

Democratic Governance Reforms in Turkey and Their Implications

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Introduction

Turkey is a country located astride two continents and at the crossroads of the regions of the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East, presenting both some opportunities and threats. She is a rapidly urbanizing, developing, and changing country. During the Justice and Development Party (JDP or AKP in Turkish) governments within the last 12 years, she has achieved a steady and one of the highest economic growth rates in the World despite some slow down after the 2008 global economic and financial crisis. Today, Turkey has a globally integrated, technologically advanced and market-driven economy, which is considered in the G-20 major world economies (Kaplan 2012, pp. 298–299; SPO 2003, p. 125).

Turkey has a 75.6 million population with a medium age of 30, 77.3 % of whose lives in cities and towns, and 67.6 % of the population is between the ages of 15 and 64 (TurkStat 2013). Around 70–75 % population is made up of mainly the people of Turkish ethnicity¹ but includes people from various ethnic backgrounds, which have in turn resulted in ethnic, religious, political, democratic, and human rights problems. In terms of the land area and population, she is one of the largest countries in her region and in Europe. These unique geographical and demographical characteristics both shape the cultural, economic, social, and political landscape of the country and help explain the wave of recent reforms in the country and her socioeconomic, political, and administrative transformations.

¹In the 1982 Constitution (Article 66), the term “Turk” is not used in its ethnic sense and accordingly defined as “anyone who is bound to the Turkish state by the bond of citizenship” in its legal meaning. Thus, “Turkish” refers to the citizenship of Turkey. Yet, this definition is criticized for its assimilative connotations.

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Turkey, according to Friedman (2009, p. 117), is in her way to become one of the key countries in this century despite some of her problems such as a divided look between secularists and Islamists, statists and liberals, and Turks and Kurds. Similarly, Kaplan (2012, p. 298) points out that Turkey has relatively high human development capacity compared to most countries in the Middle East. It is ranked 79th in the world and thus is classified under the high human development countries (Brzezinski 2012, pp. 142–143). Due mainly to the progress started by Atatürk and the developments especially during the 1980s and after 1999 when she was officially announced as a candidate country for EU membership, Turkey has turned out to be one of the most, if not the most, democratic, secularist, and modernist country among the Muslim World (Aydın and Keyman 2004, p. 19; Friedman 2009, pp. 114–115; Khanna 2011, pp. 81–82; Walker 2012).

Turkish democracy is a relatively developed parliamentary democracy with a system of free elections and several competing parties. Turkish democracy continues to have shortcomings and problems and to function according to a patch-work constitution prepared and enacted under the Military regime in 1982. Thus, Turkey still has some ground to cover in the areas of basic human rights and freedoms, the rule of law, and democracy (Kubicek 2002, p. 2; Gül 2008). According to the democracy index prepared by Economist Intelligence Unit, Turkey is considered as a flawed democracy and ranks 88th out of 167 countries in the world (EIU 2011). Besides, in the Rule of Law Index 2012–2013, Turkey performs poorly with regard to government accountability (68th out of 97 countries) and with regard to human rights (76th out of 97 countries) due to deficiencies in the functioning of auditing mechanisms, political interference within the judicial system, and poor performance in protecting the freedom of expression and privacy (WJP 2012, p. 39). Moreover, in terms of the freedom of the press, Turkey is considered as partly free, and ranks 117th out of 197 countries in the World (Freedom House 2012). Furthermore, Turkey ranks 54th in perceived governmental corruption out of 176 countries in the world (Transparency International 2012).

Even though put forward 10 years ago, Kubicek's observations regarding democracy in Turkey still hold. He argued that Turkish democracy is handicapped by a strong state tradition, which fosters paternalism and constrains civil society, pluralism, and independent voices. He maintains:

“Traditionally, civic groups have been seen as accessories of the state, not as genuine partners able to initiate action on their own... The state has therefore been traditionally hostile to independent groups with their own agenda, concerned that they could rip apart the interwoven fabric of Turkish society... Efforts to expand democracy in Turkey ... have run up against this barrier, and hence there has been no complete democratic ‘breakthrough’ in the country” until the 1980s (Kubicek 2002, p. 4).

Another area to pay attention is the status of women in the political, economical, and social life in Turkey. Despite an increase in the proportion of the female representatives in the National Parliament from 9.1 % up to 14.4 % after the 2011 national parliamentary elections, their representation in local councils and elected positions continues to stay under 1 %. Besides, Turkey ranked 77th in gender inequality index among 146 countries for which an index score was calculated in 2011.

Moreover, female population ages 25 and older with at least secondary education was 27.1 % compared with 46.7 % of male population same age with the same level of education in 2011, showing the disadvantaged position of women in educational attainment. In much the same way, in terms of average educational attainment, it is 8 years for men while 6 years for women in the same year. Furthermore, the labor force participation rate is much lower for women than men. In 2011, only 24 % of women at working age participated in the labor market whereas 70 % of men of the same age were in the labor market (UNDP 2012, pp. 139–142). These percentages clearly indicate that there is a clear need to improve women's status in political, social, and economic life in Turkey.

How to Approach and Study This Subject?

The general review given on Turkey presents a mixed picture. Yet, considered together with the recent governance and economic reforms, overall there are many reasons to be optimistic about Turkey's democratic, administrative, and economical progress. The history of the Republic of Turkey, including the last century of the Ottoman Empire, is itself represents a story of strong reform initiatives, westernization, and increasing ties with Europe. This fact is nothing unknown to those who have done studies on Turkey. This chapter firstly aims to study and understand what has been happening in Turkey in recent years. The study and contemplation of what happens today requires an inspection of the past and the deliberation of the possible reflection of what happened in the past on today. Besides, it also involves a prediction of the future and the possible reflection of the future on what happens today. Or put another way, what happens today is the reflection of the imposition of the future on the present because today is shaped by the future expectations, wills, and intentions. "The basic idea is that expectations about the future and experiences of the past are efficient in converting environmental requirements into institutional forms and practices... The resulting indeterminacy in outcomes within a particular environmental context provides a possible role for deliberate political action" (March and Olsen 1995, pp. 10–11).

Another issue regarding the approach taken in this chapter involves the way of determining the aspects or dimensions (i.e., political, economic, administrative etc.) of what happens today and the method of exploring, examining and, even, explaining, if possible, those changes, their aspects, and interactions. Many reform programs, suggested by international organizations such as the EU, WB, IMF, UNDP, and OECD and implemented by particularly developing countries, are often called as structural or institutional adjustment or transformation programs especially since the 1980s. The main focus of these programs is to transform the structure of the state and/or public administration by enhancing the rule of law and the rules of the game (i.e., democratization, transparency, and accountability), by improving market mechanism and by introducing market mechanisms into the public sector, privatizing the public sector, increasing efficiency, reducing costs and red-tape, among others

(UNDP 2007, p. 2). Yet, the methods have been various. In the 1980s the market was taken as the new basic driver of development instead of the Keynesian welfare state. Starting in the 1990s, the efforts are concentrated on improving competitiveness in the market and the capacity of the public administration or the state as the facilitator of good governance as the market has still continued to be the driving force (Baimyrzaeva 2012; Güler 2004, p. 27; 1996). According to the EU rules, candidate countries have to meet the economic and financial standards (Maastricht or convergence criteria) and Copenhagen (accession) criteria, including a free market economy, a stable democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and the acceptance of all EU legislation, including of the euro. Specifically, the basic areas for institutional transformation involve the betterment of public policy making processes, the enhancement of the rule of law, accountability, transparency, auditing, and efficiency as indicated in the SIGMA Program of the EU on the reform in public administration (Peretó 2007).

Similarly, democratic governance practices by UNDP in developing countries focus on such thematic areas as access to justice, the rule of law, human rights and security sector governance, local governance and civic engagement, public administration reform and anti-corruption, women empowerment and gender equality (UNDP 2013). These ideas seem to be based on a changed role for governments. In today's world, "government is less the producer of goods and services, and more the supervisor of proxies who do the actual work" (Kettle 1993, pp. 21–22). In much the same way, Frederickson (1997, p. 85) states that governance is seen to include hyperpluralism with complex interactions among political parties, legislative bodies and their subdivisions, public organizations, interest groups, intermediaries, organizations, clients, the media, vendors, and so forth. Besides, governance is characterized by high levels of delegation and decentralization mixed with fuzzy boundaries between sub-elements of the organization, its clients or customers, and other organizations (Frederickson 1997, p. 86). The wave of the recent reforms in Turkey seems to include almost all of the above mentioned dimensions or aspects, particularly the reform of the central, regional, and local administrations and of their relations among themselves and with the market and society along with the enhancement of the political system or democracy. Yet, Turkey is considered to be in need of realizing further institutional change and reforms in her financial, judicial, personnel, auditing, taxing, central, and local administration system, of realigning the responsibilities and resources among the central, regional, and local administrations, and of continuing her struggle against poverty (OECD and EU 2005, p. 6; UNDP 2007, p. 2). These reforms are seen necessary to strengthen the sustainability of economic growth and democratization.

