

Turkey's EU Membership: Advantages and Disadvantages

"First Europe – Turkey Forum" will be held between the 5-6th of December 2008 with the cooperation of TASAM (Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies) and the Instytut Wschodni in the city of Sopot, Poland. A committee of 70 people, including academicians, businessmen and press members from Turkey will attend the forum.

The First Europe – Turkey Forum, to be held between the 5-6th of December 2008 in the city of Sopot in Poland, is organized by the cooperation of TASAM (Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies) and INSTYTUT WSCHODNI, of which head office is located at the capital of Poland, Warsaw. Political, economic, cultural and social dimensions of the "Turkey - European Union Relations" will be evaluated and discussed in the Forum.

A group of 150 people comprising of representatives of the TGNA, the European Parliament and many national parliaments of European countries, bureaucrats, academicians, businessmen and press members is going to discuss the primary subjects stated below in 8 different sessions throughout the two days of the Forum:

- Turkey's Role on the South Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa
- Integration of Turkey and Europe
- Turkey as the Bridge Between the East and the West, and EU's Role on Energy Security
- Economic Potential of Turkey and It's Use in the EU Common Market
- Turkey's Role on the EU-NATO Relations
- Turkey's Role on the South Eastern Europe and the Middle East
- The Black Sea Region and EU's Black Sea Policy
- European Identity and Turkey
- Direct Foreign Investments: Investment Profiles of Turkey and EU

After the Chairman of TASAM Süleyman Şensoy stated that Turkey is continuing to move ahead on the route of EU Membership, he drew attention to the fact that the most important factor in the negotiation process which is communities' understanding each other and the need of a construction of a base to provide this understanding is being missed out. In his words; "One of the basic factors in the European Union project is the public itself. For this reason, European Union Citizenship is a very critical matter both in theory and practice. And Turkey's expressing itself is of so much significance for developing common areas in between."

He also stated that; "There is a common belief that today, European Union needs to develop it's relations with Turkey so as to have a word in the management of multipolar globalization. We, as TASAM, also share this belief. This assessment makes it impossible for our country to be a passive audience against the dynamic processes of Europe, of which we are a part in some way. We believe that Europe will bring opportunities for our country, but we also believe that we will have a responsibility in solving the problems that inevitably occur as a result of Europe's significance in the world policy and economy and that we can contribute to Europe too."

Turkey's strategic importance and acquisitions have increased in every dimensions in this period in which all the parameters and balances of the world are being redefined and every systems of the world are going through tough times. Turkey's integrating into the European Union with an accelerated calendar seems to be a must for EU to take a strong place in the multipolar world system. Otherwise Turkey's alternative will again be itself in a realpolitical

common sense.

Again with the words of Şensoy; “ We aim to discuss such subjects that redefines Europe as internal and foreign policy, security, economy and energy in the European Union by correlating each of them with Turkey in the First Europe – Turkey Forum. Our starting point is the need to analyse and understand the actors of Europe that determine the processes of Europe which we are a part of already. We think that understanding and expressing alone is not enough; we have to be included in the development of these processes and the management of them. We believe that Turkey’s potential importance in the configuration of the New Europe must be put forward. And this is why we organized this First Europe - Turkey Forum.”