

**TOWARDS AN INTERACTIVE APPROACH FOR  
EXTERNAL EUROPEANISATION:  
MINORITY-RELATED POLICY CHANGE  
IN TURKEY**

Paper presented at Enlargement –KFG Conference  
The Transformative Power of Europe  
Free University Berlin, 10 December 2009.

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## Introduction

The Helsinki Summit in 1999 represents a turning point for EU–Turkey relations. Turkey gained a formal status of candidate country to the EU providing strong incentive to launch democratic reforms for the membership. The country has attained substantial change in minority protection which is highly sensitive and controversial issue especially because of the long struggle against ethnically-based movement of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK).<sup>1</sup> In 2005, the EU launched accession negotiations with Turkey which strengthened the EU conditionality further. However, the developments in Turkey have proved a controversial path in the reform process for minority rights which is characterized by ups and downs, by accelerations and slow downs.

After the launch of accession negotiations in 2005, the EU reform process including minority protection reforms in Turkey entered a phase of stagnation. From an incentive-based perspective, the development was unlikely due to the seizable and credible reward of EU membership (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). As could be observed in the case of Central and Eastern European enlargement process, the EU's leverage increased significantly after the opening of accession negotiations (Vachudova 2005). However, the case of Turkey demonstrates the opposite outcome which could be bound to the decline in the credibility of EU rewards weakened by member state arguments of privileged partnership with Turkey rather than membership. *Is the weak credibility of EU rewards the cause of stagnation?* Moreover, minority-related reforms in Turkey has entered a period of stagnation but not halted since 2005. For instance, in 2008, the government adopted new foundations law and implemented the rule on broadcasting in other languages in spite of the controversial voices among both elites and society. *How can we explain the adoption and implementation of these particular policies in a period with weak EU conditionality?*

The research presented with this paper is a backward looking research (y-centered) taking the case of minority-related policy change in Turkey after 1999 by considering different degrees of policy change in order to develop a causal mechanism to explain Europeanisation in accession countries or in more general external Europeanisation. The aim of the paper is to explore the factors behind the stagnation and the recent continuum in minority-related reforms of Turkey in order to develop an interactive theoretical approach which combines top-down and bottom-up level factors. First, the hypotheses from the three models of Europeanisation and enlargement developed by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) will be explored in the paper in order to explain the recent developments in minority protection in the country. Are the present theoretical frameworks able to explain the stagnation and recent continuum of the minority-related reforms in Turkey? Second, I will present an interactive theoretical framework which is a broad and multi-dimensional approach for explaining external Europeanisation.

The first part of the paper explains the theoretical framework developed by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) exploring the conditions for rule adoption in candidate countries. This part of the paper also deals with the shortcomings within the literature. The second part provides an analysis of minority rights in Turkey in order to develop an interactive theoretical framework. While examining the minority-related policy change in Turkey, the paper tests the three theoretical approaches provided by the Europeanisation and enlargement literature. In the latter parts, I present the theoretical framework I propose and explain the minority-related policy change in Turkey after 2005.

### **Theorizing Europeanisation in the Accession Countries: What is missing?**

The Europeanisation literature originally focused on the member state Europeanisation (Börzel and Risse 2000; Radaelli and Featherstone 2003). With the 2004 enlargement of the EU,

Europeanisation of non-member states has taken significant attention from the scholars (Olsen 2002; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). Even though there is a lively debate over the definition of the Europeanisation (Risse and Börzel 2000; Grabbe 2001), the term is mostly defined in the literature as ‘the domestic impact of the EU’ (Sedelmeier 2006:4). Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005:7) define the term more broadly which is more suitable in this paper as “a process in which states adopt EU rules”. Within the Europeanisation and enlargement literature, EU conditionality is the most explored area which is the major policy tool of the EU in dealing with the accession countries (Grabbe 2001:1014).

For a more comprehensive approach to deal with Europeanisation and enlargement, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) offer three explanatory mechanisms of Europeanisation for rule adoption in non-member states: external incentives model, social-learning model and lesson-drawing model. The external incentives model, which is the relevant model to the paper, is based on the rationalist bargaining model following the logic of consequences which treats actors as strategic utility-maximizers. According to this model, the EU employs a strategy of reinforcement by reward in which EU rules are set as a pre-condition for accession countries to receive rewards (assistance and institutional ties) from the Union (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005:10). The starting point of external incentives model is domestic status quo measured via the “goodness of fit” which reflects the misfit between European and domestic processes, policies and institutions (Green, Cowles and Risse 2001, Börzel and Risse 2000).<sup>2</sup> The model assumes that the launch of EU conditionality upsets domestic status quo by providing incentives for rule adoption and changes the domestic opportunity structure (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005:11).

The general proposition of the approach is: “*A government adopts EU rules if the benefits of EU rewards exceed the domestic adoption costs*” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005:12). Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005:12) propose four scope conditions that affect the cost-benefit balance: determinacy of conditions, size and speed of rewards, credibility of conditionality and veto players and adoption costs.

The social-learning model defines the EU as a community with a collective identity and a set of common norms and values. Following the logic of appropriateness, rule adoption by non-member states depends on their perception of EU demands and rules as appropriate in regard to the collective identity, norms and values (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005:18). Therefore, the general proposition of the social learning model is: “*A government adopts EU rules if it is persuaded of the appropriateness of EU rules*” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005:18). Three conditions for EU’s persuasive power are defined by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005:18-20): legitimacy, identity and resonance.

The lesson-drawing model which is usually neglected in the literature is based on the idea that domestic policy dissatisfaction from the status quo leads to policy-makers to learn policies and rules from abroad (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005:21; Rose 1991:11). Policy dissatisfaction is the stimulus for policy-makers to search for new policies to transfer from elsewhere. The EU, in this model, is not the primary factor behind the policy changes. Rather, the policy change is domestic-driven and voluntary. The general proposition of the model is: “*A government adopts EU rules if it expects these rules to solve domestic policy problems effectively*” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005:22). The model provides an alternative explanation to the developments in Turkey in regard to minority rights which will be explored in the next sections.

