TRACING DOMESTIC CHANGE IN TURKEY'S POVERTY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION REGIME: A CASE IN EUROPEANIZATION?

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ABSTRACT

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Europeanization has been the subject of various studies in the last decades. It has been operationalized as a historical process, as a cultural diffusion of European values, as a process of institutional adaptation of institutions and lastly as the adaptation of policies. Taking the last approach, this thesis aims to examine the nature and the extent of the impact of the European Union's poverty and social exclusion strategy on Turkish poverty and social exclusion regime in the EU accession process. It takes up a bottom-up research design by employing the domestic change as the dependent and the possible impact of the EU as the independent variable and questions whether and to what extent the EU accession process has an impact on the degree, nature and direction of domestic change in the field of poverty and social exclusion in Turkey in the last decade. It concludes that there has been a change in poverty and social exclusion policies in the last decade to varying degrees with respect to objectives, principles, procedures and instruments; however, the impact of the EU has been limited to policy learning.

Keywords: Europeanization, policy change, poverty and social exclusion, Turkey.

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE'NİN YOKSULLUK VE SOSYAL İÇERME REJİMİNDEKİ DEĞİŞİMİ ANLAMAK: BİR AVRUPALILAŞMA ÖRNEĞİ Mİ?

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Avrupalılaşma son onyılda birçok çalışmanın konusu olmuştur. Avrupalılaşma ya bir tarihi süreç, Avrupalı değerlerin kültürel yayılması, kurumların adaptasyonu süreci ve son olarak politikaların uyumlaştırma süreci olarak işlenmiştir. Avrupalılaşmayı politika uyumlaştırma süreci olarak tanımlayarak bu çalışma, Avrupa Birliği'ne adaylık sürecinde Avrupa Birliği'nin yoksulluk ve sosyal dışlanma stratejisinin Türkiye'nin yoksulluk ve sosyal dışlanma rejimi üzerindeki olası etkisinin niteliğini ve kapsamını incelemektedir. Çalışma, ulusal politikalardaki değişimin bağımlı ve AB'nin olası etkisinin bağımsız değişken olarak alındığı aşağıdan yukarıya bir araştırma tasarımını benimseyerek, AB'ye katılım sürecinin Türkiye'nin yoksulluk ve sosyal dışlanma politikalarındaki değişim sürecine bir etkisi olup olmadığını, eğer varsa bu etkinin derecesi, niteliği ve yönünü araştırmaktadır. Çalışma, yoksulluk ve sosyal dışlanma politikalarında politika hedefleri, ilkeleri, usulleri ve araçları açılarından incelendiğinde her bir bileşende değişen derecelerde olmak üzere son on yılda bir değişimin olduğu ancak bu AB'nin bu değişime etkisinin öğrenme süreçleri ile sınırlı olduğu sonucuna varmaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Avrupalılaşma, politika değişimi, yoksulluk ve sosyal dışlanma, Türkiye.

To my family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to examine the nature and the extent of the impact of the European Union's (EU) poverty and social exclusion strategy on Turkish poverty and social exclusion regime in the EU accession process. There is a tendency in literature on Europeanization of Turkey to attribute most of the changes in the different domestic policies and institutions to the pressures from the EU. In particular, many commentators argue that Turkish social policies have been undergoing a massive transformation in 2000s especially after the social security reforms of the mid 2000s where the EU had been one of the major players. The study first explores if there has in fact been a policy change in the field of social inclusion. Second, it examines the nature and content of such change. Third, it investigates the extent to which the EU accession process has any impact on the degree, nature and direction of domestic change in the field of poverty and social exclusion.

As a case study inquiring the impact of the EU on domestic change, this thesis focuses on poverty and social exclusion policies for several reasons: First, Turkey represents a critical case in poverty: poverty rates have remained high despite very high rates of economic growth. Second, level of poverty is the highest in Turkey among EU member states and candidate countries as measured by Eurostat[1]. Third, it

[1] Eurostat estimates at-risk-of-poverty rate from the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) instrument since 1999 for EU member and candidate countries as well as Iceland and Norway. At-risk-of-poverty rate is measured as the share of persons with an equalised disposable

is widely claimed in both academic and policy-practitioner circles that high incidence of poverty in Turkey constitutes one of the main obstacles in Turkey's accession to the EU.

Following this introductory chapter, in Chapter 2, the study provides a historical overview of EU's poverty and social exclusion regime and discusses the impact of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) on domestic policies and institutions in member states during the last decade. This chapter also reviews the Europeanization literature that focuses on both member states and candidate countries, and examines the evolution of research designs that characterize this literature. Following this discussion, it focuses on the workings of the OMC and the Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM) process that the EU is expected to bear its impact on the poverty and social policy regimes of in the member states and the candidate countries respectively. As will be discussed, member states participate in OMC and are expected to translate EU objectives into national policies through the functioning of OMC. Candidate countries do not participate in OMC directly, however, prepare themselves for the future participation through the JIM process carried out jointly by the Commission and national governments as well as national stakeholders. The chapter then reviews the literature in order to draw theoretical expectations for the case of Turkey. This chapter concludes with a brief discussion of research design and methodology employed in this study.

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income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60 % of the national median equialised disposable income (after social transfers). Turkey provides data for Eurostat since 2002.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the EU's social inclusion strategy by reviewing the evolution of the concepts of 'poverty' and 'social exclusion' during the postwar period and shows how the EU has adopted the term 'social exclusion' in its official language. It then reviews the key features of the EU's social inclusion strategy that became increasingly clear in the 2000s through the policy structure approach that "unpacks policies into four key dimensions: objectives, principles, procedures and financial instruments" as proposed by Graziano (2011:585) and adapted by Bölükbaşı and Ertugal (forthcoming). This approach has been proposed as an analytical tool to understand the degree of change in a policy field. It has been suggested that the intensity of change is greater when more dimensions are involved. Graziano (2011) defines the change as policy transformation when all the four dimensions show change, policy adjustment when two or three dimensions change, and policy continuity when one or no dimensions change (p.585).

By relying on the same approach adopted in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 traces domestic change by reviewing the changes in the principles, objectives, procedures and instruments in Turkey's poverty and social exclusion policies in 2000s. It does so by first providing an overview of the current state of play in poverty and social exclusion in Turkey. The chapter proceeds by tracing the changes in the principles (by observing adequacy of income support schemes, inclusiveness of labour markets, and access to quality services), objectives (the extent to which the successive governments during the 2000s relied on a declared objective of combating social exclusion), procedures (the extent to which the governments have come to adopt a systematic, consolidated and comprehensive poverty alleviation strategy through

coordination of public bodies and consultation with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) playing a role in this policy area), and financial instruments (provided by the EU and through the domestic budget).

Chapter 5 is devoted to the unpacking of domestic change by studying the interplay of the structuring institutions, dominant policy ideas and powerful interests in the area of social exclusion in Turkey that collectively determine policy outcomes. This chapter then concludes with a set of findings on the direction, degree and nature of change in Turkey's poverty and social exclusion regime and the role played by the EU therein.

CHAPTER 2

EUROPEANIZATION OF NATIONAL SOCIAL INCLUSION POLICIES THROUGH THE EU SOCIAL INCLUSION PROCESS

Following a historical overview of EU's poverty and social exclusion regime, this chapter discusses the impact of the Open Method of Coordination on domestic policies and institutions in member states during the last decade. It then reviews the Europeanization literature on both member states and candidate countries with a special attention on the evolution of research designs. Following this discussion, it focuses on the workings of the OMC and JIM processes in the member states and the candidate countries respectively that the EU utilizes to iterate national policies towards EU goals. The review of the literature aims to draw theoretical expectations for the case of Turkey. This chapter concludes with a brief discussion of research design and methodology employed in this study.

2.1. Historical Background

The concept of social exclusion appeared in the EU policy during the Delors Presidency in mid-1980s. In 1989, a Council Resolution noted that "combating social exclusion may be regarded as an important part of the social dimension of the internal market" (Council, 1989). It was followed by two Council Recommendations, 92/441/EEC and 92/442/EEC, in which member states were invited to include measures to combat social exclusion in their national policies and the Commission

was asked to coordinate the actions of the member states (Council 1992a and 1992b). As Ferrera *et.al.* (2002) states, these attempts can be seen as "the open method of coordination in embryonic form" (pp.229).

The legal basis of EU social inclusion process came with Article 137 of Amsterdam Treaty that states "the integration of persons excluded from the labour market" among the fields that the Community shall support and complement the activities of the Member states. In 1999, the Commission issued a Communication titled "A Concerted Strategy for Modernising Social Protection" that asked the Council adopt a strategy in social protection similar to the European Employment Strategy (EES). The communication defined four key objectives of such strategy as: to make work pay, to make pension systems sustainable, to promote social inclusion, and to ensure high quality and sustainable health care (CEC 1999).

The launch of EU action on combating social exclusion was Lisbon European Council on 23-24 March 2000 where it has been stated that "the number of people living below the poverty line and in social exclusion in the Union is unacceptable and steps must be taken to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty" (European Council 2000a, para. 32) in order to reach the strategic goal of the EU: "*to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion"* (para.5). Lisbon Summit decided to apply the open method of coordination (OMC), the new governance instrument of the EU that was originally applied in the area of employment, to the fight against social exclusion.

The core idea of OMC was to coordinate and iterate national policies towards common objectives of the EU. It was an alternative to community method, i.e., the transposition of the EU *acquis* into national legislation. The OMC is not legally binding and it functions on four main elements:

- fixing guidelines for the Union combined with specific timetables for achieving the goals which they set in the short, medium and long terms; (common objectives)
- establishing, where appropriate, quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks against the best in the world and tailored to the needs of different Member States and sectors as a means of comparing best practice; (common indicators)
- translating these European guidelines into national and regional policies by setting specific targets and adopting measures, taking into account national and regional differences; (national and joint reports)
- periodic monitoring, evaluation and *peer review* organized as mutual learning processes (European Council 2000a, para.37).

The Commission's White Paper on European Governance published in 2001 explained that OMC is an instrument to complement or reinforce the Community action. It is a way of encouraging co-operation, the exchange of best practices and agreeing common targets and guidelines for Member States "where there is little scope for legislative solutions" and "it should not be used when legislative action under the Community method is possible" (Commission 2001:22).

Following Lisbon Council, the Commission and the Council prepared common objectives in the fight against poverty and social exclusion as

- to facilitate participation in employment and access by all to resources, rights, goods and services,
- to prevent the risks of exclusion,
- to help the most vulnerable,
- to mobilise all relevant bodies" (Council 2000b).

These objectives were adopted by Nice European Council where member states were invited "to develop their priorities in relation to these objectives, to submit by June 2001 a national action plan covering a two-year period and to define indicators and monitoring mechanisms capable of measuring progress" (European Council 2000b). Nice European Council also adopted the European Social Agenda in which specific priorities of action for 2001-2005 periods were defined and "fighting poverty and all forms of exclusion and discrimination in order to promote social integration" was one of the six priority areas (European Council 2000b).

Following Nice European Council, the Treaty of Nice was approved where the Article 137 of TEC was amended to include "the combating of social exclusion" among the areas in which the Community shall support and complement the activities of the Member States. As regards to the combating of social exclusion and the modernisation of social protection systems, it has been stated that the Council, "may adopt measures designed to encourage cooperation between Member States

through initiatives aimed at improving knowledge, developing exchanges of information and best practices, promoting innovative approaches and evaluating experiences, excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States" and may adopt directives in the rest of the areas stated in the first part of the Article. This statement was the base for the functioning of OMC in the field of social inclusion.

2.2. The literature on the effectiveness of OMC

Since its introduction, the effectiveness of OMC in transforming national policies and iterating them towards EU objectives has been questioned in the literature. The question was whether OMC was an effective mechanism in influencing national policies of the member states. Two main answers can be distinguished in this debate.

The first group, OMC skeptics, compared hard (legally binding) law with soft law (the OMC) and argued that OMC was ineffective in changing domestic policies due mainly to its non-binding character. Thus, national governments were free to use it "mainly to secure their own competencies rather than to realize common goals" (Schäfer 2006, p. 70). As OMC leaves design and implementation of national policies to the national actors, Scharpf (2002) argued that "the expected benefits of OMC depend crucially on the willingness of those national actors who are in fact in control of policy choices" (p.654). As this group of scholars perceived hard law as being superior to the soft one, the only possible solution for influencing national policies was to include policies included in OMC in the sphere of hard law. As

differences in welfare states of the EU has been perceived as the main reason for not having hard law (directives for instance) in the social policy field, Scharpf (2002) proposed a model that would have the status of EU law where differentiated framework directives for the member states that belong to the same welfare state type would be issued and OMC could be used within the group that faces similar challenges.

The second group underlined the advantages of OMC without ignoring the drawbacks. Begg and Berghman (2002) argued that the differences between welfare states were not as important as it was argued and as EU member states face similar problems and constraints of EMU, there is actually enough room for Europeanizing their social policies. They also underline that OMC "allows for experimentation, learning and the development of new procedures" (p.192) which can be used to improve European Social Model further. Ferrera *et. al* (2002) underlines the potential of OMC in influencing national policies through processes that encourage learning and opportunities created such as seeing what works and what does not in other countries, creating and/or strengthening national policy making capacities, and highlighting problem areas that were not been studied before ('blind spots'; p.236). Therefore, they argue, OMC can produce significant policy outcomes if there is sufficient commitment at the national level. Radaelli (2003b) points out that OMC fosters 'cognitive convergence' even if there is little evidence for trans-national learning (p.53). As regards overall impact of OMC on national policies, he argues that "the impact of the OMC will be differentiated across countries and will depend on factors such as the domestic opportunity structure and socialization effects"

(p.54). On socialization effect, it has been pointed out by others that OMC provides national experts with opportunities to come together, exchange their experiences and views, develop a common language, even apply peer pressure, all of which foster learning processes (Jacobsson 2004, Heidenreich 2009, Zeitlin 2009).

In sum, there is much disagreement as to the effectiveness of OMC in transforming policies governed by OMC in member states. A weakness of these studies, however, was their emphasis on the impact of the OMC rather than the process of implementing the method: the existence or lack of instruments and mechanisms through which the OMC may influence domestic policies have not been examined. This weakness has been addressed by Europeanization research framework where the focus is on whether, and if so, to what extent and how the process of European integration changes national policies.

