

Policy Department External Policies

ANALYSIS OF THE 2007 ANNUAL ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY UNDER THE PRE-ACCESSION INSTRUMENT IN PREPARATION OF THE REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT MULTI-ANNUAL INDICATIVE PROGRAMME

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

This briefing paper was requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs.

It is published in the following language: English

Coordinating editor and author: **Dr. Mladen Staničić**

Co-author: **Dr. Burcu Gültekin-Punsmann**

Dr. Mladen Staničić is Director of the Institute for International Relations in Zagreb, Croatia. He is also editor-in-chief of the journal *Croatian International Relations Review*, Professor at the Diplomatic Academy of The Croatian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, co-convenor of the PfP Consortium Working Group 'Regional Stability in Southeast Europe' within the PfP Consortium and member of various other Croatian and international expert working groups. He is also a member of the Croatian negotiation group for the *acquis communautaire* chapter "Common Foreign and Defence Policy".

Dr. Burcu Gültekin-Punsmann is Research Fellow at the Center for European Studies at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara. She is the Turkey project manager of the Caucasus Business and Development Network (CBDN) project run by International Alert. She holds a PhD from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris.

Briefing for the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament made under the framework contract with the Trans European Policy Study Association (TEPSA)

Responsible Official: **Georgios Ghiatis**
Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union
Policy Department
WIB 06 M 45
rue Wiertz
B-1047 Brussels
E-mail: georgios.ghiatis@europarl.europa.eu

Publisher: European Parliament

Manuscript completed on 30 July 2008.

The briefing paper is available on the Internet at
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/studies.do?language=EN>

If you are unable to download the information you require, please request a paper copy by e-mail : xp-poldep@europarl.europa.eu

Brussels: European Parliament, 2008.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Scope of the briefing: This Briefing Paper analyzes the coherence of the IPA Annual Action Programme 2007 for Turkey (AAP) with the European Union's (EU) pre-accession objectives. The aim of IPA assistance to Turkey is to support the EU pre-accession strategy, adopted in the conclusions of the European Council of December 2004. The actions foreseen shall correspond to three objectives: progress towards fully meeting the Copenhagen political criteria, adoption and implementation of the *acquis communautaire*, and promotion of an EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue.

Turkey has been receiving pre-accession assistance from the EU since 2001. IPA assistance will build on assistance provided under the Turkey pre-accession instrument (2002-2006) as well as the MEDA programme (1996-2001).

The global amount of financial support earmarked in the Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) 2007-2009 is €1602,3 million. For 2007, the total amount of funds to be allocated within IPA reaches €497,2 million. The breakdown between the five components of the IPA is as follows:

- Component I 'Transition Assistance and Institution Building' : €256,2 million
- Component II 'Cross-Border Cooperation': €6,6 million
- Component III 'Regional Development': €167,5 million
- Component IV 'Human Resources Development': €50,2 million
- Component V 'Rural Development': €20,7 million

The Annual Action Programme (AAP) for Turkey under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for 2007 amounts to a maximum of Community assistance of €256,2 million. The budget of Component I represents almost half of the total IPA funds allocated to Turkey for 2007.

This paper is divided into a *Political criteria*, an *Economic criteria* and a *European standards* sections, thereby following the structure of the Progress Report and the priority axes within the MIPD. Each section provides an analysis of the current situation, the projects identified by the AAP and an assessment referring to the tasks identified above. The briefing closes with conclusions and recommendations.

Within the IPA-I *Institution Building* component the focus of assistance in the area of political criteria lies on the institutions that are directly addressed by the reforms: the judiciary and the law enforcement services. A second priority is the support for the continued development of civil society organisations. Among the issues to be addressed, priority will be given to human rights and fundamental freedoms, gender issues and the fight against corruption.

As concerns the adoption and implementation of the *acquis*, the main areas of activity, reflecting the volume of legislation to be transposed and implemented as well as the investments required, will be: agriculture and food safety, justice, liberty and security (particularly border management, migration and visa policy, and international cooperation among law enforcement agencies), and environment.

