

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN TURKEY: IMPERATIVES, EFFORTS AND CONSTRAINTS

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Süleyman Sözen
Anadolu Üniversitesi
İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi

• • •

Türkiye’de İdari Reformlar: Zorunluluklar, Çalışmalar ve Zorluklar **Özet**

İdari reform sorunu iki yüzyıldır Türkiye'nin gündeminde olan bir konudur. Bugün de genel kabul gören görüş, kamu yönetiminin iyi işlemediği ve kapsamlı bir reforma ihtiyacı olduğudur. Bu çalışmada ilk önce idari reformu zorunlu kılan nedenlerden sosyo-ekonomik yapı, dış faktörler ile kamu yönetimindeki yetersizlikler üzerinde durulmaktadır. Daha sonra da Osmanlı'dan günümüze kadar olan idari reform çalışmaları kısaca değerlendirilmektedir. Makale, önceki reform programlarının arzu edilen hedefleri gerçekleştiremediklerini ve başarısız olduklarını tartışmaktadır. İdari reformun önündeki engelleri ortaya koymayı temel amaç edinen bu çalışmada Osmanlı-Türk siyasasının üç önemli karakteristiğinin önemli rol oynadığı ileri sürülmektedir. Bunlar: patrimonyal yapının ve patronaj ilişkilerin varlığını sürdürmesi; sivil toplum unsurların güçsüz olması; siyasal istikrarsızlık, toplumsal kutuplaşma ve parçalanmış siyasal kültürdür. Fakat, son yıllarda kamuda yeniden yapılanma çalışmalarının hız kazandığı görülmekte ve burada da IMF ve Avrupa Birliği ile 2002 seçimlerinde sağlanan tek parti iktidarı değişimin dinamikleri olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İdari reform, Türkiye, patronaj ilişkiler, sivil toplum, siyasal istikrarsızlık.

Abstract

The issue of administrative reform has been on Turkey's agenda for two centuries. Today, there is also a general agreement that public administration in Turkey is functioning badly and in need of radical reform. In this study, at first, the reasons for reform are considered. After that, administrative reform efforts from the late Ottoman period to the present day are briefly reviewed. The paper argues that the past reform programmes did not achieve desired results and they failed. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to explore the barriers to reform. In this respect, three dominant features of Ottoman-Turkish polity play a central role. They are the persistence of patrimonial patterns and patronage relations; lack of civil society elements; political instability and fragmented political culture. However, in recent years the efforts of restructuring public sector have gained momentum because of change dynamics such as the impact of IMF and the EU and the existence of single party government formed following the 2002 general elections.

Keywords: Administrative reform, Turkey, patronage relations, civil society, political instability.

Administrative Reforms in Turkey: Imperatives, Efforts and Constraints¹

INTRODUCTION

It might be argued that there is a general agreement on the need for administrative reform in Turkey. Indeed, all parties in the country express their views officially and unofficially that bureaucracy is functioning badly and in need of radical reform. Wastage, corruption, bribery, and red tape are persistent problems despite the scarcity of public resources. This is also well documented in public administration literature (TÜSİAD, 1983; ERGUN, 1991; TUTUM, 1994, OKTAY, 1997; BAŞBAKANLIK, 2003). For instance, the study of TESEV (The Economics and Social Studies Foundation of Turkey), conducted in 1999 and published in 2000, clearly demonstrates that the trust in public administration and the satisfaction from the public services are significantly low. Not surprisingly, the study also found that 91 per cent of those who participated to the survey supported the idea of reform at the central government level. Support for reform at the municipal level, on the other hand, was around 80 percent (TESEV, 2000).

Furthermore, as will be addressed later, since the inception of the Republic, the Turkish Governments, almost without exception, have been closely interested in reforming public administration and have included the promise of reform in their government programmes. Besides, many experts including foreigners undertook reform initiatives and produced many reports. The results, however, fell quite short of the expectations and they were a deep disappointment (SÜRGİT, 1972; SAYLAN, 1974; TUTUM, 1994; POLATOĞLU, 2001; AYKAÇ et. al., 2003).

¹ This article is a revised version of a paper presented at EGPA Annual Conference, Postdam, Germany, 4-7 September 2002.

So, when an administrative system is desperately in need of reform and this is recognised by everyone, lack of administrative reform programmes or the failure when initiated presents an interesting issue which deserves proper attention. The interesting question, then, is how we can explain this paradoxical situation. Thus, the primary aim of this study is to provide some explanations for the question of why administrative reform does not take place in Turkey where the need for reform is long overdue.

In doing so, the first part of the paper deals with the factors providing rationales for administrative reform. The key points, which will be addressed, are deep economic and financial crisis that Turkey is facing and the country's socio-demographic trends. Furthermore, globalisation and other international factors such as the influence of the IMF, the World Bank and more importantly the relations with the EU to gain full membership will be explored. In addition to these macro level forces, deficiencies in the public administration will be briefly described.

In the second part, the study seeks to provide explanations for the factors preventing the initiation and successful implementation of administrative reform. The core argument of the paper is that Turkey's socio-political structure and cultural factors pose great difficulties in making administrative reforms happen. In this respect, the paper will examine the fundamental characteristics of the Turkish political culture with regard to the issue of administrative reform. Finally, the paper will conclude with the analysis of the most recent events and their possible effects on the issue of administrative reform.

