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Framing Turkey: Identities, public opinion and Turkey's potential accession into the EU

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Publication date
2013

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Citation for published version (APA):

Azroun, R. (2013). *Framing Turkey: Identities, public opinion and Turkey's potential accession into the EU*.

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CHAPTER 4

Focusing on Differences? Contextual Conditions and Anti-immigrant attitudes' Effects on Support for Turkey's EU Membership.

Manuscript under review

Abstract

Scholars recognize anti-immigrant attitudes as a strong predictor of support for Turkey's EU membership, but levels of support and the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support have been shown to differ across countries. In this chapter we argue that contact with "immigrants" leads to less support for Turkey's membership and to a stronger effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support. Also, we argue that direct contact is not needed, but that contact can also be mediated through the media or politics. Using cross-sectional survey data (N = 26.344) collected in 20 EU member states, we find support for our expectations. These findings suggest that politicians and media have strong influence in the way citizens frame specific issues, and through that affect public opinion.

The Turkish road to EU membership is a long and yet unfinished journey. One likely reason is that public support for Turkish membership among EU citizens is low (McLaren, 2007). As several European leaders have committed to holding a referendum on Turkish membership, public opinion is likely to play an increasingly important role in Turkey's EU accession bid. Research on public support for EU enlargement with Turkey has mainly concentrated on individual-level factors. Recent studies focus on citizens' economic and political (of which some identity-related) attitudes (e.g., Gerhards & Hans, 2011; Karp & Bowler, 2006). De Vreese, Boomgaarden and Semetko (2008) compare the strength of these predictors and show that anti-immigrant attitudes are strong predictors of support for Turkey's EU membership. Our findings in chapter 3 confirm this and we showed that the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes is driven by citizens' categorizing others as an out-group in combination with their negative bias towards out-groups.

Support for Turkish accession not only differs substantially between individuals, but also varies systematically between countries (McLaren, 2007). This leads one to suspect that aspects related to individuals' political context play a role here. The impact of contextual factors on public support for Turkey's EU entrance has remained largely unexplored, however. This is perhaps surprising, as contextual factors explain cross-country differences in levels of, e.g., support for EU integration (e.g., Anderson & Reichert, 1996) and cross-country differences in, e.g., effects of individual-level predictors on EU support (e.g., Garry & Tilley, 2009).

Notable exceptions to the rule that contextual effects are not studied with regard to Turkish membership include Jones & Van der Bijl (2004) and McLaren (2007). Jones & Van der Bijl (2004) show that export and distance to the candidate country matter for levels of support for entrance of that candidate country. McLaren (2007) demonstrates that the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes substantially varies by country. In this chapter we build on these studies and extend them, providing a comprehensive account of the role of context in public support for Turkey's EU access. We contribute to the literature by examining the effect of various contextual factors on support for Turkey's EU membership. Our core argument is that the

presence of and direct personal experience with out-groups (citizens of Turkish origin as well as Muslims) explains both differences in levels of support for Turkey's EU entry and variation in the strength of the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on such support.

Drawing on a survey of citizens ($N = 26,344$) from 20 EU member states conducted in 2009, we show that the relative number of citizens of Turkish descent in a country explains variation in support for Turkey's EU membership across countries. The relative number of Muslims explains more of the variation in the strength of the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkey's membership than the relative number of citizens of Turkish origin. Also, our analyses show that the importance of the immigration issue has an additional impact on the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkey's membership. In other words, contextual variation conditions the effects of anti-immigrant attitudes.

We add to the existing body of knowledge on factors affecting support for Turkey's EU membership in at least two ways. First, we explore the effect of factors related to EU citizens' identity at the contextual level, by focusing on the presence of perceived out-groups. Effects of economic factors at the contextual level on support for enlargement have been explored (e.g., Jones & Bijl, 2004), but identity-related factors at the contextual level have been largely neglected (with one notable exception: McLaren, 2007). Second, we focus on the *conditionality* of the effect of individual-level identity factors. Previous studies argue that anti-immigrant attitudes are a proxy for a general tendency to categorize (e.g., Sniderman et al., 2000), and that this tendency is influenced by personal and mediated experiences with immigrants (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart, 2009; Sniderman et al., 2000). We argue that experiences with immigrants lead citizens to become experienced in categorizing. This leads to citizens being more likely to employ their general tendency to categorize when confronted with the issue of potential Turkish accession, resulting in a stronger effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkey's EU membership.

