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## CHAPTER 3

Talking Turkey. Anti-immigrant Attitudes and Their Effect on Support for Turkish Membership of the EU.

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### **Abstract**

Recent studies have shown that attitudes towards immigrants are the most important factor explaining opinions towards EU issues. Two arguments are given to explain this effect. First, we argue that these arguments are both build on the idea that people with anti-immigrants attitudes frame other Europeans as an out-group. Second, we test the validity of these arguments by measuring how respondents in a voter survey frame the issue of Turkish membership. We find that framing the issue in terms of out-group indeed mediates the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership. This finding offers new insights into why levels of public support varies over different EU issues, as opposition is likely to increase when an issue is more easily framed in terms of out-groups.

Public opinion is important in the process of European integration (Gabel, 1998; Jones & Bijl, 2004). In the early years of the European Union (EU), public opinion on European issues was characterized as a 'permissive consensus,' where political elites were believed to have tacit permission to act in European affairs (Karp & Bowler, 2006). However, public opinion has been shown to be important for policy outcomes in at least two different ways: directly, through referendums, where rejection of proposals has led the EU to modify its plans (Gabel, 1998), and, more indirectly, with officeholders trying to keep their constituencies pleased (Carrubba, 2001; Norris, 1997).

Because public opinion matters, it is also relevant to understand where it comes from. In previous studies, opinions on the EU have been explained by a variety of different factors, including economic and political ones, and identity (e.g., Anderson & Reichert, 1996; Carey, 2002; De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2005; Gabel & Palmer, 1995; Hooghe & Marks, 2005; Karp & Bowler, 2006). In recent studies, attitudes towards immigrants have appeared to be the most important factor explaining citizens' views on the EU in general as well as on specific EU topics (De Vreese et al., 2008; McLaren, 2007).

Although the relationship between attitudes towards immigrants and opinions on the EU has been empirically shown, the explanation of the effect has not been tested. Two explanations have been proposed (De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2005; McLaren, 2002). In this article we will argue that, although these explanations have different starting points and emphasize different aspects, they are actually part of the same explanation: citizens with negative attitudes towards immigrants have a general tendency to categorize. When confronted with an EU issue, these people employ their general tendency to categorize and are then likely to frame other Europeans as members of an out-group, subsequently applying the negative evaluations shown towards members of out-groups.

To test the explanations of the effect of attitudes towards immigrants on opinions on the EU, we look at the more specific issue of Turkey's potential membership in the EU. Enlargement in general is an important EU policy area and the European Commission considers enlargement as a part of the

European integration process (European Commission, 2003). As a number of different studies have shown, attitudes towards immigrants have similar effects on support for EU integration (e.g., De Master & Le Roy, 2000), for EU enlargement in general (e.g., De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006a) and for membership of specific candidate countries (e.g., McLaren, 2007). Thus, by learning more about the Turkish case, we can also increase our understanding of how, more generally, attitudes towards immigrants influence opinion on the EU.

This study will add to the knowledge on how attitudes towards immigrants add to the formation of opinions on the EU. If opinions on the EU are indeed dependent on citizens framing others as out-groups, then opinion formation depends on the general tendency to categorize, but also on the specific context in which citizens are confronted with EU issues. When discussing 'internal' EU affairs, differences between Europeans may well come to the fore. When discussing EU competition with the USA or China, however, other Europeans may more easily be seen as fellow Europeans. Thus, understanding the relation between attitudes towards immigrants and support for the EU may help us to understand how other opinions on the EU are influenced.

### **Theory**

Previous research has presented two different but related arguments on why attitudes towards immigrants affect attitudes towards the EU in general, and EU enlargement and potential Turkish membership in particular (De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2005; De Vreese et al., 2008; McLaren, 2002; McLaren, 2007). The arguments are both based on premises related to the formation of in-groups and out-groups and how their members are treated; however, they use these premises in different ways.

The argument made by De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2005) builds on two premises from social identity theory. The first of these is that the central factor in the formation of attitudes towards immigrants is the degree to which people tend to classify themselves and others into groups. In a study on prejudice towards immigrants, Sniderman, Peri, De Figueiredo and Piazza (2000) gave respondents an extensive list of attributes and asked

them whether they associated the items with immigrants. They found that the 'consistency of evaluation, of systematically taking advantage of opportunities to express negative views and feelings about a group, is the hallmark of prejudice' (Sniderman et al., 2000, p. 47).