I. IMPERATIVES OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM IN TURKEY

The issue of administrative reform in Turkey is not a new one. Instead, it has a history goes back to the end of the 18th century. So, Turkey has a long history of modernisation efforts and administrative reform has been a vital part of it. There is no doubt that Turkey experienced great transformations in the modernisation process including the establishment of the Turkish Republic replacing the Ottoman monarchy, the introduction of modern legal system borrowed from the West, and the transition to multi-party democratic system in 1946.

However, when we look at the current state of the country it is difficult to say that Turkey achieved her historic aim of reaching the contemporary level of Western civilization. Today, Turkey is facing immense economic, social, and

political problems. Among them, administrative reform is still an unresolved issue and gaining even more urgency for Turkey.

This study argues that Turkey's economic difficulties and fiscal crisis, coupled with socio-demographic conditions and international pressure, provide impetus for administrative reform. In addition to these macro level forces, deficiencies in the public administration also require fundamental change. The present section will deal briefly with such factors.

1. Socio-economic Imperatives to Reform

One factor, among others, leading to administrative reform is the economic pressures that governments face. A brief look at to Turkey's macroeconomic picture sharply shows how the Turkish economy is in crisis with persistently high inflation rate, unbearable burden of public deficit, and having one of the weakest money in the world. Within ten years, Turkey experienced three major financial crises, in 1994, 2000 and 2001. In 2001 Turkey endured its deepest recession since 1945, shrinking economy 9.4 per cent (IMF, 2002). Although Turkey has recovered quickly following economic recession the Turkish economy, at present, is still very fragile and the IMF is supporting Turkey's economic programme under the Stand-by-Arrangement.

Turkey's recent fiscal indicators also clearly demonstrate the severity of crisis. Government expenditure has grown rapidly since 1995 and expenditure out of the consolidated budget has almost doubled, from 22 % in 1995 to 42 % in 2001. Growth in the consolidated budget is mainly caused by interest expenditure which in 2001 accounted for 52 % of the consolidated budget. It means that Turkey in 2001 spent more than half of its total consolidated budget on interest payments. More importantly, there has been a sharp growth in the debt to GDP ratio reaching 93 % in 2001 from 57 % in 2000 (RAJARAM, 2001). Although the OECD Report (2004) on Turkey praises Turkey's quick recovery and points out to positive developments such as strong growth, sharply falling inflation, and large productivity gains economy is still far from being stable.

Moreover, Turkey's socio-demographic trends put pressure for administrative reform. They can be summarised as follows: a rapid growth in the country's population, reaching 65.3 million in 2000; rapid urbanization and having very large young population; the share of 0-14 age group population forms 30 % of total population (DPT, 2001). In relation to unemployment, the severity of the recent economic crises has contributed a sharp rise in unemployment. Both urban and rural areas have been badly hit.

In sum, socio-demographic trends, on the one hand, load Turkish Governments with immense task of providing sufficient public services such as health, education and social security. On the other hand, economic constraints force Governments to curb public expenditure simply because economy cannot easily afford an increase in public expenditure. Therefore, making public administration more efficient and more effective appears to be as one solution to the problem. Reducing waste, eliminating unneeded hierarchy, improving services to citizens, and creating a leaner but more productive administration provide some contribution to the solution of the problem that Turkey faces for decades.

2. Deficiencies in Public Administration

As mentioned in the previous section, Turkey's economic and fiscal crises emerge as an important factor making administrative reform necessary. So, at this point, we need to ask whether or not there is a causal link between economic/financial crisis and a malfunctioning public administration. Regarding this point, Evans and Rauch (1999) address that economic growth depends on governance this is because a weak state capacity makes impossible to implement public policies effectively. Therefore, there is a connection between bureaucratic structures and economic growth. Rauch and Evans (2000) argue that without the help of public bureaucracy, it is difficult if not impossible to implement or maintain a policy environment that is conducive to economic growth. For them the key ingredients of effective public bureaucracies include competitive salaries, internal promotion and career stability, and meritocratic recruitment. In their comparative study, they showed that countries whose bureaucratic structures incorporated Weberian features have experienced more rapid economic growth over the 20 years between 1970 and 1990 than did those countries in which such features were less fully incorporated. Thus, it might be said that having a competent and well functioning public administration is one, among others, important means for economic development. Having an effective administrative system is also important to curb corruption in public administration.

However, in terms of Turkish public administration, it is difficult to say that Turkey has an effective administrative system. Widespread corruption, inadequate administrative capacity, bribery, red tape, lack of accountability, the existence of patronage and clientelistic relations instead of meritocracy, low level professionalism, highly centralized bureaucratic structure, and inefficiencies in the provision of public services are persistent problems which Turkish public administration suffers. This is well documented in public administration

literature (TÜSİAD, 1983; TUTUM, 1994; OKTAY, 1997; TESEV, 2000; TESEV, 2001, TÜSİAD, 2002). Moreover, when ordinary citizens encounter with state departments in their daily life they experience great difficulties mostly due to the malfunctioning of administrative machine and lack of technical capacity.

