

MENDEL UNIVERSITY IN BRNO

Faculty of Regional Development and International Studies

Department of Territorial Studies

**Justice and Development Party (AKP) and its influence on
Turkey**

Bachelor Thesis

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Brno 2015

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Abstrakt

Murínová, Dominika. *Strana Spravodlivosti a Rozvoja (AKP) a jej vplyv na Turecko*.

Brno, 2015. Bakalárska práca

Hlavným cieľom bakalárskej práce je zistiť ako moc prezident Erdoğan a jeho strana AKP ovplyvňuje Turecko a jeho obyvateľstvo. Prvá časť opisuje voľby od roku 2002 až do posledných volieb, ktoré sa konali tento rok v Novembri. Ďalšia časť sa zaoberá protestmi, kto protestoval a prečo a aké to malo následky v nasledujúcich rokoch pre Stranu Spravodlivosti a Rozvoja. Ďalšia kapitola je zameraná na vzťah Turecka a Európske Únie od svojho začiatku a od momentu kedy sa AKP dostalo k moci. Posledná kapitola sa venuje politickej vízii strany AKP na najbližšie roky. Aké sú jej ciele a čo sa chystá zmeniť.

Kľúčové slová

Turecko, Strana Spravodlivosti a Rozvoja, Voľby, Protesty, Európska Únia

Abstract

Murínová, Dominika. *Justice and Development Party (JDP) and its influence on Turkey*. Brno, 2015. Bachelor thesis.

The aim of the bachelor thesis is to look how much is President Erdoğan and his JDP influencing Turkey and its citizens. The first part of the thesis will describe elections since 2002 until the last ones which took place this year in November. Next part deals with protests, who was protesting and why and how it affected Justice and Development Party in upcoming years. The next chapter will focus on the relationship between Turkey and the European Union from the start and from the moment when JDP came to power. The last chapter is dealing with the political vision of JDP for next years. What are its goals and what it plans to change.

Key words

Turkey, Justice and Development Party, Elections, Protests, the European Union

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank my supervisor, Mgr. Ondřej Mocek, for his useful comments, patience, remarks and help he provided me throughout the all stages of completing my thesis. I would also like to give my thanks to my friend, Abdurrahim Aktaş, who helped me with the Turkish translations and information I needed. At last, but not least, I would like to thank my Family and Friends who supported me during the whole undergraduate study without expecting anything in return. Thank you all.

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List of abbreviations

EU – European Union

GNA – Grand National Assembly

JDP – Justice and Development Party

NMP – Nationalist Movement Party

KWP – Kurdistan Workers' Party

PDP – Peoples' Democratic Party

RPP – Republican People's Party

ISIL – Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

1. Introduction

Justice and Development Party (JDP) was formed from the ashes of the political parties which were not very popular for their Islamic point of view. They abandoned the tradition of the Islamism and formed the conservative Democratic Party. JDP's members are saying that they are pro-Western and pro-American Party and will continue the negotiations with the European Union about Turkey's membership. Most of the opposition saw this as a political trick. They changed their ideologies too quickly from Islamism to democrats and from anti-European to pro-European. Despite of the opposition concerns the party became the most popular one among Turkish people and allowed them to be in charge of the republic since 2002 until now.

During their first general elections they won sweeping victory and got two-thirds of the seats in Grand National Assembly. Since then each general election they won with even higher number of votes. Obviously people are satisfied with changes and directions New Turkey is heading to.

Everything looked perfect until the May, 2013 when everybody heard about demonstrations in Istanbul's Gezi Park. The initial cause of the protest was a plan to build a shopping mall there. Mostly environmentalists did not like this idea because there is almost no green space in Istanbul anymore. It was a small peaceful protest until the police attacked protesters with tear gas. After that it evolved into wider anti-government unrest and the largest wave of protests in recent Turkey which did not take place just in Istanbul but also in other large cities in the country.

The thesis will be analyzing the elections since 2002 when JDP got elected for the first time until the last election which took place this November. Each election will look at JDP's political program, the list of the opposition and the situation in the country during elections. This year general election is important to mention because the first one was in June but the elected parties were not able to cooperate and there had to be a new election in November. Also during the time between these elections there was terrorist attack in Ankara. There will be mentioned JDP's views for upcoming years and also

anti-government protests which I mentioned before. Who were the people protesting that day? After this we take a look at the relationship between JDP and the European Union, the years before JDP was in power and after. How hard did it push to move negotiation talks further and also the relationship between Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus.

The main question of the thesis is how much are President Erdoğan and his JDP influencing Turkey and its citizens? It is in power for 13 years and still going strong. Also it can play a very important role for the European Union in the case of migration crisis Europe is going through right now since most of the immigrants who cross the Mediterranean Sea get there from Turkey. This situation can be advantageous for Turkey which can demand something in favor of helping the European Union.

2. Methodology and aim of the thesis

2.1 Aim

The aim of the thesis is to analyze Justice and Development Party's influence on current politics, people and the EU.

Since JDP was established it has been one of the most popular parties in the country which became influential from the day it started. Its aim was clear, to get through 10 % national threshold and get into Grand National Assembly. This was fourteen years ago and it is the biggest and most influential party in modern Turkey. How was it able to attract so many people right from the beginning? And how is it possible that it is still on the top of its game until now? These are the questions to which we will try to find answer to.

Firstly I will be comparing the general and presidential elections, since JDP's premiere in 2002 general election when it came into power, compare elections and analyze if it is the only party which is so popular and getting more and more votes each election in the country. It is important to do so we can see in elections how the society reacted after JDP was in power. Before the elections happening after 2013 we will stop to have a look at the controversial protests that happened that year and could significantly change the results of upcoming elections. These protests were very anti-governmental and it looked like it is the last time we will see JDP as a governing party. We will answer questions who were the people that were protesting and why? In 2014 Erdoğan became the 12th President of the Republic of Turkey and the first one who was elected by popular vote. It was surprising that even after the protests JDP did not lose its trust in citizens and was able to be still very influential in politics. This year was a very important general election happening because it was the first one after the protests and there was a new political party ahead called People's Democratic Party which could change the course of the results. This party was a very attractive one mostly for its pro-Kurdish point of view. We will look at the 2015 general election in little bit more detailed way since it is a very important one. There will be comparison of the most

perspective parties' campaigns and predictions of the results. Since the coalition was not made and new election was called for November 1st 2015. It is important to notice if JDP was able to change something from June to November and attracted more people to vote for them. There will be comparison of these two elections and we will look at the reaction of the world on results which will shape the way Turkey is heading to.

The second part will be talking about Turkey and its relationship with the European Union. Since when is Turkey candidate country and why it is still not the member after so many years. Also I will mention how JDP sees this membership and if it is really doing everything it can to become part of the European Union. We will take a look at its relationship with Cyprus if something changed since 2002. Another point to look at is if Turkey does not have any other offer from some other international organization to join to. We will look at the reaction of the European Union on 2013 protests and the way how can JDP gain something from the migration crisis the EU is going through right now.

The last chapter will take a look at the set of goals JDP is willing to achieve until 2023. The party calls it the New Turkey Vision. It is mostly about how the party thinks Turkey should be heading to in subject of politics, society and the world. These goals might be the right thing people want to hear and is able to attract them to vote for the party. The party came out with new set called the New Turkey Contract 2023 this year and I will compare it with the one from 2012. These are the points that can influence Turkey and its citizens the most because these are plans JDP wants to achieve.

2.2 Methodology

The thesis is analyzing the elections since 2002 until the ones which took place this year to see how society was shaping and if JDP was able to influence it to continue to be in power. Each one will look at who got most of the votes, seats in General National Assembly and from which part of Turkey people vote for their party. Each election is different. The situation in the country has changed and people could change their opinions. The main principal of the thesis is using a literature research. The research

was based on searching, collecting, sorting, and processing the information. The information was obtained mainly from books, journals, scientific articles, internet resources, and specialized publications. Sometimes certain information was not translated into English and it was only in Turkish language which was causing problems.

One of the most important resources used in my thesis are internet publications on the web page of Justice and Development Party, Turkish News, and other ones from which I could get most recent issues from since they are so fresh that they could not be part of some book publication yet.

3. Justice and development Party establishment

Justice and Development Party (after just JDP) is a social conservative party, nowadays the biggest one in Turkey, and the most successful Islamic-inspired Democratic Party in the world. The party was formed in August 2001 by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who is former mayor of Istanbul. People liked how he governed city of Istanbul which was advantage for his new political party. This new party was facing many controversies because it was born from the ashes of old Virtue Party which could not continue its function anymore because it was banned in June 2001 for violation of secularist articles in Constitution. That is why few former representatives of Virtue Party created JDP – known in Turkish as “*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*”, and wanted to run for parliamentary seat in November 2002 elections. Its very name refers to a “white” party, which in Turkey traditionally suggests a more liberal and tolerant wing of religion. JDP claims itself as strongly pro-Western and want to continue with negotiations of Turkish membership to the European Union. Erdoğan’s popularity, mostly among the middle class, has led to the party’s immediate rise to the top. He claimed his new party’s primary goals were improving the economy and expanding democracy. (Yavuz 2006, p. 1-7)

3.1 JDP’s premiere in 2002 General election

Grand National Assembly of Turkey (later just GNA) consists of 550 seats and its members are elected through a closed-list proportional representation system according to D’Hondt method and are elected for the 4-year term.¹ In order to gain any seats the party must clear a national threshold of 10 percent and at least one D’Hondt method quotient in the district from which it is elected. Also candidates are seated only if their party is organized in one-third of districts within each of half of the provinces, and has nominated two candidates for each seat in at least half of provinces. Parties which are

¹ Before the year 2007, the general elections were held every five years instead of four but it changed during the Turkish constitutional referendum in 2007.

not able to obtain more than 10 percent of valid votes cannot get seats in GNA. (Elections in Turkey)