Sniderman et al. (2000) also established that the degree to which immigrants were negatively evaluated was independent of the particular group of immigrants. One would expect particular attributes to be commonly associated with certain groups of immigrants. For instance, residents of an originally Christian country might see Islamic immigrants as a greater cultural threat than immigrants from another Christian country. In what they called a switch experiment, Sniderman et al. (2000) compared how different groups of immigrants – in this case, African and East European immigrants – were evaluated on a large number of attributes. Respondents were first asked about problems perceived to be related to one immigrant group, after which they were asked to list the attributes of either the same group or of another group (the 'switch'). The experiment found no difference in the average tenor over a large number of evaluative attributes between groups. The authors therefore concluded that anti-immigrant attitudes measured with these evaluative attributes are not inherent to a specific immigrant group, but are purely the result of a general categorizing of immigrants as 'other.'

The second premise of De Vreese and Boomgaarden's (2005) argument is that people tend to show a favourable bias towards members of their own group and an unfavourable one towards members of other groups (for an overview, see Brown, 2000; Tajfel, 1982). As Brown (2000, p. 747) states: '[It] is by now a common-place that group members are prone to think that their own group (and its products) are superior to other groups (and theirs), and to be rather ready behaviorally to discriminate between them as well.' This effect is even found in minimal group experiments, where the only group attribute is that the experimenter calls the participants a group (Sniderman et al., 2000). A prime example of this is an experiment performed by Tajfel (1981) in which subjects never met, had no common history or future, and had absolutely no knowledge of the others' characteristics. The investigators asked the subjects to estimate the number

of dots projected by a tachistoscope and then randomly assigned them to one of two groups, while telling them that they were part of a group either of over-counters or of under-counters. Remarkably, even in such groups, people tended to discriminate in favour of their in-group at the expense of the out-group.

Combining the two premises, De Vreese and Boomgaarden argue that people 'holding negative attitudes towards immigrants will show a greater readiness to categorize others in general, which is likely to yield unfavourable evaluations of these out-groups' (2005, p. 64). With the EU bringing together people of different nationalities, cultures, religions and ethnicities, people who have negative attitudes towards immigrants are likely to use these differences to categorize other Europeans as an out-group, thus developing a negative bias.

Brewer (1999), however, questioned whether categorizing people as part of an out-group is sufficient to understand the negative bias towards them. She argues that the negative bias towards the out-group is more likely to be 'motivated primarily by the desire to promote and maintain positive relationships within the ingroup rather than by any direct antagonism toward outgroups' (1999, p. 442).

Applying a similar line of reasoning to European enlargement, McLaren (2002; 2007) developed an explanation of why the perceived threat from immigrants affects support for enlargement, based on perceived threats to the in-group from an out-group. She argues that Europeans have been socialized to accept the nation as the primary in-group. Combining this with previous findings that concerns for the nation as a whole play a larger part in attitude formation than concerns for one's own situation (e.g., Citrin, Green, Muste, & Wong, 1997; Funk, 2000), McLaren concludes that 'the same people who fear. . . changes from minority groups living in the country . . . are very likely to fear similar changes resulting from the process of European integration' (McLaren, 2002, p. 554). Since protecting the in-group and the group identity is at stake, one can hypothesize that people with anti-immigrant attitudes also fear what Turkish membership in the EU may bring.

How do McLaren's arguments relate to those of De Vreese and Boomgaarden? Both assume that people categorize others into an in-group

and an out-group. However, whereas De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2005) state that defining Turks as an out-group is sufficient to create a negative bias, McLaren (2002) goes an extra step, assuming this to be a zero-sum game, where gains for the out-group are losses for the in-group. Using Sniderman et al.'s (2000) rationale, these arguments are not necessarily very different. In their study on prejudice, these authors have hypothesized that perceived threats (not related to immigration) lead to a stronger categorization of immigrants. Sniderman et al. (2000) claim that people perceive the losses for the in-group as resulting from gains for an out-group. Having thus defined an out-group, people exhibit a negative bias against that group, either just because it is an out-group or to defend the in-group. Other studies (e.g., Citrin et al., 1997; Quillian, 1995) establishing that negative, primarily economic, perceptions are important predictors of negative attitudes towards immigrants support this conjecture. In line with this, De Vreese et al. (2008), tested whether the effect of hard predictors, such as economic evaluations, on support for Turkish membership was mediated by soft predictors, such as anti-immigrant attitudes. They did ultimately find that negative economic evaluations led to more negative attitudes towards immigrants, which in turn led to less support for Turkish membership.