A final issue to consider is related to how one would explain what happens today. There is not much space to get into a detailed discussion of change or reform theories or approaches here. However, it would be appropriate to shortly touch upon the fact that the wave of the changes since the 1980s could be considered to fall under the framework of the general theories on public management reforms, which mainly includes the new public management (NPM) and the new public governance (NPG) paradigms (Ferlie 2012, p. 237). Ferlie (2012, p. 243) argues that these two paradigms

present entrepreneurship in public administration as a reform instrument to accomplish the goals of service modernization, strategic change, and capacity rebuilding particularly in the public administration. However, there are contrary approaches opposing to see public administration as an entrepreneurial organization driven mainly by the market principles. Barth (1996) argues that autocratic management styles have to be changed to more participative, bottom-up styles; and that governance may offer new solutions and flexibility in this respect. Even though the new developments offer new opportunities, the notion of competition that is stimulated by entrepreneurialism can be problematic in the public sector. The implication of living in an interconnected world is the need for more teamwork, collaboration, and communication, not increased fierce competition (Barth 1996, p. 195). Citizens are not customers and public administrators do not act on the base of competition, risk taking, and profit making. But rather, public administration should foster public interest, educate citizens and facilitate citizen participation, manage diversity and change properly and responsibly, and utilize teamwork and communication in the public administration (Barth 1996). Similarly, as Frederickson points out, public benefit, the equal distribution of public services, social justice, and equality of opportunity are some of the basic principles that guide the policies and actions of public administration (Frederickson 1997, p. 107). Public administration also has to be sensitive to the needs of the underrepresented or disadvantaged groups and minorities. Providing the necessary services to the public is the primary goal for the public sector whereas profit motive is the dominant incentive in the private sector. Emphasizing choice, competition, and decision-cost perspectives tend to be favorable to those who are in a position to make free choices and who can compete in the free market (Frederickson 1997, pp. 87–88).

Accordingly, this chapter is an attempt at presenting the political and administrative structure as well as constitutional principles in Turkey, the transformation in these structures, and the driving reasons and dynamics behind them. Besides, the recent reforms are reviewed and discussed, and their implementation and outcomes are evaluated. In this respect, economic liberalization, decentralization, deregulation, changes towards governance and efforts to democratize and shrink the state, the impact of European Union and globalization, among others are presented and examined. The last section concludes the chapter by presenting and discussing implications for public administration and public policy and future prospects.

Political and Administrative Structure in Turkey

The centralist structure and the efforts of modernization and/or westernization in Turkey were inherited from the Ottoman Empire (Kılıçbay 1995; Kongar 1999; Mardin 1962; Ortaylı 2002). The basic features of this heritage have been a dominant state control over the society and economy, and the dominance of the center over the periphery (Mardin 1973, 1991; Tural 2009, pp. 20–21) exercised mainly through the power of tutelage and central budgetary control. The duality between secularist—modernist state elites and the religious oriented peripheral movement

has existed in Turkish modernization process over the two centuries but become more obvious in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire and after Turkey's transition into a multi-party democracy after the Second World War.

Almost all scholars studying on Turkish political life accept the duality of the center and periphery as a key concept for explaining the structure of the political competition in Turkey (Mardin 1973). Today, it can be said that the center and periphery relations are more complicated. Turkey has been ruled by political parties and elites supported by the periphery since 1950. In other words, ruling parties have been formed by a peripheral base till 2002 elections. This type of parties placed at the center right of the political spectrum established a refined consensus between the central elites and peripheral mass in the process of elections and government formation. However, especially after the 2007 elections the JDP cadres seem to have put an end to this consensus. The JDP cadres unlike the other cadres of the former center right parties in power have risen from the grassroots to the national politics. Moreover, the JDP governments have refused to share power with the military, the supreme courts and the civil bureaucracy on the one hand, and initiated a reform of these institutions on the other hand. Thus, the JDP seems to be in an effort of establishing a new type of political contra-elites, sympathizer institutions, and socioeconomic groups.

The Turkish economy has developed under the leadership of the public sector especially until the 1980s. A combination of statist approach and centralization was considered as an efficient method to build nation state, achieve economic development, keep the country intact, and ensure consistent administration (Ortaylı 1979, p. 287; Mardin 1994). Besides, the centralized administrative system was generally regarded as functional at the beginning years of the Republic because it helped implement top-to-bottom modernization and westernization reforms that were the Republic's core targets (Heper 1985; Heper and Keyman 1998). In this process, the interesting point is that the Republic of Turkey was established by a war, the War of Independence, given against "the western countries." As Ortaylı points out that we, Turks, have to both adapt to the modern world and protect our history and identity against the modern world (Ortaylı 2006, p. 56).

Since its establishment, Turkey has sided with the West in defense of freedom, democracy, and human rights through membership in organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the Council of Europe, and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (CAIMED 2004). Another concrete example of continuing aspiration for westernization is Turkey's integration efforts to the EU. Turkey has close economic relations with the EU since 1963 when Turkey participated in a free trade agreement with the EEC, and then these relations turned into a Customs Union in 1996 (Winkler 2005). Turkey began full membership negotiations with the European Union in 2005. Meanwhile, as a result of being a bridge between the West and the East, Turkey has continued to foster close political, economic, and industrial relations with the Eastern world, particularly with the states of the Middle East, Central Asia, and East Asia.

Another important reason for the centralized state structure in Turkey was the fear that the unitary form of the state and the soul of nationhood would have been harmed and separatist movements would have been fueled if the powers of central government

were decentralized and local administrations were strengthened (Narlı 2000, pp. 108–109). The social, cultural, and religious diversity of the Ottoman Empire was mostly transferred to the Republic which was used to justify state centrism and bureaucratic advocacy in the process of nation building and the consolidation of the nation state. In fact, in order to assimilate various ethnic groups and foster a common Turkish identity, Turkish laws severely restricted the public use of languages other than Turkish as well as open expressions of separate cultural identities until recently, such as Kurds or Alevis (a large and diverse group of Muslims living Islam liberally in Anatolia and differentiate themselves from the Sunni Muslims in Turkey) (Flam 2004, p. 176).

Basic Structure of the Current Political and Administrative System

The 1982 Constitution sets up a unitary state and a centralized political and administrative system in Turkey. As stated mainly in the first and second articles of the Constitution, *the main principles of the political system and state structure in Turkey* are republicanism; respectfulness to human rights; secularism; democracy; the rule of law; welfare state; the separation of powers; constitutional government; unitary state; judicial review of administrative decisions and acts through administrative courts. The 1982 Constitution recognizes the principle of decentralization as a basis for the organization and functioning of local administrations whereas the principle of centralization is for the organization of central government (Polatoğlu 2000, p. 80). In other words, the centralized structure of the public administration system is balanced by autonomous local administrations along with the local branches of the ministries of central government. According to the Article 123 of the 1982 Constitution, Turkey employs the principle of *deconcentration* within the organizational hierarchy of the central administration transferring power and resources to local branches and to officials of central administration. The Article 123 states that the public administration should function in unity and coherence in order to maintain the integrity of the whole body of national administration including provincial and local ones. However, the system is still very centralized and in turn causes administrative, political, and democratic problems.

According to the Article 123 of the Constitution, the administration is a whole and indivisible mainly because of the fact that Turkey is a unitary state. On the other hand, the essential features of the Republic of Turkey are indicated in the Article 2 of the 1982 Constitution:

The Republic of Turkey is a democratic, secular, and social state governed by the rule of law; bearing in mind the concepts of public peace, national solidarity and justice, respecting human rights; loyal to nationalism of Atatürk.

There was a committee made up of representatives from the four political parties in the Parliament working to write a whole new constitution. This new constitution would have introduced some sort of a presidential system and a system of much

autonomous local and regional administrations. Yet, the 1982 Constitution is still in effect and its concepts and principles as well as the established traditions and culture have affected the structuring and functioning of the public administration in Turkey. For instance, Article 123 of the Constitution introduces the concepts of (a) *centralization*—concentrating all the authority at the center; (b) *decentralization*—delegating authority to the local units; and (c) *deconcentration*—in which the center delegates parts of its authority to its hierarchically controlled field units.

Political and Administrative Structure at the Central Level

Turkey has a parliamentary representative democracy based on the separation of powers between legislative, executive, and judiciary branches. The legislative power is vested in the unicameral parliament, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT). The Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers, making up the government, own actual executive powers and are responsible before the GNAT. The judiciary is independent of the executive and legislative branches, and the Constitutional Court is charged with ruling on the conformity of laws and decrees with the constitution. The Council of State is the tribunal of last resort for administrative cases, and the High Court of Appeals for all others.

The Parliament, the Turkish Grand National Assembly, is composed of 550 representatives, who are directly elected by the people once in every 4 years. A representative is a member of the Parliament representing the whole nation, not just the district from where he or she gets elected. To avoid excessive political fragmentation and to make it easy to establish a government, only parties winning at least 10 % of the votes cast in a national parliamentary election gain the right to representation in the Parliament. This 10 % threshold is considered to limit the representation in the Parliament as in the 2007 national parliamentary elections when only three parties formally entered the parliament compared to only two parties in 2002.

The executive branch is dual: The President of the Republic and the Council of Ministers or the Cabinet. The president is the head of the state and used to be elected only once for a 7-year term by a round of votes in the parliament. But after the constitutional amendments in 2007, the presidents are to be elected for a 5-year term by direct popular elections. He or she mainly has limited and symbolic powers. Empowered by the 1982 Constitution, the president is also considered as a part of the executive branch, exercising some administrative powers without political responsibility. For example, the president can preside over the meetings of the Cabinet if he or she chooses to do so, and he or she chairs the meetings of the National Security Council (NSC, *Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*). The president also appoints several high ranking public officials. It could be further argued that the president was further empowered by the change in the method of his/her election method by popular vote in 2007. Considering the continuing pressures from the government for a shift to a presidential system, the election method by popular vote may ignite a change from parliamentary governmental system into some sort of a (semi-) presidential system.