Government programmes without exception and the Five Year Development Plans, therefore, have addressed the necessity of reform and included reform proposals. For example, the Eighth Five Year Development Plan, 2001-2005, devoted one chapter to the issue of administrative reform with the title 'Enhancement of Efficiency in Public Services'. The present situation is described by the Plan in the following terms:

'The need for a holistic, radical and lasting change including human resources, administrative principles and functioning in the public administration continues. Accordingly, elimination of existing deficiencies and breakdowns in the objectives of public institutions, their duties, distribution of the duties, structure of the organization, personnel system, resources and the way they are used, present public relations system are priority issues'.²

The deficiencies in public administration listed above bring to mind the critical question that What are the reasons for these deficiencies? Indeed, providing explanations to this question is of vital importance to administrative reform programmes in the future. Therefore, while exploring the factors blocking administrative reforms some insights are provided on the subjects such as clientelism, party politics, and patronage, resulting to politicisation and nepotism. There is no doubt that these problems are among the most important factors obstructing the firm establishment of merit system in Turkish public administration.

3. Globalisation and the Role of International Organizations

The first two factors mentioned above are related to domestic context. While acknowledging the importance of endogenous factors global pressures are also affecting administrative systems all around the world (WELCH and WONG, 2001). Farazmand points out that "all nation states are challenged by the forces of rapid globalization and their governments' sovereignty is being eroded by the new norms and organizations of the world order"

2 <http://www.dpt.gov.tr/dptweb/ingin.html>.

(FARAZMAND, 2004:4). Indeed, since 1980's administrative reform has been a global trend and governments everywhere are engaged in reforming their public administrations (KETTTL, 2000).

One striking feature of the process of globalization regarding public administration has been the international convergence on a common reform agenda. For instance, Aucoin (1990) points to the "internationalisation of public management". Osborne and Gaebler (1992) talk about "reinventing government" and claiming that "entrepreneurial government" replacing bureaucratic state is a new "global paradigm" emerging in contemporary public management. Thus, the changes to public management that are being undertaken around the world appear to indicate that there is a paradigm shift in public administration (COMMON, 1998). In literature, this new paradigm is called "New Public Management" (NPM) (HOOD, 1991). The key elements of NPM reforms include advocating pro-market mechanisms in the provision of public services; adopting private sector management practices in the public sector; an increasing emphasis on economy, efficiency and effectiveness; a movement away from input controls, rules, and procedures toward output measurement and performance targets; decentralizing management and privatisation.

Haque (2002) argues that NPM-type reforms are supportive of global market forces and conducive to globalization. Furthermore, the OECD, the IMF and World Bank are keen advocates of NPM reforms across the world. Thus, NPM reforms have been introduced not only in developed countries but also in developing countries. Haque (2002) states that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have used both covert influence and overt pressure on the economically vulnerable developing nations to adopt policy reforms in favour of globalization. Without doubt, Turkey is not exception to this development.

As global actors, international agencies such as the European Union, the IMF, the World Bank and the OECD in particular have had substantial influence on Turkey's public policies. This is partly because Turkey has been depending on foreign loans for a long time. Another influential factor in this regard is Turkey's strong commitment towards becoming a modern westernised country. No doubt that the recent developments such as Turkey's inclusion to the enlargement process and Turkey's stand-by arrangements with the IMF have clearly increased their influence on Turkish politics and economy.

Following the approval of the Accession Partnership by the European Council in 1999, the Turkish Government announced its own National Program for the Adoption of the EU *acquis* on March 19th 2001 and the National

Program was submitted to the EU Commission on March 26th, 2001. Finally, the decision of the European Council, taken in December 16-17 Brussels summit to start accession negotiations on 3 October 2005 will have, without doubt, important implications for public administration. Turkey will need to improve the administrative capacity to negotiate in an efficient and proper way with the EU in the membership process. Thus, reforming public administration will occupy a central place on political agenda.

However, as stated before, the issue of administrative reform is not today's issue but it has a long history. For this reason, it might be fruitful to look at briefly the previous reform attempts and their outcomes.

II. PREVIOUS REFORM EFFORTS AND THEIR OUTCOMES

Turkey has a long history regarding administrative reform attempts. Bureaucratic reform was one of the most attractive topics on the political agenda in relation to the Ottoman modernisation process. The origins of modernisation efforts can be traced to the late eighteenth century with the reign of reforming Sultan Selim III (in reign from 1789 to 1807). When the Empire experienced a series of military defeats and loss of territory the Ottoman ruling elite began to search the outside world for saving the state. The rulers of the Empire decided that selected adoptions of military technology were necessary in order to restore the declining military capability (LEWIS, 1968). Sultan Mahmud II, the successor of Selim III, also furthered the modernisation efforts by establishing a new modern army. He also restructured central administration by creating state departments and council of ministers with a prime minister (İNALCIK, 1964).

The death of Mahmud II was followed by the *Tanzimat* (Reform) era, 1839-1876, which brought social, economic, legal and political reforms. During the first (1839-1876) and second constitution period (1876-1908) administrative reforms also continued to occupy central stage in the Ottoman politics (SÜRGİT, 1972). In sum, within the Ottoman modernisation process, the establishment of modern bureaucracy gained importance. In doing so, many legal changes were introduced.

With the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, the ruling elite, led by Atatürk aimed to build a modern nation state through embarking on a series of cultural and ideological reforms in line with Western civilisation. The problem of the consolidation of state power was the critical issue for the Turkish state in the 1920s and 1930s (HEPER, 2000). With regard to

administrative reform, the social and economic developments which took place during the Republican period required a comprehensive reform programme. As a result, administrative reform efforts continued during the Republican era (SÜRGİT, 1972).