2.3. Europeanization Research Framework I: From studying member states to candidate countries

The usage of the term 'Europeanization' has increased rapidly since 1980s. In his review study, Featherstone (2003) groups the usage of Europeanization in four categories: "as an historical process; as a matter of cultural diffusion; as a process of institutional adaptation; and as the adaptation of policy and policy processes" (pp.5). As an historical process, Europeanization has been used to refer to export of European authority, social norms, beliefs, values and behaviour, the meaning and content of which has been open to discussion in the relevant literature. As a matter of

cultural diffusion, Europeanization has been used to refer to the diffusion of values, habits, ideas, identities, cultural norms. One of the ongoing debates in this field is the cultural assimilation of migrants. The third field, Europeanization as a process of institutional adaptation deals primarily with "domestic adaptation to the pressures emanating directly or indirectly from EU membership" (Featherstone 2003, pp.7). The fourth group of studies explores public policy impacts of EU membership where convergence of public policies as a result of EU membership has been discussed widely. This thesis belongs to the third group of studies and focuses on a possible impact of the EU in social inclusion policies of a candidate country. It does not focus on historical and cultural meanings of 'Europeanization' and does not aim at contributing to convergence debate.

There are various definitions of Europeanization in the literature (see for instance Ladrech 1994, Risse, Cowles, Caporaso 2001, Olsen 2002). However, we will build our discussion on the definition proposed by Radaelli who defines Europeanization as it is widely used in the Europeanization research program

> processes of (a) construction, (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, "ways of doing things" and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies (Radaelli 2003b, p.30)

As the above definition implies, Europeanization research framework starts with EU policies and draws expectations for the content and the direction of domestic change. This brings us to the first question of the research design in the realm of

Europeanization: top-down or bottom-up research design in exploring the domestic change.

2.4. Europeanization research framework II: top-down or bottom-up research design in exploring the domestic change

Studies adopting a top-down research design take EU policies as the independent variable and question the domestic change depending on the adaptational pressure created by the distance between EU requirements and the state of domestic policies, politics and polity. Risse, Cowles and Caporaso (2001) provide a three-step framework for exploring domestic 'adaptational' change. First, "relevant Europeanization processes- formal and informal norms, rules, regulations, procedures, practices- at the European level" (p.6) are identified. The central question in top-down design is if adjustments to Europeanization processes at the domestic level lead to domestic change. Second step is to identify the "goodness of fit" between Europeanization processes and national settings. The degree of fit determines the degree of "adaptational pressure" and "the degree of adaptational pressures in turn determines the extent to which domestic institutions would have to change in order to comply with European rules and policies" (p.7). Thus, if the policy of country in question fits in well with the EU policy, there would not be adaptational pressures. At the other extreme, if the policy of the country is completely different from that of the EU, the degree of adaptational pressures will be the highest. The third step is to identify the extent to which domestic change occurs. This depends on intervening factors which are multiple veto points in the domestic

structure; facilitating institutions; political and organizational cultures; the differential empowerment of domestic actors; and learning. Structural change in response to Europeanization processes is more likely to occur in countries where there are fewer veto points, there is a consensus based culture and mediating institutions exist.

Later, Börzel and Risse (2003) distinguished two types of misfits, -policy and institutional-, that creates adaptational pressure. Policy misfit stands for differences between policies at the EU and national level, which result in compliance pressure at the member state level to varying degrees. Institutional misfit, on the other hand, is more indirect; it challenges domestic rules, procedures, understandings and ways of doing things as implied in the definition above.

This literature focusing on the top-down strategy has its weaknesses, which are addressed by the second generation Europeanization literature focusing on a more bottom-up approach as will be discussed below. However, it has to be underlined that goodness of fit and the resulting adaptational pressures are used in Europeanization research as an explanatory tool to identify the wedge between the nation states and the EU in terms of policies and institutions. In countries where the degree of fit between Europeanization and national processes is perfect, for instance, there is no need for domestic change. In the case of various degrees of fit, it is logical to expect different ways of adoption. This in turn explains why Europeanization has differential impact on domestic policies and there is little room for convergence even in the case of hard law.

The bottom-up research design takes a different path. Instead of starting from the EU policies and institutions as the independent variable and trying to understand the domestic change as the dependent one, the bottom-up research design

> starts from actors, problems, resources, style, and discourses at the domestic level. Put differently, the starting point is a system of interaction at the domestic level. By using time and temporal causal sequences, a bottom-up approach checks if, when, and how the EU provides a change in any of the main components of the system of interaction. Finally, 'bottom-uppers' try to measure the consequences of all this in terms of change at the domestic level (Radaelli 2004, p.4)

There are a number of criticisms directed at the first generation of Europeanization research employing the top-down research design. The main criticism to top-down approach is its emphasis on adaptational pressure stemming from degree of misfit. In fact, Bulmer and Radaelli (2005) argue that the goodness of fit argument "best applies to one type of policy -positive integration- rather than offering a general explanation" (pp.347). Same point was raised earlier by Knill and Lehmkuhl (1999) who had defined three mechanisms of Europeanization as positive integration, where an EU policy is transposed by the member states into their national legislation, negative integration where the EU legislation changes the domestic distribution of roles and powers, and framing integration in which EU policy changes beliefs, strategies and perceptions of domestic actors. They argued that 'goodness of fit' does not have any explanatory power in the mechanisms other than positive integration.

Second, top-down approach assumes that there must be an adaptational pressure on the national actors. Radaelli (2004) argues that national actors do not only respond to pressure, they "can use 'Europe' even in the absence of pressure" (pp.7). A similar point is raised by Bulmer and Radaelli (2005) where governments may use European policy "to justify and legitimate change" (pp.347), they may use European policy as an opportunity to maintain the reforms that they want to implement or to strengthen their positions even when they are under little adaptational pressure from the EU. Therefore, there is room for domestic change even in the absence of adaptational pressure and adaptational pressure is neither a necessary condition nor the best predictor of domestic change caused by Europeanization.

Third problem in the top-down research design concerns attribution of independent causal power to the EU level policies and institutions in explaining change. This design is not amenable to definitely concluding that the domestic change is in fact caused by Europeanization and not by other variables (such as globalization or domestic politics). Radaelli (2004, pp.9) suggests three ways to verify that it was the EU acting as "cause" in explaining domestic change. First, Europeanization must have occurred before the change. As Europeanization usually happens through slow processes of socialization and learning, and as it may coexist with the other factors, it is not easy to decide which comes first. Therefore, this test is not enough to decide that a change in a policy is caused by the EU. A second check, he argues, can be done against a counterfactual, i.e., whether the change would have taken place anyway. It has to be done with the third tool, which is, formulating and controlling for the rival alternative hypotheses (such as domestic politics or globalization). As a

consequence, Radaelli (2004) suggests that "there is Europeanization when the logic of domestic political actors changes. This happens when elements of EU policy-making become a cognitive and normative 'frame of reference'" (pp.10).

Next question in the research design deals with 'what is Europeanized'- the outcome or the dependent variable under study. Radaelli (2003b) offers three "domains" of Europeanization: domestic structures (institutions, public administration, intergovernmental relations, legal structure, political parties etc), public policy (actors, policy problems, style, instruments, resources) and cognitive and normative structures (discourse, norms, values, political legitimacy, identities, state traditions, policy paradigms, frames and narratives) (pp.35).

The last problem to be dealt with in research design is the content and the degree of change at the domestic level. Börsel and Risse (2003) classify potential outcomes as 'absorption', 'accommodation' and 'transformation' (pp. 69-70). Accordingly, they argue, absorption happens when European policies or ideas are incorporated "without substantively modifying" domestic processes, policies, and institutions. Accommodation refers to cases where existing policies and institutions are adapted to European ones without changing the nature of the former. Transformation is the highest degree of domestic change in which domestic institutions, policies and processes are replaced by the new ones. Radaelli (2003b), on the other hand, classifies and adds another category: retrenchment, inertia, absorption and transformation (pp. 37). In this context, when a national policy (or any domains stated above) become less 'European', we can think of a retrenchment, in other

words, it represents a negative Europeanization. Inertia refers to a situation where there is lack of change or it may take the form of delays and resistance to transposition (of a directive for example). Absorption is said to exist when there are non-fundamental changes while the core is maintained. Finally, transformation happens when a paradigmatic change occurs.

Empirical studies on the extent to which the EU creates domestic change are still limited. In addition, the majority of studies is for EU 15 (see Cowles *et.al.* 2001; Héritier *et.al.* 2001; Featherstone and Radaelli 2003; Bulmer and Lequesne 2005; and Graziano and Vink 2007). These studies have focused on domestic impacts of the EU on the areas subject to hard law (such as transport policy and environmental policy). Although the conclusions vary for countries and policy areas, a common finding of this literature is that the EU policies trigger domestic change, however, the content and direction of the change have been differentiated. In other words, Europeanization does not necessarily result in convergence of policies in the EU 15.

Studies on Europeanization of social policies in the candidate countries, the focus of this study, are even more limited. Most of the studies for candidate countries are on Europeanization of former candidates, i.e., Central Eastern European Countries (CEECs) (see Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005, 2007, Grabbe 2003) on various policy areas. Europeanization of social policies constitutes a very small part of this literature.

Grabbe (2003), for instance, explores Europeanization as a consequence of EU accession process and she concludes that "the EU accession process is pushing the applicant countries towards greater convergence" (pp.306) as a result of three factors: speed of adjustment set by the formal accession process, the openness of CEECs to EU influence in the post-communist transformation process, and the breadth of EU agenda (mainly the EU conditionality). Policy transformation, on the other hand, occurs through five mechanisms: provision of models, money (aid and technical assistance), benchmarking and monitoring, advice and twinning, and gate-keeping (ibid., pp.312). The degree and the direction of change in candidate countries depend on two additional intervening variables to those put forward by Risse, Cowles and Caporaso (2001): "asymmetry of the relationship with EU" and "uncertainty built into the accession process" (pp.318). Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2007) pointed out "the desire of most CEECs to join the EU, combined with the volume and intrusiveness of the rules attached to its membership" as the two main factors for the Europeanization in the CEECs.

Substantively, in the case of candidate countries, the driving force for Europeanization has been conditionality. The first form of conditionality is in the form of political conditionality which primarily deals with satisfying general democratic and human rights norms, which stands as the condition for opening of accession negotiations. The second form of conditionality is *acquis* conditionality. In the accession negotiations, the candidate countries are expected to transpose the *acquis* into their domestic law. The literature on Europeanization of CEECs follows this substantive distinction as well. The first group of studies focuses on democratic

change (such as Schimmelfennig *et.al.* 2003, Kubicek 2003) where the second group deals with domestic impacts of adoption of specific EU policy rules (see for example Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005). Comparing the impact of the EU on both areas, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2007) conclude that the influence of the EU has been pervasive as regards to the adoption of the *acquis* where it was rather limited in promoting democracy when authoritarian governments were in power and more prominent after these governments had lost office. With regards to the mechanisms under which the EU conditionality was most effective, they found out that the key factor was the "domestic cost of adopting EU rules" (pp.100).

With regard to other actors creating domestic change, Bulmer and Radaelli (2005, pp.352) underlined that "The EU is only one of the actors promoting Europeanization, organizations such as the Council of Europe are also deeply involved in the transfer of European models" in candidate countries.

2.5. Europeanization of social exclusion policies in member states: Open Method of Cooperation (OMC)

As discussed above, social exclusion policies in the EU are governed by the OMC, a mode of governance used by the EU to achieve a convergence towards the EU goals without having a legally binding piece of legislation. In the OMC, the EU provides a platform for discussion and policy transfer through which member states are encouraged to design their own policies in accordance with the EU guidelines. Therefore, Europeanization of social policies occurs, to a large extent, through a

policy learning process where policy makers come together to discuss best (and worst) practices and to engage in peer review of their policies. Europeanization based on learning differs from Europeanization of a policy area by transposing and implementing a particular *directive.*

For this reason, it has often been argued that "cognitive convergence" (Radaelli 2003b, pp.53) has been the major impact of the OMC and "communities of discourse with their own vocabulary, criteria, and belief system" emerge as a result (Bulmer and Radaelli 2005, pp.350). The ultimate aim of the EU is achieving a domestic change towards EU goals in either modes of governance, however, it is through a process of learning among national experts in OMC rather than imposing directives to transpose. As Bulmer and Radaelli (2005) underline "the expectation on which the whole OMC is based is that ideational convergence will produce policy change at the domestic level" (pp.350).

However, it is not easy to show that a particular change at the domestic level is "caused" by OMC, rather than other factors such as domestic politics, however, such difficulty is due to the fact that the relationship between ideational convergence and policy change is not necessarily a linear-causal one. Policy makers who happen to have internalized ("learned") 'European' ideas may not take the same decisions at the national level. As Radaelli (2004) underlines "processes of socialization are not a sufficient condition for Europeanization. There may be considerable socialization without policy change at home" (pp.10).

2.6. Europeanization of social exclusion policies in candidate countries: The Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM)

Candidate countries prepare and submit Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM), a policy document jointly prepared by the Commission, national governments and other stakeholders in the field of social inclusion. JIM provides a sound analysis of poverty and social exclusion in the country and presents the major policy proposals to harmonize national policies with EU common objectives. Upon signature, JIM follow-up process in which the implementation of policies are monitored begins. Therefore, the common objectives of the EU are translated into national policies before the accession through the processes of JIM preparation and follow-up. In other words, poverty and social exclusion policies of candidate countries become subject to Europeanization. So far, all the CEECs and Croatia have prepared and signed JIMs. This section will summarize the (limited) literature on changes occurred in Europeanization of social policies in CEECs in the EU accession process.

Studying the changes in social policies of Hungary, Ferge and Juhász (2004) found out that EU accession "did not play a major role in shaping the changes" (pp.240) in Hungarian social policy and the World Bank and the Council of Europe were more influential than the EU. However, they point out JIM process that started in 2002 as the only field where a European influence could be perceived. In fact, they underlined the importance of JIM process by stating that "For the first time in postwar history, poverty and social exclusion have become early in 2004 a major topic in public political discourse" (pp.246). On the social policy reform in Czech

Republic, Potůček (2004) argues that the impact of the EU has been limited to institution building. He attributes this to "institutional and behavioral path dependency as the country exhibited resistance to change coupled with a strong adherence to the Bismarckian, corporatist welfare state" (pp.253). On a more general account on the impact of the EU on social policy reforms of CEECs, Lendvai (2004) argues that the impact of the EU has been limited to the cognitive sphere in which "Changes happen in the way policymakers construct, speak, discuss and act on social issues. New vocabulary, new discourses, new meanings and new agendas are constituted during the accession process." (pp. 321) The Commission itself underlined the "learning" impact of JIM process in its Synthesis Report of the JIMs where it was stated that

> "In conclusion, it is clear that the experience of developing the JIMs has demonstrated the relevance of the Union's social inclusion process and the common objectives on poverty and social exclusion to the new Member States. Furthermore, it has reinforced the potential for exchange of learning and best practice between the new Member States and the old Member States" (CEC 2004, pp.7).

