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EXPLAINING THE MODES OF EUROPEANISATION OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE PROCESS OF TURKEY'S ACCESSION TO THE EU

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Europeanisation literature recently started to consider in what ways and under which circumstances enlargement and the accession process change the identity, the interests, and the behavior of governmental and societal actors. This research examines the consequences of the EU accession process has on civil society in Turkey, as the accession country is under investigation here. There are three questions that are given particular attention: First, to what extent do they act as 'promoters' of Europeanisation? In other words, under the new opportunity structure posed by the EU, do actors of the civil society contribute effectively to the accession process by being the catalysts for the policy adoption or are they detached? Second, what are the conditions facilitate or constrain their engagements? The empirical data is drawn from expert interviews conducted with the key representatives of the non-state actors, public officials and experts in Turkey between 2009 July and 2011 October. The PhD project assesses and compares the mobilizations of Turkish business interest groups, trade unions and NGOs. This paper will have the focus on the NGO sector² operating in different policy fields including: women rights, environment, education& youth and human rights.

2. HOW TO APPROACH THE EU INTERVENTION ON THE POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES AND WHAT TO EXPECT?

The EU accession process refers to the adjustment of organization of the national politics and policies to European standards that will decrease the policy & institutional misfit until the given state accedes to the Union. The EU policy towards accession states mainly includes the EU conditionality with respect to enlargement. The EU membership of a candidate state is conditional on their fully meeting the Copenhagen criteria (democratic conditionality) and adopting the EU *acquis* (*acquis conditionality*) (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004:677).

Imposition of the conditionality has various implications on the political opportunity structure of the civil society in the non-member states (Börzel, 2010; Knodt, 2001: 182). In this regard, impact of the EU can be direct or indirect. In direct forms, there is direct intervention of EU on the political environment of the civil society via the conditionality. The EU has an impact on the organization of the politics and daily routines of policy formulation by (1) imposing treaty revision and formal intergovernmental agreement affecting the formal organization of politics. Democratic conditionality has potential to transform the state and civil society interaction to the benefit of non-state actors. The EU transforms the political environment for non-state actors in accession states by providing channels of access and participation, and incorporating principles in political programmes affecting the patterns of interaction. The EU attempts to promote participatory mechanisms in order to ensure access of non-state actors to the policy formulation and

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2 Information regarding the selected NGOs is summarized in a table in the appendix.

implementation (Kutter and Trappman: 50). Second, by its nature, the EU itself is a multilevel political entity and (2) offers multiple access points for the non-state actors. Apart from institutional arenas in the EU level, non-state actors find new political realms in the transnational level via memberships in networks and platforms operate in the EU level (Sudbery, 2010: 140). Third, the EU intends to (3) build capacity of the civil society by providing them financial aid, training and technical assistance. Lastly, the EU changes the political opportunity structure (4) by supplying ideas and by promoting appropriate concepts that affect established and widely shared beliefs in national and/or regional institutions. Accession states are in the ‘no-exit’ position when they agree to comply with the conditionality for the EU membership. The EU, with wide range of tools, determines the favorable political setting that national government has to reach for the EU membership. In the meantime indirectly the EU alters the power equilibrium of domestic politics and has great potential to provide alternative reference points and models for non-state actors (Kutter and Trappman: 51)

Table 1: In what ways the accession process has an impact on the non-state actors?

Direct		Indirect	
Participatory mechanisms	Capacity Building	Channels of Access and Participation	Ideas
Change of law and formation of new institutions	The EU funding schemes	Multi-level character of the EU political system	Misfit : No exit situation

The puzzle to be explained is that, although accession process can lead to empowerment of the non-state actors, outcomes are be *uneven, ambiguous and unexpected* (Börzel, 2010:1). In the literature on European civil society / interest intermediation, scholars indicated not every actor is well off under changing opportunity structures. Boronska-Hryniewiecka (2011: 78-79) tries to answer the question of “why some have some non-state actors, such as environmental NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and trade unions, been able to penetrate EU institutions while others have not?” In her findings, she concludes that some NGOs are regarded as legitimate interlocutors- so called insider groups (such as trade union in the social dialogue), while others are blocked from the negotiating table. Beyers (2002) makes distinctions among “diffuse” and “specific” interests and claimed specific interests (business associations & trade unions) are well-off based on two assumption (1) due to the nature of their interests they can overcome the collective action problem (Olson 1965) and (2) they are directly linked to the policy sectors in which they interact . Eising (2007: 336-7) points out that, interest groups are likely to attach greater relevance to the EU institutions for the representation of their interests if they are exposed to high degree of EU regulation. In similar vein, Risse-Kappen (1996: 66) indicated European institutions are more open to impact of business associations rather than trade unions. Mahoney and Beckstrand (2001) have followed the EU funding practices for the civil society associations (CSOs) and came to the conclusion that pan- EU organized groups are funded most and instead of newcomers - Central Eastern European Countries (CEECs)- old member states get the larger share of the EC funding. Pleines indicated that CSOs from CEECs do not have enough capacities to integrate at the EU level (Pleines 2011a) and this situation hinders their leading roles in the adoption of *acquis* (Pleines 2011b).

Accordingly, many studies link Europeanization and mobilizations of civil society suggest that; the impact of the EU is largely mediated through, and conditioned by, existing domestic institutions, policies, cultures and identities (see also Beyers 2002; Eising 2007; Saurugger 2005, Beth and JoAnn 2005, Marks and McAdam 1996).