The reform efforts of the Republican period can be divided into three periods. The first one is the period between the end of World War II and 1960. In this era, foreign experts and committees as well as some individual ministries and departments undertook various studies on administrative reform. Two of them deserve to be mentioned. The first study to improve public administration is the Neumark Report. At the request of the Turkish Government of the day Dr. F. Neumark from the Istanbul University, conducted a study in 1949 and presented his report: 'The Principles of Rational Work within the Central Government'. Another important study in this era is the Baker Report. In 1950, a committee of experts from the International Development Bank, chaired by James M. Barker, carried out the study: 'The Analysis and Propositions for Development Plan'. The report included methods for administrative reorganization.

In this era, another important development regarding administrative reform was the establishment of the Institute of Public Administration for Turkey and the Middle East (TODAİE) with the protocol signed in 1952 between the UN and the Turkish Government. The Institute was assigned to improve the capacity of public administration through running training courses and specialised programmes (SÜRGİT, 1972). As will be mentioned later, the Institution played an active role in the following administrative reform programmes.

However, no serious attempts were made to implement the findings of these studies. Three reasons are offered for the failure of reform attempts prior to 1960. First of all, most of the research studies focused only on individual ministries or other administrative departments. Besides, the studies were far from being comprehensive and based on personal opinion and observation. Secondly, the issue of recruiting the qualified personnel for the job was neglected. Thirdly, an appropriate environment for reform was not created (İDARİ DANIŞMA KURULU, 1972).

The second period begins with the 1960 military coup. It is widely acknowledged that the military intervention represents a milestone in terms of administrative reform (MIHÇIOĞLU, 1963; İDARİ DANIŞMA KURULU, 1972; SÜRGİT, 1972). Following the military coup a number of important changes were made including the introduction of a new Constitution. Turkey also entered into an era of planned economic development, of which the First

Five Year Development Plan was introduced in 1963. Soon after the military intervention, two important institutions: the State Planning Organisation (SPO) and the State Personnel Department were created. As a result, administrative reform efforts gained momentum. In 1962, the Turkish Government set up a commission to examine the organization and functions of central government departments and to determine whether the present arrangements were most appropriate to the efficient performance of these functions (SÜRGİT, 1972).

One year later, the commission issued a significant piece of research. This came to be known 'MEHTAP' Report (Report on the Project for the Study of the Central Government). The Report listed insufficiency in financial resources, inadequate personnel, lack of guidance and control, organizational deficiencies, red tape and ill-organized centralization as primary factors which led to inefficiencies in the functions of central administrative departments. In addition to the MEHTAP Report, in 1960s numerous studies were undertaken but most of the proposals unfortunately were not put into effect (SÜRGİT, 1972). The failure of administrative reform efforts undertaken between 1963 and 1971 is attributed to the following factors: 1) it was not assured that reform efforts should be continuous; 2) reform efforts were not backed up by consistent political support and organization; 3) personnel reform was relegated to the problem of wages and salaries; and 4) work on administrative reform never went much beyond research (HEPER, 1979).

In March 1971 the military again intervened in the political process. This time the intervention was indirect and instead of taking over the government, the military closely manipulated the formation of the Cabinets and their policies. In this period, the issue of administrative reform again gained importance. In 1971 The Advisory Committee for Administrative Reform was created in order to give direction to the reform efforts. The committee published its report in 1972 with the title: 'Restructuring Administration: Principles and Proposals (İDARİ DANIŞMA KURULU, 1972).

The 1980 military intervention represents another period. In contrast to the past reform attempts, the reform efforts of the 1980s placed more importance to the implementation process rather than producing comprehensive research reports. The reforms met with limited success (HEPER, 1989; İDAREYİ GELİŞTİRME BAŞKANLIĞI, 1994). In 1991 another comprehensive research named Public Administration Research Project (KAYA) was published by the Institute of Public Administration for Turkey and the Middle East. However, due to the change in government it was forgotten on the shelf.

In 1998 OECD's country report on Turkey, again indicated the need to improve public management in terms of organization, operation and personnel

structure'. The reform proposals recommended by the OECD in 1998 are so similar, if not the same, to those of the previous reform studies undertaken since 1949. Indeed, one striking feature of the past reform efforts was the repeat of similar problems mentioned for the need for reform. It means that the previous reform initiatives did not produce desired results. Put it differently, the Turkish governments were incapable of making administrative reforms happen. Thus, the questions of why socio-economic factors do not generate sufficient pressure on political authorities; which factors affect successful implementation of administrative reforms; and what are the obstacles to reform become critically important. Answers are needed for these questions in order to provide a far-reaching insight into the persistent issue of administrative reform. The following section aims to deal with such questions.

III. BARRIERS TO REFORM

As Berkman and Heper (2001) point out, administrative reform is not only a technical issue involving changes in organisational charts and manuals but it also takes place in a socio-political context and requires changes in norms, social relations and political power configurations. Subsequently, an effort to understand the reasons for the failure of administrative reforms should take into account Turkey's socio-political structure evolved from the historical process. This implies that the nature of democracy and political culture play a crucial role on institutional reforms. Despite considerable degree of modernization and industrialization, the continuities in a historical tradition of a strong, centralised, and bureaucratic state in the contemporary Turkey have important implications with regard to administrative reform. These implications will be examined with reference to the three dominant features of Ottoman-Turkish polity. They are: the persistence of patrimonial patterns and patronage relations; lack of civil society elements; and political instability, party politics and fragmented political culture.

