

ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS AT KARAMANOĞLU MEHMETBEY UNIVERSITY TOWARDS TURKEY'S ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

Gürbüz Ocak

Assoc. Prof. Afyon Kocatepe University, Education Faculty,

gurbuzocak@gmail.com

Hasan Kizilkaya

Instructor, Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University,

Foreign Languages Dept.,

hasankizilkaya35@gmail.com

Serkan Boyraz

Instructor, Aksaray University, Foreign Languages Dept.,

serkan.boyraz@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

University students will take part in the work life as an important element of the work force in the very near future - that is to say, they are going to be the future. For this reason, college students' perceptions and attitudes about the European Union (EU) and beliefs and attitudes towards full membership in the EU - which is crucial for the future of our country - are very important. In this context, this study aimed to measure attitudes of college students towards Turkey's membership. A Likert-type scale was used for data collection.

The scale consisted of 23 items (19 positive & 4 negative). Data was obtained from 242 Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University students who were selected by a random sampling method. This data was analyzed using one-way ANOVA and t test in terms of variables. Students' attitudes towards Turkey's EU membership did not differ significantly ($p > 0.05$) at socio-economic, prestige and legal system sub-dimensions in terms of gender. However, it was found to be a significant difference between male and female students at the culture dimension. While students' attitudes did not show a significant difference at prestige, legal system and culture

sub-dimensions in terms of variable “having relative in EU countries”, significant difference was found between students having relatives and not at the socio-economic dimension.

KEYWORDS:

Turkey, European, Union, college, students, attitudes

INTRODUCTION

Since it was founded, the Republic of Turkey has always closely followed the developments in the international conjuncture to reach the level of contemporary civilization and position itself in international organizations such as OECD and NATO. Shortly after the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958, which is described as the greatest peace project in the history of mankind, Turkey applied for full membership to the community in July 1959 (Accession of Turkey to the European Union, 2012). After this application the nation was notified that the development level of Turkey was not enough to fulfil requirements for full membership, and thus a partnership agreement was proposed until requirements for full membership could be met. The agreement was signed in Ankara on September 12, 1963 (*TR –EU Relations*, 2012).

The Ankara Agreement envisaged a three-stage process including reparation, transition, and the final period for adaptation of the Turkey to EEC. The period of preparation specified in the agreement has concluded by the Additional Protocol in 1973, thus beginning the transition period. The transition period, which processed slowly due to the economic difficulties of the 1970s and the 1980 military coup, finally came to an end in 1996 with the entry of Turkey to Customs Union (DPT, 2000). At the summit held in Helsinki on 10-11 December 1999, our nomination was registered for full membership. This has started a new era in relations with the European Union, which has a long history. A summit in Brussels on December 17, 2004 was a turning point in EU-Turkey relations. In the summit it was proposed to start negotiations on October 3, 2005 by specifying that Turkey was sufficient to meet the political criteria. Negotiations have been initiated on the proposed date and the *acquis* adaptation efforts are still ongoing (Samur, 2010). Turkey tried to meet requirements for the documents and reports published so far by the EU. Although sometimes these documents and reports asked matters that candidate countries are

unable to fulfil, in general candidate countries have tried to meet demands to ensure the Copenhagen and Maastricht criteria. All of these efforts were carried out in order to join in the European Union, the rising star of the 21st century. As of today the EU, which has become the community of nations with 25 member states, may expand its boundaries in the 2010-2015 period with the candidate countries such as Turkey, as well as nations including Croatia, Serbia-Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania (Özer, 2006).

In recent years, Turkey - European Union (EU) relations are among the major topics of discussion in the country. In this debate - referred as "the EU matter" in short - it can be claimed that one who has no stance about the EU accession process and Turkey-EU relations will remain outside of politics. Turkey's EU nomination is a matter which everyone on the street is familiar with. On the other hand, many think that they know very little about the matter and follow not only with surprise but also with enthusiasm. In addition, the issue is perceived in different ways in different social circle. Consequently, different attitudes and reactions occur. Recent researches carried out in Turkey indicate that society is hopeful for Turkey's EU membership. However, detailed information is not available (Türk Sosyal Bilimler Derneği, 2005).

