

**Abstract:**

Measuring political legitimacy is an ambitious and challenging undertaking. Social scientists have been struggling time and again to find solid methodological tools. Especially Weber's definition of political legitimacy – the belief in legitimacy – generated numerous inconclusive studies. The paper does away with Weber's pitfalls and constructs a comprehensive account of political legitimacy. Contributions from political scientists, system theorists and institutionalists are merged into a multidimensional conceptual framework, which enables social scientists to assess the degree of political legitimacy in the precise time-space context of a given political system. To illustrate the capabilities of the framework and for its own sake, it is applied to the Turkish Justice and Development Party, which demonstrated an astonishing track record since its first candidanship in 2002. The framework reveals how the JDP came into power via seemingly liberal democratic promises and progressive policies; how it successively extended its support base with the provision of minority rights and large investments in the public sector; and finally how it delegitimized itself through continuous human rights violations and corruption.

**Conceptualizing political legitimacy:  
A comparative analysis of the Turkish Justice and Development Party  
from 2002 until 2015**

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Keywords: Political Legitimacy, Input Legitimacy, Output Legitimacy, Turkey, AKP, JDP

PPE-Conference 2016 Universität Witten/Herdecke

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## 1 Introduction

Different scholars from different disciplines have examined legitimacy and in accordance with their own convictions and needs, they hold different conceptions of legitimacy. For legal scholars legitimacy is just legal validity, for political philosophers it is a normative principle of morally justifiable rule, while social scientists are concerned with the empiric consequences of legitimate or illegitimate political systems. The latter will be the focus of this paper. Studying the literature related to political legitimacy, I noticed two mayor issues. The first one is the much-debated contribution by Max Weber and the second is the often-missing distinction between input and output elements of political legitimacy. I will deal with both issues separately in the theoretical framework. The theoretical discussion narrows down in a conceptual framework that enables a social scientist to identify the precise workings of criteria contributing to the legitimacy or illegitimacy of any given political system. To demonstrate the explanatory power of the conceptual framework, I test it on the Turkish Justice and Development Party (JDP). The framework allows me to construct to comparable periods of legislation and explains why the party extended its legitimacy basis until the general elections of 2011 and lost legitimacy in the proceeding period. For now, I think it is best to start at the beginning, what is political legitimacy?

## 2 Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Political legitimacy

Legitimacy is a narrative of power and, generally speaking, it is about the legitimate use of power. When power is exercised according to justifiable rules and we have evidence of consent, we call it legitimate (Beetham, 1991, p. 3). In the case of political legitimacy it is about the legitimacy of power held and exercised by the system of government. In the words of contemporary economist, Larry Diamond (2008, p. 88) political legitimacy is “the moral title to rule”. This definition might be a good description of political legitimacy but it tells us little about the particular function. Why does a ruler need a moral title to rule; Why is it advantageous if not necessary to legitimize power; is it not enough to just hold power? For me the best and clearest explanation of the role of political legitimacy is to look at its counterfactual. What happens in the absence of political legitimacy? Without legitimacy, a

state would have to use the continuous threat of force to maintain order or expect that many of its rules and policies would go unheeded (O'Neil, 2010, p. 35). Why would that happen? If all citizens of a given state would act as rational agents, hence optimize their own utility, the losers of political decision-making, for instance minorities in democracies, would not accept their faith. They would either leave the state or in sever instances initiate violent uprisings against the state. In the long run a state could not perpetually enforce its constitution by sanctioning mechanisms against the insurgents. Therefor a motivation for non-strategic non-rational action is needed for a well-functioning state. Citizens have to make personal sacrifices for the common good. They have to be willing to pay taxes. In a democracy the minority has to accept the majority decision. These sacrifices cannot be explained by rational behavior. Therefore a state needs to provide different incentives to ensure the political allegiance of its citizens (Abizadeh, 2002). Legitimacy provides moral incentives for compliance with authorities; this particular quality of compliance enhances order, stability and effectiveness (Beetham, 1991, p. 34). In short, legitimacy transfers the right to rule from the people to the government, allowing it to effectively make decision on behalf of society at large. Legitimacy thus creates power that relies not on coercion, but on consent.

