkish migrants are taken seriously and are having economic, cultural and political relevance, they can play this role. Turkish migrants causing problems in the countries they live in, however, also create problems for Turkey – or, at least, are far from adding value. Therefore it could be argued that Turkey has no choice but to be truly sincere about integration, because only then all parties can benefit. The question however remains, in how far the EU is equally sincere about it. If one considers the persistent obstacles to free movement, which is still one of the central issues in EU-Turkey relations, it appears that Turkish migrants as well as Turkish citizens suffer: Visa-free travel is still an illusion and it seems unlikely that the decisions of the Court of Justice in individual cases, which are only putting the finger on Europe's negative attitude on free movement, will lead to a general improvement; one could therefore conclude that Turkish people are effectively being prevented from exercising some of the rights European legislation gives them.[2] On the other hand, the European concern of potential mass immigration of Turks to Europe must also be addressed and taken into account in order to formulate a win-win-solution to this central obstacle to true integration.[3]

Within the EU, the obstacles to free movement are complemented by limitations on political rights. The European demand to renounce Turkish citizenship for a working, tax-paying, law-abiding Turkish migrant, who has lived 30 or even 40 years in Europe, reduces the eagerness to really become an EU citizen. It also raises emotional reactions for Turks to be subjected to different regulations in the process of admission to citizenship. The EU will have made a major contribution to integration by changing its attitude in this regard by, for example, giving migrants who have lived in Europe for a certain time the right to vote regardless of citizenship. Already today, the importance of Turkish migrants, accounting for an approximate 2.5 million qualified voters, has come to an unprecedented degree. Political parties will increasingly be affected by this growing potential. The conservative notion that the emotional bond between Turkish migrants and Turkey is an obstacle for integration and therefore a reason for marginalising them from national political life requires re-examination. Turkey can be a part of the solution just as it can also be a part of the problem: As long as Turkish EU membership is used – or rather misused – for cheap propaganda, the topic as an election issue emotionally disturbs Turkish migrants. Arguments for an anti-enlargement course along the lines of "cultural-religious" differences, used for justifying why the "homeland" of many migrants (i.e. Turkey) should not be admitted, create the ground for dangerous reasoning: Turkish migrants, in the eyes of many Europeans displaying the characteristics of the country that shall not be admitted, are concerned whether those saying "An EU without Turkey" may someday say "An EU without Turks". Accordingly, they perceive the "no to Turkey in the EU" campaign as a campaign against them, especially in the post 9/11 environment with its growing Islamophobia and discriminatory policy approaches.[4] This is not to argue that Turkish migrants shall be manipulated in the favour of Turkish policy goals since this would mean intervention in the internal affairs of the countries concerned. However, it should be acknowledged and taken into consideration that the integration (or non-integration) of Turkish migrants into different EU societies is partly but strongly linked with the question of Turkey joining the EU or not. To ignore this fact would mean to be ignorant to central links and connexions in this complex puzzle.

From the presented point of view, it seems that Turkey is more successful than some EU member states if it comes to integration. Turkey is already playing a major "European" role in terms of culture (Eurovision, European Capital of Culture), economy (Customs Union, commerce with the EU), politics (Council of Europe), and security (NATO, OSCE, European Security and Defence Policy). The only – central – European arena whose decision making mechanisms Turkey does not participate in is the EU. It is an undeniable fact that Turks are an important component of European life. Through immigration, European countries have already tested whether it is possible to live with Turks. At this point, it can already be concluded that Turkish migrants constitute an undeniable "social-political capital" to Europe that should not and must not be wasted by building up barriers instead of establishing a climate of mutual understanding, respect and cooperation. Only by really accepting and understanding Turkish migrants as "capital", the countries they live in can fully benefit from the potential of its migrant population. Turkish migrants are a "soft power" that cannot only contribute to the admission of Turkey to the EU but also to the general interests of European countries – particularly in times of crisis as they are experienced today in the financial and economic sphere.

1) Cf. also Eleni Mavrogeorgis: A Clash of Perceptions, Not of Civilizations.: Revealing Muslim & Non-Muslim Perceptions of National Loyalty and Integrated Living (Rutgers DGA Policy Brief, 1), Newark 2009.
2) R. Gutman during the mentioned symposium.
3) Former MEP V. Öger at the same event.
4) U. Erdener, Rector of Hacettepe University, at the mentioned symposium.

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ZEI Events

The task of the European Commission in ongoing accession negotiations consists not only in the technical conduct of negotiations, but to an increasing degree in the mediation between different expectations and demands attached to enlargement policy. This mediation is an important factor in adequately responding to European as well as to partner's interests. During his visit to the Center for European Integration Studies (ZEI) on 24 June 2009, Commissioner Olli Rehn particularly acknowledged the moderating function of ZEI's EU-Turkey-Monitor, accompanying accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey ever since their launch in late 2005. The reinforcement of mutual understanding and recognition in this as well as in other policy fields with particular external implications plays a major role in any successful European policy.

