

Turkish-German relations under the new coalition government in Germany –

The impact of the new German coalition government of CDU/CSU and FDP on Turkey's accession to the European Union and how Turkey can use it to her own benefit

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When the European Union (EU) opened accession negotiations with Turkey in 2005 the German Green-Social-Democratic government was one of its strongest supporters. In contrast, Christian Democratic (CDU) Chancellor Angela Merkel is known for her opposition to Turkey's EU membership but was constrained by her Social Democratic (SPD) partner in the Grand Coalition. The general elections of September 2009 replaced the SPD by the liberal party (FDP) in the government. This article will discuss how the new German coalition government of CDU/CSU and FDP is expected to affect Turkey's accession to the EU and how Turkey can use the new coalition to her own benefit. It is shown that the government's policy is not likely to change a lot although the FDP has been less passionate about Turkey's EU membership than the SPD. I will argue that both domestic as well as foreign policy issues shape the parties' positions on Turkey's accession. Domestically, the conservative parties are influenced by the presence of a large immigrant community of Turkey origin in Germany while economic arguments favor the FDP's support. It will also be argued that foreign policy issues also play a critical role. In this area, Germany's role in the EU constrains Merkel to a large extent to pursue complete opposition. The analysis will reveal that Turkey should make use of the generally supportive position of the FDP. Further, Turkey should stress the EU obligation to continue accession negotiations with Turkey by which the German government feels bound.

1. Introduction

Germany is one of the most decisive Member States of the European Union (EU) when it comes to Turkey's future in the EU. Germany together with France has been the "motor of European integration" until today. It was their governments that initiated the European Monetary Union as well as the Maastricht Treaty creating the EU in 1993 (Baun, 1995-96; Mazzucelli 1997, 3-4). Further, France and Germany have the largest populations in the EU and Germany is the largest net contributor to the EU budget (European Commission 2008). Until today, EU decisions have depended on the consent of France and Germany. This is especially true for enlargements. So it is safe to argue that Turkey will only accede to the EU if Germany and France are in favor of it.

Both French President Nicholas Sarkozy as well as German Chancellor Angela Merkel have expressed their opposition to Turkish EU membership and their support of a "privileged partnership" in the past (Stephens 2009). But Merkel's Grand Coalition never blocked

Turkish-EU negotiations because her coalition partner, the Social Democratic Party (SPD), and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier strongly supported accession (ESI 2006). Although Merkel remains in office, the coalition government has changed with the recent federal election. The SPD has been replaced by the Liberal Party (FDP) since they have the absolute parliamentary majority together with the Christian Democratic Party/Christian Social Party (CDU/CSU) of Merkel. The head of the FDP, Guido Westerwelle, is the new minister for foreign affairs. The position of the Liberal Party on Turkish membership is less clear than the one of the SPD. It is not one of complete opposition but the liberals are not known for their open support of Turkey either (HAZ 2009). This is why this paper aims at assessing the following question: *How will the new German coalition government of CDU/CSU and FDP affect Turkey's accession to the European Union and how can Turkey use the coalition to her benefit?*

To answer the research question a content and discourse analysis is conducted to determine the parties' positions and their underlying factors. First, the statement on Turkey's EU accession included in contract of the new government coalition and the positions of the three parties in the German government – CDU, CSU and FDP – are analyzed. Do the parties themselves have coherent positions or do opinions on Turkish EU accession differ internally? General party and election programs as well as public statements are used to assess the various positions.

Second, the factors determining the positions of the parties in government regarding Turkey are assessed. It is assumed that the interplay of domestic and external politics determines the government parties' positions on Turkey's EU accession. This assumption is based on the theory of two-level game which was developed by Robert D. Putnam. He assumes that in international decision-making governments take domestic as well as international pressures into considerations. The national position on an international issue is formed on the domestic level but is also influenced by international issues (Putnam 1988). In Germany with about four million Muslims (Haug/Müssig/ Stichs. 2009, 11)¹ domestic issues certainly influence the parties' position on Turkish entry into the EU. But at the same time the government needs to consider her international obligations. In this case this means that while the German government's position is strongly shaped by domestic politics, international institutions and issues can also potentially constrain the government's room of maneuver. Thus foreign policy issues also play a role in shaping the coalition parties' positions and need to be considered. On the international level, the factor that Germany has been "the motor of integration" in the past is likely to play a role. Therefore, the assessment will test the following hypotheses:

1. The coalition government cannot pursue a strong coherent policy on Turkey's EU accession because the coalition parties' positions are in conflict with each other. On the one hand the CDU/CSU rather opposes and on the other the FDP rather supports Turkey's accession to the EU.
2. The positions of the parties in government are largely shaped by the presence of the large Turkish-German community in Germany.
3. The CDU and Merkel cannot pursue politics of complete opposition because they are constrained by external politics.

The analysis of the factors determining the German position on Turkey's EU accession can also reveal how Turkey can use the new government to her own benefit. Which issues should be tackled or stressed in Turkey's relations with Germany? Based on the findings and considering the factors influencing the German position, a proposition is formulated on how

¹ . "Muslimes Leben in Deutschland: im Auftrag der Deutschen Islamkonferenz" eds. Nürnberg: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

the new coalition can be used by Turkey. In the end, the results are summed up and the research question is answered while also giving an outlook for possible future research.

2. The positions of the parties in the German government

In the following, the official positions of the parties in the German coalition government are assessed. Their general political programs and election programs as well as public statements of representatives of these parties are analyzed. Prior to this, the position on Turkey's EU accession as included in the coalition agreement is described.

2.1. The statement on Turkey's EU Accession in the coalition agreement

The coalition partners CDU, CSU and FDP decided to follow the grand coalition in their official position on Turkey's accession to the EU. The statement has the exact same wording as the one of the Grand Coalition. It states that the EU negotiations with Turkey should be an "open-ended" process. If membership was rejected, privileged relations with the EU should be offered to Turkey. The agreement further adopted the following sentence from the former coalition: "If the EU is not capable of integrating Turkey or if Turkey is not able to completely fulfill all the obligations of EU membership, Turkey should be closely tied to the European structures in a way that further develops her privileged relations with the EU (CDU/CSU/FDP 2009, 109; own translation).

But the new contract skips a paragraph from the former one which stated that Germany supported Turkey's economic and democratic development and its ties to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The former contract also stressed that Turkey needed to comply with the Copenhagen Criteria giving the example of fundamental rights and religious freedoms. This too has been left out in the agreement of the 'black-yellow' coalition (CDU/CSU/SPD 2005, 151; CDU/CSU/FDP 2009, 109).

The statement of the new coalition agreement leaves much room for interpretation. It is not a complete rejection of Turkey's membership perspective but does not show strong support either. It stresses the open-ended nature of the accession talks. Although the negotiations are in fact an open-ended process, to include it in the coalition contract is a political statement revealing skepticism regarding Turkish EU accession. The contract does not decide on a final decision but rather leaves everything open and much room to maneuver for all actors in the government. Moreover, it does not answer the question of how the new government will affect Turkey's EU membership prospects. To answer this question, the positions of the individual coalition partners and its actors will in the following be assessed.

2.2. The CDU/CSU and Turkish EU accession

The position of the biggest coalition partner the CDU/CSU is analyzed in the following. Although the parties of the CDU and CSU form one parliamentary group, they are two different parties with a similar but slightly different program. The CSU only exists in Bavaria where the CDU does not have any candidates. This is why these parties have one election program but two different general political programs. As the CSU is expected to defend more conservative positions, it is important to look at both parties separately before determining their common position.

