

The kurdish issue and the failure of EU-
Turkey relations
*Case study: HDP situation after July 20,
2015*

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Introduction

- 1987: Turkey applies to join the EU
- 1999: EU offers Turkey clear accession prospects, provided it meets Copenhagen criteria
- 1st criteria: “stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, **human rights and respect for and protection of minorities**“=>The Kurdish issue

Aim and research questions

- Aim: emphasize the importance of the Kurdish issue in the failure of Turkey's European path starting with July 20, 2015, until the end of 2016.
- Research Questions
 1. *What is the attitude of the European Union towards the Kurdish issue on the territory of Turkey?*
 2. *Did the Kurdish situation, play a major in the failure of EU-Turkey relations after July 20, 2015?*

Methodology

1. Case study on the situation of the Peoples' Democratic Party (the main political party supporting the rights of the Kurds), starting with July 20, 2015, until the end of 2016.
2. Text analysis regarding the HDP issue:
 - official EU documents:*
 - >*European Commission Reports*
 - >*European Parliament*
 - speeches of the EU officials*

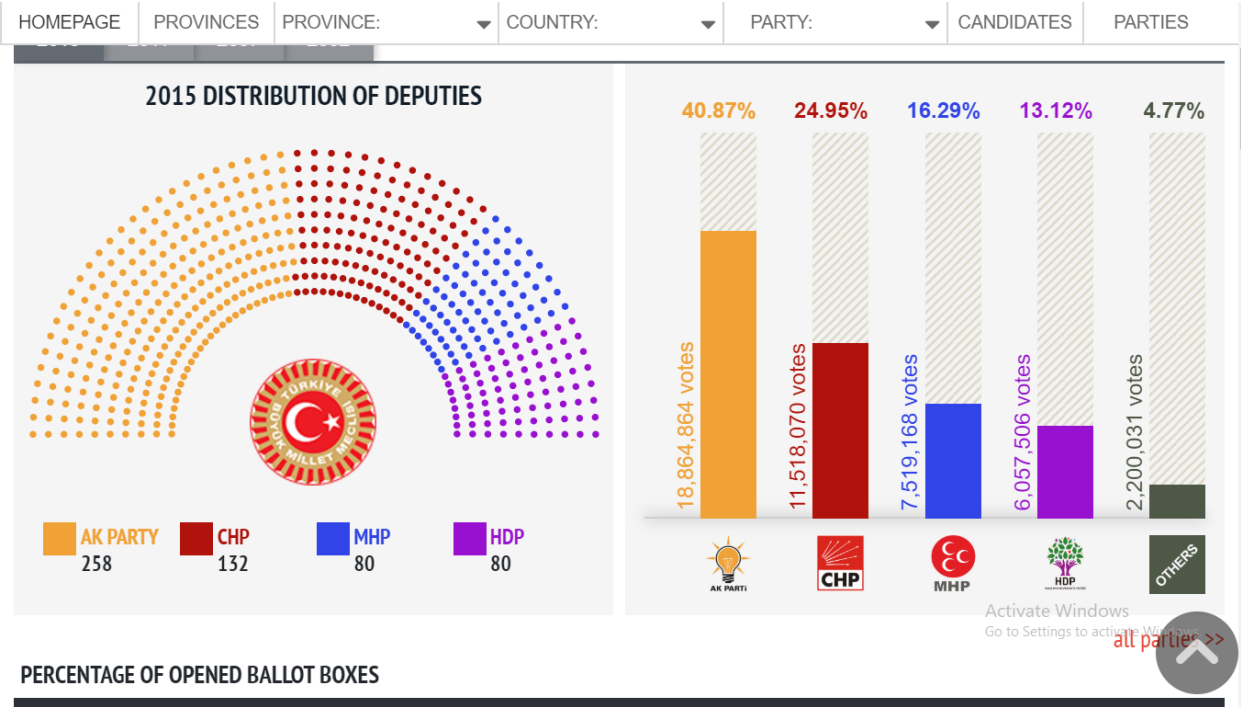
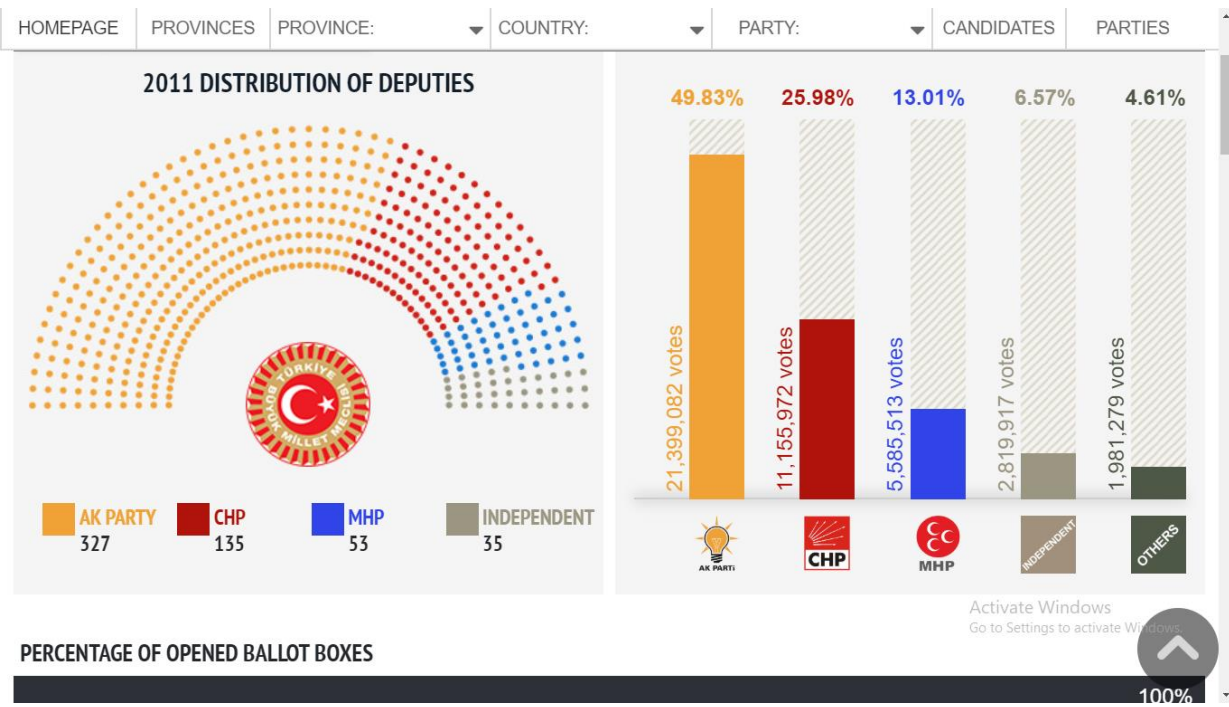
Structure

