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TURKISH TRADE UNIONISTS AND TURKEY'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

ABSTRACT

In all the discussion of Turkey's accession to the EU little attention is paid to the views of workers. This paper provides a statistical analysis of the views of over 6,000 Turkish trade union members on Turkey's EU membership. Parameters are estimated using multilevel probit models where the nested structures of workers into trade unions and federations are taken into account since they shared some joint characteristics because of belonging to these organisations.

The analysis confirms the extensive disillusion with the EU found elsewhere in Turkish society but more interestingly it disconfirms an idea that those inside the EU may too easily assume to be the case: that it is those with what might be considered modernist characteristics among the Turkish population who are most likely to be in favour of EU entry. The idea seems to chime well with assumptions that the EU is a progressive, modern force. But whatever the validity of such a view, EU entry is not in fact found to be the favoured goal of the young and the best educated: it is older workers who are the most likely to support entry and those who are educated to the highest level the most likely to oppose it. Amongst the main three trade union federations there is also a greater propensity of members of trade unions affiliated to Hak-İş (the Islamic federation) to support entry than those in Türk-İş (centre right) or DİSK (historically the most militant).

Introduction

The question of Turkey's accession to the European Union is one that ebbs and flows as a matter of public debate in both member countries and in Turkey itself. Whereas British support for Turkey to join the EU has remained generally positive both France and Germany have been opposed, the former French President Sarkozy fuelling resentment in Turkey by claiming Turkey

was not part of Europe. An often unspoken but related point of criticism – the three main ones being that Turkey is too big, too poor and too Muslim- has been the view that Europe is, by definition, Christian, the Catholic Church having wanted reference to its ‘Christian roots’ enshrined in the EU constitution. Turkey first applied to join the then EEC over half a century ago and membership talks opened in 2004. Within the country, there is increasing disaffection with the long drawn out process of complying with the requirements imposed for EU entry, especially in view of the accelerated accession of other countries, some of which did not exist half a century ago, and not least because of the accession of Cyprus, which now blocks Turkey’s entry. Under successive AKP governments, which first came to power in 2002, an initial enthusiasm for membership (dubbed by some a ‘golden age of Europeanisation’, Onis (2008:1)) has tended to give way to a more open-ended view of Turkey’s future, at times entailing the prospect of closer relations with other Muslim countries and with former Soviet countries. Such options have become more appealing as Turkey’s share of trade with the EU has fallen and its political stock has risen, notably in the Middle East. Opposition to Turkish accession from within Europe has been by no means constant. France, post-Sarkozy, is now in favour; the future Pope Benedict XVI, once firmly opposed, also later claimed to favour entry. Throughout, though, Turkish entry has been blocked and, within Turkey, frustration, if not outright opposition to entry, has resulted.

The views of people in Turkey on the question of Turkish accession to the European Union, as opposed to those of their government, rarely make headlines outside Turkey but they have been periodically assessed in different surveys such as *Eurobarometer* and the German Marshall Fund of the United States’ *Transatlantic Trends*. Understandably these surveys have been mainly concerned to monitor changes over time, the latter finding a fall in the proportion of Turks who thought membership would be a good thing from 73 per cent in 2004 to 38 per cent in 2010 (Transatlantic Survey 2010). Seldom have such reports taken the form of multivariate analyses

however, the first to claim to have made such an analysis being Carkoglu 2003. No less pertinent to the present purpose is that the views of trade unionists have been typically neglected. Yildirim et al 2008 have analysed the stance adopted by a limited number of trade union leaders and officials in three of the main Turkish trade union confederations, but their analysis does not stretch to the views of rank and file members. Such studies as have been conducted of the opinions of Turkish trade unionists themselves are clearly outweighed by those of Turkish business organisations and politicians (Atan 2004; Diez et al 2005; McLaren and Bac 2003) and they tend to have been local, commissioned by only one trade union confederation and to have usually taken the form of small scale surveys (for instance a survey reported by Muftoglu and Cetin (2005) was commissioned by a trade union affiliated to the DİSK trade union confederation and was confined to 373 trade unionists in Istanbul).

The objective here is to examine the views of Turkish trade unionists on the country's accession to the EU and related issues making use of a major survey of over 6,000 trade unionists that was conducted under the aegis of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and three of the main Turkish trade union Confederations, DİSK (confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey), Hak-İş (Confederation of Turkish Righteous Trade Unions) and Türk-İş (Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions)¹.