Table 1 Central government structure in Turkey

The Parliament	The Executive Branch	The Judiciary
<i>Turkish Grand National Assembly</i> 550 representatives are elected for a 4-year term by open, competitive, and fair elections.	<p><i>A. Central Government</i> The Presidency, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, and ministries</p> <p><i>B. Field Administrations of the Central Government</i> Regional branches, provincial branches, and district-based branches</p> <p><i>C. Advisory Bodies:</i> The National Security Council, The State Council, The Court of Accounts</p> <p><i>D. Autonomous Bodies:</i> Higher Education Council, autonomous regulatory bodies such as Privatization Authority, Competition Authority, and Capital Markets Authority etc., and some others.</p>	<p><i>A. Supreme courts</i> Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court of Appeals, the State Council</p> <p><i>B. Supreme Council of Judges and Public Prosecutors^a</i></p> <p><i>C. First level of specialized courts in the provinces</i></p>

^aIt is a body with administrative, auditing, and disciplinary power over judges and public prosecutors directly after they are appointed

As in many other parliamentary governmental systems, the prime minister is the most powerful political leader in Turkey. The prime minister is appointed by the President to form a government and he or she is normally the leader of the party having the highest number of seats in the Parliament. The central administration includes the Presidency, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, ministries, and consultative agencies. The Cabinet needs to be approved through a vote of confidence in the Parliament and is at the top of both the political and administrative system. The Prime Minister (PM), according to the 1982 Constitution (the Articles 112, 109), is the head of both the Cabinet and the public administration. The PM, as the chairman of the Cabinet, ensures cooperation among the ministers and supervises the implementation of the policies of the government. If necessary, the PM may take corrective measures including the dismissal of a minister through a proposal to the president. Each minister is responsible to the PM for the conduct of the affairs of one's ministry and for the activities of the subordinates in ministries (Table 1).

Field and Local Administrations: Each ministry is based in Ankara but have the units in the provinces serving on their behalf in a hierarchical organizational structure. For administrative purposes, Turkey is divided into 81 provinces (*il*) on the basis of geographical situation, economic conditions, and public service requirements as stated in Article 126 of the 1982 Constitution. Provinces are the main administrative units for central government activities and they are headed by provincial governors (*Vali*). Yet, each ministry has a provincial and/or regional director of its provincial or regional field organization. The provincial governor also has the authority and responsibility for the supervision of the "field organizations" of each ministry. Provinces are further divided into districts (*ilçe*), headed by the sub-governor (*Kaymakam*).

Within the administrative organization of Turkey, the position of provincial governor is very important since he (or rarely she) is the chief executive of the

provincial administration and has the responsibility of coordinating and controlling the operations of different field agencies of the central government (Polatoğlu 2000, p. 93). At the provincial level, there are not only the field branches of the central government under the supervision of the provincial governor but also local administrations enjoying some autonomy. Local administrations include province-wide metropolitan municipalities (*büyükşehir belediyesi*) and district municipalities (*belediye*) in 30 provinces, and special provincial administrations (*il özel idaresi*), city and town municipalities (*belediye*), and villages (*köy*) in the remaining 51 provinces. There are also functionally autonomous local bodies such as universities, the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), and state economic enterprises. These functional local administrations provide specific services without any geographical restriction and can be located at the center or periphery.

The geographical local administration in Turkey is divided into three main administrative tiers, consisting of the municipalities (and metropolitan municipalities, a new tier of the local administrative structure established in 1984), the special provincial administrations and villages. The decision making and executive bodies of these local administrations are all elected by popular vote, except for the chair of the special provincial administration. The municipalities are the most autonomous type of local administrations and headed by elected mayors and councils. The special provincial administrations, established in 51 provinces, and the village administrations are also autonomous local administrative entities responsible mainly for the provision of local public services. Yet, the special provincial administrations also carry out some of the duties of central government and provide assistance to the local branches of the central government, if needed. Accordingly, the governor who is appointed directly by the central government has a dual role in the province. As of 2014, there are 81 provinces and 51 special provincial administrations, 1,400 municipalities, 30 metropolitan municipalities, 850 districts, and 18,000 villages in Turkey.

A new law (enacted in 2012 and numbered 6360) established province-wide metropolitan municipalities in 29 provinces with a population of 750,000 and over to be effective after the 2014 local elections. In a short while, the number of the provincial metropolitan municipalities was increased to 30 with another law passed by the Parliament. According to the 2012 law, all the other local governments in those 30 provinces with the newly established provincial metropolitan municipalities were abolished after the 2014 local elections, accounting more than 50 % of all the local governments in Turkey. 30 provinces are to have only provincial metropolitan municipalities as the upper-tier and district municipalities as the lower-tier of the provincial metropolitan municipalities. As in many other countries, city or town municipalities in Turkey also have responsibilities for the production of public works and infrastructure and for bringing substantial local public services to the local citizens within their municipal boundaries. Similarly, every province used to have a province-wide local administration, called as the special provincial administration. Duties regulated by law and ranging from education to construction, from agriculture to social assistance are given to the special provincial administrations to be delivered within the entire area of a province, particularly in rural areas. Now,

Table 2 The regional and local administrations in Turkey

Regional administrations	Local administrations		
	Geographical		Functional
	Two-layer province-wide municipalities in the 30 most populous provinces	Other local administrations in the remaining 51 provinces	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) – Regional Development Administrations to manage regional (inter-provincial) development projects stimulated and managed by the central government. They are established in mainly comparatively underdeveloped regions such as the Southeastern or Eastern Anatolia Regions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Two-layer province-wide metropolitan municipalities with an elected mayor and metropolitan council – District municipalities with an elected mayor and council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SPAs – City and town municipalities with an elected mayor and council – Villages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – State universities – State theaters – State research institutes – Turkish Radio and Television Corporation...

after the 2012 provincial metropolitan municipality law was put into effect in 2014, only those 51 provinces without a provincial metropolitan municipality have a special provincial administration, city and town municipalities, and village administrations.

Although the local governments are autonomous decentralized units, they are subject to close scrutiny and control of the central government exercised through the power of tutelage, which is the guaranty of the indivisibility of administration and the country. In this regard, the provincial governor is given some authority to oversee the autonomous local authorities as well. In fact, the governor is the head of the special provincial administrations. In addition, the principles of the “indivisibility of administration” along with the “indivisible integrity of the state and nation” also reflect the centralized and hierarchical structure of the administration in Turkey. The “maintenance of law and social order” and the “unity of the nation” have been major historical principles of the Turkish state (Polatoğlu 2000, p. 110; Heper 1992). Thus, one could argue that there is still a centralist state structure and limited local autonomy in Turkey (Table 2).

Turkey had no real regional administrations until 2006 because largely of its possible implication for separatism. The law numbered 5449 was enacted on 25 January 2006 and provided for the legal framework for establishing regional development agencies (RDAs) in the 26 NUTS II regions throughout Turkey. The RDAs are defined as separate local-regional administration units, but national coordination among the RDAs is to be done by the Ministry of Development. The main objectives of the RDAs are to invigorate and support local and regional potential for

economic development, to organize economic development and related research and education activities in their respective regions, to enhance the cooperation among public, civic and private sectors, and to enable an efficient and suitable utilization of public resources, among others. Agencies are created by a decision of the Council of Ministers on the basis of NUTS 2 regions and the Council of Ministers is also allowed to rearrange regions.

Changes in Turkey Since the 1980s and Their Reasons

The beginning of the neo-liberal era and the related reforms starts with the 24 January 1980 economic decisions to liberalize economy and the army coup later in the same year that suppressed social unrest and attempted to overcome political instability. The 1980s witnessed the adaption of a new constitution with some authoritarian leanings and strong statist and centralist characteristics, and a change from import substitution to export-oriented growth policies. As a result, the Turkish economy was opened up to the market forces and globalization, and in turn state intervention in the economy was declined and a change in the political and administrative structure begun (Akdoğan 2010; Bayar 1996, p. 779; Gül and Memişoğlu 2007; Öniş 2004; Sallan Gül 2006, pp. 281–300; Shaker 1995). In a politically suppressed milieu, people could not raise much opposition to such changes.

The policies in the 1980s were in general successful in reviving economic growth, economic liberalization, and the shift in the economy from import substitution to export orientation (Öniş 2004; Sallan Gül 2006). Yet, the political and administrative reforms were very slow and, thus, the centralistic, undemocratic, and statist aspects of political and administrative system continued to exist into the new millennium (Hicks 2001, p. 78; Cizre-Sakallıoğlu and Yeldan 2000, p. 482; Heper and Keyman 1998, p. 266). Öniş (2004, p. 114) asserts that Özal Governments had defects particularly in building a strong legal infrastructure for a well functioning and competitive market economy and sustainable growth and in understanding and institutionalizing the rule of law. Besides, in the 1990s, increasing public sector and foreign trade deficits, concomitant chronic inflation, the 1999 earthquake, the economic and financial crises in 1994 and 2000–2001, high inflation, a weak banking sector, and increased macroeconomic volatility all have had adverse side effects on political, economic, and social lives, making it absolutely imperative to deal with the macroeconomic imbalances with permanent measures and structural adjustments. Therefore, in 1999, the government embarked upon a comprehensive economic reform program to address the long-standing economic problems, to reduce inflation and to achieve a sustainable growth. Kemal Derviş, working for the WB, was invited to Turkey and appointed as the minister responsible for the economy and for the implementation of a structural adjustment program, focusing on shrinking the size of the state and its role in the economy, and separating the economy from the politics (Derviş et al. 2006, pp. 63–64 and 102). Besides, some amendments to the 1982 Constitution were passed enabling privatization and economic liberalization.