Type of interest and their positioning in domestic politics remains as attributes of the domestic political structure that filter the opportunity structure posed for non-state actors by EU to activate their mobilization in the accession process. In this regard, specific interests are well off in compare to the diffuse interests. It is because, their capacities are greater, (1) their constituency is identifiable thus they can respond to the changing opportunity structure in a faster way with consistent manners. (2) They are embedded in the domestic political system and due to the high connectedness to their policy realm the relevance of the EU and the possible change that accession process can bring to their political environment are supposed to be greater.

2. MAIN ASSUMPTIONS & THE CODING STRATEGY

In theoretical level, to explain the actors' differential pathways of engagement; it is necessary to assess whether actors relate themselves to changing structures, develop collective identities and accordingly invest in their organizational structure to take advantage of opportunities. In this section I summarize the main assumptions to be tested and the coding strategy developed in accordance to the theoretical discussion and relevant studies.

Organizations' identifications with the changing opportunity structure are high when they agree on position papers indicate the logic of organizations related to EU Accession Process. The position papers can (1) support the EU norms and ideas or (2) reject them. It is more likely that such strong statements lead to changes in organizational structure: increasing specialization, employing EU experts, formation of new branches.

Identification with the changing opportunity structure is low when organizations remain (3) neutral without showing their political color.

In the end of the continuum (4) organizations do not find the accession process relevant to their organizations.

It is expected that organizations with high capacity levels can develop position (1) or (2) and realize changes in their organizational structures. Capacity of the organization is high when; organizations have sustainable funding sources (e.g. membership fees, donations etc.) to support their organizations. Another indicator is large membership bases show whether their causes are embraced by the larger segments of the society.

PROMOTERS OF THE EUROPEANISATION PROCESS

- If strong identification to the process (support) is accompanied by the changes in the organizational structure;

(1) Supporters acquire mass amount of EU funding for the projects aim:

- Better understanding of the accession process
- Initiating Public debates
- Producing information on the EU and on technical aspects of the process

- Monitoring the process
 - Deepening the understanding of Union's functioning within candidate countries
 - Attempting to change perceptions in a positive way.
- And;
- Time period of these projects is longer and the projects are managed by consortium with many stakeholders.

(1) Supporters activate their transnational exchanges to contribute to the EU accession process.

- Increasing contacts with relevant EU institutions.
- Forming own structure in Brussels or having a representative in there.
- Membership in the European federations.
- Membership in the European networks.
- Interaction between interest groups and their counterparts in the European countries.
- Contacts with European political parties and media.

(1) Supporters increase their contacts and exchanges with relevant institutions in the domestic level (on the EU affairs).

If organizations show support (1) but this does not lead to changes in organizational structure; they are expected to act as USERS (2)

OPPONENTS OF THE EUROPEANISATION PROCESS

- If strong identification to the process (rejection) is accompanied by the changes in the organizational structure,

(2) Under these conditions, opponents cannot acquire EU funding but activate their own resources and contacts both in transnational and domestic level to block the accession process.

If organizations are the opponents (2) but this does not lead to changes in organizational structure; they are expected to be DISCONNECTED (4) from the process

USERS OF THE EUROPEANISATION PROCESS

- If organizations do not develop deliberately any position and remain neutral in the process (without disconnecting);

(3) Neutrals are recipients of the small- scale projects aims at capacity building. Length of projects is short and the number of the partner organizations managing the project is less. Organizations make use of the EU funding scheme when available programmes match their objectives.

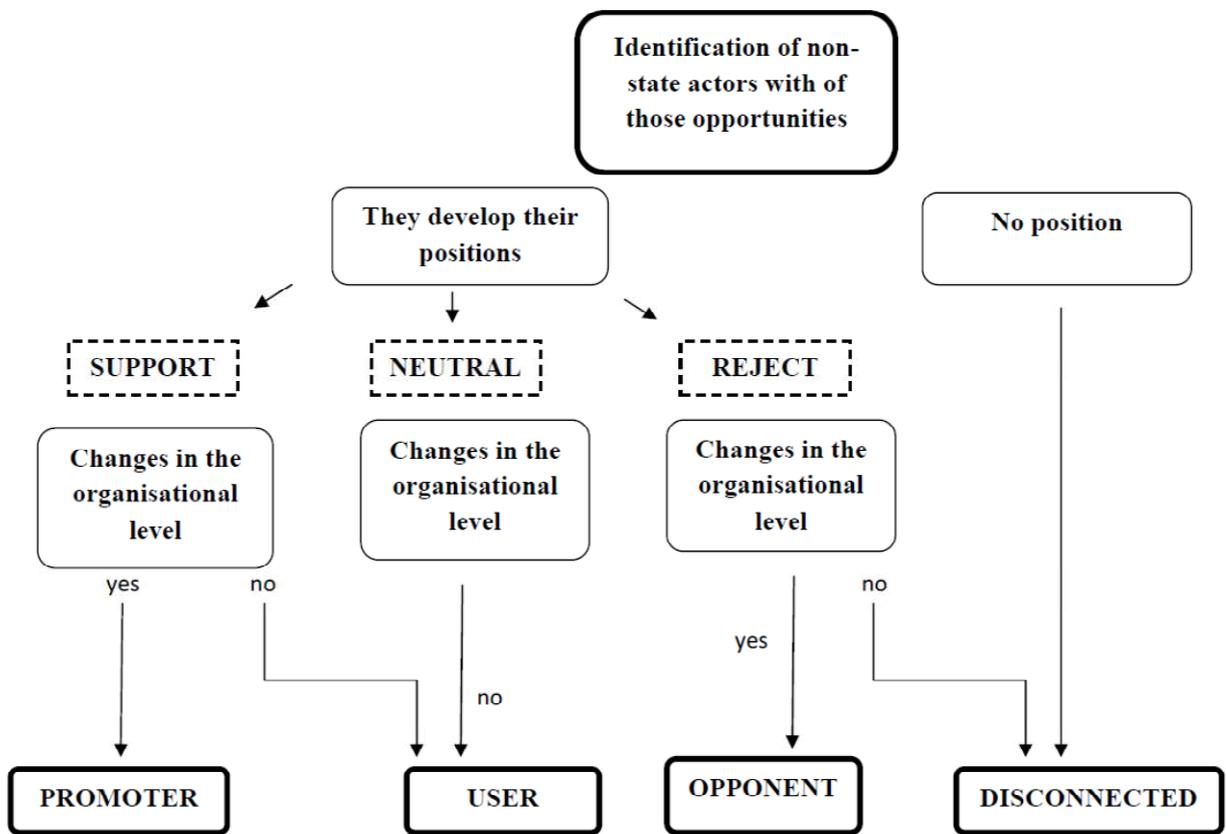
(3) In the domestic level, neutrals make use of the participatory mechanisms and channels linking non-state actors to the governing the accession to the EU on ad-hoc basis.

