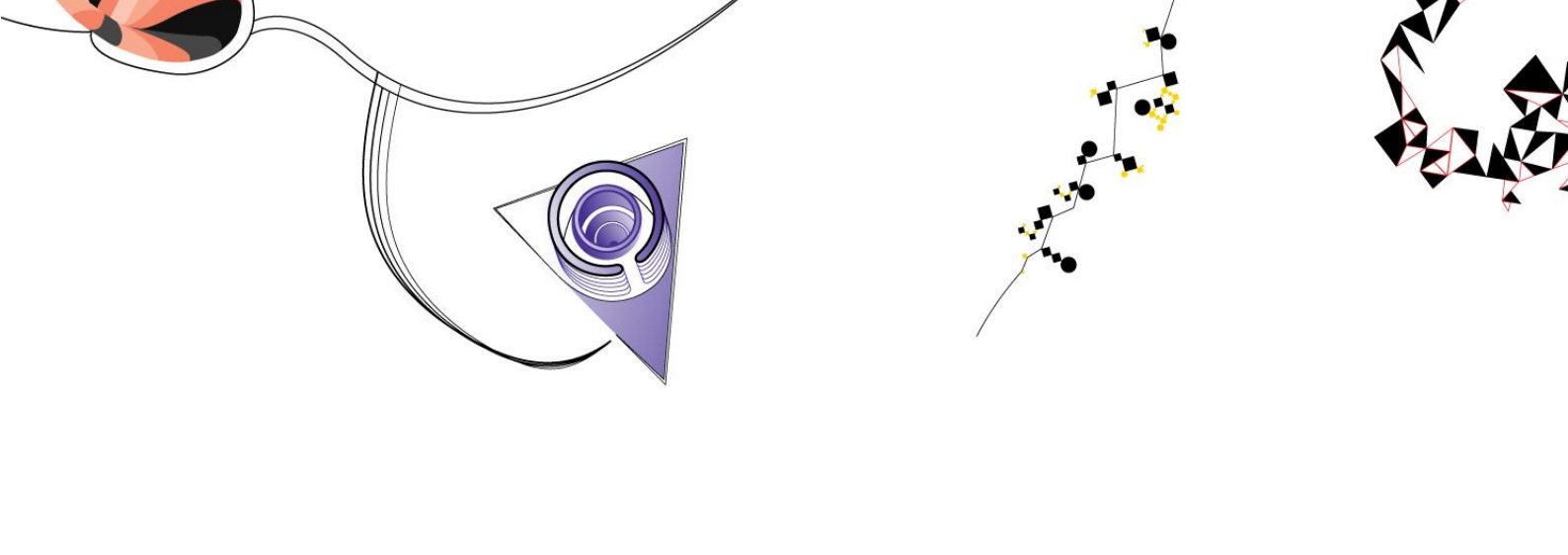
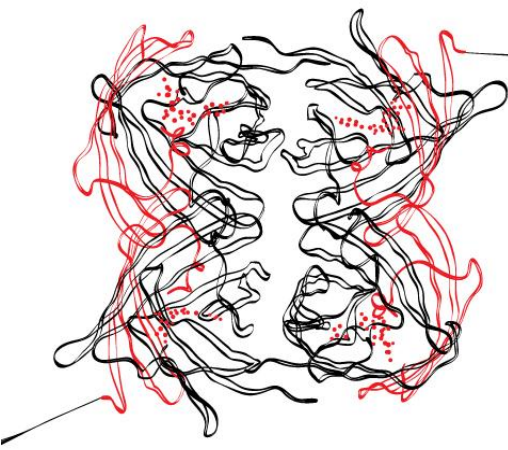




EU citizens' attitudes towards Turkey's membership

Bachelor Thesis – European Studies

University of Twente – School of Management and Governance

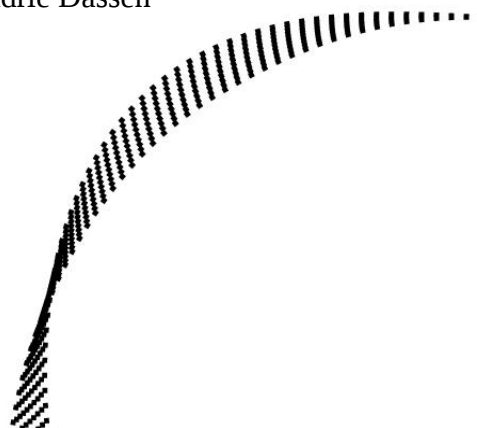


Author:

Diba Mirzaei
S1122150

Supervisor:

Dr. Adrie Dassen



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Summary

This thesis examines EU citizens' attitudes to Turkey's potential EU membership. When it comes to Turkey's EU membership, the citizens of the EU seem to be more reluctant towards Turkey's membership compared to other acceding countries. It is this thesis' aim to understand why this is the case and what factors could be influential in EU citizens' opposition. Based on this, this thesis asks itself the following research question:

“To what extent do EU citizens' attitudes towards Islam and opinion about Islamic culture explain their position regarding Turkey's EU membership?”

The theoretical concepts that have been investigated depicted that Turkey's culture and religion, Islam, are decisive for EU citizens to oppose Turkey's membership. It has been tried to test these claims by formulating two hypotheses. These two hypotheses have been tested by conducting a cross-sectional study for which an already existing data set from the European Commission has been used, namely the Eurobarometer 53 survey from 2001.

The findings showed that indeed culture and religion explain EU citizens' opposition. Citizens that are Islamophobic as well as fear to lose their own culture with Turkey's accession are more likely to be against Turkey's membership. Moreover, even after introducing gender as a test variable for both hypotheses the relationship between the two original bivariate relationships did not change. Thus, the relationship between being Islamophobic and being against Turkey's accession, as well as the relationship between being afraid of losing one's own culture and being against Turkey's membership are not due to mere chance but are, on the contrary, substantial and significant.