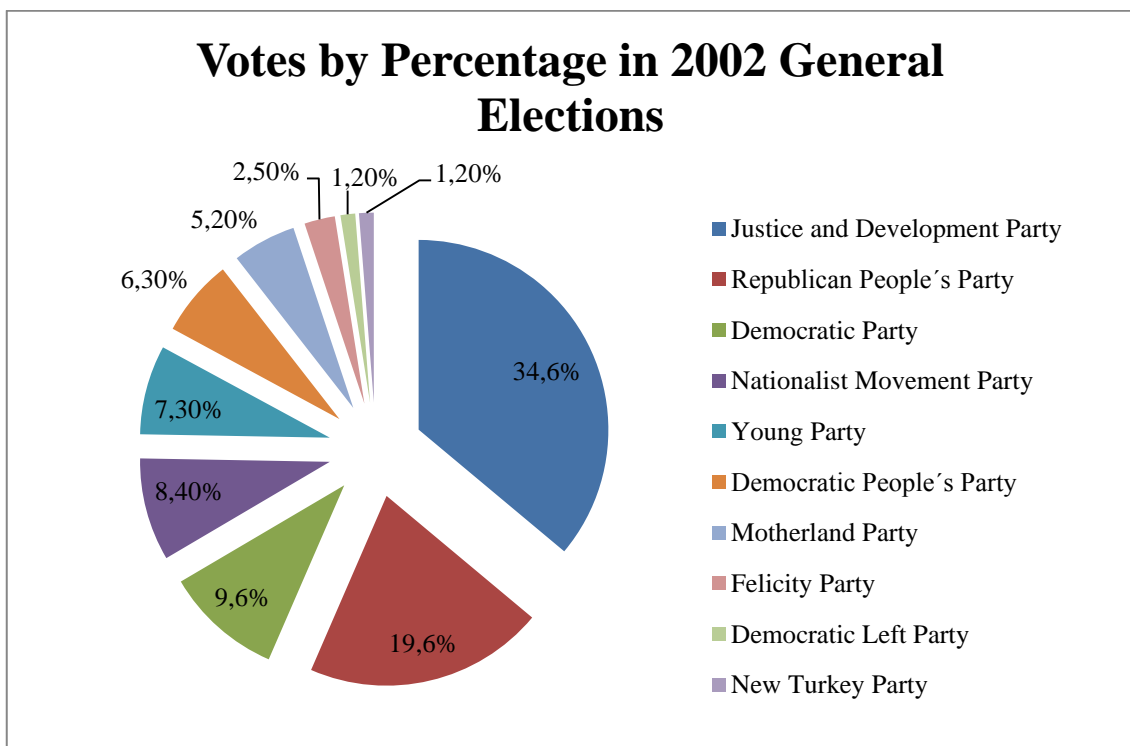
JDP's political program was very simple and was able to attract many people. When the campaign geared up all eyes were on Erdoğan and his party. Everybody was curious if they are going to win election. Their political campaign was focused on these points:

- Abolish death penalty;
- Expand freedom of expression;
- Abolish anti-terrorism provisions that authorized punishment for verbal propaganda against the unity of state;
- Allow education and broadcasting in Kurdish language;
- End the intransigence of Turkish foreign policy towards the Cyprus question;
- Establish retrial rights for citizens whose court decisions are overturned by the European Court of Human Rights. (Cizre 2008, p. 137-139)

Opposition parties did not trust JDP's sudden change from Virtue Party. They launched investigations to discredit Erdoğan and his party. They tried to show to citizens that it is just a trick and they should not believe them. Opponents found and started to play old recordings, from the time Erdoğan was still mayor of Istanbul, where he was saying that Turkey should never be part of the European Union; which was his main priority now. Professor of Political Science at Ankara University wrote in his article: *"In the context of political change, the question here is whether the JDP's change is viewed as an 'accredited change' by the ruling elites. For those who espouse the Kemalist-centric approach, the JDP is masked version of the National Outlook. They accuse the JDP of trying to cheat the public by pretending to be secular."* (Alkan 2004)

Even though there were many critics over new political party its premiere was successful and party came with 34.6 % of total votes, which was very impressive victory since it started to function just a year before the election. It got very large number of votes. The reason why might be Erdoğan's influence to it. He is a very good speaker and people like him, and believe him. He was the driving force of the success of

JDP. Their biggest opponent, left-leaning Republican People’s Party (later just RPP) in Turkish known as “*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*”, came out second with 19.6 % of the votes, and was also only party besides JDP passing 10 percent nationwide electoral threshold to gain seats in GNA. JDP earned 363 representatives in 550-seat Assembly, which was a first time when some party had secured a clear majority since 1987. Ali Carkoglu, professor of International relations in Istanbul, mentioned in his article: “*The incumbent government’s coalition members suffered the heaviest losses. Compared to the 1999 election, the largest incumbent coalition partner, the Democratic Left Party (in Turkish known as “Democratic Sol Parti”), shrunk down to about 1.2 %. It may have set a world record for being the largest party in one election and losing almost all its support in the next one. Among the other coalition partners, the Nationalist Movement Party (in Turkish known as “Milliyetci Hareket Partisi”) lost 9.6 percentage points, while the junior partner the Motherland Party (in Turkish known as “Anavatan Partisi”) lost 12.9 percentage points. Hence, the coalition partners together lost about 39 percentage points of electoral support from the April 1999 elections.*” (p. 30)



Graph 1 source: AKPARTI ENGLISH 2002

These elections were held during the economic crises which followed the 2001 financial crash and resulted in a deep resentment of coalition governments who had governed the country since the 1980 military coup. New political party was just the right thing citizens needed. JDP promised them growth and stability which was appealing to middle and working class voters who were not satisfied with the upcoming plans of outgoing government. Whole world was watching this election which means that JDP started to influence politics since the day it started. In international view Turkey was the example of the country which could coexist with a secular democracy after this parliamentary election, JDP with its campaign was the best solution for them, and thereby provide an example for other Muslim governments.

3.2 General election and presidential election in 2007

Turkish president is elected by GNA with absolute majority vote through a two-round system to serve as a head of the state for 7 years. Candidate has to be member of GNA and needs to be supported by 20 of its members, or nominees by political parties that have attained more than 10 percent of votes in the last general election. Candidate shall be also a common Turkish citizen who fulfills the requirements and who is eligible to become one of the members of Parliament. This person must be over 40 and have completed higher education.² (Elections in Turkey)

JDP's candidate for presidential election became Abdullah Gül. Many people, mostly opposition, were afraid that Erdoğan would be the one; he was the head of JDP and the most influential one for citizens. It took a long time until party announced their candidate. Gül was the strongest candidate to be in presidential election, if he won he would be the first president with Islamic roots. Opposition was afraid of that mostly because JDP already controlled Prime Ministry and Parliament, and if one of them was

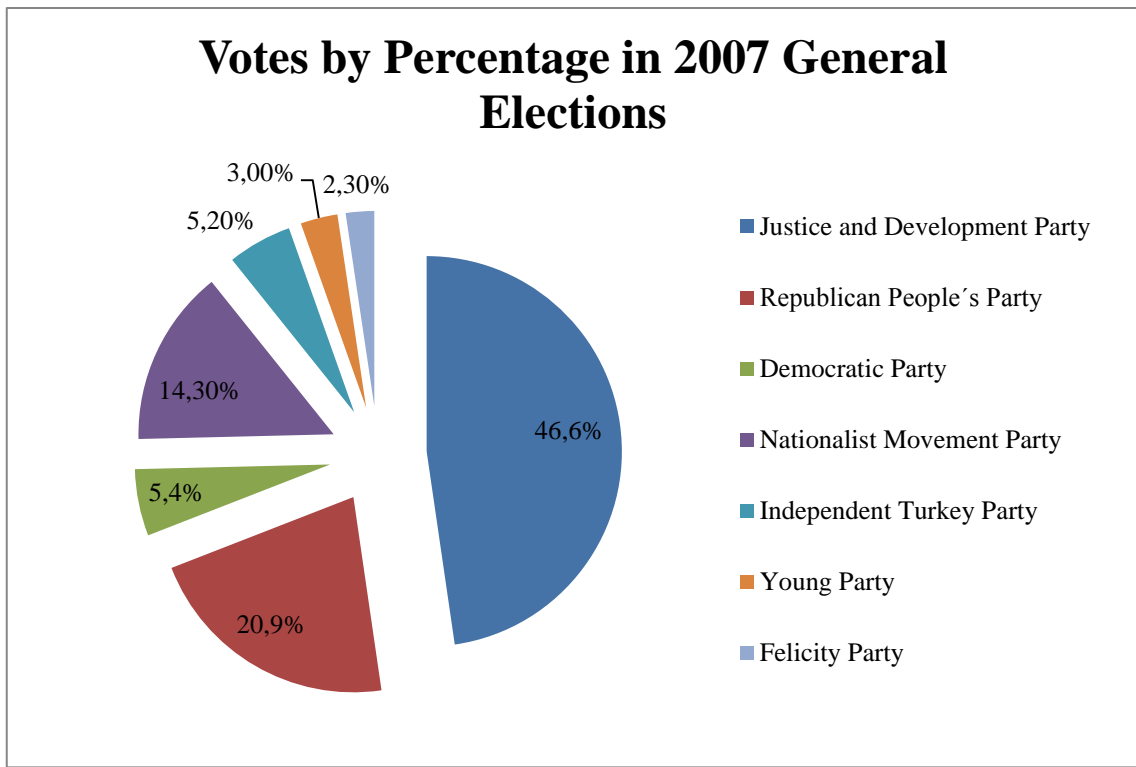
² The situation changed after the Turkish constitutional referendum in 2007. The president is now elected by popular vote for 5 years with a chance to be re-elected for the second term.

also head of the state that would be clear victory for JDP. Erdoğan insisted on a president coming from JDP. Opposition took this as a threat to Turkey's balance of powers. The candidate for Nationalist Movement Party was Sabahattin Çakmakoglu and for Democratic Left Party it was Hüseyin Tayfun İçli. First round of presidential election was held on April 27th, 2007. The winner of the election needed two-thirds of votes which means 367 of them from GNA. Gül achieved 357 of votes. It was really close to the number he needed but still below two-thirds so there had to be second round of voting in following week. But RPP filed a claim to Supreme Court and on May 1st, 2007, Constitutional Court annulled first round of presidential election on grounds that a required two-thirds quorum was not present. It was repeated on May 6th, 2007, but boycotting continued and the necessary amount of members present was not met again. After this Prime Minister Erdoğan called for early general election which was supposed to be held in November 4th, 2007, but instead it was held on July 22nd, 2007. (Migdalovitz, 2007, p.1-10)

Nobody expected very high participation at election during the summertime but there were few things that played important role for Turks to vote. Situation in the country during 2007 general election was not that good. Turkey still had high unemployment rate, increased crime rate, and mounting foreign debt. JDP had problem dealing with Kurdistan Workers' Party in Turkish known as "*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê*" (after just KWP), and the threat and reality of terrorism since 2003 Iraqi War. The party's effort to redefine secularism was also controversial. Even though GDP growth increased and reduction of inflation came down to single digits, it did not mean that Turkey was better off, it just made higher debts. But on the other hand the party was successful in socioeconomic needs and demands for poor ones who are their biggest majority of voters, poorly educated low-income citizens living in rural areas. (Eligür, 2007, p. 1-3)

There was a very short time for political campaigns before general election. The 2007 election campaigns were dominating with the issue of secularism and also increased KWP's terrorism. JDP's political program focused again on socioeconomic concerns of Turkish public, particularly the poor segments of population. The RPP was during election campaign accusing JDP's ministers and parliamentarians of corruption.

However, they were not able to offer very convincing socioeconomic program and did not get support from Turkish society. (Eligür, 2007, p. 3-5)



Graph 2 source: AKPARTI ENGLISH 2007

Once again JDP won the election and came out with 46.6 % of votes which was a stunning victory. They received 341 seats in GNA. The opposition parties which were able to reach 10 % threshold were: RPP with 20.9 % of votes which meant 112 seats and Nationalist Movement Party (later just NMP) with 14.3 % of votes which meant 71 seats. The BBC's reporter Chris Morris who was in Ankara said: *"Those who still believe it is a threat to the secular system are clearly in minority."* (BBC News, 2007) JDP was able to hold on to their power over citizens.