Main findings: The integration of Turkey represents one of the largest and most important challenges facing the EU in the coming years. It poses a number of new dilemmas to the EU, having in mind the inner political development of Turkey, which represents a complex issue. Therefore, the accession process of Turkey to the EU should be regarded as a special case, not

comparable with the accession process of any other accession country, and it requires a special approach, taking into account the concrete situation on the ground. On the other hand the accession of Turkey to full-fledged membership is of a great strategic interest for the EU, especially from the security point of view, having in mind the new role of the EU as an actor not only in global economy, but in international security relations as well.

Political criteria. When approaching with a view to assisting the accession process of Turkey to the EU, both a deep understanding of the contemporary Turkish society and a recognition of the changes which have taken place in recent times is needed in order to develop a strategy for a realistic EU policy towards Turkey. In the context of the analysis of political aspects of the *IPA 2007 Action Plan* one may conclude that the plan generally follows the mid-term priorities from the *MIPD 2007-2009* and offers relatively adequate measures for their short-term implementation in 2007. However, there is a large disproportion between projects earmarked to assistance for meeting political criteria and projects earmarked for improving the implementation of the *acquis*.¹ There are only 5-6 projects² assigned to the political criteria, whereas around 30 projects are funded with regard to the implementation of the *acquis*. Therefore one major recommendation is to give priority to the adaptation of Turkey to the political criteria, especially as the adaptation of the Turkish economy in line with the Copenhagen economic criteria is not, comparatively, as complex.

Economic criteria. The Economic criteria fall under the priority axis “Adoption and implementation of the *acquis communautaire*” of the AAP. This priority axis will comprise 28 projects covering 14 *acquis* chapters, the main chapters being agriculture and fisheries, customs union and taxation, energy, environment, financial control, internal market, justice liberty and security, social policy and employment, statistics, transports.³ The completion of the internal market has been a priority area of Turkey’s EU integration. The AAP will further support this process, which has been quite successful.

European Standards. There are two main areas where *The 2007 AAP* can contribute to the better adaptation of all segments of Turkish society to the Copenhagen criteria and to the *acquis communautaire*: regional development that is reducing regional disparities as far as possible, and education with the focus on local communities. These two issues are interconnected because underdevelopment in the provinces is one of the most urgent issues to be faced by both Turkey and the EU. Consequently education at the local level is one of the most efficient tools to alleviate those disparities in the short and long run. The promotion of an EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue is also a very important element for the adaptation to the European standards and criteria.

Main conclusions:

- When approaching with a view to assisting the accession process of Turkey to the EU, a deeper understanding of the contemporary Turkish society and recognition of the

¹ Out of the global IPA budget for Turkey of 256,2 million € 25,648 million € are earmarked for political projects, 153,361,950 € for European Standards, and 77,192,770 € for civil society support. No money is foreseen for economic projects.

² Indeed, under the economic criteria, a project like „The establishment of a reception, screening and accommodation system (centres) for refugees/asylum seekers“ (allocation: €47 millions), might be considered as political, which illustrates that the structure of Commission Decision from 20/12/2007 is not transparent enough.

³ There are some projects dedicated to the reduction of regional disparities, which has political aspect indeed, however it shows the inconsistency in the Commission Decision from 20/12/2007

changes which have taken place in recent times is needed. This will allow the EU to address the challenges for a realistic EU policy towards Turkey.