By taking the rule adoption as the dependent variable, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) examined the impact of the EU on domestic change in accession countries. Even though the

theoretical perspectives provided by these scholars are highly beneficial, some problems have still existed in the literature. First, the lesson-drawing model is highly neglected in the enlargement and Europeanisation literature. While the scholars focus merely on the impact of the EU, there is a tendency to neglect the possibility of domestic choice. The literature on Europeanisation and enlargement has mainly focused on the impact of EU conditionality on accession countries beginning with Eastern enlargement while treating domestic factors (veto players or domestic opposition) as intervening variables (Kelley 2004; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005; Vachudova 2005). However, it could be asserted that the literature prejudices the impact of the EU conditionality on domestic change and interventions by the elite level domestic opposition without tracing the internal pressure for change (Acquire and Radaelli 2006: 14). Such a research design bears the danger of overlooking the possible explanatory variables in the domestic arena. As Börzel and Risse (2009: 8) stress in their recent article the lesson-drawing model is the least-researched area in the literature. The present paper aims to stress the lack of attention to the perspective 'Europeanisation and domestic choice' in the literature by bringing the lesson-drawing model into the analysis in order to explain Europeanisation of candidate countries.

Second, the interaction between different mechanisms of domestic change is also neglected in the literature. The tendency to treat different mechanisms as alternative explanations does not prove any fruitful development in the literature. As Börzel and Risse (2009: 8) put it, "potential interaction and feedback effects are hardly explored". I aim to develop a mechanism by this research comprising the interaction between two different mechanisms of change.

Last, domestic mobilization in favour of change is neglected by all three theoretical branches in the Europeanisation and enlargement literature. However, the demand for change via change agents is a crucial aspect which, for sure, affects the analysis if it is included. The paper, therefore, includes the societal demand for change via change agents to the analysis. The aim of this is to develop a comprehensive explanation to the domestic change.

To sum up, the paper proposes an interactive and multi-dimensional theoretical framework in order to explain domestic change in accession countries. In order to explain minority-related policy change in Turkey, why there is a need for an interactive theoretical framework will be explained in the next section and the comprehensive theoretical proposal will be framed.

## **2. Why an Interactive Approach? : Looking from the other side of the fence**

### **2.1 Explaining the case of Turkey: The inability of the Enlargement and Europeanisation Theories?**

This part of the paper evaluates the capability of present enlargement and Europeanisation theories to explain minority-related policy change. The present research is a backward-looking study aiming to explain the case of Turkey by developing a theoretical framework. The idea for an alternative approach is due to the limited capability of existed theoretical approaches in explaining the case of Turkey. After looking to the developments in minority rights in Turkey, I will test the theories of enlargement and Europeanisation by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) and present the alternative approach I propose.

#### *Revolutionary Reforms*

Since the protection of minorities and improvement of minority rights was included to the Copenhagen Criteria, it has become an important pre-condition for the accession to the EU. Even

though the principle of non-discrimination required as a part of *acquis communautaire* is a highly developed standard of the EU, minority rights remain a vague issue within the Union (Schwellnus 2005:51). Moreover, there is no minority standard at the internal *acquis* or among the EU member states. That compels the EU to refer different European organizations' minority rights standards such as the Council of Europe (COE) or Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (Schwellnus 2005:56). Despite the lack of any standards in minority rights within the EU, rule adoption in the issue area for candidate countries is strictly demanded by the EU. As a result, minority protection is defined as a pre-condition for the accession to the EU which is also identified within the literature (Schimmelfennig, Knobel and Engert 2003; Kelley 2004; Ram 2001; Sasse 2006; Schwellnus 2005).

Referring to the 'goodness of fit' argument, the issue of minority rights in Turkey before and after the launch of candidate country status should be mentioned. Lausanne Treaty of 1923 is the only document in Turkey that embraces the definition of minorities, however, on the basis of religion. The treaty only recognizes non-Muslim minorities in Turkey by also restricting the non-Muslim minorities to Greeks, Jews and Armenians. However there is no reference in the treaty to Muslim minorities such as Kurds. Until 2000s Turkey did not have any legal document dealing with minority rights. Moreover, no article dealing with minority rights in the recent 1982 Constitution was present. As it is stated in the Minority Rights Group International Report on Turkey (2007) "The Turkish constitutional scheme 'solves' the question of minorities without ever addressing it. There is no reference in the Constitution to the word 'minority', not even the Lausanne minorities." Therefore, there is not any other legal framework for minority rights in Turkey than Lausanne Treaty. In contrast, there are some articles in the 1982 Constitution even restricting the minority rights such as Article 42 prohibiting education in other language than Turkish (Minority Rights Group International Report on Turkey (2007:15).

Additionally, minorities and minority rights have been perceived by large segments of the country as a threat to the country's integrity. As Grigoriadis (2008:34) clarifies, "Minorities were often discredited as 'tools of foreign interests' and 'unreliable, second-class citizens' that did not deserve any special protection." The Kurdish question complicates the issue of minority rights in Turkey further. There is a tendency of binding any improvements in minority protection as a concession to the PKK among some segments of elites and society. Therefore, any improvement in the area of minority protection in Turkey is highly surprising under these domestic considerations.

Since 2002, the government has launched a number of reforms in regard to the protection of minorities. Some of the reforms are the recognition of the right of non-Muslim foundations to own immovable properties, the right of non-Muslim communities to build worship places, the rights to teach and broadcast in languages other than Turkish that are used in daily life of Turkish citizens (Oran 2004:116-124). The Civil Registry Law was also changed in 2003 by allowing to name children in Kurdish or other minority languages. In this period, Turkey also ratified some international documents for the legal protection of minority rights such as the ratification of the 1965 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (Grigoriadis 2008:34-36). Moreover, the year of 2008 has witnessed a revival of the reform process in regard to minority rights. For instance, in 2008 the government implemented broadcasting in Kurdish and adopted a new foundations law allowing non-Muslim foundations to recover the seized properties (if still held by the state) and both Muslim and non-Muslim foundations to receive foreign funding. Very recently in 2009, the government started talks for solving Kurdish question via further democratization and making peace with the PKK.