## **2.2 How can a political system become legitimate?**

Now that we have identified the unique and essential role of political legitimacy, we need to find out how it can be created and what are its precise sources? While most scholars agree that political legitimacy is necessary for a well functioning system, many are at odds with each other about the precise sources of political legitimacy. A highly acknowledged contribution stems from Seymour Martin Lipset (1959), who argues that political legitimacy derives from 'the capacity of a political system to engender a belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate or proper ones for the benefit of society.' In other words it is an essential capability of the government to influence and convince the society that it (the government) is the best at serving their (societies) needs. Lipset's, like Merelman's and many others' operationalization of political legitimacy, builds on Max Weber. In his seminal work economy and society Weber starts his conceptualization of legitimacy with a clear distinction between power and domination. He defines power (Macht) as 'the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to

carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests' (Weber, 1978, p. 53), while he defines domination (Herrschaft) as 'the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons' (Weber 1978, p. 53). In other words power describes the probability that others will not resist one's will, whereas domination describes the probability that one's will, will be obeyed. This distinction has fundamental consequences for the corresponding construction of scientific inquiry. In the case of power social scientists will look for the absence of phenomena (resistance) and in the case of domination they will look for constitutive phenomena of obedience. Proceeding in the line of domination Weber clearly states, what he regards as the most crucial building block of domination '[A] willingness to submit to an order imposed by one man or a small group, always implies a belief in the legitimate authority (Herrschaftsgewalt) of the source imposing it' (Weber 1978, p. 53). In the course of the book he repeats and emphasizes this point, for instance on p. 213, stating that 'custom, personal advantage, purely affectual or ideal motives of solidarity, do not form a sufficiently reliable basis for a given domination. In addition there is normally a further element, the belief in legitimacy.' In other words the legitimate use of force is one that is believed to be legitimate by those subject to that force. Since Weber is regarded as a (if not the) godfather of sociology many turn to his ideas to construct their own theories. On first sight it seems to be a logical and useful strategy to look at beliefs about legitimacy. For social scientists legitimacy does not depend on personal or morally justified convictions. In contrast to political philosophy, social science abstains from normative and objective concepts and explicitly considers and adapts its approach relative to a given context. But if social scientists want to use and operationalize Weber's theory for their own task they face two substantial problems, which are nicely illustrated by Beetham (1991, pp. 8-13). He criticizes Weber's work on legitimacy to be the source of major confusion. He especially scrutinizes Weber's relativistic definition of legitimacy as solely the "belief of legitimacy" (Weber 1978, p.212), claiming that the successive operationalization by Weber's followers produced numerous useless empirical studies. I agree with Beetham's criticism. Exaggerated Weber's definition boils down to the success of public relations campaigns of a given government. Such a definition legitimizes propaganda-based regimes and puts legitimacy on a par with the size of the budget and level of creativity invested into these

campaigns. Let me explain in more detail why this is a pitfall for social science. If legitimacy is operationalized as the function of a system's ability to persuade members of its own appropriateness (Schaar, 1981, p. 20), then it fails to grasp the precise working of beliefs in the formation of legitimacy. Beetham stresses that a given political regime is not legitimate because people believe in its legitimacy, but because it can be justified in terms of their beliefs. The correct methodology is to measure the discrepancy between the rules established in a given system and the shared beliefs justifying these rules (Beetham, 1991, p. 12). This methodology generates a measure of theoretical consent identifying the relations between authorities and subordinates, top-down and bottom-up. In contrast Weber's definition produces a measure of obedience and not of consent, which describes a unidirectional relationship, from top to bottom. This can be nicely illustrated with Merelman's (1966) conceptualization of legitimacy in terms of a psychological relationship of stimulus and response. First leaders lay down rules, promulgate policies, and disseminate symbols, which tell followers how they should feel and what they should do. In response followers provide favorable attitudes towards the stimulators. But it is not only social science in line with Weber's concept that reduces legitimacy in this way, he himself is very explicit about it: "Obedience" will be taken to mean that the action of the person obeying follows in essentials such a course that the content of the command may be taken to have become the basis of action for its own sake. Furthermore, the fact that it is so taken is referable only to the formal obligation, without regard to the actor's own attitude to the value or lack of value of the content of the command as such' (Weber 1978, p. 215). The second cause of confusion is Weber's three types of legitimate rule. The reason why I will meet the elevation of Weber's threefold typology into self-sufficient sources of legitimacy with criticism is their methodological incoherence. Assessed through Beetham's framework of legitimacy it becomes obvious that each of Weber's pure types is but one element in a totality, hence not self-sufficient. Since this criticism seems quite abstract for now, I will first introduce Beetham's framework, before I return to the criticism of Weber's three types of legitimized authority. Beetham's (1991, p. 20) separates legitimate power into three dimensions: (1) conformity with established rules, (2) justifiability of rules in terms of shared beliefs, and (3) legitimation through expressed consent. The analytical investigation is guided by three questions, which independently reveal and connect the three dimensions