Our findings have also societal implications. Personal experience with Turkish immigrants or Muslims may be a fact of life, but indirect experience with immigrants through public, political or media attention towards the immigration issue may be subject to elite influences. Opposition towards

Turkey's EU membership may be mobilized by elites by inducing the public to categorize others in terms of "us" versus "them". And this can have significant implications in view of the growing public involvement in decisions on Turkey's membership.

Theory

In recent years, anti-immigrant attitudes have been recognized as one of the strongest predictors of attitudes towards the EU. Different studies show that perceived threats posed by immigrants affect both support for EU integration (e.g., De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2005; McLaren, 2002) and support for membership of Turkey (e.g., De Vreese et al., 2008) and other applicant countries (e.g., McLaren, 2007). McLaren (2007) finds considerable differences in level of support for Turkey's potential EU membership and finds that the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on such support varies across countries. What explains these differences between countries?

First, we turn to the question of how to explain differences in the level of support for Turkey's EU membership. McLaren (2007) argues that it is the proportion of a country's population that is of Turkish origin that explains the degree of support. It is plausible to assume that the presence of people of Turkish descent in a country causes support for the Turkish candidacy, as other citizens in the country become familiar with them. However, this would require personal contact between native citizens and Turkish immigrants (Jackman & Crane, 1986; Pettigrew, 1998; Wagner & Zick, 1995). Such contact is generally scarce in contemporary Western Europe (e.g., Sniderman et al., 2004). In fact, several studies have shown that concentrations of immigrants may lead to feelings of hostility towards these immigrants among natives (e.g., Bobo, 1988; Giles & Hertz, 1994; Oliver & Mendelberg, 2000; Quillian, 1995; Taylor, 1998; Valenty & Sylvia, 2004). This can be understood using conflict theory, which holds that, primarily through competition for limited resources such as jobs or housing, diversity fosters out-group distrust (e.g., Putnam, 2007). From this, McLaren argues that 'such hostility is likely to carry over into feelings about whether a country ought to be able to join the European Union, and that higher concentrations of Turkish immigrants in a member state will mean

individuals in that member state have a lower probability of supporting Turkish candidacy' (McLaren, 2007, p. 259). Building on her work, we first hypothesize:

- [H1] The greater the share of the population from Turkish descent in a country, the greater the opposition against Turkish membership in that country.

Second, we turn to the question of how to explain differences in the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkey's membership. McLaren finds evidence that the strength of the effect (also) depends on the number of Turkish immigrants (2007, p. 270). Why would anti-immigrant attitudes be a more important predictor in countries where a larger share of the population is of Turkish descent than in countries with relatively fewer Turkish immigrants?

In chapter 3, we proposed a model of how the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish potential accession might work. Building on social identity theory, we argued that the effect can be understood in three steps: First, anti-immigrant attitudes are to be seen as a measure of a general tendency to categorize others in an in-group and an out-group. Second, when someone with strong anti-immigrant attitudes is confronted with a specific issue such as EU enlargement, his or her general tendency to categorize is employed to give meaning to the other nationality of the applicant country and thus to 'frame' the issue in terms of an out-group. Third, when the issue is 'framed' in terms of an out-group, the EU citizen is negatively biased towards the 'other', either through in-group favouritism or out-group rejection.

For individuals 'to frame' is described in the literature as the process of selecting certain aspects of a complex reality to guide individuals' processing of information (e.g., Scheufele, 1999; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). By selecting certain aspects of an issue and neglecting certain others, a particular interpretation of the issue is promoted above others (e.g., Entman, 1993). For example, an individual can frame the issue of enlargement in terms of the economy or in terms of in-group and out-groups. The chosen frame would lead this individual to interpret enlargement, respectively, as an issue of weighing gains and losses, or as an

issue of whether the applicant country belongs to ‘us’. To be able to apply a certain ‘frame’ to a specific issue, considerations belonging to that particular frame need to be stored in memory to be available to the individual (e.g., Chong & Druckman, 2007b; Slothuus & De Vreese, 2010). And the presence of Turkish immigrants makes it more likely that a frame defining Turkish immigrants as an out-group is available.