2.7. Research Design and Methodology of the Study

Given the theoretical framework summarized above, the thesis examines the impact of EU social inclusion framework on Turkey's national poverty and social inclusion policies in the last decade. It first explores the key features of EU social inclusion agenda with regards to its objectives, principles, procedures and instruments as proposed by Graziano (2009) and adapted by Bölükbaşı and Ertugal (forthcoming). Then the existence or absence of change in domestic objectives, principles, procedures and instruments of social inclusion policies in Turkey is traced. Then it

attempts to understand to what extent domestic change is correlated (or caused) by Europeanization by employing a bottom-up research design. Finally, it unpacks ideas, interests and institutions and interrelations among them in the process of EU accession.

As will be discussed below, Turkey exhibits a high degree of misfit with EU social inclusion regime, therefore, we can expect high adaptational pressures. However, as EU social inclusion framework does not have a legally binding character, the pressure will not be that strong. It is even weaker for candidate counties as they do not fully participate in the OMC. The pressure for candidate countries stems from the requirement of drafting the Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM) as well as pressures of EU conditionality (which can be observed from regular reports). It must be noted, however, that as of the submission date of the study, the negotiations of social policy and employment chapter has not been opened and Turkey's JIM has not been signed.

As regards the methodology of the study, three sets of primary sources have been analysed. The first has been an analysis of national policy documents (such as development plans, medium-term programmes, strategic plans of the institutions as well as statistics where relevant) and the literature on Turkey's poverty and social inclusion policies. The second source has been the documents of the EU on the evolution and key features of EU social inclusion strategy. Third, semi-structured interview data obtained from eight mid-level bureaucrats from SHÇEK, DGSAS, SSI, SPO, Ministry of Health, MoLSS and one official from EU Delegation to Turkey between 14 October 2011 and 4 November 2011 is analysed. Semi-structured

interviews have been carried out relying on four main issues: (1) does the interviewee observe a change in social inclusion policies in Turkey in the last decade, (2) if he or she observe change, does s/he think that it is related with the EU accession process, (3) if the policy change is related with (or caused by) other actors, what are they, and (4) how s/he assess the relative importance of domestic and international actors. The findings of the interviews are discussed in chapters 4-6 together with other primary sources.

CHAPTER 3

THE EU'S SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

This chapter provides an overview of the EU's social inclusion strategy by briefly discussing the concepts of 'poverty' and 'social exclusion' and adoption of 'social exclusion' concept in EU's official language. It then reviews the key features of the EU's social inclusion strategy through an analysis of its principles, objectives, procedures and instruments as proposed by Graziano (2009) and adapted by Bölükbaşı and Ertugal (forthcoming).

3.1. Conceptualizing poverty and social exclusion: From the literature to EU's official terminology

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, poverty has been defined in absolute terms. people are poor if they do not have the necessary resources to achieve a certain minimum level of consumption. According to Rowntree (quoted in Ringen 1988: 351), families in this historical period were counted as poor if their total earnings are insufficient to obtain the minimum necessities of merely physical efficiency". Minimum necessities in this definition were basic needs including food, clothing, rent and heating. This definition is known as absolute poverty in which poverty is measured according to what is defined as subsistence and the quantities.

As a criticism of such definition of absolute poverty, Townsend developed a definition of "relative poverty" where

> "Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong" (1979:31).

The European Commission's official definition of "poor" dating back to the early 1980s follows the definition of relative poverty proposed by Townsend:

> "The poor shall be taken to mean persons, families and groups of persons whose resources (material, cultural and social) are so limited as to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life in the Member State in which they live" (Council 1984).

Conceptualized as such, the 'relative' component in this definition stems from the fact that someone is said to be in poverty only in relative terms to other people in the same society. Poverty in rich countries may have a different meaning than in poor countries, for instance, where access to telecommunications is a need in a rich country, it may be access to water in a poor one (pp.22-23). A necessity for a British person may not be a necessity for a Turkish person for instance. Additionally, Lister (2004) argues that relativity has time as well as cross-national elements. Therefore, needs in 2000s are completely different than needs in 1930s and thus poverty in the sense of 1930s do not exist in 2000s. Thus, relative definitions of poverty take the society as the departure as needs are 'socially constructed'. This is true even for food, as Townsend (1993) argues, as

> "the amount and cost of the food which is eaten depends on the social roles people play and the dietary customs observed as well as the kinds of foods made available socially through production and availability in markets" (1993:31).

Over the course of decades the EU adopted the concept of "social exclusion" as it appears in official documents more so than poverty. In the 2000s, the terminology is standardized in the Joint Report on Social Inclusion (2002) which defines social exclusion as a situation in which

> "people are prevented from participating fully in economic, social and civil life and/or when their access to income and other resources (personal, family, social and cultural) is so inadequate as to exclude them from enjoying a standard of living and quality of life regarded as acceptable by the society in which they live. In such situations people are often unable to fully access their individual rights" (European Commission 2002, pp.15)

3.2. Key Features of the EU's Social Inclusion Strategy

In this section, the key features of EU social inclusion strategy will be discussed by adopting "a policy structure approach which unpacks policies into four key dimensions: objectives, principles, procedures and instruments" as proposed by Graziano (2009, p.3).

The key objective of the strategy is "to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty" (as agreed at the Lisbon European Council of March 2000) with clear indicators defined, its main principle is active inclusion, the financial instrument is European Social Fund for member states and IPA for candidate and potential candidate countries, and the main procedure is OMC. These will be discussed below.

3.2.1. Common objectives with quantified indicators

In achieving the key objective of making a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty, Nice European Council in December 2000 adopted four key EU objectives in the area of social inclusion. These were

- facilitating the participation in employment and access by all to resources, rights, goods and services,
- preventing the risks of exclusion,
- helping the most vulnerable, and
- mobilizing all relevant bodies" (Council 2000b).

Member states were invited "to develop their priorities in relation to these objectives, to submit by June 2001 a national action plan covering a two-year period and to define indicators and monitoring mechanisms capable of measuring progress" (European Council 2000b). Thus, member states submitted their first two-yearly National Action Plans on social inclusion (NAPs/incl) in June 2001 before the introduction of common indicators which then were collected in the first "Joint Report on Social Inclusion" including Commission's comments. Reporting requirements were simplified in 2003 by the introduction of a streamlined approach where the three pillars of social protection, i.e. social inclusion, pensions, and health and long-term care objectives would be followed and reported together (CEC, 2003). Since then national action plans on social protection and social inclusion are combined into "National Strategy Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion" that are collected under one "Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion" by the Commission.

New common objectives for the 'streamlined' OMC were adopted in 2005 as follows:

- Ensure the active social inclusion of all by promoting participation in the labour market and by fighting poverty and exclusion among the most marginalised people and groups.
- Guarantee access for all to the basic resources, rights and social services needed for participation in society, while addressing extreme forms of exclusion and fighting all forms of discrimination leading to exclusion.
- Ensure that social inclusion policies are well-coordinated and involve all levels of government and relevant actors, including people experiencing poverty, that they are efficient and effective and mainstreamed into all relevant public policies, including economic, budgetary, education and training policies and structural fund (notably ESF) programmes and that they are gender mainstreamed (CEC 2005, pp.5-6).

In order to monitor the progress of member states towards the objectives set by the Nice European Council stated above, European Council held at Laeken adopted a set of indicators (European Council 2001).

Table 1. Social Exclusion Indicators

Primary Indicators	Secondary Indicators
1. At-risk-of-poverty rate after social transfers (with low-income threshold set at 60% of median income)	1. Dispersion around the 60% median low income threshold
2. Distribution of income (income quintile ratio)	2. Low income rate anchored at a point in time
3. Persistence of low income	3. Low income rate before transfers
4. Median low income gap	4. Distribution of income (Gini coefficient)
5. Regional cohesion	5. Persistence of low income (based on 50% of median income)
6. Long term unemployment rate	6. Long term unemployment share
7. People living in jobless households	7. Very long term unemployment rate
8. Early school leavers not in further education or training	8. Persons with low educational attainment
9. Life expectancy at birth	
10. Self perceived health status	

Source: Social Protection Committee, 2001, p. 3-4.

Agreeing on these indicators at the EU level was a major achievement in the field of poverty and social inclusion where there has been an ongoing debate on various issues (such as the definition and measurement of poverty). The setting of EU wide targets as in the case of European Employment Strategy (such as achieving 70% employment rate in each member state by 2010), would be neither meaningful nor achievable in the field of social inclusion mainly due to the multi-dimensional character of poverty and its relations with other policy areas. For this reason, "to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty" was set as the strategic objective at the Lisbon Council. As discussed by Atkinson et. al. (2004), declaring and pursuing a common poverty rate target (say decreasing poverty rate to 15%) would be extremely challenging for some countries and irrelevant for others. Thus,

concentrating on the progress achieved by each member state in each of the indicators agreed was a more meaningful choice for the EU.

The introduction of indicators facilitated policy making at the EU, national and local levels by providing all actors with a framework. The statistical systems and data collection mechanisms were developed as well allowing conducting comparative researches, facilitating mutual learning and exchange of good practices. As a result of all these processes and the changes in social and economic situation bringing new challenges and new priorities, the initial list of indicators was revised continuously (the last update was in September 2009).

3.2.2. Principle of active inclusion

The key principle employed in EU's social inclusion strategy has been active inclusion based on an understanding that "the best safeguard against social exclusion is a job", as underlined in Lisbon European Council of March 2000. Although the introduction of combating social exclusion to EU policies was seen as a step towards a 'social Europe', it has been widely accepted that the reason was still economic. Achieving full employment was lying at the heart of Lisbon strategy and social inclusion was nothing more than including more people in the work force. In other words, it is the "recommodification of the labour potential of persons who are threatened by social exclusion" as Scharpf argues (2002:658).

Three pillars of 'active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market' are defined as

(i) adequate income support,

(ii) inclusive labour markets, and

(iii) access to quality services (CEC 2008).

Member states were to design and implement and integrated active inclusion strategy bringing "right mix of the three strands". Adequate income support refers mainly to social protection systems that would provide people with sufficient income to "lead a life that is compatible with human dignity", an inclusive labour market refers to the adoption of "arrangements covering persons whose condition renders them fit for work to ensure they receive effective help to enter or to re-enter and stay in employment that corresponds to their work capacity", and quality services are defined as all services such as social services, housing, childcare, long term care and health services (CEC 2008).

3.2.3. Procedures

Following the launch of Lisbon Strategy with the aim of making a decisive impact on eradication of poverty by 2010, member states were asked to prepare a National Action Plan on social inclusion (NAPs/inclusion). NAPs/inclusion were prepared every two years on the basis of common objectives. The Council and the

Commission assess these reports and then a joint report on social inclusion is prepared outlining common challenges and policy measures.[2]

Candidate countries are also included in the OMC through preparation and submission of the Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM). The context for preparing the JIM was provided by the conclusions of the Göteborg European Council in 2001 where the Commission and the candidate countries were asked to initiate a cooperation process with the aim of preparing each country for full participation in the open method of coordination. JIM is prepared and signed "jointly" by the candidate countries and the European Commission. JJIM defines the national framework for translating EU's objectives into national policies. After the joint signature, objectives and policies defined in JIM become subject to follow-up by the Commission. Thus, poverty and social exclusion policies of candidate countries are affected by the EU objectives and framework way before participating in the OMC (European Commission web page, http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=842&langId=en)

3.2.4. Instruments

The European Social Fund (ESF) is set up to promote economic and social cohesion in member states. ESF defines its priorities and areas to be supported in accordance with the priorities of the EU. In 1980s, ESF prioritized transition from industry to services economy whereas the priority was globalization and information society in

[2] National and joint reports on social protection and social inclusion are available at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=757&langId=en

1990s. Active labour market policies, lifelong learning and employability have been the priorities since the introduction of Lisbon strategy in 2000. In 2007-2013 period, adaptability of workers and enterprises was added as a priority as a result of severe economic downturn. In addition, EQUAL initiative was launched in 2000 to promote a more inclusive labour market through fighting discrimination and exclusion based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Candidate countries and potential candidate countries (candidate countries are Turkey, Croatia, Iceland, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, and potential candidate countries are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244) participate in IPA, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, which helps them in EU accession. IPA is the new financial instrument that brings all previous instruments (namely PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD, CARDS and the Turkey pre-accession instrument) into a single framework since 1 January 2007. IPA has five components: transition assistance and institutions building, cross-border cooperation, regional development, human resources development and rural development. Total IPA budget for the period 2007-2013 is 11.5 billion Euros. It is the fourth component of IPA, "Human Resources Development", that is devoted to fund projects aiming at increasing employment, strengthening social inclusion through the integration of disadvantaged people into the workforce and supporting education and lifelong learning policies to support adaptability and flexibility of the work force. In this component, Turkey has used approximately 300 million Euros between the years 2007 and 2011.

CHAPTER 4

THE CHANGING SOCIAL INCLUSION REGIME IN TURKEY: PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES, PROCEDURES AND INSTRUMENTS

By relying on the policy structure approach discussed in Chapter 3, this chapter traces domestic change by reviewing the changes in the principles, objectives, procedures and instruments in the poverty and social exclusion policies in 2000s in Turkey. Following a brief discussion of state of play in poverty and social exclusion in Turkey, Turkey's poverty and social inclusion policies with regards to principles, objectives, procedures and policy instruments with a view to trace change and continuity in the last decade especially after 1999 when Turkey was granted a candidate status will be discussed. The aim of this discussion is to analyze if there has been a change in each of these four dimensions and to what extent the changes are attributable to the EU accession process.