of legitimacy. Is power valid in terms of the law? For power to be legitimate it must be acquired and exercised in accordance with established rules, Beetham calls these “rules of power” (Beetham 1991, p. 16). “Rules of power” are not just formal but also informal and exist in any kind of social order. They constitute the first level of legitimacy and examples are a constitution, laws, codes of conduct, etc. If an authority breaches these rules it acts illegitimate. The second level questions if the law or the rules of power are justifiable in terms of the beliefs and values established in the society? The structure of power must be seen to serve a recognizably general interest, rather than simply the interests of the powerful (Beetham 1991, p. 17). A minimum level of shared beliefs is a necessary condition for a functioning state. These shared beliefs can be grounded in various forms and include input and output criteria. In Scharpf (1997) words: ‘the capacity of the majority rule to create legitimacy depends itself on a pre-existing sense of community –of common history or common destiny, and of common identity –which cannot be created by mere fiat.’ Social order is rooted in a common belief shared among the people and the government. If the underlying norms and values start to diverge between dominant and subordinate a deficit of legitimacy occurs. If both parties cannot find a minimum common denominator the legitimacy of the government is not only threatened but also withdrawn. There are different claims about the origins of a shared beliefs, ranging from ethno-cultural and cultural nationalist theses to constitutional patriotism (Abizadeh, 2002; Habermas, 2001, p. 74; Miller, 1995, pp. 91-92). Also Weber’s traditional type of authority is a possible ground for shared beliefs. The longer a political system has been in place, the more institutionalized it becomes, as it has the weight of history on its side. Change becomes difficult to imagine if an institution has existed “since time immemorial” (O’Neil, 2010, p. 36). Is there demonstrable evidence of consent to the given relations of power? Actions, expressing consent are the third level of legitimacy. Examples are concluding agreements with a superior, swearing allegiance, or taking part in an election. If people do not act according to the rules, they delegitimize the government morally and symbolically. Actions expressive of consent, even if undertaken purely out of self-interest, will introduce a moral component into a relationship, and create a normative commitment (Beetham 1991, p. 18). Secondly, such actions have a publicly symbolic element. In that they constitute an explicit acknowledgement on the part of the subordinate of the position of the powerful (Beetham,



1991, p. 18). While none of the criteria of legitimacy is sufficient to solely legitimize political power, any form of non-legitimate power can lead to a legitimation crisis. To sum it up political power is legitimate if there is (1) the legal validity of the acquisition and exercise of power, (2) the justifiability of the rules governing a power relationship in terms of the beliefs and values current in the given society, and (3) evidence of consent derived from actions expressive of it. These three dimensions expound why Weber's theory has caused so much confusion, as each type of legitimate authority actually relates to a different level of legitimacy, though regarded as stand-alone sufficient in the operationalization of Weber's work. The rational-legal type of authority refers to Beetham's first level of legal validity. Resting on a belief in the legality of enacted 'rules (Weber 1978, p.215), it becomes detached from any substantive beliefs, which can justify the present rules. As earlier mentioned, Weber's traditional type, grounded in the belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions (Weber 1978, p.215), represents just one example of shared beliefs (second dimension of Beetham's framework) that can justify rules of power. This reductionist account ignores all shared beliefs that are not based on tradition, which is especially misleading for "modern states". At last the individual's belief in his charisma is pure propaganda (Weber 1978, p.215). The charismatic type represents the rare case of a legitimacy deriving solely from consent, and is completely detached from any rules or justifying beliefs.