1. The Persistence of Patrimonial Patterns and Patronage Relations

Most students of Turkish society and politics considered the historical absence of rival loci of power and the predominance of the authority of the centre as the politically distinctive features of Ottoman traditional patrimonialism (KÖKER, 1995). The patrimonial and centralized nature of the political culture has been underlined as an important factor that explains the patron-client relations. Indeed, clientelism and patronage has been one

important characteristic feature of Turkish political culture. Within this context, the nature of relationship between the state (the ruler) and society (the ruled) can be resembled with the relationship between father and son. In folklore, '*Devlet Baba*' meant 'Papa State' (SUNAR, 1974). As Özbudun states, "Turkey provides a fertile ground for the formation and maintenance of a wide variety of clientelistic relationships" (1981:252). This is because Turkey meets almost all the conditions necessary for the widespread presence of such relationships such as inequalities in the control of wealth, status, and power; weakening traditional authority patterns which have not been replaced by modern authority patterns; the presence of broad governmental activities; and the existence of electoral competition (ÖZBUDUN, 1981:252-253).

The prevalent persistence of clientelistic relations has essential implications for administrative system. Such a relationship would not let to develop a structure based on a legal and rational one. Put it differently, the ascendancy of patronage relations constitutes an important obstacle to the initiation of administrative reform programmes aiming the formation of legal-rational bureaucracy. Indeed, most of the past reform efforts including the first reform study of the Neumark Report, the MEHTAP Report, government programmes and the Five Year Development Plans proposed the need for the establishment of the principle of merit. The absence of the principle of merit can be attributed to the patrimonial nature of public administration. For instance, the recent study of TESEV found the presence of significant level of patronage within public administration. Participants identified finding a relative in the relevant department as the most effective way of acquiring the required service (TESEV, 2000).

A broad review of civilianisation policy in the police organisation and its outcome may serve as a good illustration of negative results caused by patron-client relations on public administration. There have been two major civilianisation efforts in the national police organisation. The first attempt, made in the early years of the 1970s, aimed at improving delivery of police services through employing civilian personnel in office-based tasks in police stations. However, the experience showed that the policy did not bring about the desired results and the actual outcome was a chaos and conflict between uniformed and civil personnel. Such a policy without clear task allocations created important problems and harmed the organisational integrity. Due to the opposition from the police, and also pressure from civilian personnel who argued that they do the same work for less pay, the final step to resolve the problem had been the transfer of civilian administrative staff into police officers.

Eventually, the amendment made in 1972 by Law no: 1649 turned the status of civilian administrative staff into that of police officer regardless of matching the requirements for being a policeman. Moreover, in order to avoid such conflict occurring again, the new law replaced Article 4 of the Police Organisation Act with a new one stating that in addition to operational duties, administrative and logistic functions will also be performed by police officers, not by civilians.

After twenty years, there was another attempt, made in 1992, to increase the number of civilian administrative staff in the national police. This second effort was made in a much larger scale, and more than five thousand civilian personnel were employed in 1992. Consequently, the number of civilian administrative personnel immensely rose from 477 in 1991 to 5,896 in 1992, an increase of more than twelve times.

The rational objective behind this new policy was to release more police officers to local police stations and to patrolling duties by employing civilians for administrative and other related office tasks. However, the policy again did not produce the desired results. This is mainly because the majority of police officers remained at the same post through utilising influential channels, particularly by using their political and bureaucratic patronage relations. The result was an unnecessary increase in manpower. It can be safely said that the implementation of civilianisation policy created new problems in the organisation. One important problem has been that the career development and other related personnel management aspects of civilian staff have not been established. Civilians do not see an encouraging career future in the organization. Thus, between 1992 and 1995 the number of civilian administrative personnel rapidly reduced from 5,896 to 5,003, a decrease of 15 per cent (POLİS 1992, 1995). This number reduced to 4200 in 1999 (POLİS, 1999). This rapid decline resulted largely from horizontal move to other central government departments. It seems that as a better position was found in other government departments they moved there, but it is not so easy as it needs political and bureaucratic patronage affiliations. In many ways, the analysis of even such a small-scale case provides valuable clues for policy failures. This is only one case of the innumerable policy failures in Turkey. However, one could argue that the causes of failure seem to have similar patterns.

It might be argued that in many respects, the existence of patrimonialism and patronage relations within the Turkish polity has led to many policy failures and blocked the development of a legal-rational public administration. Consequently, the emphasis has been placed upon personal rule rather than impersonality, loyalty rather than merit, informal networks rather than formalised structures, and partisanship rather than impartiality. Within the

present structure, it would be naive to expect from the policy-makers (politicians and senior bureaucrats) to initiate reform programmes threatening their well-entrenched interests. To do so, the strong pressure of powerful and autonomous groups is needed. However, this is also lacking even in the current state of Turkey.

2. Lack of Civil Society Pressure for Reforms

While explaining the factors leading to the failure of administrative reforms, the weakness of public pressure for reform emerges as an important factor. The top-down nature has been one important character of past reform efforts. Indeed, one significant aspect of the previous administrative reform efforts has been the absence of public involvement and the exclusion of interest groups from the reform process. Having looked at the past reform attempts one can say that all of them were imposed from above. No civil societal elements were involved in any stage. For example, Zürcher pointed out that:

‘The reform policies of Tanzimat had never been based on popular demand. They were imposed on Ottoman society because the leading bureaucrats deemed them necessary or because they were forced to act by the representatives of the great powers’ (ZÜRCHER, 1994:69-70).