On August 28th, 2007, the second attempt for presidential election took place and Abdullah Gül became the 11th president of Turkey, making him the first former Islamist to hold the post. During this attempt only a simple majority was required and Gül received 339 votes from 550 seat chamber. Sabahattin Çakmakoglu received 70 votes and Hüseyin Tayfun İçli received only 13 votes. Gül had received respect while he was

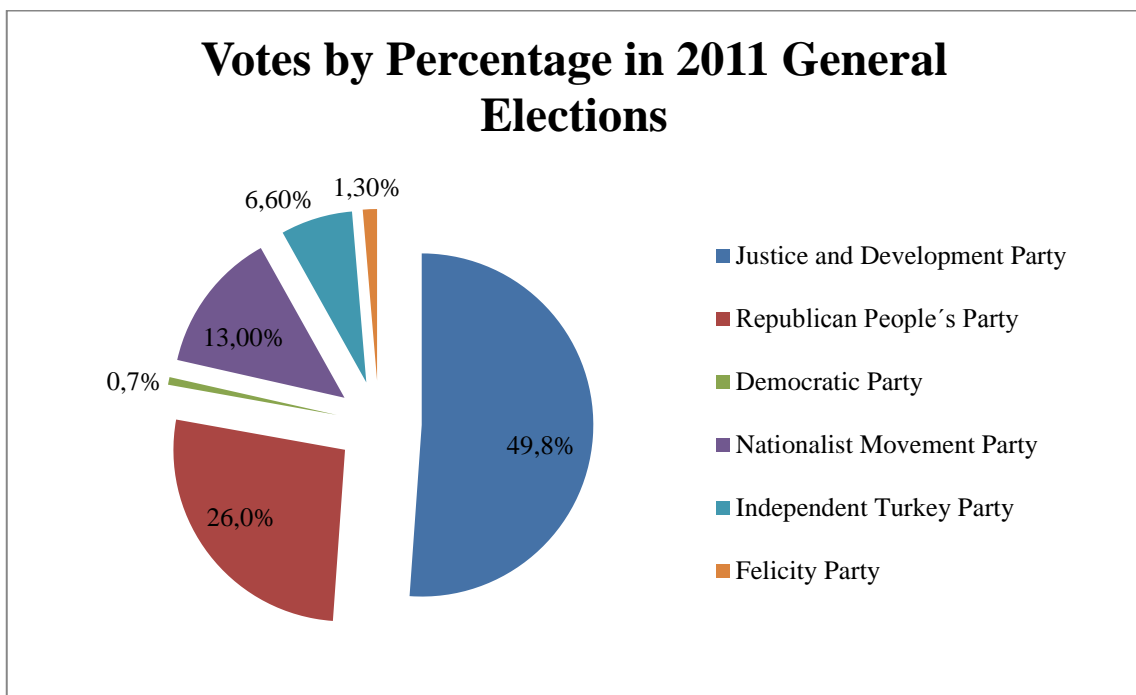
still foreign minister for his negotiations with the European Union (later just EU) about Turkey's membership. After he won presidential election he said to journalists that he will use his experience as foreign minister to boost Turkey's EU bid, make Turkish presidency more active on international scene, and that Turkey will be contributing more to world issues. (The Guardian, 2007) This was exactly what people who were voting for JDP wanted to hear. That was one of the reasons why they voted for them. Turkish citizens were influenced by party's words and believe that it can do it. JDP had all the power in GNA and also one of them was head of the state which was the best outcome they could ask for.

3.3 General elections in 2011

JDP's political program for general election 2011 was still based on democracy and focused on poor part of Turkish population. One of the main topics was replacing the old military commissioned 1982 constitution and to declare a new one. Another important issue was to resolve Kurdish problem.

RPP changed a lot of things in their party. They made several leadership changes, replaced almost whole executive committee only a year before the election and had a new leader called Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. He was the only candidate who visited all Turkey's provinces, giving speeches in cities that had not seen their party's politicians in many years. He received a lot of credit for his strong commitment and credibility even though he was not able to overrun Erdoğan's rhetorical power. They made number of intelligent policy proposals on matters relating to family policy, youth, women, and other social issues. The head of Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Istanbul wrote in his article: *"As a result, the organization and the mobilization of members could have been better, even though some progress was indeed made. The party is still suffering from a credibility problem because many people still identify it with the old Kemalist establishment."* (Meier, 2011)

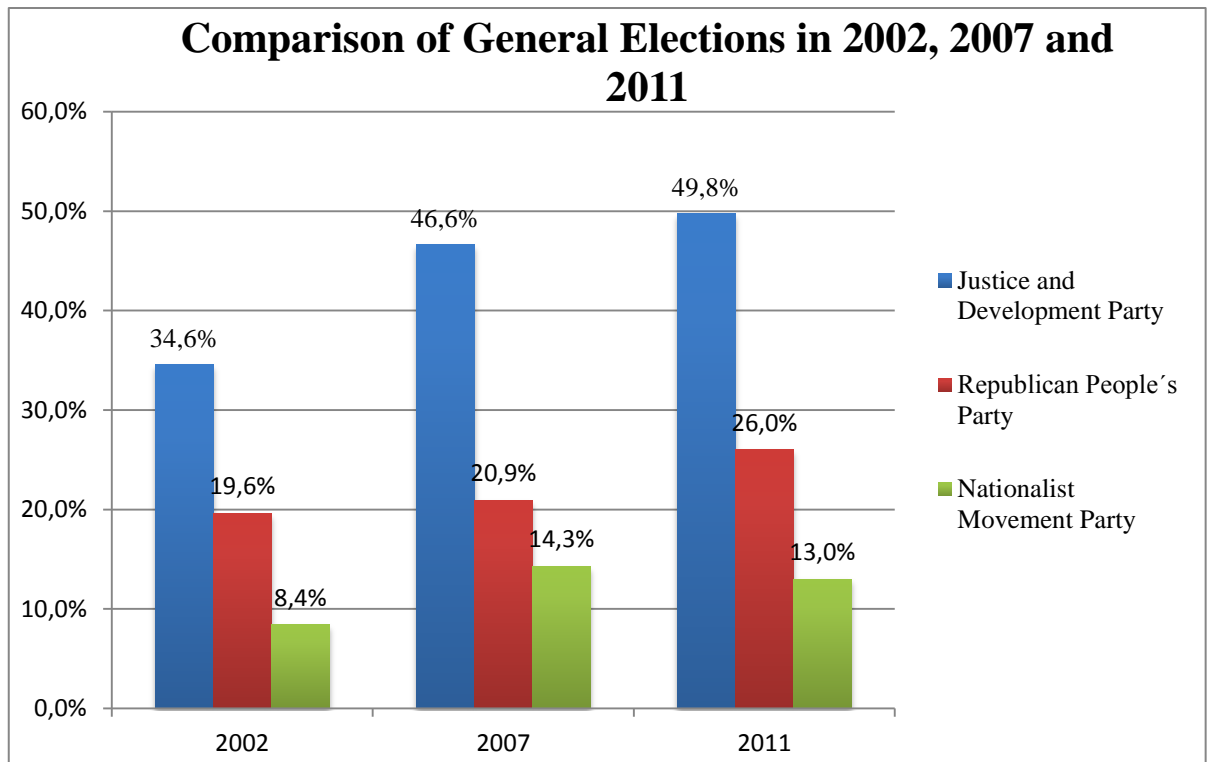
The results of this election did not bring much of the surprise. JDP won with 49.8 % of votes which meant 327 seats in GNA and it did not have to form a coalition with another party. But the party did not receive three-fifths majority (330 seats) which is needed to pass a new constitution. So if JDP wanted to pass a New Constitution it would need coalition partner. The dream about a new constitution still did not become true. RPP came up second with 26 % of votes and gained 135 seats. Most of votes they received came from the West part of Turkey which was not in favor of Erdoğan and his JDP. And the last party which got more than 10 % of votes was NMP with 13 % and gained 53 seats.



Graph 3 source: AKPARTI ENGLISH 2011

The interesting fact is that JDP have gained each general election even bigger number of votes which shows its influence on people. In 2002 general election they got 10.8 million votes (34.6 %), in 2007 it was 16.3 million (46.6 %) and this year they got around 21.4 million (49.8 %). But if we look at the graph below we can see that RPP is increasing their votes each year too, especially in 2011. We have to say that change inside of the party helped them to get trust among more citizens. NMP has its ups and

downs. In 2002 they received just 8.4 % and did not even get to GNA. In year 2007 they were back in the game with 14.3 %. But in 2011 its numbers dropped again by 1.3 %.



Graph 4 source: AKPARTI ENGLISH

3.4 2013 Protests

The reason why it is important to analyze protests is because it is one of the influences on the society. Since the day it started until the last one we can see how protests spread around the country. It is reaction of people on JDP's dealing with protesters. It was the first big protest against the party and its government. That is why it is important to mention it.

The protest started because of government's decision to build a new shopping mall and residential complex, which would be favorable for businesses, constructors and politicians, on the ground of a public park called Taksim Gezi Park. Erdoğan insisted that it will not be only a traditional mall but it will include mosque, opera house and

culture centers. JDP also wanted to rebuild Ottoman-era military barracks. Critics see this to have a ring of Islamism because it was at barracks where Islamic-minded soldiers revolted in intent to bringing in Sharia law. They also think that it is not a coincidence that Construction Company called Kalyon Group would be the project's main contractor since they have a very close relationship with JDP. It was not the only construction plan in near future. JDP also announced the construction of third airport, which is supposed to be the biggest airport in the world, and also third bridge through Bosphorus to stabilize the traffic in Istanbul which's population becomes higher every year. These plans put Istanbul's last ecological reserves, last forest and water reserves under serious danger. Environmentalists were against this idea mostly because this is one of the few remaining green spaces which are left on the European side of Istanbul that is why they started a quiet and peaceful protest. This protest broad a wider attention after the police used tear gas, water cannon and burned down tents of the protestors to scatter a peaceful rally, which resulted in many injuries. The size of the protest started to grow. It was not just about the park anymore but it became a mass anti-government resistance, against JDP and their leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The brutality of the police on peaceful demonstrators transformed the process in few days and spread to other cities too, bringing issues including government intervention on freedom of speech and Erdoğan's increasingly authoritarian style of government. (Mendonca and Ercan, 2014, p. 9-10)

After the police attacked the environmentalist demonstrators' on May 28, 2013, people asked for support against the police violence and the number of protesters had increased during the night. Images of the police violence had spread through the social media very quickly which helped them to attract even more people to join them. By May 31, 2013, this anti-governmental mobilization spread to the other big cities such as Ankara, Izmir, Antalya, and others. It was the first time that western side of Turkey faced the government violence. People with different origin and views such as Kurds, Turks, Laz, Feminists, Alevis, religious people and anticapitalistic Muslims, stayed side by side together to protest. Erdoğan heavily criticized protesters he was calling them "looters" and was accusing them of extremism and terrorism. He was not planning to stop the

project. Even more people were going out every night to protest. By June 1, 2013, the police was unable to hold so many protestors so they had to withdraw. The square was peacefully occupied for few days even though there were few clashes with police in other parts of Istanbul and across the country. On June 11, 2013, police re-entered Taksim square and Gezi Park and used excessive force, tear gas, water canyons, and plastic bullets against those in the park. On June 15, 2013, the park was completely re-taken by security forces. There had been more than 8,000 injuries, 104 people sustained serious head injuries, 11 people lost an eye, most as a result of plastic bullets fired by police, and 8 people have died, at least four as a result of police violence. (Yaman, Alev, 2014, p. 6-9)

The mainstream media were not broadcasting the events from the Taksim Square and Gezi Park. People were outraged when they turned on CNN Turk on June 1st, 2013, and saw documentary about penguins while police was beating up, firing plastic bullets and using water canyons against protesters.