All these reforms represent a breakthrough from the previous policies of Turkey in the area of minority rights. Even though the minority protection in Turkey has still been far from the European practices, the reforms opened the window of change and broke taboos in the minority issues. Notwithstanding the improvements in minority rights before 2005, the reforms in the area stagnated between 2005 and 2007 with a recent revival in 2008 . The next section will focus on explaining the stagnation and recent revival in policies related to minority rights.

**Table 1: Minority-related policy change in Turkey**

2002-2004	2005-2007	2008-2009
Progress	Stagnation	Revival

*Why Stagnation and Revival? (2005-2009)*

In order to explain the stagnation and revival in the reforms regard to minority rights in Turkey, I will analyse the main scope conditions proposed by three models of enlargement and Europeanisation, the social-learning model, the lesson-drawing model and the external incentives model, in this part of the paper.

*Social-Learning Model*

*Legitimacy hypothesis: Are the EU rules legitimate?*

*“The likelihood of rule adoption increases as the legitimacy of the rules increases with the clarity of rules, their adherence to a rule hierarchy based on the constitutive values and norms of the community, their degree of acceptance and the legitimacy of the rule making procedures; decreases if there are special rules for non-member states or they are not accepted and applied in all member states” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005).*

Concerning the legitimacy, minority protection norms and rules in the EU do not rely on a high degree of legitimacy. First, the EU does not have a clear minority standard at the internal *acquis* which applies to all member states and accession countries. When the EU demand the adoption of minority protection rules from the accession countries, the content of the demand is not clear at all. Second, the sense of double standards of the EU in regard to minority rights has been widespread among accession countries. Since minority rights are still problematic within the member states, the EU does not urge any EU member state to adhere the same legal norms while it urges the candidate countries (Rechel, 2008: 181). As a result, the legitimacy of the EU minority protection rules in the case of Turkey is weak in the period under investigation.

*Identity: To what extent feeling European?*

*“The likelihood of rule adoption increases with the identification of the target government and society with the community that has established the rules” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005).*

With the change of the government in 2002 elections, the reforms in minority rights accelerated in Turkey. The commitment of the new Justice and Development Party (AKP) government was high to the EU reforms comprising minority protection measures. To what extent the government identified itself with the EU was not clear because of their Islamic roots contrasting with their commitment to the EU accession process. Nevertheless, the symbolic reliance on the EU has changed in this period with the high commitment to the ideal of EU membership by attempting to fulfil the membership

requirements. Moreover, the leader of the AKP, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, stressed in some of his speeches, for instance in 2004 speech in Oxford University, that the EU has been perceived as a political union embedded with norms and values by his government.<sup>8</sup> While emphasizing the universal character of these norms and values, he stated that Turkey has been ready to embrace European norms and values (2004). In spite of that, the AKP government has been a conservative party in regard to cultural and traditional norms and values. Therefore, a dual approach has been adopted by the government which is characterized by preserving the traditional culture and values and, at the same time, embracing the democratic norms and values of the EU (Nasr 2005: 23).

Although the AKP continued to embrace a multiculturalist and inclusive perspective in minority issues, the reform process in regard to minority rights stagnated between 2005 and 2007. The identification of the government with the EU is at a medium degree in this period. The model does not assume a complete stagnation of the process due to some degree of identification of the government with the EU. Therefore, the explanatory power of social-learning model for this period of time is limited.

The period between 2008 and 2009 witnessed a revival in the reforms of minority rights. Interestingly, one of the speeches of Erdogan in 2008 raised some doubts in regard to the identification of the government with the EU norms, values and rules.<sup>9</sup> In the speech, Erdogan emphasized the official policy of ‘one nation and one state’ and he added the necessity of accepting this policy by every Turkish citizen. He also stated that there is no room in the country for people if they deny this policy. This speech reflects the rigidity of the Turkish identity which excludes minorities and their demands for further rights. Therefore, the AKP’s identification with the EU’s norms and values could be a rhetorical move of the government. In spite of these considerations, this period still reflect medium level of identification of the government with the EU. The expected outcome from the model is between low and medium degree of policy change in minority rights. As a result, identity and legitimacy as crucial scope conditions of social-learning model are not able to provide an explanation to the variation of the minority-related policy change.

**Table 2: The Social-learning Model and Europeanisation of Minority Rights in Turkey**

Time period	Legitimacy	Identification (Identity)	Expected minority-related change by the model	Minority-related change
2005-2007	Low	Medium	<b>Low-Medium</b>	<b>Stagnation-Low</b>
2008-2009	Low	Medium	<b>Low-Medium</b>	<b>Revival-High</b>

Lesson-drawing Model

Policy failure and policy dissatisfaction:

*The likelihood of rule adoption increases as the perception that domestic rules are working satisfactorily decreases and dissatisfaction with domestic rules increases as the threat of domestic sanctions for maintaining the status quo increases (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005).*

Since the AKP government has begun to rule Turkey, the party has supported the idea of better

governance for Turkish people for the sake of Turkish citizens not for EU membership. The government, therefore, “presented the democratization reforms required under EU conditionality as long-overdue policies that would benefit the Turkish society at large- and not as EU interference in Turkey’s domestic affairs” (Ugur and Yankaya 2008:590). The country’s painful experiences in the past such as military interventions, human rights violations, economic crises, Kurdish problem stirred the policy-makers with the help of internal demand for change to find a solution to these domestic problems. As Ulusoy (2007:473) emphasizes, the crisis of Turkish state with policy failures in many areas is a vital factor behind the recent reform process in Turkey- due to corruption in most of the state institutions and party politics, the situation in the south-east almost brought civil war to the country, and the economic crisis of 2001. In such a situation, the EU provided the model for the policy-makers after gaining the candidate country status in 1999. Therefore, the policy-makers’ and societal dissatisfaction with the status quo is critical for the reforms in minority rights and other policy areas in Turkey.

The established single-party government committed itself to the EU reform process after coming to power in 2002. The AKP government’s two characteristics paved the way of reforms in a smooth path. First of all, they distanced themselves from the nationalist argument of unitary state which paved the way for minority protection reforms. Besides, they presented the reforms for the benefit of Turkish society in referencing the utility of EU rules and norms (Ugur and Yankaya 2008:590). The government adopted a policy approach for reform process that approves the necessity to adopt new policies for the sake of Turkish citizens.