Another problem from which Turkey has suffered is the undemocratic military influence and political instability due to weak coalitions and frequent elections in the 1990s. The problems related to democracy, the rule of law, and basic rights and freedoms along with the resurgence of Kurdish nationalism and the revival of political Islam have added to the increased influence of the military on the political and administrative system (Hicks 2001, pp. 78-79; Öniş 2004, p. 130). Of course, the privileges and prerogatives granted to the army by the 1982 Constitution and laws have also played an important role in this outcome. The concerns of the Turkish military were about the indivisible integrity of the country, the unitary, and secular character of the state (Aydın and Keyman 2004, p. 19; Kubicek 2002, p. 4).

All these developments and problems of the late 1990s and the early 2000s shook Turkish democracy and political and administrative system and paved the way for the JDP governments and reforms. The new JDP government, established at the end of 2002, declared itself as a reform government and explicitly stated its will in realizing comprehensive reforms. The strong one party JDP governments launched a new wave of democratization, deregulation, liberalization, and decentralization, contributed to the enhancement of democratic governance, the protection of individual rights and freedoms, the enhancement of public service delivery, and the marketization and globalization of the economy started during the previous coalition government. These reform attempts were justified on the base of an obvious need for economic recovery, political stability, democratic governance, active, efficient, decentralized and flexible public administration to facilitate economic development in accordance with the EU norms (Aydın and Keyman 2004, pp. 16–17). The increased global standards and Turkey–EU relations seem to have triggered the transformation and to provide an anchor for the JDP governments to proceed with the reform efforts. It is particularly worth mentioning, as Aydın and Keyman (2004) state, that the accession process to the EU has functioned as the most important driving and guiding force for the reforms. In addition, it was argued that the centralist state structure, military influence over democratically elected governments, and the tutelary powers of the center over the local administrations had gone beyond the legal limits. Thus, there was a clear need for political, economic, and administrative reforms to improve flawed democracy, to establish fair competition and consumer rights, to eradicate chronic inflation and public sector deficits, to remedy the extreme centralization and bureaucratization of state and administration structure, to prevent delays, complexities, rigidities, and excessive red-tape in service delivery, to enhance service quality, and to meet people's expectations (Çelenk 2009, p. 50; Öniş 2004, p. 114; Sezer 2002).

The recent wave of the reforms and changes were also necessitated by such domestic causes as population growth, huge waves of migration to urban areas, increased and diversified citizen demands, absolute and rigid administrative structure procedures and regulations, among others. Other group of important triggering factors in the processes of reform and change has been global dynamics and developments such as globalization, the relations with IMF, WB, OECD and UN, the fall of Soviet Block, proliferation of neo-liberal capitalist market ideology, weakening nation states, revolutionary changes in ICT technologies, among others (Al 2002;

Cılga 2004; Çelenk 2009, p. 41; Farazmand 1994; Gül 1998, 2005; Kettle 2000; OECD and EU 2007; Ökmen 2005). These factors all have forced many national political and administrative systems as well as the Turkish system to take necessary steps and precautions to adapt to these changes and meet international standards. Accordingly, a general tendency towards democracy, the protection of human rights through international mechanisms, the NPM, governance, e-government, decentralization, privatization and marketization of public services have developed and have been widely put into practice (Aksoy 2004, pp. 38–40; Bozlağan 2003; Dunleavy and Hood 1994; Gül and Özgür 2004; Ömürgönülşen 2003; Özer 2005; Sallan Gül 1999, p. 70; Sözen 2012; Yıldız 2003).

The undemocratic structure of the 1982 Constitution, written under military rule, has been one of the most important reasons for political reforms. This is because, as argued by the chief commanders of the 1980 intervention, the main concern of the Constitution is to protect the state, the nation, and the unity against misbehaviors and fragmenting forces. In order to achieve those goals, the military was given important prerogatives in the political system. Compared to the state of human rights and freedoms in the 1961 Constitution the approach of the original version of the 1982 Constitution was very restrictive. For instance, according to the Article 13 of the Constitution, the restriction of human rights and freedoms could be based on such vague notions as the protection of “public interest,” “public morals,” and “the unity of the country and state” (Tanör 1997, p. 105). Besides, the constitution had additional restriction measures under each article of the Constitution regulating basic rights and freedoms. Therefore there has emerged a need for amendments in the Constitution or for many people a need for a new constitution regarding the protection of human rights.

Other group of reasons for the latest reform wave was related to a lack of participation in public policy making processes of those who “may be affected” by these policies and the inadequacy of transparency, accountability, and dissemination of information with the public or interested parties. Within the structure created by the 1982 Constitution, the notion of participation has been restricted to elections and election campaigns. Hence, membership in NGOs and participation in public policy making processes continue to be very low in Turkey. It is also the same with women’s participation in general and specifically female representation in policy making bodies and managerial positions against the fact that women got their suffrage rights in the early 1930s. Moreover, the civil society has never been as strong in Turkey as they are in developed western countries to influence governments. Furthermore, the established system of auditing was not effective because it was largely based on legal compliance. Tools to hold administration accountable were exclusively confined to compliance with the laws and regulations and legal accountability is maintained by the system of judicial review. Every citizen has the right to appeal to administrative courts against the actions of the public administration. Yet, it did not allow for true transparency because performance based accountability and the principles of good governance were not implemented and the results of auditing functions were not disclosed to the public.

Religious and ethnic revival as a result of global developments as well as population growth and urbanization have also contributed to the revival of ethnicity

and religious issues (Kepel 1994) that has had important impact on the recent reform efforts and diversified citizen demands. Besides, democratization has increased individual freedoms, created a permissive environment for the religious and ethnic groups and Islamic charities to thrive and feed religiousness and ethnicity in the world as well as in Turkey (Huntington 2008, p. 212; Yavuz 2005, p. 16). It should however be mentioned that it was the 1980 military coup that started the revival of religious sentiments and triggered Kurdish separatism. The military regime made religion courses with a Turkish Sunni version compulsory for the secondary and high school students as a precaution to prevent any leanings towards Communism and to strengthen the national unity. Besides, the number of religious secondary and high schools has steadily increased after 1980. Due to these developments, conservatism and religious sentiments grew. Interestingly, the developments towards marketization and commercialization in the same period seem to have feed increased conservatism and religious sentiments in a hope to keep the society and families intact. All these developments have also influenced the Turkish politics and, in turn, the political parties with Islamist and conservative references have enhanced their societal base (Fuller 2008, p. 101).

Main Aspects of Changes Towards Democratic Governance in Turkey

The most important aspect of the recent political reforms involves changes in some laws and the amendments to the 1982 Constitution. “There is little doubt that the original text of the 1982 Constitution contained severe defects, which rendered it hardly compatible with universal democratic norms” (Özbudun 2007, p. 195). The 1982 Constitution has been amended 17 times, especially since 1999 fairly radically. The general directions of these amendments were to improve the protection of fundamental rights, to enhance democracy, to bolster the rule of law, to limit the military’s influence on the political system and to diminish the intervention of the governments in the judiciary and the market. A constitutional reference was made to privatization for the first time, in Article 47, by the amendment of August 13, 1999, thereby removing some of the legal obstacles before privatization. The constitutional amendments of 2001 and 2004 enhanced human rights, the rule of law, gender equality; included provisions for the prevention of torture and ill-treatments and for the abolishment of death penalty; and curbed the influence of the military on the politics (Özbudun 2007, p. 195). Besides, international agreements on human rights signed by Turkey are placed above the domestic laws. If a conflict emerges between the laws and such international agreements, priority shall be given to the international agreements not to the national laws. Moreover, Turkey signed some international agreements banning death penalty and made necessary amendments in the Penal Code accordingly (Sokullu-Akıncı 2011, pp. 155–156).

The 1995, 2005, and 2010 constitutional amendments extensively dealt with political parties and increased liberties for the political parties and its members.

Özbudun (2007, pp. 180–192) states that the 1995 constitutional amendments brought about improvements in the status of associations, trade unions, public professional organizations and cooperatives, and abolished the ban on the political activities of such organizations. In general, the most radical and comprehensive constitutional amendments were those of 2001 and 2010, which involved changes to more than 30 articles in the 1982 Constitution in each case mostly about human rights. These changes included reducing custody time, further protecting private life, abrogating very general reasons mentioned in the 13th article of the Constitution designed for the restriction of human rights by laws, making the closure of political parties difficult, clarifying the decisions of the NSC to be advisory; and increasing the number of civilian members in the NSC.

There are distinct ethnic groups such as Kurds, Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, Jews, Laz, and Abkhazians, making Turkey a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country. Internationally recognized minority groups involve Armenians, Greeks, and Jews. Kurds are largest non-Turkic ethnicity, concentrated mainly in the Southeastern provinces of the country, and makes up around 15–18 % of the total population. Other ethnic groups besides the Kurds constitute an estimated 10 % of the population. Yet, these groups are not considered as minority but equal citizens of the Republic of Turkey.