(3) Transnational exchanges of neutrals are on ad-hoc basis and contribution to the EU accession process is either not part of the organizational logic or not systematically applied.

DISCONNECTED ONES FROM THE EUROPEANISATION PROCESS

- If organizations have any position and find the process irrelevant;
- (4) Organizations do not choose applying for the EU funding, do not engage in transnational exchanges and in the domestic level, participatory mechanisms and channels linking non-state actors to the governing the accession to the EU are not relevant for the organizations.

Table 2. Divergent engagement pathways with relevant conditions



4. EMPIRICAL SECTION

In this section, empirical findings on Turkish NGOs will be presented operating in four policy fields: women rights, environment, education& youth and human rights.³ In accordance to the analytical framework, it is expected that, NGOs have low capacity issues and represent diffuse interests hence cannot cope with ‘collective action problem’ (Olson 1965). Accordingly, such attributes are constraining factors for them to adapt smoothly to the changing opportunity structure in the EU accession process.⁴

The data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Additionally their organizational history and documents were analyzed to make assessments on their capacities and ideational framings vis-à-vis the changing political opportunity structure.

4.1 WOMEN ORGANISATIONS

Turkish women organizations do not have strong organizational capacities and frequently operate with limited budgets. The membership fee option is the first option to finance the organization but most of the time they have problems with collecting this contribution from the members. BASKENTKADIN finances the organization with the membership fees. KDV and UCANSUPURGE collects rather very symbolic amount of money from the people affiliated to the organization. KADER, has rather stable channels of funding, but also collects membership fees. They all stated that, membership fees are not enough for financing an organization. Representatives from the organizations frequently stated that project-based working style is becoming a custom and most of the time organizations support themselves with the funding provided by the international donors.

These organizations are formed by the volunteers who have different backgrounds with diverse political views. Volunteers or supporters of the organizations reflect the wide political spectrum of the Turkey. At the organizational level there has been discussion over the European politics and Turkey’s accession to EU, but as the organization they do not have the single voice/ position over the ongoing process. Volunteers and paid staff of the organization are having sometimes conflicting political positions, so they found having “no position on the EU issues” as the easy way out.

Women organizations do not show special interest in investing in their organizational capacities in the EU accession process. There is no change in their organizational structure and they did not employ experts specialized in the EU issues. Yet, due to the gaining significance of ‘fund-raising’ with projects, they gained such expertise over time in order to deal with phases of project cycle management, e.g. following the call for the projects, writing the project, and reporting while conducting the project. However, there is no specific person dealing with the EU-projects. In general, they claim that their organizations do not signify having experts and special departments in their organizational charts. In general, “specialization” is rather weak for such organizations and that approach is rather associated with the “professionalization” that carries risk of undermining their voluntary action.

3 Please see the abbreviations of NGOs covered in the analysis and their organizational information in the appendix.

For women organizations, the EU funds have been always significant to finance their organizations. All of the organizations under examination have applied for the EU funds. These organizations claimed, the EU funds support building their capacities. However, in the process of application and in the executing the projects all claimed that they have encountered many problems that lessened the impact of the EU funds. They find the process lengthy, over-bureaucratic and rigid. Most of the time, their organizational capacity was not sufficient to deal with such issues. Therefore they look for other sources mainly at the national level that offer them more freedom in every respect. Apart from that, the EU funding they receive was not in greater amounts and they did not execute projects with many stakeholders that would boost the Turkey's accession to the EU in visible terms. Rather the funding supported their projects mainly aimed at their capacity building and raising awareness of their issues. Accordingly, it is observed that when the organizations lack capacities, the EU funds support their capacity building in first place.

Transnational exchanges of the women organizations have moderate impact on the ongoing EU accession process since they do not have permanent representations in the relevant outlets, such as in Brussels. They reach there with their memberships in transnational organizations and most significant one is the European Women's Lobby (EWL). They feed Brussels with relevant information via EWL and in return they gain information and expertise. Since this channel is brand new, the impact remains moderate. Moreover, women organizations keep good contacts in Brussels and especially they pronounced name of Emine Bozkurt⁵ who gave them opportunity to raise their concerns. On the other hand, it is also striking that slow pace of the EU- Turkey accession made European outlets and the EU channels visibly less relevant for women organizations. It is observed that channel of United Nations keeps its high reputation and especially reports prepared by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) are highly significant and relevant for women organizations.

