

the euro or the “big bang” enlargement in 2004, the Austrian elite has led public opinion to accept policies that were initially unpopular, but on Turkey the dynamic has been the opposite.

Austrian institutions ranging from political parties to academia and research institutes still have remarkably few contacts with their counterparts in Turkey, and industrialists have also been conspicuously absent from the membership debate despite their strong involvement in Turkey’s hydro-electric power sector.

And what about Turkey itself? Ankara only began to take special note of Austria’s views when political ranks looked to be closing against Turkey in 2004. This was interpreted by some Turkish analysts as an irrational detour back to the era of Hapsburg-Ottoman rivalry. Turkey seems to have sensed that it had no hope of influencing the Austrian debate, but nor did it in any way try to exercise public diplomacy to turn the tide. □

v.ringler@esiweb.org

Danes settle down to “serious debate” on the EU’s crisis

By Anne Mette Vestergaard, Chief advisor on European Affairs at the Danish Institute for International Studies

The failure of the constitutional treaty turned Denmark’s EU agenda upside down. In May 2005, most Danes accepted the government’s line and the opinion polls promised a clear Danish Yes. It was also expected that a positive outcome on the treaty would be followed by one or more referendums on the abolition of Denmark’s various opt-puts. But after the French and Dutch Nos, opposition to the treaty rose so sharply that Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen had no choice but to follow the UK and postpone the referendum until some unspecified point after the mid-2006 EU summit.

Danes are still strongly in favour of EU membership, but if asked to ratify the constitution would say No. Yet, just as we in Denmark

were expected to face up to our responsibilities after our 1992 No vote on the Maastricht Treaty, the Danish government now expects the French and the Dutch to present their ideas on how the EU can move forward. So long as there is no clear signal on this from France and the Netherlands, the winning argument during a campaign in Denmark would be “You’d better say no until we know what text we are voting on”.

The Danish Parliament has responded quickly to the idea of a reflection period by allocating some €1.8m for a national debate on the future of Europe. The idea is to support a wide range of events throughout the country and end up with a report for the European Council in June 2006. Thanks to our No to Maastricht, we already have solid experience of how to go about this. But it remains to be seen whether a public debate that is not linked to a referendum will grab the attention of citizens and the media.

Under a “Citizens’ Agenda” headline, five broad ques-

tions will define the overall focus of the debate to ensure it doesn't go off in all directions. The questions relate to the role of the EU in resolving cross-border problems, internal EU problems and securing legitimacy and public participation in EU decision-making, including setting the EU boundaries.

Turkish membership is so far the hottest EU topic in Denmark. The 2004 enlargement was widely perceived as a historic opportunity, and the enlargement to Bulgaria, Romania and the western Balkans is generally accepted, without much enthusiasm. But Danish politicians are less than lukewarm over Turkish

membership. The Prime Minister has stressed that Turkish membership will depend not only on Turkey's compliance with the Copenhagen criteria but also on the EU's capacity to take Turkey on board. He has said that the widespread sense of insecurity among EU citizens towards Turkish accession is something that all EU leaders must relate to and discuss openly. He has also pledged that he will be encouraging the EU to slow down and consolidate before engaging in new endeavours whose long-term effects are unpredictable.

The Prime Minister's attitude towards Turkish membership mirrors public

opinion in general. Denmark's fervent support for the EU's eastern enlargement is not being given to further enlargement including Turkey. Yet even though a large majority of Danes have pronounced themselves against Turkish membership, more than two-thirds (67%) respond positively when asked specifically whether they would accept a reformed Turkey as an EU member at some point in the future. □

amv@diis.dk

Adapting to the EU is a risky road for Turkey too

By **Güven Sak**, Executive Director of TEPAV, the Economic Policy Research Institute in Ankara

Turkey's long road to last October's opening of EU accession talks was only made possible by the seemingly boundless enthusiasm of Turkish decisionmakers and the general public for almost all things European. Polls have consistently demonstrated a pro-membership sentiment

DENMARK

Head of Government

Anders Fogh Rasmussen (V)

Last Elections: Feb 2005 **seats**

Liberal Party (V)	52
Social Democracy (S)	47
Danish People's Party (DF)	24
Conservative People's Party (KF)	18
Radical Left (RV)	17
Socialist People's Party (SF)	11
Unity List - The Red-Greens (EL)	6
Representatives from Faroe and Greenland	4

GOVERNING COALITION	
70 SEATS OUT OF 179	
V (Liberal Democrat Group)	KF (EPP-ED)