Yildirim et al (2008) argue that although Turkish labour organisations have oscillated in their approach to the incorporation of their country into the European Union there are some broadly definable differences between them.

Türk-İş, for example, which is by far the largest of the three confederations, is not a homogeneous confederation but in supporting European Union entry, especially with respect to labour rights, it tends to be mindful of issues concerning national sovereignty (Cyprus and the Kurdish question)

and to also have reservations with respect to privatisation, a significant number of its members operating in state economic enterprises and the public sector. For their part DİSK and Hak-İş are much the same size but clearly differ in their stance on European Union entry.

DİSK, which was founded as a breakaway from Türk-İş in 1967, was closed down by the military in 1980 in response to its militancy in the 1970s (Nichols and Sugur 2004: 149-52). Now less militant, it is still regarded as left wing among the confederations. It is supportive of the European Union in so far as it may facilitate new democratic rights, the rule of law and more progressive social and welfare policies but it still regards the European Union in class terms as an organisation of capital. In keeping with this, in 2008 *Birleşik Metal-İş* (a left DİSK affiliate representing workers in the metal industries) published a declaration which emphasised that the economic crisis arose out of the capitalist system and was a crisis of capital for which Turkish workers should not be forced to pay (Ozgun and Muftuoglu 2011: 1).

Hak-İş was founded in 1976 and the early articulation of its Islamist principles stressed the common interests of employer and employee and a negative stance to the European Union. Its current pro European Union stance is in line with that of the often dubbed ‘mildly Islamist’ government (though it is in fact increasingly authoritarian) and it is heavily influenced by an understanding that membership offers increased protection against undemocratic intervention by powerful secular forces, not least the military. As Yildirim et al report ‘*Hak-İş* has been the most ardent defender of the European Union in the Turkish labour movement’ (2008: 378). This would suggest that if their members were in tune with the orientation of their union confederations, those in *Hak-İş* unions would be most likely to be in favour of Turkey’s accession to the European Union, those in DİSK the least in favour and that those in *Türk-İş* would be found somewhere in between.

Our first task is to examine how closely the views of members of trade unions affiliated to these three confederations correspond to these positions on the question of Turkish entry to the European Union and how far these views may be a function of certain features of the memberships, for instance their demographic, occupational or industrial composition. Following this some related issues are examined: respondents' views on changes likely to follow European Union entry and on who they thought would benefit from this.

Trade Unionists' Support for Turkey's Membership of the European Union

In order to examine support for Turkey's membership of the European Union respondents were asked: 'Are you in favour of Turkey becoming a full member of the European Union?' Respondents who were members of trade unions affiliated to *Hak-İş* were clearly more likely to be in favour (64 per cent) than members affiliated to the other confederations, *Türk-İş* (53 per cent) and especially those in DİSK (46 per cent)

Table 1 Whether in favour of Turkey becoming a full member of the EU

Percentages	yes	no	don't know	base
<i>Trade union characteristics</i>				
<i>trade union confederation</i>				
Hak İş	64	28	9	2183
Türk İş	53	39	8	2660
DİSK	46	38	16	1600
<i>position trade union member</i>				
shop steward	59	35	6	1642
not	52	39	10	4474

Demographic and individual characteristics

age

15-25	48	39	13	341
26-30	49	37	14	872
31-35	54	34	11	1104
36-40	54	37	9	1316
41-45	59	34	2	1336
46-50	59	34	7	795
51 and over	62	29	9	256

sex

male	56	35	8	5050
female	49	34	17	954

birthplace

rural area/village	56	34	10	1993
small or medium sized town	56	35	9	2252
large town/city	52	37	11	1838

Percentages	yes	no	don't know	base
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Individual characteristics (cont.)

present location

rural area/village	41	46	13	201
small or medium sized town	61	30	9	1939
large town/city	53	37	10	3592

age ceased full time education

13 or younger	58	30	12	941
14-16	52	36	12	896
17-18	56	36	9	2069
19-21	56	35	10	1034
22 or over	53	39	9	958

occupation

manager	63	31	6	273
professional/technical	49	39	12	409
other white collar	52	38	9	888
skilled manual	58	34	9	2429
semi skilled manual	54	34	12	533
unskilled manual	48	38	14	788
other	53	35	12	714

percentages	yes	no	don't know	base
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Sector, industry, workplace and organisational characteristics

sector

private	55	35	10	2574
public	56	36	9	2577
other	50	35	16	464

industry

mining and quarrying	57	35	8	349
manufacturing	53	38	10	1403
electricity, gas and water	57	34	9	640
construction	50	37	12	147
Transport	63	29	8	480
financial	51	34	14	35
information and communication	57	32	11	164
public administration	58	33	9	528
education, health and social work	49	38	13	187
tourism, hotel and restaurant	57	25	18	60
agriculture	46	49	6	199
other	55	34	11	1697

workplace status

independent	56	35	9	3022
part of nationally owned organisation	55	36	10	1393
part of European MNC	48	43	10	357
part of non European MNC	46	41	13	160
don't know	54	31	15	653

percentages	yes	no	don't know	base
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Sector, industry, workplace and organisational characteristics (cont.)

Workplace size (employees)

1-9	56	32	14	355
10-49	53	34	13	728
50-149	50	37	13	1033
150-499	56	36	8	1382
500 or more	56	35	9	2717

political identity

left	51	47	2	1390
centre left	53	46	1	418
centre	53	46	1	918
centre right	55	44	1	394
right	57	41	1	2217

Note: Political identity is included under the heading Sector, Industry etc. for convenience. Respondents were presented with a five point scale labelled 'left' at one end and 'right' at the other and asked to indicate how they would describe themselves. The terms 'left', 'centre left' etc have been attributed.

Descriptive analysis suggests that stewards were somewhat more likely to favour membership (62 per cent) than others (53 per cent). The full results of this and other descriptive analysis are provided in Table 1. Among other things these results suggest that male trade unionists are more likely to favour European Union membership than female ones; older trade unionists are more likely to favour membership than younger ones; those with less formal education are more likely to be in favour than those who are more highly educated; that whereas those born in rural areas/villages are more likely to favour membership than those born in large towns or cities, it is those who currently live in rural areas/villages who are the least likely to do so; and that those who

work for Turkish owned companies are more likely to favour membership than those who work in multinational companies, whether European owned or not.

A probit type of probability model was estimated to examine what effects these and other variables had on the probability of being in favour of European Union membership when other variables were controlled for (details of methods adopted are available from the authors). The assumption in such a probit model is that all observations are independent. Here, the data set collected for trade union members has a hierarchical (nested or clustered) character. Workers may be the level 1 units in a higher level structure where the level 2 units are the trade unions and level 3 units are the trade union federations. In this nested structure, the workers will be sharing some common characteristics because of being members of the same trade unions and federations. If one ignores this type of cluster correlation of the nested data and applies the usual probit analysis, then estimates of Type I error are likely to be too small, i.e., the standard errors of coefficients will be underestimated, leading to an overstatement of statistical significance. Furthermore, the interpretation of findings at the individual level as the same at the group level will be incorrect since the effects of group level predictors are confounded with the effects of the group dummies. We therefore estimate a multilevel probit model where level 1 observations are the union members, 6614 workers; the level 2 units are 11 trade unions; and level 3 units are the three federations.

Group effects are estimated using dummy variables for trade unions and federations in the usual probit model. With the exception of Tek Gıda- İş the parameters for all other trade unions were estimated significantly. Being members of 1: *Hizmet- İş (Hak-İş)*; 2: *Öz İplik-İş (Hak-İş)*; 3: *çelik-iş (Hak-İş)*; 4: *Özgıda--İş (Hak-İş)*; 5: *Tes--İş (Türk-İş)*; 6: *Belediye--İş (Türk-İş)*; and 7: *Teksif (Türk-İş)* had a positive impact on the probability of favouring EU membership. The base

group was a mixed group of unspecified trade unions. The estimates for being members of three federations were also significant. Compared to the base group being a member of the *Türk-İş* federation or being member of DİSK had a negative effect but being member of *Hak-İş* had a positive impact. All these results convinced us of the need to estimate a multilevel probit model.

Table 2 Three-level Probit Models in favour of Turkey becoming a full member of the EU

Models	Model 1 (Status variable)	Model 2 (Status+Demographic and Occupational variables)	Model 3 (Status+Demographic and Occupational +sector, organizational and industry variables)	Model 4 (Status+Demographic and Occupational +sector, organizational and industry+political variables)
Random effects	Variance (Standard deviation)	Variance (Standard deviation)	Variance (Standard deviation)	Variance (Standard deviation)
<i>trade union</i>	0.127 (0.355)	0.113 (0.337)	0.119 (0.344)	0.096 (0.309)
<i>trade union confederation</i>	0.038 (0.196)	0.041 (0.203)	0.032 (0.180)	0.032 (0.179)
Fixed effects	Parameter (Standard error)	Parameter (Standard error)	Parameter (Standard error)	Parameter (Standard error)
Intercept	0.273 (0.169)	-0.379 (0.281)	-0.141 (0.380)	0.100 (0.413)
<i>position trade union member</i>				
shop steward	0.398 ⁰ (0.060)	0.255 ⁰ (0.073)	0.273 ⁰ (0.082)	0.238 ¹ (0.088)
Demographic and individual characteristics				
<i>age</i>				
15-25 (base)		0	0	0

26-30	0.047 ³ (0.147)	0.001 (0.167)	0.066 (0.184)
31-35	0.247 ⁸ (0.144)	0.236 (0.164)	0.291 (0.179)
36-40	0.129 (0.142)	0.140 (0.163)	0.133 (0.178)
41-45	0.289 ⁵ (0.144)	0.308 ⁶ (0.167)	0.302 ¹⁰ (0.183)
46-50	0.326 ⁴ (0.157)	0.363 ⁵ (0.182)	0.395 ⁵ (0.199)
51 and over	0.418 ⁴ (0.205)	0.594 ¹ (0.243)	0.547 ³ (0.260)
<i>sex</i>			
female	-0.074 (0.087)	-0.060 (0.101)	-0.117 (0.110)
<i>birthplace</i>			
rural area/village (base)	0	0	0
small or medium sized town	-0.077 (0.077)	-0.026 (0.087)	-0.057 (0.095)
large town/city	-0.087 (0.081)	-0.024 (0.092)	-0.008 (0.101)
<i>present location</i>			
rural area/village (base)	0	0	0
small or medium sized town	0.719 ⁰ (0.185)	0.725 ¹ (0.217)	0.861 ⁰ (0.230)
large town/city	0.643 ⁰ (0.181)	0.623 ⁰ (0.213)	0.664 ⁰ (0.226)
<i>age ceased full time education</i>			
13 or younger (base)	0	0	0
14-16	-0.151 (0.110)	-0.216 ⁹ (0.126)	-0.253 ⁷ (0.138)

17-18	0.032 (0.092)	-0.033 (0.106)	0.008 (0.118)
19-21	0.037 (0.107)	-0.039 (0.122)	0.005 (0.134)
22 or over	-0.144 (0.111)	-0.309 ¹ (0.128)	-0.267 ⁶ (0.139)
<i>occupation</i>			
<i>manager</i>	0.188 (0.161)	0.145 (0.187)	0.098 (0.197)
professional/technical	-0.049 (0.132)	0.014 (0.155)	0.011 (0.164)
other white collar	-0.139 (0.093)	-0.148 (0.103)	-0.117 (0.115)
<i>skilled manual</i>	0	0	0
Semi-skilled manual	-0.145 (0.136)	-0.172 (0.164)	-0.219 (0.176)
unskilled manual	-0.281 ⁰ (0.099)	-0.263 ² (0.114)	-0.301 ² (0.125)
other	0.032 (0.106)	0.068 (0.134)	-0.009 (0.145)
<i>Sector, industry, workplace and organisational characteristics</i>			
<i>sector</i>			
other		0.191 (0.150)	0.160 (0.106)
private		0.220 ² (0.097)	0.101 (0.160)
public		0	0
<i>industry</i>			
mining and quarrying		0	0
manufacturing		-0.087 (0.159)	-0.254 (0.179)
electricity, gas and		0.052	-0.118

water	(0.200)	(0.222)
construction	-0.383	-0.650 ³
	(0.269)	(0.291)
transport	0.279	0.097
	(0.207)	(0.229)
financial	0.071	-0.169
	(0.458)	(0.480)
information and communication	-0.013	-0.263
	(0.273)	(0.294)
public administration	0.137	-0.009
	(0.205)	(0.229)
education, health and social work	-0.024	-0.146
	(0.256)	(0.277)
tourism, hotel and restaurant	0.550	0.360
	(0.383)	(0.404)
agriculture	-0.065	-0.118
	(0.243)	(0.267)
other	-0.051	-0.244
	(0.163)	(0.183)
<i>workplace status</i>		
independent	0	0
part of nationally owned organisation	-0.062	-0.067
	(0.087)	(0.095)
part of European MNC	-0.170 ⁰	-0.120
	(0.154)	(0.166)
part of non-European MNC	-0.457 ³	-0.393 ⁹
	(0.215)	(0.229)
don't know	-0.136	-0.009
	(0.118)	(0.133)
<i>workplace size (employees)</i>		
1-9	0	0
10-49	-0.171	-0.299
	(0.180)	(0.193)
50-149	-0.359 ⁴	-0.426 ⁰

			(0.173)	(0.186)
150-499			-0.179	-0.391 ³
			(0.171)	(0.185)
500 or more			-0.346 ³	-0.552 ⁰
			(0.164)	(0.177)
<i>political identity</i>				
left				0.020
				(0.118)
centre left				0.063
				(0.155)
centre (base)				0
centre right				0.187
				(0.161)
right				0.034
				(0.108)
AIC	8196	6242	5025	4294
BIC	8223	6403	5311	4598
logLik	-4094	-3096	-2466	-2097
deviance	8188	6192	4933	4194
Number of observations	6116	4667	3750	3201

Table 2 reports the results of Multilevel Probit Models. Model 1 in Table 2 makes clear that significant differences remain between stewards and ordinary members after affiliation to union confederation has been controlled for.

Model 2 in Table 2 confirms that the difference between members and stewards persists when the attempt is made to take into account the possible effects of a number of demographic and

occupational variables. Some of these effects are themselves significant, like the dummies introduced for age which suggest that workers aged over 40 are more likely to be in favour.

Model 3 in Table 2 confirms that the differences between members and stewards persist when the attempt is made to take into account not only the demographic and occupational variables but additional variables that relate to sector, industry and organisation, some of which effects are again significant in their own right. It is possible that this result is a function of the closer proximity of shop stewards to managements who are likely to be in favour of EU entry. However this is speculation. Apart from anything else, we have no evidence for managers, only trade unionists. Rather than speculate further we have simply taken care to control for this difference when seeking to assess the effects of other variables.

Of the coefficients of the industry variables in Table 2 model 3 only the coefficient of the transport variable is significant in its own right, those in the industry being more likely to have a positive view. Of the occupational categories considered only the impact of unskilled work is significant in its own right, those in unskilled work being less likely to have a positive view. And the private sector has a significant positive effect (although this was not apparent in the descriptive analysis and disappears in model 4).

The full model also suggests that those who live in small towns or cities are more likely to favour membership than those who live in villages. On one interpretation this is in line with the idea that the European Union represents modernity to Turkish people and that those who are more 'modern' (in this case, urbanised) will be likely to be more in favour.

Such an interpretation does not sit happily with other results. For instance, it is the old not the young who are more likely to be in favour of European Union entry; and it is not those who are the most educated. Ironically, it is the young and the better educated who are precisely the groups that the Turkish state focuses on when it solicits European investment in Turkey. One recent appeal from the Investment Support and Promotion Agency of the Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry depicts Turkey as a country which is not only the 'fastest growing economy in Europe' but one that has 'Over 25 million young, well-educated and motivated labour force', with '60 % of the population ... under the age of 35' and 'approximately 450,000 students [who] graduated from around 150 universities and other higher education institutions in 2009' (Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry 2011). Whereas such groups are attractive to European inward investors they are not necessarily attracted to European Union entry.

That those who work in independent Turkish-owned enterprises are more in favour than those in non-European MNCs might also not be thought to sit well with the interpretation that aspects of modernity are associated with a pro European stance (the parameter of working for European MNCs did not prove to be significant in Model 4). Similarly the finding that it is those in the smallest workplaces who are more likely to be in favour than those in larger ones does not link well to any general idea that those who would be most in favour are the ones who are most readily characterised in terms of certain features often attributed to modern society.

Comparison with the regression analysis of the Turkish population conducted by Carkoglu 2003 is not strictly possible. Among other things, Carkoglu lacked controls for union affiliation, birthplace, occupation, private/ public sector, industry, size of workplace and included controls for party political preference, geographical region, and he included various attitudinal measures (2003: 184), which he considered 'the most influential of all variables in the model'. These

included pro European Union attitudes, religiosity, and how respondents thought life would change if Turkey became a member of the European Union².

Even so, Carkoglu shares our conclusion that, as he puts it, ‘Surprisingly ... being younger does not mean that individuals will be more supportive of the EU membership’ (2003:186). Carkoglu finds level of education is not significant but he derives from this a conclusion that is again similar to our own: ‘this finding points to the fact that younger generations who are typically more educated are not inculcated with a pro-EU predisposition’ (2003:186).