### **2.3 The distinction between input and output legitimacy**

The second part of the theoretical discussion does not deal with writings of identity politics, but with those of systems theorists and institutionalists. To begin with I will sketch what input and output legitimacy means according to David Easton's (1957) political systems theory. Imagine the government as a black box, within which decisions are made. Prior to the decision-making process expectations, beliefs, wishes, demands, etc. (inputs) by society at large have to be collected and channeled into the "black box". Easton calls this part of the political process the input side. Here legitimacy depends on the level of inclusion and representation of the citizens' inputs, which is usually determined by procedural characteristics (e.g. voting rights, voting procedure, etc.). Out of these inputs the "black box" (government) creates outputs (e.g. policies, reforms, budgets, etc.), which are judged by the citizens, hence output legitimacy. Beetham's framework of legitimacy does not explicitly

distinguish between input and output criteria of legitimacy. Among Weber' followers legitimacy is mostly reduced to a procedural dimension, as the traditional or charismatic justification seem not to be relevant in a modern nation state (O'Neil, 2010, p. 37). In doing so, they only consider the input side of political legitimacy. Easton (1957) emphasizes that the output side is just as important as the input side. The output is directed at the social or physical environment and contributes to the legitimacy of the government, as it transforms citizens' demands into actual laws and policies. These outputs serve as the foundation of feedback. While the legitimacy of input enables the system to hold government accountable for its output, the decisions and actions interacting with the society are the feedback that is evaluated. This iterative process ensures that, in Beetham's language, the shared beliefs of subordinates and authority stay aligned. It is an iterative mode of self-regulation, by which governments can react to changing beliefs and demands (inputs) of their citizens and citizens can evaluate if these reactions (output) are legitimate. Very important and often neglected in the literature is what Easton calls the "outcome", which is the interaction of the output created by the government and the society, meaning that people do not actually judge the output of the political process but the outcome, the real impact and actual perceived phenomena in their life (Easton, 1957). This idea is in line with the definition given by Lipset (1959), emphasizing that political legitimacy is based on perception. Richard Merelman (1966) combines outcome legitimacy with Lipset's definition, when he defines political legitimacy as 'a quality attributed to a regime by a population. That quality is the outcome of the government's capacity to engender legitimacy' (For criticism of this definition, see section 1). Rothstein (2011, p. 80) emphasizes that 'political legitimacy is created, maintained, and destroyed not so much by the input side of the political system as by the output side. In brief, political legitimacy depends more on the quality of government and less on the quality of elections or political representation.' If a system has an effective government this, in turn, will generate political legitimacy. Rothstein's argument is based on the observation that citizens usually come into contact with the output side, the administration, rather than the input side of the political system. He infers that citizens experience the public administration as the political system. Therefore, in line with the idea of outcome legitimacy, the character of the administration is decisive for the way the political system is perceived (Rothstein, 2011, p. 95). Betancourt (2012) agrees with

Rothstein (2011, p.80) that electoral fairness itself is insufficient to ensure political legitimacy. He highlights that in democracies the output side is a far greater source of variation as it depends primarily on performance of governmental functions. Hence, the stock of legitimacy in a democracy accumulates or depreciates primarily through output criteria (Betancourt, 2012). Running through the Eastonian notion of input-output-outcome, one can easily identify the major sources of political legitimacy. Incorporating the distinction between input and output sources of legitimacy into Beetham's framework safeguards the concept of input and output legitimacy to fall back on Weber's reductionist account of legitimacy as a sole belief. The combination of both allows a social scientist to assess in a straightforward manner the degree of legitimacy in the precise time-space context of a given power relationship. Based on the presented theoretical discussion of political legitimacy I construct the conceptual framework for the later analysis.

### 3 Conceptual Framework

The following table serves as the conceptual framework. The basic framework stems from Beetham (1991, p.20) and is expanded with concepts by Betancourt (2012), Easton (1957), Rothstein (2011, p.20) as well as my own thoughts. Since all the included dimensions are discussed within the theoretical framework, I limit the conceptual framework to this table. Just one short comment; the entries (black font) are just examples and do not include all possible values of each dimension.