4.1. Poverty and Social Exclusion in Turkey: The current state of play

Turkey has been experiencing an intense structural transformation starting by the implementation of economic liberalization programmes starting from early 1970s. During this decade, Turkey implemented a new economic programme including privatization of the State Economic Enterprises, promotion of export-led growth, liberalization of foreign trade regime and transition to full currency convertibility in 1989 (Öniş, 1998:183–196). Integration with world markets with a relatively weak

economy resulted in a series of crises in 1994, 1998–1999 and 2000–2001 that started with financial markets and spread to other sectors. These crises were followed by structural adjustment programmes of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The outcomes of crises were severe: worsening income distribution, decreasing employment and increasing poverty.

Although poverty has been increasing since then, decreasing poverty with quantified and time bound targets has never been defined as a policy objective in Turkey. Poverty has not been measured and analyzed at the national level until 1990s. The first such analysis is provided by "Turkey: Economic Reforms, Living Standards and Social Welfare Study" conducted by World Bank using Household Income and Consumption Expenditure Surveys of 1987 and 1994 conducted by Turkish Statistical Institute (Turkstat) (World Bank, 2000). Second study was the "Joint Poverty Assessment Report" conducted jointly by World Bank and Turkstat in 2005 based on 2002 Household Budget Survey (World Bank, 2005). Turkstat conducts Household Budget Surveys on a yearly basis since 2002, from which "Poverty Studies" are published annually (Turkstat, 2002-2009).

The methodology used in poverty analyses of Turkstat depends on the determination of persons below the thresholds (food poverty threshold and poverty threshold) calculated depending on consumption expenditure. Food poverty threshold is the cost of 80 items that are mostly used by low income households composing a minimum of 2100 calories. Poverty threshold (food and non-food poverty threshold) is calculated by adding the percentage of non-food expenditures in the budgets of

households nearest to the food poverty threshold. According to the latest Poverty Study (Turkstat 2009), 339 thousand people live under food poverty threshold (287 TL) and 12.8 million people live under the poverty threshold comprising food and non-food expenditures (825 TL). It must be noted, however, that the composition of the basket has often been criticized on the grounds that if and to what extent it reflects the real situation. TÜRK-İŞ, one of the biggest trade union confederations in Turkey, calculates food and complete poverty lines according to its basket. For the year 2009, food and complete poverty lines calculated by TÜRK-İŞ are 750 and 2.441 TL respectively.

As the calculation of poverty lines and median income are different, figures of Turkstat and Eurostat are not comparable. Eurostat declares poverty rate for Turkey in 2006 as 26.5 percent while it was 17.81 percent according to Turkstat. According to Eurostat methodology, Turkey's poverty rates are the highest among EU member states as well as candidate countries (26.5 percent and 16.6 percent for Turkey and the EU average respectively in 2006).

Table 2: Poverty rates according to food and complete poverty line methods, 2002-2009

Methods	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	TURKEY							
Food poverty	1,35	1,29	1,29	0,87	0,74	0,48	0,54	0,48
Poverty rate	26,96	28,12	25,60	20,50	17,81	17,79	17,11	18,08
	URBAN							
Food poverty	0,92	0,74	0,62	0,64	0,04	0,07	0,25	0,06
Poverty rate	21,95	22,30	16,57	12,83	9,31	10,36	9,38	8,86
	RURAL							
Food poverty	2,01	2,15	2,36	1,24	1,91	1,41	1,18	1,42
Poverty rate	34,48	37,13	39,97	32,95	31,98	34,80	34,62	38,69

Source: Turkstat Poverty Studies, 2002-2009.

According to Poverty Studies (Turkstat 2002-2009), one third of Turkish population was living under the poverty threshold in 2002. After 2005, it dropped to one fifth, which is still high when international comparisons are taken into account. As Table 2 indicates, there are distinct disparities between urban and rural areas in relation to the poverty rate: the ratio of people experiencing poverty has always been higher in rural areas than in urban ones. Moreover, the disparity is widening due to a considerable decrease in urban poverty and rising rural poverty. In other words, the poor rural population becomes poorer in time. In 2009, 8.5 million of 12.8 million poor in total live in rural areas.

Second, poverty is sensitive to household size and composition in Turkey: poverty increases with household size reaching 40 percent in households with more than seven people. In terms of household type, poverty rates are the highest (24.48 percent) in large families and the lowest in families without dependant children (9.86 percent). Poverty rates of single parent households are higher than average as well. Third, it is highly related with employment in the formal jobs. In Turkey, employment reduces poverty only when it is in the formal sector. Where only 6% of formal employees are poor, 27% of daily waged and 30 % of unpaid family workers in agriculture are poor. As regards gender, women are poorer than men in Turkey (19 and 17.1 percent respectively). Education constitutes the main determinant of poverty, the likelihood of being poor is the lowest among university graduates and highest among the illiterate.

The EU uses at-risk-of poverty rates before and after social transfers as an indicator of effectiveness of transfer payments in alleviating poverty. According to Eurostat data, the difference between the two poverty rates is the highest in Nordic member states. It can be explained by the redistributive power of "social democratic" welfare regimes in Esping-Andersen's typology of welfare states (Esping-Andersen 1990:26-29). Social democratic welfare states provide the highest level of decommodification, which "occurs when a service is rendered as a matter of right, and when a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market" (ibid., p.22). Social democratic welfare states provide citizens with rights-based universalistic benefits, which in turn is associated with lowest levels of poverty. In EU 27, social transfers decrease poverty by almost 10 percentage points from 25.7 to 16.4 percent on average in 2010 (EU SILC- Statistics on Income and Living Conditions- data, accessed on 27.11.2011). In Turkey, however, the impact of social transfer on diminishing poverty, i.e. redistributive power of transfer payments, is nearly 1 percent; poverty rate before and after social transfers are 27.4 and 26.5 percent respectively.

Distribution of income is highly unequal in Turkey as can be inferred from high Gini coefficient well above EU averages. In 2009, it is estimated that the population at the first quintile (lowest income level) received only 5.6 % and the population at the fifth quintile (highest income level) received 47.6 % of total income. S80/S20 ratio, the ratio of equivalent income of the richest 20 % of the population to the equivalent income of the poorest 20 % of the population was 11.3 in Turkey and 4.9 in EU27 in 2006. In other words, the richest earn 11.3 times more than the poorest in Turkey.

Table 3: Distribution of Annual Personal Disposable Income by Quintiles of Household Population (%)

	1987[1]	1994[1]	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Lowest 20%	5,2	4,9	5,3	6,0	6,0	6,1	5,1	5,8	5,8	5,6
Second 20%	9,6	8,6	9,8	10,3	10,7	11,1	9,9	10,6	10,4	10,3
Third 20%	14,1	12,6	14,0	14,5	15,2	15,8	14,8	15,2	15,2	15,1
Fourth 20%	21,2	19,0	20,8	20,9	21,9	22,6	21,9	21,5	21,9	21,5
Highest 20%	49,9	54,9	50,1	48,3	46,2	44,4	48,4	46,9	46,7	47,6
Gini Coefficient	**0,43**	**0,49**	**0,44**	**0,42**	**0,40**	**0,38**	**0,43**	**0,41**	**0,41**	**0,42**
EU Average[2]	**-**	**-**	**0,29**	**0,30**	**0,30**	**0,306**	**0,302**	**0,306**	**0,307**	**0,304**

Source: TUIK Household Budget Surveys, available at www.tuik.gov.tr;

[1] Millennium Development Goals Report, Turkey 2010, [2] Eurostat, SILC (Statistics on Income and Living Conditions).

Given this brief background, we can now discuss the principles, objectives, procedures and instruments of poverty regime in Turkey.

4.2. Principles

This section reviews the principles that characterize the Turkish poverty and social inclusion regime and discusses the changes in the principles during the 2000s with regards to three pillars of active inclusion: adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services. The aim is to trace if principles in social inclusion and poverty regime in Turkey are approximating to those in the EU's activation agenda.

Turkish welfare regime has been classified in Southern European (sometimes referred as the Latin Rim or the Mediterranean) welfare regime type together with Spain, Portugal and Greece (Gough 1996, Saraceno 2002, Buğra and Keyder 2003, 2006, Ercan 2008, Grütjen 2008, Gal 2010). Those who added a Southern European cluster into Esping-Andersen's typology of liberal, social democratic and continental

clusters (Leibfried 1993, Castles 1995, Ferrera 1996, Gough 1996, Martin 1996) identified the main characteristics of the southern welfare regimes as (i) a highly fragmented and corporatist income maintenance system with the dominance of pensions providing high protection for the already employed workers (insiders) and minimum protection for the outsiders; (ii) low level of public social assistance and as a result of (i) and (ii) a high risk of poverty and social exclusion, (iii) (at least partially) universalistic health care, (iv) low service provision by the state and high degree of decentralization in the realm of social policy together with administrative weaknesses of state institutions; and (v) state's endorsement of family as the primary carer.

Turkish welfare regime, similar to Southern European regimes, has a strong corporatist nature providing protection to formally employed employees and leaving others (such as unpaid family workers in agriculture and informal employees) unprotected. Those not covered by social insurance are supposed to be supported by social assistance, which, however, is not the case in Turkey where there is no universal, rights-based minimum income scheme based on social citizenship. Benefits provided by the state reaches a minority of the poor and their amounts are quite low, which results in a high incidence of poverty and social exclusion. In the absence of social protection schemes, family appears as the safety net in addition to its cultural importance in Turkish society, as stated in World Bank report (2003), 'it is difficult to overstate the importance of marriage, family and extended family ties' in Turkey' (p.41). Health care, on the other hand, was provided to formally employed according to the status at work until the recent change in 2003.

4.2.1. Changes in Adequate Income Support Schemes

Adequate income support refers mainly to social protection systems that would provide people with sufficient income to "lead a life that is compatible with human dignity", (CEC 2008). In this section, change and continuity in social insurance and social assistance systems will be discussed.

According to the most recent comparable statistics, Turkey spent 10.5% of GDP on public social expenditures where OECD countries spent 19.3% in 2007 (OECD Social Expenditures Database, accessed on 5.11.2011). More importantly, pensions and health expenditures constitute 48 and 37 percent of all social expenditures respectively leaving 15 per cent on all other social expenditures (social assistance programmes, active labour market programmes, unemployment, housing and family benefits etc). Comparing social expenditures of Turkey with OECD and EU averages, Buğra (2008:224-233) argues that although Turkey spends less than most of the OECD and EU countries on all areas, the most crucial difference is extremely low spending in Turkey in areas such as social assistance, active labour market policies and family policy. This shows, she argues, the design of Turkish social policy along the corporatist lines, providing formally employed with pensions and health while leaving informal employees and those outside of the labour market with no protection.

The social protection system in Turkey consists of social security system and social services and assistance system. The social security system is governed by Social Security Institution (SSI) and aims to provide insurance for employees in formal sector and their dependants mainly in the form of health care services, pensions and unemployment benefits associated with employment status, on a contributory basis. As of July, 2011, 17.2 million people are insured (i.e. work in formal sector) in Turkey. With 35.5 million dependants and 9.7 pensioners, almost 85% of the population is covered by the social insurance system (SSI, 2011). It should be borne in mind that as women constitute nearly one third of the employed population in Turkey, employment related benefits and pensions are primarily enjoyed by men. Another problem of the social security system is low levels of pension benefits stemming from low earnings while employed. In addition, there exist differences among both the employed and pensioners arising from their status at work. Typically, civil servants have better social security rights than self-employed and workers.

Turkish social insurance system has been subject to numerous reform attempts since mid-1990s due primarily to continuous deficits of the system which in turn is financed by transfers from the state budget. The problem was stemming mainly from early retirement. Dependency ratios, the ratio of pension recipients to active contributors, were around 2, where four contributors are needed to finance one pensioner in sustainable social security systems (Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2004). International organizations such as the World Bank, the IMF and the OECD have published numerous reports on the measures to be taken to ensure the

financial sustainability of the system, however, governments tried to solve actuarial imbalance by introducing minor changes to the system until late 1990s. The EU raised similar points as the financial problems of the social security system. In the 2002 Progress Report, for instance, the Commission stated that "Turkey should take the necessary measures to ensure financial stability of the social security system and effective co-ordination among the different social security institutions" (CEC 2002:95). In sum, Turkish social security system has been criticized on the financial grounds rather than the coverage and inadequate income support that it provided to the population covered.

It was the social-democratic led coalition government that managed to pass the comprehensive reform bill, Law No. 4447[3] in 1999 aiming at establishing the actuarial balance, changing the institutional structure of the social security system and introducing unemployment insurance for the first time in the history of Turkish social protection system. The crucial change was increasing the retirement age to 58 for women and 60 for men (with a transitory period for those who are already in the system). The institutional structure component was the establishment of Social Security Institution (SSI) that unifies three social security institutions, namely Pension Fund for civil servants, the Self-Employed Social Insurance Institution - BAGKUR for the self-employed; and the Social Insurance Institution - SSK for workers.

[3] Available at http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/Metin.Aspx?MevzuatKod=1.5.4447&MevzuatIliski=0&sourceXmlSearch=

The reform bill has been subject to the biggest debate on social protection system in Turkey. Although the implementation was delayed for years, the public debate was still crucial as it brought all stakeholders into the discussion and increased the visibility of problems in the field of social security (Buğra 2008). It was at the same time the change of the government in November 2002 since when Justice and Development Party (AKP in Turkish) is the governing party. AKP pursued the social security reform and the most comprehensive social security reform composed of four components, i.e., institutional structure, pensions, health, social assistance was introduced.

With regards the institutional component, existing three social security institutions were unified under SSI by the Law No. 5502[4] in 2006. Therefore, the fragmented institutional structure of the social security system has changed, which was a historical step towards improving the administrative capacity of the institution, eliminating problems of monitoring and provision of standardized services.

With regards to pensions, it was clearly stated that the ultimate aim was to ensure sustainability of the system and eliminating the fiscal burden of the existing system on state's budget due mainly to extremely low working periods (15 and 20 years for women and men). Although the retirement age had already been increased by Law no. 4447 albeit gradually for those who were in the system, it was increased further to 65 for both sexes to be implemented gradually until 2036 by The Social Insurance

[4] The full version of the Law can be found at http://www.csgb.gov.tr/birimler/sgk_web/html/sgk.pdf

and General Health Insurance Law No. 5510[5]. The number of days to be worked to be entitled to pension is increased from 7000 to 9000 days gradually (100 days for 20 years until 2028), replacement rate is fixed at 2 per cent, where it was variable according to years worked in the previous system punishing the longer years of working life (Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2008).