The EU process has not made significant changes on the political environment of the NGOs like diversification of channels that would allow their participation of them in the political processes. When the EU – Turkey relations were at its peak point, when Turkey was granted the candidacy and accession negotiations were started, both state and civil society were enthusiastic to cooperate. Especially public officials were willing to include all relevant stakeholders by giving them voice in dialogue meetings to fulfill the criteria of the EU, that necessities inclusion of the civil society in the process. Women organizations made use of this trend and they have shown extra efforts to remain as significant part of the process. However, this trend was not sustainable. First, the pace of the EU- Turkey relations slowed down and as the relative significance of the process have diminished for all actors, both state and civil society did not show extra efforts to work together to boost the accession process. Not only the pace of the accession but also lack of institutional capacities, code of conducts and cooperation culture handicapped the intensification of the participatory mechanisms allow participation of women organizations. Additionally, also capacities of women organizations were not sufficient to overcome such problems. The EU process facilitated their inclusion in some respects yet their actual participation was not materialized. The most significant impact of the EU accession process on their actual participation is the change of law of association and charities. Women organizations perceive the change in a very positive way and claimed the political environment liberalized considerably and this change has great impact on their daily routine.

Women organizations are 'Users of the Europeanisation'. They have low organizational capacities. Financially, they rely on third party funding and they do not have large membership basis. Regarding the

5 She is a Dutch politician with Turkish descent and Member of the European Parliament since 2004 and European Parliament rapporteur on women's rights in Turkey.

EU accession process, these organizations did not make any organizational changes showing that specialization remain low at the organizational level. Relevance of the misfit is moderate for the women organizations. In their organizational level there have been no tendencies to form coherent policy paper on the EU accession process. Under these conditions, women organizations' relative empowerment from the new political opportunity structure is limited.

4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Environmental organizations generally work project-based and support themselves with the third party funding provided by the international organizations. These organizations employ professionals and their salaries are paid from the project budget. Except TEMA and CEKUL, other organizations either lack the publicity to extract funding through charitable donations and business affairs or just they do not prefer such alternative options to support their organizations. As the representative of the DOGA DERNEGI calls it, the funding they extract from international fund givers are most of the time "restricted fund sources". So, they do not have flexibility to decide on the allocation of the money beforehand and they are not able to make slight changes on the budget during the project period. The representative of DOGA DERNEGI highlights the importance of having budgets with unrestricted funding that could be collected by the members of the organizations donate money on regular basis. Accordingly, developing their membership system is a good option to reach unrestricted funding; on the other hand it is rather a difficult option since people in Turkey generally prefer donating to the organizations that work on dramatic and traumatic issues like natural disaster or children with illnesses. DOGA DERNEGI has 300 members and their annual membership fee is 10 € so still their unrestricted funds are not materialized.

In the accession process, environmental NGOs neither set up new organizational units nor decided to change the hierarchical structure within the organizations, except TEMA. TEMA had separate international departments and EU projects division. In 2009, these two sections merged. TEMA has also initiatives to open up a representative office in Brussels in order to follow up the EU environmental acquis and to exchange information with the EU officials on Turkey's specific environmental issues. Their attempts are not materialized, yet TEMA has two branches in Europe, one of them is in Netherlands and the other one operates in Germany.

On the other hand, these organizations hold great expertise and specific expert knowledge on the environmental politics. As the head of Civil Society Development Center (STGM) stated, members of the NGOs used to work for the Ministry of Environment. Thus holding such great expertise with hands-on knowledge on the environmental politics eased their adaptation to the change vis-à-vis the EU accession process.

The relevance of the misfit and the salience of the EU acquis are quite high for the environmental organizations in Turkey. They attach great importance to the EU acquis determining norms, standards indicated for the Turkey in the chapters on the environment. Environmental organizations have been engaged in the Turkey's accession to the EU and they had significant initiatives to facilitate the reform process regarding environment chapter of the acquis. The most visible initiative was formed when the EU and Turkey relations was its peak point. The initiative was called "ABce- Turkey's Environment and Agriculture Alliance" and BUGDAY, CEKUL, DOGA DERNEGI and TEMA got together and formed this platform or civil society alliance in 2006 to show their support and to channel their input to the process. Their main objective behind forming this alliance was enhancing Turkey's performance of harmonization of the environmental and agricultural part of the EU acquis through forming a control and

feedback mechanism with bringing prominent NGOs together. In 2006, the first product of their initiative was writing up a prescription to solve the water problem of Turkey. “Turkey’s Water Prescription” brought twenty-two concrete solutions to address this problem in Turkey. This document is indicator of their readiness to give support to both Turkish government and the EU in the process of reviewing the water policy of Turkey, conducting necessary scientific research and drafting legislation on water in Turkey. Especially, regarding the institutional situation, they proposed opening up new political channels to involve NGOs and academics to the decision making processes. Environmental organizations signified active involvement of NGOs in the process of harmonization of the national legislation with EU Water directive.

Environmental organizations are recipients of EU funds. Especially the ones with greater capacities such as TEMA, DOGA DERNEGI and CEKUL executed large scale projects with various stakeholders. The projects managed by them have great potential to narrow down the misfit between the Turkish environmental legislation and the EU acquis. However, also these organizations encountered some problems related to the procedures set by the EU. They also claim the procedures are over-bureaucratic and tiring for them. For instance, TEMA finds the rule of ‘equal contribution to the project funding’⁶ is a financial burden for them since the overall budget of the projects they have engaged in was over 1 million €. After completing a large scale project, CEKUL decided not to engage in projects with many stakeholders since they were not satisfied with the decision-making mechanisms in such structure. DOGA DERNEGI pronounced that the EU is rigid in the sense of determining areas to be supported; so they cannot find funding that will support their activist movements in the national level. Relatively weak organization in capacity terms, CEVRE VAKFI has different experiences. They cannot find appropriate funding schemes to apply in the last years.