**Table 1**

Criteria of Legitimacy		Form of Non-legitimate Power
1. Conformity to rules		Illegitimacy (breach of rules)
2. Justifiability of rules in terms of shared beliefs	INPUT: rightful source of political authority	Legitimacy deficit (discrepancy between rules and supporting beliefs, absence of shared beliefs)
	OUTPUT: proper ends and standards of government	
3. Legitimation through expressed consent, recognition by other legitimate authorities		Delegitimation (withdrawal of consent)

## 4 The political legitimacy of the Turkish Justice and Development Party

### 4.1 Case Introduction

Using the proposed conceptual framework, I examine the basis of legitimacy of the Turkish Justice and Development Party (JDP, though I will use the Turkish abbreviation: AKP). The following analysis is by no means comprehensive and does not do justice to the complexity of the case. Nevertheless I hope that the brief proceedings deliver some insights and illustrate the explanatory power of the conceptual framework. I do believe that an analysis based on the framework could deliver a comprehensive account; it just cannot be done in such a short paper. I construct my cases using the third dimension of the conceptual framework, expressive action of consent. Participating in a voting procedure is an action expressing consent with the political system. Voting for a specific party is an expressive action of consent with this particular party, hence legitimizing its rule. Therefore the electoral outcomes are the starting point of my analysis. I will develop the precise cases of comparison in the proceeding paragraph.

**Table 2**

Election date	Party leader	Number of votes received	Percentage of votes	Number of deputies
<b>November 3, 2002</b>	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	10,763,904	34.26%	363
<b>July 22, 2007</b>	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	16,327,291	46.58%	341
<b>June 12, 2011</b>	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	21,442,206	49.83%	326
<b>June 7, 2015</b>	Ahmet Davutoğlu	18,851,953	40.86%	258

(<http://www.electionresources.org/tr/assembly.php?election=2002,2007,2011,2015>, accessed 10.09.15)

The AKP was founded in 2001 and repeatedly became the most popular party in the last four general elections (see table 2). Until the general elections of 2011, the AKP continuously increased its popularity. In the general election of 2015 it could not extend its popularity further, and even suffered losses of almost 10% of total votes. I interpret this drop of votes, as a withdrawal of legitimacy. Correspondingly there must be reasons for the change in attitudes towards the AKP by the people. I argue that it was unsatisfied

expectations around identity issues of religious groups and ethnic minorities that allowed for the original acquisition of political legitimacy by the AKP. For a comprehensive disquisition see Cizre (2008). The successive inclusion of the two groups into the Turkish society allowed for a successive increase of received votes. I call this period of AKP rule (until 2011) progressive and the following period regressive (after 2011). Capitalizing on the economic boom after the crises of 2001 the party increased its legitimacy through large investments in public goods and services. Building on a strong basis of output legitimacy the AKP turned its back on the democratic promises of the party in the regressive period and pursued an authoritative Islamic agenda. I argue that this shift including illegitimate action against liberal democratic rights caused the tipping point of the AKPs popularity. The conceptual framework allows me to pinpoint how the AKP successively legitimized its rule, by bridging the gap between shared beliefs and established rules during the first period (progressive). During the second period (regressive) it is again a discrepancy between shared beliefs and established rules, which determines the course of political legitimacy. This time the AKP carried its policies to excess, breaching established rules whereby the party created a legitimacy deficit for itself. Since the theoretical framework is very comprehensive for such a short paper, I have only little space to make my argument. Therefore I drastically simplify the matter, hoping that I still get the decisive ideas across.

## **4.2 The Rise of the AKP**

### **4.2.1 The basis of political legitimacy (before 2002)**

For simplification I interpret the previous ruling party, the DSP, as an extension of Kemalism. Kemalism builds on the heritage of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic in 1922. Three ideas constitute the pillars of Kemalism: modernization, cultural nationalism and secularism. Among other domains the reforms introduced by Atatürk's regime included civil and political equality for women, state support of the sciences and free education, a drastic reformation of the language, permanent ban of political parties to prevent religious influences on the democratic process, permanent ban of religious clothing in public spaces, to name just a few (Kili, 1980). This strict nation-building program forced Kurds to absorb Turkish values and culture instead of developing their own local identities. Since the identity of Kurds is grounded in ethnicity they rejected