In sum, there has been a long debate on the reform of social security system in Turkey with strong opposition from the former president, trade unions and the opposition party. It was annulled by the Decision of the Constitutional Court, the old system prevailed for some time and only after several amendments were made to the original proposal it went into force. However, AKP government succeeded in keeping the original body of the reform, which is seen as an achievement of the single party government having the majority of the seats in the parliament. However, as the main aim of the proposal was securing the actuarial balance of the system and the social assistance component has never been realized, it is not possible to say that it introduces an approximation of the Turkish system to 'adequate income support' principle as far as pensions are concerned. That has not been the ultimate aim of the proposal anyway as underlined by interviewee 5 who worked in the preparation phase where the original proposal was the standard World Bank approach of three-tier system of benefits, which the government did not want to adopt.

Social assistance component of the social security reform was the most problematic and it was not realized at the end. The core problem in the field of social assistance

[5] http://www.csgb.gov.tr/birimler/sgk_web/html/sosyalsigvegensagsigkanunu.pdf

was that the system was open to arbitrariness and corruption due to the fragmented institutional structure composed of numerous public and private institutions providing overlapping assistance and lack of coordination and cooperation among them. This, in turn, was causing spending public money in an ineffective ways in alleviating poverty. This has been acknowledged by Regular Reports as well. In 2004 Regular Report, it was stated that "Existing structures to promote social inclusion are highly dispersed and there is insufficient coordination of activities. It is important to promote an integrated approach mobilising various governmental bodies and all relevant stakeholders in the process" (CEC 2004b, p. 112). In fact, interviewees 3 and 4 underlined this point in saying that the total number of recipients of in cash and in kind benefits given by the institutions was not known until recently.

The draft law on non-contributory payments prepared as a component of the social security reform was actually addressing most of the problems stated above. It proposed to unify all social assistance in "Directorate General for Non-Contributory Payments" in SSI that would solve the fragmented and uncoordinated structure of the system both in terms of assistance provided and service provider public institutions, namely Directorate General of Social Assistance and Solidarity (DGSAS), Directorate General of Foundations, General Directorate for Social Services and Child Protection and SSI.

The main aim of the law was defined as setting principles of the establishment of a social assistance system integrated with the social security system, building a common national database of social assistance, setting common definitions of the

poor, the assistance to be provided and objective eligibility criteria and thus achieving social assistance provision in efficient, transparent, fair and accessible manner. The core principle set out in the draft law was the establishment of a rights-based, universal, tax financed social assistance system. However, this component has never been realized and the Directorate General of Social Assistance and Solidarity become the core public institution with regards to social assistance.

In Turkey, there is no universalist, rights-based system of social assistance and there is no minimum income scheme. The only exception to this is the payments made under the Law No. 2022 to disabled and to those 65 years of age or older, which covers 1.3 million people in total as of September 2011 (SSI 2011). The payments, however, are very small: monthly 109 TL for old-aged, 219 TL for less than 70 percent and 328 TL for more than 70 percent disabled. Apart from that, the social assistance system is governed mainly by the Directorate General of Social Assistance and Solidarity (DGSAS) the aim of which is defined as alleviating poverty through the provision of non-contributory assistance to poor people outside of the coverage of social insurance system. DGSAS provides social assistance in cash (assistance and scholarships) and in kind (mainly in the form of meals, food, coal, medicine and clothing) to those in need through over 900 social assistance and solidarity foundations established at the local level in every province and sub-province.

DGSAS was established as 'Fund for the Encouragement of Social Assistance and Solidarity' affiliated to Prime Ministry in 1986 by Law no. 3294. It was a solidarity fund which carries the characteristics of charity organization covering some 900

local foundations governed by "Vakıf Mütevelli Heyetleri" (Executive Boards of Foundations) that 'help the poor'. In 2004, it was restructured as the "General Directorate for Social Assistance and Solidarity" by Law No. 5263, which transformed the fund into a public institution for poverty alleviation with an increased budget, having recruited experts and strengthened policy making capacity at the central level in addition to its existing institutional capacity at the local level through its affiliated foundations.

The definition of the target group and the standards of service provision by DGSAS have always been subject to criticism. Article 2 of Law no. 3294 defines the target group of the institution as 'those who are poor, those who are not covered by public social security schemes and not having pensions from those institutions, and those who can become productive and beneficial for the society by means of a little monetary support, or education and training'. In practice, the foundations was carrying out the tests (such as home visits) to assess the conditions of the applicant. As there was not a standard among foundations, the identification of the recipients as well as the mechanisms through which assistance is provided have been criticized as being arbitrary and open to personal and political nepotism and discrimination (see for example Şenses 1999, Özcan and Ayata 2002, Buğra and Keyder 2006). As a result, some recipients receive benefits from multiple foundations due to lack of an integrated system of DGSAS where recipients are registered and monitored. It is reported that recipients provide false declarations in order to get benefits when they actually do not need them as there was not a standard means test through which the

applicants would be assessed, some recipients also use personal contacts in executive boards of the foundations in receiving benefits (interviewees 2,3,4,7,9).

"The Integrated Social Assistance Project" (DGSAS web page) aimed at tackling these problems. The core activity of the project was the establishment of a 'common database' that would enable the staff at the central and local levels to run data inquiries on income, housing, health, family and other conditions of the applicants by using databases of relevant public institutions (such as SSI and Ministry of Health). Once the pilot phase carried out in Ankara is completed and the project will start running in full force, these inquiries will enable the institution to reach the those in need, will prevent corruption and thus there will probably be less room for ineffective use of public funds stemming mainly from arbitrary evaluations in decision making mechanisms of the foundations. The results in the implementation remain to be seen.

"Social Risk Mitigation Project" (SRMP) which was funded by the World Bank in order to "mitigate" the negative impacts of the structural reform programme implemented by the IMF had been instrumental in the transformation of DGSAS (interviewee 2). The project was implemented between the years 2002 and 2007 with a grant of 500 million USD to the DGSAS. It had four components: assistance component directed to those most affected by the economic crisis, institutional capacity component used mostly for the restructuring of the institution, conditional cash transfers (CCT) component directed at the poorest 6 per cent of the population in order to provide them with basic health and education services, and local

initiatives component aiming at supporting the poor to run their businesses. The CCT programme aimed to provide an incentive to poor families to keep their children at school and to receive basic health services. A cash payment was made to expectant mothers and families with children younger than six years when they visit hospitals for regular checks. To support schooling of children of poor families, a cash transfer was being made to families who send their children to school. Local initiatives programme aimed at supporting income generating and employment creating projects. It was underlined by the interviewees that SRMP was very successful in all four components. CCT was particularly successful in reaching the poorest segments of society and providing them with opportunities of basic health and education, which is crucial in addressing future poverty than the current one. CCTs and local initiatives programmes have continued to be implemented by the funds allocated to the institution upon the completion of the project. In the local initiatives component, income generating and employment creating projects have received the highest share (DGSAS and World Bank web pages, www.sydgm.gov.tr , www.worldbank.gov.tr)

In addition to public institutions, municipalities provide social assistance as well. As Buğra and Keyder (2005) point out, municipalities have become very visible in the area of social assistance since the mid-1990s. However, there are problems associated with the provision of social assistance by municipalities. First, as the municipal accounts are often not transparent, the source of the assistance may not be known and there may be a certain element of bribery in the relationship between the donators and the municipality. Second, there is a widely shared belief (see field study conducted in Buğra and Keyder, 2003) that "municipal social assistance could be and

probably is carried out in conformity with political interests in a way to maximize the chances of re-election of the party in power (Buğra and Keyder 2005:33).

Therefore, despite the changes in the institutions and the services provided in the area of income support, the narrative above shows that it is not known if and to what extent Turkish social protection system provides people with adequate income support especially if they are not covered by the social security system. This is mainly due to the fact that DGSAS is still not able to provide statistics on the population coverage and the amount of social assistance paid. Activities carried out by municipalities and NGOs are not organized and transparent to create an impact on poverty.

4.2.2. Changes in Inclusive Labour Markets

As 'inclusive labour markets' are mainly about segments of the society who are furthest away from the labour market and arrangements to help them to "enter or re-enter and stay in employment" (CEC 2008), this section will briefly discuss those segments and public employment policies addressed to them.

According to the latest Turkstat Labour Force Survey (LFS), of 72.5 million non-institutional population in August 2011, 53.7 million are 15 years of age or older. Labour force, however, is only 27.4 million due to extremely low labour force participation rate (51%). Low labour force participation stems from females as their labour force participation rate is less than half of than that of males (30 and 72,8 per

cent respectively). Women constitute less than half of the employed as well; of 24.8 million employed, 17.6 million is men and 7.2 million is women. Therefore, women in Turkey constitute the first group of the society who has limited access to jobs both in terms of labour market participation and employment. Low levels of female labour force participation may be explained by present low levels of educational attainment, particularly amongst women as they are also subject to other economic and cultural constraints (Ercan and Dayıoğlu 2010, ETF 2011)

As of August 2011, 43.6 percent of all employed, 84.8 percent of those employed in agriculture and 28.4 percent of those employed outside agriculture is informal. In agriculture, almost all women and 75 percent of men are informal. In non-agriculture, unpaid family workers and women self-employed are more likely to be informal. One fifth of wage and salary earners and employers are informal in non-agriculture regardless of sex. Informality divides Turkish labour market into a primary and secondary segment. The primary segment is composed of formal private sector, high-end finance and service occupations and public sector employment the total of which constitutes the 25 percent of total employment. Employees in this segment have formal contracts and enjoy higher job security with relatively higher wages than the rest of the employed. The secondary segment is composed of those who work in an unregistered way in agriculture and non-agricultural sectors with no job security as they remain unprotected by labour laws and social security system (Ercan and Tansel 2007, ETF 2011, Bölükbaşı and Ertugal, forthcoming). Thus, informal employees in the secondary segment are excluded from rights attached to work to a large extent.

Unemployment, the third factor for exclusion from the labour market, has been at the level of 10-11 percent in Turkey in the last decade hitting 18 percent in the aftermath of 2008 crisis in urban areas. Unemployment exceeds 20% when discouraged workers who gave up search because they do not believe that there are jobs available are added as proposed by Ercan and Dayıoğlu (2010). Young appears to encounter more difficulties in access to jobs given their unemployment rates have been twice the overall rates (23.3. percent in August 2011 in urban areas).

The synopsis above shows that women, young and informal employees are excluded from the Turkish labour markets to a large extent. Although Turkey does not have a systematic employment policy (Bölükbaşı and Ertugal, forthcoming), there have been several policy measures aiming at supporting women and young have been undertaken especially in order to tackle negative impacts of the economic crisis that began in 2008 in the form of "stimulus packages". The packages aimed to increase the employment rates of women and young by subsidizing their labour costs for a period of five years. The Law stipulates that for the newly hired women (above the age of 18) and the youth (aged 18-29), the Treasury pays 100 percent of the employer's social security premiums in the first year. The subsidy is reduced to 80 percent in the second, 60 percent in the third, 40 percent in the fourth and 20 percent in the final year. The employment package is also expected to expand formal economy employment since employers must register their newly hired employees with the social security institution From inclusion point of view, reductions in social security premiums can be seen as a positive change, the impact of which remains to be seen (Ercan and Dayıoğlu 2010).

A second policy change in the last decade was the enactment of new labour act no. 4857 in 2003. The preamble of the Law states its aim as "to modernise Turkish labour law in line with recent developments and bring about convergence with the EU *acquis*"[6] . The law mainly sought to address labour market flexibility and job security issues by introducing atypical contracts and flexible forms of employment previously not permitted under Turkish legislation. Apart from flexicurity, the law did not bring any changes for people who are excluded from the labour market (such as those who are not covered by the labour law).

Third, Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), whose predecessor was the public institution responsible mainly for job placements of the unskilled labour in Turkey and abroad, was restructured as the public employment agency in 2003 by Law No. 4904. After that, İŞKUR assumed a more active role in administering both active and passive labour market programmes, i.e., active labour market programmes (ALMPs), job brokerage, vocational counselling and unemployment insurance fund. ALMPs in Turkey were only introduced in the last decade by projects funded by the World Bank and the EU. The main Project that transformed İŞKUR into a provider of ALMPs is EUR 50 million EU-funded ALMP Project implemented in 2003-2006 period. By means of the project, İŞKUR staff and approximately 50.000 unemployed were trained. However, İŞKUR currently offers a limited range of services to a small group of the unemployed. As of July 2011, 1.5 million of 2.7 million unemployed is registered to İŞKUR. Only 211 thousand people have participated in vocational

[6] http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss73m.htm

trainings and 50 thousand people have participated in job counselling services in 2010. Thus, only 16 percent of the unemployed registered to İŞKUR and 9 percent of the total unemployed benefit from ALMPs. The services provided by İŞKUR still focus more on job brokerage and unemployment benefits than ALMPs where finding jobs for the disabled and ex-convicts is a priority (ETF 2011). It is important, however, to note that apart from disabled and ex-convicts, İŞKUR does not provide specific services for those excluded from the labour market. Moreover, there exists no empirical data regarding the effectiveness of ALMPs in Turkey in encouraging social inclusion.

Fourth crucial development in the area of employment policy was the "Action Plan" prepared by State Planning Organization (SPO). The main aim of the Action Plan is to strengthen the linkage between social assistance system and employment through carrying out three main activities:

- New applications for social assistance will be registered to İŞKUR's system by the institutions that receive the application,
- İŞKUR will contact those persons directed to İŞKUR by social assistance institutions,
- Special programmes will be developed by İŞKUR for them.

Following the Action Plan, the legal background is established mainly by means of protocols between institutions responsible for employment and social protection and the Circulars issued by the Office of the Prime Minister. It is expected that all people who applied for social assistance will have been registered in İŞKUR's database by

the end of 2011 and consequently İŞKUR will be able to distinguish specific groups in the total number of unemployed and to contact the disadvantaged to develop appropriate programmes. İŞKUR will employ job counsellors to contact and guide the disadvantaged to relevant services as envisaged by the Action Plan. The action plan is a clear reflection of "activation" policy pursued in Turkey. The idea of "not creating a poverty culture" and directing social assistance recipients to productive activities have always been in the agenda of SPO which will be discussed in the 'objectives' section below.