Thus we can conclude that De Vreese and Boomgaarden (2005) and McLaren (2002) are actually making the same argument, though they approach it from different angles. Basically, both arguments explain the effect of attitudes towards immigrants in the following ways: (1) attitudes towards immigrants can be seen as a measure of the general tendency to categorize others into an in-group and an out-group; (2) when confronted with a more specific issue such as the EU, the general mechanism to categorize is employed to give meaning to the different nationalities in the EU and thus frame the issue (Entman, 1993; Gamson, 1992; Scheufele, 1999; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007) in terms of out-groups; and (3) having framed the issue in these terms, the 'other' is given a negative bias, either through in-group favouritism or out-group rejection.

We test this argument on the subject of potential Turkish membership. Previous research has indeed shown that negative evaluations of immigrants

lead to less support for Turkish membership (e.g., De Vreese et al., 2008; McLaren, 2007). Turks differ from most other citizens in Europe in nationality, culture, religion and ethnicity. Following the previous line of reasoning, people with anti-immigrant attitudes are likely to use these differences to categorize Turks as an out-group. In turn, defining Turks as an out-group, with all the negative associations of an out-group, may result in their not supporting the Turkish bid for membership in the EU. To test this explanation, we formulate the following hypotheses.

First we want to test the relations involved. We hypothesize that people with negative attitudes towards immigrants frame the issue of Turkish membership in terms of out-group more than people who have more positive attitudes towards immigrants (H1). Furthermore, we hypothesize that people who frame the issue of Turkish membership more in terms of out-group show less support for Turkish membership than people who do not frame the issue in those terms (H2).

Testing these relations is, however, not sufficient. Since we argue that the degree to which people give meaning to the issue in terms of out-group is what explains the effect, we need to establish whether this framing does indeed mediate the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership (Baron & Kenny, 1986). To test this, we formulate our third hypothesis: the degree to which people frame the issue in terms of out-group mediates the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership (H3).

## Research design

### Sample

To test our hypothesis, we use data from a survey conducted in the Netherlands in December 2008. From the online panel of TNS-NIPO (N = 143,809), we contacted a sample of 2400 individuals, of whom 1394 filled in an online questionnaire (response rate = 58.1%). From the sample, 700 respondents were randomly selected to receive the open-ended question, which was later coded; 163 respondents did not respond, leaving a net sample of 537.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> These 537 respondents do not differ significantly from the other respondents in the survey in terms of age, education, or income. There are, however, somewhat fewer women



## Variables

**Framing in terms of out-group.** We expect people with negative attitudes towards immigrants to interpret or give meaning to the issue of Turkish membership in terms of out-group. Thus we need to be able to measure how respondents frame this issue. Individual frames are defined as ‘mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals’ processing of information’ (Entman, 1993, p. 53). Mentally stored clusters are of course hard, if not impossible, to measure directly, but previous studies have shown that frames are manifested in text and speech by ‘the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments’ (Entman, 1993, p. 52). It is thus possible to measure frames by looking at texts produced by respondents. To do this, we used an open-ended question to make respondents produce a text on the issue. Respondents were asked to provide arguments for their position on potential Turkish membership. Their texts were then coded on the presence of four different items.

As we looked for the degree to which respondents frame the issue in terms of out-group, the first item we coded was whether the respondent explicitly referred to Turks as an out-group (for instance: ‘They are not European’ or ‘They have another culture’); this item was scored 1 when explicit mentioning was present and 0 when it was not. The second item we coded was whether respondents explicitly mentioned a threat resulting from Turkey entering the EU (for instance, ‘Turkish accession will cost us money’ or ‘Our country will be flooded by immigrants’). Sniderman et al. (2000) argue that the degree to which people categorize immigrants as different depends on perceived threats from immigrants, so this also serves as a measure of in- and out-group framing. As with the first item, this item was scored 1 when respondents mentioned explicit threats and 0 when they did not.

