



REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
PRIME MINISTRY
SECRETARIAT GENERAL FOR EU AFFAIRS

EU REFLECTION GROUP REPORT

EUROPEAN PROJECT 2030 The Threats and Opportunities May 2010

Introduction:

In the European Council Conclusions of December 2007, it was decided to establish a working group of independent nature with the aim of identifying the challenges the Union may encounter in the long term, together with defining the measures to be adopted to address those challenges. The group, called as the “EU Reflection Group”, was mandated to take up an endeavor to address, in particular, the expectations and priorities of the EU citizens.

EU Reflection Group was designed as a group not bearing a political nature. Among the members, there are 12 individuals from different backgrounds, who were selected in order to reflect the diversity in the EU, ranging from former prime ministers to businessmen. The group, which was to carry out its study under the chairmanship of the former prime minister of Spain, Felipe Gonzalez Marquez, was to present a report to the European Council of June 2010.

The final outcome of the study is a compromise which emphasizes the year 2030, in order to highlight the challenges which the EU will be faced with in the medium to long term, especially if its proposals for measures to be adopted are not followed.



**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
PRIME MINISTRY
SECRETARIAT GENERAL FOR EU AFFAIRS**

EU Reflection Group, issued their Report, the outcome of a 2 year long reflection period, on 8 May 2010, the day before the Europe Day, May 9, addressed to the European Council. It was presented to the President of the European Council Van Rompuy and was an item on the agenda of the European Council of 17 June 2010.

The Report is a wake-up call for Europe, in order to prevent its marginalisation in the international scene and heavily underlines the issue of economic governance due to the pressures of the global financial crisis that has affected Europe severely.

In summary, the Report highlights the problems that the EU, which is defined as much more than a common market and rather as a union of values, will face in the long term, and it emphasizes that these problems can be overcome by adherence to the principle of solidarity and by enhancing the content and implementation of the Union's economic and social policies.

The analysis of the current situation and the forecast for the future in case the necessary measures are not adopted are starkly realistic. The Report, in particular, draws attention to the danger of marginalisation for Europe as an economic and political international actor. It points out that for the first time in Europe's recent history, there is widespread fear that today's children will be less well-off than their parents' generation.

Moreover, it has been specifically stated that the global power balance will change, several new powers will emerge and the world's center of gravity will shift towards Asia and the global south. In fact, the decline of the EU's share in the global wealth, whose growth rate is far below compared to its competitors and the fact that Asian countries are investing more in research, technological development and innovation, are the major causes of this development. In addition, it has been established that the EU's energy requirements and dependency will increase by 50% and as a result of this, the two-thirds of its energy demand will have to be supplied from 3rd countries.



**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
PRIME MINISTRY
SECRETARIAT GENERAL FOR EU AFFAIRS**

In social and demographic terms, the population of Europe is aging and losing its dynamism, thus it has been pointed out in the Report that well-educated and skilled workforce is declining.

The most significant measures, in order to avert this foreboding picture, include the matters which are being debated for a while and are identified as objectives that need to be accomplished. Among these, are the measures which the EU has to take in order to become a knowledge-based society, to increase the level of employment, to enhance macro-economic coordination, and to become an effective foreign policy actor.

The Report of the EU Reflection Group: Enlargement and Turkey:

Turkey is one of the few countries which the Report refers to by name. This can be construed as an indicator of the significance of Turkey both for the EU and also for the world in general, in political, economic, cultural and social terms.

Those challenges and opportunities of the EU pointed out in the Reflection Group Report, such as becoming a powerful global actor, securing energy supplies and routes, solving the demographic and economic problems due to the contribution of a young, skilled and dynamic workforce, combating illegal immigration or organized crime would benefit from Turkey's accession both for the shaping and implementation of such policies.

In the report, within the context of the EU's role as a foreign policy actor, it has been emphasized that the commitment given to Turkey and other official candidate countries must be honored and in this framework, accession negotiations must be continued. Under the section titled as "Europe in the



**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
PRIME MINISTRY
SECRETARIAT GENERAL FOR EU AFFAIRS**

World: Becoming An Assertive Player”, regarding Turkey’s accession it is stated that “In line with this policy of engagement and inclusiveness, the Union must honor its commitments with regard to the current official candidates, including Turkey, and carry on with the negotiation process.”

The Report underlines the significance of the EU enlargement as an element to overcome the challenges and maximize the opportunities the EU is faced with, in favor of a more peaceful, secure, and prosperous Europe contributing to a more stable, fair and secure world order.

As stated in the Report, for many people around the world, the major value of the EU is being seen by many, as a reference point that brings prosperity and peace for its citizens, an alternative model in respect to traditional inter-state relations and a transnational community of law, in a continent divided by hot and cold wars. EU must become a continental hub by using inclusive and transforming strategies, which have been used successfully in the previous enlargements. Enlargement remains the most effective foreign policy tool for the EU.

In order to attain its objectives, Europe should play a more assertive role in the international arena. However, to achieve this, EU must always be open to new members (limited to the states already given candidate status or perspective) and must assess each candidate country on its own merits and their progress as regards compliance with membership criteria. It should be demonstrated that the Union is an inclusive and credible structure which remains faithful to its commitments towards all the candidate countries, particularly to Turkey. And this is what is indicated by the phrase “true limits of Europe”.

These observations target primarily the French President Nicholas Sarkozy and the ones who share a similar point of view regarding Turkey’s EU accession. When Mr. Sarkozy came up with the proposal for such a group to be established under the name of the “Wise Men Group” in 2007, he had stated that one of the objectives of the group was to be to determine Europe’s boundaries or limits. Such an



**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
PRIME MINISTRY
SECRETARIAT GENERAL FOR EU AFFAIRS**

objective was not included in the European Council Conclusions of December 2007. The Report of the EU Reflection Group demonstrates by these statements that the boundaries of the Union can only be drawn by objective criteria, reflecting compliance with EU values, norms and standards, rather than by subjective elements.