This protest had a very negative impact on JDP. People who once trusted started to have doubts about it. JDP had to gain back its trust for upcoming general election. It knew that this protest will have an effect on its numbers. A lot of journalists had been attacked while they were in the field in the middle of the protests. The police took 39 journalists to the custody. The reason was their presence in the protests as field reporters. They did not just arrest them but also destroyed all the equipment and material they had. (Yaman, 2014) The protests were broadcasted in all television around the world. The reporters were talking about Turkey as a country in crisis, which is experiencing “revolution,” some of them named it “Turkish Spring.” (Bilgin, 2013)

3.4.1 Who was protesting?

Turkish Research and Consultancy called KONDA has made a report “*Who were the people at Gezi Park?*” They have evaluated respondents based on gender, age and level of political organization, and then compared that to the average profile for Turkey.

The research found that more women had participated than men. Only 49.2 % of men had participated at the protest. But in average it was more or less parallel to the population of Turkey. Although it is important to mention that the gender distribution in Istanbul is 51.5 % female and 48.5 % male, this means that the gender distribution on protest has reflected gender distribution of Istanbul. They also found out that 20.2 % of women and 22.1 % of men were part of a political party, or non-governmental organization. This data also shows us that gender distribution for some affiliation is balanced. (KONDA, 2014)

The average age in Turkey is 30.3 and in Istanbul 30.1 and average age of protesters was 28, which again shows us that the number represents Turkish society. Only 5.5 % of protestors were younger than 17 while 16.5 % were between the ages of 18 – 20. Majority of protesters were between the ages 21 – 25, it was 30.8 % of them. 20.3 % of the people were between the ages 26 – 30. That is why the protest was also called “youth movement.” (KONDA, 2014)

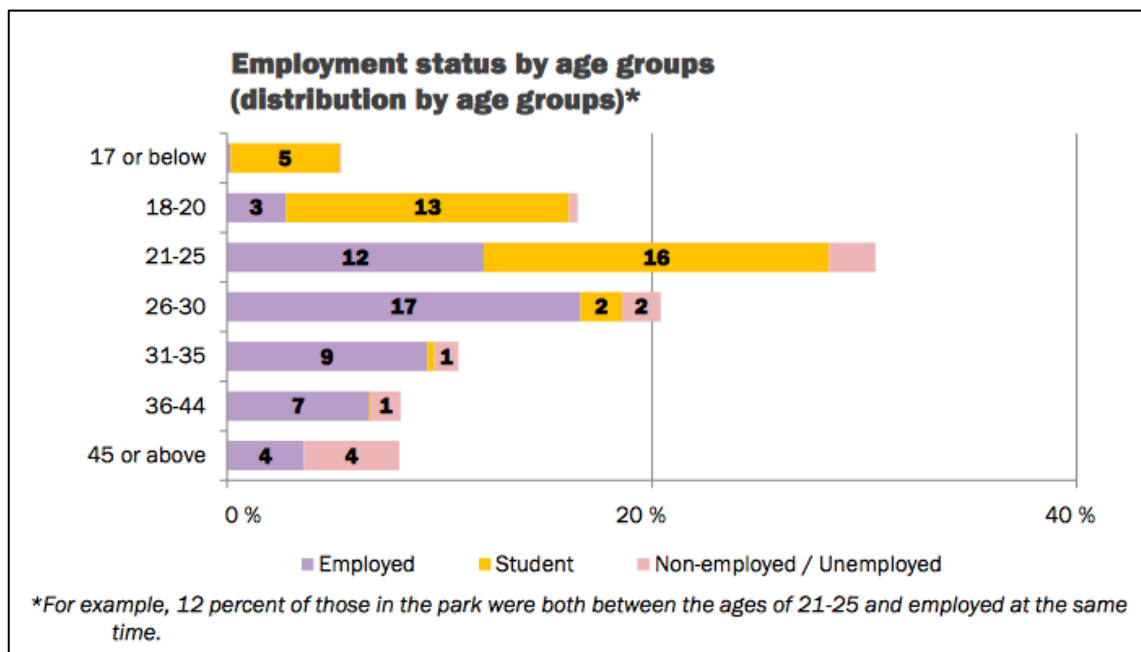


Figure 1 source: KONDA, 2014, p. 10

On the Figure 1 we can see that many people between the ages 17 – 25 were attending school. The ones who were 26 and more were mostly employed. Only few people were not employed. From this overview we can say that mostly people with higher education have attended the protest. KONDA also found out that only 0.3 % of the people who came to Gezi Park were illiterate. Half of protesters were college graduates. They have also observed that the rate of students was much higher in the protest than overall population in Turkey. Representatives of retired and housewives were presented at lower rates. Housewives are making up 32.2 % of the population of Turkey while only 2 % of them were participating at the protest. Total percent of retired people in Turkey is 13.8 % but only 3.5 % of them were at the protest.

40 % of the people who were asked were not part of any political or non-governmental organization and have participated in the protests before. 39% of the people were not affiliated in any political or other group neither had participated in the protest before. 16% of people were politically affiliated and have participated in some protest before. And only 5% of the people were politically affiliated but have never been part of some protest before. We can see that only 21 % of people were affiliated in the political or non-governmental group. That is why we can say that most people came to protest because of their own will and were not pushed by some organization but because they wanted to change something. Most of the people who were demonstrating were supporters of RPP, the main opposition party. The ones who were critical of the protest were supporters of JDP. (KONDA, 2014)

73 % of the people decided to participate in the protests after seeing the police brutality. This is the proof that police brutality was major turning point for the most of the protesters. Only 19% were there because of environmental issue.

3.5 Presidential election in 2014

This presidential election had a very significant importance. It was the first time, since the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, that president was elected directly by

citizens. First round of election was on August 10th, 2014. If the candidate received more than 50% of votes he was automatically elected a president, if not there was going to be a second round of the election on August 24th, 2014, where two candidates who obtained most of the votes would compete. There were three competitors who bid for Turkey's presidency: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the prime minister of Turkey and the head of JDP, than Ekmeleddin Mehmet İhsanoğlu, who was Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIO) from 2004-2014 and he was joint candidate of two opposition parties, RPP and NMP but also by several smaller parties, and the last candidate was Selahattin Demirtaş who is head of left-wing pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (later just PDP). (Vicari and Lika, 2014)

Erdoğan won the election with 51.79 % of votes and became the 12th President of Turkey and the first one who was elected directly by citizens. İhsanoğlu received 38.44 % of votes. He was mostly elected on West side of Turkey. And Demirtaş had 9.78 % of votes. (The Guardian, 2014)

3.6 General election 2015

This general election was the first one to be held after anti-government Gezi Park protests in 2013. It was very important one for JDP to see if they kept their trust in Turkish citizens. The ideal scenario for them would be if they received 367 seats in GNA in order to finally change the constitution directly without cooperation with other parties.

Justice and Development Party's political campaign was focusing this year on young generation of people. The reason why it chose young ones might be connected to protest in 2013. As I already mentioned in previous chapter the average age of protesters was 28 so mostly young generation. That is why JDP is trying to get back their sympathies. Its promises were:

- Cover the insurance of young people who just started to work for 42 months
- Tax advantages for young employees

- Cover the costs of food, transport up to 600 TL (around 200 euros)
- Local incentives for industrial development on the East side of Turkey
- Support young couples who want to get married by giving them 5,000 TL (around 1666 euros)
- Decrease passport fees to 100 euros (now it is 217 euros)
- Decrease a fee for getting out of the army service for Turkish people who live outside of Turkey to 1,000 euros (now it is 6,000 euros; it is obligatory to attend the army even if the person lives in another country) (AK Parti, 2015)

People's Democratic Party was promising:

- To stop the assimilation against minorities
- Cancel the obligatory religion training at school
- Cancel the obligatory army service
- Close the hydro electrical power plants and coal power plants due to their bad effect on the environment – “Right to live is not just for people”
- It is against central management and it wants a local management
- Cancel the fee for students who attend so-called second education (they go to college after 6 p.m. and work during the day)
- Salary for housewives
- More freedom for homosexuals (HDP, 2015)

Republican's People's Party was focusing on retired people and women. Its promises were:

- Increase the retirement to 1,500 TL which is around 500 euros (now it is 1,070 TL which is around 356 euros)
- Give the retired people discounts for cultural activities
- Give bonus to retired people during the main festivals in Turkey (Bayram at the end of Ramadan and Kurban Bayram – “Festival of Sacrifice”)
- Move the industrial zones out of cities
- If the company hires women they will get financial support from the government

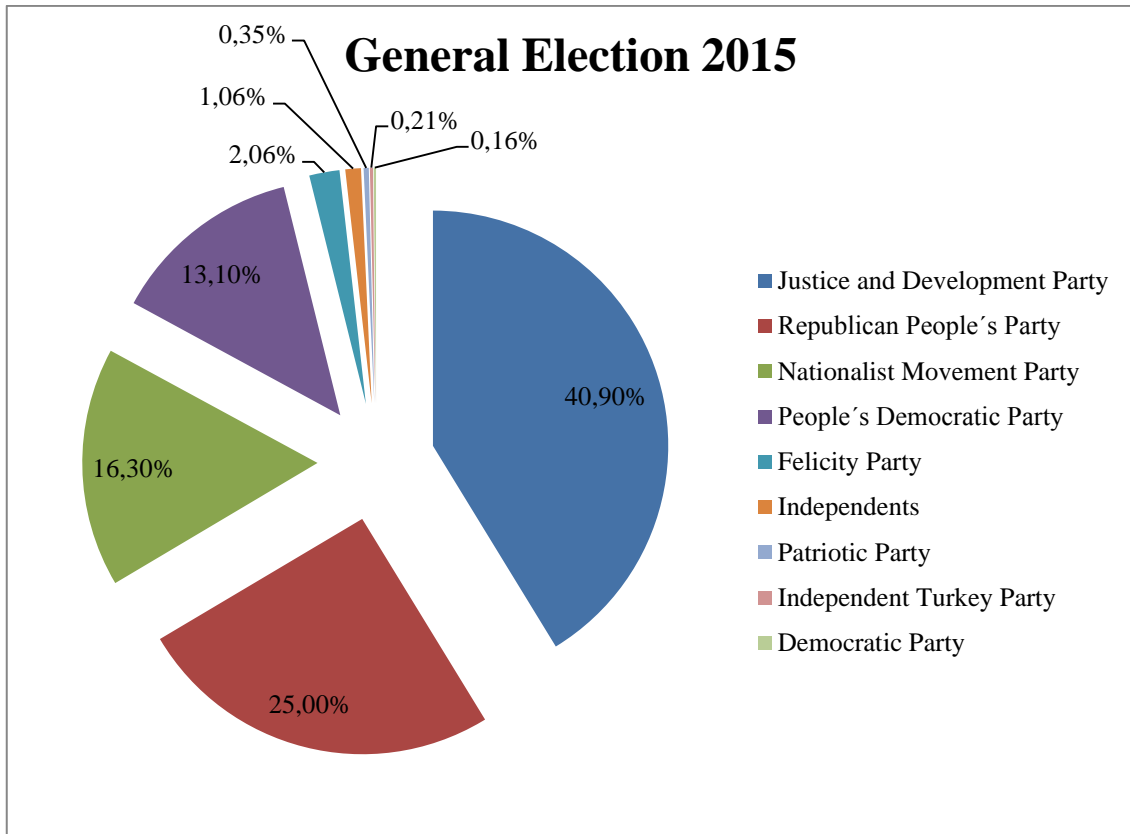
- Liberalize the education (CHP, 2015)

Nationalist Movement Party's promises were:

- To cancel laws which are encouraging JDP
- Decrease unemployment rate
- To achieve 7 % economic growth
- New works for 700,000 people
- To raise democratic standards (MHP, 2015)

If we take into consideration that most of the population in Turkey are young people JDP was focusing their program the right way. The median age of Turkey is 30, which means that most of the people are young ones who just started to work or are planning to start a family. And mostly people from rural areas will appreciate the bonuses given to them. On the other hand RPP was heading the wrong way. They were focusing mainly on retired people who represent only around 14 % of the population. NMP was just criticizing everything about JDP and wanted to change most of the things they have done as they were before. (CIA, 2014) As we can see none of the parties mentioned negotiation talks with EU in their campaigns.