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1. Introduction

The European Union (EU) is an international supranational organization that has currently 27 member states (MS). Starting with six countries in 1951, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Luxembourg, it now even comprises countries in the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. Thus, it covers a diversity of different cultures, traditions as well as habits and connects the people of all the various MS with the aim of democracy, prosperity, stability and peace. In 2013 even Croatia, a country with which the EU had its struggles about granting it accession or not, will officially be a member of the EU.

However, the journey has not ended yet. There are still several countries waiting in line to be finally granted accession into the European Union including/among others the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro as well as Serbia (Maier & Rittberger, 2008).

Yet, when looking at these expansionary plans and visions of the EU, one has to ask itself whether it isn't utopian to think that way. In order for a country to be part of the Union, each and every MS has to vote in favor of its accession, hence, making the voting unanimously. In some countries there is even a referendum necessary (Maier & Rittberger, 2008); thus, the public opinion is crucial for the decision-making process at stake.

With regards to this, several questions pop up immediately. What do the average EU citizens think about connecting as many people in Europe as possible? Do they want to be connected? And if yes, who do they want to include and exclude? Are they satisfied with the EU conducting all these accession talks to these culturally different countries? And what are the criteria on which the public bases its opinion?

There has been already research conducted on the matter, but the focus has been primarily on Eastern European countries (Cichowski, 2000) of which the majority has been already granted accession, but it is still under-developed in the case of Turkey and culturally similar countries. This study, however, tries to fill this gap. Especially the case of Turkey seems to be interesting as Turkey, that is partly located in the East Thrace in Europe, has been already waiting for its accession since the 1980's, but has still not been granted that status and so far it doesn't seem that it will obtain it in the near future. Accordingly, Turkey is the country that has been waiting for membership the longest. Looking at Eurobarometer surveys conducted by the EU itself, it becomes apparent that even the majority of the EU's citizens oppose Turkey's entry. The question that therefore arises is why this is the case. Why are citizens in favor of one country's accession and against another one's?

There are many factors important in stating why individuals support some actions while opposing others. Mostly, whether citizens are in favor of new accession country depends on their own cost-benefit calculations. When the benefits are considered greater than the costs, a country is welcome to join, if not, citizens will react reluctantly (Maier & Rittberger, 2008). Furthermore, if a country performs well politically, citizens are more likely to oppose the accession of new countries, as they could further undermine their country's sovereignty and power. Dixon (2010) argues in line with that by reinforcing the cost-benefit calculations and especially pointing out the political costs, such as a country's loss of power in the EU Council as a country's vote depends on its population size.

Contrary, McLaren (2007) who has specifically dealt with Turkey's candidate status claims that "explanations for differences in opinion about Turkish candidacy are likely to relate to out-group rejection and its counterpart, in-group identity and protectiveness" (McLaren, 2007, p. 257). The aforementioned takes into account resources possessed by a group, for instance jobs and security benefits, but also cultural aspects, such as myths and traditions.

These factors have also been reinforced by Dixon (2010) who recalls upon previous research that has shown that there is a sense of cultural identification with one's in-group which is best illustrated in the examples of Nordic states supporting Baltic candidates and Greece supporting Cyprus. Thus, one tends to exclude out-groups.

Similarly, Jones and van der Bijl's study (2004) depicted that historic relationships between countries and cultural aspects, such as religion, explain support for EU enlargement. Religion, here, seems to be quite interesting as all members of the EU have Christianity as their main religion which would make Turkey stick out with its by far Muslim majority.

It becomes apparent that there is an extensive amount of theories on the issue which are all highly valuable and applicable. Most of these theories rely on cost-benefit calculations and economic factors. But this research will rely on cultural factors that would be more interesting to observe here as Turkey is culturally differing from the rest of the members of the EU. In other words, we will rely on culture and religion; especially the latter seems to be interesting as with a membership status Turkey would be the first Muslim MS in the EU.

As a consequence, what this paper tries to answer is:

"To what extent do EU citizens' attitudes towards Islam and opinion about Islamic culture explain their position regarding Turkey's EU membership?"

As already mentioned since public opinion research on the EU enlargement has so far mostly focused on Eastern European countries, this thesis aims to shift that focus on Turkey and find out which factors are crucial in shaping citizens attitudes towards the former.

For that purpose it will first be started with the conceptualization to come up with two hypotheses. After that the methodology will be elaborated. Here, a data set from the European Commission will be used, the Eurobarometer 53 from 2001. The questions from the survey that measure the variables will be used in order to confirm or reject the hypotheses. This will enable us to answer the research question at last.

2. Theory

The theoretical foundation of the research question:

“To what extent do EU citizens’ attitudes towards Islam and opinion about Islamic culture explain their position regarding Turkey’s EU membership?”

is based on the assumption that Islam and Turkey’s distinct culture will explain EU citizens’ attitudes towards Turkey’s accession.

Since there are many theories dealing with public opinion and citizens’ support or reluctance towards a given matter, one has to narrow down the scope of possible theories that can be applied to this case. Therefore, it will be first dealt with the concept of being European. Here, it is important to know what European citizens perceive and consider as European. Based on this, concepts that can explain support or opposition for enlargement can be found and hypotheses can be formulated.

2.1. What is European?

Ever since the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in the 1950s the notion of one European statehood has become voiced more often. Before that, thinking of a united Europe was merely utopian and widespread among intellectuals (Bugge, den Boer & Waever, 1993). However, the war and conflict times have passed and European countries have come closer together. But what exactly is European?

According to Harrington (2004) being European is about being committed to democracy, enlightenment and reason. It’s about having higher values and treating peace and stability as priorities. Moreover, Europe is a continent, thus, being European also means that you live or at least stem from a European country. Europe has clear borders to the North, South and West, yet, its Eastern border is rather spurious and not well-defined, making it even look like a part of the Asian continent (McCormick, 2005); although Asia has been seen as a distinct and individual continent for more than 2000 year, making it therefore non-European.

However, these factors are not being considered decisive in explaining being European or not. For instance, Cyprus is part of the EU, although it is geographically seen outside Europe. It is even further away from Europe than Turkey, as at least 4% of Turkey lie in Europe but nevertheless Turkey is still perceived as Asian and not European. In addition to that, Bulgaria which is also an EU member has a high corruption level (Transparency International, n.d) but yet still has membership status.