To sum up, the policy-dissatisfaction the status quo by the AKP government is present from 2005 till 2009. The government declares their aim to solve many problematic issues such as Kurdish problem, or relations with Armenia. Therefore, the problems or failures in the policy area of minority rights has been recognized by the government and this has lead to policy dissatisfaction of them with the status quo. While the model is not capable of explaining the stagnation of the minority-related policy change, it certainly provides an explanation of the continuum of the process in 2008 through the factors explained above.

**Table 3: The Lesson-drawing Model and Europeanisation of Minority Rights in Turkey**

Time period	Policy failure	Policy dissatisfaction	Expected minority-related change by the model	Minority-related change
2005-2007	Present	High	<b>High</b>	<b>Stagnation-Low</b>
2008-2009	Present	High	<b>High</b>	<b>Revival-High</b>

#### External Incentives Model

#### *Credibility of Conditionality: A Privileged Partnership?*

*“The likelihood of rule adoption increases with the credibility of threats and promises” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005: 16)*



The model of EU conditionality by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) rests on the credibility of the EU to deliver rewards in the case of rule adoption and withhold them in the case of non-compliance. The incentive based model assumes that the credibility of conditional rewards increases via the opening accession negotiations with the candidate states (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005:14). The case of Turkey demonstrates exactly the opposite outcome in contrast to this assumption. What happened to the EU conditionality dealing with the enlargement of Turkey?

The 2004 decision to launch accession negotiations with Turkey in 2005 was accompanied by the internal inconsistencies of the EU member states for Turkey's inclusion to the Union. During the year of 2005, a debate flourished among EU member states questioning the decision of launching accession negotiations with Turkey. Germany, France and Austria among EU member states who opposed the enlargement to Turkey proposed a 'privileged partnership' with the country rather than the membership. The aim of the proposition was to keep the accession negotiations open-ended which make alternative outcomes of the accession process possible rather than EU membership (Aydın 2007:6).

The debate among EU member states focused on the absorption capacity of the Union. The discussions about the absorption capacity dated back to the 1993 Copenhagen Summit reflected at the conclusions of the Summit (1993:14): "the Union's capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, is an important consideration in the general interest of both the Union and the candidate countries." The 2005 debate turned around the ability of the EU to absorb Turkey with its size, population and culture. The arguments of member states found a place in 2005 accession framework of Turkey with a reference to the absorption capacity of the EU as one of the Copenhagen criteria (Aydın, 2007:6). As Aydın (2007:5) emphasizes, "The credibility of EU commitments toward Turkey have been characterized by mixed messages, contradiction of commitments, and opposition to the principle of accession on the basis of constructed borders that the country itself could do nothing about". The consequence was the weakened credibility of EU conditionality which seems unable to bring any further positive developments to Turkey.

The privileged partnership debate caused a high drop in public support for EU membership in Turkey from 74 % in 2002 to 50 % since 2006 (Öniş 2009:25). The debate strengthened the anti-European coalition in Turkey who is in favour of the continuum of the current status quo. The privileged partnership proposition also stirred sentiments in Turkish public believing that the EU has double standards in dealing with the Turkish enlargement. These discussions especially emerged in the failure of the Cyprus settlement and the refusal of opening Turkish ports to the Republic of Cyprus that caused the suspension of the accession negotiations partially (Aybet, 2006:532-533). The issue of Cyprus has translated to the domestic discourse as an unfair treatment of the EU to Turkey by the high demand from Turkey to open the ports to the Republic of Cyprus without fulfilling its commitments to the Turkish Cypriots promised in the case of cooperative behaviour of them in the UN plan for Cyprus (Öniş 2009:26). Such an attitude weakened the credibility of the EU further.

Schimmelfennig (2008) offers a different perspective for the credibility of EU conditionality in Turkey in his recent article. According to Schimmelfennig (2008:931), the credibility of threats or the punishment decreased Turkey due to securing the accession negotiations by Turkey that would last until 2014. Therefore, the lack of immediate pressure on Turkey to comply is referred as a vital factor for the stagnation of the reforms (Schimmelfennig 2008:931). However, such an argument eradicates itself by the stick of the EU implying the suspension of accession negotiations at any time due to debate discussed above. The primary problem in EU conditionality is the mixed signals

weakening the credibility of the EU to deliver rewards in the case of rule adoption in Turkey (Patton 2007:344). The EU seems as if it is not able to enlarge to Turkey. The weakness of credible rewards is the most important factor led to the short term political concerns of Turkish policy-makers rather than focusing the long term benefits of EU conditionality. That leads us the domestic factors, role of veto players and the adoption costs, which will be explored in the next section.

### Veto Players and Adoption Costs

*“The likelihood of rule adoption decreases with the number of veto players incurring net adoption costs (opportunity costs, welfare, and power losses) from compliance” (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005: 17)*

The developments in the domestic political sphere of Turkey are critical to understand the recent slow down of the reforms in minority rights. After the launch of accession negotiations with the EU, a number of events stirred the nationalist sentiments in Turkey. Patton (2007:345) portrays it as reactionary nationalism caused by the demands of the EU about sensitive issues such as the Cyprus problem, cultural rights to the minorities (especially Kurds are the subject of the reaction), and the Armenian issue. With the privileged partnership debate, the reactions against any European demand boomed dramatically in this period.

Dealing with minority rights, the end of ceasefire in 2004 (unilaterally declared by the PKK in 1999) and the revival of PKK terrorism have particular importance which fuelled the nationalist sentiments further in Turkey. The efforts of the AKP government to solve the Kurdish problem by political means have become more difficult under these circumstances. Therefore, the government has turned into more prudent for launching minority-related reforms under the pressure of nationalist sentiments caused by the revival of PKK. As Patton (2007:346) emphasizes, nationalists put pressure to the government by asserting that “the EU-induced reform laws have weakened the Turkish state, made it impossible to effectively fight terrorism and encouraged Kurdish separatism”. Due to growing opposition against minority reforms, the government toned down its reforms in minority rights.