In the EU accession process, among all other NGOs, regarding organizational capacities environmental organizations remain as deviant cases. Their distinctive feature is that they hold great expertise in their fields. Regarding the salience of the EU conditionality and the relevance of the misfit, they have also shown different attributes. For environmental organizations the criteria set by the EU and environmental policy in the European realm function as an anchor. They demand Turkish legislature to attain such standards; therefore the relevance of the acquis is quite high. They formed intra- environmental organizations initiative to boost the accession process. However, that initiative was not durable and ended after some time. Main reasons behind that are; first organizations cannot find time to work on it and on top of everything when the pace of the EU- Turkey relations slowed down, their enthusiasm and strong commitment was kind of diminished.

Environmental organizations are the ones that keep durable and sustainable linkages with international organizations that allow them to exchange information, resources in the transnational level. Among them, the organizations that invest in their capacities and attach highly significance to the EU misfit activate transnational networks to facilitate the Turkey’s accession to the EU. DOGA DERNEGI and TEMA exchange information and resources in the transnational level in great extent to have a considerable impact on the accession process; whereas CEKUL and CEVRE VAKFI do not show the same attributes. CEVRE VAKFI lacks capacity and they do not have motivations for being a member in an international organization. CEKUL keeps various memberships, but they do not link their exchanges to the accession process; it is because over time the relevance of the misfit dropped for their organization due to changes in their staff hence priorities.

⁶ According to the rule, recipient of the funds including NGOs should contribute to the overall budget of the project. The percentage of their contribution varies between 10 to 15 percent.

Environmental organizations have not been excluded from the policy networks since the area they work on do not correspond to the critical policy realms where non-state actors continuously challenge state to claim their rights. One of the indicators is that, their causes have been perceived legitimate by large segments of the society since their membership base is larger. Second, they employ former state bureaucrats and academics who know how to deal with the bureaucracy. Therefore, the impact of the EU on the institutional framework by pushing for change in law of associations charities has minimal impact on environmental organizations. They stated, they do not feel the change, just some bureaucratic processes were dismantled. With great willingness to engage in the accession process and greater capacities, environmental organizations found new channels to raise their concerns and to have say in the policy making. Especially, the push of the EU in this case materialized with the long-term EU funded projects that brought many stakeholders together. This new style of policy making created rapprochement of NGOs and the state in preparing the new environmental legislation. However, at the end, the proposal on the new legislation was not taken to the parliament in a transparent way and the recommendations prepared by environmental organizations were dismissed. This example indicates the state actors are reluctant to consult the NGOs and include their concerns in every stage of any policy proposal. In this stage, over 80 environmental organizations came together and formed 'Nature Law Watch Initiative' to advocate their rights and demanded new code of conduct regulating relations among civil society and the state.

Environmental organizations have great potential to act as promoters of Europeanization. They received considerable amount of the EU funding and managed it through larger consortiums in longer time of periods. They produced technical knowledge that had direct impact on the direction of the accession process. These organizations have also made great use of the transnational exchanges. Participatory channels are not fully activated, but there have been slight developments. However, also results indicate that their potential to promote Europeanisation is constrained by the structural factors endanger civil society-state relations in the domestic level. Additionally, slow pace of the EU-Turkey relations that diminish the impact of the misfit (conditionality).

4.3 EDUCATION & YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

Organizations working in the Education & Youth field show different attributes since they possess relatively strong organizational capacities and their causes are supported by large segments of the society, volunteers, business firms and state institutions.

TOG employs 35 professionals and they have large network of volunteers mainly supported by student clubs in the universities. Students realize their projects under this structure and according to their data each year 20.000 volunteers engage in such projects and that corresponds to active 5.000 people each year. TOG is also among organization that are confident about their financial strength and sustainability of funds. TOG has main sponsors, sectoral sponsors, collaborators in projects, supporters of campaigns and corporate sponsors. Individual donations correspond to 15% percent of the budget. Each year TOG expects to reach 3-4 million TL budget. ACEV shows the same attributes. They have 6-7 million TL budget each year. This organization is mostly supported by a Turkish corporation, FIBA. Along with their strong linkages to one of the largest corporation in Turkey, they have also capacity to get funding from prominent charities in Turkey founded by other large corporations like Sabanci and international ones like Vodafone. World Bank and the EU also have supported some of their projects. In their enhancing literacy programme, ACEV have recruited over 7200 volunteers to teach people who are illiterate. CYDD is also working in the field of education and supporting education of people in Turkey. Their legitimate cause is pursued by many volunteers working in their branches organized all over of Turkey. Individual contributions holds great amount of their budget, CYDD has also supported by state institutions with regard to their different project.

Organizations pursuing education & youth rights are financially stable organizations due to their legitimate causes pursued by large segment of the society. In this line, their organizational structure chart is also complex with different departments working on variety of issues within same organization. All organizations described above are having projects and international departments with recruited experts working on different tasks like fundraising, tracking the projects and increasing international relations. Yet, these departments have not developed vis-à-vis the EU accession process of Turkey. They do not have department following up EU specific issues and the EU funds.

For education & youth organizations, the relevance of the misfit and EU political conditionality is low. They do not develop any attachments to the political developments in the EU accession process of Turkey.

The other attribute of education & youth organizations is that, they do not have political colors as they are supported by the large segments of the society who support their causes by volunteering or donating. They do not want to narrow down their supporters by limiting their focus with politically colored stakes, opinions and positions etc.