As mentioned above, the Ottoman modernisation efforts aimed to create a strong centralized state that would regulate the polity and society from above (HEPER, 2000). During the Ottoman modernisation period, the reform programmes which aimed at ‘saving the state’ were initiated and implemented from above and civil societal elements did hardly have any impact. It was mainly because there was no distinctive socio-economic class to challenge the centre in the Ottoman Turkish polity. Indeed, the absence of civil society in Turkey was an inheritance from the Ottoman Empire, where political, economic and social power was concentrated at the centre (HEPER, 2000). The weakness and lack of autonomy of civil societal elements vis-à-vis the state did not allow them putting sufficient pressure on the governments to realize administrative reforms.

Therefore, at the research stage of the reform studies no attempts were made to consult the public. The reports, in large part, reflected the personal views and opinion of idealistic bureaucratic and intellectual elites. Reform reports largely demonstrated their personal political views. Furthermore, ideological considerations also played a role in administrative reform policies. We can see such considerations in the 1960s reform attempts. For example, Mihçioğlu identified the 1960 revolution as a new beginning for a new effort in

economic, social, and cultural development and administrative reform. He said that:

‘This movement inspired and strengthened particularly by the intellectuals meant a new hope for those who called for the realization of this country’s long overdue economic and social reform efforts in a very short time. This can be done only with the involvement of the state and under its leadership. And this is only possible with an administrative machine which is working well, rational and equipped with competent personnel (MIHÇIOĞLU, 1963:1).

Within the political culture where the state is highly centralized and bureaucratized it is difficult, if not impossible, to view Turkish civil society as the primary agent for change. As Kubicek says if change was to come, it would be either "from outside" or "from above," both concepts having a long tradition in Ottoman-Turkish history (KUBICEK, 2001). Thus, the absence or weakness of civil society to exert pressure for administrative reform might constitute a key missing link to make changes happen.

3. Political Instability, Polarised Political Culture and Party Politics

Needless to say that strong and sustained political commitment to reform is an essential factor for successful implementation. It should not be forgotten that one important factor securing political commitment to reform is the strong pressure exerted by the public. As mentioned above, the Turkish Governments have not faced such a pressure from civil society groups due to their weakness vis-à-vis the state.

It is generally recognised that the presence of political stability provides an environment which is suitable for reform. It is possible to observe this in Turkey. For example, the mid-1980s stand as the period that important changes were introduced (HEPER, 1989). Without doubt, the existence of political stability played as a facilitating factor. The Government of the day was formed by the Motherland Party (MP) whose had the absolute majority in Parliament. In addition to this, the other factors such as strict party discipline, the power of party leader and strong centralised structure of the state facilitated the implementation of government policies. More importantly, the leadership of the MP had specific policies to pursue. Turgut Ozal, the leader of the MP was also ideologically determined to implement policies of privatisation of the State Economic Enterprises, of simplification of bureaucratic procedures, of decentralisation, and of reducing bureaucracy at the centre (HEPER, 1989). Thus, these factors

helped the MP Governments to implement their policies successfully in comparison with the previous attempts. One reason why administrative reform attempts were intensified during the military intervention periods was the stability provided by the military, even though stability was achieved through coercion and oppression.

However, it should be noted that stability in Turkish politics is exception. Today, there are forty-eight political parties in Turkey. Although a competitive multi-party system in Turkey has been in operation for more than five decades it is difficult to state that Turkey has a well- established democracy. In addition to military interventions, conflict, polarisation and increasingly fragmented political parties characterise Turkish political system. For example, ideological polarisation, fragmentation and volatility based on the “left” and the “right” ideology were the main characteristics of the Turkish political life in 1970s (ÖZBUDUN, 2000). Today, ideological polarisation within society has been continuing. Turkish society is divided into rival camps along with Turkish-Kurdish, Sunni-Alevi, and secular-anti laic divisions.

Moreover, Turkish democracy has been essentially a party-centred polity and political parties play an important role within the power structure of Turkish society. This is called “party politics” (ÖZBUDUN, 2000; GÜNEŞ-AYATA, 1994). With the introduction of competitive multi-party system political parties adopted the existing patron-client relations in order to establish a political support base by providing their supporters an access to state resources (GÜNEŞ-AYATA, 1994).

It can be easily said that such a political culture described above has important implications for public administration reforms. One striking feature of Turkish public administration was lack of reform initiatives and the failure when there was an attempt. This was partly because politicians did not put their commitment on the reform side. Reform programmes were left to be forgotten. In addition, instabilities and conflict led the political parties to concentrate on short-term objectives rather than long-term strategies. Furthermore, highly centralized nature of the state gives the political parties in power the opportunity to exploit the resources of the state in favour of their political interest. For this reason, political parties are always rhetorically in favour of decentralization policies but when they come to power they are always reluctant to give away their powers due to their pure political considerations. Despite frequent talks about reform, politics-as-usual remains the order of the day because of political instabilities and conflict.

As a result of polarised socio-political structure and party politics the political parties in power employed personnel policies with political

considerations and they ignored the reform proposals and continued to implement the policy of favouritism by appointing their supporters. So, politicisation and partisanship emerged as a great problem in the Turkish public administration.