Turkey has had formal relations with the EU since the signing of the association agreement in 1963 (the Ankara agreement) and is thus the candidate country which has had the longest historical relationship with the EU without obtaining full membership. Turkey applied for full membership in 1987 but it was not until the establishment of the Customs Union in 1995 that the EU signalled that Turkey's wish of joining might be fulfilled. The Turkish hopes were however dashed when EU leaders decided to exclude Turkey from the enlargement process at the European Council meeting in Luxembourg 1997. Turkey did not receive the status of candidate country until 1999 and accession negotiations were initiated on 3 October 2005 (Christensen, 2009). After Turkey's commissioning the agenda for negotiations with the EU in Brussels on 3 October 2005, the EU settled the head of order. In parallel with this development, a rapid integration process began with Europe in the political, economic and legal area. Many agencies and institutions in Turkey have entered into a restructuring process in the way of Europeanization. In this process, Turkey is not expected to face significant challenges in the integration with the EU in political, economic and legal fields (Akpınar, 2006).

EU-Turkey relations can be characterized as quite a turbulent marriage. But for good and for bad, the couple has managed to stay together for more than 40 years. But how can we ensure that the EU and Turkey will manage to stay together in the future despite the many ups and downs - and preferably, also live together happily ever after? (Christensen, 2009). The efforts of Turkey in the process of adaptation to the EU attracted the attention of the youth population and have led them to create either a positive or negative attitude towards the issue. Attitudes of young people, who are the future of the country, are very important with regards to this issue.

Christensen (2009) states that the prospect of becoming a member of the EU provides a unique platform for ensuring the democratization process in Turkish society. Meanwhile, the EU has been ambivalent in its membership promises towards Turkey which has led to declining support for Europeanization among the Turkish public. This scenario has raised the question of where Turkey's society is and where it should be heading. Unfortunately, doubts about whether Europe is the right choice of partner is also very much prevalent in the Turkish debate. All in all, EU-Turkey relations are being confronted with negative dynamics. This vicious cycle of reinforcing negativity also affects public opinion. Opinion polls suggest decreasing public support on both sides. According to the Eurobarometer opinion poll of November 2008 When specifically asked for their opinion on Turkish membership of the EU, the respondents rank Turkey as the least-favoured accession country, with only 31% supporting and 55% opposing membership (14% are undecided). However, 45 of the respondents are in favour of Turkish accession once it has fulfilled all the necessary criteria, while equally 45% remain opposed even if fulfilment of the criteria were the case (leaving 10% undecided) (Können, 2009). Yılmaz (2008) explains the EU issue briefly with the following words "No one can know today whether Turkey will ever become a member. Who, indeed, knows what the EU will look like after fifteen or twenty years? At the same time, Turkey could also take an entirely different route from what is now predicted. Perhaps the next generation in Turkey might not want to join the EU, even if all the criteria have been fulfilled. However, Turkey should bring its "Europeanization/ Westernization process" to its ultimate conclusion.

Turkey presents both a huge challenge and a great opportunity for the EU and is therefore one of the most controversial and complex issues in the current European public debate. The country's size, its growing population,

its level of economic and social developments and its cultural and religious character are all central issues. Furthermore, the question of Turkey is not limited to the pros and cons of accession but is also very much a question about Europe's own borders, values, identity and history. The debate about Turkey is thus not only a debate about letting in another country, but also a debate about what the EU is and should be in the future. This is also true for Turkey, with the EU also constituting a dilemma as it represents both a great opportunity and a huge challenge (Christensen, 2009). These issues are played an important role in writing the attitude statements and dimensions are designated with respect to the issues mentioned above. The factors consist of socio-economic, prestige, legal system and cultural dimensions which were taken into consideration in the development of the scale.

Universities are institutions which are training people to respond to the changing and evolving needs of our country. Students who are studying at universities will, in the very near future, be an important element of the labour force. Thus, they will take part in the workforce and will work in a variety of fields. For this reason, college students' perceptions and attitudes about EU and beliefs and attitudes towards accession to the EU, is an important issue that should be studied.

Purposes of the Study

Turkey is a country with an outstanding youth population. Turkey's full membership in the EU may closely concern the youth population. In this context, the feelings and attitudes of young people towards Turkey's membership of EU are also important. This study aimed to determine and analyze university students' attitudes towards Turkey's full membership of EU.