Of course, respondents could also explicitly argue that Turkey or the Turks are not an out-group (for instance, saying ‘We are all Europeans’ or

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in our selection (52% compared to 54% among the other respondents,  $p < .05$ ). We have no reason to believe that this would contaminate our results in any way, however.

‘We share a common history with Turkey’). This would of course indicate that the respondent does not frame the issue in terms of out-group. As this also contributes to a measure of the degree to which the respondent gives meaning to the issue in terms of out-group, this was the third item coded. Of course, it was coded opposite to the first two items, with a score of 0 when there was an explicit mention of Turks or Turkey not being an out-group and 1 when it was absent. Finally, we coded whether any positive consequence was explicitly mentioned (for instance, ‘Accession will bring us needed manpower’ or ‘A larger internal market will stimulate economic growth’). Reversing Sniderman et al.’s (2000) argument, we assume that perceived positive consequences of immigration will result in less categorization of immigrants as others. This item was coded in the same way as the third item.

The four items formed a weak, but sufficiently reliable Mokken scale ( $H = .35$ ).<sup>10</sup> By adding the scores for the four items, we constructed a measure of the degree to which participants frame the issue in terms of out-group. This resulted in a variable that ranges from 0 (respondent explicitly mentioned that Turks are an in-group and perceived accession as having positive consequences – i.e. respondent does not frame in terms of out-group) to 4 (respondent explicitly mentions that Turks are an out-group and perceives accession as having negative consequences – i.e. respondent does frame in terms of out-group), with a mean of 2.34 and a standard deviation of 0.87.<sup>11</sup>

Support for Turkish membership. Except for the construction of the mediation variable, we measured all variables using closed questions. The dependent variable – the level of support for Turkish membership – relied on a question asking to what extent respondents were in favour of or opposed to Turkey becoming a member of the EU (ranging from 1, strongly opposed to Turkish membership, to 7, strongly in favour;  $M = 2.74$ ,  $SD = 1.78$ ; for Dutch translation, see Appendix 3).

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<sup>10</sup> If we were to remove the threat item, the scale would improve (to  $H = .55$ ). However, we have compelling theoretical reasons to leave the item in.

<sup>11</sup> A second coder also scored the items for all 537 respondents. The inter-coder reliability was high, with Krippendorff’s alpha values ranging between .82 and .89 for the four scored items, and a Krippendorff’s alpha of .89 for the framing scale. Full descriptives are found in the Appendix 3.

**Anti-immigrant attitudes.** To measure the independent variable ‘anti-immigrant attitudes,’ we asked the interviewees to react to eight items on a seven-point scale (ranging from 1, strongly disagree, to 7, strongly agree). The items were as follows:

1. In schools where there are many children of immigrants, the quality of education suffers.
2. Immigrants abuse the social welfare system.
3. Immigrants are a threat to security.
4. Immigrants are given second-rate treatment by the authorities.
5. The presence of immigrants increases unemployment in the Netherlands.
6. Immigrants are an important cause of crime in the Netherlands.
7. Immigrants enrich the cultural life of the Netherlands.
8. The religious practices of immigrants are a threat to our way of life.

Items 4 and 7 were recoded and an average was taken of all items. This resulted in a highly reliable anti-immigrant scale (Cronbach’s alpha = .88; no improvement with deletion of any item) scored from 1 (highly positive towards immigrants) to 7 (highly negative) (M = 4.66, SD = 1.18).

**Controls.** To prevent the possibility of obtaining biased estimates of our effects, we inserted controls in our models that we know are related to both anti-immigrant attitudes and support for the EU or for EU enlargement. These are: evaluation of the economy (e.g., De Vreese et al., 2008; Sniderman et al., 2000), satisfaction with the government (e.g., Franklin et al., 1995) and exclusiveness of national identity (e.g., Hooghe & Marks, 2004; Sniderman et al., 2000).

*Evaluation of the economy.* Since the EU was originally primarily an economic project, some of the first predictors of support for the EU and its policy were economic. It has been argued that attitudes towards the EU in general and to enlargement in particular are driven by ‘a healthy component of self-interest’ (Karp & Bowler, 2006, p. 371). Gabel (1998) showed that perceptions of what respondents thought the EU would bring them were indeed an important predictor of support for European integration. Karp and Bowler found that ‘responses towards enlargement are likely to be driven by short-term instrumental concerns such as, for example, a concern over how the entry of new countries may provide additional benefits or

cost', and they conclude that citizens 'going through tough economic times may want little or nothing to do with enlargement' (2006, p. 372). As we discussed earlier, economic evaluations are also related to anti-immigrant attitudes (Citrin et al., 1997; De Vreese et al., 2008; Quillian, 1995; Sniderman et al., 2000), so controlling for them is important.

To measure how respondents evaluate the economy, we asked them how they viewed the economic situation in the Netherlands over the next 12 months, how they viewed the economy in the EU and how they viewed their personal situation on a seven-point scale (from 1, most negative, to 7, most positive). These three items were then averaged on the same scale from 1 to 7 (Cronbach's alpha = .82, M = 3.22, SD = 0.92).

*Satisfaction with the government.* The argument that satisfaction with governments can predict support for the EU and enlargement is based on the premise that people have little information about those matters. This lack of relevant information makes people look to national politics for cues to evaluate EU issues (Crum, 2007; Franklin et al., 1995; Hix, 2007). National governments not only control the national policy agenda, but also are central actors at the European level. And because national governments have more influence than other national political actors on policy outcomes at the European level, people who approve of the government are less likely to be Eurosceptic (Hix, 2007). At the same time, we assume that satisfaction with government is related to anti-immigrant attitudes. With the immigration issue having become more salient in the media over the past two decades (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2007), we assume that the way citizens feel about immigrants and immigration is an important factor in the way citizens judge the incumbent government. As such it is important to control for government satisfaction.

To measure the degree of satisfaction with the current government, respondents were asked how well they thought the government was doing in general. In addition, four individual items measured how respondents thought the government was handling the issues of European integration, the economy, the environment and immigration. All five items were measured on a seven-point scale (from 1, very dissatisfied, to 7, very satisfied); an average of these five items produced an index with the same scale (Cronbach's alpha = .82, M = 3.89, SD = 0.99).

*Exclusiveness of national identity.* The concept of national identity is clearly related to anti-immigrant attitudes. As we know from social identity theory, people who identify more strongly with the in-group tend to show a more negative bias towards an out-group (Sniderman et al., 2000; Tajfel, 1982). The two are, however, conceptually different, because anti-immigrant attitudes are about the readiness to show negative out-group bias, which depends on more factors – e.g. personality traits, perceived group competition, or a general sense of insecurity – than identification with the in-group only (M. B. Brewer, 1999; De Vreese et al., 2008; Sniderman et al., 2000).

Different studies have, however, shown that in different contexts national identities are either positively or negatively correlated with EU identities and thereby with support for the EU (for an overview, see Hooghe & Marks, 2004). Hooghe and Marks (2004) argue that this disparity can be explained by making a distinction between exclusive and inclusive national identity, with people who perceive their national identity as exclusive of other territorial identities less likely to support the EU than those who perceive their national identity as inclusive.

Following this reasoning, we also chose to use the exclusiveness of national identity. The exclusiveness of national identity could not be measured directly. Instead, it was coded by comparing the strength of national identity and the strength of EU identity. We measured national identity using five items. Participants were asked to respond to the following statements on a 7-point scale (from 1, very little, to 7, very much):

1. I am proud to be a Dutch citizen.
2. Being a citizen of the Netherlands means a lot to me.
3. The Dutch flag means a lot to me.
4. Dutch people share a common heritage, culture, and history.
5. I feel close to my fellow Dutch.

The responses were averaged to create a reliable index (Cronbach's alpha = .91) of national identity ranging from 1 to 7 (strong national identity) (M = 5.18, SD = 1.17). EU identity was measured in similar way, with Dutch being replaced by European and the Netherlands by the EU. Averaging these responses resulted in a highly reliable (Cronbach's alpha = .87) EU

identity index ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ). National identity was presumed to be exclusive when national identity was stronger than EU identity. When this condition was met, the exclusiveness of national identity was scored as the difference between national identity and EU identity. When this condition was not met, the exclusiveness of national identity was scored 0. The result was then recoded using the same scale as the other independent variables, from 1 (nonexclusive national identity) to 7 (highly exclusive) ( $M = 2.59$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ).

*Demographics.* Finally we added the following demographics to the model: gender (51.8% female), age ( $M = 50.15$ ,  $SD = 16.39$ ) and the highest level of education attained on a scale from 1 (primary school) to 6 (university) (Median = 3, IQR = 3).

### **Data analysis**

Baron and Kenny (1986) prescribe three steps for a mediation analysis. First, we need to establish an effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on framing in terms of out-group. Second, it is necessary to measure the strength of the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership. Third, we must once again measure the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership, but this time controlling for framing in terms of out-group. At all three steps, the effects will be controlled for exclusiveness of national identity, satisfaction with government, evaluations of the economy, gender, age and education.

The first step can be directly used to test Hypothesis 1, and the third one can evaluate Hypothesis 2, by focusing on the coefficients of the framing variable. Hypothesis 3 is tested by comparing the results of the three steps. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a mediation effect is present when we find significant results in the first two analyses and a lower effect of the independent variable in the third.

However, Preacher and Hayes (2008) argue that this process is not sufficient to establish a significant mediation effect, and suggest a more formal model to estimate and test the mediated effect. Because the assumption of normality of the effect cannot be upheld, the test will be performed using bootstrapping (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). This method consists of repeatedly sampling from the data set and estimating the

mediated effect in each re-sampled data set. Preacher and Hayes argue that, 'by repeating this process thousands of times, an empirical approximation of the sampling distribution ... is built and used to construct confidence intervals for the indirect effect' (2008, p. 880). When 0 does not lie within the confidence interval, we can conclude that the mediated effect is significant. We will thus finish the data analysis with an evaluation of the bootstrapping results of our model.

## Results

First, we tested whether anti-immigrant attitudes affect the degree of giving meaning in terms of out-group. The results of the regression analysis are shown in Model 1 of Table 3.1. We found a positive *b*-coefficient for the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on the use of out-group arguments ( $b = 0.25$ ). This means that, when anti-immigrant attitudes increase by one point (on a scale from 1 to 7), the score on the framing scale increases by about a quarter of a point (on a 0 to 4 scale). As this is quite a substantial effect, and it is statistically significant at the .001 level, this supports Hypothesis 1 and fulfils the first step in Baron and Kenny's mediation analysis.

Next we explain support for Turkish membership, first with anti-immigrant attitudes and the controls, and second with our mediator added to the model. Models 2 and 3 of Table 3.1 present the results. Model 3 shows that the effects on support for Turkish membership of how people categorize Turkey are indeed as predicted by Hypothesis 2. We found a *b*-

Table 3.1

*Results of regression analysis for mediation analysis.*

	Model 1 Dependent: Framing in terms of out- group	Model 2 Dependent: Support for Turkish membership	Model 3 Dependent: Support for Turkish membership
Anti-immigrant attitudes	0.25*** 0.34 (7.73)	-0.53*** -0.35 (8.26)	-0.26*** -0.17 (4.64)
Framing in terms of out-group			-1.03*** -0.51 (14.34)

