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Survey: Culture shapes Turkey-EU views

ISTANBUL, Turkey, Nov. 18 (UPI) --

Europeans tend to base their views of Turkey as a member of the European Union not on political or economic but cultural grounds, a survey indicates.

The survey, conducted in five EU countries between June 2008 and this month, was performed by Bogazici University's Center for European Studies, the Dialogue with Europe Association, the Autonomous University of Madrid and the University of Granada. It found cultural differences were the main reason Europeans do or do not favor Turkey's admission to the EU, the Daily Zaman reported Wednesday.

The <u>newspaper</u> said the survey found 40.4 percent saying it was mostly cultural factors that shaped their stance -- negative or positive -- towards the possible membership of Turkey in the EU.

The survey, which was conducted among 5,000 people in France, Germany, Spain, Britain and Poland, found more than half of those who oppose Turkey's membership (51.3 percent) said Turkey should be excluded from the EU because it is a Muslim country, culturally distinct from Europe's Christian background, Daily Zaman said.

The study also found younger Europeans are more supportive of Turkey's entry to the EU than are older generations, Hurriyet Daily News reported.

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