The period after 2005 has also witnessed a series of political crises between pro-reformist government of Justice and Development Party (AKP) and veto players primarily Kemalist opposition (led by the Republicans People Party (CHP) and the military) and nationalists. Especially Kemalist elites concentrated on key state institutions (judiciary, military, and parliament) have become the main veto players against the EU reform process of Turkey after 2005 (Patton 2007:349). These circles have become alienated from the EU day to day because of the EU reforms shaking the main principles of Kemalism. Kemalism as the state ideology of Turkey has two important characteristics: secularism which is the strict separation of religion and state and the unitary of state reflecting a single Turkish identity (Posch 2007:10). The EU reform process challenged both characteristics causing a reaction from Kemalist and nationalist elites. As Ulusoy (2007:477) points out, the EU reforms challenge “the whole political project upon which the Republic was established in 1923.” Therefore, these groups developed an anti-European coalition both against the EU reform process and the rule of the AKP.

First of all, the reforms in minority rights broke many taboos in the first principle of Kemalism, the unitary of state, such as the long denial of existence of Muslim minorities- mainly Kurds. Nevertheless, a report prepared by the Working Group on Minority and Cultural Rights, a committee working under the Office of the Prime Minister, in 2004 demonstrated the vehement opposition against any debate about the unitary of state or Turkish identity. In essence, the report was prepared by the intelligentsia who attempted to demonstrate the necessity to develop a civic

national identity that does not exclude minorities (Grigoriadis 2009:143).<sup>3</sup> The publication of the report led to political crisis caused via the reactions by the nationalist and Kemalist groups- the military officials, members of Parliament and NGOs. The opposition against the report focused on the unitary character of Turkish state. Even though the report received support from parts of the society, the media and NGOs, the negative reactions to the report were high. The process led to putting the academicians who prepared the report in court.

Second, the secular character of Turkey is even more problematized because of the Islamist roots of the ruling party, the AKP. After 2005, the political crises turned around the issue of the trust to the rule of AKP have become a part of daily life. The belief among some parts of the elites and the society has been the possible hidden agenda of the AKP for weakening the state by the EU reforms and bringing an Islamist rule. Besides, the AKP was not very effective to approach this problem. As Posch (2007:15) states, the AKP failed to convince the important part of the society about “its new identity as an ‘ordinary’ or ‘new style’ conservative party.” That led to polarization among both the elites and the society.

In 2007, a shocking judicial case in 2007 which is neglected by many scholars dealing with Turkish politics has been launched. Even though the case is not directly related to minority issues, it represents a grand opening for Turkish democracy and elimination of illegal powers or opposition against further EU reforms comprising minority rights. The case charged a terrorist organization called *Ergenekon* which characterized themselves as nationalist Kemalists. The members of the organization have been military officials, journalists, NGOs’ and civil society representatives, academicians. The aim of the organization was to topple the government by a military intervention. In order to prepare the preconditions for such a military intervention, they organized a number provocative action (assassinations, bombings, etc.). This is what many people called for years, the *deep state* of Turkey.

The criminal charge against the members of the organization showed that the organization planned several military interventions since 2005. Additionally, the plans of the organization to deprive the minorities from their political and cultural rights and properties they owned after the possible military intervention appeared in the accusations (Dönmez and Kilic 2009). The Turkish society shocked with the accusations, especially against the former high military officials, due to the long tradition of the societal trust to military as the guard of Turkish Republic. The societal trust has been shaken by the accusations against the military officials by being a member of a terrorist organization.

Many believed that the organization is “the last living extension of Gladio, a code name denoting the clandestine NATO stay-behind operation in Italy after World War II, intended to counter a possible communist invasion of Western Europe” (Zaman Newspaper 2009). Prime Minister Erdogan also stated that the operation somehow resembles to the ‘Clean Hands’ operation in Italy against Gladio in the beginning of 1990s (Zaman Newspaper 2008). This judicial case is a grand opening for Turkish democracy. The operation represents deep transformation of Turkey into a more democratic state.

The impact of the case can be evaluated as the rising distrust of the public opinion to both army and Kemalists, the weakened discourse on Islamic threat by the AKP and further mobilization of change agents for policy change. Therefore, related to this part of the paper, the impact of veto powers has been weakened via the case of *Ergenekon* despite their opposition to any democratic opening in minority rights (such as the opposition against the recent attempt of the AKP government for a democratic opening to solve the Kurdish question).

To sum up, the minority-related reforms has entered phase of stagnation after 2005 in which the incentive-based model provides an explanation via the decline of the credibility of EU conditionality and high number of veto points incurring high adoption costs. However, the period after 2007 has witnessed the efforts of the government for rule adoption and implementation of the rules adopted in minority rights. The incentive-based model assumes a complete stagnation in the reform process due to the decline in the credibility of EU conditionality, medium adoption costs and veto points. In this case, there is a need for an alternative explanation for the minority-related reform process of Turkey.

**Table 4: The External Incentives Model and Europeanisation of Minority Rights in Turkey**

Time period	The size and credibility of the EU reward	Veto players (Impact) and the size of adoption costs	Expected minority-related policy change by the model	Minority-related Policy change
2005-2007	Low	High	<b>Stagnation-low</b>	<b>Stagnation-low</b>
2008-2009	Low	Medium	<b>Stagnation-low</b>	<b>Revival-High</b>

## **2.2 Proposing an Interactive Approach: Policy Change via Top-down and Bottom-up Pressures**

The case of Turkey demonstrates the limited capability of three Europeanisation and enlargement theoretical models for explaining the reform process in the area of minority rights after 2005 with its ups and downs. While the social-learning model proves no explanatory power in the case, the other two models provide limited capacity for an explanation. For instance, the weakened credibility of EU rewards and high number of veto players with adoption costs are capable of explaining the stagnation in the reform process of Turkey. However, the continuum of partial rule adoption and implementation of the rules adopted can not be explained by the external incentives model. Rather, the lesson-drawing model provides an explanation to the continuum of the reforms in minority rights in a period with weakened EU's credible conditionality. By analysing Europeanisation of minority rights as a remedy to domestic problems or the failure in the policy area accompanied by policy dissatisfaction, the model has a strong explanatory power in the case of Turkey.

As Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005) argue, some cases of rule adoption in central and east European countries lie at the borderline between the domestic choice and the impact of the EU conditionality. However, there is not much study comprising the impact of the EU and the domestic choice which is helpful for future research providing a broad understanding of the Europeanisation process. Besides, there is a gap within the literature to analyse the domestic change from a lesson-drawing perspective which would provide different insights rather than the impact of EU conditionality alone. The case of Turkey provides us the laboratory to explore the EU-induced and domestic-driven policy change due to the lack of EU's credible conditionality recently.

How can we explain the minority-related policy change in Turkey after 2005? It is necessary to put the interaction between top-down and bottom-up models into the analysis. The starting point for such an analysis is the inclusion of the internal demand for change via change agents such as NGOs or intelligentsia, and the policy dissatisfaction of policy-makers with the status quo to the analysis in addition to the veto players and EU conditionality. Because the accession countries are subjected to EU conditionality, disentangling the domestic-driven and EU-induced policy is not an easy task. However, a research design starting from two different levels, EU level and domestic level,

interacting in the policy-making process could be a beneficial approach. Besides, the impact of the EU on domestic factors driving the policy change should be considered. As Akman (2005:72) puts it, “the EU creates a social awareness demand side to change the perceptions and utility functions of domestic actors.” Such an analysis established via the case of Turkey could be tested in other accession countries in further research.

The primary focus of the proposed model is to shed light on the interaction between external and internal levels that leads to different degrees of policy change. Börzel’s pull-and-push model (2000) is very helpful to map the interaction between these levels. The decision-making process is affected by both EU level push and societal level pull for/of policy change. I assume that the process lead to different degrees of change due to the interaction between these levels. In this study, the two mechanisms will be integrated via the case of Turkey. The first one is the external incentives model which begins from the EU level, therefore, a top down approach. The other is the lesson drawing model which starts from the domestic level, hence, a bottom-up model. I will analyse the interaction of these two mechanisms that leads to different degrees of domestic change in minority-related policy in the case of Turkey.<sup>1</sup> The next section is an attempt to explain the minority-related policy change in Turkey after 2005 by the proposed model.

The hypotheses in the research are:

### **1. Credibility of EU conditionality:**

*The likelihood of rule adoption (policy change) increases with the credibility of conditional threats and promises (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005; Kelley 2004).*

### **2. Veto Points:**

*The more the power is dispersed across the political system with different preferences, and the more actors have a say in political decision making, the more difficult it is to foster the domestic consensus or ‘winning coalition’ necessary to introduce changes in response to Europeanisation pressures (Börzel and Risse 2000; Kelley 2004; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005 )*

### **3. Policy Failure and Policy Dissatisfaction:**

*The likelihood of rule adoption increases as the perception that domestic rules are working satisfactorily decreases and dissatisfaction with domestic rules increases as the threat of domestic sanctions for maintaining the status quo increases (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005)*

### **4. Domestic Mobilization:**

*The higher the domestic mobilization in favour of change, the more likely it is that policy change will occur (Börzel 2000).*

### **5. Push-and-Pull:**

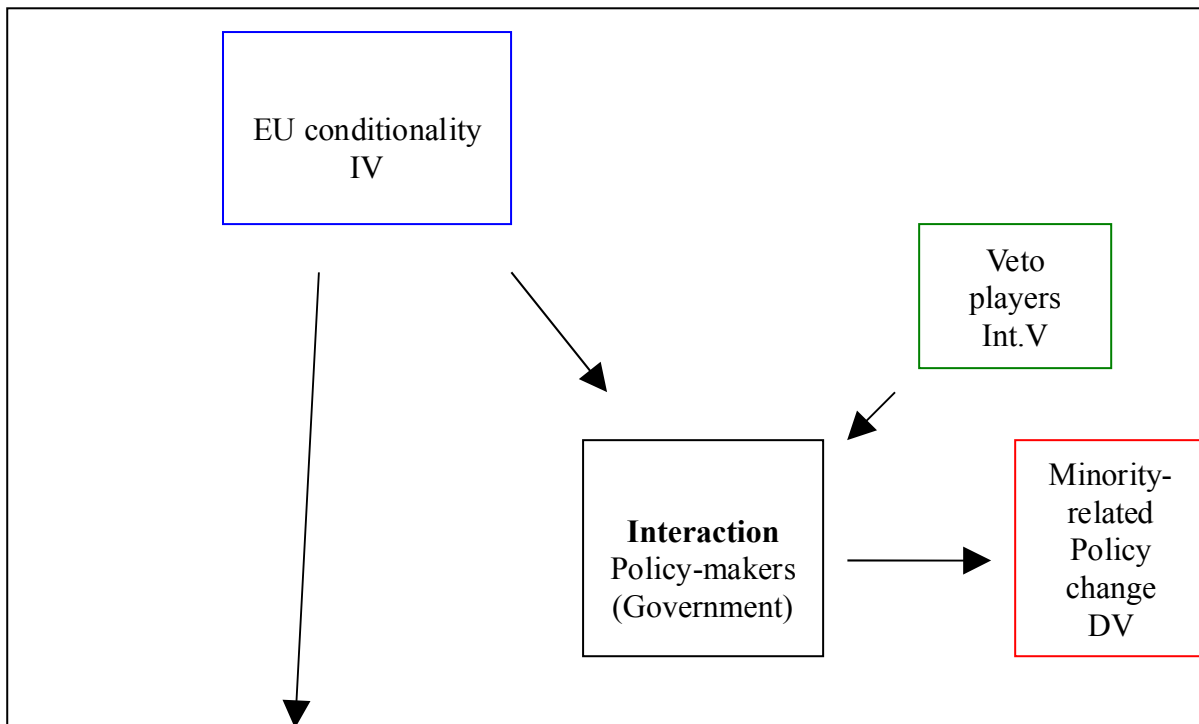
*The higher the credibility of the EU conditionality (push), the higher the level of domestic mobilization in favour of change (pull) and the policy dissatisfaction (pull) and the higher the policy change. (Both policy makers and veto players are sandwiched between EU conditionality and domestic mobilization (Börzel 2000). This leads to policy change).*