*Table 3.1 continues*

*Table 3.1 continued*

	Model 1 Dependent: Framing in terms of out- group	Model 2 Dependent: Support for Turkish membership	Model 3 Dependent: Support for Turkish membership
Exclusiveness national identity	0.08** 0.11 (2.65)	-0.22*** -0.16 (3.90)	-0.14** -0.10 (2.92)
Government satisfaction	-0.12** -0.14 (3.16)	0.44*** 0.24 (5.76)	0.31*** 0.17 (4.77)
Economic evaluations	0.09* 0.10 (2.32)	-0.20* -0.10 (2.58)	-0.11 -0.05 (1.58)
Gender	0.01 0.00 (0.09)	-0.09 -0.02 (0.63)	-0.08 -0.02 (0.68)
Age	0.00 -0.03 (0.65)	0.00 -0.01 (0.36)	0.00 -0.03 (0.83)
Education = 1	-0.04 -0.02 (0.30)	0.13 0.03 (0.50)	0.09 0.02 (0.40)
Education = 2	-0.07 -0.02 (0.39)	0.15 0.02 (0.47)	0.09 0.01 (0.31)
Education = 3	-0.01 -0.01 (0.09)	-0.02 -0.01 (0.08)	-0.03 -0.01 (0.16)
Education = 4	0.01 0.00 (0.09)	-0.09 -0.01 (0.27)	-0.07 -0.01 (0.26)
Education = 5	0.01 0.01 (0.11)	0.10 0.02 (0.37)	0.11 0.02 (0.51)
R <sup>2</sup>	.18	.26	.47
N	537	537	537

*Note:* Entries are unstandardized and standardized OLS regression results, with absolute t-values in parentheses. Collinearity diagnostics show satisfying results, with a lowest tolerance value of .713 (for anti-immigrant attitudes, excluding the education dummies).

+  $p < .1$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (two-sided).



coefficient of  $-1.03$  ( $p < .001$ ), so for every 1 point increase on the framing scale, support for Turkish membership decreases by 1 point (on a scale from 1 to 7). Thus, people who frame the issue in terms of out-group show substantially and significantly less support for Turkish membership than those who do not frame the issue in those terms. This also fulfils the second step in Baron and Kenny's mediation analysis.

The final step in Baron and Kenny's method is to compare the effects of anti-immigrant attitudes on support between the model with the mediator and the one without. We found a significant negative regression coefficient for anti-immigrant attitudes for both Models 2 and 3. However, the size of the effect in each of the models differs substantially. In model 2 (without the mediator) we found a  $b$ -coefficient of  $-0.53$ . This means that, in the case of an increase of 1 point in anti-immigrant attitudes, support for Turkish membership decreases by about half a point. Once the mediator is added to the model, now estimating the direct effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support, every 1 point increase in anti-immigrant attitudes accounts for only about a quarter of a point decrease in support (Model 3:  $b = -0.26$ ). Thus, the difference between the coefficients in each of the two models ( $-0.5326 - -0.264 = -0.2762$ ) is accounted for by the mediated effect. According to Baron and Kenny's method, the mediated effect has been established, and Hypothesis 3 is supported. However, there is no full mediation effect, because anti-immigrant attitudes still show a significant effect on support for Turkish membership.<sup>12</sup>

We followed this up with the more formal check of the mediation effect proposed by Preacher and Hayes (2008). The total mediated effect,  $c$ , is the multiplication of the effect between immigrant attitudes and framing in terms of out-group and the effect between framing in terms of out-group and support for Turkish membership ( $c = -0.2615$ ). Using the bootstrap method, we re-sampled 10,000 times from our original sample and estimated the mediated effect each time. On average, the mediated effect was very close to our first estimate ( $boot = -0.2624$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ). Both the lower and upper limits of the bootstrap 99% confidence interval are

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<sup>12</sup> We confirmed these findings using structural equation modelling. The results of such modelling are not shown here but are available from the authors on request.

negative ( $LL = -0.37$ ,  $UL = -0.16$ ), which means that the mediated effect is significant at the .01 level. Hypothesis 3 is again partly supported because there is, indeed, a mediated effect by framing in terms of out-group, but a direct effect between anti-immigrant attitudes and support for Turkish membership still remains.

### Conclusion

In this article we asked how one should explain the effect of attitudes towards immigrants on attitudes towards EU enlargement in general, and towards Turkish membership in particular. We argued that previous studies in essence use the same explanation, and we tested this using survey data. We hypothesized that negative attitudes towards immigrants lead people to frame the issue in terms of out-group (H1), that framing the issue in terms of out-group leads to less support for Turkish membership in the EU (H2) and that framing in terms of out-group mediates the effect of attitudes towards immigrants on support for Turkish membership (H3). Our analyses support these hypotheses. The more negatively people evaluate immigrants, the more likely they are to frame the issue of potential Turkish membership in terms of out-group. Further, the more people frame the issue in this way, the more they oppose Turkish membership. We found a mediated effect, both following Baron and Kenny's (1986) steps and using Preacher and Hayes' bootstrapping approach (2008). However, there is no full mediation, as the direct effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership did not disappear.