Problem

What are the attitudes of university students' towards Turkey's accession to the EU? Is there a significant difference between attitudes of according to their Personal characteristics?

Assumptions

Following assumptions have been accepted:

1. Within the research, the answers given by the students to the statements in the attitude scale correctly reflects their own thoughts and attitudes.
2. The scale, which was designed in order to measure affective characteristics of the students, is able to serve the purpose of study.

METHODOLOGY

The study, aimed to identify and evaluate attitudes of students' towards Turkey's full membership in the EU, a general survey model was used. The survey is an approach which aims to describe a past or present situation as it is. General survey models are survey arrangements made on the population or on a sample selected from the population in order to reach a conclusion about the population composed of many components (Karasar, 2010). In the study, scale development and data collection was carried out together. For this reason, the attitude scale developed by the researcher was used as a data collection tool.

Population and Sample

The population of study consists of 242 students: 90 boys (37.2%) and 152 girls (62%), all of whom have been studying at the University of Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey. As a general rule of the factor analysis done during the development of the scale, sample size must be a multiple of five times the number of variables. Therefore 242 students were taken in the sample for a 48-item draft scale. (Tavşancıl, 2006). The study group is the population that can be reached. The study population is the population that a researcher can state opinions by directly observing it or taking advantage of her observations on a selected sample set (Karasar, 2010, p. 110). Since the aim of the study was to determine attitudes of students' towards Turkey's full membership in the EU, college students were determined as the appropriate study group.

In Table 1 the Personal characteristic of the sample

Table 1: Personal characteristic

Variable	Level	N	%
Gender	Female	152	62,8
	Male	90	37,2
Have you been in the EU?	Yes	14	5,8
	No	228	94,2
DO you have Relatives in EU countries?	Yes	144	59,5
	No	98	40,5

Income	Low	128	52,9
	Average	70	28,9
	High	44	18,2
Total		242	100

Data Collection Instrument

In order to determine the items of the data instrument used in this study, The items consisted of 48 attitude items formed in accordance with the general attitudes, feelings, and opinions. A five Likert type, which is one of multi-point scales, was used, because it is easy to design and ensures high reliability and validity (Tekindal, 2009). The scale was applied to a group of student consisted of 15 persons. Errors, mistakes and grammar in terms were detected and corrected. After required corrections were completed, the 48-item trial scale was applied to a total of 242 students, 90 men (37.2%) and 152 girls (62%), studying at university.

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine sub-dimensions and the structural validity of the scale. In the analysis, which was done to determine the suitability of the data obtained for the factor analysis, KMO Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was found to be .866 and the Bartlett test (Bartlett Integrity Test) result found ($p = ,00$) These values can be considered as an indication of the appropriateness of the data for the factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure should be greater than .70, and is inadequate if less than .50. The KMO test tells one whether or not enough items are predicted by each factor (L.Leech, Barrett, & Morgan, 2005).

In factor analysis, population must have a normal distribution. This assumption is for all variables and all linear combinations of the variables. Data was tested via Barlett test because it was obtained from multivariate normal distribution. The higher the Barlett test result, the higher the possibility of significance (Tavşancıl, 2006). For the results of factor analysis to be valid, the Barlett test result should be lower than $p = 0.05$, otherwise it is invalid (Pallant, 2007, s. 181).

As a result of evaluation, 25 items were excluded from the 48-item

draft scale. So, 23 items, including 4 negative and 19 positive, were left in the scale. According to the varimax rotated principal components analysis, the scale is a four-dimensional scale. Factor loadings of the designed scale ranged from 0.77 to 0.47. 8 items in factor 1, 6 items in factor 2, 5 items in factor 3 and 4 items in factor 4. The factors consist of socio-economic, prestige, legal system and cultural dimensions which were taken into consideration in the development of the scale. The variances explained by each factor are respectively 18.52, 15.33, 12.13, 10.28 and a total of 56.27 percent. Alpha coefficients are respectively, .85, .82, .79, and .69 and the total scale alpha value is $\alpha = 0.908$.