Dr. Olli Rehn, EU Commissioner for Enlargement, meets with ZEI Director Prof. Dr. Ludger Kühnhardt and Dr. Andreas Marchetti, Editor of the ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor.

Three Questions
to Olli Rehn, EU Commissioner for Enlargement

Over the past five years you have been responsible for the European Union's enlargement policy. Years prior to eastern enlargement, there had been a rather enthusiastic attitude to finally overcome the division of Europe. Nowadays, enlargement seems to be more and more of a tedious topic to many EU citizens. What has happened?

The end of the Cold War was an historic opportunity that had to be seized in order to see Europe reunited and in peace. Eastern enlargement was instrumental in achieving the peaceful and democratic transformation of Central and Eastern Europe. This year, we have many opportunities to remember the reunification of Europe, as we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain and the 5th anniversary of the 2004 enlargement.
Following the successful completion of this transformation, people's attention has focused on other issues, especially in times of the economic and financial crisis. It is only natural that the economy and jobs are the first and foremost concerns of our citizens today. The EU is fully committed to combat the economic recession. At the same time, let us not make EU enlargement a scapegoat for a problem it did not create.
Europe's economic troubles were not created by Czech autoworkers or Bulgarian internet programmers. They stem from system errors of financial capitalism – and originate from Wall Street, not from the streets of Prague or Sofia.
There is no end of history in the Western Balkans or in Turkey today and the transformative soft power of EU accession is just as instrumental for peace, stability and progress in South-East Europe today as it used to be in Central and Eastern Europe a decade ago.

The European Union has started accession negotiations with Turkey in October 2005. So far, the process has not been accompanied by strong public or even political leaders' support, so that you find yourself often in the position of a mediator between quite different positions. Where do we stand at present in the negotiations and where are we heading from here?

Since the opening of the accession negotiations, we made steady progress. Until today, 11 out of the 35 policy chapters have been opened.
However, no one should be mistaken: there is no cruise control in the accession negotiations. Each step forward requires hard work and intense preparations by the candidates for EU membership. The main engine of the accession process remains the reforms in Turkey.
We have seen progress in early 2009, but we expect more reforms to be carried out this year. There is a need to re-create a virtuous circle for Turkey's accession process, whereby reforms in Turkey lead to concrete progress in the accession process. Therefore, I encourage Turkey to resume with full energy the reforms to strengthen fundamental freedoms and to modernise the country.
On the EU side, it is crucial that we continue to pursue a consistent policy. The Commission remains fully committed to the EU agenda for Turkey's accession, unanimously agreed by Member States in 2005.

Commissioner Dr. Olli Rehn in March 2009 at the EP. Photo European Parliament

Enlargement is also not only about enforcing stability, but about making armed conflict next to impossible through voluntary integration. If used well, this instrument can bring peace and stability to regions where all other tools of the box have failed repeatedly throughout history. This is particularly true for the Western Balkans and Turkey. With Turkey's potential accession, the example of peaceful and voluntary regional integration will be extended to the Middle East and Caucasus too. That is why the enlargement process must move on, even if it sometimes seems that there is no support for and no steam in it anymore.

Enlargement with its strong transformative agenda has quite frequently been labelled one of the Union's most efficient foreign policy tools. Nonetheless, its implications for the internal functioning of the EU are equally substantial since enlargement policy fundamentally changes inner-EU dynamics with the eventual inclusion of new members. As a factual link between the internal and the external dimension of the EU, what are the implications of enlargement for EU foreign policy ambitions in its neighbourhood and beyond?

The European Neighbourhood Policy and its advanced offspring, the Eastern Partnership, are cases in point of the EU combining all of its tools of soft power to encourage transformation for the sake of stability in its neighbourhood – that is, doing everything we can in political and economic relations without an immediate accession perspective.
During its half-century history, the EU has pursued deepening and widening in parallel. As new members joined, the EU continued to pursue deeper integration, often stimulated by new challenges raised by the new joiners, which required attention to new policy areas at EU level.
We founded the Single Market after the southern enlargement in the 1980s, and developed substantial cohesion and regional policies. We established the single currency after the Nordic and Austrian accessions in the 1990s, and saw important new developments in foreign and security policies. Since the 2004 accessions – and of course since the 9/11 and the terrorist attacks in Madrid, London, Istanbul and elsewhere – we have witnessed significant progress in the area of justice, liberty and security.
Recently we have focused on economic competitiveness and sustainable development with new methods of integration, as well as on institutional reform. The Lisbon Treaty – pending ratification – has been designed to make the enlarged EU more efficient, more democratic and increase further its voice in the world with a reinforced foreign policy.
Deepening and widening are not contradictory, but rather complementary. It is the combination of the two that has made the EU stronger and increased our leverage in the world economy and politics.
In my view, this is the best and well-tested method for Europe's successful evolution also in the future.

Dr. Olli Rehn has been Commissioner for Enlargement since 2004. The interview was conducted by Dr. Andreas Marchetti, Research Fellow at ZEI.

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