Kurdish problem in the form of suppressed cultural rights and freedoms along with armed confrontations in the Southeastern Region of Turkey, where many Kurds live, has become a major issue after the mid-1980s and intensified in the 1990s. During the 1990s, the military raised its discomfort with the polarization in the politics, the sluggish performance of the Parliament, and over-emphasis on the democratic, cultural, and ethnic rights of the Kurdish people (Saybaşılı 1995, p. 75). The military along with many politicians and bureaucrats considered the demands for the recognition of the Kurdish identity as threats to the territorial integrity of the state and the unity of the nation. Accordingly, some measures, mostly military, were taken to fight against the problem. Besides, Kurdish identity had been neglected and even denied until the early 1990s. According to the official rhetoric, Ergil (2001, p. 171) argues, there was the problem of terror but not an ethnic Kurdish problem, and in turn such an approach has contributed to the strengthening of the Kurdish Communist Party (KCP-Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan in Kurdish and Kürdistan İşçi Partisi in Turkish). Although the Kurdish language had been banned by the administrative decrees since the late 1930s, the use of the language in public was prohibited after the early 1980s. However, as Aydın and Keyman (2004, pp. 34–35) state, these policies led to serious human rights abuses, a significant degree of mistrust between the state and the people in the region and mass migration to the cities nearby and in Western Turkey.

Overall, triggered by the emergence of EU conditionality there has been significant progress accomplished regarding the Kurdish issue in recent years. Aydın and Keyman (2004, p. 35) state that the October 2001 amendments to the 1982 Constitution removed the restrictions on the use of Kurdish language and on the broadcasting in local languages and dialects as long as such broadcasts were not against the main principles of the Turkish Republic and the unity of the state. The Civil Registry Law was amended in July 2003 to permit parents to name their

children in Kurdish. More importantly, in April 2010 the TBMM voted for a law permitting political campaigning in languages other than Turkish. The reform packages in 2003 became widely famous for lifting Article 8 of the Anti-Terror Law (thus further expanding the freedom of speech), putting the extension of broadcasting rights in Kurdish and the freedom of the press into effect, strengthening the fight against torture, easing the procedures for establishing associations, and making the retrial of cases on the basis of the decisions taken by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) possible. Moreover, a number of restrictions on the freedom of expression have been abolished to meet the standards of the European Convention of Human Rights (Aydın and Keyman 2004, p. 27).

However, it is not enough discussing the religious identity problems of Sunni dominant groups or Kurdish people in Turkey. There have been attempts to extend the cultural rights to the Alevi people and gypsies as well. As a religious community with a major identity and recognition problem, Alevis have raised their voice against the preference of a legal Turk—Sunni Islam synthesis of the post-1980s and mandatory religion courses in which a Turk—Sunni version of Islam is taught (Van Bruinessen 2009, p. 122). These mandatory courses were made optional in 2012 but due to neighborhood oppression and a lack of teachers for other elective courses many do not have a real option other than choosing whatever course is offered for them. Thus, there does not seem that much progress has been achieved in this respect. The main reason for this is that participation of and national dialogues with all different ethnic groups have been limited in this process. Besides, indirect restrictions on the political participation and representation of different ethnic groups in politics, such as the 10 % national threshold, worsen the conditions by causing unfair representation and in turn trust and legitimacy problems (Aydın and Keyman 2004, p. 39). Similarly, undemocratic party system and party leaderships, limitations and oppression on the effective use of freedom of the press and expression, and labor rights all deteriorate the existing problems.

Increased Control of Civil Government over Military

Even though Turkey has a parliamentary representative democracy, the military has had an influential position in the political system (Bilgiç 2009, p. 803; Hale 1996, p. 256). The roots of the influence of the armed forces on the political system could be traced back to the role of the military elite in both the modernization of the Ottomans and the formation of the Turkish Republic in the early 1920s (Hale 1996, p. 256). It may be because such a role was taken in modernization, the armed forces have a self-perception of the guardian role of the state and of its founding principles such as national unity and secularism (Dağı 1996, p. 124; Narlı 2000, pp. 108–109). However, the 1980 military intervention had far reaching aims and “tried to change the political attitude of people and to de-politicize the whole society in an attempt to prevent in future the political and ideological fragmentation and polarization which had characterized pre-coup Turkey” (Dağı 1996, p. 125). The NSC as the

main body of the coup with General Evren as the leader who overthrew the government forbid all political activities, suspended newspapers and publications, banned many books and collected them, abolished political parties and prohibited the main politicians from involvement in active politics, and put them under custody (Schulman 2007, p. 15).

The constitutions and some other legal regulations have contributed to the armed forces' considering themselves as the guardian of the state and its principles. The major source of the influence of the military has been through the NSC. Karpat (2010, p. 246) argues that the influence was increased and institutionalized after the 1960 intervention by the establishment of the NSC. By the NSC the military has had a decisive role on the internal and external security issues as well as on some foreign policy matters. Özbudun (2007, p. 193) states that the status and powers of the NSC were strengthened by the amendments in 1971 and particularly by the 1982 Constitution because "the wording of the 1982 Constitution no doubt strengthened the morally binding character of NSC decisions."

However, Flam (2004, pp. 174–175) states that such an influential role of the military on the political system is not consistent with the principles of modern democracy and has constituted one of the main obstacles in Turkey's accession to the EU (Cizre 2004, p. 107; Narlı 2000, p. 107). In fact, the preconditions of the EU for membership in the Turkish case are the realization of government's control over the military and the consolidation of the democracy (Bilgiç 2009, p. 803). Accordingly, since the Helsinki Summit of 1999, there have been efforts to curb the power of the army on the Turkish politics and to meet the Copenhagen political criteria regarding democracy and human rights (Müftüler Baç 2005, p. 18). In 2007 the armed forces tried to intervene in the politics once again, but the JDP was able to avoid this attempt within the Europeanization and globalization context. This attempt has given a way for a new political period which has been started with the 2002 elections. Özbudun (2007, p. 195) argues that "recent constitutional and legislative reforms have eliminated a large part of the privileges and prerogatives granted to the military by the 1982 Constitution." Yet, he maintains that "Further steps towards civilianization and the establishment of full civilian control over the military seem to depend on the overall consolidation of democracy and the successful completion of accession negotiations with the European Union" (Özbudun 2007, p. 195). After the 2010 amendments to the 1982 Constitution, the chief officers of the 1982 intervention are now being prosecuted. It could be argued that this has further contributed to the reduction of the role of the armed forces in the Turkish politics.

Enhancement of Legal System and the Rule of Law

The power, structure, and independence of the judicial system are crucial for the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law, and human rights and freedoms. One of the significant changes made in the judicial system was the abolition of the State Security Courts (SSCs) in 2004 after soldier members of the SSCs, established to

protect the state and the unity of the nation, were replaced with civilian courts in 1999. Another change involves banning the power of military courts to try civilians (including juveniles) (Aydın and Keyman 2004, p. 40). Besides, the rights of the detained persons were improved, custody periods were reduced to 24 h (extendable to a maximum of 4 days upon the written order of the public prosecutor in the case of collective offenses), and the conditions of detention in law enforcement and interrogation facilities have been enhanced (Aydın and Keyman 2004, p. 23). Moreover, a very recent change in the Criminal Code is that special-authority courts are abolished and their authority is transferred to the heavy penal courts, which are authorized to try only cases involving organized crime and terrorism. Finally, another judicial package just passed at the beginning of 2013 provides freedom to defend oneself before the courts with a language other than official language; and the State Council has just decided that the attorneys have freedom to be present in court rooms with their head-scarves to defend their clients.

However, there are some changes that are difficult to see as improvements in the judicial system. One of them is the requirement for the administrative courts to make their rulings on stopping execution by the administration after getting the defense of administration. This, it can be argued, would delay the protection of the rights and freedoms of people and even harm them if acts and actions of administration are against the laws. Another revision is related to the prison sentence of the people who have breached the law allegedly on behalf of an outlawed organization even if it cannot be precisely proved that they are not a member of the organization. Such an article creates a potential for misuses.

The 2010 amendments to the 1982 Constitution provide the government to appoint several members in the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court of Appeals, and the State Council. Besides, the 2010 amendments establish an ombudsman system in order to provide confidential and impartial assistance in mediating and resolving complaints and disputes between individuals and the public administration. However, recent changes increase the power of the government to oversee and influence the judicial system that is supposed to function in accordance with the principles of the independence of the courts and the security of tenure of judges (Article 159 of the 1982 Constitution). For example, despite its overall contribution to improve democratic characteristics of the political system in Turkey, the new changes allow the Ministry of Justice to sit as the president in the Supreme Council of Judges and Public Prosecutors (SCJP), a body with administrative, auditing, and disciplinary power over judges and public prosecutors after they are appointed. Another significant change involves the election of 10 of the 20 members of the SCJP by judges and prosecutors. Yet, the effects of the Ministry of Justice on the election process are criticized. Therefore, it is difficult to consider these changes as a progress in the rule of law because the influence of the government over the SCJP and judicial system in general continues.