Table 3 How views have changed in the last five years on Turkey joining the EU

Percentages	more in favour	no change	more against	difference between in favour and against	base
<i>Trade union characteristics</i>					
Trade union confederation					
HAK-İŞ	46	41	13	33	2160
TÜRK-İŞ	26	56	18	8	2618
DİSK	24	57	19	5	1585
position trade union member					
shop steward	36	49	15	21	1620
not	31	52	17	14	4424

Our own multilevel probit analysis further suggests that the differences between the members of unions affiliated to the three confederations, and between shop stewards and members, are robust. There would also seem to be a relatively good fit between the position taken by the leaderships of the three confederations (as described by Yildirim et al) and those of their memberships³. Moreover, *Hak-İş* members, who are most likely to favour European Union entry, have been moving in the same direction as their leadership, which has been more in favour of European Union membership in recent years. Respondents were asked ‘Have your views changed in the last five years on Turkey joining the European Union?’ Members in unions affiliated to Hak-İş were

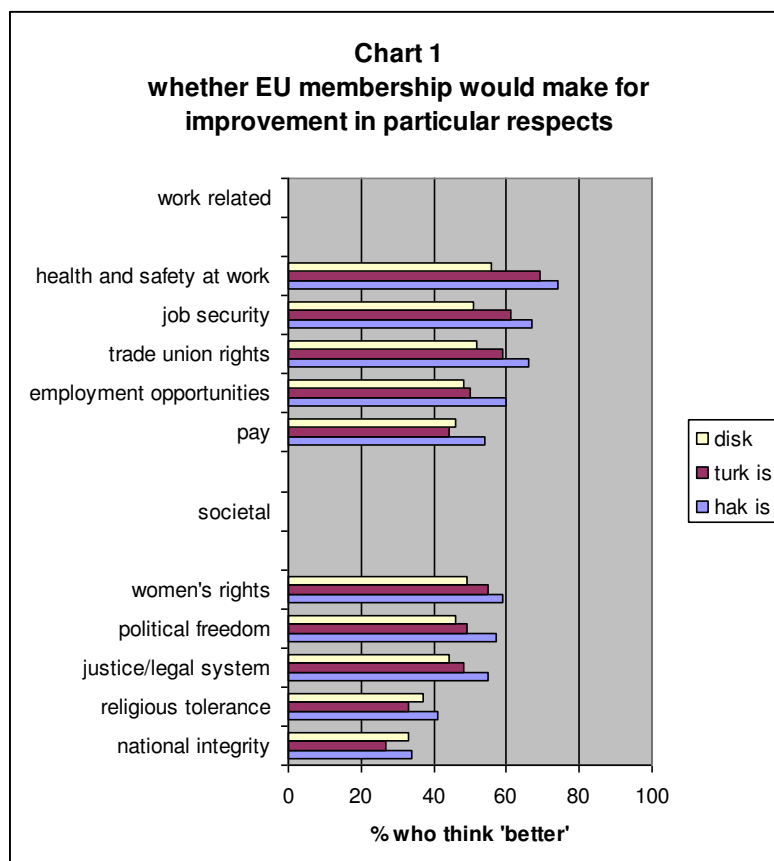
more likely to have changed and about half of Hak-İş members reported that they had become more in favour compared to only about a quarter of those in Türk-İş and DİSK (Table 3).

Further differences between Trade Unionists in the Three Confederations.

In order to further explore differences between trade unionists in the three confederations, respondents' views were examined on particular changes they thought were likely to follow European Union entry and also their views on whose interests they thought would be served by European Union entry.

Views on particular changes likely following European Union entry.