However, there is at least one factor that Cyprus and Bulgaria share with all EU MS: their culture.

Turkey is part of a complete different civilization than European countries. They belong to an Islamic-Middle Eastern civilization whereas Europe belongs to a Christian-Western civilization (Bugge, den Boer & Waever, 1993). Consequently, besides the differences in culture, also differences in religion define the term 'European'. Ever since the Middle Ages Europe has been considered by 'strangers' as a Christian community, as a pack of countries that all have at least one thing in common; their religion (McCormick, 2005).

2.2. Support for enlargement

Based on this definition of Europe, it can now be dealt with factors that can explain support or opposition towards enlargement and specifically towards Turkey's accession. Although there are many factors which citizens take into consideration, such as cost-benefit calculations (Sanchez-Cuenca, 2000), democratic values (Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 2011) and economic factors (Cichowski, 2000), it will be focused merely on cultural factors as these seem to be more pressing with the definition of Europe in mind.

McLaren (2007) reinforces **national sentiments** as the most dominant factor in explaining support or rejection.

Despite the talk in the media being dominantly about political and economic factors that prevent Turkey from acceding the Union, the citizens also draw their opinions on *who* is going to be part of their community, hence, the citizens of Turkey themselves (McLaren, 2007). Consequently, one has to investigate if the citizens are able to identify themselves with the Turks, or if that is not feasible for them. Thus, it is more about whether one is willing to embrace the different culture and way of life in its own system and daily life. Especially in the case of Turkey, culture contributes a fair share to its resentment (McLaren, 2007).

In addition to the aforementioned differences, one major problem and difference that Turkey faces is its predominantly Muslim population which accounts to around 99% of its population. This fact is more likely to be perceived as a threat to one's own culture. Citizens of the EU may fear that they will lose their own culture by including a country that is extremely different to one's own. Furthermore, McLaren (2007) proceeds by stating that nations that have experienced a great influx of Turks in their country might assess Turks on the basis of the experiences they have made with the Turkish immigrants. When the respective citizens have made positive experiences, they will also evaluate Turkey's accession positively. On the

other hand, if the experiences are predominantly negative, their evaluation on integration will be negative as well.

Moreover, as Jones and van der Bijl (2004) indicate, geographical proximity also plays a role in determining support or reluctance. The closer one is geographically, the stronger will be the ‘we-feeling’ between citizens as one expects that the country is more similar to one self’s country than a country that lies on the other side of the world.

With this in mind, the theoretical findings can be summed up by stating that support for enlargement depends on the religion that the majority of the acceding nation practices, and whether one is willing to embrace the culture of that nation.

2.3. Attitudes towards Islam and culture

Since in this case, the talk is about the accession of Turkey which is a predominantly Muslim country, we want to know to what extent EU citizens support Islam. Therefore, here the term ‘Islamophobia’ becomes interesting. According to Halliday (1999) Islamophobia can be best summed up as “prejudice against Muslims” (p.898). Sheridan (2006) goes even further by defining it as the “dread or hatred of Islam and therefore a fear or dislike of Muslims” (p. 317). Islam is considered as a threat towards non-Muslims, an aggressive religion that is predominantly hostile towards the Western world. An Islamophobic person sees Muslims as terrorists and as the cause for all the evil and chaos in the world (Halliday, 1999). However, in this respect the hate and fear is not necessarily yielded towards Islam as a religion but towards Muslims, the people.

As McLaren (2007) has said if you have a large Muslim minority in your country you base your sentiments towards them on your experiences. Since Europe is a continent full of immigrants, people might judge the nations of these immigrants based on their behavior. Especially many Turks live in Europe and since their majority is Muslim, people might evaluate Islam and Turkey by means of how they act and behave.

This makes us form a hypothesis related to Islam per se as it most likely will be an important factor for being in favor of Turkey’s accession or not.

- 1. EU citizens that are Islamophobic will be more likely to oppose Turkey’s accession than EU citizens that are not Islamophobic*

Moreover, as aforementioned, culture will also be crucial in supporting or rejecting Turkey. Under the term culture one understands language, art, music, theatre, series, architecture,

science, technology as well as everyday aspects, such as sports, drinking and eating behavior, or clothing (De Cillia, Reisigl & Wodak, 1999). It is culture that makes us feel close or distant to people. The more similar the culture, the more one feels belonging to each other and the more one is willing to incorporate these people in one's everyday life. Scholars have already pointed out that there are significant differences between the Eastern and Western culture (Bugge, den Boer & Waever, 1993). The fact that one still talks about the East and the West as two distinctive entities depicts that differences are still existing and pivotal. This could even 'force' people to hold on more tightly to their own cultures in order to maintain and preserve it.

This is the focus of the second hypothesis. Does it hold true that in order to safeguard their own culture EU citizens do not want Turkey to be part of the EU? This can be tested by the following hypothesis:

2. *EU citizens that feel that they will lose their own culture through enlargement are more likely to oppose Turkey's accession than EU citizens that do not feel that way.*

3. Methodology

In this chapter it will be focused on the methodology which will be applied to this research. Based on the hypotheses we have come up with four variables. The variables for the first hypothesis are the independent variable ‘level of Islamophobia’ and the dependent variable ‘support for Turkey’ while the variables for the second hypothesis are the dependent variable ‘support for Turkey’, and the independent variable ‘fear of losing one’s own culture’. In order to measure them, it first had to be thought about dimensions for these variables. Once done with that, it has been looked for indicators of these dimensions which were found in the Eurobarometer 53 survey, a cross-sectional study conducted by the European Commission. The topic of this survey was “Racism, Information Society, General Services, and Food Labeling”. Here they constructed a questionnaire which they gave to approximately 16 000 citizens of the then 15 MS.

3.1. Data

This study will make use of a data set from the European Commission itself. The data has been collected between April and May in 2000 for the standard Eurobarometer 53 with the topic “Racism, Information Society, General Services, and Food Labeling” (Gesis, n.d.). The focus of this Eurobarometer survey was to know more about the mindset of EU citizens concerning migration, food labeling or services such as mobile phones. In order to test that, they established a survey with more than 80 items measuring their variables.