A last, but not the least, change is that the issues regarding human rights can be brought to the Constitutional Court before pleading the case to the ECHR. The success of this amendment, it could be argued, will depend on the decisions of the Constitutional Court. If the Court strictly follows the decisions of the ECHR, the

amendment could be an improvement. Otherwise, this amendment would function to delay pleading to the ECHR. In July 2012 a revision of some articles of the laws regarding judicial process, known as the third judicial package, was passed. The revision included provisions in accordance with the sixth article of the ECHR that anyone has the right to be judged by independent and impartial courts and to ask for carrying his/her trial out in a “reasonable period of time.” In recent years, the excessive workload of the judiciary and a very slow process of trials cause the breach of the right to be judged within a reasonable period of time and fulfillment of duty of the state to trial in a reasonable period of time. For this reason, the ECHR decided that Turkey had to pay compensation in such cases.

Realignment of the State and Market Relations

During the 2000–2001 economic and financial crises, some amendments to the 1982 Constitution were passed enabling privatization and economic liberalization for the successful implementation of the structural adjustment program. The structural adjustment program and new reforms have been strictly followed and implemented by the JDP governments after 2002. These amendments gave autonomy to the organizations such as the Central Bank of Turkey and the Council of Capital Markets. Accordingly, the elimination of public monopoly in some public services, the establishment of unemployment insurance, enhanced financial transparency, and tightened control on budget expenditures in the public sector were put into effect. Especially, the establishment of autonomous regulatory bodies, such as the Banking Regulation and Supervising Agency, the Competition Authority, and the Privatization Authority, was a significant step towards regulating and administering rationally and effectively the related markets. It helped develop properly functioning markets without being influenced by the political developments and being interfered excessively by the governments (SPO 2003, p. 71). Besides, the Competition Authority has been working with increasing effectiveness to eliminate unfair competition in the market. Moreover, the new Penal Code was also amended to provide for the prevention of unfair competition. Furthermore, the right for civil servants to establish trade unions and right to collective bargaining without a right to strike has been introduced to public administration system in Turkey in 2001. In contrast to civil servants, public workers had enjoyed wider labor rights such as right to strike and right to be a member of a political party until the 1980s. Yet, labor unions have lost their power since the 1980s and a great majority of their members due mainly to neo-liberal policies and changes in economic structure and globalization.

Another aspect of unfair competition in the market is related to the protection of consumers and the pervasiveness of the informal market. A lack of properly functioning consumer protection system and regular market mechanisms resulted in unfair competition in the market, inefficiencies, and the violations of the basic rights. To solve such problems, a Consumer Protection Law was enacted in 2004 by the Parliament, establishing a sufficient mechanism and penalties to protect

consumers and help to create a fair and competitive economic environment. Another change regarding the market involved leaving the disagreements on international public service deals out of the duty of the public courts. Besides, in order to overcome inadequate transparency and accountability in public administration, and to ensure competition and fairness at public tenders, the Public Tender Authority was established as a public legal entity, which is administratively and financially autonomous. Moreover, the 2004 Public Procurement and the Right to Information Acts made it compulsory to provide access to the information about all administrative decisions and actions upon request. Especially, the Right to Information Act may contribute to the responsiveness of the public administration. Similarly, the sessions of the Turkish Grand National Assembly are now broadcasted live by the Turkish Radio and Television. These reforms have helped Turkey make tremendous progress towards developing a good governance structure and becoming a more market oriented and competitive economy, integrated with the world economy.

General Administrative Reforms

The JDP governments have continued the wave of reforms launched by the coalition governments at the end of the 1990s and during the early 2000s with an increasing momentum. In addition to its government program, the first JDP government announced an urgent action plan providing the ground for the reforms. The reform package included the goals of restructuring public administration, simplifying bureaucracy, meeting diversified needs and demands of the society and economy, reducing public deficits, accelerating the decision making process, shrinking the role of the state, and increasing the use of market mechanisms.

The most radical attempt to reform the state and public administration was the 2003 Public Administration Reform Draft Law. The overall goals of the draft law were to restructure relations between central government and local administrations and to realign the functions and the size of the public administration according to the principles of the NPM. For example, the draft law included provisions for the empowerment of the market and civil society and for a public management system built upon good governance principles such as transparency, accountability, participation, responsiveness, human rights, and individual freedoms, etc. (Gül 2005). Besides, the draft law was to restrict the authority of the central government and to limit its services to such areas as justice, national defense, domestic security, foreign policy, fiscal and economic policy, national education, social security, coordination among public organizations and agencies, and the preparation of plans at the national level. Some of the central administration's responsibilities for such public services as health, local, and regional economic development, environmental protection, the preservation of cultural and historical heritage, social assistance, welfare and social services were to be transferred to the regional and local administrations. Accordingly, the roles and functions of the ministries and public agencies in the central government were to be limited to policymaking, monitoring, and

supervisory functions whereas the delivery of basic local services was to be left to the local administrations. Thus, the central government no longer would have had the authority to assume duties which explicitly left to the local administrations. In fact, the local administrations were granted a general competence to decide or take action on any local issues or to meet any local needs. Besides, public services at all levels were allowed to be provided in accordance with the market principles and mechanism with consumer-orientation, efficiency, and competitiveness (Gül 2005). However, this draft law failed in the Parliament.

Despite the failure of the Government to pass the draft reform bill, the Prime Minister Erdoğan insisted on putting the main principles of the draft reform law into practice. As a first step to achieve this goal, some government agencies such as the General Directorate of Rural Services and the local branches of several ministries were abolished and their responsibilities were transferred to local administrations. Besides, several specific laws were enacted including the Act on Public Financial Management and Control, the State Auction Act, the Act on Ethics in Public Administration, the acts on regional and local administrations, and acts on social security. The Act on Public Financial Management and Control is a good example of Turkey's accelerated efforts towards harmonizing its public internal financial control system with the EU and international standards, increasing transparency and accountability in public financial management, enhancing the efficiency of auditing and fiscal control systems. The Law is also expected to help reduce the public debt and expenditures. Similarly, the State Auction Act helps to fight corruption and aims at transparency, competition, and accountability in the process of public auctions. The reform laws on social security are an attempt to reduce the deficits of social security institutions and to create new sources (see also Sallan Gül and Gül 2006). The social security reform, especially Health Transformation Program, liberalizes social security and health sectors, and opens them to the market and competition.

The essence of the other reform laws involves devolving some responsibilities and resources of the central government to local and regional administrations, give them a general authority to meet all the common needs of local citizens, privatizing or making it easier to use market mechanisms and providers in the delivery of public services, and to hire temporary and part-time personnel on contract. In other words, the reform laws both aim to shrink the role of the central government in the administrative system and of the state in the economy and society by dispersing its powers downward to the local and regional governments, the NGO's, and the market.

Turkey has continuously faced major problems in establishing and implementing a system of objective public recruitment and employment. This resulted in the appointment of people who are not qualified, but close to the political party in power. Besides, training has been a headache in the public administration system. Despite introducing a general entrance exam for public employees, Turkey has failed to establish an impartial and sound system for promotion in civil service. A lack of training seems to be one of the factors that prevent efficiency and effectiveness in the civil service. Recently, training has become compulsory for promotion for public employees of local governments. Wider use of objective criteria is a new practice

whereby staff promotions are made only after the candidates attend certain in-service training courses and pass subsequent examinations. These examples of recruiting and promoting staff on the basis of merit could be considered as concrete steps towards good governance. In addition, Turkey has spent enormous efforts to reach the level of European e-government systems in the recent years. Under the 2003 Urgent Action Plan, a comprehensive strategy for establishing an e-government system which fully complies with the EU standards was set up and e-Transformation Turkey Project was adopted to coordinate information society activities, carried out under different topics by different institutions. Through this method, people are provided with the opportunity to obtain some services online such as the payment of taxes and the application for and obtainment of passports or registrations. Similarly, the Prime Ministry and Ministry of Interior also launched a local net project with the purpose of providing a complete source of data and information related to local administrations, and increasing accessibility to local government services. All above mentioned reforms define new parameters for the public governance in Turkey signaling an important change and transformation in the traditional administrative structure and culture.

Local and Regional Administration Reforms

The changes regarding local administrations started in the 1980s, which empowered local administrations financially and increased their capability of generating some of their own resources and of implementing their projects in accordance with the principles, standards, and national and regional plans defined by the central administration (Canan 2004; Gül and Özgür 2004; Gül 2005; Gül and Memişoğlu 2007). A new reform of local and regional administrations started after the inauguration of the JDP government at the end of 2002 and the reform laws except for the one on the village administrations have been enacted by the Parliament since 2004. These laws regulate municipalities, metropolitan municipalities, special provincial administrations (the SPA), local administration service unions, and the RDAs. As a traditional and spontaneously formed local government type, villages managed according to the Village Act of 1924 (numbered 442) have been out of the reform waves so far but is also in the process of amendment by the current government. With the 2012 act numbered 6360, all the village administrations in the 30 provinces with province-wide metropolitan municipal administrations were abolished and turned into the neighborhoods of the district municipalities in whose limits they were located.

The reference law regulating the SPAs was the Act of Provincial Local Administrations first issued as a temporary law in 1913 and amended by the 1987 law. The SPAs have become dysfunctional to a great extent because most of their functions have been given under the responsibility of newly established or existing local and regional branches of central government agencies over the years. The new law numbered 5302 was enacted in 2005. The 2005 act empowers these province-wide

local administrations to some degree by decentralizing several responsibilities of the central government to these local administrations; and increases the autonomy of the SPAs by allowing the provincial general council to select its own chair and to meet more frequently. Yet, some argue that the new law restricts the responsibilities of the SPAs by enumerating them more precisely (Marcou 2006, p. 7). Besides, a governor still is the general administrator of a special provincial administration, represents its public legal personality, and has important formal and informal powers on provincial general council and the affairs of the SPAs. However, their power could be expected to diminish as the reforms are carried on successfully and the local society and politicians absorb the goals and principles of these reforms. The 2012 act numbered 6360 also abolished all the SPAs in the 30 provinces with province-wide metropolitan municipal administrations and transferred their responsibilities mainly to these new local administrations. As villages, the SPAs continue to exist and function in the remaining 51 provinces in Turkey.