In a country without Turkish immigrants, individuals are less likely to have thought about Turkish immigrants. But the more Turkish immigrants in a country, the more likely individuals are to have thought about them as a group, as it is more likely they encounter these immigrants (either in real life, through interpersonal communication, or in the media). Individuals who are negatively predisposed towards immigrants (and who thus, we assume, have a strong tendency to categorize) are likely to have thought about the Turkish immigrants as an out-group. Thus, the frame of people of Turkish descent as an out-group is most available for those individuals who have strong anti-immigrant attitudes and live in a country where there are relatively many Turkish immigrants. And when confronted with the question whether someone supports or opposes Turkey’s EU membership, those who have the frame of Turkish immigrants as an out-group most readily available, are most likely to employ the frame and show a negative bias towards the out-group, rejecting Turkey’s EU membership. We thus hypothesize the following:

- [H2] The greater the share of the population of Turkish descent in a country, the stronger the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership.

However, an issue with the concentration of Turks as a contextual explanation is the question whether Turkish immigrants come under the rubric of ‘Turks’ or under the rubric of ‘Muslims.’ It has been argued that Turks are increasingly stereotyped as Muslims (e.g., Marranci, 2004; Poynting & Mason, 2007). However, Turks are not the only Muslims in the world and Turkish immigrants are also not the only Muslims living in EU member states. But Muslims are perhaps easier recognized as a group than are Turks, for instance by the head scarf women wear. This means that if the contextual effect is about high concentrations of a discernible group,

then perhaps the group we should focus on should be the more easily recognizable group of Muslims, rather than Turks.

Van Spanje, Azrout and De Vreese (2010) show that the dominant religion among the population of applicant countries is important in explaining support for EU membership. By means of an experiment, they show that knowledge about the fact that about half of the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina leads to significant and substantial less support for Bosnia's membership among British, Danish and German citizens. Van Spanje et al. argue that fear of Islam is what drives this effect, as they also show that this effect is moderated by the degree respondents fear religious practices of immigrants.

From this, we can follow the same argument as previously, but replace 'Turkish immigrants' and 'Turkey' with 'Muslims' and 'a Muslim country,' respectively. We thus argue that high concentrations of Muslims are likely to be associated with strong feelings of hostility towards Muslims, and that 'such hostility is likely to carry over into feelings about whether a *Muslim* country ought to be able to join the EU, and that higher concentrations of *Muslims* in a member state will mean individuals in that member state have a lower probability of supporting *a Muslim country's* candidacy [authors' alterations of the original quote in italics]' (McLaren, 2007, p. 259). Similarly, we theoretically expect interaction between anti-immigrant attitudes and the presence of Muslims.

[H3] The greater the share of the population in a country that is Muslim, the greater the opposition against Turkish membership in that country.

[H4] The greater the share of the population in a country that is Muslims, the stronger the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership.

There is, however, another issue with the number of Turks as a contextual predictor, and the same issue with the number of Muslims. Turkish migrants and Muslims are too few (in the EU the proportion Turkish immigrants does not exceed 3% and the proportion Muslims 6%) and too concentrated for most EU citizens to have everyday contact with them (Sniderman et al., 2004). As conflict theory suggests that it is physical

proximity that leads to hostility (Putnam, 2007, p. 142), we should perhaps not expect any strong effects.

We propose to extend the argument and argue that direct contact with Turkish migrants or Muslims is not required. Conflict theory states that physical proximity of “others” leads to higher levels of distrust of these others. But in a situation where there is no physical proximity, the physical may be replaced by a mediated proximity. We propose that this mediated proximity is the degree to which the immigration issue is important in a polity. It is then not so much that people have direct contact with immigrants or Muslims, but that they are aware of their presence through, e.g., political or media attention to the issue.

Obviously, importance of the immigration issue is more likely in a country that has seen higher levels of immigration than a country with a relative low number of immigrants. Yet, the degree of importance of the immigration issue is partly independent of the share of (Turkish) immigrants and the share of Muslims. Immigration issues may be important in a context of relatively low shares of Turkish and/or Muslim migrants, and not important in a context of relatively high shares. As such, we argue that the degree of importance should be considered independently as a contextual predictor of support for Turkish membership, as a mediated form of contact with immigrants. We thus hypothesize the following, in analogy to our hypotheses stated above:

[H5] The more the immigration issue is important in a country, the greater the opposition against Turkish membership in that country.