Additionally, the European Commission distributes these questionnaires twice a year, albeit with slightly different questions. Henceforth, they have a longitudinal design which is repeated from time to time. Yet, in this case, a cross-sectional design will be used as only one data set collected at one point in time will be used which is the Eurobarometer 53 survey.

The standard Eurobarometer 53 takes the population of the then 15 MS into consideration.

Only citizens aged 15 and older were included, since teenagers under 15 will most likely not be able to answer the questions. “The basic sample design applied in all states is a multi-stage, random (probability) one” (European Commission, 2000).

3.2. Threats to validity

It is important to check for the strong points and weak points of the study. In order to do so one has to focus on the internal and external validity.

According to Shadish et al. (2002), internal validity refers to the question whether an observed co-variation between A and B reflects a causal relationship from A to B.

For a cross-sectional study many threats such as instrumentation, history and maturation can be left out altogether, because the data has been collected at once (De Vaus, 2001).

Yet, factors that are more important for the internal validity are the factors that one needs for testing a bivariate relationship, namely the time order, testing for causality/correlation and excluding third variables. In a cross-sectional study one cannot test the time order as data has been collected only at one point in time and one also cannot fully exclude the effect of a third variable which may have an impact on the relationship between the independent and dependent variable. However, one can test whether there is a causal relationship between the dependent and independent variable, which will be done in this study to confirm or reject the hypotheses.

External validity deals with the question of whether results are generalizable for a greater population (Stone-Romero, 2002), or as Shadish et al. (2002) have stated external validity “concerns inferences about the extent to which a causal relationship holds over variations in persons, settings, treatments and outcomes” (p.83).

Threats to external validity encompass certain affects found with certain units might not be true or applicable if other kinds of units had been studied. For instance, effects observed for white men may not hold true for females (Shadish et al., 2002). Yet, the units in this study have been chosen randomly and reflect the populations of the 30 countries adequately. Moreover, threats could be that the treatment used, in this case the questionnaire, does not adequately measure the research questions and hypotheses. We think that the questions were adequate, yet open-ended questions would have probably given more reliable answers as they ‘force’ respondents to write down what they really think.

Moreover, external validity is also concerned with the generalizability of the setting of a study. As the study can be replicated in different settings, this should also not be a further problem. Thus, as Gerring (2012) stated, external validity is rather high within studies, but on the other hand, it is rather low within experiments. As a consequence, this statement can be applied to this study as well. As it is a cross-sectional study, the external validity should be also high here.

Henceforth, the external validity is very high for a cross-sectional study whereas the internal validity is not that high but can still not be considered as very low as many threats are eliminated. This reinforces us even more in making use of this type of research design, as it seems the most appropriate to us.

4. Relationship between ‘level of Islamophobia’ and ‘support for Turkey’

In this chapter the relationship between the independent variable ‘level of Islamophobia’ and the dependent variable ‘support for Turkey’ will be tested in order to confirm or reject the first hypothesis ‘EU citizens that are Islamophobic will be more likely to oppose Turkey’s accession than EU citizens that are not Islamophobic’. The variables have been first conceptualized in order to find items in the Eurobarometer survey that are indicators for these variables. After having done that, an index has been constructed for the independent variable, yet not for the dependent variable as it was not a latent variable.

However, in order to truly confirm the bivariate hypothesis it had also to be checked for test variables that could influence the bivariate relationship. Here, the test variable gender has been introduced as it was expected that gender could also account for support or rejection of Turkey.

4.1. Index measuring ‘level of Islamophobia’

This independent variable ‘level of Islamophobia’ measures how much citizens can combine their own religious beliefs with citizens that belong to another religion. Since the majority of Turkey’s citizens are Muslims, we want to know whether EU citizens can imagine welcoming them or whether their faith is an obstacle for their accession. To put it bluntly, this variable wants to measure whether citizens support or reject Islam and therefore measures the citizens’ attitudes towards Islam.

The variable cannot be measured directly as it is a latent variable that is not directly observable. There are many factors that shape a person’s level of Islamophobia, yet there are a few factors (dimensions) that seem highly crucial for this study. These factors include living with people from another religion, granting Muslims the same rights, acceptance of Muslims and their religious practices and feeling at ease with Muslims (not considering them as threatening or disturbing).

As aforementioned, it will be relied on already existing data that stems from the Eurobarometer survey which poses questions that measure this variable. In order to find suitable items that are indicators of our dimensions, the questionnaire has been checked and items were found relating to the acceptance of people from different religions and particularly Muslims.

As a result, in this case a 4-item index (Islamophobia Index) has been constructed.¹

¹ The items can be found in the Appendix

Aiming at knowing whether these items correlate or not, the internal consistency has been tested by using Chronbach's alpha (α) with the result being the 0.663. Although, as a rule of thumb results over 0.7 are considered as stable, it is still believed that with a result slightly lower than 0.7 forming an index would be more adequate than testing all items individually.

In order to make the answer categories unanimous, 1 has been given for answers that imply few or no reluctance towards Islam and 2 has been given to answers indicating reluctance towards Islam. Since not available (NA) and don't know (DK) had been already coded as missing data in the original SPSS file, this principle has been retained and treated it likewise. This will be the case for both hypotheses.

Henceforth, since there are four items that are dichotomous, outcomes ranged from 4 to 8 with 4 meaning very low and 8 meaning very high. The higher the number, the more reluctant the respondent is. Due to the classification from 4 to 8, there are now more than two answer categories that have a clear order, due to which this variable has an ordinal measurement level.

The following outcome outlines that N (number of cases/ respondents) is 12,968 and that the missing data adds up to 3,110 which equals almost one fifth (19.3%) of all cases. This is a high number but due to N being quite big even without the missing data, this should not have a great impact on the meaningfulness of the research. In addition to that, the table shows that almost half of the respondents, 47.1% have a very low reluctance towards Muslims and only 4.0% have a very high reluctance.

Table 1
Islamophobia Index

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	6109	47.1
	low	3150	24.3
	moderate	1877	14.5
	high	1187	9.2
	very high	645	5.0
	Total	12968	100.0
Missing	System	3110	
Total		16078	

Note. Index with 4 items

Yet, for the sake of simplicity and clarity in the later stage of bivariate cross tabulation and hypothesis testing the following table that dichotomizes the variable will be used. As a consequence it had to be thought about how to dichotomize this variable because it has five values. Thus, the mode, which is the value that appears most often in a data set, will be used. Since there were 12,968 respondents, the mode for a normal distribution should be at 6,484 where the median respondent is placed (total N divided by two). Here however, the mode is 6,109. Yet, as this is less than 6,484, also respondents from the value ‘low’ have to be taken into consideration, as somewhere between ‘very low’ and ‘low’ the median respondent is placed. Based on this, it can be stated that 4 and 5 have been coded as low and 6, 7 and 8 have been coded as high, with the former meaning low reluctance towards Muslims and the latter meaning high reluctance towards Muslims. According to this table, 69.3% have a low level of Islamophobia and only 11.4% have a high level.

In addition to that, with the mode one can also figure out the distribution. In a normal distribution model the mode would be at 6,484 as this would be also the median value. Yet, in this case the mode is at 9,259 as by far more respondents have a low level of Islamophobia than a high level. As a consequence, this makes the distribution highly skewed to the right side of the mode.

Table 2

Islamophobia Index

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	low	9259	71.4
	high	3709	28.6
	Total	12968	100.0
Missing	System	3110	
Total		16078	

Note. dichotomized Index with 4 items

4.2. Measurement for ‘support for Turkey’

The dependent variable ‘support for Turkey’ intends to measure whether EU citizens support Turkey’s entry into the EU or not.

When measuring this variable the focus has to lie on whether citizens are willing to include Turkey to the EU. This would be an indicator of identifying with the nation.

As a matter of fact, the Eurobarometer survey provides us with one question which however directly measures ‘support for Turkey’.

In Turkey's case N is 12,684 but the missing data is quite high with 3,394 (21.1%) meaning that these respondents have answered with DK or have not answered at all. But, also here the same applies as for the independent variable which is that N is large even without the missing data. Hence, these 21.1% will not make a significant difference.

According to the table, 39.9% are in favor, contrary to 60.1% which are against. Here, there are slightly more respondents against than in favor. This enables us to make a statement on the distribution. For that, the mode will be used. In a normal distribution model one would expect the mode to be at the median respondent which in this case would be at 6,342 as this would be the total N divided by two; thus, for both values one would expect more or less the same amount of respondents. However, here the mode is at 7,628 as more respondents have answered with 'against' instead of with 'in favor'. Henceforth, the distribution is skewed to the right side of the mode.

Table 3

Attitudes towards Turkey's membership

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	In favour	5056	39.9
	Against	7628	60.1
	Total	12684	100.0
Missing	NA	17	
	DK	3377	
	Total	3394	
Total		16078	

4.3. Testing the bivariate relationship

In the following the first hypothesis "Citizens that are Islamophobic will be more likely to oppose Turkey's accession than citizens that are not Islamophobic" will be tested. The dependent variable is 'support for Turkey', a dichotomy with the values 'against' and 'in favor' whereas the independent variable is 'level of Islamophobia', also a dichotomy, with the values low and high.

The following cross table gives a clear picture on the effect that the level of Islamophobia has on the support for Turkey.

Table 4

Support for Turkey by level of Islamophobia (absolute numbers and column percentages)

	Level of Islamophobia		Total
	Low	High	

Turkey	Against	4061	2404	6465
		53.3%	75.1%	59.8%
	in favor	3555	796	4351
		46.7%	24.9%	40.2%
Total		7616	3200	10816
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In order to test the relationship between these two variables, the association has to be tested. For this purpose, the direction of the relationship and the substance as well as the significance of the association have to be checked.

Based on the hypothesis, it is expected that x2 (high level of Islamophobia) is more likely to lead to y1 (against) than to x1 (low level of Islamophobia). This is why the percentages of cell x2/y1 to cell x1/y1 have to be compared.

$$E_{xy} = \% \text{ value } x2/y1 - \% \text{ value } x1/y1$$

$$E_{xy} = 75.1\% - 53.3\% = 21.8\%$$

The result is 21.8% with E_{xy} being Epsilon the percentage difference of x and y.

When one tests the direction, one does not just have to test the direction of the way the hypothesis has been stated, but also whether the percentages of the other rows meet the expectations. Hence, is the percentage for respondents with a low level of Islamophobia and being in favor of Turkey higher than for respondents with a high level of Islamophobia and being in favor? Looking at the table it can be concluded that yes indeed this is the case with the former having 46.7% and the latter having 24.9%. Thus, since not just the percentage of x2/y1 is higher than the percentage of x1/y1 but also the percentage for x1/y2 is higher than the percentage of x2/y2 the relationship is in the expected direction.

Moreover, when one checks for the substance, the hypothetical difference between two cells ranges from -100 and +100. However, for a large N one does not expect E_{xy} to be as high as one would expect for a small N. Since in this case N is around 16,000 cases a percentage difference of 21.8% is high and makes us conclude that the relationship between the two variables is indeed substantial and the found relationship is unlikely to be entirely due to chance.

The next step in the test for association is to check whether the relationship is significant. In order to see whether E_{xy} is significant it has to be compared with E_{crit} (Epsilon critical) a value which mainly depends on the sample size and which one uses in order to confirm or refute a hypothesis. The bigger your sample, the smaller E_{crit} will be and when E_{xy} is bigger

than *Ecrit* hypothesis can be accepted. Thus, in this case since the sample comprises more than 1100 respondents *Ecrit* is 5. Here *E_{xy}* is 21.8 and therefore much higher than *Ecrit*. Thus, based on these grounds the hypothesis can be accepted and it can be stated that EU citizens with a higher level of Islamophobia are more likely to oppose Turkey's accession than EU citizens with a low level of Islamophobia.

4.4. Effect of gender

Hypotheses are only fully checked when it has also been paid attention to potential additional or other influences called 'third variable' (T). These third variables can have an effect on the relationship between X and Y or do not have an effect at all. Yet, one can only know that for sure once one tests it.

In this case, the test variable will be 'gender' since it would be interesting to see whether men have different perceptions concerning Turkey than women. As a matter of fact, it is expected that male EU citizens are more against Turkey's accession than female EU citizens because women in general are more caring and compassionate which makes them accept people more easily than men.

Generally speaking, we think that gender affects one's opinion on Turkey's accession because being a man or woman changes a lot the way one looks at facts and issues. As a result, there should be a difference in perception.

Based on this, the following relationship is expected: After the introduction of the test-variable 'gender', the original relationship "Citizens that are Islamophobic will be more likely to oppose Turkey's accession than citizens that are not Islamophobic" will become weaker. Thus, gender is both related to one's level of Islamophobia and one's support for Turkey.

This model is the partial explanation model as the original relationship remains but the test variable 'gender' further explains the original relationship between 'level of Islamophobia' and 'support for gender'.

In order to test this trivariate relationship, the following table will be used.

Table 5

Support for Turkey by level of Islamophobia, controlled by gender (absolute numbers and column percentages)

	Male			Female		
	Low level of Islamophobia	High level of Islamophobia	Total	Low level of Islamophobia	High level of Islamophobia	Total
Against	2042 (53.3%)	1276 (75.5%)	3318 (60.1%)	2019 (54.4%)	1128 (74.8%)	3147 (59.5%)
In favor	1791 (46.7%)	415 (24.5%)	2206 (39.9%)	1764 (46.6%)	381 (25.2%)	2145 (40.5%)

Total	3833(100.0%)	1691(100.0%)	5524 (100.0%)	3783(100.0%)	1509(100.0%)	5292 (100.0%)
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$E_{xy|T}$ for both values of T have to be computed now which will be called E_{xyT1} and E_{xyT2} .

Moreover, the percentage difference of the original bivariate hypothesis for T1 (male) and T2 (female) has to be compared. Thus, in both cases it is expected that a high level of Islamophobia is congruent with being against Turkey's accession. Yet, we expect the percentage difference for male respondents to be higher than for female respondents. In the next step it will be seen if this is the case.

The percentage difference of x2/y1 (high level of Islamophobia/ against Turkey) for T1 (male) is 22.2%

$$\rightarrow E_{xyT1} = 75.5\% - 53.3\% = 22.2\%$$

The percentage difference of x2/y1 (high level of Islamophobia/ against Turkey) for T2 (female) is 21.4%

$$\rightarrow E_{xyT1} = 74.8\% - 53.4\% = 21.4\%$$

Both outcomes are substantial and also significant as they are higher than $E_{crit} = 5$. Moreover, the percentage difference for male respondents is higher than for female respondents; yet, the difference is so small that it is not considered as significant. Especially, since the percentage difference for the original relationship was higher than for T2 (21.8: 21.4) the bivariate hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Therefore, a high level of Islamophobia leads to lower support for Turkey. Henceforth, Islamophobia as well as being in favor or against Turkey's accession is not gender-specific.

5. Relationship between ‘fear of losing one’s own culture’ and ‘support for Turkey’

In this chapter, the relationship between ‘fear of losing one’s own culture’ and ‘support for Turkey’ will be tested in order to confirm or reject the hypothesis ‘EU citizens that feel that they will lose their own culture through enlargement are more likely to oppose Turkey’s accession than EU citizens that do not feel that way’.

First, both variables have been conceptualized in order to find items in the Eurobarometer survey that are indicators for these variables. After having done that, an index has been constructed for the independent variable, yet not for the dependent variable as it was directly measurable.

However, in order to truly confirm the hypothesis it had to be checked for test variables that could influence the bivariate relationship. Here, the test variable gender has been introduced again as it was expected that gender can also account for support or rejection of Turkey.

5.1. Index measuring ‘fear of losing one’s own culture’

Since the dependent variable for both hypotheses is ‘support for Turkey’, in this chapter it will not be paid attention to the former’s operationalization as this has been already elaborated in the previous chapter. Thus, it will only be dealt with the independent variable.

The independent variable is ‘fear of losing one’s own culture’ which states whether citizens are comfortable with the accession of new MS or whether they fear that admitting more countries would lead to the loss of their own culture since their country would be open for new immigrants who possibly have different cultural values.

In order to conceptualize this latent variable which cannot be directly observed, two dimensions seem to be relevant which are feeling that the ‘new’ culture can contribute something positive to the ‘old’ culture and considering diversity as a blessing.

As it has been decided to use the Eurobarometer survey it has been looked for items that measure these dimensions and three items have been found that appear to be good indicators.

Similarly as for the first hypothesis, Chronbach’s Alpha has been tested to check whether the items correlate and the result was 0.745 which is high and therefore enables us to proceed by using an index.

Based on this, the following index ‘Loss of own culture Index’ has been constructed. Similarly as for the independent variable of the first hypothesis, the answer categories have been made uniform; 1 equaling no fear of losing the own culture and 2 exemplifying fear

towards losing the own culture. In general, with three items there are scores ranging from 3 to 6, where 3 means very low (fear) and 6 means very high (fear), making the measurement level here ordinal, too.

After taking a close look on the outcome, it can be stated that N is 11,515 and that 43.8% had a very low level of fear and only 19.6% had a very high level of fear. Surprisingly, the missing data makes up to 28.4% (4,563) which is more than one fourth of the respondents. Nevertheless, because N is still high even without the missing data, also in this case it can be still proceeded with the analysis.

Table 6

Loss of own culture Index

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	5045	43.8
	low	2408	20.9
	high	1803	15.7
	very high	2259	19.6
	Total	11515	100.0
Missing	System	4563	
Total		16078	

Note. dichotomized Index with 3 items

Yet, similarly as for the first hypothesis, also here the following table will be used which dichotomizes the variable for the analysis. Contrary to the independent variable of the first hypothesis here it is easier to dichotomize because there are four values of which two exemplify low scores and the other two exemplify high scores. Therefore, 3 and 4 have been coded as low and 5 and 6 have been coded as high; the former meaning low fear of losing its own culture and the latter meaning high fear of losing its own culture. According to this table, 46.4% have a low level of fear whereas 25.3% have a high level of fear.