The discussion about the coalition agreement regarding the government's policy on Turkey confirms this expectation. According to the newspaper *Münchner Merkur*, CSU Secretary General Alexander Dobrindt and other members of the CSU such as Minister President of Bavaria Horst Seehofer had demanded to include a statement of complete

opposition to Turkish EU accession in the coalition agreement. This had also been supported by the CSU expert for foreign policy Thomas Silberhorn who claimed that the *Turkey 2009 Progress Report* of the European Commission proved there was a strong slow-down of reforms in Turkey. While Merkel remained quiet on this issue during the negotiations, some in the CDU actually favor Turkish accession. Ruprecht Polenz, former secretary general, criticizes the CSU position of definite opposition during the coalition negotiations saying that the new coalition could not dismiss something a former government had agreed on in a legally binding way (Eichele 2009). In the end, the CSU failed to push through its will. But Merkel, also head of the CDU, certainly does not share Polenz's support for Turkey's EU membership either.

In 2005, Merkel attempted – without any success – to include the possibility of a “privileged partnership” in the negotiation framework of the EU and Turkey (Spiegel 2005). As a chancellor she has repeatedly stated that she preferred a “privileged partnership” (ESI 2006, 1). During a meeting with French President Nicolas Sarkozy, which was part of the CDU election campaign, Merkel explicitly said that EU membership should not be offered to Turkey (Beermann 2009). But Merkel's opposition to Turkey's membership is weaker than Sarkozy's who is blocking the opening of five chapters in the accession negotiations (Rürüp 2009; EurActiv 2009). Instead she acted according to the principle of “pacta sunt servanda” and promised that she would not block the negotiations (ESI 2006, 1; HAZ 2009). This policy towards Turkey might have been caused by her Social Democratic coalition partner that ensured that their coalition agreement included that the goal of the negotiation process is Turkey's accession to the EU (CDU/CSU/SPD 2005, 151).

The opposition to Turkey's accession into the EU is also evident in the parties' programs. While both the general party program of the CDU and the election program of the CDU/CSU speak in favor of the so called “privileged partnership”, they differ in the way they give the reasons for opposition to membership. The CDU party program briefly states that for membership both Turkey's compliance with the Copenhagen criteria and the EU's capability to integrate new members needs to be fulfilled. The program also states that the CDU actually favored a “privileged partnership” (CDU 2007, 101). The common election program of CDU and CSU explicitly states that Turkey did not fulfill the political and economic criteria. It specifically mentions freedom of expression, equality of men and women, protection of minorities, and freedom of religion. It implies that because Turkey did not comply with these obligations, the CDU/CSU favored a “privileged partnership” (CDU/CSU 2009, 90). This statement expresses stronger opposition to Turkish EU membership than the one in the general program. This position is likely to have been influenced by the CSU explicitly stating in its political program that the party opposed Turkey's EU membership in general (CSU 2007, 154). The CDU seems to be more reluctant to formulate such a rigid position. Nevertheless, the CDU also stresses that it prefers a “privileged partnership” instead of membership.

But what is meant by “privileged partnership”? In a position paper of 2004, the CDU/CSU defines the concept of “privileged partnership”. The paper was drafted before the start of the accession negotiations in 2005. It states that Turkey did not comply with the political criteria of Copenhagen – especially regarding human and minority rights – at that point in time. It further states that even in the case of the opening of negotiations with Turkey, the talks should be directed towards a “privileged partnership” because Turkish accession would bear the risk that the EU would be reduced to a free trade area. Instead a “privileged partnership” should include a free trade area including all kind of goods. It also envisages the strengthening of cooperation in support of civil society, environmental protection, small and medium-scale companies and cooperation in health and education policy. Further, Turkey's inclusion in the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security

and Defence Policy (ESDP) should be increased. In addition, better cooperation in internal and legal affairs is described as a goal (CDU/CSU 2004). This specific concept of a “privileged partnership” is heavily criticized for being very vague, having no legal base in the EU treaties (Karakas 2005, 9) and not giving any power to Turkey in the EU decision-making (Leggewie 2008, 7).

It was Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg of the CSU, current minister for defense, who drafted this position paper (Fischer 2009). It is especially CSU politicians that demand the stop of accession negotiations. So did CSU Secretary General Alexander Dobrindt in April 2009 when there was disagreement between Turkey and the EU over the new Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Welt 2009b).

But although the CSU opposes Turkey’s EU membership more strongly than the CDU it is not that clear that as Udo Witzens predicted for the Grand Coalition “(...) a CDU-led government (...) will most probably return to its traditional course and confirm Turkey’s claims for EU-membership leaving anti-Turkish rhetoric to its right wing partner, the Bavarian CSU” (Witzens 2005, 220). After four years of a CDU-led government Merkel’s general opposition to Turkey’s EU membership and her preference of a “privileged partnership” with Turkey has become clear. She is expected to represent this point of view in the new government too (Barysch 2009).

Thus it can be said that the Bavarian CSU strongly opposes Turkey’s accession to the EU. But while the general position of the CDU and its chancellor Merkel is also one of rejection of Turkish membership while favoring a “privileged partnership”, some members of the party are in favor of Turkish membership. The factors that are likely to decide the Turkey policy of the CDU/CSU will be discussed in the next chapter. But first, the official position of her coalition partner, the FDP, is analyzed.

2.3. The FDP and Turkish EU accession

The position of the FDP on Turkey’s accession to the European Union is much more positive than the one of the CDU and CSU but not that clear either. In fact, between 2005 and 2009 it seems to have become increasingly supportive. While the FDP election program of 2005 still stressed that alternatives to membership needed to be developed in case Turkey did not fulfill the accession criteria (FDP 2005b, 46-7), the election program of 2009 does not mention any alternatives any longer.² Instead it states that the decision on Turkish EU membership will not be on the agenda in the upcoming years. It states that in spite of Turkey’s reform progress, Turkey still had many problems. The condition for EU membership was that the EU was able to accept a new member and that Turkey fulfilled the criteria. All accession negotiations should be an “open-ended process” (FDP 2009a, 71).

This is exactly the position taken by the liberals in the negotiations of the coalition agreement with the CDU/CSU. While the CSU insisted on including the rejection of Turkish accession, the FDP did not want to include a statement on this issue at all. Westerwelle argued – in line with the FDP program – that there was no need to talk about Turkey’s EU membership since it was not on the agenda in this legislature period (Eichele 2009).

A similar statement was made by Werner Hoyer, FDP foreign policy expert, in April 2009 after US President Barack Obama had spoken out in strong favor of Turkey’s EU membership. Hoyer stated that it was too early to discuss Turkey’s membership because neither the EU nor Turkey was ready for accession. But he also said that it was a mistake to torpedo Turkey’s efforts of reforms by taking away any perspective of membership referring

² The general program of the liberal party is of 1997 and does not contain any statements on Turkey (FDP 1997, “Wiesbadener Grundsätze”).

to the position of the CDU/CSU. It was in Germany's own interest to support reforms in Turkey (Handelsblatt 2009).

Similar positions are included in the FDP program for the European Parliament elections in 2009 (FDP 2009b, 4) and in a position paper on the FDP foreign policy guidelines in 2005 which stressed that the negotiations should "really" be an open-ended process (FDP 2005a, 3). During the party convention of the FDP in 2003 – before the opening of the EU-Turkey negotiations – the party passed a decision which elaborates on the parties' positions on Turkish accession in more detail. The document states that Europe was a free space for religious commitments. Europe stands for an attitude or values but not for one religion. Although the "European values" have been strongly influenced by Christianity, they are not directed against other religious beliefs. It further recognizes Turkey's reform progress, urges for more reforms and stresses the necessity for actual application of the newly formulated legal bases. More importantly, it states that Turkey and other should be treated equal as other candidate countries. But the EU had to manage the last enlargement rounds and Turkey had to go through a process of change (FDP 2003, 1-2).

In contrast to this decision, some FDP members have expressed a much more negative opinion on Turkish EU accession in the past. At the party convention of 2003, the FDP group of Baden-Württemberg tried to introduce their position on Turkey's EU membership. Instead of Turkish EU membership, they clearly favored a "privileged partnership". The document criticizes the former Red-Green government for agreeing to the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey in 2005 because Turkey had not fulfilled the conditions of democracy, market economy, rule of law, human rights, freedom and tolerance which defined the European Union (FDP Südwest 2003). In 1999, former FDP leader Wolfgang Gerhardt had explicitly said that he was in general against Turkey's inclusion in the EU (Spiegel Online 1999). But until the election campaign of 2005 he had completely changed his position to one in favor of Turkish membership in case the conditions were fulfilled (Gebauer 2005).