[H6] The more the immigration issue is important in a country, the stronger the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership.

Methods

Survey

We conducted a survey in 20 countries of the EU, three weeks prior to the 2009 European Parliament Elections. In selecting which countries to include, we took into consideration that the sample would include larger

and smaller member states, countries from North, South, East and West, and long term and new members to the EU. The countries included were Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.¹⁴ From the TNS databases and their partners, a sample was drawn, with quota's enforced on age, gender and education to ensure representativeness. A total of 26,344 respondents participated. The average response rate (AAPOR RR1) was 23% (with a minimum of 13% in Denmark and a maximum of 46% in Lithuania).

The questionnaire was developed in English and translated by TNS (who also translate the Eurobarometer surveys) into the different languages. As an additional check, all translated questionnaires were retranslated back into English. Irregularities and problems arising from this process were resolved by deliberation.

Variables

Support for Turkish membership. The dependent variable is the degree to which an individual EU citizen supports or opposes Turkish membership of the EU. We asked the respondents to score on a scale from 1 to 7 whether they are 'strongly against' Turkey's EU membership (1) or 'strongly in favour' (7) (see Appendix 4 for precise question wording and descriptive statistics).

Anti-immigrant attitudes. The main independent variable is an individual EU citizen's attitude towards immigrants. As we follow Sniderman et al. (Sniderman et al., 2000) that the collection of anti-immigrant attitudes is a measure of the readiness to categorize and

¹⁴ In this chapter 4, we excluded one country in the dataset from the analysis, namely Bulgaria. We did so because Bulgaria is an outlier that does not fit the theoretical premises of the chapter. This chapter is about the presence and contact with a new group in each national society. Of course, we are firstly interested in the presence of Turks and secondly, with religion as perhaps a distinctive feature of Turks, the presence of Muslims. In Bulgaria, however, there is a large minority of (ethnic) Turks, which live there as a result of Ottoman occupation. In that sense, these Turks are living there for so long, that they cannot be perceived as a new group in Bulgarian society and contact between Turks and Bulgarians is likely to have other effects than contact between Turks and other Europeans. Given that Bulgaria is a theoretical outlier and that with a relative small sample of countries outliers may have significant impact on the results, we opted for leaving Bulgaria out.

subsequently negatively evaluate the ones who are categorized as different, we do not make a distinction between economic or cultural threat perceptions. We measured anti-immigrant attitudes using 5 items, which also include the items McLaren used to measure economic and cultural threat to the in-group. The items loaded onto one factor (eigenvalue = 3.12; 62.39% explained variance) and by taking the mean we constructed a highly reliable scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$).

Number of Turkish migrants. A first contextual variable is the share of a country's population that is of Turkish origin. We retrieved these data using the Eurostat online database. With regard to the country's population in 2009, this was unproblematic. Concerning the number of Turkish citizens in 2009 in 16 countries, this was unproblematic, too. For Belgium and Lithuania the last estimate was from 2008, for France 2005 and for Greece 2001. For these countries, the most recent estimate was used.

Number of Muslims. A second contextual variable is the percentage of Muslims in each country. We used estimates from the report on the global Muslim population of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2009). The sources used in the report include national censuses and general population surveys such as the European Social Survey and the World Values Survey. Although the sources used are from 1999 until 2009, all estimates of the 2009 population figures are projections (under the assumption that the Muslim population would grow at the same rate as the general population).

Importance of the immigration issue. To assess the degree to which the immigration issue is important in a polity, we focus on the general public, on political parties and on the national media. From various sources we constructed country-level variables for each of these.

For the degree to which the public finds the immigration issue important, we used the data from our survey. We asked respondents to rate on a scale from 0 (not at all important) to 6 (very important) how important they thought the immigration issue was. As we are interested in the degree to which the issue is important in each country, we aggregated up individual scores by calculating their country-level means.

We used data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey that was conducted in 2006 to construct our measure of the importance political parties attach to the immigration issue. In this survey, experts from each country were asked to score political parties on a number of issues on both the position each party took on the issue and on the importance it attached to the issue (Hooghe et al., 2010). We used the items by which parties were scored on how important immigration policy, integration of immigrants and issues relating to ethnic minorities were to them. The items load onto one factor (eigenvalue = 2.41; 80.26% explained variance) and by calculating the mean we construct a highly reliable scale (Cronbach's alpha = .88). Country scores were computed by taking the country mean, weighing each party by its size in their national parliament.