4.2.3. Changes in access to quality services

Founded in 1983 by Law No. 2828, the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK) is the main public institution in social services providing social services for children, old-aged, young, disabled, families, and women exposed to violence in need. Although SHÇEK aims to address vulnerable groups across almost all segments of society, its financial and institutional capacity has remained limited and thus it has not been able to reach its target groups adequately. Changes in the service provision by SHÇEK in the last decade will be discussed below.

First, in terms of child protection, the institution has placed a stronger emphasis on care in 'the family'. In annual reports since 2006, it has been stated that care in the family is better and cheaper than institutional care. It was estimated that the cost of a child in the institution as 900 Turkish liras where it is 300 Turkish liras in the family care option (SHÇEK 2006:33). Care in the family, on the other hand, has been

carried out in several steps. First option is protecting children within their families through providing families with benefits in cash and in kind instead of providing them with institutional care (such as orphanages). The number of children staying in orphanages decreased from 10.471 in 2006 to 4.596 in 2010. Institutional care policy has changed since 2006: orphanages hosting 20-25 children per room have been transformed into smaller and home-like units, called Children Homes and Affection Homes, where 3-6 children stay together. Second option is granting cash transfers to families should they get their children back from these institutional facilities. The aim here is to limit the rate of families' leaving their children under institutional care when the primary reason for leaving children was economic. When returning children to their own families is not possible, the children are given to foster families. The number of children protected in their own families or in foster families is nearly doubled since 2004. It is estimated that all these policies resulted in financial savings equivalent to the total costs of 480 institutions where 60 thousand staff would work (SHÇEK 2010:12). Hence, the main rationales behind this policy change were both financial (through cost-containment) and political (in the sense of supporting families as the prime care givers).

'Care at home' model was introduced for the disabled by Article 7 added to the Law No. 2828 on 01.07.2005. Accordingly, persons with heavy disabilities who are in need of long term care (which must be proved by a health report) can now be looked after at home by their relatives undertaking their cares. SHÇEK pays minimum wage (600 Turkish liras as until December 2011) to the carer. When the care is undertaken by a private care and rehabilitation center, the payment is doubled. Number of

disabled persons benefited from care at home service increased from 30 thousand in 2006 to 285 thousand in 2010 (SHÇEK 2010b:76). Number of private care and rehabilitation services increased from 10 in 2007 to 77 in 2010 and 4331 people stay in these centers as of December, 2010 (ibid, p.77).

In the area of disability, another policy change in the period under study was the establishment of the Administration for People with Disabilities in July 2005 through a new Law for the People with Disabilities (Law No.5378), focusing on health, education, rehabilitation, employment, care and social security problems of people with disabilities. This new institution is responsible for ensuring the coordination of all services and for policy making for disabled people.

In the field of health, inequalities in benefiting from health services stemming from different rules and regulations governing the three social security institutions and the problems of the Green Card system designed for financing health expenses of the poor were had been the two main problems in the system. The "Health Transformation Programme" inspired by the World Bank (interviewee 8) called for (i) integrating different types of hospitals under Ministry of Health, (ii) introduction of family practitioners system, (iii) strengthening the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Health, and (iv) a general health insurance system covering the entire population where premiums of those who earn less than the minimum wage would be paid by the state by Law No. 5510 (Ministry of Health, 2003).

There was more enthusiasm in the public about the health reform than the social security one especially on the ability to be able to go to "whichever hospital you want" (interviewee 8) as historically, different types of hospitals were providing services to different groups among the insured. The family practitioner system was seen as positive as it would provide people with easy access to basic health services in their neighbourhoods without having to commute to large hospitals in large urban centers. The new generalized health insurance system (Law No. 5510) was important in providing universal health care provision for the first time in Turkey regardless of employment status. However, the high level of contributions paid, especially by those whose incomes are only slightly above the minimum wage, was criticized. Two other contributions to be paid to hospitals and on prescriptions were criticized as being discriminatory and heading towards the privatization of health services in the end (TTB 2003).[7] This situation intensified historical concerns about the quality of health services in Turkey where free treatment in public hospitals is associated with long waiting lists and low quality services where private hospital may not be accessible due to high costs for patients.

4.3. Objectives

Although the incidence of poverty remains widespread in Turkey, the state has a quite limited interest in poverty alleviation, and fighting poverty has never been defined as a strategic, programmatic or policy objective in the official documents (this point has been underlined by interviewees 3, 4, 6, 9 as well). Although the governments in power during the period under study declared in their official

[7] In the implementation, the privatization concerns proved to be justified as private hospitals were free to set their rates for treatments and the amount of contributions they would ask from patients.

documents (such as the Government Programme and the Action Plan) combating poverty and improving income distribution among their priorities[8], there was no attempt to launch a comprehensive national strategy for combating poverty. This has not been the case despite the increasing manifestation of poverty during the period under study especially after the 2000-2001 economic crisis. As the narrative above shows, the government's responses were limited to (i) project based interventions such as Conditional Cash Transfers, free school textbooks, meals, (ii) emphasizing the central role given to the family further, and (iii) supporting the social assistance system.

Interview data based on interviews carried out with key policy makers show that the bureaucrats often underestimated the role the state should play in the area of poverty reduction. The lack of poverty alleviation policies has been justified by the economic constraints Turkey was operating under especially in hard times, such as those around the economic crises. The scarcity of public resources, high public indebtedness, high interest payments on standing debt and the stand-by agreements with the IMF that included a quasi fiscal rule, for example of maintaining a 6.5% surplus in the primary budget for purposes of interest payments, have constituted the rationales for keeping public social expenditures at lower levels and redistributive policies underdeveloped. Under these circumstances, the projects funded by the World Bank and the non-comprehensive, arbitrary provision of social assistance have been seen as the most feasible ways to combat poverty (Interviews 1, 2, 3, 4).

[8] See Government Programme of the 59th Government, http://www.basbakanlik.gov.tr/docs/hukumetprgtr.doc and Action Plan http://www.akparti.org.tr/

Yalman (2011) points out that "it is difficult to say that there has been an acknowledgement of the phenomena of poverty as a major policy concern in the country itself" (p.228) despite increasing poverty and widening inequalities in Turkey in the process of the structural adjustment process since the 1980s. He also argues that as there has not been a tradition to develop policies aimed to alleviate poverty in Turkey, the existing 'policy regime' is shaped by "the spirit, if not the letter, of the conceptual categories developed by the international agencies, the World Bank in particular" (p.228). Therefore, the fact that the policy 'regime' with regards to poverty alleviation in Turkey has been influenced, if not entirely structured, by the conceptual framework proposed by the World Bank, featured repeatedly in almost all of the interviews as well.

As a comprehensive national poverty alleviation strategy does not exist, the narrative below relies on policy documents the most important of which are development plans, medium term programmes and strategic reports of the institutions in the area of poverty reduction in order to be able to draw conclusions on the change and continuity in objectives.

A survey of the official documents starkly reveals that policymakers in Turkey assumed that the poverty problem would be automatically solved by securing economic growth through its knock-on effects. It has been widely accepted that economic growth would inevitably make the poor better off. The emphasis on economic growth was particularly noteworthy in the first five year development plan covering 1963-1967 period in which all policy objectives depended on the estimation

of 7% economic growth rate. Although there were no references to poverty, income distribution was underlined and "providing a fair income distribution at a higher income level" (SPO 1963) was defined as a strategic goal in the first Plan. Such focus on economic growth continued to remain central to social development in the successive two five year development plans (SPO 1968, 1973) as well.

There was a change in the language of the development plans starting with the fourth plan. This plan focused primarily on combating inflation in an environment of economic crisis (SPO 1979). The following fifth development plan covering the years 1985 and 1989 reveals the influence of ongoing neo-liberal restructuring with clear references to market-based development. The emphasis shifted from economic growth and income distribution to competitiveness and efficiency. The policy objective of social security system was declared to be the maintenance of actuarial balance and the key principle in the field of social assistance was volunteerism. In all fields of social protection, it has been underlined that a cost-benefit analysis of the policies should be implemented, that public policies should not cause welfare dependency and laziness, and that transfer payments must be limited where possible (SPO 1985). All these references to social protection clearly attest to the successive governments' underlying logic of keeping a minimum role for the state in all areas of social policy.

The term poverty was explicitly mentioned in the seventh plan (SPO 1996) for the first time where social assistance was defined as the policy tool for poverty alleviation. The priority was strengthening the institutional capacity of the Social

Solidarity Fund so as to serve people whose incomes are under the poverty threshold. It was the eighth plan that was the first of its kind that provided an analysis of social protection policies and institutions. It has been stated that there has been a rising need for social assistance and social services due to "urbanization, internal migration, high inflation, poverty and changes in the family structure". The Plan, however, conceded that service provision remained limited as a result of fragmented institutional and financial structure and lack of coordination and cooperation among public institutions (SPO 2000, p. 110).

The ninth plan was the first plan that used the term "social exclusion". Increasing quality of life and inclusion of people and groups at-risk of poverty and social exclusion was defined as an explicit policy priority with a clear emphasis on prevention of poverty and activation (SPO 2007, p.88-89).

It must be borne in mind that although development plans reflect the overall approach to public policies, defining a priority in the development plan does not necessarily mean that this priority will translate itself to concrete policies. In Turkey, there are no policy documents on defining poverty as an objective with quantified targets as in the case of EU social inclusion strategy.

Medium-term programmes prepared for three-year periods since 2006 are another set of significant policy documents announcing governments' policy priorities. In the first and second medium-term programmes, "strengthening social inclusion" was defined as one of the priority areas of the programme (p.4 and p.3 respectively). In

the third medium-term programme, social inclusion is discussed under "strengthening human development and social solidarity" heading and was not defined among the central priorities. This structure is kept in the subsequent medium term programmes as well. Until the last medium term programme covering for the period 2011-2013, the priorities defined were the same with slight differences in wording. Overall, the priorities were (i) access to education and health for all, (ii) enlarging coverage of social security system, (iii) ensuring cooperation relevant institutions including municipalities and NGOs, (iv) defining objective criteria in determining the people in need, (v) providing social services for the disabled, women victims of domestic violence, ex-prisoners and migrants with a view to increase their employability, and (vi) strengthening 'childcare under family surveillance model' for children in need of protection. With regards to social assistance, the official approach was summarized as "priority will be given to those activities which will prevent the formation of culture of poverty, enhance employment opportunities, enhance employability and transform individuals from being needy to productive and financially self sufficient" (SPO 2006, p.21). This statement was kept in all the programmes reflecting the dominant approach towards poverty.

In the medium term programme for the period 2009-2011, a distinction between those who can and who can not work was made. It was stated that "the poor who are unable to work will benefit from regular social assistance mechanisms" (SPO 2009, p. 53). This statement was crucial as providing social assistance on a regular basis rather than ad hoc benefits was mentioned in a policy document for the first time in Turkey.

In medium-term programmes, poverty alleviation has been dealt with a triangle of economic growth with cash transfers for those who cannot work and employment for those who can. This resembles the World Bank's poverty alleviation strategies, which, as interviewee 7 argued, is easy to understand given the fact that most mid-level bureaucrats in SPO have worked in projects jointly conducted with the World Bank. The more recent cohorts of policy makers working with the SPO, interviewee 7 added, firmly believe in neo-liberal values having adopted the language of 'poverty culture' and 'welfare dependency'.

4.4. Procedures

As the discussion above shows, policy making in the field of poverty and social exclusion in Turkey suffers from a lack of a comprehensive and integrated poverty alleviation strategy. Such finding, however, reflects the general pattern of policy making in Turkey which is highly centralized and hierarchical. Successive governments, however, have perceived poverty as a mitigation problem rather than a redistribution one. The procedures that will be discussed in this section include the coordination of relevant public institutions given the multi-dimensional character of poverty, involvement of international institutions and the EU, and the involvement of NGOs.

First, as regards the degree and nature of coordination among public institutions, as EU Progress Reports also point out (see for instance 2004 Progress Report where it was stated that "existing structures to promote social inclusion are highly dispersed

and there is insufficient coordination of activities" (p.112)), there has been minimum coordination and cooperation among the institutions in the area of social exclusion, which limit the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided. A new Ministry of Family and Social Policies has been established very recently in June 2011, merging a number of institutions responsible for social services (SHÇEK), social assistance (DGSAS), Directorate General for Women, the Administration for Disabled and the Directorate General for Family with a view to overcome the institutional fragmentation in this field. The impact of such merger, however, is yet to be observed.

Secondly, as discussed in Section 4.2.1 above, the DGSAS has been restructured as the main public institution for poverty alleviation in the last decade. This reflects two crucial points in policy making procedures: first, it reveals the understanding of poverty problem as a mitigation one rather than redistribution one, second it shows how the programmes implemented by the international institutions strengthened the former. As discussed in detail in the evaluation of the poverty alleviation programmes report prepared by the Turkish Social Sciences Association (2004), the perception of poverty as a mitigation problem that would be dealt by safety nets has been strengthened, rather than challenged, by the UN institutions as a result of which the institutional capacity of DGSAS as the primary public institution providing social assistance to the poor has been strengthened. The impact of the EU has been limited to the impact of social assistance programmes on alleviating poverty due to the patchy institutional structure rather than introduction of a discussion on the redistributive policies.

The role of NGOs reveals the patchy institutional structure as well. NGOs have been perceived as social assistance providers along with programmes and projects implemented by international organizations rather than actors to be consulted in the policy making processes. Especially successive governments under the AKP, NGOs in the field of poverty alleviation are seen as providing social assistance to the poor as the extension of public social assistance schemes. In this context, NGOs in the poverty field are expected to function as charities (i.e. mitigators) rather than as stakeholders to be consulted in the process of policy making. As Buğra and Keyder (2006:224) argue "NGOs of an Islamic character are especially successful in mobilizing charitable donations and channelling them to destitute people". Deniz Feneri Association is a clear example of such NGOs, which have become providers of welfare along with the sporadic state institutions.

At the end of 2004, the process of drafting of Turkey's Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM) was launched. In aiming at identifying and outlining the principal challenges candidate country are facing in combating poverty and social exclusion, the process of preparing the document results in drawing up a balance sheet or an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of existing policies with a view to identifying policy priorities. In this way, the process aims at streamlining concerns about poverty and social exclusion across all relevant policy fields and help coordinating and consolidating the institutional interventions. In this context, the EU Coordination Department of the MoLSS was responsible for the drafting of the JIM with the cooperation of all relevant public institutions, social partners, universities and NGOs.