- The Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component translates the priorities set out in the European Partnership into three sub-components: 1/ *Political requirements*, where EC assistance will be used to support a stable, modern, democratic, multi-ethnic and open society based on the rule of law; 2/ *Socio-economic requirements*, where EC assistance will be used to support the development of the socio-economic environment; 3/ *European standards*, where EC assistance will support and accompany the country in its European integration plan (legal approximation, administration needs and requirements for DIS).
- Despite the fact that Turkey has made certain progress in the transition process, especially in the European “Common Foreign and Security Policy”, in which 45 out of 46 CFSP declarations are aligned, Turkey on the other side still faces some serious political problems. Human rights and fundamental freedoms are still an issue of great concern. The “European strategy of zero tolerance” showed some effect with regard to torture, but the situation throughout the whole country remains crucial. Regional disparities are still huge, especially considering education, human rights and gender equality in the southeast of Turkey. The pace of the political transition has slowed down in the last 2 years, and the implementation of the reforms remains uneven.
- The civilian justice reform represents another top priority in the transition process of Turkey. Despite the progress achieved in the field of judiciary consolidation, further progress has to be made. The implementation of the Istanbul Protocol and the strengthening of legal and judicial protection of religious freedoms are missing in the IPA 2007 Action Plan.
- Law enforcement services are not at a satisfactory level. The system for an independent monitoring of detention facilities leaves space for improvement. Combating torture is a top priority with regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights.
- Projects earmarked to educate all segments of Turkish society (in terms of respecting human rights, rights of women, rights of schooling, concerns of minority and vulnerable groups, participation of civil society etc.) are not adequately addressed at the political level. Although some projects in this field are foreseen (like TR 07 01 04 “Empowerment of Women and Women NGO in the least developed regions of Turkey” – allocation of €5 million), more projects dealing with this area are urgently needed.
- In the field of social policy and economic and social rights, the AAP focuses almost strictly on capacity-building actions. However, the Progress Report points at the need to further reinforce social dialogue mechanisms by encouraging cooperation with EU partners. The AAP has to help to foster social dialogue. The Civil Society Dialogue framework can contribute to the further development of social rights by linking trade unions and sectoral federations with their counterparts in EU countries.

Recommendations:

- The volume of funds available under the IPA budget for Turkey is not sufficient to have a direct macro-economic impact on Turkey's development. It is essential therefore to ensure a strong sectoral and geographical concentration of IPA, in order to impact the areas of intervention. However, even with a high degree of concentration, the direct impact of IPA will be limited.
- The EU-Turkey civil-society dialogue must be established in all relevant areas in terms of adaptation to European standards. Although all programmes granted for this area in the IPA 2007 Action Plan will be extremely useful, insufficient attention has been paid

to regional development and the education of the local public administration, as well as to the status of women in society.

- The AAP can propose the allocation of IPA funds to Black Sea Synergy projects aiming at fostering sub-regional integration. Thereby Turkey could also contribute to the ENP through cross-border cooperation in the overlapping Turkey-EU neighbourhood. The AAP can highlight the need that regional development projects, which are run in border regions, should integrate a cross-border cooperation dimension.
- The resources under components III and IV, which are precursors of the Structural Funds (and also component V, the precursor of EU rural development programmes) can therefore be utilized, first and foremost, to assure complementarity with the *acquis* by introducing into the Turkish framework for economic development the strategic planning and management principles guiding the implementation of the relevant EU instruments.
- There is a large disproportion between projects earmarked to assistance for meeting political criteria and projects earmarked to meet the economic criteria. There are only 5-6 projects assigned to political criteria, against around 30 projects assigned to the economic criteria. Therefore, one of the major recommendations should be to give priority to the adaptation to the political criteria.
- The AAP should integrate a gender dimension into its actions in the field of social policy. Furthermore, as regards anti-discrimination and equal opportunities, it is important to bear in mind that the transposition of the EC Directives concerning discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation is incomplete.
- In the area of public administration reform of the civil service, especially the implementation of the recently adopted legislation on decentralization will be welcomed. Support for the fight against corruption and the protection of financial interests of the EU deserve special attention as well as the implementation of the Regulation on Principles of Ethical Behaviour for Civil Servants. In the area of human rights, a National Human Rights Institution must be established as well as the office of an Ombudsman.

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Introduction

This briefing focuses on the analysis of the 2007 annual action programme for Turkey under the Pre-Accession Instrument, with special attention paid to the identification and explanation of country-specific or other problems. In line with the structure of the progress report which is annually published by the European Commission, this briefing consists of three main chapters (Political Criteria, Economic Criteria, and European Standards).

POLITICAL CRITERIA

When assessing the political situation in Turkey one must have in mind the specific political position of this country in international relations, especially in the context of its civilizational and cultural mindset. One indication of this specific state of mind can be illustrated by the new Eurobarometer opinion poll (February 2008 Survey)⁴. According to this survey which has been conducted last fall, the total of 84% of Turks considers the military as the most trusted institution in the country, compared to just 63% who had confidence in the Government. On the other hand, Eurobarometer shows that the perception of the Turkish population is continuing to deteriorate with regard to the EU. Only 45% consider full-fledged membership “a good thing”, compared to the 54% in 2007 and even 70% in the period 2003-04.