To assess the importance of the immigration issue in the national media, we used the media dataset of the 2009 European Election Study (details about the media study can be found in: Schuck et al., 2010). In this dataset, three national newspapers and two national television-news-shows were analyzed in the three weeks prior to the 2009 European Parliament Election. The unit of coding in the media dataset is the news story, where a story in a newspaper is defined as an article and in television-news defined by its topic. We used items about the primary, secondary or tertiary topic of the story to score whether immigration related issue were part of the story. For each country, we then calculated what the percentage of the stories of which the primary, secondary or tertiary topic was immigration. With both tabloids and quality newspapers from each country and television news from both public broadcasting and commercial stations, we are confident that the chosen outlets in the European Parliament Election Study media dataset give a representative picture of the media in each country.

Controls. In our models we will control for the most relevant factors from recent literature and demographics. They include exclusive national identity (Hooghe & Marks, 2004), government satisfaction (Franklin et al., 1995), economic evaluations (Gabel & Palmer, 1995), political ideology (Gabel, 1998), political interest, age, gender, education and ethnicity.

Data analysis

Because our dataset consists of individual respondent clustered in different countries, we first assess the intraclass correlation coefficient. We find a significant proportion of the variation (5.9%) at the country level, and thus use multilevel modelling techniques to test our hypotheses.

We start our analysis with a baseline model, which only contains individual-level predictors, by which we assess the variation in support for Turkey's EU membership at the country level and of the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on such support. Consecutively, we add the country level variables. Given the strong correlation between the relative number of Turks and the relative number of Muslims, and the strong correlations between the different indicators for importance of the immigration issue (see Table 4.1), it would be unwise to add all contextual variables in one model. We can however combine one of the relative number predictors with one of the importance indicators, and those are the combinations we will model. First, we test the main effects of the contextual predictors (H1, H3 and H5), and second we test the interactions of the contextual predictors with anti-immigrant attitudes (H2, H4 and H6).

Results

We first turn to Model 1 (see Table 4.2). We find an average intercept over all countries of 4.22. Across the 20 countries in our dataset, we find a variance of 0.125, which significantly differs from zero. This means that there is cross-country variation in support for Turkey's membership.

Looking at anti-immigrant attitudes, we find a significant effect with a coefficient of -0.36. This means that for every 1 point score more negative

Table 4.1
Country level correlations.

	Number of Muslims	Importance public	Importance parties	Media salience
Number of Turks	.67**	.24	.42 ⁺	.05
Number of Muslims		.35	.52 [*]	.25
Importance public			.66**	.57**
Importance parties				.59**

Note: Entries are Pearson's *r* correlations between independent variables at the country level. *N* = 20.

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

towards immigrants (on a scale from 0 to 6), support for Turkey's membership drops on average 0.36 points (on a scale from 1 to 7). Again, this is an average effect across the 20 countries in the data. The variance of the effect is 0.010 and significantly different from zero. So there is also cross-country variation in the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkey's membership.

We now turn to our first hypothesis. In Models 2, 3 and 4 (see Table 4.3), we test the main effect of the presence of Turkish immigrants,

Table 4.2

Multilevel models explaining support for Turkish EU membership.

	Model 1
Intercept	4.22 ^{***} (0.10)
Anti-immigrant attitudes (AIA)	-0.36 ^{***} (0.02)
Exclusive national identity	-0.09 ^{***} (0.01)
Government satisfaction	0.08 ^{***} (0.01)
Economic evaluations	0.08 ^{***} (0.01)
Political ideology (left-right)	-0.021 ^{***} (0.00)
Political interest	-0.00 (0.01)
Age	-0.01 ^{***} (0.00)
Female	0.12 ^{***} (0.02)
Education low	0.16 ^{***} (0.03)
Education high	-0.10 ^{***} (0.03)
Member ethnic minority	0.15 ^{***} (0.05)
<hr/>	
Variance of random components	
Intercept	0.125 ^{**}
Anti-immigrant attitudes effect	0.010 ^{**}
Residual	3.027 ^{***}
<hr/>	
Deviance (-2LL)	104068.46

Note: Level 1: individual, N = 26,344; level 2: country, N = 20. Standard errors within parentheses.