- The study is structured in three themes, each representing the study objective of a part :
 1. *In the first part, we tried to emphasize how the situation of the Kurdish minority has influenced Turkey 's relations with the European Union since 1987.*
 2. *The second part follows the evolution of the People's Democratic Party from its formation to the parliamentary elections in Turkey in 2015.*
 3. *The last part includes the case study and the text analysis through which we followed the role played by the situation of the Party in the failure of the European integration of Turkey.*

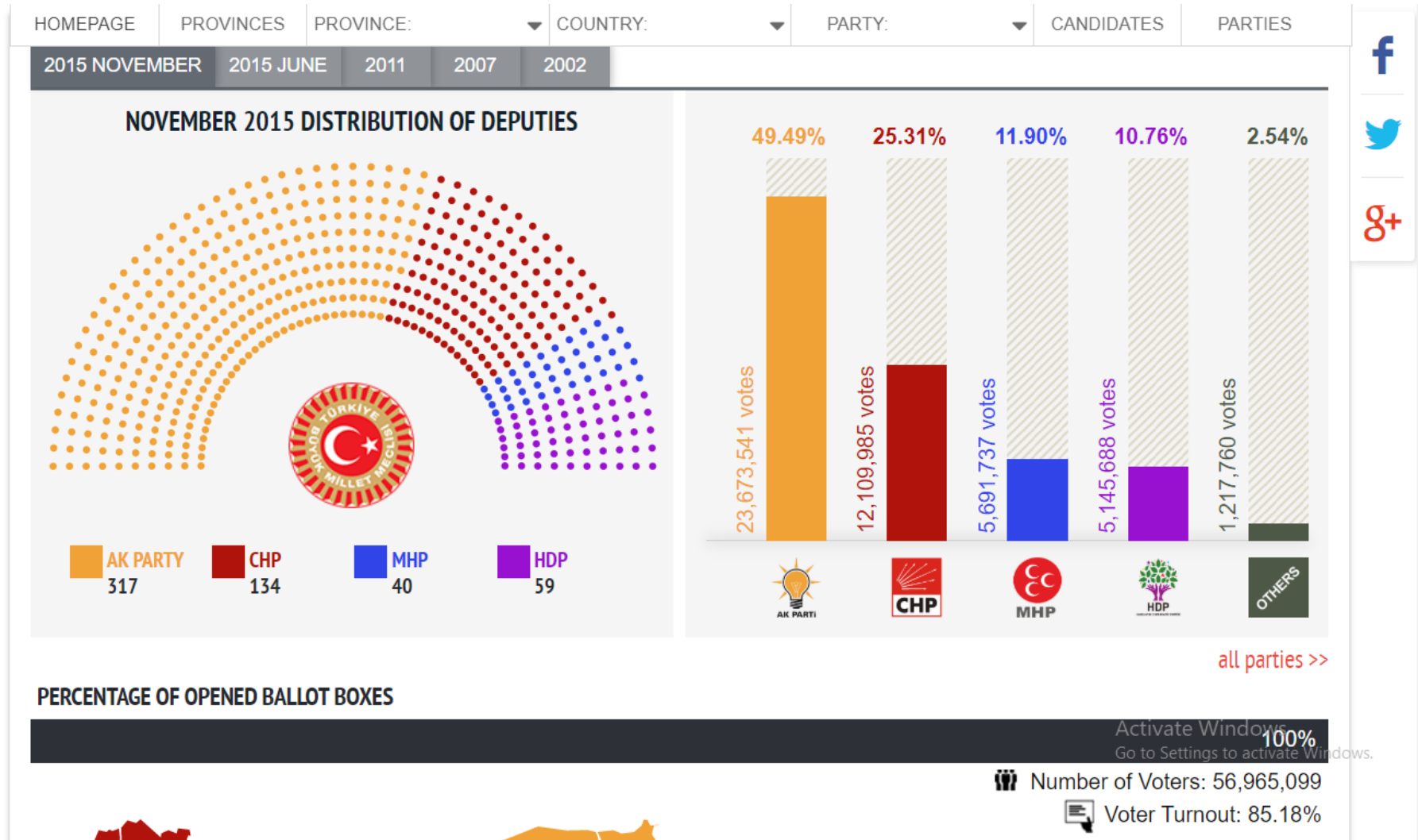
1.The Kurdish issue in the Turkish European path