Capacities of the education & youth organizations are greater in compare to every other type of NGOs. They are financially strong and mostly they raise funds through donations either from real persons or from corporations. Therefore, the significance of the EU funds and any other international funding source remain low. Also, the salience of the accession negotiations and the misfit is very weak for education & youth organizations. Since, the relevant part of the acquis are neither the EU's and nor Turkey's top priority in the accession negotiations, the conditionality is far from being an anchor for education & youth organizations.

Among all other empowerment mechanisms of the EU, funding schemes are the most pronounced opportunity structure for them. Their agenda on the EU mainly concerns project development and fundraising. Yet, the EU funding remains moderately significant for education & youth organizations. The reason behind that, these organizations are financially stable organizations and they can attract funds from variety of sources. In addition, the projects that are funded by the EU are very indirectly has the potential of contributing to Turkey's Europeanisation. At least, they have not such perspective in their application and implementation processes. Education & youth organizations have benefited from the EU funding schemes on ad hoc basis. Among all other empowerment mechanism of the EU, the funds have been most relevant and effective ones for them. 'Youth in Action' programme is becoming increasingly significant for the education & youth organizations.

Education & Youth organizations are increasingly engaging in transnational activities; yet they do not relate their relative empowerment vis-à-vis the EU accession process and they do not activate their linkages or networks to facilitate Europeanisation of Turkey. The organizations under examination here are financially stable organizations and are able to organize in every region at the national level. Beyond the borders of Turkey, in the transnational level they are able to keep exchange information and resources by having membership in transnational networks and even some keep permanent representations abroad. Even though, European networks and organizational structuring in relevant venues seem significant, these organizations do not activate their power bases to have a say in the EU accession process.

These organizations have not stated problematic issues that endanger their relation to state institutions. Including attracting funds and collaborating in projects, they have tendency to collaborate with state. These organizations collaborate with the state institutions rather than contesting and since their causes are perceived as 'legitimate' ones, in general they do not pronounce the issues of having lack of access in policy networks or in decision making mechanisms. Accordingly, they do not argue any positive or

negative impact of the EU on the political environment that diversifies their participation channels in the policy making.

Education & youth organizations remain ‘disconnected’ from the EU accession process but they are users of the EU funding schemes. These fields have been included in this analysis as the control group. In compare to the other fields, the accession negotiations are not problematized by any stakeholders (including the EU officials and public officials in Turkey) in this policy area. When the *acquis* and the *misfit* are not problematized, the opportunities to empower civil society cannot function properly. Another difference of the education & youth organizations is that, in compare to other organizations in other fields they have stronger capacities. Thus, this attribute have also shown that there is not direct linkage between the organizational strength of given NGO and their relative empowerment from the changing opportunity structure.

4.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS

Human rights organizations under examination here have been active since early 1990s. This is a relatively longer period of time if one considers the late development of NGO sector in Turkey. Their initial plan to support their organizations with membership fees but they could not realize their objective of supporting their organizations with the contributions collected from their own network. Similar to women rights and environmental organizations, NGOs in the policy field of human rights encounter with the issue of financial stability hence pursue project-based working style. Attracting funding from international sources are becoming widespread solutions to sustain their organizations.

Human rights organizations do not show special interest in investing in their organizational capacities in the EU accession process. There is no change in their organizational structure and they did not employ experts related to EU matters. Human rights organizations do not have departments specialized in the EU issues. In general, specialization in their organization is less likely to emerge.

The relevance of the *misfit* indicating the gap between the human rights practices in Turkey and the EU *acquis* on the human rights is relevant for the human rights organizations. However, in their organizational logics, they do not a specific position on the EU issues. One of the reasons is that; since these organizations have large membership bases and many branches dispersed in Turkey, it is harder for them to have a single voice over the European politics. Data has shown that, there show symbolic support to EU accession process of Turkey but still they keep their reservations. Second, over time their attachment to the EU accession process of Turkey was eroded aftermath the EU-Turkey relations were slowed down post-2005; nevertheless the EU conditionality remains as significant “reference point” for them. Slow pace of the accession is one explanatory factor but also human rights organizations see that the EU has been less effective than they presumed and their expectations have not been met.

Similar to women organizations, there is general acceptance of the positive impact of the EU accession process on the political environment. They claim, the European impact with the concrete *acquis* including norms, ideas and policy recommendations enabled discussion of the human rights issues in Turkey and gave opportunities to the actors of civil society to raise their concerns. In other words, the existence of the NGOs in the field of human rights and their causes are legitimized from the perspective of all relevant actors in policy making and including some segments of the society. However this acceptance does not make them enthusiastic to stick to the accession process and to the EU political conditionality. These organizations pursue advancement of human rights in Turkey and in international realm accordingly they

are critical organizations on every aspect of policies pursued by power-holders, including the EU. They are 'critical' by nature and in their organizational levels they do not give open support to any mainstream political tendencies and show affiliations, rather they keep themselves 'neutral' ones. Accordingly, with such critical stances they do not just follow up the EU's norms and criteria set for the accession states but also track applications of such norms in the European level and question whether the EU itself is a "sincere" norm-setter. On the other hand, in some of the cases, human rights organizations realized that they will not well off in the foreseeable future since in contrary to their expectations, they could not get the support of the EU for their specific concerns and issues (e.g. Kurdish question, clash between Secularism & Islamism).

It is hard to make general conclusions, regarding the relative impact of the EU funding on human rights organizations. The analyses have indicated there are two divergent patterns of engagements to the changing opportunity structure. First group, including IHD and MAZLUMDER, have no tendencies to attract funding since they prefer collecting membership fees and support their organizations with the contributions of the people who support their causes. Accordingly, the EU funding mechanisms remain irrelevant. Second group, including HCA and HRFT, mainly extracts the EU funding and their organizational capacities were empowered to greater extent. They do not collect membership fees or the amount of the money collected remain symbolical, so they have to raise funding and the EU sources are relevant for them.