The evaluation criteria of the alpha coefficient; $0.00 \leq \alpha \leq 0.40$ is not reliable. $0.40 \leq \alpha \leq 0.60$ has low reliability. $0.60 \leq \alpha \leq 0.80$ is quite reliable; $0.80 \leq \alpha \leq 1.00$ is highly reliable. (Tavşancıl, 2006). In this case, the designed scale is a highly reliable scale.

Data Analysis

Options on the scale are listed from left to right in the form of “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “undecided”, “agree” and “strongly agree.” Positive items in the attitude scale are scored as 5-4-3-2-1 and negative items as 1-2-3-4-5. Analysis of the data interpreted on the basis of ranges 4:20 to 5:00 “strongly agree”, 3:40 to 4:19 “agree”, 2.60-3.39 “undecided”, 1.80-2.59 “disagree”, 1.00-1.79 “strongly disagree” in order to calculate the scores of the students’ answers to the items on the scale. In the analysis of the data’s arithmetic mean, frequency, percentage, factor loadings, one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) and t-test statistical procedures were used. The level of significance was set at 0.05 for statistical calculations.

FINDINGS

Findings of the study are presented in tables 2, 3, 4 and 5. scale . Table 2, answer the question. What are the *attitudes of students’ towards* Turkey’s accession to the European Union according to Socio-economic factor?

In general, the students stated that they are undecided about statements placed in the socio-economic dimension of the scale which make up the first factor. So, it can be said that students’ attitudes are uncertain about the benefits that European Union membership will provide in terms of social and economic aspects. In this context, it can be taken as an indication of the effect of current economic and social crisis in the European Union on student attitudes. Example of designing tables is attached.

Table 2. Attitudes of *students' towards Turkey's accession to the European Union* in regard to Socio-economic factor

Item		1	2	3	4	5	M	Result
I believe that freedom of expression will advance via EU membership	f	35	66	52	66	18	2.79	Undecided
	%	14.5	27.3	21.5	27.3	7.4		
I believe that EU membership will raise the income levels of employees.	f	33	51	59	75	24	3.02	Undecided
	%	13.6	21.1	24.4	31.0	9.9		
I do believe that employees' rights will be taken under protection via EU membership.	f	20	52	61	76	26	3.06	Undecided
	%	8.3	21.5	25.2	31.4	10.7		
Through EU membership, I believe that new job opportunities will be created in our country depending on foreign capital.	f	19	37	41	120	23	3.35	Undecided
	%	7.9	15.3	16.9	49.6	9.5		
I believe that the quality and standards of agricultural products will rise.	f	27	64	49	72	25	2.95	Undecided
	%	11.2	26.4	20.2	29.8	10.3		
With EU membership, new markets will be created for the goods produced in our country.	f	23	27	61	103	27	3.33	Undecided
	%	9.5	11.2	25.2	42.6	11.2		
I believe that EU membership will reduce the unemployment rate.	f	24	53	65	79	18	3.02	Undecided
	%	9.9	21.9	26.9	32.6	7.4		

I believe that we will have the perceptivity of a democratic state with EU membership.	f	44	66	58	55	17	2.70	Undecided
	%	18.2	27.3	24.0	22.7	7.0		

Table 3. Attitudes of students' towards Turkey's accession to the European Union in regard to Prestige factor

Item		1	2	3	4	5	M	Result
I think that accession to the EU will increase prestige of Turkey.	f	41	40	63	68	29	3.00	Undecided
	%	16.9	16.5	26.0	28.1	12.0		
I consider EU membership as a measure of development.	f	68	58	35	67	14	2.59	Disagree
	%	28.1	24.0	14.5	27.7	5.8		
Through EU; Turkey will have stronger voice on the international platforms.	f	33	57	45	73	29	2.97	Undecided
	%	13.6	23.6	18.6	30.2	12.0		
With EU membership; I believe that cooperation with EU countries will increase in the fields of defense and security.	f	27	65	66	70	10	2.83	Undecided
	%	11.2	26.9	27.3	28.9	4.1		
In order to have a more active role in the world, Turkey's accession to the EU is required.	f	60	42	65	52	22	2.71	Undecided
	%	24.8	17.4	26.9	21.5	9.1		
I believe that EU membership will increase the trade with the European countries.	f	24	36	40	109	32	3.35	Undecided
	%	9.9	14.9	16.5	45.0	13.2		

In general, the students expressed that they are undecided about the statements in the prestige dimension that is the second factor of the scale. In this context, it can be said that the students were generally satisfied with present prestige of Turkey in the world and they are undecided about the benefits from being a member of the EU with respect to the prestige dimension. 28.1% of students strongly disagreed and 24.0% disagreed with the statement, which is the item 9 of the scale, “I see EU membership as a measure of development”. The average of the answers given by the students is in the “disagree” range with 2.59 score. In this case, it is possible to say that the students do not see EU membership as a measure of development.