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; + $p < .1$ (one-tailed).

controlled for the three different indicators of importance of immigration. In all three models we find a significant negative effect of the relative number of Turkish immigrants on support for Turkey's membership (ranging from -0.32 in Model 2 to -0.36 in Model 4). The negative coefficient is as expected, as it means that more Turkish immigrants lead to less support for Turkish immigrants. And with the relative number of Turkish immigrants ranging between nearly 0% and just over 2%, model 2 predicts an average difference in support of 0.70 (on a 7 point scale) between countries with very low and very high numbers of Turkish immigrants. These findings support our first hypothesis.

In Models 5, 6 and 7 (see Table 4.3) our hypothesis 3, concerning the main effect of the presence of Muslims, is tested. In these three models, we

Table 4.3

Multilevel models explaining support for Turkish EU membership.

	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
AIA	-0.36 ^{***} (0.02)	-0.36 ^{***} (0.02)	-0.36 ^{***} (0.02)	-0.39 ^{***} (0.02)	-0.36 ^{***} (0.02)	-0.36 ^{***} (0.02)
Number of Turks	-0.32 [*] (0.14)	-0.33 [*] (0.15)	-0.36 ^{**} (0.14)			
Number of Muslims				-0.10 [*] (0.04)	-0.07 [*] (0.05)	-0.10 ^{**} (0.04)
Importance Public	0.13 (0.15)			0.15 (0.15)		
Importance parties		0.07 (0.06)			0.07 (0.07)	
Media salience			-10.38 (8.77)			-9.36 (9.06)
Variance of random components						
Intercept	0.110 ^{**}	0.104 ^{**}	0.137 ^{**}	0.115 ^{**}	0.109 ^{**}	0.147 ^{**}
AIA effect	0.010 ^{**}	0.010 ^{**}	0.010 ^{**}	0.010 ^{**}	0.010 ^{**}	0.010 ^{**}
Residual	3.027 ^{***}	3.027 ^{***}	3.027 ^{***}	3.027 ^{***}	3.027 ^{***}	3.027 ^{***}
Proportions of reduced variances (compared to model 1)						
Intercept	.120	.166	-.095	.078	.128	-.180
AIA effect	.001	-.001	.005	.004	.003	.007
Deviance (-2LL)	104064.49	104064.51	104064.21	104064.70	104064.90	104064.86

Note: Level 1: individual, N = 26,344; level 2: country, N = 20. Standard errors within parentheses. Models also include intercept, exclusive national identity, government satisfaction, economic evaluations, education low, education high, age, gender, member of ethnic minority, political ideology and political interest, but are not shown in the table.

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; + $p < .1$ (one-tailed).

also find significant negative effects. With coefficients between 0.07 and 0.10, the effect of the presence of Muslims appears much weaker than the effect of the presence of Turkish immigrants. However, if we take into consideration that the relative number of Muslims in each country ranges between nearly 0% and almost 6%, Model 4 estimates a difference in support of 0.55 between countries with very low and very high Muslim shares. This implies that the effect of the relative number of Muslims still has a weaker effect on support for Turkish accession than the relative number of Turks, but the difference is not as large as a first look at the coefficients may suggest.

The last hypothesis about main effects was about the importance of the immigration issue in the polity (H5). In Models 2 and 5 this hypothesis is tested using importance for citizens; in Models 3 and 6 using importance for political parties; in Models 4 and 7 using importance in the media. In none of these models we find significant effects, thus the data does not support out hypothesis.

Comparing the three main effects, it appears that country variation in support is best explained by the relative number of Turkish immigrants, followed by the relative number of Muslims. As importance of the immigration issue has no significant effects, it is of no importance in explaining levels of support for Turkey's EU membership.

We now turn to the hypotheses about the variation in the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkey's membership. Models 8, 9 and 10 in Table 4.4 are used to test the second hypothesis about the moderation by the relative number of Turkish immigrants. The interaction between anti-immigrant attitudes and the relative number of Turkish immigrants has a significant negative effect in all three models. We expect a negative interaction effect, as this would mean that the more people of Turkish descent in a country, the stronger the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership. Between countries with the lowest and highest number of Turkish immigrants, the models predict a difference in effect of anti-immigrant attitudes of 0.12 in Model 9 and 0.21 in Model 10. This supports our second hypothesis.