Transnational exchanges of the human rights organizations are on ad hoc basis and the relative impact is minimal. They do not have permanent representative in relevant outlets. As a clear sign for the foreseeable future, they do not have any plans or preparations to have a branch in Brussels or to employ staff to follow up the agenda there. On the other hand, human rights organizations are keeping track of human rights violations in Turkey in a systematic way and they offer reports and data. Human rights organizations admit that, Eurocrats and academics, activists from Europe include a visit to their offices when they have visits to Turkey. Especially the Eurocrats show interest in the reports prepared by NGOs that contest the government perspectives time to time. To greater extent, they meet European officials and academics in the national level in the regular meetings organized in the routine of the Turkey's accession process and share their concerns. However it is not more than a symbolic intervention to the EU accession process, rather they tend to instrumentalize these opportunities to raise their concerns. Human rights organizations share their concerns and feed them with different kind of data showing perspective and experiences of NGOs in Turkey.

Similar to the other policy fields, although the EU accession process has made significant changes, in the human rights policy field the participatory mechanisms are not fully open and effective. The EU political conditionality and the visible misfit indicated that Turkish legislation lags behind international norms and criteria and the EU pushed Turkish government to satisfy the democratic norms to become eligible for the full membership. Human rights organizations observe the transformative impact of the EU and admit that their causes became more visible and legitimate with the support of the EU. However, conversely they claimed the changes in the law and associations did not bring serious changes on their working environment, rather in the practice to some extent the pressure on them is still on the place. In the governing the EU accession process, the participatory mechanisms that link NGOs with the government work to some extent yet human rights organizations do not find it sufficient and sustainable. They can observe that there are new developments and innovations reflected in the governing the political processes and especially consultations are increasing. For instance, they are included in the preparation of National plan to adopt the EU acquis and also the EU officials tend to consult them in the process of preparation of the EU regular progress reports on Turkey. So, either in national or via transnational linkages they were

able to raise their voices, concerns and critiques. However, similar to the what observed in the environmental policy area, the EU push for institutionalization of state and NGO relations via building concrete mechanisms did not succeed since the state-society relations in the nation level remained still problematic. Even if the institutional changes were materialized they were either not implemented or implemented with deficiencies. In addition, these organizations are also dissatisfied with the slow pace of the EU and Turkey relations, so the participatory mechanisms are also losing significance for them. The EU conditionality used to be strong reference point and an ‘anchor’ for their argumentations, but this is not the case anymore. The interviews showed that this change cannot be just explained through the slow pace of the EU and Turkey relations and diminishing impact of the conditionality’s to transform Turkey but there have been also some turning points that have negative consequences on the perception of human rights organizations on the EU and on Europe in general.

Human rights organizations remain ‘users’ of the ongoing accession process. Regarding their organizational traits, first of all none of them has invested in their organizational capacities to have a say in the process. Second, at the organizational level they do not have a single policy paper indicating their subjective assessments on accession process. As it is discussed above, due to the turning points in ongoing accession process human rights organizations have become more critical on the EU and the credibility of the conditionality was dropped in the meantime. Overall, under these conditions they do not make use of the new opportunity structure in a systematic way.

5. CONCLUSION

NGOs in Turkey remain as the ‘users’ of the Europeanisation process. The main reasons can be traced to organizational traits of NGOs that originate from the nature of diffuse interests they carry. Briefly, the data shows that the organizations operate with limited organizational capacities and have less willingness to engage in the process. Their limited capacities were constraint in extracting EU funds and forming transnational exchanges. Regarding participatory mechanisms, capacities of NGOs were not sufficient to overcome the problems that block healthy state and society relations at the national level. Moreover, the slow pace of the EU – Turkey relations and its losing relative significance has altered the subjective assessments of the NGOs in a negative way.

Participatory mechanisms were not fully developed in the EU accession process that would provide channels to bring together decision makers and actors of civil society. Yet, NGOs that were in clash between the power holders for a long time claimed; the EU accession process normalized the political atmosphere and changed the ethos of politics in favor of citizens and organizations pursue protecting and expanding human rights and freedoms. Push of the EU made state-society relations much smoother. NGOs are increasingly perceived as legitimate actors in their policy fields and decision makers started to consult them on ad-hoc basis. Changing the image of the civil society and their gaining significance was consequence of two-fold process. The EU had pressure on the government to include the civil society in the governance of the accession; thus the government took initiatives to articulate interests of civil society. On the other hand, the EU had consulted actors of civil society in different venues to gain insight information on the political developments in Turkey. Civil society has seen as mean to differentiate the impartial information sources and their input have been signified due to its potential to facilitate reforms and accelerate the accession.

However, the problems that block the civil society- state cooperation are embedded in the political system and this tradition continued in the governing of the Turkey’s accession to the EU. The relative impact of

the EU on the liberalization of the political environment was constrained by the problematic relations between two parties. The initiatives of institutionalization of consultation mechanisms were not materialized and even if there were serious attempts, the cases show that the relations are far from being successful to produce good result satisfying actors of civil society.

Certain cases have shown that, especially in the field of environment, NGOs made use of their transnational linkages and increased their access to Brussels. The organizations having strong affiliations to the EU accession process and perceive relevance of the misfit, activated their capacities to have memberships in certain networks and gained memberships in federations. Organizations that do not perceive the relative significance of the EU misfit on their policy realms, such as education & youth NGOs, did not show such effort and had relations on ad hoc basis.