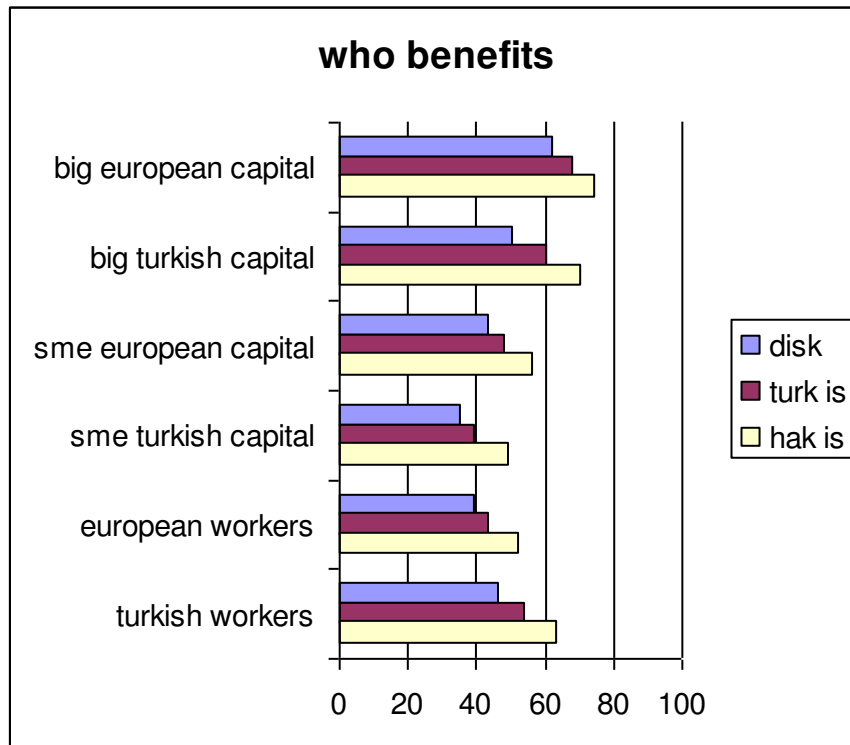
Respondents were asked how they thought membership of the European Union would be likely to affect a number of matters in Turkey: these were health and safety at work, job security, trade union rights, employment opportunities, pay, women's rights, political freedom, justice/legal system, religious tolerance and national integrity. Overall, given the choice to reply with respect to each of ten matters that they would get 'better' or that there would be 'no change' or that they would get 'worse' respondents tended to reply that they would get 'better' (Chart 1).



Further consideration of the proportions expecting a 'better' outcome suggest that whichever confederation their union was affiliated to, respondents were somewhat more likely to think that work related issues would improve than that those issues referred to here as 'societal' would. Amongst work related issues, with the exception of pay, around half of all respondents thought things would get better with European Union membership, irrespective of which confederation their union was affiliated to.

Amongst the five 'societal' issues, the lowest level of support was for the idea that national integrity would get better (with Türk-İş members being even less convinced about this, which is in line with the confederation's official stance). Support for the idea that religious tolerance would increase as a consequence of European Union membership was also muted across all three confederations. In fact, not only were respondents less convinced that religious tolerance would increase as a consequence of European Union membership but answers to another question suggest that they were also less likely to associate the European Union with religious tolerance than with rights at work. Respondents were asked what the European Union meant to them. Did it mean religious tolerance? Did it mean rights at work? Members of DİSK affiliated unions strongly agreed or agreed that it meant rights at work more than it did religious tolerance (55 percent to 42 per cent); so did Türk-İş affiliate members (60 per cent to 36 per cent); and so did those in Hak-İş (70 per cent to 44 per cent).

Chart 2. Who would benefit from Turkey becoming a member of the European Union.



It is also apparent from Chart 2 that, on all issues, members of Hak-İş affiliates were most likely to expect improvement usually followed by those in Türk-İş and DİSK, this being in line with the general pattern of support for full European Union membership (Table 1).

Who Benefits?

In order to examine which interests respondents thought would be served by European Union membership they were asked whether they thought particular interests would benefit from Turkey's entry to the European Union, whether they thought that they would not benefit or whether they were undecided. The particular interests asked about were those of European big business, Turkish big business, European small and medium enterprises, Turkish small and medium enterprises, European workers and Turkish workers.

Members in all three confederations were more likely to say that, out of all the different interests, big European capital would benefit, followed by big Turkish capital. Members of all three confederations were also more likely to think that European small and medium capital would benefit than small and medium Turkish capital. As against this, members of all three confederations were more likely to think that Turkish workers would benefit than that European Union workers would (Chart 2).

As far as differences between the different confederations are concerned, DİSK members, in conformity with their lower level of support for European Union entry, were the least likely to see benefit accruing to any of the interests; Hak-İş members, in conformity with their higher level of support for European Union entry, were, in the case of each of the interests, always the most likely to do so.

Discussion

Members of the three federations differed in their propensity to favour Turkey joining the European Union. But in the case of all three federations although they were more likely to see benefits from this accruing to European big capital and to a lesser extent Turkish big capital they were somewhat more likely to think that entry would benefit Turkish workers than existing European Union ones. There is, however, a consistent pattern whereby the members of unions affiliated to Hak-İş are most likely to be in favour of Turkey's European Union accession and those in DİSK affiliates the least likely to be so. The relation persists even after a considerable number of controls have been introduced. It is not possible to determine whether a causal link runs from union leaderships to members or from members to the leadership but whichever the case it might be thought that there is a reasonable fit between leadership stance and member opinion on the desirability of European Union entry.