Although Westerwelle supports Turkey's EU aspirations, he has continuously stressed that the EU is not capable of integrating a new member right now (Bild 2009; Süddeutsche 2009c), Turkey was not ready and the negotiations should be an open-ended process. Since he also excluded the question of Turkish EU membership from the coalition negotiations, Westerwelle is unlikely to show any ambitious support for Turkey's EU membership during his term of office (Ehrich 2009; HAZ 2009) but he could prevent Merkel from blocking the accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU.

2.4. Interim conclusion of the official positions of the parties in government

Since the coalition agreement leaves much room for interpretation and maneuver in terms of the German policy on Turkish EU membership, the parties' positions needed to be assessed more closely. This ambiguity can also be found in the parties' own positions on Turkey's EU accession.

The assessment of the coalition parties' positions on Turkey's EU accession has shown that the CSU completely opposes Turkey's EU accession. In general the CDU also disfavors it. Although some CDU politicians support it, the majority including Merkel prefer a "privileged partnership". But Merkel does not block the accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU.

The position of the FDP is even less clear than that of the CDU. Although in general the FDP has shown support for Turkey's EU membership in the recent past, Westerwelle has stressed several times that Turkey was not ready to join the EU today and has never been very ambitious in defending Turkey's EU perspective. Nevertheless the FDP's inclusion in the German government might be positive for Turkey.

The assessment of the parties' official positions on Turkish EU accession could prove the first hypothesis: The coalition government cannot pursue a strong coherent policy on Turkey's EU accession because the coalition parties' positions are in conflict with each other. On the one hand the CDU/CSU is rather opposing and on the other hand the FDP is rather supporting. It can be expected that the Turkey policy of the German government will not change dramatically compared to the one of the Grand Coalition. But the FDP is generally expected to show less support for Turkey since in the past the FDP has been less supportive of Turkey's EU aspirations than the Social Democrats.

To understand the mechanisms behind the parties' positions on Turkey's EU accession and how Turkey can use the new coalition to her own benefit, the factors influencing the parties' positions need to be determined. Relying on two-level game theory it is assumed that the parties' stand on this issue is influenced by the interplay of domestic and foreign politics issues (Putnam 1988).

3. Issues affecting the positions of the parties in government

There has always been a very strong debate in Germany on Turkey's accession to the EU. It has been a highly politicized issue due to special relations between Turkey and Germany. According to Putnam, it is assumed that issues at the domestic and international level influence the position of the German government (Putnam 1988). Domestic issues especially have dominated the discussion. Since the parties compete for voters (Große-Hüttemann 2005, 36), they are highly influenced by the public opinion. Therefore, in the following the effects of four different domestic issues on the parties' positions are analyzed first. In a country with 2.5 to 2.7 million Muslims with a Turkish background (Haug/Müssichs/Stichs 2009, 12) their integration is expected to highly affect the debate on Turkey's EU membership. Germans with a Turkish origin also represent a strong voter group. The role of Islam and culture, the second issue analyzed, is also closely linked to the presence of the Muslims mainly originated from Turkey. The issue of human rights and democracy in Turkey has also been on the agenda in Germany. In spite of this, often rather conservative business groups have advocated Turkish accession in the past because Germany is Turkey's most important trading partner (Witzens 2005, 218). Because the business interests have a strong influence on politics, they also need to be considered.

At the same time foreign policy issues are also likely to influence the coalition government. The impact of four foreign policy issues on the government's stance is analyzed here. First, Germany's close relations with Turkey have to be examined. Except for the Helmut Kohl CDU-administration, Germany has proven to be the most reliable supporter of Turkey's membership aspirations in the past because "[F]or two centuries Germany and Turkey have been related in a close friendship of states and people" (Witzens 2005, 218). Second, the German government has committed itself once again to the transatlantic partnership (CDU/CSU/FDP 2009, 111) and US President Barack Obama has called on Europe to allow Turkey to join the EU (Charter 2009). Therefore, the effects of German-US relations are assessed. Third, the Franco-German axis has been influential in Turkey's accession process. Thus its impact needs to be analyzed. Fourth, Germany's special role in the EU is expected to influence the German coalition government. Its influence on the German position on Turkish EU membership is examined.

3.1. Domestic issues and Turkish EU accession

Especially because of the high number of Turkish immigrants in Germany, domestic issues have dominated the debate on Turkey's EU membership in Germany. Thus in the following

the domestic factors affecting the positions on Turkey of the governing parties are assessed first. It is analyzed which parties are especially affected by these issues and in what way.

3.1.1. Integration of people with a Turkish origin in Germany

“(…) I[i]n Germany, issues of immigration and integration are a key ingredient of the debate about Turkish accession” (Barysch 2007, 4). In a survey conducted by the ESI most people “stressed the importance of the position and perception of the large Turkish minority in Germany to the wider debate on Turkey” (ESI 2006, 4).

There are about four million Muslims in Germany, out of which 2.5 to 2.7 million are Turks or Germans with Turkish origin (Haug/Müssig/Stichs 2009, 11-12). Both, the success of their integration into the German society and their potential as voters are closely linked to the question of Turkish membership.

The topic of immigration and integration dominates the German debate on Turkey. Turkish migrants are often accused of not being willing to integrate. It is the circumstances under which Turkish immigration to Germany took place that make integration very difficult. When Germany invited Turkish guest workers in the 1960s, they were expected to leave later. This is why politics never tackled the issue of immigration. Instead many guest workers stayed and their families followed (Schaefer 2005, 6-8). In spite of that Germany denied to be an “immigration country” and thus did not pursue any active integration policy. Further, the immigrants came from less developed regions of Turkey. They were traditional workers and thus not very well educated. Therefore it is difficult for their children to achieve a high level of education and find employment. A study conducted by the *Berlin Institut* stated that compared to other migrants in Germany Turkish migrants are the least integrated regarding the level of education and employment rates (Berlin Institut 2009). The study has been confronted by a lot of criticism especially regarding their integration indicators. Other studies have shown more positive results. In the most populated federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia only six per cent of the Turkish-origin people under 30 years old do not have any kind of educational degree while 17 per cent of them have successfully completed the university degree qualification. This means that there is a big difference between the generation of the guest workers and their children (Sauer 2009).

Further, according to the *Sinus Study* 84 per cent of Turkish-origin people agree that one cannot be successful in Germany without German language skills. 68 per cent say that they have good or very good language skills and 75 per cent use German with their friends. The study revealed that the group of Turkish-origin people is not homogenous but rather split into the same milieus as the German population. Turkish-origin people in the traditional worker milieu had more in common with Germans in the same milieu than with Turkish-origin people in the middle-class (Sinus 2009). But Germans have the perception that the integration of Turkish-origin people has failed in Germany, they think that Turkey’s overall integration into the EU is not possible either (Schaefer 2005, 3).

The *Eurobarometer* data supports the assumption that the Turkish immigrants’ presence favors public opposition to Turkish EU accession. In Germany, 78 per cent of the people surveyed by *Eurobarometer* agreed that “Turkey’s joining could risk favouring immigration to more developed countries in the EU” (Eurobarometer 66 2007). In Germany people who think that immigration was a bad thing are also more likely to oppose Turkish accession (Austin/Parker 2005, 31). In addition: “As opinion polls show approval or rejection of Turkish EU accession is directly correlated with the actual economic conditions in Germany, especially with the situation on the labour market” (Witzens 2005, 220). Especially in times of economic crisis people perceive a thread from immigrants which could take away their jobs or use their welfare benefits. 73 per cent asked by *Eurobarometer* in Germany oppose Turkish

membership. Only Austrians expressed more opposition (Eurobarometer 63 2005). McLaren found out that "(...) in countries where immigration from Turkey is high, citizens are most hostile to the Turkish candidacy" (McLaren 2007, 254). Immigration linked with a high level of a perceived threat seems to create a feeling of hostility towards Turkey (McLaren 2007). This perception of migration as a threat has been stressed by the "securitization" of migration. Migration is increasingly perceived as a danger to the welfare system and security of a national state (Huysmans 2000).