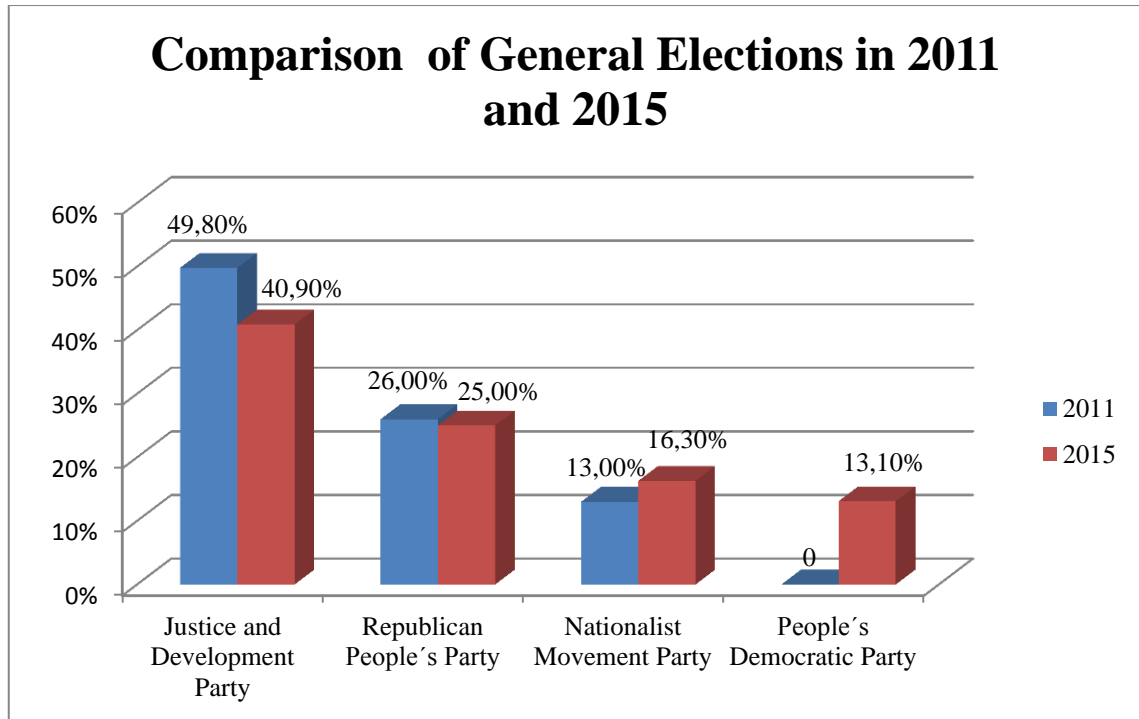
Author Thomas Seibert who is writing for German's international broadcaster named DW (Deutsche Welle) expressed his opinion in one of his articles: *"Most experts anticipate the JDP taking anywhere from 40 to 47 percent of the votes. With such result, the JDP would remain by far the strongest power in Parliament, but its ability to form a one-party government will depend on whether the pro-Kurdish PDP makes the leap beyond the 10-percent threshold and enters Parliament."* The Deputy Minister, Bulent Arinc, and former JDP member admitted that PDP could win as much as 12 percent of votes. The author of the article also wrote that Erdoğan had always benefited from the polarization of the society, there are people who hate him and do not like things he is doing and then there are those who adore him. (Seibert, 2015)



Graph 5 source: Today's Zaman

The election took place on 7th June 2015. JDP received 40.9 % of votes which means that it lost its majority in parliament and won only 258 seats out of 550 in GNA. In the last general election it received 49.8 % of votes, its numbers dropped by 8.9 % and lost 69 seats in GNA which is high number for a party that is in power since 2002. We can see that protest did reflect in results. Republican People's Party also came out worse than it did in 2011. It received 25 % of votes which makes 132 seats. On the other hand Nationalist Movement Party increased their vote share and received 16.3 % which makes 80 seats. And new People's Democratic Party fared better than it was expected. It was not expecting to receive more than 10 % election threshold because it decided to contest as one party rather than independent candidates. It received 13.1 % of votes which makes 80 seats which is the same number of seats as NMP. It was victory for them. This party is appealing for its pro-Kurdish point of view. It might be the reason

why it received so many votes to reach 10 % threshold. It might be also why JDP and RPP lost some votes.



Graph 6 source: Today's Zaman

Since the majority of votes was not met the coalition had to be made which was problematic task. Many people thought that RPP, NMP and PDP will make a coalition against JDP which would mean 292 seats for them against 258 of JDP's seats. But NMP refused to make a coalition with PDP so coalition of three was not an option. JDP was not accepting PDP either and was trying to negotiate only with RPP and NMP. NMP did not cooperate and was proposing early election. RPP tried to negotiate with JDP and gave them 14 principles with which it would make a coalition with them. But JDP did not accept them and that meant a breakdown between JDP and RPP. Early election was the only option left. But NMP started to be against it because of the circumstances such as terrorist attacks by KWP and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (later just ISIL) on Turkish soil. NMP would make a coalition with JDP only if it accepted 4 unconditional terms. First one was to end solution process, second one was to limit Erdoğan's presidential power, third one was to re-open suppressed corruption investigation against

JDP's former ministers, and last one was to end discussion over changing first four articles of Turkish constitution. Of course JDP did not accept such terms; it would go against each other if it did. The negotiations broke down ending prospects of all coalition governments and new election were called for 1st of November. (DW.COM, 2015)

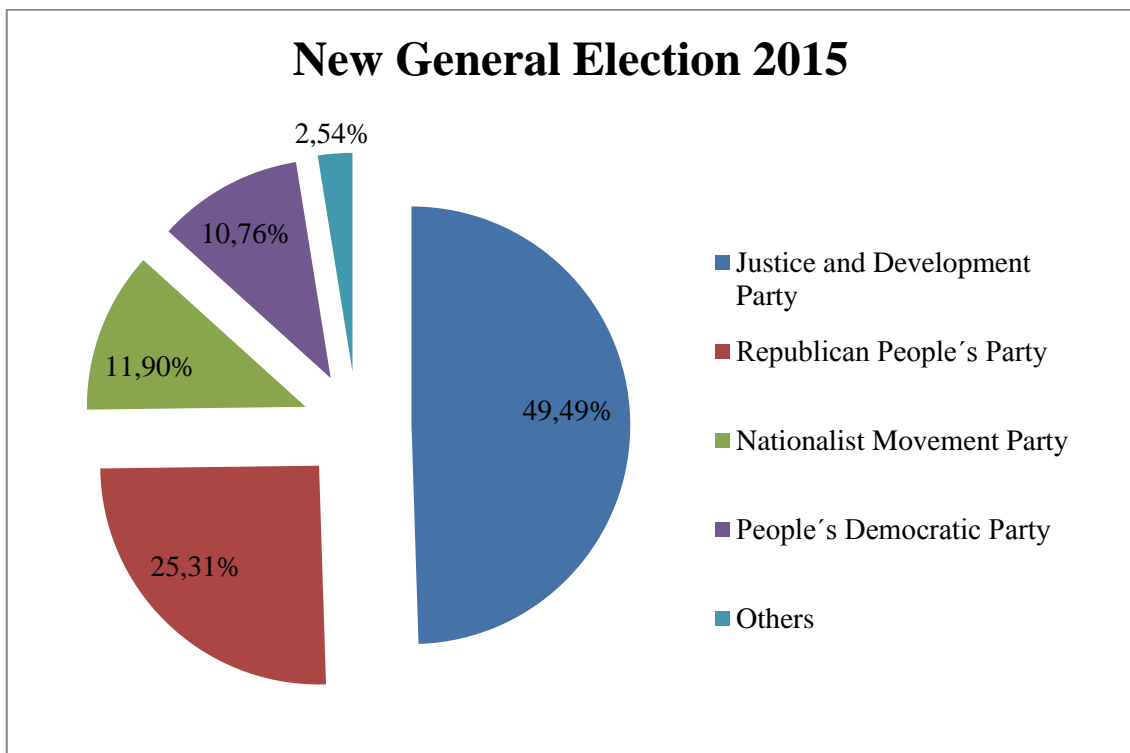
3.6.1 Ankara bombing in October

Before the November election there was bombing in Ankara which is important to mention because the way how government reacted on it could affect results of the election.

It was October 10th and people were gathering for a peace march protest against the conflict between the state and Kurdish fighters in southeast Turkey. This protest was organized by several leftist groups including the pro-Kurdish PDP and took place close to Ankara's Central railway station which is in center of the city. Suddenly people heard two massive explosions which have killed 95 people and more than 400 people were injured. This attack is titled as the deadliest one in Turkey's modern history. The investigation found out that the responsibility for these bombings are two suicide bombers who were brothers and had links with the ISIL. Prime Minister Davutoglu announced three days of national mourning and said that the nation has to stand together against terrorism to defend their country. President Erdoğan insisted that his entire nation was the target and that they do not differentiate between the deaths and asks Turkish people to stand in unity and solidarity. The leader of RPP said that his party is ready to end such attacks and agreed to meet with Prime Minister to discuss the bombing. (Al Jazeera, 2015) The leader of PDP Demirtas accused JDP government and President Erdoğan of forcing violence and denounced them as "murderers with blood on their hands." He called it as an attack by their state against their people. He also claimed that the biggest threat to Turkey's peace and security is JDP itself. (Hürriyet Daily News, 2015)

3.6.2 New election in November

Opinion polls had predicted a replay of the June election with just slightly changes when JDP won only 40.9 % of votes and lost its majority for the first time after 13 years. The election was held on 1st of November 2015. And JDP came out with a victory once again. It received 49.49 % of votes which makes 317 seats in GNA. The party got 59 seats more than in the first round which was in June. Nobody expected such a high increase in numbers. Even more surprising was that JDP was very close to get 330 seats to pass new Constitution it is so dedicated to change. RPP received 25.31 % and 134 seats in GNA. It gained only 2 seats more from June election. NMP got 11.90 % of votes and 40 seats which means that it lost half of its deputies in GNA. Everybody was interesting how will PDP do in this election. In June it received 13.10 % of votes and 80 seats in GNA but in new election it got only 10.76 % and 59 seats. They lost 21 seats and its number was so low that it almost did not pass 10 % threshold. All other parties received less than 1 % of votes.