1999-2005	-Turkish authorities have taken numerous steps to comply with the Copenhagen criteria
2005-2009	-clashes between the Turkish security forces and Kurdish militants (especially PKK) -Turkey's democratic reform is slowing down
2009-2011	-Negotiations between Turkish authorities and PKK sustained by EU
2011-2013	-the failure of the negotiations -new waves of violence
2014-July 20, 2015	-new peace negotiation -Erdogan sustain the European integration
July 20-	--new conflicts

2.HDP and the Turkey Parliamentary elections



3. The situation of the HDP in the failure of the Turkish state's accession to the EU



- **European Commission Turkey Report 2015:**

- the issue of violence against the party during the parliamentary elections was stated three times

- **European Parliament resolution on the 2015 report on Turkey:**

- “- [European Parliament]condemns, however, the intimidation and harassment of the media and discrimination of opposition parties in terms of pre-election coverage, the atmosphere of violence and intimidation, marked in particular by attacks on individual candidates and opposition party offices, particularly that of the People’s Democracy Party (HDP)

- [European Parliament] expresses serious concern about the judicial investigations targeting mainly HDP members”

- **European Commission Report 2016**

- the issue of actions taken against party supporters was stated twice

- **European Parliament resolution of 6 July 2017 on the 2016 Commission Report on Turkey**

- “-[European Parliament] strongly condemns the imprisonment of 11 MPs belonging to the People’s Democratic Party (HDP)

- [European Parliament] condemns the decision of the Turkish Parliament to waive the immunity of a large number of MPs unconstitutionally, including 55 out of 59 HDP parliamentarians”

- **High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini**

“–As you know, we have already reacted, in a united way, to the latest developments in Turkey following the arrest of the leaders of HDP and other measures that were taken in the last couple of weeks, expressing in the name of the 28 Member States our very serious concerns about developments in the country, especially related to the media freedom but also the debate about the death penalty. We will exchange views with the Ministers on that.

-The arrest of the co-chairs of HDP, as well as the detention of several of its deputies, adds to a long list of extremely worrying developments”.

- **Federica Mogherini and Johannes Hahn**

“–The European Union is gravely concerned about the detention last night of several HDP Members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly on charges alleging support of terrorist activities. Among those detained are the party's co-chairs Ms. Figen Yüksekdağ and Mr. Selahattin Demirtaş, both democratically elected leaders and our trusted and valued interlocutors.”

Conclusions

- The situation of the Kurds in Turkey has thus been a key issue in the state's accession process since 1987, strongly influencing Turkish-European relations.
- The HDP has become the main political organization supporting the rights of the Kurdish minority since the 2015 elections.
- The failure of Turkish-European relations was strongly affected by the HDP situation, respectively by discrimination and attacks against party members and supporters.

**Thank you for your
attention 😊**