Such a strong public opposition influences the parties since they compete for voters. On the other hand, the Turkish-Germans also represent a big voter group for the parties. So how do the parties in government deal with the issue of Turkish immigration in relation to Turkey's accession to the EU?

The issue of integration of the Turkish immigrants has especially been instrumentalized by the Christian conservative parties to gain electoral support. In 2000, CDU-politician Friedrich Merz initiated the so-called "Leitkultur" debate in fact demanding to stop any further immigration (Süddeutsche 2008). Ursula Neumann links this term to a prevailing ethnic understanding of the state with a "homogenous defined culture binding for everyone and to be protected against any disturbing elements" (Neumann 2003, 290; own translation).³ The debate was continued in 2004 when Angela Merkel criticized the Turkish migrants for not being willing to integrate (Schaefer 2005). CSU-politician Edmund Stoiber called for preserving the "Christian occidental heritage" and demanded to reduce social transfers in case migrants did not integrate (Fahrenholz/Klüver 2004). The CDU also strongly criticized the SPD and Greens for defending their idea of a "multicultural" society in which people from different cultures could peacefully co-exist. Merkel said that "multiculturalism" had failed (Süddeutsche 2004). "Multiculturalists" do *not* want to impose "German" values on other cultures because of the Nazi Germany past (Schaefer 2005). In 2005 it was the SPD-led Schröder government that introduced the new Immigration Act (Zuwanderungsgesetz) which for the first time recognized that Germany was an "immigration country" (Schaefer 2005). He demanded from Turkish migrants to integrate but warned against a "clash of cultures" (Fahrenholz/Klüver 2004). This immigration debate is likely to have influenced the political debate on Turkey's EU accession, too. Schaefer noted in 2005:

It is only in the last two years, ironically coinciding with the debate over Turkish membership of the EU, that Germany has begun to its search to decide what kind of country it is seeking to be in the 21st century (Schaefer 2005, 3).

In 2008, CDU Secretary General and current Chancellery Minister Ronald Pofalla announced that the "Leitkultur" debate would be reactivated by the CDU during the election campaign (Süddeutsche 2008). Although this did not happen because the economic crisis dominated, it shows how the CDU and CSU use the topic of failed integration to gain votes:

For some time debate on Turkish EU-membership was rather emotional, particularly when topics like migration and costs of accession were discussed in the public. Xenophobic fears were recklessly incited and functionalised for political purposes (Witzens 2005, 220).

In contrast, the FDP traditionally stands for a liberal integration policy and usually does not make use of xenophobic feelings. The liberal party has a much more positive approach to migration and calls for a point system of migration. In a point-system migration becomes independent from the labor market situation but dependent on the migrant's qualification (Volkman 2009, 24). The FDP never mingled the topics of the immigrants' integration and Turkish EU accession. On the other hand, the FDP receives extremely little votes from Turk-

³ Neuman writes: "Damit ist die Vorstellung von einer homogenen, für alle verbindlich definierbaren und vor Verunreinigung durch fremde Elemente bewahrenden nationalen Kultur verbunden, wie dies in der jüngsten Debatte um die ‚deutsche Leitkultur‘ (Friedrich Merz, CDU) erneut deutlich wurde" (Neumann 2003, 290).

Germans in elections. This might be due to the fact that FDP politics have especially favored business and upper class citizens in the past. A great majority of Turkish-German citizens vote for the SPD and the Green party. In a poll of 2001 and 2002, 62 per cent of Turkish-origin Germans said they would vote for the SPD while 22 percent stated they would vote for the Green party. Only three per cent wanted to vote for the FDP and only eleven per cent said they preferred the CDU/CSU. Thus until now, the big group of Turkish-origin German citizens have not been attracted by neither the FDP nor the CDU/CSU. Germans originated from Turkey have a much stronger affiliation with the SPD and the Greens (Wüst 2003). That they do not support the CDU/CSU is likely to be caused by the parties' approach towards immigration and Turkey's EU membership. It is very difficult for the CDU and CSU to attract Turkish Germans and thus they do not have a strong incentive for a pro-Turkish policy. Instead of appealing to the German-Turks, the conservative parties try to gain votes through using anti-Turkish rhetoric. But considering that in the future the Turkish-German population will be steadily growing because of its high birth rates (Berlin-Institut 2009), the CDU will need to start to appeal to these voters, too. The initiative of the *Islam Conference* and the *Integration Summit* show that the CDU and CSU have recognized that they need to appeal to the immigrants too. But it also reveals that they believe that the Turkish identity is based on Islam. They consider the foreigner to be Muslim.⁴ Further, although Kaya and Kentel could show that most people with a Turkish background in Germany supported Turkey's EU accession, at least 30 per cent of them opposed it in 2003 (Kaya/Kentel 2004, 50). This means that the CDU does not necessarily need to pursue a pro Turkish EU membership policy to appeal to these voters. In any case for now the CDU/CSU as well as the FDP cannot compete with the SPD and the Greens for Turkish-origin voters. Instead the CDU/CSU will continue their conservative integration policy and their opposition to Turkish membership to ensure the support of their traditional voters. Although Turkish-Germans do rarely vote for the FDP, its voter clientele prefers a pro-Turkey policy because of economic reasons which will be discussed later. Germans' perception of the German-Turkish community also affects what they think of the compatibility of Turkish and European culture as shown in the following.

3.1.2. Culture and religion

"The Ottoman Empire and its Muslim identity as opposed to Christian Europe have been crucial in shaping the minds of Europeans in conjunction with Turkish membership to the EU" (Müftüler-Baç/Taşkın 2007, 41). This is also true for Germany where in a *Eurobarometer* poll 74 per cent agreed that "[T]he cultural differences between Turkey and the EU Member States are too significant to allow for this accession" (Eurobarometer 66, 2007).

Especially the two German historians Hans-Ulrich Wehler and Heinrich-August Winkler have defended the view that Turkey was not part of Europe in a geographical, historical and cultural sense. Turkey did not go through the European stages of Reformation, Renaissance and Enlightenment (Witzens 2005, 221). Today's Turkish achievements of Europeanization were new and superficial. The European ideal of a free individual did not exist in Turkey. Wehler concludes that therefore Turkey is not part of Europe. Winkler

⁴ The CDU Minister for Interior Wolfgang Schäuble initiated the first *Islam Conference* in Germany in September 2006 which involved 30 people, 15 Muslim (10 with Turkish origin) and 15 non-Muslim representatives of different institutions. Its aim is to improve domestic relations between the majority population and Islam in Germany and to set up a body officially representing German Muslims. An *Integration Summit* has also taken place under the leadership of Chancellor Merkel. These initiatives might provide an opportunity for the Turks represented in these bodies to show their effort to create an "enlightened and European Muslim society" (ESI 2006, 4). But the real intentions of the CDU/CSU in initiating these summits are unclear.

predicts that if Turkey is accepted and thus the historical roots of Europe are ignored, this will lead to the failure of the European project (Kramer 2003, 10). The two historians draw their cultural concept from Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" which also "(...) inspired cultural ideologists e.g. the German opponents to Turkey's EU accession" (ibid., 229). According to Huntington Turkey belongs to the "Muslim" but not to the "European civilization". Huntington predicts Turkey's fall back to the Islamic world. In line with him, German opponents do not recognize Atatürk's achievements of modernization and instead consider Turkey to be like other Islamic countries that have never been part of Europe (ibid., 230-31). Turkey's "otherness" is constructed on the base of its Islamic religion (Müftüler-Baç 2007). Politicians of the CDU and CSU oppose Turkish membership because Turkey is culturally too different and its accession could bring about the "clash of civilizations" (Große-Hüttemann 2005; Hülse 2006). This viewpoint is shared by the German public of which 75 per cent disagree with the statement that Islam is compatible with the Western culture (ESI 2008, 28). SPD and Green politicians also refer to Turkey as culturally different but they support membership because of these differences. Turkey could be a "bridge" between continental Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean (Hülse 2006, 22).

Where does the German Islamophobia come from? Rather than a historical rooted psychological German fear of the "Asiatic danger" ("asiatische Gefahr") (Witzens 2005, 225)⁶, it is mainly the presence of about four million Muslims which influences the image of Islam in Germany. Germans especially debate the role of Turkish women in Islam (Barysch 2006, 3). More than 90 per cent of Germans believe that Islam is hostile and aggressive to women (Barysch 2007, 4). Honor killings have attracted special attention in Germany. There were 45 cases of honor killings between 1996 and 2005 (ESI 2008, 23). 25 per cent of the whole female population but 38 per cent of Turkish women claimed they had suffered from domestic violence in 2004. Many Germans also believe that most Turkish women were forced into marriage although the numbers do not support this assumption. While 25 per cent of Turkish women did say that they had only met their husband after the wedding, only nine per cent said that they were forced into marriage. Two-thirds would not accept such a forced marriage "under no circumstances" (Schaefer 2005, 13-14). The role of Muslim women is also largely discussed by books and films⁷ of Turkish-Germans (Schaefer 2005). While these activities are mostly very positive, they also increase the skepticism towards Muslims in general. Wearing the headscarf also has a very negative image in Germany. Germans perceive it as a symbol of suppression. A Muslim woman's application for a job in an architecture office was rejected because the woman wears a headscarf. The office stated that it did not want to support Islamism (Platen 2009).

Again migration is perceived as a threat to the stability of a country. This perception has become more common in the post 9/11 age. The journalist Deniz Baspinar describes her own experience saying that Muslims have become a symbol of the "other" replacing the foreigner as the "other" in Germany. Muslims represent the foreigner and the threat for Germans today (Baspinar 2009). This became apparent in the debate on the construction of a mosque in Cologne which was faced by strong opposition (Kölner Stadtanzeiger 2007). There is a

⁵ In his book 'The Clash of Civilizations and The Remaking of World Order', which Samuel P. Huntington published in 1998, Huntington claims that future conflicts will occur along cultural and religious dividing lines in the world. He predicts the "clash of civilizations" such as of the "Western civilization" and "the Muslim world" (Huntington 1996).

⁶ Witzens writes: "In Germany the term *asiatic* is linked with negative associations". There are also the expressions "die asiatische Tat" ("the Asiatic deed") and "die asiatische Grausamkeit" ("the Asiatic cruelty") (Witzens 2005, 225; accentuation in the original).

⁷ E.g. Serap Ciceli's *Wir sind eure Tochter, nicht eure Ehre*, Necla Kelek's *Die Fremde Braut* and Fatih Akin's film *Gegen die Wand*. Seyran Ates, a Berlin lawyer fighting for women rights, received the title "Women of the Year 2005" by the German Female Citizen's Association (see Schaefer 2005 and ESI 2006).

general fear that an “Islamization” takes place because of the presence of Turkish immigrants. In fact Germans “Islamize” Turks. Islam tends to be set equal to Islamism. Opponents of Turkish EU membership such as the CDU/CSU politicians fear that political fundamentalism would spread to the EU and Germany (Große Hüttmann 2005; Güngör 2004). Güngör claims that the Islamic organizations in Germany such as the Caliphate State based in Cologne were partly responsible for this image. The organizations had become more fundamentalist because Islamist profited from a lack of interest in Muslims in Germany. This strengthens the perception that Islam and democracy do not go together (Güngör 2004, 25-37). Austin and Parker have shown that those who fear Islamic extremism are more likely to oppose Turkish EU membership (Austin/Parker 2005, 38).

For the CDU and CSU Christianity is the key ingredient of a European identity. They call for a Europe that is committed to its “Christian occidental roots and the ideas of the Enlightenment” (CDU/CSU 2009, 89). This understanding was also apparent in the CDU/CSU debate on a German “Leitkultur” and was especially determining for former chancellor Helmut Kohl’s opposition to Turkish membership (Szymanski 2007). The difference in culture and religion between Turkey and the EU is one of the major reasons why the Christian parties oppose Turkey’s accession to the EU (Müftüler-Baç/Taşkın 2007; Yılmaz 2009). Merkel has repeatedly stressed in the past that the EU needed to define its borders (Szymanski 2007). CDU-politician Markus Pieper said that Europe needed to draw its borders where “a common history, culture, and value orientation are missing” (Hickmann/Krüger/Nitschmann/Wiegand 2007). This issue is of even more importance for the more conservative CSU which is elected by traditional voters in Bavaria.

The FDP on the other hand defines Europe as “the room of freedom of religious commitments”. Although Europe’s values have strongly been shaped by the Christian religions, they were not directed against any other religious beliefs. In Europe, a plurality of private and personally religious commitments was possible. Further, Europe stood for an attitude and not for a religion (FDP 2003). The SPD and the Greens use the cultural and religious differences as an argument for Turkey’s accession – enriching Germany’s culture and demonstrating that Huntington’s prediction of the “Clash of Civilizations” was wrong (Große-Hüttemann 2005; Müftüler-Baç/Taşkın 2007). In comparison the FDP has not passionately argued in such a way in support of Turkish EU membership in the past. Instead the FDP has often criticized the democratic deficit of Turkey. This topic of the German debate will be discussed in the following.

3.1.3. Democracy and human rights

Human rights issues are of special importance in the German debate on Turkey’s accession to the EU. In the *Eurobarometer*, 93 per cent agreed that “[T]o join the EU in about ten years Turkey will have to systematically respect Human Rights” (Eurobarometer 66, 2007). Compared to the debate on Eastern enlargement, human rights and democracy issues have played a more important role in Turkey’s case than in the other enlargements. This is due to two reasons. First of all, the presence of the Turkish community causes the Germans to pay more attention to Turkish domestic issues. Every Turkish domestic issue is also discussed in Germany (Sauter 2002, 99-100). When the latest progress report of the EU Commission was released on 14 October 2009, the German media mainly reported that the Commission criticized Turkey’s deficits in human rights such as in freedom of expression, domestic violence against women and a high number of honor killings (Spiegel 2009). Although the Commission criticized that there were an increasing number of judgments delivered by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) stating that Turkey had violated the European

Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), human rights issues only made up a very small part of the report (European Commission 2009).

Second, there is the notion that Islam and democracy do not go together (Güngör 2004, 35). People are suspicious that the democratization of Turkey is not sustainable because Turkey is the only democratic country in the Muslim world. Some also fear that the AKP might have a hidden agenda of Islamizing Turkey (Jung 2008, 118).

The FDP clearly states that Islam and the German “Grundgesetz” are compatible (FDP 2009a, 29). The party praised the reforms of the legal base of fundamental rights and freedoms in Turkey but stressed the necessity for their actual application (FDP 2003). It is the FDP politicians who strongly demand from Turkey to guarantee human rights. Westerwelle said that Turkey’s accession to the EU was not on the agenda in the coming years because Turkey did not fulfill the political criteria yet. His previous statements also referred to the guarantee of fundamental rights such as the case in 2003 when he said that at that time Turkey could “of course” not join the EU (Leggewie 2004, 199). For the FDP, Turkey’s EU accession largely depends on Turkey’s democratic transition which the liberals consider to be possible.

In contrast, CSU politicians use every opportunity to use the deficits in Turkey’s human rights record as a proof that Islam and democracy are exclusive and thus Turkey’s accession impossible. Their common election program also stressed Turkey’s human rights deficits (CDU/CSU 2009, 90). Referring to the Commission’s progress report, the CSU politicians Manfred Weber and Markus Ferber stated that if even the Commission was skeptical of the negotiations with Turkey, this means that there is resignation. Both demanded the suspension of negotiations (Spiegel 2009; Welt 2009a). Merkel did not comment on the report. But Werner Langen, CDU representative in the European Parliament, did express his support for Angela Merkel’s suggestion of a “privileged partnership” with Turkey (Welt 2009a).