Likewise in this case, the mode will be used to figure out the distribution. In a normal distribution model the mode would be at 5,757.5 as this would be also the median value. Yet, in this case the mode is at 7,453 as by far more respondents have a low level of fear than a high level. As a consequence, this makes the distribution highly skewed to the right side of the mode.

Table 7

Loss of own culture Index

	Frequency	Valid Percent
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Valid	low	7453	64.7
	high	4062	35.3
	Total	11515	100.0
Missing	System	4563	
Total		16078	

Note. Index with 3 items, dichotomized

5.2. Testing the bivariate relationship

After having dealt extensively with the dependent and independent variable, it can now be tested the hypothesis “EU citizens that feel that they will lose their own culture through enlargement are more likely to oppose Turkey’s accession than EU citizens that do not feel that way”.

The independent variable is ‘fear of losing one’s own culture’ which is a dichotomy; with the values low and high (low/ high level of fear) and the dependent variable is ‘support for Turkey’, also a dichotomy with the values in favor and against.

The following cross table will contribute to having better insight in the effect that the fear of losing its own culture has on the support for Turkey.

Table 8

Support for Turkey by fear of losing its own culture (absolute numbers and column percentages)

		Fear of losing Own culture		Total
		low	high	
Turkey	against	3248	2532	5780
		52.3%	71.5%	59.3%
	in favor	2962	1007	3969
		47.7%	28.5%	40.7%
Total		6210	3539	9749
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Now it can be checked whether the hypothesis can be confirmed or rejected. First, the association will be tested to see if there is a relationship, how strong it is and if it is significant.

Based on the hypothesis, the percentage difference of high level of fear (x2) and not a priority (y1) has to be checked with low level of fear (x1) and not a priority (y1). It is expected that x2/y1 is bigger than x1/y2 which is indeed the case as can be seen from the following computation.

$$E_{xy} = \% \text{ value } x2/y1 - \% \text{ value } x1/y1$$

$$E_{xy} = 71.5\% - 52.3\% = 19.2\%$$

However, it still has to be seen whether the relationship for the other row is also in the expected direction. The percentage for low level of fear and being in favor (x1/y2) is 47.7% and the percentage for high level of fear and being in favor (x2/y2) is 28.5% which is indeed lower and therefore it can be said that the relationship is in the expected direction.

Moreover, when it comes to the substance, also here it can be stated that the relationship is substantial with a cell percentage difference of 19.2, especially since we have such a large N. Now checking for the significance of this relationship again *Ecrit 5* will be taken as a comparison value and since 19.2 is bigger than 5 the hypothesis can be confirmed and it can be concluded that EU citizens that feel that they will lose their own culture through enlargement are more likely to oppose Turkey's accession than EU citizens that do not feel that way.

5.3. Effect of gender

One can only be completely sure that the hypothesis can be confirmed or refuted if it has been tested for third variables. Is there maybe another variable that explains support for Turkey or is it really dependent on the level of fear of losing its own culture?

Contrary to the first hypothesis, it is expected that female EU citizens are more against Turkey's membership than male EU citizens because women are in general more caring and compassionate they are also more concerned with culture. They are the ones who are more engaged in raising the children to whom they want to transmit their own culture.

Therefore, it is expected that gender has an impact on the relationship in the following manner: After the introduction of the test-variable 'gender', the original relationship "EU citizens that feel that they will lose their own culture through enlargement are more likely to oppose Turkey's accession than EU citizens that do not feel that way" will become weaker. Thus, gender is both related to one's fear of losing one's own culture and support for Turkey. Also here, the partial explanation model has been used as the original relationship remains but the test variable 'gender' further explains the original relationship between 'fear of losing one's own culture' and 'support for Turkey'.

In order to test this trivariate relationship, the following table will be used.

Table 9

Support for Turkey by loss of own culture, controlled by gender (absolute numbers and column percentages)

	Male			Female		
	Low level of fear	High level of fear	Total	Low level of fear	High level of fear	Total
Against	1665 (52.7%)	1366 (71.9%)	3031 (59.9%)	1583 (51.9%)	1166 (71.1%)	2749 (58.6%)
In favor	1496 (47.3%)	533 (28.1%)	2029 (41.1%)	1466 (48.1%)	474 (28.9%)	1940 (41.4%)
Total	3161(100.0%)	1899(100.0%)	5060 (100.0%)	3049(100.0%)	1640(100.0%)	4689 (100.0%)

$E_{xy|T}$ for both values of T, called E_{xyT1} and E_{xyT2} , will be computed now.

Therefore, the percentage difference of the original bivariate hypothesis for T1 (male) and T2 (female) has to be compared. Thus, in both cases high fear of losing its own culture is expected to be congruent with being against Turkey. Yet, the percentage difference for female respondents is expected to be higher than for male respondents. We will see if this is the case in the next step.

The percentage difference of x2/y1 (high level of fear/ no priority) for T1 (male) is 19.2%

$$\rightarrow E_{xyT1} = 71.9\% - 52.7\% = 19.2\%$$

The percentage difference of x2/y1 (high level of fear/ no priority) for T2 (female) is 19.2%

$$\rightarrow E_{xyT2} = 71.1\% - 51.9\% = 19.2\%$$

Both outcomes are substantial and also significant as they are higher than $E_{crit} = 5$. Surprisingly, both percentage differences are the same which makes us reject that women are more concerned with culture than men. Also in this case the original bivariate relationship cannot be rejected. In fact, for all three E_{xy} the percentage difference has been 19.2 which is a very striking result but which on the other hand is significant in stating that fear of losing its own culture is also not gender specific. The relationship between the ‘fear of losing one’s own culture’ and ‘support for Turkey’ is significant and not due to mere chance.

6. Conclusion

This thesis had the intention to give an insight in the enlargement process of the EU in the case of Turkey. Specifically, it tried to understand EU citizens' perception of Turkey and what factors could explain their support or rejection of the former's membership. It thus set out to answer the following research question:

“To what extent do EU citizens' attitudes towards Islam and opinion about Islamic culture explain their position regarding Turkey's EU membership?”

This question has been approached by first dealing with the theoretical foundation. For that it has first been dealt with the term 'European'. This was important in order to narrow down the scope of possible theories that could be significant for defining public opinion and citizens' support or reluctance towards a given matter. Once it is known what EU citizens perceive as European it can more easily be derived which factors they consider as a must-have for potential MS.

Being European encompasses factors such as geography, democracy, norms and values as well as culture and religion. However, it has been ruled out that any factors except for culture and religion could have an impact on Turkey's support or reluctance as not all members of the EU have functioning democracies or geographic proximity, yet they at least share the same cultural and religious features.

Since Turkey has a predominantly Muslim population, it has been expected that Islam could have an impact on EU citizens' opinions. Here, the term 'Islamophobia' has been coined and describes a sort of hatred towards Muslims as one perceives them as a threat. Moreover, also culture, or rather the fear of losing one's own culture has been brought into perspective. This aspect deals with people who are afraid that with one additional MS their own country will lose its own distinctive culture.

This theoretical outline was helpful in stating two hypotheses:

H1: *EU citizens that are Islamophobic will be more likely to oppose Turkey's accession than EU citizens that are not Islamophobic.*

H2: *EU citizens that feel that they will lose their own culture through enlargement are more likely to oppose Turkey's accession than EU citizens that do not feel that way.*

In order to test these hypotheses, data had to be outlined. It has been decided to conduct a cross-sectional study by using an already existing data set from the European Commission, namely the Eurobarometer 53 survey from 2001.

As a next step both hypotheses have been tested individually by first naming the independent variables which were ‘level of Islamophobia’ for the first hypothesis and ‘fear of losing one’s own culture’, as well as by naming the dependent variables which was ‘support for Turkey’ in both cases.

For the first hypothesis an ‘Islamophobia Index’ has been constructed for the independent variable and the dependent variable ‘support for Turkey’ has been measured with one item. After creating a cross table, checking for the direction, substance and significance of the relationship, the relationship could be stated as both substantial with a percentage difference of 21.8% and significant as this difference was by far larger than the chosen *Ecrit* = 5. However, in order to be completely sure it has been decided to test whether gender had an impact on this relationship and therefore, this variable has been introduced as the test variable. Nevertheless, even then the found relationship was not significant enough to reject the initial hypothesis and therefore it could be concluded that indeed a high level of Islamophobia was congruent with being against Turkey’s membership.

Similarly, for the second hypothesis a ‘Loss of own culture Index’ has been constructed for the independent variable and the dependent variable ‘support for Turkey’ has been measured with one item. Also here, a cross table has been created in order to check for the association; and as a matter of fact, likewise here the relationship turned out to be substantial with a percentage difference of 19.2% and also significant as this difference was higher than *Ecrit* = 5. Moreover, also here gender has been introduced as a test variable and similarly here the found relationship was not significant enough to refute the initial bivariate relationship. Thus, indeed EU citizens that are more afraid of losing their own culture will be more likely to oppose Turkey’s membership.

As a consequence, based on all the aforementioned facts an answer to the research question can be given which is that EU citizens’ attitudes towards Islam and Islamic culture play a significant role in explaining their support or rejection for Turkey’s accession. As a matter of fact, both hypotheses have shown that the more one despises Islam and the more one is clinging to one self’s culture, the more one is likely to oppose Turkey’s accession. Contrary, the more one accepts and tolerates Islam as well as the more one is open for new cultures, the

more likely one will be in favor of Turkey's membership. With this paper this relationship could be proven.

As a concluding remark, although both hypotheses could be confirmed and an answer to the research question could be found, there are nevertheless a few points that can be improved for further research.

Probably the biggest flaw of this research was the data set. Although it measured the variables, it was still rather old as it was from 2001 which is more than 10 years ago. The striking point here is that the survey was made prior to 9/11, but yet still, differences in culture and religion have been pivotal even then. Hence, how does it look today after 9/11? Logically seen, today citizens should be even more Islamophobic, however, is that really the case or are they more tolerant towards Islam?

Furthermore, in this study there were only two hypotheses that only dealt with culture and religion but it would have been interesting to test other factors such as geographical proximity, democracy or economic factors such as income. One could go even a step further and compare Turkey's case to culturally similar countries such as Bulgaria or compare Eastern European countries and Western European countries perceptions on Turkey.

As a last point, instead of using a cross-sectional study a longitudinal study could be used in order to see if there is a difference in perception over the years or whether results are stable.

Appendix

1. Items measuring 'level of Islamophobia'

1. Do you find the presence of people of another religion disturbing? (0= NA, 1= disturbing, 2= not disturbing, 3= don't know (DK)).

2. Again, speaking generally about people from minority groups in terms of race, religion or culture, do you think there are not many, a lot but not too many, or too many of them living in (OUR COUNTRY)? (0= NA, 1= not many, 2= a lot, but not too many, 3= too many, 4= DK).

3. If people from Muslim countries want to work here in the EU should they be accepted? (0= NA, 1= be accepted, without restrictions, 2= be accepted, with restrictions, 3= not be accepted, 4= DK)

4. Their religious practices threaten our way of life. (0= NA, 1= tend to agree, 2= tend to disagree, 3= DK)

2. Item measuring 'support for Turkey'

1. Would you be in favor or against Turkey becoming part of the European Union? (0= NA, 1= in favor, 2= against, 3= DK)

3. Items measuring 'fear of losing one's own culture'

1. People from these minority groups are enriching the cultural life of (COUNTRY) (0= NA, 1= tend to agree, 2= tend to disagree, 3= DK)

2. It is a good thing for any society to be made up of people from different races, religions or cultures. (0= NA, 1= tend to agree, 2= tend to disagree, 3= DK)

3. (COUNTRY)'s diversity in terms of race, religion or culture adds to its strengths. (0= NA, 1= tend to agree, 2= tend to disagree, 3=DK)

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