Graph 7 source: "2015 Turkey General Elections."

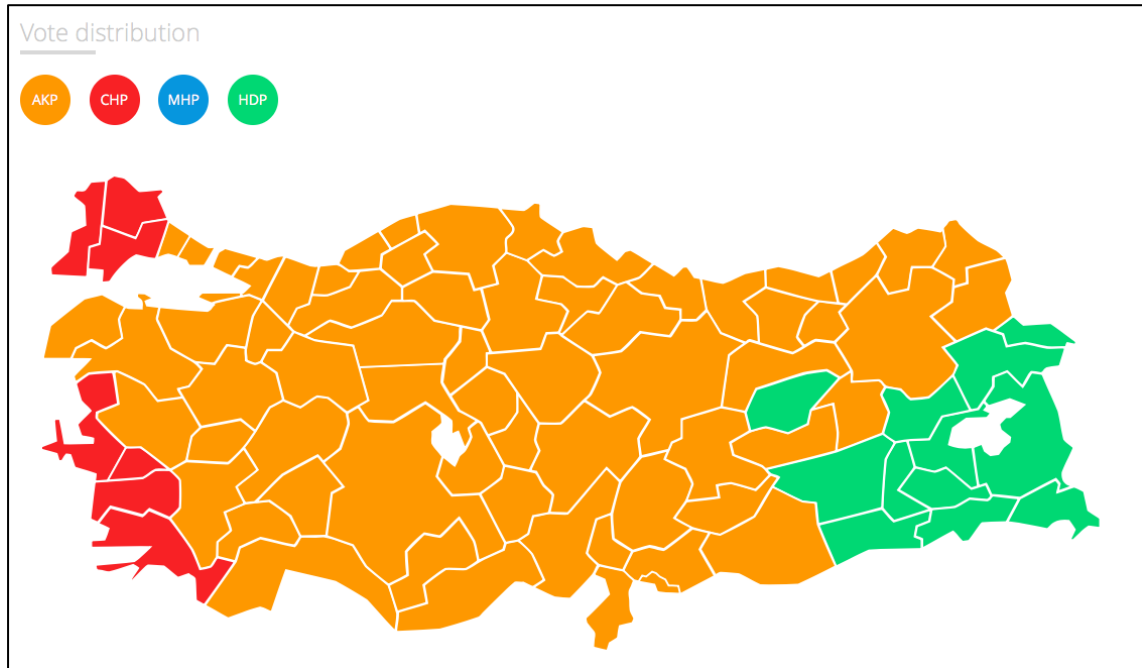


Figure 2 source: "2015 Turkey General Elections."

When we look at Figure 2 we can see that JDP won in most of the provinces. RPP has still many of its voters on West side of Turkey and PDP has its followers on South-East part of the country where many Kurdish citizens live.

Turkish citizens who live outside of Turkey were also able to vote. On Figure 3 we can see that most of them put their trust into JDP which received 56.23 % from foreign country vote rate and their votes came from Australia, Kazachstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, African countries, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Norway, France and Germany where 2 million of Turks found their home. RPP got 16.39 % of votes and mostly people from Russia, Republic of China, USA, Iran, Oman, and South Africa voted for them. NMP received only 7.12% of votes and none of the countries had such a high percentage for them to show up. PDP got 18.20 % of votes and was the second most voted one outside of Turkey. It got most of the votes from Turks living in Canada, United Kingdom, Finland, Ukraine, Poland, Switzerland, Italy, and Japan.

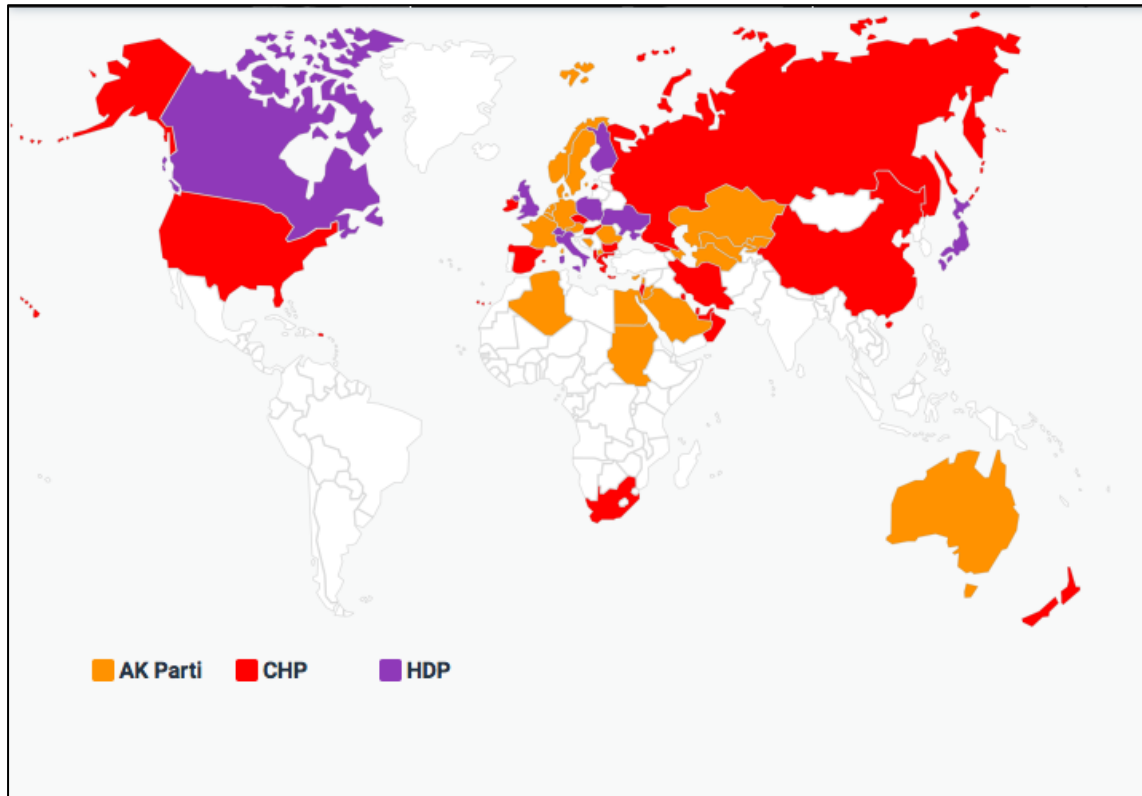


Figure 3 source: "2015 Turkey General Elections."

JDP received 9 % more votes than it did in June. What was the reason? One of them might be the bombing in October. Many citizens started to fear of political instability with increasing terrorist attacks and decline of the economy. Those who were seeking that stability voted for JDP, fearing that opposition parties are bad for Turkey as it was in 1990s. The second reason might be higher number of voters in November election than was in June. In June 53,741,838 voters went to elect their leader and there were 46,161,607 valid votes. In November the number has increased and 57,555,137 people went to put their vote into the ballot box and 47,667,434 votes were valid ("2015 Turkey General Elections") which means that 3,813,299 more people decided to vote the second time. The third one might be Erdoğan who was able to convince people that only the rule of one party can protect them from inner threats in the form of Kurds and against unstable environment in their region (Syria, Iraq.) The fourth one is less votes for PDP which almost did not pass 10 % threshold. Its less numbers are related to failed attempt to make peace with Kurds and anti-Kurdish mood.

Prime Minister Davutoglu stated right after JDP's win in election that he wants to take a step forward to change the Constitution and reunite the country which will be a very hard to do so since the mood in the country is very tense. Even though Turkish lira has strengthened after the election but Turkey has serious economic problems and is also dealing with corruption and nepotism. JDP did not receive enough votes to enforce new constitution which would change Turkey into presidential republic similar to Putin's Russia which is main plan of the party.

The world is not excited about the results but also not disappointed. They know what to expect from Erdoğan and his JDP party. The conflict with Kurds is very tense and will continue to escalate but the EU is more interested in Turkey's promise to handle migration crisis and its help to fight ISIL. (SME)

4. Relationships with the European Union

Turkey is trying to be part of European integration for 60 years. Its path started in 1949 when it became a member of Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), year after became member of Council of Europe. In 1952 Turkey became part of NATO and played significant part in Western defense since then. The discussion about Turkey's possible membership started in 1959 with the European Economic Community and became an associate member in 1963 which offered the prospect of membership after seventeen years. In 1987 Turkey officially applied for the entry into European Community but it was rejected and got an offer of the prospect of a customs union, which Turkey obtained in 1996. The European Union granted Turkey status of candidate member during the European Council of Helsinki in 1999. The council concludes that Turkey must meet the same accession criteria as apply to other candidates, and that it will be eligible for pre-accession aid to support the reforms required for membership. (Arvanitopoulos, 2009, p. 22)

This negotiation is the most difficult one in history of European integration. Turkey is very large country which political system is far from meeting European standards.

European citizens see Turkey as too big, too poor, and too different with its traditions and religion, and most of all geographically not wholly European. Opinions of people worsened even more after 9/11 attack after which people started to see Muslims as a threat. Despite of this the accession talks with Turkey showed that political system of the EU can be pushed even beyond the traditional geographic and cultural boundaries. For Turkey it would mean a big step forward in the country's modernization and westernization. They see themselves as a secular state that is part of Western world. (Arvanitopoulos, 2009, p. 21)

4.1 Turkey – EU relations after JDP comes to power

The EU membership is one of Turkey's most important foreign policy problems and extremely powerful domestic issue. JDP knew this and that is why this issue was part of their political campaign as I already mentioned before. A month after the election the European Union held a Copenhagen summit during which it was deciding to admit ten new members and was also preoccupied with the controversial question whether they should set a date for Turkey to begin its accession talks for eventual membership. France and Germany were against Turkish membership. They both experience powerful anti-immigrant point of view especially towards Muslims and Turks. This is mostly the outcome of last years during which a lot of migrants who profess Islam came to their country and are hard to cooperate with. Germany's 5 % of population is Turkish. Former president of France, Valery Giscard d'Estaing, had argued that Turkey is not part of Europe and if it became a member that would be the end of the Union. These countries suggested a privileged partnership to Turkey but not the membership they were hoping for. Many Turkish and international reactions called the European Union a Christian club failing to recognize the democratic, secular and modern credentials of Turkey. United States former president George Bush saw accession negotiations as an important step to recognize Turkey in reconciling a Muslim society with democracy. This summit was full of bargaining and compromising and it came out with the decision that Turkish accession talks will start without delay in December 2014 if Turkey meets

all Copenhagen criteria. JDP was, despite of its bitter and nasty exchanges with some of the EU leaders during the summit, satisfied with final decision and promised to implement the reform packages as quickly as possible. JDP's arguments could not be overseen by the EU leaders and they had to come up with some satisfactory result for both sides. Even though JDP was satisfied with this outcome Turkish former president, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, was more critical about it and defined it as an unfair decision. JDP made reforms which were initiated under previous government, passed constitutional reforms and harmonization packages of the EU which were covering issues such as freedom of expression and assembly, minority rights (e.g. Kurds), and privileges of the military. The decision about Turkey's candidate status was reaffirmed at Brussels Summit on December 2004. Council took note that Turkey sufficiently fulfilled the political criteria and it could open accession negotiations on October 2005. (Kirisci, 2002) Turkey was awarded status of the candidate country but despite of that it had no guarantee or obligation that one day it will be accepted as a full member of the European Union. But if we look back at other countries which were candidates for membership none of them had a problem to proceed to the full membership.