3.1.4. Economic interests

Economic interests have not played a dominant role in the German debate on Turkish EU accession although benefits for the German economy are expected from accession. Germany is Turkey’s biggest trading partner and most of the foreign direct investments in Turkey come from Germany (Table 1; see Flam 2003; Lejour/Mooij/Capel 2004). The German public especially does not consider its possible positive economic effects. Nevertheless, German business associations are very well aware of the benefits Turkey’s membership will generate and strongly support it.

Table 1: Macroeconomic effects of Turkish accession to the internal market in 2025 (Lejour et al. 2004, 42).

	Volume of GDP (%)	Volume of consumption (%)	Equivalent variation (billion US\$)	Export volume (%)	Terms of trade (%)
Turkey	0.8	1.4	4.4	8.1	3.5
Accession-10	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2
Bulgaria	0.0	0.1	0.3	1.3	0.1
Romania	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.8	0.2
EU-15	0.0	0.0	3.8	0.2	0.1
Germany	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.3	0.1
The Netherlands	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.1

The Federation of German Industries (Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie, BDI) clearly is in favor of Turkey’s entry into the EU because of the expected economic gains (Witzens 2005, 218). The BDI suggests that Turkey and the EU should form something like

the European Economic Area before Turkey's accession (Große-Hüttemann 2005). The idea of a European Economic Area has also been suggested by the CDU but rather as an alternative to membership (Szymanski 2007, 38). In 2002, the BDI published a position paper with the title "Five good reasons for a clear European perspective for Turkey" which states that the great economic potential of trade and economic relations between Turkey and the EU need to be used. It mentions that Turkey's economy was already focused on the EU and Germany was Turkey's most important trading partner. Further, Turkey was a strategic partner in the region and Turkey could trigger economic growth in the EU. Last, a credible membership perspective strengthened Turkey's contribution to peace and stability in the region and the world and thus also created stability and security for the Turkish economy (BDI 2002). In addition, former BDI president Michael Rogowski published an article in *Die Welt* calling on the EU governments to decide for the opening of negotiations in 2004. He also stressed the stabilizing effect of Turkey's membership for Turkey's economy (Rogowski 2004).

The importance of Turkey's EU membership for the German business interest was also the reason for the *Financial Times Deutschland* to endorse the Green party in European Parliament elections calling on its readers to vote Green in the European elections. The CDU/CSU had disqualified itself because of its opposition to Turkey's EU entry and the FDP did not defend a very clear standpoint on Turkey's accession, the newspaper argued (FTD 2009).

While all parties CDU, CSU and FDP generally defend business interests, it is the FDP which relies on business people as their main voter clientele. The expected economic gains are also the reasons for the liberal party's support for Turkish accession. The business interests have the potential to push the FDP to take a stronger and more supportive position on Turkish entry into the EU. The CDU and the CSU are also influenced by these economic interests but both parties also rely on other conservative voters and are not as dependent on voters of the liberal business circles as the liberal party.

3.1.5. Interim conclusion of domestic factors influencing the coalition parties' positions on Turkish EU accession

As can be seen domestic factors play a very strong role in the German government's position on Turkey's EU accession. The presence of more than two million people with a Turkish origin in Germany influences the Germans' image of Turks and Turkey. Germans tend to ignore the fact that the people of Turkish origin are not representative of the Turkish society. The analysis revealed that the parties of the CDU, CSU and FDP are influenced by such domestic factors and use them in the discussion of Turkish EU membership in different ways.

The CDU and most of all the CSU defend conservative integration politics and have often accused the Turkish immigrants of not being willing to integrate. The CSU is much more explicit in linking the image of Turkish immigrants in Germany to the question of EU accession and appealing to xenophobic fears. Both parties make use of the negative popular public opinion on Turkish-German people. The FDP stands for a much more liberal view of integration and does not make use of such xenophobic feelings. But both parties are not successful in attracting Turkish-German voters. It can be expected though that with a growing number of Turkish-German voters, the CDU/CSU will try to appeal to people with a Turkish origin also in order to remain a catch-all party. In the long term future this can be a chance for Turkey to positively influence the German domestic debate. Turkey should also try to use the *Islam Conference* and the *Integration Summit* to change the image of Turks in Germany.

The differences in religion and culture have been discussed in a similar way as the projection of the German perception of the Turkish immigrants. The CDU and CSU clearly

state that Turkey is not part of the European culture and thus should not join the EU. Islam is seen as being the dangerous “other”, an image that has become common in the post 9/11 age. The conservative parties, especially the CSU, make use of the Islamophobic fears that Turkey could bring more terrorism into the EU. In contrast, the liberal party denies the notion of the EU as a “Christian club”. Turkey could make use of this liberal view by pressuring the FDP to use the argument of cultural differences to support its EU entry like the SPD and the Greens use it.

In line with this is the argumentation of the CDU/CSU that Turkey’s deficits in human rights and democracy reveal that accession was not possible at all. Instead the FDP stresses that Islam and democracy can coexist but the application of the democratic reforms needed to be ensured before Turkey could become a member. Turkey can win the FDP’s support by making considerable progress in the application of democratic reforms.

The economic argument which is less discussed by the public but even more so by business circles is the main reason why the FDP supports Turkey’s accession. It should thus be stressed by Turkey to increase the commitment of the liberal party. But the CDU/CSU is also influenced by economic interests. The interest of the business community might in fact be partly responsible for Merkel’s more cautious Turkey policy in the past.

Thus the second hypothesis saying that the parties’ positions are largely shaped by the presence of the large Turkish-German community in Germany was only partly confirmed. It could be shown that the CDU and CSU are indeed mainly influenced by the domestic politics of immigration and integration. On the other hand, the FDP does not connect the two issues of Turkish immigrants and Turkey’s EU membership. The FDP is mainly led by the economic benefits of Turkish EU accession.

To conclude Turkey should make use of the overall positive but not very committed position of the FDP by increasing their awareness of the economic and cultural importance of Turkey’s accession to the EU. In addition, a credible Turkish commitment to the application of political reforms would also strengthen the support of the liberal party. In contrast, the conservative parties might be encouraged by an increased integration success of the Turkish-Germans. While the cultural and religious differences are mainly used as an argument against Turkey’s entry on the side of the CDU/CSU, economic interests soften the parties’ opposition.

3.2. External issues affecting Turkish EU accession

In addition to domestic factors, foreign policy issues cannot be ignored by the German government. Germany’s foreign policy is characterized by its continuity. There has been continuity in German’s relations with Turkey, the US and France. Further, Germany has always pursued a policy of “pro-EU integration” and thus taking a leading role in the EU (Maull 2006). Germany’s external relations work both in favor of and against Turkish membership. In the following, the impact of these factors on the government coalition’s position on Turkey’s EU accession is analyzed.

3.2.1. Effects of Germany’s relations with Turkey

Germany and Turkey are linked by a very special and enduring relationship which does not only consist of close economic links and the recent history of Turkish guest workers in Germany. This relationship goes back to the 19th century during which Germany had been a reliable partner for Turkey. The German military advisor Helmut von Moltke modernized the Turkish army in the 19th century and German engineers constructed the Baghdad railway to name some examples. During that time cooperation between the Ottoman Empire and Germany was mostly focused on military issues (Witzens 2005, 218; Szymanski 2007, 26).

Beginning in the 1930s about 80 German academics, artists and politicians emigrated from Germany to Turkey and influenced Turkey's modernization. After World War II strong political relations developed between Turkey and Germany because both countries belonged to the anti-Soviet bloc. Germany also supplied Turkey with military equipment. The 1950s and 1960s also saw the development of a German policy supporting democratic reforms in Turkey (Szymanski 2007, 26). In fact the first chancellor of the Federal Republic Konrad Adenauer (CDU) was in support of Turkey's membership in the European Community. Walter Hallstein, member of the CDU, was President of the European Commission when the Ankara Agreement was signed in 1963. He stressed that Turkey was an integral part of Europe. Except for the Kohl administration, Germany continuously supported Turkey's EU membership. Especially the government of Gerhard Schröder showed strong support by insisting to determine a date for the start of negotiations (Witzens 2005, 218-19).

