

Abstract

This thesis aims to answer the question why did Turkish ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) dropped the consistent reform initiative and effort to ensure fulfillment of EU entry criteria after starting accession negotiations in 2005. To answer this question the paper analyses the interest of AKP in EU accession. The causes of interest in the EU are examined firstly and then it is focused on the reasons responsible for the loss of interest. The paper demonstrates that the transformation of interest of the ruling party in EU accession was influenced by the combination of two factors. The first factor was the lack of credibility of the accession negotiations with the EU and the ensuing improbability of membership. The second factor was the consolidation of the AKP political power. With respect to the nature of the AKP original interest in the integration of Turkey into the EU, the thesis concludes that the interest depended on the necessity of the accession process for domestic political purposes of ruling party. Afterwards the party achieved its objective, which was to get rid of opponents and secure their position in the Turkish political system, the AKP had no reason to try to meet all requirements of the European Union, given the unlikely outcome of accession negotiations.