This development is partially due to the perception of some of the standards of the *acquis communautaire* as a political pressure for the country, or at least as a one-dimensional and too general approach. This again results in reservations towards the EU, against a background of problems which have burdened Turkey’s international position for a long time, like the problem of the division of Cyprus, although the Turkish government continually expresses its commitment to a comprehensive settlement. However, according to the last Progress Report on Turkey (2007) the European Council decided that accession negotiations will not be opened on eight chapters as a response to Turkey's restrictions regarding the Republic of Cyprus, and that no chapter will be provisionally closed until the European Commission confirms that Turkey has fulfilled its commitments. As for the time being some settlement of the problem is not very likely, negotiations of these chapters have dropped in some kind of blockade with no clear vision of the outcome.

Human rights and fundamental freedoms are still an issue of great concern. The European strategy of zero tolerance showed some effect with regard to the abolishment of torture, but the situation throughout the whole country remains crucial. Regional disparities are still huge, especially considering education, human rights and gender equality in the southeast of Turkey. A close reading of the actions listed in the IPA 2007 Action Plan reveals the absence of actions to improve cultural diversity and minority rights, as well as the strengthening of the system for independent monitoring of detention facilities. In that segment one may see the need for improvement.

Education and training are prerequisites for a well-functioning knowledge triangle (education-research-innovation) and play a key role in boosting growth and jobs. When talking about Turkey, education has a special relevance. The implementation of standards is much more needed than it is assumed by the national programme for Turkey under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for 2007. More education and training programmes are needed particularly in the province areas, not only in terms of civic training for conscripts, military judges and prosecutors,

⁴ It is clear that only one opinion poll can serve only as a generalised indicator. Nevertheless, Eurobarometer opinion poll has a recognisable reputation and relevance in related issues in general and therefore may be regarded as appropriate for this purpose.

The civilian justice reform represents another top priority in the transition process of Turkey. Despite the progress achieved in the field of judiciary consolidation, further progress has to be made. The implementation of the Istanbul Protocol and the strengthening of the legal and judicial protection of religious freedoms is missing in the IPA 2007 Action Plan.

Law enforcement services are not at a satisfactory level. The strengthening of the system for an independent monitoring of detention facilities is a sector to be improved. Combating torture is a top priority with regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights.

ECONOMIC CRITERIA

Turkey's economic integration into the EU is well advanced. Turkey's trade openness increased marginally. Exports and imports of goods and services totaled 63% of GDP in 2006. The EU remained Turkey's largest trading partner. In 2006, FDI-inflows from the EU amounted to 82% of total FDI, compared to 58% in 2005. The FDI-stock totaled about 20% of annual GDP, of which roughly two thirds originated from EU countries. Turkey's average per capita income, measured in purchasing power standards, reached in 2006 nearly 30% of the EU-27 average in 2007.

The membership of the Union requires the existence of a functioning market economy, and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. The 2007 Progress Report highlights that macroeconomic stability has been successfully maintained and recent financial turbulences have shown the resilience of the economy.

In relation to the economic criteria, the Progress Report recommends that Turkey takes further decisive steps towards structural reforms. However, macroeconomic stability and predictability are dependent on the continuation of appropriate fiscal and monetary policies and the establishment of an effective social security system. The need for an improved coordination across different institutions and policy areas in economy is also underscored. The continuation of market liberalization through the privatization of state-owned enterprises and price reforms, in particular in the areas of energy and agriculture, is underlined. The improvement of the business climate and the correction of labour market imbalances remain priority areas.

As underscored in the MIPD, the consolidation of macro-economic stability does not present a need for EU assistance. As a matter of fact the IPA Annual Programme Component I doesn't include any action in the field of Economic Criteria.

The volume of funds available under the IPA budget for Turkey is not sufficient to have a direct macro-economic impact on Turkey's development. It is essential therefore to ensure a strong sectoral and geographical concentration of IPA, in order to have a measurable impact on the areas of intervention. However, even with a high degree of concentration the direct impact of IPA will be limited.