The CDU has been responsible for difficulties in Turkey-EU relations in the past. Former President Richard von Weizsäcker's expressed a rather negative view on Turkey's membership application of 1987. Later Kohl denied Turkey's accession perspective because it did not belong to "Christian Europe" (Szymanski 2007). In contrast, former FDP ministers for foreign affairs Walter Scheel, Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Klaus Kinkel supported the European perspective of Turkey. It was Kinkel who pressed for the implementation of the customs union in 1995 (Dittrich 2009, 66). Nevertheless all parties in government including the CDU and the CSU are influenced by the long-lasting special relations between Turkey and Germany. German foreign politics are known for their continuity. This image and expectation from German foreign politics can be used by Turkey to its own benefit.

3.2.2. Effects of Germany's relations with the US

A similar positive effect is expected from Germany's traditional close relations to the US which has been a supporter of Turkey in the past. Germany's past in which the US played a decisive role has created a very strong feeling of thankfulness of the Germans towards the Americans. This has strongly shaped German-US relations. The new coalition government has committed itself to the transatlantic relationship (CDU/CSU/FDP 2009, 105). The transatlantic relations are central to both the foreign politics of the FDP (Dittrich 2009, 68-69) and the CDU/CSU. Westerwelle, new German foreign minister, has paid one of his first visits to Washington where he met with US Minister for Foreign Affairs Hillary Clinton. During the German chancellor's visit in the White House, Merkel and Obama had stressed the special meaning of German-US relations for the transatlantic partnership (Süddeutsche 2009b).

Because the US have proven to strongly speak in favor of Turkish EU accession, in Germany "[S]upport for Turkey's accession has ceased to always go hand in hand with good relations with America" (Szymanski 2007, 39). The US relationship with Turkey goes back to the Cold War during which Turkey decided to place itself on the side of the West and became "one of the crucial cornerstones of the free West" (Brusse/Griffiths 2004, 17). For the US, both Turkey and Germany represented the key providers for security in the West during the Cold War (Szymanski 2007, 26). The US successfully tied Turkey to the Western world and gave economic and military support to Turkey. Turkey fought on the side of the West in the Korean War and became member of NATO (*ibid.*, 16-17).

The end of the Cold War made Turkey less important as an ally. But the new terrorist threat has strengthened the West's dependency on an ally in the Muslim world. Although Turkey and US have experienced some difficulties in their relations and both countries policies have diverged (Güvenç/Memişoğlu 2004, 221-22), Obama has strongly committed himself to a dialogue with the Muslim world. Before he visited Turkey in April 2009 he had expressed his strong support for the EU membership of Turkey as a Muslim country. He said

that the US and the EU should “approach Muslims as [our] their friends, neighbors and partners (...)”. Addressing the EU he continued: “Moving forward towards Turkish membership in the EU would be an important signal to your commitment to this agenda and ensure that we continue to anchor Turkey firmly in Europe” (quoted in Charter 2009). Through supporting Turkey’s EU accession, Obama can also give a positive sign of mutual understanding to the Muslim world. In November 2009, US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Gordon visited Ankara to talk about a common policy for the region and improve Turkey-US relations (Hürriyet 2009).

Since the new coalition has committed itself to the transatlantic partnership, Germany will be exposed to pressure from the US to act in favor of Turkish EU membership. But as other global and domestic issues such as climate change and the economic crisis are currently on top of the agenda the US cannot be expected to prioritize Turkey-EU relations during the coming years. But Turkey can use its relations to the US and exert pressure on Obama to further push for improving Turkey’s possibilities of joining the EU.

3.2.3. Effects of Germany’s relations with France

Along with Germany’s relations with the US, its relations with France have been a generally accepted guideline in German foreign policy since the 1950s (Maull 2006, 3). Germany’s close relations with France are shaped by the same continuity as its ties with the US. The Franco-German axis has been the “motor of integration” (Baun, 1995-96; Mazzucelli 1997, 3-4). During the first days in office Westerwelle visited France to stress the importance of the French-German cooperation. Especially Merkel and Sarkozy have often shown their close cooperation in the past especially in their position on Turkey (Economist 2009b).

In contrast to the US, France is the strongest opponent of Turkey’s membership in the EU. President Sarkozy has expressed his opposition several times. It is based on domestic and foreign policy considerations. First, Sarkozy sees Turkey as “the other” together with other countries in the Middle East. Second, Sarkozy fears a decrease in power of France and the EU through Turkey’s membership. Turkey’s way to handle the Armenian issue also plays a role because 400 000 Armenian-French people live in France (Barysch 2007, 3; Lagro 2008). At the same time France is interested in strengthening its relations with Germany to restore the French role in global and European politics (Lagro 2008, 66). Sarkozy and Merkel have developed a very close political relationship and especially Sarkozy intends to seriously strengthen the Franco-German axis (Economist 2009b). Both countries share a pro-integrationist approach and fear that Turkey’s inclusion in the EU “would spell the end of the federalist’s dream of a political union” (Barysch 2007, 3). Merkel and Sarkozy have been the strongest opponents to Turkish accession. They also both prefer a privileged partnership between the EU and Turkey (Yılmaz 2009, 79-84). It was also the French EU presidency in 2008 which initiated the “Union for the Mediterranean” criticized by Turkey for a strategy to dismiss Turkey’s accession perspective. German Chancellor Merkel supported the French plan in the end and the Union entered into force in July 2008 (EurActiv 2008). In the beginning of 2009, Merkel and Sarkozy denied Obama’s call for letting Turkey into the EU and stated their opposition (Süddeutsche 2009a).

Both party groups in government stress the importance of the Franco-German axis but it appears that for the liberals the stress of the relations with the US could become more important because the FDP foreign policy expert Ole Diehl criticized the Red-Green government for putting too much weight on the relations with France as a counterforce to the US. Instead the liberals aimed at creating a balance between the two. The transatlantic relations remained to be one of the most important elements of German foreign policy (Dittrich 2009, 69). Merkel on the other hand has shown her commitment to German-French

relations in the first weeks of her term when she went to France in remembrance of the end of World War I:

Ms Merkel and her colleagues have dropped hints that policy may change a bit, too. This week she went to Paris to join Nicolas Sarkozy to commemorate the end of the first world war, a first for a German chancellor and a nod to those (especially in Paris) who crave a new era in Franco-German relations (Economist 2009a).

Concluding, Germany's close relations with France have proven to be destructive for Turkey's perspective of EU membership. But this can be balanced by Germany's role in the EU.

3.2.4. Effects of Germany's role in the EU

Although the German government is certainly influenced by its relations to Turkey, the US and France, Germany's role in the European Union may act as the strongest constrain on the German policy on Turkey's EU accession. Although Merkel expresses her opposition to Turkey's membership it is not "clear that Ms Merkel will want to obstruct membership negotiations with Turkey" (Economist 2009b). Merkel has followed a policy of "pacta sunt servanda" respecting the decision of the European Council to open negotiations with Turkey. As Szymanski writes, it seems that "Merkel perceived that a policy of categorical opposition to Turkey joining the EU was not producing the desired results" (Szymanski 2007, 37). Why is this so? Merkel is the chancellor of the largest EU Member State carrying a special responsibility in the EU and having agreed to the opening of negotiations under the Red-Green government. Merkel feels a special obligation:

Turkey has been promised EU accession negotiations by a former German government, and that is why these accession negotiations are now being continued. ... Negotiations are open-ended, but are being led in a fair manner. While the CDU and I personally prefer a privileged partnership of Turkey to membership, we are still reliable partners (quoted in ESI 2006, 1⁸).