There are reasons why many European policymakers and analysts were backing Turkey's EU membership. First of all it is because of the question of security. Turkey has been a country with relatively stable democracy which wants to prevent radical movements and regional warfare in its neighborhood, an area which is simultaneously the EU's southern and eastern borderland. Turkey could really contribute to the European collective security arrangements and it would appear to be a natural first row candidate in security matters, since it is a long-established NATO country with considerably firepower and politico-cultural influence in the region. (Çamlıbel, 2014) Another fact to think about is that the EU can become a truly global partner only with help of Turkey. By its acceptance the EU would significantly increase its ability to act in Middle East, a region traditionally under considerable US influence. This point was also advocated by JDP stating that they are respected by all parties in Middle East and have good relationships with Israel and Arabs. It would be also a very nice image of two such a different countries working together as one in the post 9/11 world. Another thing

which is worth to mention and plays significant role in decision making is Ukrainian crisis. The ability to secure the EU countries' energy has become an increasingly topical concern. Both Turkey and the EU would benefit if they were able to broker deals with producer countries as a united front.

The negotiations were connected to several issues, for example implementation of Turkish roadmap for the EU accession, enterprise and industry, financial control and statistics, health and consumer protection, and trans-European transport. (Alexander, Brenner and Krause, 2008) During the accession process 35 chapters have to be passed. Turkey has closed so far just one. The first problem came in December 2006. Turkey has not applied Additional Protocol of the Ankara Association Agreement to Cyprus and the country still prevented the entry of boats and planes coming from Cyprus on their territory. That is why the EU decided to suspend eight negotiation chapters out of thirty-five. Turkish government saw this as a betrayal since the Greek part of Cyprus became part of the EU in May 2004, even though it rejected the reuniting Annan Plan in opposition with Turkish Cypriots who accepted it. Greek Cypriots say that they did so because Turkish Armed Forces were still present in northern Cyprus since invasion in 1974. (Carkoglu and Rubin, 2003) Second one is connected to former French president, Nicolas Sarkozy (in that time acting president), who proposed to establish Union for the Mediterranean which would include all member states of the EU and countries along the coast of Mediterranean sea. Sarkozy saw Turkey in this as an alternative for a membership in the EU. Turkey rejected this proposal. Abdullah Gül (that time minister of foreign affairs) said: "*Mediterranean cooperation and cooperation with European Union are two different things. Turkey is the country that has started accession negotiations with the European Union and is in negotiation process.*" (SME, 2007) Another six negotiation chapters were frozen in 2009 by the Republic of Cyprus. Their argument was that Turkey is not trying to normalize the relationship among their countries. Since then, the negotiation chapters were going at a snail pace and no chapters have been opened or closed until October, 2013, when they opened chapter 22 (Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments). As for 2014, 14 chapters

were opened out of 35 and only one chapter titled *science and research* was closed. (Tocci, 2014)

JDP was pushing to move the negotiation talks during their first years in the office but during their third term president Erdoğan (that time Prime Minister) did not mention the EU membership in his vision speech for 2023, during JDP's Congress in 2012. Critics of JDP say that it was just the topic they needed during their first candidacy to gain the power. The authors of the paper "*Europeanization in Turkey Stretching a Concept to Its Limits?*" wrote: "*They (ab)use the EU as a "legitimization device" to push their own political interests. Since the AKP has gained electoral support and the membership perspective became less credible in the post-2005 period, the EU has lost relevance for domestic institutional change. The fading support for EU membership in the Turkish public has further undermined the potential for using EU accession as a legitimization device. At the end of 2001, the support level exceeded 70 percent; by 2009 it had dropped to just below 50 percent.*" (Börzel and Soyaltin, 2015, p. 14)

In 2013 Turkey made some modest steps forward again in its EU accession negotiations. France was willing to unblock one chapter (regional policy), out of five, which was untouchable during the Sarkozy's presidency. This was a very important move; we can see that new French President Francois Hollande is not opponent of Turkish membership unlike his predecessor. At the end of May Turkey was going through massive protests and the European Union members started to be skeptical about Turkish membership. They were criticizing the police violence and in June, 2013, EU postponed the accession talks for four months due to government's handling of the protests. Despite of that, the EU started to open new chapter at the end of the year 2013. (Legendijk, 2013) The reason might be Turkish ultimatum over membership. Erdoğan said that Turkey might take a different journey, given the stalled negotiations with the EU. The Central Asian group so called the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) already listed Turkey among "dialogue countries" of the organization in 2013. This Central Asian group consists of two powers Russia and China. Foreign Minister Davutoğlu thanked all member countries of the organization and stated that this

partnership will strengthen ties in fields of economy, transportation and will provide for fight together against the challenges which threaten all the countries. Nothing changed so far Turkey is still among “dialogue countries.” (Sectsco.org, 2015) There seems to be some willingness to get promoted to observer status and even full membership and it might be just the right time for Turkey since it has domestic difficulties due to terrorist attacks by KWP, war in Syria and protracted coalition negotiations. A writer for *Daily Sabah Columns* wrote: “*Searching for new geostrategic ventures at the expense of the existing Western alliance might not be such a good idea, rather than pursuing grandiose projects such as the SCO, improving trade and bilateral relations with China and Central Asian republics seems to be a safer and more rational option*”. (Ünay, 2015)

The European Commission officially announced in January, 2015, that Turkey is ‘sufficiently prepared’ to start negotiations about the chapter 15 (Energy). However, the report is still waiting for the approval by Greek Cypriot Administration which blocked this chapter in 2009. The problem is that Greek Cypriots are still blocking the chapter because of the hydrocarbon reserves which were found off the shore of Cyprus. They want to sell hydrocarbons to boost the exploration and productions activities. This has upset Turkey because the peace agreement over the divided island was still not reached. (Turkish Weekly, 2015)

The most recent issue is a problem with refugees that the European Union has. Each day thousands of refugees, who are running away from war zone Syria, cross the Mediterranean Sea and seek help and refuge in the EU. A lot of refugees are taking boats from Turkey and that is why the EU is asking them for help. Many refugees come to Turkey but they do not stay there, they are moving forward to the EU and they want to prevent that to happen. Angela Merkel stated that Turkey is a key element to solve migration crisis. On the Brussel Summit in October 2015 Turkey and EU made a deal. The EU will give Turkey financial help of 3 milliard euros and it will strengthen its borders with Syria. Of course Turkey did not accept it without any favors for them. New chapters should be opened in accession negotiations and also liberalization of visa

for Turkish citizens. (Dennik N, 2015) But it does not mean that Turkey do not have to meet requirements to become EU member, although Turkey did profit from this migration crisis.

It is still a long road until the Turkey will make such a progress to become the member of the EU. Their biggest obstacles still remain. The first one is their relationship with Greek Cypriots which is still not improving and the found reserves of the hydrocarbon did not help to it. The second one is there for a long time and still not fading, mixed feelings of the few EU member countries which are not completely open to Turkey's full membership. They are still not convinced that Turkey is the right country to become the member. A lot of the chapters are still frozen and ones which are opened are probably not going to be closing very time soon. After all these things Turkey is still patiently waiting for their chance to become part of the EU. We will see what happens after the Brussel Summit where the EU promised to speed up the negotiation process. On the other hand they did not have much choice than to accept Turkey's terms since the migration crisis is very critical. They need Turkey to take care of at least some percentage of refugees. We can see that Turkey becomes very influential in politics and the EU already has a reason to cooperate more with it.

5. Political Vision 2023 of JDP

JDP has written a set of goals it wants to reach until 2023. This book was written in September 2012 and is available on JDP's official site. It is divided into politics, society and the world.

Politics

JDP views totalitarian and authoritarian approaches as enemies of democratic politics which should be produced by tolerance and values political legitimacy based on will of people and the common values of humanity. The aim of JDP is to normalize Turkey's

politics as it is mentioned in the book: *“For decades, Turkish politics has been under the shadow of tensions arising from the relationships between religion-politics, tradition-modernity, religion-state and state-society-individual. These tensions have narrowed the space for politics and have caused numerous problems. AK Party has attempted to reconstruct these relationships and free them of being problem areas; it has impeded the progress of crisis-prone tutelage approaches and thus has normalized the political system.”* (AKPARTI, 2012, p. 30) JDP sees itself as a permanent feature of Turkish politics which increased the quality of politics and frustrated those who accused the party of having a “hidden agenda.” Also it allowed the will of people to be reflected in institutions and organizations. Since 2002 JDP made major steps toward the rule of law, to develop democracy and allow citizens to be part of it.

Here are some examples:

- the minimum age of Member of Parliament was lowered from 30 to 25
- people are able to vote for their president by public vote now
- elections are more transparent
- polling boxes and voting cabins have been upgraded to modern standards
- allowed citizens living abroad to vote
- increased transparency and fight against corruption

The party would like to lift problematic legal stipulations related to election system and elections. It would be possible with changes of the Constitution specifically of these laws: Law 298 on Fundamental Precepts of Elections and Voting Lists, Law 2820 on Political Parties and Law 2839 on Parliamentary Elections. These changes would help to introduce better democratic representation and to lift all anti-democratic impediments and limitations to the right to elect and be elected. Higher Election Council which is responsible for inspection and administration of elections will be able to do its job better. JDP thinks that the best way to produce justice, trust and stability Turkey needs to change is political system to party-affiliated presidency, semi-presidential system or presidential system. The party calls it a necessity which would help to reflect will of people more effectively and there would be independence between legislature and

executive power. This new system would not be paralyzed by powerless and weak governments open to intervention. One of the three systems should be selected and implemented to solve Turkey's structural problem in political system. (AKPARTI, 2012, p. 15 and 16)

JDP is determined since its foundation to change the Constitution to more open one which would not be exclusive but inclusive, not divisive but uniting, not "othering" but embracing, not uniform but diverse, not penalizing but freeing. 1982 Constitution is lacking such things as the rule of law, fundamental rights and freedoms, freedom of thought and religion. Even though this Constitution was amended 17 times, these changes were served as a protection against true democracy. JDP is trying to raise the awareness of new Constitution since 2007. Turkey has changed and that is why its Constitution should change with it. The old one is taking its citizens as a property of the state which is wrong and people should own the state. It is written that JDP is determined to make a new, democratic, civil and free constitution. (AKPARTI, 2012, p. 17 - 19) We can see that JDP is really serious about the new Constitution and its necessity to make Turkey a better country. But a lot of people are afraid of the proposal of presidential political system. Erdogan would have more power as he ever had before. In the subject of terrorism JDP will continue to make everything it could to put a complete end to the problem. It writes that it will protect rights, welfare and freedom of the local people.