Turkish Nationalism. The governmental authorities classified these uprisings as ethnic separatist movements and the instituted military measures against Kurdish groups to suppress their demands. Later these military measures were accompanied by political measures such as the permanent prohibition of the Kurdish language (Efegil, 2011). While Kurds were suppressed by force, religion was considered as antithetical to progress and equality. Consequentially women's religious coverings were prohibited in public offices, repressing Islamic groups to express their beliefs freely. The AKP rose to power precisely because it was willing to challenge the traditional orthodoxy of what it meant to be a Turk. After years of being oppressed by militant secularism, Islamists embraced the AKP's promise of a new political voice and an elevated status in Turkish society. On the Kurdish front, the AKP has gone further than any other party to recognize the minority's cultural rights.

#### 4.2.2 The extension of political legitimacy (2002 – 2011)

**Table 3** (Period 2002-2011)

Criteria of Legitimacy		Form of Non-legitimate Power
<b>1. Rules</b>		No mayor incidents.  Legitimacy deficit prior to progressive output
<b>2. Beliefs</b>	<b>INPUT:</b> before	
	<b>OUTPUT:</b>	
<b>3. Actions</b>		No withdrawal, as votes increased

A constant factor that has to be mentioned, though I will not examine it in detail, is the high output legitimacy of the AKP. The economic boom of Turkey with a staggering growth rate and high levels of privatization has filled the governments budgets. Among other purposes the AKP used this money for large investments in education, healthcare, infrastructure, construction-projects (Bump et al., 2014; Korumaz & Keskin, 2014). Until today output legitimacy in terms of public goods and services is arguably the most decisive factor for the successive victories of the AKP (Gidengil & Karakoç, 2014). The following analysis always has to be interpreted against the backdrop of this high output legitimacy.

Baykal (2014) found that although on balance, social and economic indicators guide the distribution of government expenditures, Kurdish districts appear to receive favorable treatment. Among less politicized groups these expenditures trigger feelings of gratitude and appreciation towards the AKP. By granting rights to the Kurdish minority and strengthening the status of religious groups, the AKP adjusted/equalized the established rules with predominant beliefs within the society. Within this successive process the AKP understood to convert inputs into outputs in the Eastonian sense, creating a strong basis of political legitimacy. Since reforms implemented in 2002, the use of the Kurdish language is becoming more widespread: from a state-run Kurdish television channel to Kurdish instruction in universities to political campaigning (Cizre, 2008, p. 97). This increase of legitimacy was reflected in the parliamentary elections of July 22, 2007, in which the AKP increased its votes from 34% in 2002 to 47%. In the predominantly Kurdish southeast region, the AKP doubled its vote from around 26% to approximately 53% (Polat, 2008). The AKP received a wide support by Kurds due to the party's willingness to grant more rights and freedoms, as well as jobs and economic prosperity to the Kurds. In 2005, Erdogan became the first prime minister to acknowledge that 'the [Turkish] state has made mistakes about the Kurdish issue' (Polat, 2008). In 2009 the attempts in what is called the "Kurdish opening", a political attempt to solve Kurdish Problem once and for all (Somer & Liaras, 2010). In the general elections of 2011 the AKP confirmed and even extended its basis of support (Çarkoğlu, 2011). Öniş (2012) argues that the strong economic performance, the political effectiveness of managing the global financial crisis and the fragmentation of the opposition contributed substantially to this success of the AKP. According to Fidrmuc and Tunali (2015), who examined the general elections of 2002 and 2007, religiosity was an



important determinant of voting. Religiosity significantly correlates (positive) with voting for the AKP. One could argue, reasoning backwards, that since 95% of all Turks are Muslims, and the AKP gained the most support, this reflects a shared belief and therefore justifies the leap towards Islamization. Concluding I name the period until 2011 “progressive” as it was shaped by the extension of positive and negative freedoms.