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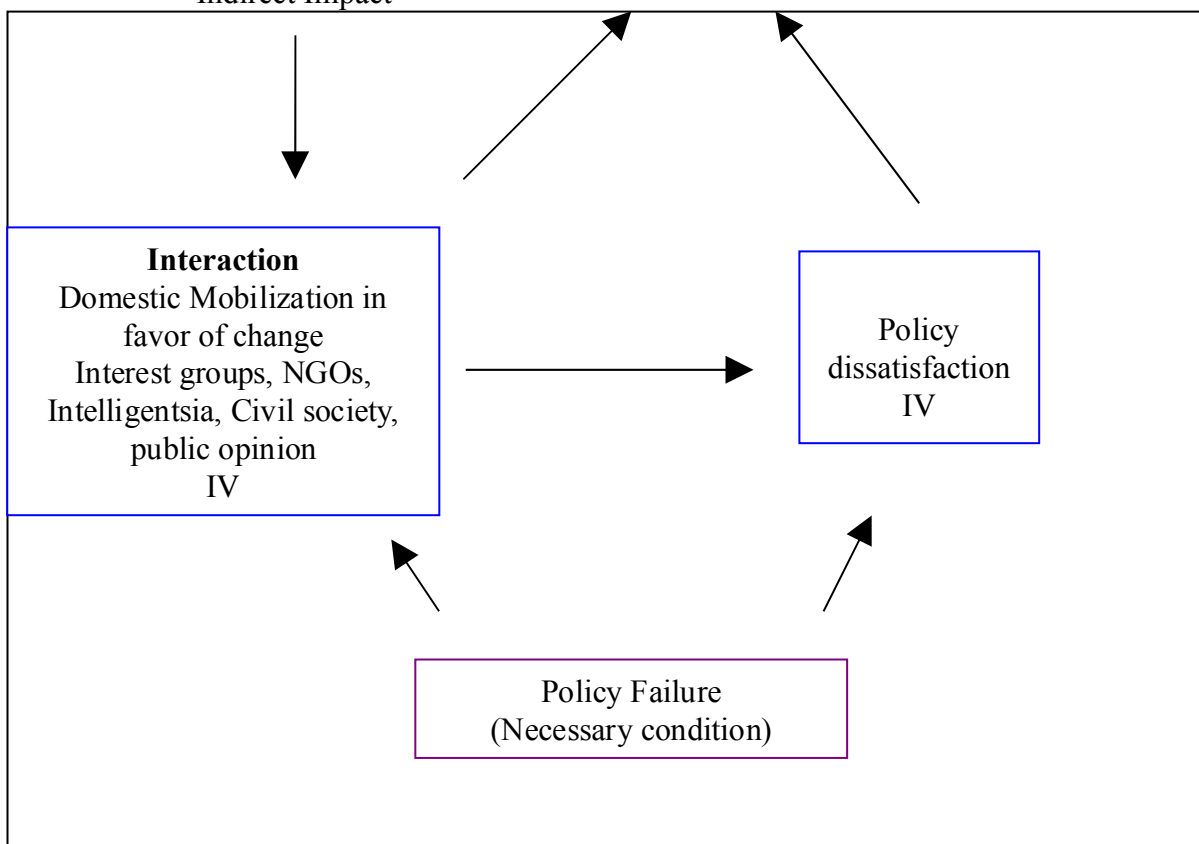
<sup>1</sup> The detailed variables could be seen in table 5.

**Table 5: Causal Mechanism Leading the Research**

**External Demand for Change - External Incentives Model  
Push for Policy Change**



Indirect Impact



**Pull for Policy Change  
Internal Demand for Change- Lesson-drawing Model**

### 3. Explaining the case of Turkey from a broader perspective: Push and Pull for Policy Change

*The higher the credibility of the EU conditionality (push), the higher the level of domestic mobilization in favour of change (pull) and the policy dissatisfaction (pull) and the higher the policy change. (Both policy makers and veto players are sandwiched between EU conditionality and domestic mobilization (Börzel 2000))*

In the previous sections, the credibility of EU conditionality and the impact of veto players have been stressed for the prior as low from 2005 to 2009 and for the latter as high in the same period. The push for policy change for minority-related reforms is, therefore, low and weak since 2005. In contrast, the pull for policy change between 2005 and 2009 is high due to the presence of policy failure in minority rights and high policy dissatisfaction of policy makers with the status quo. If all the factors are same for two periods from 2005 to 2007 and 2008 to 2009, how can we explain the continuum of minority-related policy change in the second period? The missing link in the analysis is domestic mobilization in favour of policy change strengthened by the EU accession process. In order to perceive the impact of domestic mobilization to policy change and the interaction between push and pull factors, the next section will focus on the interactive push-and-pull factors with the development of domestic mobilization since 2002.

#### *Minority-related policy change in Turkey: An Alternative Explanation*

In order to perceive the whole picture of the minority-related policy change in Turkey, the beginning of the process has a critical importance. The EU reforms started at the time coalition government of ANAP (Motherland party) - DSP (True Path party) - MHP (Nationalist Movement party) in 2002 despite in a limited way. After three years of inability to launch reforms since the Helsinki decision of 1999, the year 2002 witnessed the rise of the intense internal pressure from business interest NGOs such as TUSIAD (Turkish Industrialist and Businessmen Association), and liberal civil society organizations such as TESEV (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation) on the government for launching reforms including minority protection measures (Aydin and Carkoglu 2006:73).<sup>5</sup> The launch of reforms in 2002, therefore, was a consequence of active pressure via the change agents to the government and EU conditionality. These agents started mass campaign to force the government for launching reforms in the European integration process that resulted the beginning of reform process. The government responded the pressure by launching reform packages which seems rather symbolic attempt in spite of the opposition by the MHP (Ulusoy 2007:484). However, the stress of launching reforms, especially related to minority rights, caused the collapse of the government. <sup>6</sup>

The domestic status quo was interrupted by the 2002 elections which demonstrated the internal demand for change and the sanction of voter to the government (Aydin and Carkoglu 2006:81). All the three parties (ANAP, DSP and MHP) within the previous government were sanctioned by the voters and wiped out the parliament. The elections brought the single party government by the AKP to the parliament in which there was the Republican People's Party (CHP) as the only opposition party. Both parties strongly stressed that they were supportive of the EU reform process and economic reforms put by the IMF in the election campaigns.