The EU funding schemes is the direct empowerment mechanism applied to the civil society environment in Turkey. The EU funding has relative importance to NGO with respect to their policy environment in which they are mobilized. On the other hand, when the capacities of the organizations are not sufficient, they attach greater importance to the EU funds and show extra effort to extract new resources. Also, when organizations relate themselves to the ongoing process to greater extent, such as environmental organizations, they receive funds that allow them to promote Europeanisation. However, organizations that do not develop positions and stay to remain neutral receive funding on ad hoc basis and funding mostly address their capacity building. Additionally, one can argue that the relative significance of the EU funding schemes for Turkish NGOs, in general, has diminished. They all try to diversify their sources and decrease their dependencies on the international fund schemes including the EU funding schemes as well. The main reason behind this tendency is that, they find the application and evaluation processes of funding schemes allocated by international & supranational organizations very bureaucratic. Weak organizations do not have capacity to follow strict procedures; on the other hand stronger ones can easily opt for other funding schemes to avoid bureaucratic hassle of the EU put on non-state actors in accession states.

To conclude, this analysis shows that, to unfold the impact of the EU on civil societies in accession states, one should take a closer look at conditions, constellations in domestic level along with the organizational traits of the actors.

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APPENDIX:

Table 1: NGOs covered in the analysis

Abbreviations	Policy Field	Information
BASKENTKADIN	Women Rights	Capital City Women's Platform (CCWP), is an NGO, based in Ankara, Capital of Turkey. Its main aim is to enhance women's participation into social life through education, employment and political life. http://www.euromedalex.org/fr/node/5937
KDV	Women Rights	Foundation for Women's Solidarity (KDV), founded in 1987, is an independant organization that aims to fight with every kind of violence against women, especially domestic violence. http://www.kadindayanismavakfi.org.tr/english
KADER	Women Rights	The Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates (KA-DER founded 1997, in Turkey), is a non-partisan organization and considered as the first political movement of women. KA-DER has 17 branches in major cities. http://www.ka-der.org.tr/en/container.php?act=unlimited00&id00=111

UCANSUPURGE	Women Rights	Flying Broom (Uçan Süpürge) was founded and began its activities in 1996. The organization's initial aim was to establish a network between women NGOs and to function as an information and documentation center. http://www.ucansupurge.org/turkce/index.php
TEMA	Environmental	Since the establishment of Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA) in 1992, TEMA's mission is to raise public awareness of environmental problems, specifically soil erosion, deforestation, biodiversity loss and climate change. http://english.tema.org.tr/Sayfalar/Hakimizda/AmacVeHedefler.html
DOGADERNEGI	Environmental	Doga Dernegi, established in 2002, seeks to protect Turkey's bird species, Important Bird Areas, Key Biodiversity Areas and priority habitats, through a national network grassroots. http://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/national/turkey/index.html
CEKUL	Environmental	As one of the leading heritage NGOs in Turkey, the Foundation for the Protection and Promotion of the Environment and Cultural Heritage (ÇEKÜL), founded in 1990, strives to foster and build a nation-wide awareness and network for the preservation of the urban and rural, built and natural environment. http://www.cekulvakfi.org.tr/we-exist-through-nature-and-culture
CEVREVAKFI	Environmental	The Environment Foundation of Turkey is a non-governmental, non-profit, voluntary and independent organization carrying out its work in accordance with the principles of the Civil Code of Turkey. The Foundation, established on 1 February 1978. http://www.civilscape.org/civilscape/content/en/partner/pages/1302039114.xml
TOG	Education & Youth	Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı (TOG – Community Volunteers Foundation) is founded in December 2002. Foundation contributes to the personal development of young people through encouraging young people to participate to the social responsibility projects as volunteers. http://tog.org.tr/EN/
ACEV	Education & Youth	The Mother Child Education Foundation (ACEV) founded in 1993, has vast research, program development, implementation, and advocacy experience in early childhood, parent education and women empowerment. Retrieved from: http://www.global-womens-network.org/wiki/Mother_Child_Education_Foundation_(ACEV).Istanbul.Turkey
CYDD	Education & Youth	Foundation for Supporting a Contemporary Life (CYDD), established in 1991, aimed at protecting and developing Atatürk's revolutions and principles, reaching a contemporary society with contemporary people; working voluntarily with his information, skills and experience for the country to reach "above the level of contemporary civilization". Retrieved from: http://www.cydd.org.tr/
HRFT	Human Rights	The Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (HRFT), established in 1990, is a nongovernmental and non-profit organization providing treatment and rehabilitation services for torture survivors and documenting human rights violations in Turkey. http://www.tihv.org.tr/index.php?about-hrft
HCA	Human Rights	The Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Network, which laid the foundation for hCa Turkey and which is described as an international working conference, is an intersocietal cooperation and connection network working in the fields of international law, peace and human rights. http://www.hyd.org.tr/?pid=215
MAZLUMDER	Human Rights	The Organisation of Human Rights and Solidarity for Oppressed People, was founded by 54 people on 24 January 1991 in Ankara, Turkey. It is commonly known as MAZLUMDER and is entirely independent of the state, and political parties or groups. http://www.mazlumder.org/ing/sayfa.asp?sayfaID=1
IHD	Human Rights	Human Rights Association (İnsan Hakları Derneği "İHD") has been founded, on 17 July 1986, by 98 human rights defenders. Human Rights Association struggles for protecting life right, abolishing Death Penalty, finding disappeared person, prevention of execution. http://www.ihd.org.tr/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=141&Itemid=48