Society

In the subject of society JDP writes that it always valued the principle of a social state and that its most fundamental policy is to increase living standards of Turkish people and take care of disadvantaged ones and show them all the benefits they can get from social support programs they are eligible for. In 2012 the party started support program for widowed women and so far 192 109 of them have applied. The social spending has increased 16 times more than in 2002. JDP wants strong families and to achieve that it needs to develop social policy that strengthens the marriages. It wants to make sure that

no family will live under the poverty line by 2023. In order to achieve all of this JDP wants to create in the future parenting schools, increase the number of family counseling centers, develop social policies for Turkish citizens who live abroad, for mothers who want to balance work and family life will be provided help by childcare assistance. The goal is to achieve that 40 % of women will be working until 2023. The party says the future is in youth and that is why it allocated money for vocational training to raise qualified workers, exempted business of young entrepreneurs from tax obligation, want to increase capacity in student residence halls, increase career planning. Another subject are disabled ones. The number of disabled employees has increase by 19 000 from 2002 until 2012 and is still rising. Those who employ people with disabilities do not have to pay insurance for a period of one year. Healthcare is another issue JDP mentioned in its vision. Since 2002 healthcare achieved many improvements and the coverage of healthcare and medical expenses has been expanded and urgent healthcare service is now available also in rural areas. The satisfaction ratio has because of these changes rose from 39 % to 76 % in eight years. In terms of education JDP's aim is to give at least high school education to all the citizens and to reach 100% literacy rate for people under 50 until 2023. (AKPARTI, 2012, p. 32 - 47) The economic goal of JDP is to achieve these points until 2023 which will be the hundred anniversary of Turkish republic:

- *“To be among the top ten economies of the world in terms of GDP.*
- *To maintain a stable reduction in inflation and keep interest rates to a single digit.*
- *To increase exports to 500 billion dollars per year.*
- *To increase per capita income to \$25 000.*
- *To reach annual GDP of 2 trillion dollar.*
- *To reduce unemployment rate to 5 % and to increase the present employment rate to at least 50 %.” (AKPARTI, 2012, p. 52)*

The World

The strategic goal to achieve for JDP is to become a full member of the European Union until 2023. Its relationship with USA and NATO still remains a priority and the party will continue to strengthen these relationships. By 2012 more than seventy countries have mutually lifted visas and the main priority is to get a visa-free regime to EU countries by Turkish citizens. The relationship with Cyprus is also mentioned. JDP says that it already did its part to bring peace and stability by supporting UN Annan Plan in 2004 but UN and EU have failed and abandoned them and Greek Cypriots have been awarded by the membership despite of their rejection to this plan. The party calls for an acceptable solution for all sides and Turkey will continue with financial aid to Cyprus. Another subject was Turkey's national defense which JDP wants to make more efficient, deterrent and modern. Until 2023 the party wants Turkey to be able to manufacture its major defense needs by itself. (AKPARTI, 2012, p. 56 - 68)

5.1 The New Turkey Contract 2023

This New Turkey Contract is mentioning mostly how it is important to remember its past and be proud of it. JDP mentions again that political system which does not serve people cannot last and that Turkish citizens must cherish their homeland which was liberated as a result of many honorable sacrifices in War of Independence, Tripolitanian War, the Balkan Wars and World War I. It also talks about the beauty of Turkey's ethnic diversities and all the citizens are equal and rightful owners of their homeland. I think that some people would be surprised by this point especially Kurds minority. JDP says that its primary responsibility is to create political, cultural and economic conditions which will lead to an honorable and peaceful life. Right now Turkey is not in the good economic situation and there is a lot of ceasefire going on between the state and Kurds on South-East part of Turkey. Another point is about freedom of the press and its importance. A lot of magazines would not agree with this point since the media

was not broadcasting the 2013 protests and the national television was playing documentary about penguins while police was beating up, firing plastic bullets and using water canyons against protesters. Government was trying to hide the events and many journalists were also arrested. New Constitution is mentioned in the point 48 and 49: *„In the aftermath of the June 7 elections, the Parliament’s foremost duty will be to draft the country’s first civilian constitution in a spirit of harmony and democratic compromise. We invite all political parties and the civil society to contribute to this emerging consensus. Upon adoption of a new constitution the Parliament will continue to serve its legislative and monitoring functions, which shall be open to checks and balances within the aforementioned constitutional framework.”* (AKPARTI, 2015, p. 20) JDP again mentions the need of restructure of administrative system into presidential system in order to achieve balance of powers. The executive and legislative branches will remain independently active with necessary checks. The educational system is mentioned again as a necessary thing so their country can compete at global level because the youth is nation’s future. New thing is the talk about high-tech investments. JDP want to transform Turkey from technology consumer into technology developer. The EU membership is mentioned only in one point out of hundred which seems like it is not such an important goal. (AKPARTI, 2015)

Both of these contracts are about the same just the one from 2015 is a shorter version of the one from 2012. The main goal JDP wants to reach is to change the constitution and make Turkey a presidential state which would mean more power for Erdoğan, who is going to be president until 2019 and can be re-elected once more. With these two changes JDP would have even more influence than it has now. The party says it is important and it would help to reflect the will of people. In the case of society JDP wants to achieve that more women and people with disabilities will be employed. The topic about the relationship between Turkey and Cyprus is not very improving. JDP says that Turkey already did its part and that is why it is going to focus more on its relations with the European Union and NATO.

Conclusion

JDP's introduction into the politics was very successful. I think its biggest success was because it came out the right time. People wanted something new, something different and JDP and its political campaign was perfect fit to that description. But the biggest attraction was its leader Erdoğan who people already known, as before he was mayor of Istanbul, and he is an excellent speaker. The combination of these two things was the best one to achieve something big. JDP knew what people wanted to hear and used it in its political campaign. It won 2002 election and was influencing heading of the country since then.

In each election it was more and more successful. People liked the way Turkey was heading to and its possible membership in the EU which started to become more real. But the plan to build a shopping mall in Gezi Park was what people did not like and even more the way how the police started to treat people protesting against it. It was the biggest protest in Turkish history everybody heard about them it was in the newspapers, television, internet, social media, and so on. JDP started to be seen differently from this point but it also acted differently. The media was under attack, there were big fines for broadcasting something against the party and government, the social media was shut down for certain period of time, a lot of journalists lost their jobs for their articles, and the freedom of expression does not include these things. Everybody thought this will weaken the party that is why it was a shock when year after Erdoğan became the president of the Republic of Turkey. His speech was still able to attract and influence the people. His and the party's main goal now was to change the constitution and change Turkey into presidential system. The opposition does not like this because it would mean that he would have all the power in the country. But the biggest challenge was just about to come in 2015 general election. This election was mainly about people's trust in the government. JDP's main concern was new People's Democratic Party which could affect the results. Erdoğan's party won but did not receive enough votes for the majority. That means protests did somehow reflected in results. The coalition government had to be made but since it was not possible President called for

new election. Most people think that the votes would change just slightly this is why it was a surprise when JDP won with almost 50 % of votes. The party needed just few more seats to be able to pass new constitution without any coalition. How is it possible the party won with such a high number of votes? In my opinion people still vote for them because there is no other party they would rather give their vote to. The main strategy of opposition parties is criticizing Erdoğan and its government which is not what people want to hear. They like to hear about the possible changes Turkey can face and the better future for them and that is what JDP is giving them a hope for a better life. Also none of the opposition parties has such a leader like Erdoğan who everybody would follow. Another thing might be the way how the government reacted after terrorist attack in Ankara. People started to be afraid and the government said to do everything in their power to avoid such an attacks in the future. It will be interesting to see if JDP will be able to pass new constitution and how it will look like if it did. It is still thirteen seats short of the 330 required to call a referendum on any constitutional changes and all the three main opposition parties are strongly against such a move. We can see that after thirteen years in power JDP is still able to influence people and find the trust in them.

The relationship with the EU has its ups and downs. It was the thing JDP used in its first election as main point. After JDP was in power it looked promising with the EU negotiations but the Republic of Cyprus is the big obstacle to move forward in it and also skepticism of some countries, like Germany or France, who would rather see Turkey as privileged partner than a member. Only one chapter was closed so far out of thirty-five of them during ten year period. The EU opens some chapter from time to time but it seems to me that it is just to keep Turkey satisfied and want it to feel that it is still wanted. In my opinion if Turkey had allowed Greek Cypriots vessels into its ports, established cultural rights for Kurdish minority, harmonized its legislation with the EU, and adopted a new inclusive civilian institution, the current member states would probably still not approved its membership mainly because many governments and their citizens see Turkey culturally too different to become an EU member. Another very controversial thing is Turkish Muslim religion. In the time when the risk of a terrorist

attack is very high many people would be against the accession of Muslim country into their region and of course another point is that a lot of refugees from Syria come from Turkey and not all of them come with the best intentions. On the other hand, there are strong indications suggesting that rather than really wanting to make Turkey an EU member JDP used the accession talks and the concomitant reforms highly instrumentally, in order to consolidate its power within Turkish state structures. JDP no longer needs the EU reforms since the party already consolidated its power base, annihilated the opposing forces among the state structures, and completely delegitimized the secularist actors within society. The question is if it was ever a pro-European party. Many people see JDP as Islamist party that learned how to survive in an international system characterized by economic interdependence. In other words, its economic policies conform to the international free trade regime, while at the same time it has created an authoritarian political order in order to create a coherent Islamic-conservative constituency that is very much immune to any external criticism.

These accession talks will be for sure the longest ones in the history. Some optimists see Turkey's possible membership to happen in 2023 because of its 100th anniversary of the Republic founded by Atatürk and his companions. But Turkey still has 34 chapters to close and since it was able to close just one during ten year period it looks unlikely to happen. Even though it is still not a member state the EU needs its help with migration crisis. Turkey is very important partner to have and have good relation with. It has a very strategic position which can also help NATO in the subject of fighting ISIL. So we can see JDP's Turkey is influential in a world politics and especially now. They do not see Erdoğan's and his party's victory as a threat because they already know what to expect from them.

It will be interesting to see which way will be Turkey heading to after election. It is possible that immigration crisis will help to become one step closer to European membership. The problematic part could be JDP's decisions. Its Islamist way of ruling does not seem right to many people and many still remember how the government reacted during the protests in 2013. One of the other problems are also Kurds. Turkey is once again in conflict with KWP which can have negative effect on many Kurdish

citizens in the country. Opposition parties do not seem as a big threat yet because none of them has a special campaign which would attract more voters. All of them are focusing on what JDP does wrong and are trying to find more and more mess about them to talk about. But as we can see it is not helping to change people's minds about it. Turkish citizens need a strong leader to whom they can look up to. And so far Erdoğan is the one who is good for them now.

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