THE CONCLUDING REMARKS: SIGNS OF A NEW ERA?

Turkey's economic and socio-demographic indicators and the general view of the public which place the stress upon the urgency of administrative reform have been unable to exert sufficient pressure on governments to make changes happen. In the light of the argument presented so far, it seems plausible to suggest that Turkey's socio-political structure emerge as a dominant factor obstructing administrative reform. Indeed, as addressed above, the persistence of patrimonial patterns in the Turkish state and party patronage, coupled with chronic political instability, place constraints on the initiation and implementation of administrative reform attempts aiming the formation of legal-rational administrative techniques and practices.

However, it should be also noted that in the last couple of years Turkey has experienced immense changes in economics, political and social spheres. Although the struggle between the sources of change and the forces of status quo has not been resolved yet the most recent developments such as the existence of political stability, the present government's policy of incorporating Turkey into the global world, the increasing importance of civil society organizations in the policy-making structure and Turkey's firm commitment to become a European Union member state suggest that the sources of change are about to hold power in this new millennium.

With regard to the dynamics of change three recent developments deserve to be mentioned. The first change dynamic is related to external factors. It should be stated that in Turkish politics, external dynamics have, to some extent, impact on policy changes. In recent years, substantial changes in the Constitution and financial institutions including radical reforms in the state-banking sector demonstrates the influence of external dynamics. Following the last financial crisis of February 2001, Kemal Derviş, then vice-president of the World Bank, was brought to Turkey and appointed as Minister of State for Economic Affairs. He acted as a technocrat and took a great care to remain apolitical figure. This position let him to implement firmly the IMF policies with technical terms without political consideration. Besides, the Justice and Development Party government has also continued to implement the IMF

policies. In this direction, the 59th government declared to sign a new stand-by agreement with the IMF in December 2004.

Furthermore, since the recognition of Turkey as a candidate for accession at the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 the relations with the EU have gathered momentum. In 2001, Turkey took a number of important steps in order to accomplish the Copenhagen political criteria. The most important among these is the major review of the Constitution. Thirty-four Articles of the Turkish Constitution have recently been amended and many of these amendments actually coincide with the provisions of Turkey's National Program. The package of constitutional amendments covers a wide range of issues, such as improving human rights, strengthening the rule of law and restructuring of democratic institutions. They are being followed by complementary legislative and administrative measures to ensure their implementation. In addition, Turkey's accession negotiations with the EU will have significant implications in terms of restructuring public administration. Thus, with regard to administrative reform, as in many other areas, the EU will be a major change agent.

Another new development observed in recent years has been the emergence of non-governmental organisations as an actor in policy formulations. Of course, at present, such developments are far from being sufficient enough to put pressure on governments in relation to public policies. However, in the coming years, the influence and participation of civil societal elements on public authorities might increase with the help of other change dynamics mentioned here. This trend is also in line with the current management thinking called "good governance".

The third change dynamic has emerged in the political sphere in 2002. The general elections held on 3 November 2002 ended the long period of coalition governments and brought the Justice and Development Party (AKP) to power with a landslide majority in the Parliament. In the AKP government's programme and Urgent Action Plan the issue of administrative reform gained momentum and the government has attempted to introduce an ambitious reform programme. Consequently, a series of draft laws restructuring public administration and local governments were introduced. The draft laws triggered a hot debate on the implications of such a radical reform program, particularly those concerning the new status of local authorities and the powers of the central government. Among the most controversial draft laws were the Bill for Code of the Basic Principles and Restructuring of Public Administration and the Bill for Code of Special Provincial Administration. These Bills were adopted by the Parliament but President Sezer has vetoed them. Later, the Law

of Special Provincial Administration was enacted on 4 March 2005. The Municipality Law and the Metropolitan Municipality Law were also enacted.

Without doubt, political stability and the government's commitment to administrative reform are essential for the overall success of reform policies. However, the content of reform programmes and the AKP government's attitude towards introducing administrative reforms have been severely criticised by the opposition political parties, trade unions, many academicians and professional associations. At present, what seems to be the case is that the 59th government is very determined to continue its reform programs despite fierce opposition it faces. Today, we are already witnessing that many important structural changes in public administration have been taking place but the outcome of the reforms still remains to be seen. Last but not least point to make is that the ingredients of reform policies and the language used suggest that the government has embraced NPM-type reforms favouring the process of globalization. To what extent do such reform policies include effective remedies for the pathologies that Turkish public bureaucracy suffers? This is a decent question that requires further study.