However, the AAP Component I carries the potential to support macro-economic stability through projects aiming at improving the ability to adopt and implement the EU legal order, the *acquis communautaire*, as well as through those aiming at strengthening the administrative and judicial capacity and the modernization and restructuring of the agricultural sector. Other components of the IPA - which are not in the scope of the analysis of this briefing - can also support the development of macro-economic stability. The resources under components III and IV, which are precursors of the Structural Funds (and also component V, the precursor of EU rural development programmes) can therefore be utilized, first and foremost, to assure complementarity with the *acquis* by introducing into the Turkish

policies for economic development the strategic planning and management principles guiding the implementation of the relevant EU instruments.

The completion of the **internal market** has been a priority area for Turkey's EU integration. The AAP will further support this process which has been quite successful. Progress was reported in areas such as accreditation, standardisation and conformity assessment. The Communiqué on *standardisation in foreign trade*, applicable in 2007, further reduced the list of items which are subject to mandatory standards or technical specifications upon import; 35 mandatory standards in the area of construction products were abolished. The Turkish Standards Institute (TSE) continued adopting EN standards of the European Committee for Standardisation. More than 90% of EN standards are now adopted. The TSE has been reorganized in order to reach full compatibility with the EU's requirements concerning standardisation. Significant progress can be noted regarding *accreditation*. The Annual Programming Document is aiming at gathering new funds to further support the completion of the internal market by the removal of trade barriers.

Furthermore, the programme *TR 07 02 14 Supporting Turkey for enhancing the implementation and enforcement of Industrial Property Rights (€ 1.2 Mio)*, aiming at improving the overall legislative framework for copyrights and related rights has to be welcomed. As highlighted in the 2007 Progress Report, Turkey's legislation in industrial Property Rights is largely aligned with the *acquis*, but the administrative capacity remains insufficient to ensure effective enforcement as required by the Customs Union Decision. Turkey remains one of the countries in the world where IPR protection and enforcement is most problematic.

In the field of **social policy and economic and social rights**, the AAP focuses almost strictly on capacity building actions. The main goal of the selected programme in this field (*TR 07 02 22 Capacity Building of Social Security Institution*) is to strengthen the institutional and administrative capacity of the Social Security Institution in order to develop aligned policies in the field of the coordination of social security schemes and social security policies.

However, the Progress Report points at the need to further reinforce social dialogue mechanisms by encouraging cooperation with EU partners. Besides the support given to capacity building, the AAP has to help fostering social dialogue. The Civil Society Dialogue framework can contribute to the further development of social rights by bridging trade unions and sectoral federations with their counterparts in the EU countries. Turkey needs to adopt legislation guaranteeing full trade union rights in line with EU standards and the relevant ILO Conventions, in particular as regards the right to organize, the right to strike and the right to bargain collectively. Turkey still maintains its reservations on Article 5 (right to organize) and Article 6 (right to bargain collectively) of the revised European Social Charter.

The AAP should integrate a gender dimension to its actions in the field of social policy. The gap between men and women in economic participation and opportunity remains significant. Furthermore, as regards anti-discrimination and equal opportunities, it is important to bear in mind that the transposition of the EC Directives concerning discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation is incomplete. The Progress Report is pointing at the need to establish an effective and independent "Equality Body" to promote non-discrimination and equal treatment.

In the field of **Agriculture and Fisheries**, according to the 2007 Progress Report limited progress has taken place regarding the legislative alignment with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Turkish agricultural support mechanisms differ substantially from the current trend of the reformed Common Agricultural Policy, in which the use of agricultural support instruments without any link to production has been expanded to almost all sectors.

The issue whether projects carried on previously within the EU pre-accession assistance, such as the pilot implementation for the introduction of the Integrated Administration and Control

System (IACS), or the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN), shouldn't be further developed seem relevant. Although the National Farmers Registration System (NFRS) is in line with EU legislation, about 10% of farms remain unregistered. The Progress Report also calls for the further development of the system of land identification and the NFRS to prepare for controls on agricultural land.

The project *TR 07 02 25* aiming at strengthening the statistical capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs is of particular importance in order to upgrade the Agricultural Statistical System of Turkey to EU standards, especially with regard to the methodology and quality of compiling and processing statistical information.

The project *TR 07 02 02 Introduction of Stock Assessment to the Fisheries Management System of Turkey* is in line with the priorities of the Progress Report. Turkey has indeed not made any progress with regard to legislative alignment to the Common Fisheries Policy. Administrative structures are not sufficiently prepared for the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy. Turkey has no comprehensive policy document for the fisheries sector. The AAP can propose the allocation of IPA funds to a Black Sea Synergy project in the field of fisheries: Turkey has been actively promoting the establishment of an international framework for fisheries management in the Black Sea.

Not much space has been given to the area of ***regional policy and coordination of structural instruments*** in the AAP. However, the Progress Report urges for significant improvements with regard to the administrative capacity of key bodies at the central level in order to cope both with IPA and Structural Funds in the longer term. The ministries which are likely to act as future managing authorities for the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund are not yet prepared to carry out their functions. At the regional level, administrative capacity remains very weak, particularly in view of the lack of progress in establishing Regional Development Agencies. A capacity building project in this field should be welcomed.

The reduction of regional disparities, especially in the Eastern and Southern part of the country can also support progress in the field of the Political Criteria. No steps have been taken to develop a comprehensive strategy to achieve economic and social development in the region and to create the conditions required for the Kurdish population to enjoy full rights and freedoms.

In the field of transports, the AAP focuses on two projects. The first one is aiming at an upgrading of the Turkish Coastal Radio in order to increase the safety of life, goods, navigation and environment in Turkish coastal areas. The second, dedicated to the reform of the Turkish Railways in view of opening up the sector for competition in line with the EU *acquis*, is of utmost importance.

Furthermore, IPA in Turkey can contribute to increase the efficiency of the EU's regional transportation initiatives, especially in the Black Sea region. The European Commission has defined five major transnational axes aiming at fostering its logistical connection with the neighbouring countries. Among these, three axes are of interest for the Black Sea countries: the *Motorways of the Seas*, the *Central Axis*, and the *South-Eastern Axis*. Turkey is in the process of identifying a core network and a list of priority infrastructure projects as part of the accession negotiations. Turkey is involved in both the Pan-European Corridors and the *Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia* (TRACECA), launched in 1993 with the aim to connect Europe with Turkey and further with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the Southern Caucasus until Central Asia. Cooperation is organized through a basic multilateral agreement signed by the countries concerned, which set up an Inter-Governmental Commission and a permanent Secretariat.

EUROPEAN STANDARDS

The promotion of an **EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue** is a very important element of the adaptation to the European standards, especially with a view to two main points of assistance: bridging regional disparities, and education. It gains special relevance in the AAP, regarding the fact that Civil Society Dialogue as an issue has not been a sector of assistance until 2005. There are 4 projects in the AAP and all of them have special aspects and relevance. The cultural aspect, as it is expressed in TR 07 03 02 *Cultural bridges*, seems to become most effective because it matches very suitably the two main segments of pre-assistance: regional development and education.

Furthermore, an appropriate performance of the media as a part of civil society might be very useful in explaining to the general public the meaning of the notion of civil oversight of the law enforcement forces, which is a very important part of the security sector reform along the lines of European standards and criteria. This also depends on the development of civil-military relations, which must become part of an EU-Turkey civil society dialogue. At the moment, the problem of lacking a full professional treatment from both sides concerning the sensitive issue of civil-military relations remains. A lot of education effort in this field should be done, and here the role of IPA pre-assistance programmes is of crucial importance.

In June 2005, the Commission adopted a Communication on civil society dialogue between the EU and its candidate countries. This should help to promote dialogue between civil society, in a broad sense, in the EU and Turkey in order to address issues and concerns relating to enlargement. IPA will finance a number of actions to promote this dialogue, particularly within Turkey.

Conclusions

The aim of this paper has been to assess the 2007 AAP for the Republic of Turkey under the EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession. In this programme, the European Commission outlined the EU's pre-accession assistance for the year 2007. The 2007 AAP is divided into three priority axes: Progress towards fully meeting the Copenhagen political criteria, adoption and implementation of the *acquis communautaire* and promotion of an EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue.

The Republic of Turkey was granted the status of an EU candidate country in December 1999. Accession negotiations with Turkey were opened in October 2005. The Accession Agreement between Turkey and the then EEC was signed in 1963 and entered into force in December 1964. Turkey and the EU form a customs union since 1995.

In line with the structure of the Progress Report, annually published by the European Commission, this briefing consists of three main chapters (Political Criteria, Economic Criteria, and European Standards). By matching The 2007 AAP with the Turkey 2007 Progress Report and the Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) 2007-2009, both prepared by the European Commission, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- When approaching with a view to assisting the accession process of Turkey to the EU, a deeper understanding of the contemporary Turkish society and a recognition of the changes which have taken place in recent times are needed in order to develop a realistic EU policy towards Turkey.
- Key priorities of the AAP address in some segments, but not adequately enough, public administration reform and reform of the judiciary, particularly at the local level.

However, the most critical problem for meeting the Copenhagen political criteria will be the implementation of an effective civilian oversight of the security forces, that is to say civilian oversight of the entire law enforcement forces which include the army, police, intelligence and security services as a whole.

- Despite the fact that Turkey has made certain progress in the transition process, especially in the European “Common Foreign and Security Policy”, in which 45 out of 46 CFSP declarations are aligned, Turkey still faces some serious political problems. Human rights and fundamental freedoms are still an issue of great concern. The European strategy of zero tolerance showed some effect with regard to the abolishment of torture, but the situation throughout the whole country remains crucial. Regional disparities are still huge, especially considering education, human rights and gender equality in the southeast of Turkey. The pace of political transition has slowed in the last two years and the implementation of the reforms remains uneven.
- The civilian justice reform represents another top priority in the transition process of Turkey. Despite the progress achieved in the field of judiciary consolidation, further progress has to be made. The implementation of the Istanbul Protocol and the strengthening of legal and judicial protection of religious freedoms are missing in the IPA 2007 AAP.
- Law enforcement services are not at a satisfactory level. The strengthening of the system for independent monitoring of detention facilities is a sector that needs to be improved. Combating torture is a top priority with regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights.
- In the field of social policy and economic and social rights, the AAP focuses almost strictly on capacity building actions. However, the Progress Report points at the need to further reinforce social dialogue mechanisms by encouraging cooperation with EU partners. The AAP has to help fostering social dialogue. The Civil Society Dialogue framework can contribute to the further development of social rights by bridging trade unions and sectoral federations with their counterparts in the EU countries.
- The AAP can propose the allocation of IPA funds to Black Sea Synergy projects aiming at fostering sub-regional integration. By this, Turkey could also contribute to the ENP through cross-border cooperation in the overlapping Turkey-EU neighbourhood. The Annual Programming Document should highlight the need that regional development projects run in border regions should integrate a cross-border cooperation dimension.
- Furthermore, IPA in Turkey can contribute to increase the efficiency of the EU’s regional transportation initiatives, especially in the Black Sea region.

Recommendations

- There is a large disproportion between projects earmarked to assistance for meeting the political criteria and projects earmarked to meet the economic criteria. There are only 5-6 projects assigned to political criteria against around 30 projects assigned to economic criteria. Therefore, one of the major recommendations is to give priority to the adaptation to the political criteria.
- The AAP should integrate a gender dimension into its actions in the field of social policy. Furthermore, as regards anti-discrimination and equal opportunities, it is important to bear in mind that the transposition of the EC Directives concerning discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation is incomplete.

- The volume of funds available under the IPA budget for Turkey is not sufficient to have a direct macro-economic impact on Turkey's development. It is essential therefore to ensure a strong sectoral and geographical concentration of IPA in order to have a measurable impact on the areas of intervention. However, even with a high degree of concentration the direct impact of IPA will be limited.
- The EU-Turkey civil-society dialogue must be established in all relevant area in terms of the adaptation to European standards. Although all programmes granted for this area by the 2007 AAP will be extremely useful, insufficient attention has been paid to regional development and the education of the local public administration as well as the status of women in society.
- In the area of public administration reform of the civil service, especially the implementation of recently adopted legislation on decentralization will be welcomed. Support for the fight against corruption and protection of EU financial interests deserves special attention, as well as the implementation of the Regulation on Principles of Ethical Behaviour for Civil Servants. In the area of human rights a National Human Rights Institution must be established, as well as an Ombudsman office.

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