There is also a consistent difference in the response of shop stewards and members on the question of Turkey's European Union accession: shop stewards are more likely to be in favour. This persists whatever the union confederation and irrespective of a number of variables that might sensibly be looked to in order to find an explanation - age, level of education, occupation, industry and other differences.

From a broader sociological perspective, and in the light of a frequent underlying assumption within the European Union that the European Union represents a modernising project for Turkey, it is instructive to see that support for this project is not always most in evidence amongst those with apparently 'modern' affiliations and characteristics. It does seem to be the case that those who live in urban areas are more likely to be in favour of accession than those who live in villages and rural areas but it is not the young and the most highly educated who are in the vanguard of support. The most educated are less likely to be in favour than those who are less educated; and it is older workers - those over 40 - who are more likely to be in favour. This applies when a number of other factors are taken into account, including whether respondents lived in villages, towns or big cities (Table 2). On this evidence the image of an emerging young, highly educated and pro-European workforce is not easy to sustain.

Turkey's 75 million population rivals that of Germany and exceeds those of France and the UK. This and the fact that its birth rate is higher than in these other countries is something that threatens some of those opposed to the country's EU entry. But half of Turkey's 75 million population is less than 29 years old. It is of some interest therefore that younger workers are somewhat less likely to favour accession to the EU. In this cross sectional study we lack the qualitative data that could cast further light on why this might be. However, a study of over 300 unionised [mostly men] workers in seven plants situated in or adjacent to the Izmit triangle, an

area of extensive industrialisation which is home to many of the country's top companies, suggested that younger workers have higher expectations and aspirations that make them relatively less satisfied with a number of aspects of their work and which are likely to make for a less committed and more critical workforce (Nichols, Sugur and Tasiran 2003; Nichols and Sugur 2004: 185-200). It seems possible that this more highly developed sense of criticality among younger workers may extend to their relative lack of enthusiasm about joining the EU and that, in their eyes, EU membership may not represent the modernist/civilised future that some Europhiles outside Turkey would suppose.

The survey results also give pause for thought to those who focus attention disproportionately on the salience of benefits that would accrue to Turks in the shape of wider issues to do with freedom, justice and tolerance. Around half the respondents do indeed expect that membership would make for improvement in political freedom and justice but there are low expectations that religious tolerance in Turkey would improve and work-related issues figure somewhat more prominently in their thinking.

One final point needs making. Whatever benefits Turkish trade unionists might expect from Turkey's accession a substantial proportion of them do not expect to see the long drawn out application process come to fruition. Turkey had applied to join the European Economic Community as far back as 1959 and European Union talks on the 35 chapters have been in process since 2005, and stalled on a number of issues. Asked whether they thought Turkey would eventually be accepted as a full member around half these Turkish trade unionists replied that they thought not (55 percent of Türk-İş respondents made such a reply, 48 per cent of DİSK and 42 per cent of Hak-İş).

¹ The views expressed here are entirely those of the authors and not of the ETUC or the participating Turkish trade unions or their confederations. The authors acknowledge the earlier contribution to the survey of Nadir Sugur.

The sample of 6614 trade unionists in Turkey was taken between June and September 2009. It excludes members of Kesk, which did not co-operate in the survey. The target number of respondents was fixed at 8,000. The three Turkish trade union federations which did co-operate, and which distributed questionnaires, only did so on the understanding that each of them would contribute the same number of respondents (2,667).

In the event, Türk İş obtained 2747 respondents (103 per cent of target); DİSK obtained 1632 (61 per cent of target); and Hak İş obtained 2235 (84 per cent of target). The resulting distribution of respondents (Türk İş 42 per cent; DİSK 25 per cent; Hak İş 34 per cent) meant that trade unionists who belong to Türk İş are underrepresented in the sample when compared to their presence nationally and those who belong to Hak İş and DİSK are overrepresented.

² The only attitudinal variable included in our analysis is a measure of political identity in Model 4. The parameter for this was not significantly estimated.

³ Prima facie, this would seem to be at odds with the finding of Muftuoglu and Cetin (2005: 48) that three quarters of the trade union members that they surveyed in Istanbul did not know their union policy on Turkey's European Union membership. On the other hand it is possible to have the same view as someone else without knowing what that view is.

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