Table 4. . Attitudes of students’ towards Turkey’s accession to the European Union according to legal system factor

Item		1	2	3	4	5	M	Result
I believe that supremacy of law will be created literally via EU membership.	f	36	60	72	57	17	2.83	Undecided
	%	14.9	24.8	29.8	23.6	7.0		
I think that EU membership will end inequalities and injustices in the fields of labor and social security.	f	44	74	63	51	8	2.58	Disagree
	%	18.2	30.6	26.0	21.1	3.3		
To achieve EU standards on human rights, will be an important development for Turkey.	f	28	40	48	95	31	3.25	Undecided
	%	11.6	16.5	19.8	39.3	12.8		

Turkey is the most judged and punish country at the European Court of Human Rights; it is going to change for better with accession to the EU.	f	45	50	82	49	15	2.73	Undecided
	%	18.6	20.7	33.9	20.2	6.2		
With EU membership, Turkey will be a more democratic country.	f	58	60	53	48	22	2.64	Undecided
	%	24.0	24.8	21.9	18.8	9.1		

Students have expressed that in general, they are hesitant about the statements in the legal system dimension, which is the third factor of the scale. This can be considered as an indication that they are undecided about the benefits which European Union membership will provide Turkey in the field of legal system. 18.2% of students strongly disagreed and 30.6% disagreed to the statement which is “I think that EU membership will prevent inequalities and injustices in the fields of labour and social security”. When examined the average scores of the answers given by the students to this item, it suited to “Disagree range” with 2.58 point. In this case, it cannot be said that students believe that EU membership will prevent inequalities and injustices in the fields of labour and social security.

Table 5. Attitudes of students’ towards Turkey’s accession to the European Union according to culture factor

Item		1	2	3	4	5	M	Result
* I believe that our customs and traditions will be destroyed little by little via EU membership.	f	101	62	33	31	11	2.07	Disagree
	%	41.7	25.6	13.6	12.8	4.5		
* I do not think the culture of the EU and Turkey will go well together.	f	95	72	31	28	15	2.14	Disagree
	%	39.3	29.8	12.8	11.6	6.2		

* I think with EU membership Turkish culture will be degenerated.	f	79	64	40	40	18	2.38	Disagree
	%	32.8	26.4	16.5	16.5	7.4		
* I believe that after being a member of the EU; there will be much more meddling in our internal affairs.	f	101	77	25	26	12	2.04	Disagree
	%	41.7	31.8	10.3	10.7	5.0		

*Negative item

Average scores of four negative statements, which is in culture dimension of the scale and makes up the fourth factor, corresponded to disagree range when analyzing answers. However, when these items are evaluated in reverse order, they corresponded to the range of agree. So, it can be inferred that the students believe that EU membership will deteriorate the cultural structure of Turkey, besides the EU will step in internal affairs of Turkey and Turkish culture will not harmonize with the EU.

Are there significant differences in the attitudes of males and females?

t-test was applied to determine whether there are a significant differences between the mean scores of male and female students. Table 6 shows the result of the statistical analysis, In the variable gender, it was found that there were no significant differences among socio-economic, prestige and legal system ($p > 0.05$). However, at the culture dimension it was found that there are significant differences between male and female students. Male students have a more positive attitude than female students at the culture dimension.