### 4.3 The loss of political legitimacy (2011 – 2015)

**Table 4** (Period 2011-2015)

Criteria of Legitimacy		Form of Non-legitimate Power
<b>1. Rules</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># Kurdish language allowed</li> <li># Religious coverings allowed</li> <li># Human rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># Continuous police violence, human rights violations</li> <li># Banning of social media platforms &amp; newspapers</li> </ul>
<b>2. Beliefs</b>	<b>INPUT:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># Demands:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kurds: <i>Political participation*</i></li> <li>- Kemalists: Liberal democratic values including human rights, freedom of speech, secularism</li> <li>- Islamists: further islamization</li> </ul> </li> <li># Democratic (fair) election</li> </ul>	Legitimacy deficit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discrepancy between rules and supporting beliefs</li> <li>- Discrepancy between input of people and output of government</li> </ul>
	<b>OUTPUT:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≠ Demands (Kurds&amp;Kemalists)</li> <li># Successive Islamization</li> <li>- Ban of alcohol</li> <li>- Imam-Hatip schools</li> <li># Infrastructure (all Turkey)</li> <li># Investments (Eastern Turey)</li> <li># Overall economic growth</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Actions</b>		Election results: See 2015 (table 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># Gezi Park protests</li> <li># Votes decreased</li> </ul>

While the “progressive” period also included repressive elements, in the second period the repressive elements became more dominant. The successive abolishment of prohibitions of religious coverings successively strengthened the Islamic gender model. In the second period the AKP pushed the authoritative Islamic agenda. Outputs of this agenda were for instance the increasing number and status of Imam-Hatip schools (Coskun & Senturk, 2012, pp. 166-172), the high tariffs on and increasing prohibition of alcohol (Matthee, 2014), the radical push for a presidential system to strengthen the power of Erdogan and establish an Islamic state (Öniş, 2014), the continuous efforts to allow religious coverings in all domains of public office. Özcan (2015) argues that Islamic newspapers have created an image of a new ideal conservative woman, ignoring the worsening conditions for women and the increasingly restrictive gender politics of the AKP. All these outputs are repressive in the sense that they miss to react to the input side of prevalent shared beliefs of secularism and equality from the Kemalist era. The AKP does not share liberal democratic values, such as human rights and freedom of speech, as much as large parts of the population do (Gürpınar & Kenar, 2015). These values are mainly endorsed by people living in cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Antalya, etc. (Atay, 2013). The distribution of votes for the AKP shows a great diversion between the cities and rural areas in all elections. The AKP received the majority of its votes from rural areas. Since people in cities tend to be better educated, this is in line with findings of a study by Fidrmuc and Tunali (2015), showing that the more educated a woman is, the less likely she is to vote for the AKP.

Finally the deficit of legitimacy (discrepancy of shared beliefs) between the AKP and educated and non-religious people resulted in expressive actions of discontent by exactly those people. The Gezi Park protests in Istanbul sparked a revolutionary flame reaching all mayor cities with an estimation of more than 3,5 million participants, demonstrating against the authoritative Islamization of Turkey (Atay, 2013) The AKP reacted with a breach of rules, using police violence against peaceful protesters (Kuymulu, 2013). In the following month the AKP maintained an authoritative course and continuously violated human rights including killings of innocent civilians (Kuymulu, 2013). Eventually this authoritative Islamic agenda could not be justified in terms of shared beliefs any longer and caused a reduction of the AKPs political legitimacy, which was expressed in the general elections of 2015. At this point the withdrawal of legitimacy can even be measured as a loss

of 10% of total votes. This reduction has to be seen in the light of the earlier mentioned steady output legitimacy in terms of public goods and services as well as the evidence for vote buying (Çarkoğlu & Aytaç, 2014) which indicates that the actual level of political legitimacy is even lower than the number of votes the AKP received.

## **5 Conclusion**

The analysis of the Turkish Justice and Development Party has shown that the proposed conceptual framework of political legitimacy is a powerful tool. The discrepancy between established rules and the shared beliefs justifying this rules, explains why the AKP acquired a wide basis of legitimacy in the period of 2002 until 2011 and has lost legitimacy in the period post 2011. The important role of output legitimacy explains how the AKP has managed to maintain a minimal denominator of shared beliefs necessary for its rule. I suggest that a comprehensive study of the AKPs legitimacy based on the presented conceptual framework of political legitimacy can yield further valuable insights.

## 6 References

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