Moreover, Germany carries a special responsibility in the EU. After the Nazi regime Germany tied herself to the West. To regain sovereignty in foreign politics Germany aimed at integrating into the Western institutions and especially into the European Community (EC). Germany accepted its special historic obligations and since then has pursued a very pro-integrationist EU policy (Maull 2006, 2-3). As one of the founding members of the European Coal and Steel Community and as a driving force of European integration, Germany is expected to continue pushing for further integration. It is decisive though, whether a government considers the widening or the deepening of the EU to be more important (Szymanski 2007, 39). Regarding the widening versus deepening issue there are differences between the CDU, CSU and the FDP. The CDU rather favors a deepening of the EU aiming at the integration of the latest acceded members (ESI 2006, 2) and the preservation of the Union's absorption capacity. The CSU stresses even more the priority of the EU's internal consolidation (ibid., 38-39). The FDP has been a great supporter of EU enlargement in the 1990s and especially former foreign minister Kinkel strongly supported Turkey's EU accession (Dittrich 2009, 48). Although Westerwelle said that the EU needed to be able to integrate a new member first, Turkey's compliance with the obligations appear to be more important to him since the FDP stated that Turkey should be treated like every other candidate country (FDP 2003, 1-2).

It can be concluded that first of all Merkel and the CDU feel the obligation to stick to the EU decision to negotiate with Turkey. The role of Germany in the EU has a neutralizing

⁸ Angela Merkel on ZDF, September 28 2006.

effect on Germany's policy on Turkey's EU accession. In the last legislature period Merkel was internationally praised for her efforts in realizing the Lisbon Treaty. She would not risk this positive image. Germany's role in the EU constrains Merkel to act in opposition to Turkey's EU membership. Thus, the third hypothesis could be proven: The CDU and Merkel cannot pursue politics of complete opposition because they are constrained by external politics. Second, the stress on deepening is shared by the CDU and the CSU but only the CSU can escape the EU pressure and completely oppose accession talks. Third, the German role in the EU and the support of enlargement policies strengthens the FDP support for accession. Turkey should make use of the government's awareness that it carries a special responsibility in the EU to stick to EU decisions and support further integration.

3.2.5. Interim conclusion of external factors influencing the coalition parties' positions on Turkish EU accession

Germany's external relations work both in favor and in disfavor of Turkey's accession to the EU. Germany's close cooperation with France has strengthened Merkel's position of preferring a "privileged partnership". The strong German-Franco axis can influence EU policies. On the other hand, the CDU is constrained by its long-lasting relations with Turkey, its transatlantic partnership and most of all its EU obligations. These foreign politics issues prevent the CDU from blocking Turkey's negotiations with the EU. While Obama cannot be expected to exert much pressure in the coming years the German EU obligations restrain Merkel from blocking negotiations. The relations with Turkey may also act in favor. Thus the last hypothesis could be confirmed: The CDU and Merkel cannot pursue politics of complete opposition because they are constrained by external politics – mainly by her role in the EU.

The party of the CSU is the least affected by external factors since the party does not have a strong foreign policy profile although the CSU exclusively prioritizes EU consolidation over EU enlargement. Once again the CSU proves to be the strongest opponent of Turkish membership in the government. But this position is mainly shaped by domestic factors.

In contrast, the foreign policy principles of the FDP act in favor of Turkey's EU entry. Its stress of the transatlantic relationship and EU enlargement can strengthen Westerwelle's support. The partnership with Turkey has been important for former liberal foreign ministers too. The French-German cooperation is expected to receive less attention from Westerwelle than from past governments.

Concluding, the external factors influencing Germany can be of great advantage for Turkey. The German role in the EU is one if not the only reason that Merkel will not try to block the EU negotiations with Turkey. Thus international politics constrain the government's position. In this case according to the logic of the two-level game theory Merkel cannot represent an opinion of strong opposition because of her EU obligations. This should be used by Turkey by reminding Germany of its EU responsibilities but also use her own close relations to the US and make them encourage Germany in pursuing a positive policy towards Turkey's EU accession. Turkey should especially appeal to the liberal Minister of Foreign Affairs Westerwelle whose support of Turkey's EU membership could sharpen his own profile by being different from Merkel.

4. Concluding the new government's position and its chances for Turkey

The article has tried to answer the research question *How will the new German coalition government of CDU/CSU and FDP affect Turkey's accession to the European Union and how can Turkey use the coalition to her benefit?*. First, the official positions of the coalition

government and the individual parties in the government were analyzed. The hypothesis could be proven: The coalition government cannot pursue a strong coherent policy on Turkey's EU accession because the coalition parties' positions are in conflict with each other. While the CDU/CSU rather opposes Turkey's membership, the FDP rather supports it. The government is expected to continue the policy on Turkish accession of the Grand Coalition although the FDP is expected to show less support of Turkey's EU membership.

Next, the factors responsible for the positions of the parties were assessed to understand the underlying dynamics and formulate recommendations for Turkey on how to use the government for its own benefit. It was assumed that the positions are shaped by the interplay of domestic and international factors. For the CDU and CSU it was revealed that their opposition to Turkish EU membership is largely shaped by the presence of the large Turkish-German community in Germany. Thus in the case of the conservative parties the second hypothesis could be proven. For the FDP this does not hold true though. The FDP is largely influenced by the expected economic benefits and its liberal attitude towards religion and other cultures. While conservative politicians mainly reject the compatibility of Islam and democracy, the liberals consider the coexistence of both to be possible but not yet achieved in Turkey.

Last, it was shown that external policy issues also influence the coalition parties' positions on Turkey's EU accession. Germany's diplomatic relations with France act in disfavor of Turkish accession. Sarkozy and Merkel are known to be the strongest opponents. Nevertheless, Germany's long-lasting positive relations to Turkey positively influence the CDU/CSU and the FDP. The transatlantic relationship can potentially put pressure on the German government. Especially the FDP has announced to put a special emphasis on the relations with the US. But most of all, it is Germany's special role in the EU that constrains the government's policy. It hinders the CDU to follow a policy of complete opposition by trying to block the accession negotiations. Thus, the last hypothesis could be proven too: The CDU and Merkel cannot pursue politics of complete opposition because they are constrained by external politics. It was shown that international politics or obligations constrain the government's position on Turkish accession as Putnam's two-level game assumes.

The analysis revealed the decisive factors shaping the coalition parties' position on Turkey's entry into the EU. This way it also revealed important information for Turkey on how to use the new coalition government to its own interest of EU accession. Most of all, Turkey should appeal to the FDP since it generally supports Turkey's EU aspirations. As their party leader is the new minister for foreign affairs Turkey's government should use the chance to encourage his support. Turkey can expect positive effects from convincing FDP politicians that her efforts of democratization continue and stressing the economic importance of her accession. Westerwelle is also likely to be influenced by the US government which could be persuaded by Turkey to speak in its favor.

Since the general opposition of the conservative parties is mainly based on the problems of the integration of the Turkish community, Turkey should try to positively influence the integration efforts of the Turkish Muslims in Germany. Since a majority of German-Turks favor Turkish EU membership and the voter group of Turkish-Germans is growing, in the future the conservative parties may start appealing to them too by softening their stance on Turkey. But since the strongest positive effect on the CDU's position on Turkish membership is generated by Germany's role in the EU, Turkey should remind the German leaders of their special responsibility in European integration and continue her good relations with Germany.

In conclusion it can be said that the coalition government cannot pursue a strong coherent policy on Turkey's EU accession and is thus expected to continue the policy of the former coalition government. There will not be complete opposition to Turkey's EU membership but the government will not play the role of an active supporter either. Turkey

should especially appeal to the FDP to strengthen the party's commitment to Turkey's accession and remind the CDU and CSU of Germany's international role especially of its obligations in the European Union.

The analysis has brought up the question of how much national governments feel bound by EU decisions made by previous governments and how much influence issues of foreign relations or international obligations can have on a government's positions on Turkey's accession to the EU or other EU issues. These questions should be answered by future research.

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