Table 6 t-test Analysis Results In Terms of Gender Variable

Dimensions	Gender	N	M	SD.	T	p
Socio-economic	Male	90	24.51	6.97	.45	.65
	Female	152	24.09	6.67		
Prestige	Male	90	17.13	5.84	.72	.47
	Female	152	17.66	5.30		
Legal System	Male	90	14.05	4.69	.03	.97
	Female	152	14.03	4.31		
Culture	Male	90	9.34	3.63	2.34	.02*
	Female	152	8.23	3.49		

*p<0.05

Are there significant differences in the attitudes of students according to income levels,

Table 7, IS a One-way ANOVA analyses to determine whether there are a significant differences in terms of income level. It was found that There were no significant differences among attitudes of students' according to income levels socio-economic, prestige, legal system, and culture (p>.05).

Table 7. One-Way ANOVA Results In Terms of Students' Income Level Variable

Dimensions	Income Level	N	M	SD	F	P
Socio-economic	Low	128	24.22	6.72	.220	.803
	Average	70	24.61	6.83		
	High	44	23.75	6.96		
Prestige	Low	128	17.88	5.15	.776	.462
	Average	70	16.97	5.72		
	High	44	17.04	6.15		
Legal System	Low	128	14.26	4.53	1.28	.278
	Average	70	14.24	4.29		
	High	44	13.06	4.41		
Culture	Low	128	8.98	3.47	1.19	.305
	Average	70	8.28	3.69		
	High	44	8.25	3.69		

Are there significant differences in the attitudes of students' with respect to whether they have been to EU countries?

Table 8, is a t-test analysis, in order to determine whether there are a significant differences among the total scores obtained from the scale in terms of the variable of having been in any a EU countries. As a result of the statistical analysis, it was found that there were no significant differences between students who have been in EU and students who have not been in EU.

Table 8. t-test Analysis Results In Terms of Having Been to EU Countries

Dimensions	Having Been in EU	N	M	SD	T	p
Socio-economic	Yes	14	26.71	5.16	1.79	.09*
	No	228	24.10	6.84		
Prestige	Yes	14	17.85	5.70	.27	.78*
	No	228	17.44	5.50		
Legal System	Yes	14	14.42	4.44	.33	.73*
	No	228	14.01	4.46		
Culture	Yes	14	9.35	4.03	.76	.44*
	No	228	8.60	3.55		

*p>0.05

Are there significant differences in the attitudes of students in terms of having relatives living in EU countries?

Table 9 is, a t-test analysis in order to determine whether there were a significant differences among the total scores of the scale of having relatives in EU countries. Table 9 shows, that there were no significant differences among the mean scores of students in terms of “having relatives in EU”. As a result of the statistical analysis, the students “having relatives” in EU did not differ significantly in culture, prestige and legal system from students who do not have relatives (p> 0.05). However, at the socio-economic factor, it was found a significant difference between students who have relatives in EU and students who do not. Students, who have relatives in EU, have more positive attitude toward improving socio-economic than students who do not have relatives.

Table 9. t-test Analysis Results In Terms of Having Relatives in EU Countries

Dimensions	Having Been in EU	N	M	SD	T	p
Socio-economic	Yes	144	25.23	6.51	2.74	.00*
	No	98	22.80	6.92		
Prestige	Yes	144	17.86	5.48	1.35	.17
	No	98	16.88	5.51		
Legal System	Yes	144	14.38	4.44	1.44	.14
	No	98	13.54	4.44		

Culture	Yes	144	8.70	3.67	.28	.78
	No	98	8.57	3.46		

*p<0.05

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The students' attitudes towards Turkey's membership of the European Union in general, were found to be unclear. The average scores of students for each dimension coincide with the range of undecided. This result is supported by the study of Aydin Unal et al (2012). In their study with vocational school students concluded that 47.6% of the students studying at Vocational Schools have positive attitude towards membership in the European Union. They have reached the conclusion that the attitudes of students in social-based programs have a more positive attitude towards Turkey's accession to the European Union compared to students in science-based programs. 1380 of 2900 students that participated in the study said yes to Turkey's EU membership, but 1380 students said no to Turkey's EU membership.

The main reason of the public having negative attitudes to EU membership is the belief that with membership Turkish culture will gradually be degenerated or even will be destroyed. When analyzed the statements' average scores of four negative statements, which is in culture dimension of the scale and makes up the fourth factor, corresponded to the disagree range. However, when these items are evaluated in reverse order, they corresponded to the range of agree. In this case, it is possible to say that the students believe that EU membership will deteriorate the cultural structure of Turkey, that is to say the EU will step in internal affairs of Turkey and Turkish culture will not harmonize with EU culture. The report prepared by the European Commission Delegation to Turkey in 2009 may explain these results.