As the reform process has accelerated from 2002 to 2004 in minority rights and other policy areas, the efforts of the government for further reforms were supported by wide segments in the country-civil society organizations, business NGOs, and intelligentsia (Aydin and Carkoglu 2006:73). There emerged a grand coalition of pro-reformist powers in this period. Especially business interest groups-mainly TUSIAD- were very active in supporting both the government and the reforms. The

government has included the civil society organizations to the policy-making process more by consulting them for further policy improvements. In this process, the impact of the EU by both financial support to NGOs and the ideological support to all change agents indirectly was developing in a stable way.

The decline in the credibility of EU conditionality and the weakened internal pressure via these change agents affected caused the stagnation in the minority-related reform process. The civil society organizations, NGOs and intelligentsia are very fragmented and heterogeneous in Turkey (Kubicek 2001:38, interviews with Turkish NGOs in 2009). Therefore, unconditional support from these agents to all democratic reforms in which some would be against the very existential characters of the states is not possible. After all, it is not realistic to expect the support of the pro-Kemalist agents to the reforms that would reorganize the unitary state and laicism (Diez, Agnantopoulos and Kaliber 2005:10). Therefore, the polarization among change agents downgraded the internal pressure for the reforms in Turkey until especially 2007.

The case of *Ergenekon* in 2007 has an impact on the minority-related reforms which are the rise of further domestic mobilization in favour of change, the rising consciousness of the government for further democratization and weakened power of veto players in Turkey. While the fragmentation and decline of internal pressure has affected the previous period of reform process, after 2007 both the EU reforms and the case against *Ergenekon* has strongly been supported by pro-reformist parts of society (e.g. *Taraf* Newspaper, *Zaman* Newspaper, TESEV). The unconditional trust to military in Turkey has deeply been shaken among both elites and society. The position of veto powers has been questioned more. New plans for a military intervention including the plans of the army for preparing conditions for a successful military intervention by attacking non-Muslim minorities and blaming the Islamists as well as the AKP government has come up very recently (*Zaman* Newspaper, 2009). While these developments have strengthened the pro-reformist position of the AKP, it has weakened the position of the Kemalists and the army. Moreover, recent interviews with NGO and academic members in Turkey have showed that the AKP has realized the emergency of democratic reforms for both the sake of the country and their own sake due to the plans of military interventions recently came to light (Interviews with Turkish NGOs and academia in 2009). Such an approach of the AKP government has fuelled the revival of the reforms in minority rights since 2008.

The minority-related reform process in Turkey, therefore, can be only explained via an interactive approach combining both push and pull factors. The important conclusion from the analysis is the possibility of domestic choice without a credible EU conditionality in one of the most sensitive policy area, minority rights. In spite of the low credibility of EU conditionality, other factors have given a way for the revival of the minority-related policy change such as high degree of policy dissatisfaction of policy-makers, high degree of domestic mobilization in favour of change supported by the EU indirectly and medium degree of the impact of veto powers. Therefore, the reform process in accession countries needs to be analysed from a broader perspective comprising both the bottom-up and top-down factors.

To sum up, the neglect of domestic factors- the internal demand for change, the policy dissatisfaction of policy-makers with the status quo and the utility of EU rules for domestic problems- is unfruitful for analysing the downward and upward trends in the EU reform process of Turkey. Alternative explanations combining both the external (EU-induced) and internal demand for domestic change are necessary for analysing Europeanisation of accession countries. Providing a significant room for domestic change agents, such an approach gives insight to explore how the policy-makers are sandwiched between internal and external pressure leading to policy change in



the Europeanisation process (Börzel, 2000).

**Table 6:**                      **Push Factors**                      **Pull Factors**

Time period	Credibility of EU Conditionality	Veto powers (Impact)	Policy Failure	Policy Dissatisfaction	Domestic mobilization in favour of policy change	<b>Minority-related policy change</b>
2005-2007	Low	High	Present	High	Medium	<b>Stagnation</b>
2008-2009	Low	Medium	Present	High	High	<b>Revival</b>

### **Concluding Remarks**

Turkey has launched revolutionary reforms in minority rights since 2002. A number of taboos have been broken in the area such as the long denial of the existence of Kurds, or property rights for non-Muslim minorities. While it seemed impossible for broadcasting in other languages than Turkish in 1990s, the country implemented broadcasting in Kurdish in 2008. The reforms in minority rights represent a tremendous step for the Europeanisation process of Turkey. However, the reform process has not been smooth in Turkey. It demonstrated ups and downs through time. Recently the reforms have slowed down and since 2007 the government has surprisingly pushed the reforms in the area further.

The case of Turkey demonstrates the limited capability of the model for explaining the whole reform process in the area of minority rights after 2005 with its ups and downs. None of the theoretical models are able to explain this process. Even though the external incentives and lesson-drawing model provide some limited explanation to different time periods of minority-related policy change, there is a need for alternative explanations combining top-down and bottom-up level factors in analysing Europeanisation of accession countries.

In addition to that, both the external incentives and lesson-drawing model neglect the internal demand for change via change agents which is critical to understand the whole reform process in Turkey. Such research does not provide a broad analysis of policy change in accession countries. For a more parsimonious explanation of the domestic change in accession countries, there is a need to focus on the interaction between the EU-induced and internal pressure for a whole picture of non-member Europeanisation.

The case of Turkey provides the opportunity to examine the impact and interaction of EU conditionality and domestic choice for policy change due to the decline of the credibility of EU conditionality. The research for combining these two different angles, the external pressure of the EU and the internal pressure, is in progress. The present paper aimed to present the ideas from an ongoing research aiming to develop a broad and multi-dimensional theoretical framework.

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