Finding a significant mediation effect does have certain implications for understanding the dynamics of support for Turkish membership in particular, and of EU attitudes in general. For instance, when comparing support for different candidate countries, substantial differences were found. McLaren (2007) showed that Turkish membership enjoyed substantially less support among EU citizens than membership of the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. She also showed that anti-immigrant attitudes could not explain the differences in opposition; in fact, anti-immigrant attitudes had comparable effects on support for membership of all the candidate countries. But could it be that, because (Islamic) Turks are more easily categorized as different from other (predominantly

Christian) European citizens, Turks are more often categorized as members of an 'out-group' both by people with negative attitudes towards immigrants and by people with more positive attitudes? If this is the case, the effect size of anti-immigrant attitudes is not likely to vary for different candidate countries, but average support for membership of each candidate country is. We then need to explain the variation in the average by the degree to which people perceive candidate countries as different. And, of course, a comparable reasoning could explain differences in support for Turkish membership across different member states or across time.

Another important implication of these results is that what is apparently the most important factor explaining support for Turkish membership in particular or more generally for the EU is not directly related to the issue at stake. This means that support for Turkish membership may not depend on the perceived degree to which Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen criteria (i.e. the standard requirements that the EU has set for candidate members) or on other specifically Turkish affairs. Similarly, support for the EU may not depend primarily on how the EU functions. Both may depend more on whether people see others (whether Turks or other Europeans) as an in-group or an out-group, which in turn depends on the degree to which people are inclined to categorize in general.

Interestingly, this tendency does not apply only to ordinary citizens. As previous studies have shown, the question of whether Turkey is actually European – in other words, whether we 'belong together' – has appeared in elite and media debates about the issue (Grigoriadis, 2006; Karlson, 2008; Negrine et al., 2008; Redmond, 2007). Similarly, discussions of the negative consequences that Turkish membership might have for 'us', the price 'we' would have to pay for the Turkish gain, have become more and more prominent (Arnold, 2008; Chislett, 2008; Gangloff, 2008; Grigoriadis, 2006).

But what does this say about the stability of public opinion on possible Turkish membership? From previous research we know that the degree to which people generally tend to categorize is partly based on personal characteristics (Sniderman et al., 2000). But these studies have also shown that the general tendency to categorize is influenced by both personal and mediated experiences (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; Sniderman et al.,

2000). Future studies of the dynamics of opinion on the EU in general or on Turkish membership in particular will need to consider what factors influence the general tendency to categorize.

The question that still remains is, of course, why there is no full mediation. It is possible that this is the result of a shortcoming of this study's research design. The open-ended question used assumes that respondents are capable of formulating why they have a certain opinion, which is not automatically the case (Bishop, 2005). Also, we coded only explicit mentions by respondents, where sometimes categorization of Turkey as an out-group may have remained implicit. Both these shortcomings work in the same direction, resulting in more conservative estimates of the relationships with our mediator and suppressing the mediated effect. Of course, this does not prove that there are no additional mediators explaining the relationship between attitudes towards immigrants and support for Turkish membership. It does say something about the extent to which we may expect a fully mediated effect. And, given that we found a both substantial and significant mediated effect in a more conservative design, this shows that the degree of categorization is indeed the key element in understanding the relationship between attitudes towards immigrants and support for Turkish membership.

The final question is whether it is likely that we would find similar results if Turkey were replaced by, for instance, Croatia, or if enlargement issues were replaced by other EU topics. Of course, Turkey is the 'ideal' candidate for testing our theory, because Turks differ from most Dutch citizens in their nationality, culture, religion and ethnicity. However, so do most other Europeans.<sup>13</sup> And, as McLaren shows (2007), attitudes towards immigrants had similar effects on support for membership for all 12 countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. In addition, similar effects are found explaining other EU-related attitudes (e.g., De Master & Le Roy, 2000; De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2005; McLaren, 2002), so we are confident that our findings will be replicated when using other topics than support for Turkish accession.

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<sup>13</sup> Apart maybe for religion as most European countries traditionally had a Christian majority. But also within Christianity, strong differences are observed.