For our fourth hypothesis, about the moderation by the relative number of Muslims, and sixth hypothesis, about the moderation by the importance

of the immigration issue, we find similar results. In all models (Models 11, 12 and 13 for the relative number of Muslims, Models 8 and 11 for importance for the public, Models 9 and 12 for importance of political parties, and Models 10 and 13 for media salience), we find that the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes is significantly moderated by our contextual variables. Between low and high score countries on these contextual

Table 4.4

Multilevel models explaining support for Turkish EU membership.

	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12	Model 13
AIA	-0.02 (0.17) [.000]	-0.07 (0.07) [.058]	-0.27*** (0.03) [.870]	-0.04 (0.16) [.002]	-0.08 (0.06) [.079]	-0.25*** (0.03) [.862]
AIA * Number of Turks	-0.09** (0.04) [.291]	-0.06* (0.03) [.182]	-0.10** (0.03) [.360]			
AIA * Number of Muslims				-0.03** (0.01) [.398]	-0.02* (0.01) [.279]	-0.03*** (0.01) [.476]
AIA * Importance Public	-0.07* (0.04) [.194]			-0.06+ (0.03) [.138]		
AIA * Importance parties		-0.05*** (0.01) [.529]			-0.05*** (0.01) [.477]	
AIA * Media salience			-5.96** (1.95) [.356]			-5.24** (1.83) [.334]
Variance of random components						
Intercept	0.106**	0.102**	0.117**	0.109**	0.105**	0.122**
AIA effect	0.005**	0.003**	0.004**	0.005**	0.003**	0.004**
Residual	3.027***	3.027***	3.027***	3.027***	3.027***	3.027***
Proportions of reduced variances (compared to model 1)						
Intercept	.147	.179	.059	.120	.150	.017
AIA effect	.457	.682	.569	.540	.720	.647
Deviance (-2LL)	104053.62	104044.91	104049.17	104050.99	104043.34	104046.52

Note: Level 1: individual, N = 26,344; level 2: country, N = 20. Standard errors within parentheses. Between the square brackets is the proportion reduced variance in the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes compared to a model where the specific variable is omitted. Models also include intercept, exclusive national identity, government satisfaction, economic evaluations, education low, education high, age, gender, member of ethnic minority, political ideology, political interest and the main effects of the contextual variables, but are not shown in the table.

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; + $p < .1$ (one-tailed).

variables, we find differences in effects of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkey's membership between 0.12 (for the relative number of Muslims in Model 12) and 0.25 (for importance for political parties in Model 9). These findings also support the fourth and the sixth hypothesis.

The question that remains is which contextual variables best explain the variation in strength of the effect. For this, we also calculated for each interaction how great a proportion of the variation could not be explained when the interaction was omitted from the model. With this, we can see how much of the variation in the effect is explained by this interaction. These numbers are represented in Table 4.4 between the square brackets. Here we see that the relative number of Muslims explains more variation in the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes than the relative number of Turkish immigrants does. Comparing it with the importance of the immigration issue, it depends on which indicator we use which contextual factor is most important. Importance for political parties is the strongest predictor of the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes. Importance for citizens is a significant predictor, but not as strong as the relative number of Turkish immigrants or Muslims. But as all the interaction effects hold in all models, importance of the immigration issue in the polity and number of Turkish immigrant or Muslims each predict substantial variation in strength of the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish membership.

Conclusion

In this chapter we asked the question which contextual conditions affect levels of support for Turkey's EU membership. Following the work of McLaren (2007) and building on conflict theory, we first hypothesized that in a country with more Turkish immigrants support for Turkey's accession would be lower. We went beyond the literature in two ways. First, as Turkish immigrants may be primarily seen as Muslims and Turkey may be primarily seen as a Muslim country, we also hypothesized that more Muslims would lead to less support for Turkey's membership. Second, as most citizens do not have direct experience with Turkish immigrants or Muslims, we argued that they could have *indirect* experience with immigrants when they talk or hear about immigrants more often. We assumed that when the immigration issue is more important in a polity, citizens would

have more indirect experience with immigrants, and thus hypothesized that the more important the immigration issue, the less support we find for Turkey's EU membership.