The process began with involving nearly sixty institutions working in the area of poverty and social inclusion in total. In this context, five dissemination seminars and numerous thematic meetings with the participation of high level bureaucrats and experts were organized. The process of Turkey's drafting of the JIM has not been successfully finalized due to the problems regarding the design of policies addressing Roma people's integration. Minister of Labour and Social Security (as EU Affairs Department of his ministry was responsible for drafting) was reluctant in inserting a chapter on the current status of the Roma people in Turkey on the grounds that the Turkish Constitution was based on citizenship rather than ethnic origin. As a result of numerous official communications with other ministries and a series of high level meetings, it was decided that the situation of Roma people can be mentioned without having a separate heading. This was not accepted by the European Commission on the grounds that it was in the template of the JIM and that all other candidate countries included a chapter allocated to the Roma in their JIMs. As a result, the process came to an unofficial end (interviews 3 and 4).

However, the JIM process contributed to a new process of bringing together public institutions in this field. In addition to increasing awareness on concepts such as social inclusion, disadvantaged groups and inclusive society, the JIM process through highlighting the insufficiencies of public policies in terms of scope, budget, and effectiveness of social policies in eliminating social exclusion and poverty, encouraged public institutions to start working together for the first time (interviewees 3, 4, and Buğra 2008: 221).

4.5. Instruments

This study makes a distinction between financial instruments provided by the EU on the one hand and others employed through the domestic budget. In terms of the funds dispersed by the EU, the major financial instrument for implementing the principles and priorities of the EU's social inclusion strategy in Turkey was the Pre-Accession Instrument for Turkey (2002-2006) that later replaced by IPA for the period 2007-2013. For human resources development component of IPA[9], Turkey has benefited from approximately 300 million Euros up to now 20 per cent of which is devoted to fund policies under the social inclusion priority axis.

The projects in the social inclusion field have focused mainly on institution building in the 2002-2006 period. Numerous projects were implemented by public institutions. Under IPA, there will be funding for grant projects as well. The priorities are defined as increasing employability of the disadvantaged people and strengthening the capacity of İŞKUR mainly with regards to providing job consultancy services specifically designed for the vulnerable groups.

In addition to the EU funds, the allocations from the government budget as measured in terms of public social expenditures have increased as well as Table 4 indicates

[9] Human Resources Development Operational Programme of Turkey is available at http://ikg.gov.tr/web/en-us/oppr.aspx

Table 4: Public health and social protection expenditures by program as a share of GDP, 2001-2010

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Health	3,17	3,74	3,81	4,00	3,98	4,07	4,07	4,49	4,96	4,97
Social protection	5,72	6,29	7,17	7,03	7,29	7,12	7,38	7,23	8,33	8,64
Pensions	5,28	5,63	6,40	6,32	6,54	6,37	6,66	6,51	7,46	7,68
Social assistance	0,24	0,24	0,28	0,27	0,38	0,40	0,41	0,51	0,75	0,76
Total	8,89	10,03	10,98	11,03	11,27	11,19	11,45	11,72	13,29	13,61

Source: SPO, Public Sector Social Expenditures Statistics.

The only public expenditures not covered in Table 4 is İŞKUR's spending on ALMPs which consist mainly of job-training, vocational courses, and apprenticeship on which the expenditure is very low (around 0.15 percent of GDP) and expenditures on stimulus packages introduced in 2008 as a response to economic crisis. Stimulus packages involved various measures including short-term working payments, temporary public employment programmes, and social security premium incentives for the recruitment of young people, women and the disabled. ILO estimated the fiscal costs of the overall stimulus package as a ratio to the GDP as 0.99% in 2008, 3.41% in 2009, and 2.23% in 2010 (ILO 2010, p.20).

CHAPTER 5

EXPLAINING DOMESTIC CHANGE IN TURKEY: THE INTERPLAY OF INSTITUTIONS, IDEAS AND INTERESTS

In the narrative above, we have seen that policies affecting social exclusion and poverty in Turkey have undergone a change in the last decade especially since 2002 when successive AKP governments were in office. In this section, the direction and content of change in social inclusion policies will be examined through the interplay of ideas, interests and institutions. As Bölükbaşı and Ertugal (forthcoming, p.10) adapt from Bache (2008), ideas will be understood as 'shared beliefs, values, conceptual language and legitimate justifications; interests will refer to 'preferences and material interests of individuals or groups; and institutions will denote 'formal and informal procedures whereby decisions are adopted, rules structuring the content and sequence of policy-making, rules allocating power among actors'.

5.1. Institutions

There can be several institutions that may play a role in policy changes in the area of poverty and social inclusion. First, as Bölükbaşı and Ertugal (forthcoming, p.18) point out, in the field of social policy and employment, "the most significant feature of Turkey's political framework concerns its 'simple polity' and majoritarian character, whereby authority and power is to a great extent concentrated in the government" (p.8-9). This character of the Turkish political system strengthened

further since 2002, when AKP got the majority of seats in the parliament and consequently formed the single-party government three times in a row. As AKP held more than a simple majority in the parliament for almost a decade by now, there have not been long discussions in the parliament relating to legislative changes in the area of poverty and social inclusion. Parliamentary deliberations were restricted to limited debate on the legislative proposals which were instigated by the opposition parties, as was the case in the parliamentary sessions where the Labour Law had been changed in 2003. These debates, however, have not made any difference in terms of the content of the bill proposed that became law as the law was passed in the parliament in a form that was very close to the original proposal.

A second institution that may play a role in the legislative process is the Presidency. As the parliament elects the President for seven years and general elections are held in every five years, the President may constitute a veto player when s/he is not a member of a political party that has the majority in the parliament. This was the case until August 2007 where the previous president had used his veto powers at various times especially in the process of changing the Labour Law and reforming the system of social security. Since the current President was elected by the AKP-led parliament, the 'simple polity and majoritarian character' of the Turkish political framework is reinforced further. This implies that the direction and the content of change in any policy field are determined by preferences of governments in power, which were led by AKP, especially since 2007.

Third, as reflected in the development plans, the Turkish state has never assumed the major role of providing welfare for its citizens. The social protection system preferred to deliver this public good through the institutions family, community and municipalities. Such policy stance that had been institutionalized has been institutionalized even further especially in the current environment shaped by neoliberal forces from the 1980s. Prime Minister Erdoğan stated in his speech on 18 March 2003 in his presentation of the Government Programme of the 59th government that "the AK Party defines its political identity as 'conservative democrat'" (p.1). In effect, social policy preferences of the AKP are characterized by "an amalgam of neo-liberalism with social conservatism with an Islamic touch" (Buğra and Keyder 2006:213). It rests upon three pillars: (i) neo-liberal economic policy that gives a residual role for the state, (ii) the centrality of family and (iii) importance of communal solidarity strengthened by Islamic values. In the volume which presents the AKP's (unofficial) manifesto, Akdoğan (2004:13) clearly states this position:

> "although it is believed that the state should carry out social policies especially for the disadvantaged (mağdur in Turkish) and in need (muhtaç in Turkish), the priority should be given to private sector, voluntary organizations, charities and NGOs".

As is clear from the manifesto, giving a residual role to the state has been the dominant approach in the implementation. This political choice is not new, however. It must be noted that perceiving poverty alleviation as a responsibility of the state has never been developed in Turkish society as was discussed above. As Gürses (2009:222) points out " Having strong ties with the Ottoman charity tradition, state's responsibility to fight against poverty is in a way delivered to the family, to

charitable organizations, to non-governmental organizations (NGO) and the municipalities". After the 1980s, the ruling governments under ANAP, a neo-liberal right-wing party, has employed a "conservative-philanthropic approach to poverty" (Çelik 2010:69, Buğra 2008:205-212) as well. Boratav (2003) argues that it was a part of a policy of creating "urban, living in scatter homes, poor and consumer" (p.153) class in cities outside of the protection of labour law and unions and "helped" by the state in the form of in cash and in kind benefits from the foundations (affiliated to DGSAS (Social Solidarity Fund then) established in 1986), green card for health expenses, packed food from ANAP municipalities etc. The same "conservative-philanthropic" approach was continued by Refah Partisi in mid-1990s with a clear emphasis on municipalities this time, which can be defined as clientelism rather than philanthropy as the poor are supposed to vote for the relief they get from the municipality. This continued with AKP-led municipalities, too. The difference in the last decade was the strengthening of clientelism flavored philanthropic charity type poverty alleviation 'policy' in Turkey by means of AKP supported NGOs (such as Deniz Feneri Association) and municipalities belonged to AKP with a lack of sensible veto power for nearly a decade.

The second component of social policy approach of AKP is the centrality of family within the 'welfare mix' (Esping-Andersen, 1990). It can be clearly observed from the government programme where the Prime Minister stated that Turkish society overcame its problems and economic crisis by means of its strong family ties. He clearly declared that "the government will prioritize family oriented policies" (Programme of 59th Government, 2003:17). The family-centered social policy

approach of the AKP is discussed in more detail in the party programme[10] where the idea is to support the role of the family in providing social protection to its members. As discussed above, special emphasis has been paid to family in its role of protecting children. This was reflected in social services policies of SHÇEK especially with regards to supporting families with cash to look after their children at home. A similar policy was providing families with disabled child with a certain regular income.

Where the family is unable to provide care, it is the communities that are responsible to look after the poor, the children, and the destitute. As Buğra and Keyder (2006) point out, "Islamic elements in the ideological orientation of the ruling party appear to be very useful in motivating and mobilizing civil initiatives towards providing social assistance" (p.224). A good example is Deniz Feneri Association, a NGO guided by Islamic values, which became a sizeable organization in the last decade.

Similarly, municipalities have become more powerful channels of social assistance in cash and in kind. Although there is no reliable data on social expenditures of municipalities in Turkey, it is well known that they provide the poor that they themselves define with various forms of social assistance in cash and in kind (meals in Ramadan, food packages, coal, clothing etc). Thus, the state clearly left its responsibility in the realm of poverty alleviation to the family and the community.

[10] Available at http://www.akparti.org.tr/site/akparti/parti-programi

Actually, what the state was doing in AKP years was engaging in charity activities on a larger scale (interviewees 2, 3, 4). Strengthening the institutional capacity of DGSAS instead of passing the Law on non-contributory payments (which was the fourth component of social security reform) that collects and compiles data on all social assistance under the SSI was the reflection of this approach. It was a clear policy choice against instituting the SSI having exclusive responsibility for social assistance: it would mean that social assistance would be rights-based (Buğra 2008, interviewees 4, 9). However, the assistance provided by DGSAS have never been rights-based and has been open to corruption and discretionary decisions regarding, for example, the identification of those in need and timing and methods of delivery of assistance. Integrated social assistance project that has recently started to be implemented is supposed to solve the problems of defining the poor and conducting the means-test. However, it does not change the charity-like provision of social assistance in Turkey.

Fourth, apart from the government, changes in the bureaucracy in the last decade should be noted as an institutional factor shaping the policy priorities and outcomes. Two distinct groups in the bureaucracy must be distinguished. The first group is the top level bureaucrats, i.e., undersecretaries, deputy undersecretaries and general directors who are politically appointed. For these policymakers thinking and acting in the same way with the politically elected elite is like second nature – they acquire the policy priorities and behavioral patterns of the political elite. By the end of a decade of single party rule within the context of a predominant party system their actions have increasingly been in tune with those of the political elite and were so

long practiced that they seem almost innate. Mid-level bureaucrats, however, are a less homogeneous group with respect to their diverse backgrounds, political predispositions and the units they work within. Experts who work in EU departments (all ministries have departments responsible for EU affairs whose main responsibility is to oversee the relations between the relevant Directorate General in the European Commission) are more 'Europeanized' than the rest. In the interviews, experts who worked in the MoLSS EU Department, which was responsible for drafting of the JIM Turkey, were the only ones whose ideas were very close to the components of EU social inclusion agenda. "We are different than other experts as we go to meetings abroad, we see what is going on in the EU and we learn from others" (interviews 3, 4). Such observations corroborate the findings by Jacobsson (2004) and Heidenreich (2009) on the learning effects of participation in OMC through peer reviews and European committees that strengthen trans-national exchange processes. Learning effects are the highest for EU experts as they draft, manage and participate in EU financed projects as well, they work closely with their peers in other public institutions and they are more exposed to ideas and policies in the EU more than other experts in the ministries. Moreover, as Heidenreich (2009) puts it, they start questioning their national approach and start developing new ways of problem solving (p.21). In addition, all interviewees mentioned that the terms used primarily by the EU (such as 'social inclusion', 'activation', 'disadvantaged groups') started to be used especially by the experts, working in the EU departments. This finding corroborates the evidence presented in the Europeanization literature (e.g. Radaelli 2003:53) which may explain the existence of "cognitive convergence" among Turkish experts in the area of poverty and social inclusion.

Learning and socializing processes do not necessarily bring policy change in the Turkish case, however. Experts are only needed "when there is a technical issue, otherwise we even do not know what is going on at the high level" (interviews 3, 4). This point was underlined by Radaelli (2003a) when he argued that "convergence in talk may not produce convergence in decisions" (p.46). In sum, it can be said that EU experts are the ones who are Europeanized in terms of learning and socializing processes the most and the rest of the experts remain in the realm of dominant policies with their own technical jargons in their institutions. These experts still think that the EU accession process has had institutional changes resulting in strengthening of their human resource capacities as individuals and policy making capacities of the institutions (interviews 2-7).

These observations are complemented others when observing the process of the drafting of the JIM in Turkey. Interviewees 2-5 who were involved in this process pointed out that the state was being revolutionary for the first time in Turkey in the sense of bringing all institutions in the field together. Such observation is in line with those of the Europeanization literature where the EU leads to "new forms of communication and cooperation between previously separated domestic policy arenas" (Heidenreich 2009, p.18). Likewise this process is similar to those described by Zeitlin (2005: 447) where the "OMC stimulated improvements in horizontal or cross-sectional integration across formally separated but practically interdependent policy fields". Interviewees 2-7 added that "if there had not been JIM, we would have never met our peers, you see, we did not meet even once after the JIM process

stopped". As an explanatory note, peers here were not only bureaucrats working with various ministries involved in the JIM process but also experts from NGOs and trade unions. The JIM process, therefore, can be defined as an "incremental institutional transformation" as Heidenreich (2009:18) put it. A similar transformation has been occurring in the management of IPA funds as public institutions, municipalities, and NGOs have become the beneficiaries of EU funds.