Until 2005, municipalities were regulated by the 1930 Act of Municipality numbered 1580. This old act enumerated the duties assigned to the municipalities in 76 items and classified them as compulsory and optional duties (Polatoğlu 2000, pp. 109–110). Yet, due to the inadequacy of their own revenues and the funds transferred from the central government, the municipalities had never been able to even deliver some of their compulsory duties. As a part of the reform wave started after the inauguration of the JDP government in 2002, a new law, the Municipality Act numbered 5393 was enacted in 2005. The new act defines the powers, duties, and responsibilities of the municipalities in general, but do not enumerates them, enhancing their capacity to respond to local demands. Besides, it has provisions enhancing participation, local governance and autonomy.

On the other hand, as a new type of local administration in the most populated urban centers, metropolitan municipalities were established by the 1984 act numbered 3030. These metropolitan municipalities had the responsibility of providing metropolitan wide services overcoming the scale and the capacity of district municipalities, such as utilities, garbage collection, public transportation, social aid, urban planning, road construction and maintenance, among others. The 1984 act established a two-tiered system and district municipalities and town municipalities within the limits of metropolitan municipalities continued to provide some basic local municipal services such as building inspections, health inspections, public parks, kinder gardens, etc.

A new act on metropolitan municipalities (numbered 5216) was passed in 2004. The new act did not change the two-tiered system but included provisions to increase the power, duties, and responsibilities of these municipalities. Another 2008 act on the Formation of New Districts within all the Metropolitan Municipalities numbered 5747 turned all small town municipalities within the limits of metropolitan municipalities into district-based local administration units. As a result all first tier municipalities became the same type and the number of municipalities dropped from 3,225 in 2007 down to 2,964 in 2008 (TurkStat 2012). On the other hand, a 2005 act numbered 5355 on Local Administration Unions provides that the services that could not be provided by municipalities singly and/or by other local administration units, except for metropolitan municipalities, can be delivered by local

administration unions. This new act strengthens cooperation among local administration units on a single service basis.

At the end of 2012, a new law related to metropolitan municipalities numbered 6360 was enacted. The 2012 law establishes 13 new province-wide metropolitan municipalities and turns the previous 16 metropolitan municipalities with authority within only city limits into new province-wide municipalities with authority in the entire limits of the respective provinces. Within a few months, another province was also added to the list. In those 30 provinces, all the special provincial administrations, small town municipalities, and villages are abolished. Thus, there is only a two-tiered metropolitan municipal administration with the district municipalities under the umbrella structure of the metropolitan municipality to serve the entire province. The new law creates a new and powerful mayor model. In this model, the mayor is to represent and manage the whole province, not just the one city or metropolitan area. In this new model, the locally elected mayor seems to be placed in a position to represent the whole province and, thus, may become a much stronger political figure than the governor in a province. Besides, these provincial mayors may even come to compete with the leaders of their political party and they may become strong speakers for the rights of the local ethnic groups such as Kurds and Alevis. Moreover, the new system may lead to the consideration of some of the new province-wide metropolitan municipalities, especially in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolian Regions, as autonomous regional administrations or even state governments of some sort of a federative system. The efforts to change the existing parliamentary system into some sort of a (semi-) presidential system in Turkey may be seen to contribute to these arguments. Furthermore, 30 provinces where the new provincial metropolitan system will be effective are the most developed and urbanized provinces having more than 75 % of the total population in Turkey. So, these provincial metropolitan municipalities will be very critical local entities with important expectations to foster economic development in those provinces. Finally, the new law also has some provisions on the duties of the governors as local agents of the central government regarding the coordination of economic development and distribution of development funds in their provinces.

Turkey had no regional administrations until 2006 because largely of its possible implication for separatism. However, some sort of “regional” agencies apart from the RDAs and regional policies have always existed in Turkey and the regional units have been established as the branches of central government agencies because of some technical and service delivery necessities (i.e., road construction and maintenance, economic development public safety etc.) at the local and regional levels. The ministries or other central government agencies have established hundreds of different administrative “regions” throughout Turkey. Some of them are organized over the entire country whereas some others, over some parts of it. For example, “the state of emergency regional governorship” (OHAL) was established in the Southeastern Anatolian Region as a result of security policies in 1987, but abolished in 2002.

However, there wasn’t any legal definition of regions until the adaptation of NUTS system (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) (levels 1–3) as statistical units in 2002 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2001). The law numbered 5449 was enacted on 25 January 2006, establishing RDAs in the 26 NUTS II regions

throughout Turkey. The RDAs are defined as separate local-regional administration units, but national coordination among the RDAs is to be done by the Ministry of Development. The main objectives of the RDAs are to boost and support local and regional potential for economic development, to organize economic development and related research and education activities, to enhance the cooperation among public, civic and private sectors, and to enable an efficient and suitable utilization of public resources, among others. The members of the decision making bodies of the RDAs include members from the public, private, and civic sectors that could be seen as a clear sign of a governance model. However, there is a hesitation in using the word “regional” in calling or naming the RDAs as a result of the concerns about separatism and centralist heritage, and thus the RDAs are often called as the DAs (development agencies) in Turkey.

An Overall Evaluation of the Governance Reforms

Overall, the recent reforms on local and regional administrations expand the responsibilities and powers of local administrations and clarify the limits of central government’s power and influence over local administrations. The local governments have operated under excessive central supervision of the central government until recently. That is the main reason why they are not called as local governments in Turkey. The local administration reforms have helped decentralize this centralist system and helped pave the way for local governance by establishing some participative decision and policy making processes and mechanisms and by devolving some administrative and financial powers down to the local and regional administrations. For example, the elected bodies of the local administrations are empowered to meet every month and can only be removed or dismissed from the office by a decision of the State Council (functioning as a higher administrative court as well, called “Danıştay” in Turkish). Besides, more opportunities for public and civic organizations to involve in local decision making process are provided. The new municipality laws include provisions for more local participative commissions and a city council as an advisory and participatory entity. NGOs, universities, the chambers of commerce, some public agencies, and professional organizations are to be represented in the advisory city council and local commissions. Overall, a more autonomous, democratic and participatory governance structure is established at the local and regional levels. Thus, changes or new working principles introduced into the local and regional administration system by the reform acts could be considered as a considerable shift from a local administration model to a local governance system.

The reform laws have given an active role in local and regional economic development initiatives to the local and regional administrations and allow them to develop and implement their own projects in accordance with the principles, standards, and national and regional plans defined by the central administration. Besides, the 2008 act numbered 5747 increased the revenues transferred from the central

government budget to the local administrations. Moreover, the reforms have introduced market principles into decision making and service provision processes such as transparency, accountability, participation, responsiveness or customer orientation, entrepreneurship, choice, efficiency, cost-benefit analysis, performance, and competitiveness. In fact, local and regional administrations are also granted the legal authority to provide services by using market mechanisms such as privatization, outsourcing, and contracting-out. Furthermore, the reform laws include requirements of strategic planning and performance based budget preparation at the provincial level by the special provincial administrations, at the city level by municipalities and, development plans at the regional level by the RDAs.

Conclusion: General Evaluation, Policy Implications, and Future Prospects

As presented in Table 3, the reforms could be classified under three main areas. These reforms have helped reorganize the powers and functions of the central government and local administrations, and the state and the market. They have in general decentralized and democratized the system to some extent. As a result of these reforms and a strong one party government and political stability since 2002, Turkey has achieved a steady and high economic development and a significant shrinkage in public deficits. Besides, she has solved many problems in public service delivery, the protection of human rights and freedoms, undemocratic influence of the military on the political policy making processes, among others. Moreover, these reforms have a potential to enhance the collaborative capacity among localities towards more efficient use of local resources and mobilize local synergy and dynamics for economic development. There has been very strong support for these reforms not only from the economic actors and the elites believing that democracy is necessary for economic stability but also from the ordinary people. The voters, who remember 1990s' politically and socially instable and economically crisis-oriented structure, appreciate this process. Of course, the EU accession process and negotiations have been exploited as an anchor by the governments to achieve these transformations.