References

- AUCOIN, P. (1990), "Administrative Reform in Public Management: Paradigms, Principles, Paradoxes and Pendulums," *Governance*, 3/2: 115-137.
- AYKAÇ, B. / YAYMAN, H. / ÖZER, M. A. (2003), "Türkiye'de İdari Reform Hareketlerinin Eleştirel Bir Tahlihi," *Gazi Üniversitesi İ.İ.B.F. Dergisi*, C: 5 (2).
- BAŞBAKANLIK (2003), *Değişimin Yönetimi için Yönetimde Değişim*, (Ankara: Başbakanlık).
- BERKMAN, A. Ü. / HEPER, M. (2001), "Political Dynamics and Administrative Reform in Turkey," FARAZMAND, A. (Ed.), *Administrative Reform in Developing Nations* (Westport, CT: Greenwood).
- COMMON, R. K. (1998), "Convergence or Transfer: A Review of the Globalisation of New Public Management" *The International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 11/6.
- DPT (2001), *The Eighth Five Year Development Plan* (Ankara: DPT).
- ERGUN, T. (1991), "Yönetimin Yeniden Düzenlenmesi Gerekmesi ve Kamu Yönetimi Arastirma Projesi," *Amme İdaresi Dergisi*, Vol. 24/4.
- EVANS, P. / RAUCH, James E. (1999), "Bureaucracy and Growth: A Cross-National Analysis of the Effects of "Weberian" State Structures on Economic Growth," *American Sociological Review*, 64/5: 748-765.
- FARAZMAND, A. (2004), "Innovation in Strategic Human Resource Management: Building Capacity in the Age of Globalization," *Public Organization Review*, 4/1: 3-24.
- GÜNEŞ-AYATA, A. (1994), "Roots and Trends of Clientelism in Turkey," RONIGER, L. / GUNES-AYATA, A. (eds.), *Democracy, Clientelism, and Civil Society* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner).
- HAQUE, M. S. (2002), "Globalization, New Political Economy and Governance: A Third World View," *Administrative Rheory & Praxis*, 24/1: 103-124.
- HEPER, M. (1979), "Patrimonialism in the Ottoman-Turkish Public Bureaucracy," *Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 13.
- HEPER, M. (1989), "Motherland Party Governments and Bureaucracy in Turkey, 1983-1988," *Governance*, 2/4: 460-471.

- HEPER, M. (2000), "The Ottoman Legacy and Turkish Politics," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 54, Issue 1.
- HOOD, C. (1991), "A Public Management for All Seasons?," *Public Administration*, Vol. 69, Spring: 3-19.
- İDAREYİ GELİŞTİRME BAŞKANLIĞI (1994), *Türkiye'de Kamu Yönetiminin Tarihi Gelişimi* (Ankara: Başbakanlık).
- İDARI DANIŞMA KURULU, (1972), *İdarenin Yeniden Düzenlenmesi: İlkeler ve Öneriler* (Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası).
- IMF COUNTRY REPORT (2002), <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2002/cr02137.pdf>
- İNALCIK, H. (1964), "The Nature of Traditional Society," WARD, R. E. / RUSTOW, D. A. (eds.), *Political Modernisation in Japan and Turkey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- KETTL, Donald F. (2000), *The Global Public Management Revolution: A Report on the Transformation of Governance* (Washington D. C.: Brookings Institution Press).
- KÖKER, L. (1995), "Local Politics and Democracy in Turkey," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, No.540.
- KUBICEK, P. (2001), "The Earthquake, Europe, and Prospects for Political Change in Turkey," *Middle East Review of International Affairs Journal*, Vol. 5/2.
- LEWIS, B. (1968), *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, Second Edition).
- MIHÇIOĞLU, C. (1963), *İdari Reform* (Ankara: AÜSBF).
- OECD (1998) *The Country Report: Turkey* (Paris:PUMA).
- OECD (2004) *Economic Survey of Turkey, Summary*,
- OKTAY, C. (1997), *Siyasal Sistem ve Bürokrasi: Yükselen İstемler Karşısında Türk Siyasal Sistemi ve Kamu Bürokrasisi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları).
- OSBORNE, D. / GAEBLER, T. (1992), *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector* (Reading: Addison-Wesley).
- ÖZBUDUN, E. (1981), "Turkey: The Politics of Clientelism," EISENSTADT, S. N. / LEMARCHAND, R. (eds.), *Political Clientelism, Patronage and Development* (London: Sage).
- ÖZBUDUN, E. (2000), *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner).
- POLATOĞLU, A. (2001), *Kamu Yönetimi: Genel İlkeler ve Türkiye Uygulaması* (Ankara: METU Press).
- POLİS 1992, 1995, 1999 (Ankara: Emniyet Genel Müdürlüğü).
- RAJARAM, A. (2001), <http://www.bumko.gov.tr/WEB/etkindevlet/proing.htm>.
- RAUCH, J. / EVANS, P. (2000), "Bureaucratic Structure and Bureaucratic Performance in Less Developed Countries," *Journal of Public Economics*, Vol. 75: 49-71.
- SAYLAN, G. (1974) "Administrative Reform as a Problem of Structural Change," *Turkish Public Administration Annual*, 1: 119-141.
- SUNAR, İ. (1974), *State and Society in the Politics of Turkey's Development* (Ankara: AÜSBF).
- SÜRGİT, K. (1972) *Türkiye'de İdari Reform* (Ankara: TODAİE).
- TESEV (2000), *Devlet Reformu*, http://www.tesev.org.tr/projeler/proje_kamu_belediye.php.
- TESEV (2001), *Türkiye'de Yolsuzluk*, http://www.tesev.org.tr/projeler/proje_yolsuzluk.php.
- TÜSİAD (1983), *Kamu Bürokrasisi* (İstanbul: TÜSİAD).
- TÜSİAD (2002), *Kamu Reformu Araştırması* (İstanbul: TÜSİAD).
- TUTUM, C. (1994), *Kamu Yönetiminde Yeniden Yapılanma* (Ankara: TESAV).
- WELCH, Eric W. / WONG, W. (2001), "Effects of Global Pressures on Public Bureaucracy," *Administration and Society*, Vol. 33/4: 371-402.
- ZURCHER, Erik, J. (1994), *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris).