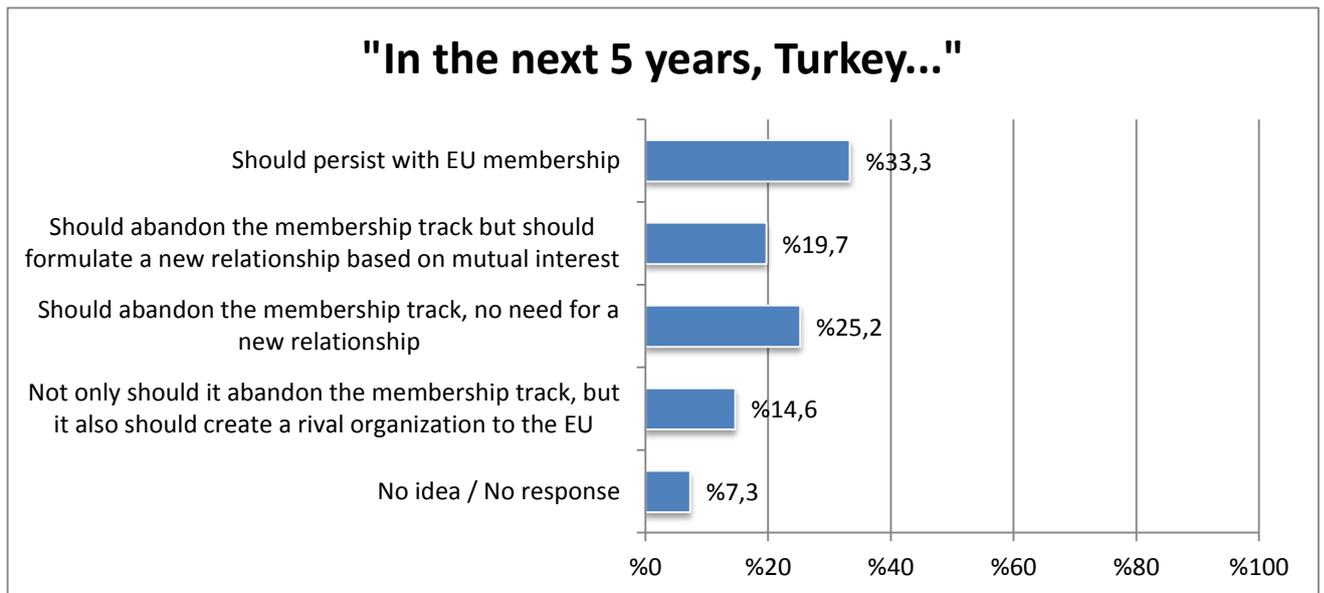


**ON THE SEMICENTENNIAL OF RELATIONS,  
TWO THIRDS OF TURKS ARE EURO-SCEPTIC**



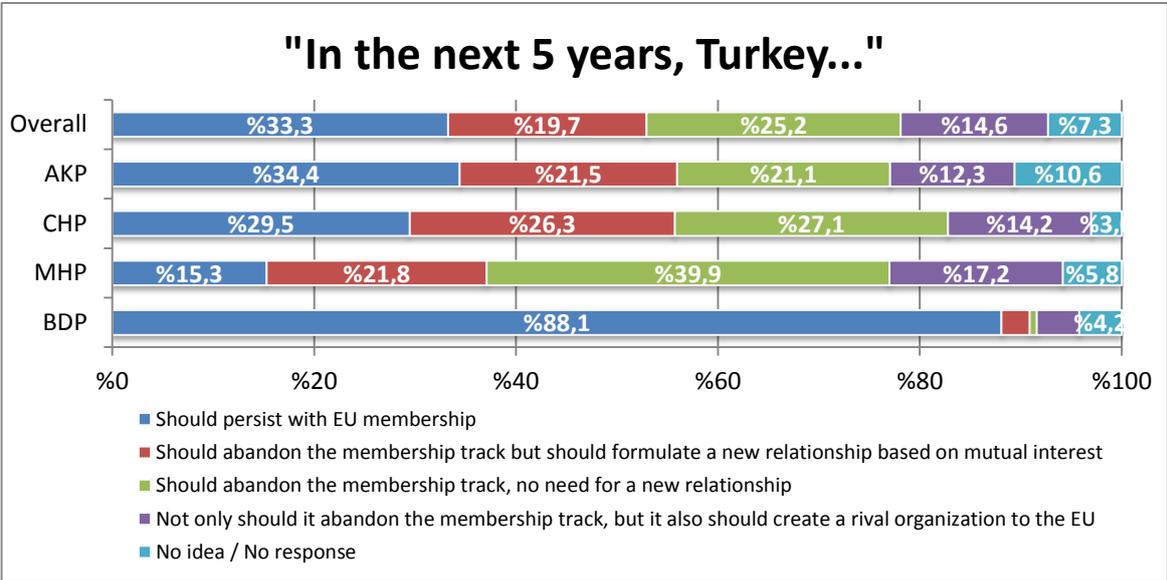
The public opinion survey carried out by TNS on behalf of the Centre of Economics and Foreign Policy Studies, EDAM, has shown that the Turkish public is divided on the issue of relations with the European Union. While one third of the public thinks that Turkey should persist with her aim of full membership; the remaining two thirds agree that Ankara should abandon the pursuit of full membership. The participants were asked the question: "This year is the 50th anniversary of the Ankara Agreement signed between Turkey and the European Union. It is also the 8th year of the accession negotiations. Which of the following policies do you think that Turkey should follow in the next 5 years?"<sup>1</sup>

33% of the people surveyed agree that Turkey should persevere with the goal of becoming a EU member. But two-thirds of the public leans closer to the view that Turkey should not become a full member. There are also differences of opinion among Turkish Euro-sceptics. 20 % supports the idea that Turkey should abandon full membership and should formulate a new relationship based on common interests. Compounding this group with the residual supporters of membership, it can be stated that more than 50 % of the public views

<sup>1</sup> This public opinion survey was carried out between 05 December 2012 – 14 January 2013 in Turkey with the participation of 1509 people representing a cross section of the urban and rural population at the age of 18 and above. The cities which were included in the survey: Adana, Ankara, Antalya, Bursa, Diyarbakir, Manisa, Erzurum, Gaziantep, Istanbul, Izmir, Kayseri, Kırklareli, Konya, İçel, Samsun, Zonguldak, Denizli, Malatya. The survey was carried out by TNS Turkey.

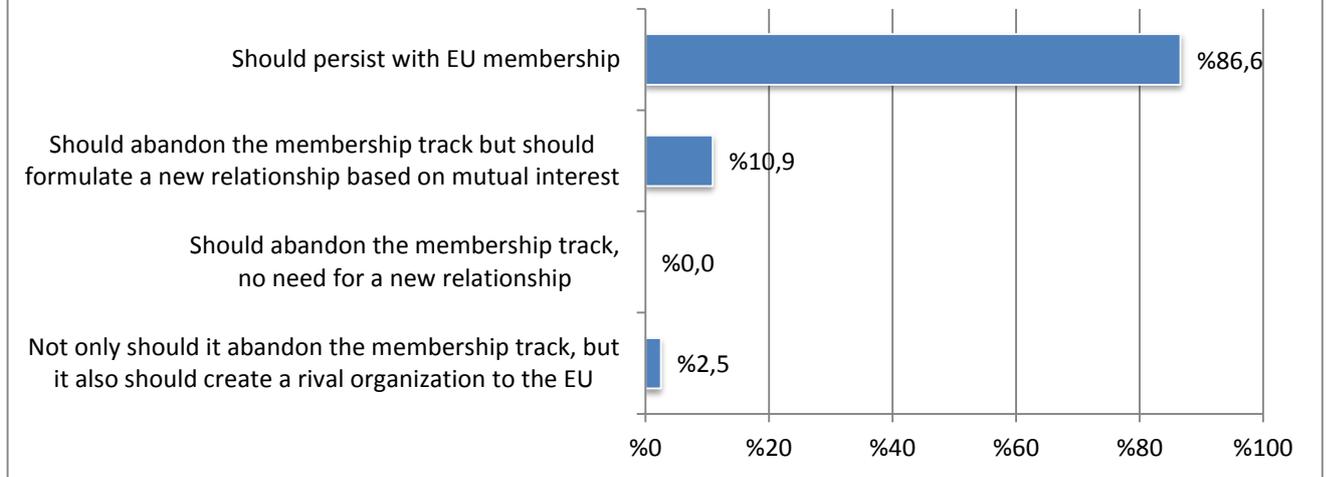
partnership with the EU positively. One quarter of the public believes that full membership should be abandoned and that a new relationship with the EU is not needed; while another 15 percent thinks that after the full membership is abandoned, a rival regional organization should be established.

There are also significant differences of opinion with regards to the future of Turkey’s relations with the European Union among the constituents of different parties. While 34 percent of AKP voters believe that the country should “persist with her aim of full membership”, this ratio falls to 30 percent among the main opposition center left CHP voters and to 15 percent among the nationalist MHP voters. The predominantly Kurdish BDP voters are apparently avid defenders of the EU goal with a support level of 88 percent.



There appears to be differences of opinion on what to do once the membership path is abandoned. While 27 percent of CHP voters agree that “relations based on common interest should be established”; this ratio is 21 percent among MHP voters. While 40 percent of MHP voters think that Turkey should act on its own after the full membership goal has been abandoned; this ratio is 27 percent among CHP voters. Those who aim to establish a new partnership in the region to rival the EU are roughly in equal ratios on all three major parties with a percentage of around 15 percent.

## "In the next 5 years, Turkey..." Experts



EDAM has also fielded the same question to a panel of foreign policy experts. In such a survey with the participation of 202<sup>2</sup> experts, it was seen that experts have a very divergent view from the public opinion and agreed overwhelmingly – 87 % - that Turkey should persevere with its goal of full membership to the European Union. Other alternatives found little support among the expert community. There is thus a major difference of opinion between foreign policy experts and the public opinion. While the public opinion is divided on the issue of full membership to the European Union; experts almost unanimously agree that the country should persist with its goal of full membership.

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<sup>2</sup> 202 experts participated in the experts study and the survey was conducted by Infakto RW.