As our expectations with regard to the effects of the contextual conditions is based on conflict theory and thus the expectation that citizens define Turkish immigrants as an out-group, we also looked at how these conditions moderate the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on Turkey's EU membership (because the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support is also based on defining others as an out-group). We hypothesized that the higher the relative number of people of Turkish descent, the higher the relative number of Muslims, and the more important the immigration issue is in a country, the stronger the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkey's EU membership.

Using a survey among EU citizens in 20 countries, we found partial support for our hypotheses concerning the main effects. The relative number of Turks and the relative number of Muslims turn out to matter, with the number of Turks having a slightly stronger effect. We found no support for our expectation that the importance of the immigration issue affected support for Turkey's EU membership. The hypotheses about the moderation of the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes were all supported by our data. Interestingly, the relative number of Muslims appears more important in predicting the effect size of anti-immigrant attitudes than the relative number of Turkish immigrants. The importance of the immigration issue is a significant predictor of the effect size of anti-immigrant attitudes, and when operationalized as the importance political parties give to the immigration issue, also the strongest predictor.

Our findings on the main effects imply that opinion is affected by direct experiences with 'others', and not by indirect experience through the importance of the immigration issue. The significant effect of the relative number of Muslims indicates that for citizens the religion of Turks is of importance in deciding on support for Turkey's membership, which is in line with other studies (Azrout et al., in press; Hobolt, Van der Brug, De Vreese, Boomgaarden, & Hinrichsen, 2011; Van Spanje et al., 2010). But since we found that support for Turkey's potential EU membership

depends mostly on the relative number of Turkish immigrant, citizens appear to show the competence to distinguish between Turks and Muslims, and have their opinion about Turkey primarily based on Turks and not on other Muslims. Given that Turkey has been a major source of large-scale migration to Europe since the end of the Second World War (McLaren, 2007), these findings indicate that the chances of Turkey gaining popular support for its accession already decreased even before Turkey applied for membership.

The presence of Muslims, however, is more important in making people think in terms of ‘us’ and ‘them’, i.e. affects the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for membership. This is as we expected, as Muslims are more easily recognized as different than Turkish immigrants and thus are citizens in countries where relatively many Muslims live more likely to be focused on differences than people in countries with many people of Turkish origin. This does raise the question to what degree these findings may hold for other, non-Muslim, applicant countries?

We argued that the presence of Muslims increases the likelihood of citizens having thought about them, and for those who hold strong anti-immigrant attitudes it increases the likelihood to have thought about Muslims as an out-group. And when the consideration of Muslims as an out-group is stored in memory and thus available, it is likely to be applied when asked about a Muslim country. But except for a consideration to be available, it is described in the framing literature that to be applied a frame should also be applicable (e.g., Chong & Druckman, 2007a; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). A frame where Muslims are described as ‘others’ is not likely to be applicable for non-Muslim countries. But the question is whether citizens learn to focus on differences with Muslims or to focus on differences in general from the presence of Muslims in their country? Of course, considerations of focussing on differences in general can indeed be applied to non-Muslim countries. Thus, future studies should examine whether the considerations to focus on differences, learned from the presence of Muslims, are Muslims specific or of a more general nature.

Finally, we found that mediated contact through the importance of the immigration issue independently explained part of the variation in the strength of the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on support for Turkish

EU membership. Although all our importance indicators had a significant effect, the strength of the effects clearly differed. Importance for the public was the weakest predictor of the effect size, salience in the media of the immigration issue being stronger and importance of political parties being the strongest predictor. This implies that citizens are probably less aware of what other people think about the immigration issue, and more susceptible to cues from the media and politicians. Of course, we should ask ourselves whether cues from the media and from politicians are not themselves cued by the public, i.e. a representation of ideas that exist among the public. Steenbergen et al. (2007) showed that political elites both respond to and shape ideas of their constituencies, thus making politicians (at least partially) instigators. Also, politicians, because of their authoritative status, often act as primary definers of issues and ideas in the media (Benson, 2004; Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke, & Roberts, 1978). In light of the position politicians take in both cueing public and media, our findings may not imply direct influence of political elite's on citizens' thoughts, it does seem to imply that elites have the ability to steer the criteria by which citizens form their opinion.