According to the report with 26% who think that EU membership would be a bad thing peaked in fall 2008 which is the second-highest level immediately after of 29%. Those, who have an unstable attitude, saying membership is neither good nor bad attitude remains at a level between 15-17% since fall 2006. While the rate of supporters of the idea that EU membership would be a bad thing, was only 9% at the beginning of 2004, but this rate went up to 20% in spring 2005, and after a year, in spring 2006, it increased to 25%. The rate of those who think EU membership

is a bad thing was below that level from spring 2006 to spring 2007, but it again reached the level of 25% in fall 2007. By spring 2008, the rate of those who think that EU membership would be a bad thing, was cut down to 21%. However, in spring 2009, it passed over the level of 29% which was in 2008 and in the last five years it seems to have reached the level almost one in four people thinking EU membership would be a bad thing (Avrupa Komisyonu Türkiye Delegasyonu , 2009).

The mean scores of the respondents were found unstable in terms of socio-economic, prestige, legal system and cultural dimensions. It can be considered as an indication that students have similar attitudes towards Turkey's EU membership, and positive and negative attitudes of students have a balanced distribution. In this context, it is possible to say that students are confused about what exactly the EU membership is.

Within the scope of the candidate countries "Eurobarometer 2001" poll results are quite extensive. These results reflect the thoughts of the EU candidate countries' and Turkey's public about EU membership. Some results of this study are as follows: 59% of respondents supported Turkey's EU membership, 14% were against and 18% were abstaining, and 9% did not answer the question. To a question which asks whether they are aware of that their countries are working to become a member of EU, 89% of the candidate country's citizens answered that they are aware, 9% answered that they aren't aware and 2% did not answer this question. Among the candidate countries, Turkey has the lowest level with 82% of the citizens who are aware of efforts of their country to become an EU member (Güreşçi, 2006). Akpınar (2006) in his study about the topic "what exactly is the EU?" has reached the conclusion that the primary school students were confused as Turkish people. The decreasing public support and doubts of Turkish youth can be seen clearly in this study. Most of the respondents agreed with the statements in culture dimensions. So, it can be said that the main concern of the students is cultural degeneration but it is possible to say that there is suspense and negative attitudes in all dimensions.

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APPENDIX

Ap-1 Scale Items and Factor Loadings

Item no	Factor loadings	Statements
1	,563	I believe that freedom of expression will advance via EU membership.
2	,656	I think accession to the EU will increase prestige of Turkey.
3	,706	I believe that EU membership will raise the income levels of employees.
4	,647	I believe that supremacy of law will be created literally via EU membership.
5	,716	I do believe that employees' rights will be taken under protection via EU membership.
6	,563	Through EU membership, I believe that new job opportunities will be created in our country depending on foreign capital.
7	,570	I believe that the quality and standards of agricultural products will rise.
8	,490	With EU membership, new markets will be created for the goods produced in our country.
9	,597	I consider EU membership as a measure of developmnt.
10	,751	Through EU; Turkey will have stronger voice on the international scene.
11	,770	I believe that our customs and traditions will be destroyed little by little via EU membership.

12	,644	With EU membership; I believe that cooperation with EU countries will increase in the fields of defense and security.
13	,700	I do not think the culture of the EU and Turkey will go well together.
14	,560	In order to have a more active role in the world, Turkey's accession to the EU is required.
15	,467	I think that EU membership will end inequalities and injustices in the fields of labor and social security.
16	,610	I believe that EU membership will reduce the unemployment rate.
17	,661	I believe that we will have the perceptivity of a democratic state with EU membership.
18	,611	To achieve EU standards on human rights, will be an important development for Turkey.
19	,675	Turkey is the most judged and punished country at the European Court of Human Rights; it is going to change for better with accession to the EU.
20	,633	I think that with EU membership Turkish culture will be degenerated.
21	,667	I believe that EU membership will increase the trade with the European countries.
22	,584	With EU membership, Turkey will be a more democratic country.
23	,724	I believe that after being a member of the EU; there will be much more meddling in our internal affairs.