



TURKISH INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
Representation to the European Union – Brussels

MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS OF TURKEY'S MEMBERSHIP TO THE EU

The European Council, on 17th December 2004, decided to open the accession negotiations with Turkey.

The challenge for both the EU and Turkey is now to transform Turkey's political, economic, social and cultural potential into assets for Europe's future.

- 1. ECONOMY :** Turkey will greatly contribute to the EU's economic power on the global scene. With a population of 70 million, a steadily increasing GNP level (460 billion euros -PPP), a young, dynamic and entrepreneurial population, an export oriented economy and rapidly developing information society, Turkey's accession will increase the size and competitiveness of the European internal market.
- 2. CONSUMERS :** Turkey's large economy and potentials will be beneficial to European consumers. Elimination of technical and non-technical barriers to trade and adoption by Turkey of the EU legislation and standards are increasing the competitiveness and the product quality in an enlarged Union.
- 3. BUSINESS :** In addition to the customs union in industrial goods, liberalisation of services and public procurement will provide European companies with invaluable opportunities. With a services sector constituting 65% of its GDP and a public procurement market of over 30 billion euros, Turkey offers high potentials for European companies in development projects.
- 4. INVESTMENT :** After accession, European companies will benefit from higher rates of return on their foreign direct investment in Turkey. Given the country's qualified labour force, high absorption capacity, tourism potentials and location at the crossroads of Eurasian markets and energy networks, the EU membership will boost its economy by attracting even more investments.
- 5. GLOBAL POLITICS :** Turkey's membership will be of great value for the EU in its global aspirations. Turkey's geographical position, relations with the neighbouring countries and connection to the Islamic world, Russia and the Central Asia will endow the EU with greater saying in the international arena.
- 6. CULTURE :** Turkey has always been a cradle for major civilisations. Hittites, Lydians, Lycians, Phrygians, Romans, Byzantines, Seldjuk Turks, people from the Balkans, Caucasia, Central Asia, Black Sea and the Ottomans are all part of Turkey's historic and cultural treasury. Among others, Troy, Istanbul, Hattusash, Mount Nemrut, Xanthos, Lethoon, Cappadocia are registered on the World Heritage List.
- 7. MULTICULTURALISM :** Turkey's membership will strengthen the EU's multicultural society and democracy. It will be a solid confirmation refuting 'clash of civilisations' scenario and proving the essence of the EU, namely a union built upon and through common values.
- 8. WOMEN'S RIGHTS :** Turkey's progress towards the EU membership is an important catalyst in empowering women. Turkish women participating in the work force in banking, engineering, legal, and the medical sectors are among the highest in Europe, whereas problems persist in both urban and rural areas. Turkey's EU process will further improve women's rights in Turkey and generate positive effects on the status of Muslim women in Europe and beyond.
- 9. ENVIRONMENT :** Turkey's membership will double the richness of European ecosystem. In Europe except Turkey, there are 3500 endemic plant species. Turkey alone is a home for 3022 endemic plant and 456 bird species. 93% of forests in Turkey are natural old forests (%1 in the rest of Europe).
- 10. SECURITY & STABILITY :** As a reliable NATO ally, Turkey's membership will consolidate both the military and the civilian aspects of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. A European Union including Turkey will be more efficient in tackling political problems and crises among which threats from undemocratic regimes, terrorism, illegal immigration and trafficking in drugs, arms, human beings... Last but not least, Turkey's membership will provide sustainable stability in the Aegean region and the Balkans.