However, strong state tradition, centralism, the continuing habits of centralized and local bureaucracy, a lack or low levels of civic democratic culture and participation by the NGOs and the public, relatively weak democratic structure of political parties, continuing dominance of the center over the local and region, among others, seem to have limited the success of the reforms, especially at the stage of implementation. Similarly, some reform attempts (such as recognition of the cultural rights of Kurds, decentralization, the establishment of the RDAs or new province-wide municipalities, among others) have been considered as harmful to the unitary form of state and notion of one nation and steps towards separatism or a form of federalism. For example, 30 newly created province-wide municipal administrations, as some argue, may be considered to create the risk of producing new small states at

Table 3 Contents and consequences of the recent reforms in Turkey

Reform area	Consequences of reforms
<i>Administrative streamlining and decentralization</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Deconcentration – Decentralization – Enhancing bureaucracy – Governance reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More power to subordinates and local branches of the central government within the hierarchical structure of the administration – More power and resources to local and regional administrations – Simplifications in bureaucracy – Reduced red-tape and e-government – Increased efficiency, effectiveness, speed, accessibility, and quality in the delivery of public services – Enhancement of transparency and accountability of the public administration to the public and civil society – Enhancement of local participatory mechanisms (advisory city council, ...)
<i>Political reforms and governance</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Amendments to the 1982 Constitution – Redesign of the relations between the state and society – Governance reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increased individual freedoms and rights – Increased recognition of diversity – Establishment of civilian authority over the military – Empowerment of civil society – Increased participation and involvement of the NGOs in the process of public policy making particularly in such fields as social assistance, negotiations with the EU, gender equality, human rights, etc. – Enhancement of transparency and accountability of the government to the public and the private and civil sectors – Ombudsman to resolve the conflict between the people and the public administration
<i>Economic decentralization</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Redesign of the relations between the state and market – Empowerment of the market – Introducing market mechanisms into the public sector – Governance reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Privatization of state monopolies – Opening up of some sectors predominantly occupied by state enterprises to private sector – Deregulation – Commercialization and marketization of public services – Shrinking the size of the state and limiting its intervention in the market – Increased competition and performance evaluation in the public sector – Transparency and accountability in public auctions – Establishment of the autonomous regulatory bodies to administer some of the commodity markets

the local level and to fuel nepotism and political patronage. However, this is ironic if one considers the fact that France, whose administrative system was adopted by the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, has reformed its administrative structure, adopted decentralization as a constitutional principle and introduced administrative units at the regional level to coordinate public investments and economic development efforts since the 1980s.

There still seems to be a lack of will in the central government to devolve especially financial powers down to local and regional administrations and civic organizations (such as unions, social help organizations etc.). The remnants of the strong statist and centralist tradition and concerns both about neutral, objective, and effective use of

resources at the local and regional levels and by civic organizations play a role in this unwillingness. Besides, the reform efforts so far do not seem to lessen financial burdens of many small to large local administrations or to strengthen their administrative capacity to handle the devolved duties and responsibilities. One could argue that the view of the central government as the “nanny-state” may be a factor for the above mentioned shortcomings of the reforms. Moreover, the understanding of the “nanny-state” seems to be transformed into mini “nanny-states” at the provincial level. This is because of the continuing high expectations of the people from the public sector and the high desires of the public officers, especially the field agents of the central government, to continue being strong agents at the local and regional levels. Of course, the inadequate levels or lack of participation habits among the local people to come together and cooperate for a common cause also worsen these problems.

Thus, transforming mentalities and thoughts and focusing on successful implementation require that the statist, centralist, and hierarchical structures and practices have been changed into a governance structure formed by the recognition of interdependency and power of each actor in the process and by participation of and negotiations among related actors and groups. Thus, future reform efforts should be focused on the creation and implementation of real and functional participatory and democratic governance processes and mechanisms at the national level as well as local and regional levels. Democratic governance requires fostering participatory public policy making processes and a culture of initiative taking and participation among local people. With regard to democratization, Turkey may have to expand the linguistic and cultural rights of the groups such as the Kurds and Alevis, and to lift restrictions on expressions of cultural identity and on cultural practices. For this purpose, Turkey could be expected to find a way to undertake a gradual shift from its traditional interpretation of the Turkish nation to a redefined notion of political community, which requires a more inclusive concept of citizenship and the recognition of cultural and ethnic pluralism in the country. However, a very large proportion of the population still fears for the partition of the country.

The JDP governments have been carrying out the transformation process without any major disruptions so far. Yet, there seems to be a slow-down in the speed of and a change in the contents of these reforms within the last a few years. The way the reforms are implemented has become more centralized, top-to-bottom and less participatory and democratic. Besides, there are continuing abuses of basic human rights and freedoms, such as continuing incidences of torture, pressures on the freedom of the press, expression and unionization, and unfulfilled cultural rights of the Alevis and Kurds. Turkey had been ranked 1st in the appeals to the ECHR for many years, a great majority of whose were judgments against Turkey for human rights violations, particularly the right to life and freedom from torture. Turkey’s human rights record continues to look troublesome since it ranks the second after Russia in the number of appeals to the Court in 2012 and a high number of journalists in jail.

Another major problem is related to a majoritarian, rather than pluralistic, understanding of democracy. The government has become more concerned with the Islamization of educational, cultural, and social life; and in turn with deciding what

is right and wrong for people. For example, the prime minister has declared that one of its goals is to educate a new generation according to Sunni Islamist values and has made changes in the curricula of the national education system accordingly. Therefore, there is an increase in the number of people who fear that the method through which Turkey's democratization is handled may lead to an authoritarian political environment and even system if a very strong one man model of presidential system replaces more pluralistic and balanced system of parliamentary democracy (Kamalak 2013). Ortaylı (2012, pp. 187–188) argues that the process of Islamization is prone to increase the tensions between secular and Islamist groups in several areas of social, cultural, political, economic, and everyday life. In this regard, the JDP is presented as the representative of the periphery and of the religious groups that oppose the centralist strong state, the system, and the center. Moreover, there are others who are concerned that the emphasis on ethnic and religious aspects may result in a resurgence of more extreme manifestations of religious primacy in social affairs and separatist movements. That, so far at least, has not happened. In fact, as Brzezinski (2012, p. 135) and Yavuz (2005, p. 27) argue that a more robust Turkish democracy accompanied by sustainable economic growth would gradually reduce the appeal of religious fundamentalism and ethnic separatism and help prevent the radicalization of the Islamist or separatist groups. However, considering the recent rhetoric and policy implementations of the JDP government and the efforts of the government to influence the judicial system, there is a clear tendency towards authoritarianism, and thus, an apparent need for upgrading Turkish democracy into a more developed, pluralistic, and participatory democracy, for establishing the rule of law more strongly and for providing better protection for basic human rights and freedoms.

Regarding the future prospects, public opinion survey carried out in Turkey reveals that the JDP without Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's leadership would lose an important part of its voter base. As Mr. Erdoğan declared, he limits himself with three terms of deputyship and thus this legislation period is going to be his last deputyship. In fact, Mr. Erdoğan has decided to run for the presidency as the candidate of the JDP in the presidential elections in August of 2014. Because of these reasons, the issue of changing the parliamentary governmental system of Turkey to a presidential one has been raised and discussed publicly. A 2012 law establishing a new model of metropolitan municipality with authority over the whole area of a province and an elected mayor that is to manage the whole province, not just a city, should also be seen as an indication of the desire for some sort of a presidential or semi-presidential system and more freedom for regional or local administrations. The new system is to be effective in 30 provinces that are the most developed and urbanized provinces with more than 75 % of the total population in Turkey. What makes Mr. Erdoğan get excited about the new system is not only the fact that he will most probably get elected as a strong president but also he will have the opportunity to determine the candidates for the mayors of the 30 new provincial metropolitan municipalities since the general local elections is going to take place

when he is still the leader of the JDP and the prime minister. It could be argued that Mr. Erdoğan believe the new (semi-)presidential system, if adopted, would allow him to be able to lead the country and economic growth even if a new strong one-party government is not established after the next national elections.

This tendency could be taken as an indication of a strong preference of the Erdoğan Government for economic development over the enhancement of democracy and human rights. In fact, this has been a trend during the history of the republic especially during the strong one-party governments with a strong leader, including the governments by Adnan Menderes in the 1950s, by Süleyman Demirel during the second half of the 1960s, by Turgut Özal during the 1980s, and now by R. Tayyip Erdoğan since 2002. Of course, other political leaders, especially Bülent Ecevit and Necmettin Erbakan, also emphasized economic development during their governments. As for the last Erdoğan government, there are reasons, as mentioned above, to assert that such a tendency has become much stronger since economic development and stability seem to have become the first priority compared to the enhancement of democracy and human rights. In short, this tendency seems to have led to “a dilemma of the ruling party” during strong one-party governments with a strong leader since there is only the JDP as a hegemonic one-party in the system without any considerable opposition from other parties and any considerable chance of their becoming an alternative to the JDP. The JDP or other strong ruling one-parties tap on economic development and stability programs to win and maintain the support of the electorate. And, the weakness of the opposition parties seems to contribute to this outcome. Öniş (2006, p. 131) makes similar observations by saying that “The AKP (JDP), as a new force benefiting from the lack of a powerful rival, capitalized on the situation and presented itself to the electorate as a progressive force that could bring benefits from the positive aspects of economic globalism and the free market; and that could reform the state in the direction of a post-developmental regulatory model.”

Despite several reforms and improvements, it is still imperative for Turkey to aim for further improvements in democracy, human rights and freedoms, the rule of law, the judicial system, women’s position and gender equality, civil society, participation and self initiative taking at the local level, political party and election systems, and the media. The consolidation of the democracy in Turkey would be possible by further improvement on these issues and the preparation of a new constitution presents a new opportunity to upgrade the Turkish governance system, enhance democracy, human rights, and freedoms. Yet, this need for further reforms and the successful implementation of these reforms and the geopolitical location of Turkey require strong political leadership and political stability, which in turn seems to create a dilemma for Turkish democracy through the dilemma of the hegemony of the ruling party. These aspects of the Turkish political, administrative, social, and economic system will be tested over the period between 2014 and 2016 when Turkey is going to go through local, national, and presidential elections.

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