5.2. Ideas

As discussed above, Turkey has never had a comprehensive and consolidated national poverty alleviation strategy combining various policy interventions addressing different dimensions of poverty. Poverty alleviation was seen as a derivative of economic growth until 1980s. After 1980s, however, with increased incidence of poverty in the neo-liberal period characterized by economic liberalization, privatization and deregulation of labour markets, policy makers began to think that the problem of poverty could be solved through a strong social assistance system. Citing countless anecdotal evidence on the inefficient use of resources allocated to social assistance and strong narratives of the poor receiving all kinds of benefits, proponents of the neo-liberal policy paradigm had gained ground emphasizing the laziness and welfare dependency of the poor. Thus the powerful idea was not to create welfare dependants as in Europe and providing people with jobs instead. Although this is in line with "activation" which is the common policy discourse, interview evidence shows that these ideas had already been internalized among policy circles *before* the EU accession process began. In the interviews, none of the bureaucrats except for those who work in the ministerial EU departments made

a reference to active inclusion policies of the EU. Interviewees gave examples of anecdotal evidence from their lives, their families and their neighbourhoods. It seems that workfare rather than welfare has been a discourse in Turkey, which probably rooted in the neo-liberal restructuring in 1980s.

In his study with AKP officials in Ankara, Dönmez (2011) aims to depict a picture of AKP's vision of social exclusion and poverty within a broader picture of the worldview of the party. He finds out that the party is a strict follower of free market economy, which allows for only a restricted role of the state in the regulation of the economy. It sees poverty as the failure of the individual rather than that of state or market. It is conservative with strong elements of Islam, resembling a Calvinist-like worldview attaching importance to being hardworking and having religious and moral values. As a consequence of their Calvinism, they think that people can escape from poverty if they work hard. For those who cannot work, on the other hand, it should be the state or charitable institutions that should provide welfare.

According to Buğra and Keyder (2006), the changing allocation in the budget of DGSAS from social assistance to projects aiming at employment creation reflects a similar world view:

> In fact, government authorities in Turkey, like their liberal counterparts elsewhere, repeatedly stress that social assistance in the form of unconditional grants entails the danger of fostering 'dependency'. 'Teaching people how to fish rather than giving them fish' is a slogan which is constantly repeated in social policy circles, where a 'right to income' largely remains an alien concept (p.223).

When asked to identify means of adequate income support, the interviewees referred to pensions and social assistance where pensions was a right yet social assistance was not. Assistance should be 'given' to those who cannot work such as old aged and the disabled. Possibility of having a welfare regime "like in Europe" would not work in Turkey as "now Europeans try to undo those welfare policies" (interview 7). A similar understanding can be observed from development plans as discussed before.

The dominant idea in the realm of inclusive labour markets, on the other hand, has been flexicurity in the last decade. As explored in Bölükbaşı and Ertugal (forthcoming), the idea of flexicurity, understood almost exclusively as flexibility, has been the dominant discourse among policy makers in employment policy making in Turkey. Özdemir and Özdemir (2006) associate recent changes in the Turkish labour law with "the discourse of flexibility" (p.313) within the broader neo-liberal discourse.

As regards access to social services, the interviewee from SHÇEK (interviewee 1) was strongly in favour of the policy changes occurred in the institution especially with regards to supporting families to take care of their children as she thinks that "family is the best for a child". With regards to access to social services, she did not refer to the EU's social inclusion agenda at all. Her understanding of 'exclusion' was closer to 'discrimination' as she said "we cover everyone as much as our budget let us do so". In the drafting of the JIM, it was obvious that "access" was a foreign concept for the Turkish bureaucracy. Not being able to have access to a public good or service was understood simply as physical access, i.e., limited transportation

networks especially in villages and Eastern regions and limited access of the disabled.

5.3. Interests

This section summarises the preferences of dominant interests in the area of poverty which are the government, the municipalities and NGOs. As discussed in section 5.1 on institutions above, as a liberal conservative party, AKP's interests were in restricted public provision of welfare and supporting the municipalities, NGOs and families as welfare providers. Both the successive AKP governments at the national level and their counterparts at the municipal level carried out philanthropic rather than rights-based social assistance programmes, family centred social services, and a more flexible labour market policy. Public provision of in cash and in kind social assistance mainly through DGSAS has been in line with AKP's interests since such assistance has been perceived as 'given by the AKP' rather than the state. Soup kitchens of AKP-led municipalities especially in Ramadan have also been clear examples of visible social assistance to the poor by the AKP. This was the primary reason for cancelling out the social assistance component of the social security reform that envisaged the establishment of a rights-based, universal, tax financed social assistance system and investing in the institutional capacity of DGSAS instead. Therefore, the provision of social assistance as a charity-like service rather than a right serves the political interests of AKP at the national and the municipal level.

The public provision of welfare, on the other hand, is limited given limited budgets allocated to social assistance and social services. As Buğra (2008) underlines provision of social assistance through DGSAS was not incompatible with AKP's ideology as it follows from charity-like provision of welfare that has been carried out by predecessors of AKP. It must also be noted that as Gürses (2009:222) points out "In Turkish social policy tradition an outlook regarding the alleviation of poverty as the main responsibility of the state has not been developed yet". It can be observed from a survey conducted by TÜSEV (Turkish Third Sector Foundation) in 2006 on philanthropy in Turkey revealed that only 38 percent responded that poverty alleviation is mainly the responsibility of the state. For the rest of the attendees, it was either the rich segments of the society, charities or families.

The social security reform and the introduction of general health insurance as a universal and rights-based system can be seen as incompatible with philanthropic and community based social policy understanding of AKP. However, the reform has actually been driven by IMF and World Bank with a view to ensure actuarial balance of the social insurance system as discussed above. Buğra (2008) underlines the importance of 2001 economic crisis that increased the visibility of poverty and the AKP had to respond to electoral pressures coming from poorer sections of the society.

There have not been strong veto players against AKP in the area of poverty. The opposition party has not been very active in proposing a rights-based approach to poverty alleviation (interviewee 4). NGOs and private sector has been attached to

system through corporate social responsibility, campaigns and tax deductions (Buğra 2008). There was not much adaptational pressures stemming from the EU except for the requirement for every candidate country to complete the process of drafting of the JIM and the preparation of a national poverty alleviation strategy both of which are repeatedly brought to the attention of the Turkish government in the Commission's assessments of this policy field (see Progress Reports since 2004).

The participation of NGOs has been commonplace in the OMC on social inclusion in the EU as it provided a novel crucial political opportunity structure for them to participate in the policy making process. As de la Porte and Pochet (2005) points out "the anti-poverty associations are not as well anchored into the national contexts as the social partners….they therefore have a more genuine motivation to take advantage of the window of opportunity offered by the social inclusion OMC" (p. 383). This was not the case in Turkey as NGOs were not involved in the process of drafting the JIM.

In sum, the dominant policy paradigms were provision of welfare to those who need without creating a poverty culture and welfare dependency, the structuring institutions were AKP governments, municipalities and NGOs supported by them, and the empowered interests were the interests of these three institutions mainly in the form of political power to ensure their re-election.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

This section summarizes the findings on the direction, degree and nature of change in principles, objectives, procedures and instruments of Turkish poverty and social inclusion policies and identifies the role played by the EU. It aims to unpack domestic change in the principles, objectives, procedures and instruments of Turkish poverty and social inclusion policies by studying the interplay of the structuring institutions, dominant policy ideas and powerful interests in the area of social exclusion in Turkey that collectively determine policy outcomes. It then concludes with a set of findings on the direction, degree and nature of change in Turkey's poverty and social exclusion regime and the role played by the EU therein. The degree of change will be defined with reference to the categories of operationalizing domestic change in the Europeanization literature: absorption, accommodation, transformation, inertia and retrenchment.

First, in terms of the ***principles*** of poverty and social inclusion policies, first, the institutionalization of activation can be seen as accommodation as employment has been used as a tool to tackle poverty *and* this did not involve a change in the essential features of domestic policies. However, it must be noted that the direction and content of changes in the poverty and social inclusion agenda and ideational change that has brought this change seem to have started earlier than the starting of the EU accession process. Yet, the EU played a role through the progress reports and the

strategic reports jointly prepared by the Turkish and European Commission bureaucrats, capacity building activities in the public sector through which mid-level bureaucrats come in contact with their colleagues from member states and the European Commission and learn about policies in this area both at the member state and EU level, and additional financial resources provided by the EU.

Changes in the three pillars of active inclusion, that is, adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services vary in terms of direction and the content. With regards to adequate income support, the recent changes in the Turkish social security system in the direction of longer working life and lower replacement rates imply a policy change. This change can be defined as transformation as (i) merging three social security institutions under one roof is a radical change realized in spite of strong opposition from the opposition party, trade unions (except for the trade union confederation that is close to the AKP), and occupational civil society institutions, and (ii) the change affected all formal employees and their dependants, which constitutes nearly 80 percent of the population. The direction of the change is in line with EU objectives in terms of sustainability of pensions system as financial sustainability of the former social security system of Turkey had been criticized in the EU in the Progress Reports[11] . The question, however, is to what extent this change is caused by the pressures of EU accession process. Interview data reveals that the impact of the OECD, the World Bank and the IMF were both earlier and more influential than that of the EU. Social security reform was one of the main components of the economic programmes

[11] Progress reports are available at http://www.avrupa.info.tr/AB_ve_Turkiye/Muzakereler,Regular_Reports.html

implemented under the surveillance of the IMF in the 2000s the main aim of which was ensuring the actuarial balance of the social security system so as to eliminate its negative impact on the state budget. Thus, it is not easy to argue that social security reform was a response to pressures of EU membership.

Changes in the social assistance system implied a policy change mainly with regards to institutions in the field. The Fund providing public social assistance was restructured as a General Directorate with increased budget as well as more and more qualified staff. With the recent introduction of a social assistance database to enable means-testing, social assistance expenditures have started to be provided under a more structured way. The SRMP was crucial in the restructuring of the institution. Interviewees (2, 7) said that the discussion in thematic groups in the JIM process was an important trigger although "the problems in social assistance system were already known before the JIM process and the studies to have a computer-based means-tested system had already been discussed in the institution". Therefore, we can conclude that the EU might have played a role in the transformation process towards a more efficient institutional system of social assistance mainly by the Commission's regular reports and discussions in the process of drafting the JIM even though it was not the most influential actor.

With regards to inclusive labour markets, we can conclude that this policy area is characterized by accommodation as although there has been virtually no change in the functioning of the labour market for those who are outside of the realm of formal jobs, the "stimulus packages" for women and young can be seen as the first policies

designed for specific groups encountering particular difficulties in access to jobs. As Bölükbaşı and Ertugal (forthcoming) argue the EU seems to accelerate the process of designing employment policies even though the driving force has been tackling unemployment.

Changes in access to quality services point to accommodation as well particularly in the area of health and social services. The main change in the field of health was the change towards a greater degree of universalism caused mainly by the introduction of general health insurance as opposed to the former system of fragmented health services according to employment status. Even though this change is welcomed by the EU as can be inferred from Progress Reports, it has been brought by the impact of the World Bank and the IMF as the main actors in the design of the social security reform including the health component

In terms of the changes in the ***objectives*** of the Turkish social inclusion agenda, the absence of a national integrated strategy on promotion of social inclusion that takes into account EU objectives throughout the period of the study imply that this policy area is characterized by inertia. Although the lack of a national social exclusion strategy has been criticized continuously since the 2003 Regular Report, there has never been an attempt to formulate a strategy. The implicit "policies" of poverty alleviation, i.e., a combination of provision of social assistance for the poor mainly by municipalities and NGOs and supporting family as the primary carer has been continued and strengthened.

In terms of the changes in the ***procedures***, absorption can be observed clearly. The JIM process has contributed to the cooperation among public institutions and with NGOs to a lesser extent. As this cooperation did not continue when the JIM process was blocked, we can argue that European "ways of doing things" are incorporated but did not modify the domestic structures completely. It must also be noted that this cooperation did not result in finalizing the JIM. Interviews revealed that changes in the minds of experts do not necessarily reflect itself in the results (interviews 2,3,4,5,8).

Finally, with regards to **instruments**, changes refer to accommodation as even if policies remained domestic, the use of EU funds in accordance with the EU objectives in the social inclusion field and with a view to strengthen institutional capacities of the institutions in the field are crucial. Almost all interviews underlined the importance of EU funds in supporting the institutional capacity of the policy making apparatuses. Social expenditures as a share of GNP have increased as well.

Overall, the analysis on the degree, nature and direction of domestic change in poverty and social inclusion regime in Turkey in the last decade and the role played by the EU show that the change carries the ideology of the current government with a neo-liberal discourse strengthened further by the interventions by World Bank and the IMF. The impact of the EU has been mainly in terms of learning triggered by the JIM process. Hence, we can say that three mechanisms through which the OMC may (or may not) facilitate change at the domestic level, i.e., 'facilitating transnational learning', 'reshaping the inertia and path-dependent dynamics of national

institutions', and by 'changing 'the domestic constellation of actors' (Heidenreich and Zeitlin 1999, p.2) were all in action in Turkey.

In conclusion, therefore, in line with Heidenreich's (2009) study, domestic regimes function according to their internal dynamics and external factors cannot change them directly. Domestic change in the context of candidate countries occurs in rather limited and indirect ways and only gradually and this statement, again, echoes Zeitlin's (2005: 472) findings for the members states where "there are relatively few concrete cases at national level of direct or first-order policy learning [which] is a natural consequence of OMC's contextualized benchmarking approach"[12].

[12] It must be noted, however, this conclusion is valid in the context of Europeanization. As it has been discussed mainly in chapter 4, the impact of the World Bank on poverty regime in Turkey both in terms of conceptualization and implementation is visible, denoting a strong case for internalization of a policy regime. I am grateful to Prof. Yalman for this vital reminder.

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APPENDIX

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☐

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Saner
Adı : Fulya
Bölümü : Avrupa Çalışmaları Programı

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Tracing Domestic Change in Turkey's Poverty and Social Inclusion Regime: A Case in Europeanization?

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: .....