It is often said that socio-political and cultural-religious divides crystallised in the European Union (EU) in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks in the USA, leading to increased tension and concerns with regard to the role and place of Islam and Muslims in the EU. The March 2004 and July 2005 bombings in Madrid and London triggered a further change in the social and political landscape, which is thought to have compounded existing antagonisms towards Islam and Muslims within the EU. The socio-political status of Muslim minorities in the EU became ever more controversial, as evidenced in pan-European public furores relating to Islamic dress, Islamophobic reactions to bombings, the assassination of film-maker Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands, the publication of cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in Denmark, or comments made by Pope Benedict XVI in Germany on Islam, to name but a few. Against this backdrop, some have argued that Turkey’s accession to the EU would lead to an ‘Islamisation’ of Europe, while others have argued that opposition to its accession reflects ‘Turcoscepticism’.

Evidence for Turcoscepticism can be found in limited and mistaken descriptions of Turkey as a poor and populous Islamic country riddled with social, cultural and political problems that would prevent it from effectively adopting and internalising the values of the EU. Discussions on Turkey’s potential membership in the EU are not limited to the political sphere though. Indeed, they have found their way into popular discourses relating to the compatibility of Turkey’s socio-cultural and religious values with those of the EU. Discussions and discourses such as these have revolved around perceived differences in collective identities rooted in religion, culture, ethnicity and national dynamics. These discussions also revolve around Europe’s supposed Christian and Enlightenment heritage, as well as its secular values of liberalism, democracy and the defence of human rights (Casanova 2006, 74). As a result, Turkey’s EU integration project has recently come to be viewed in Europe as a process of political incorporation premised on inclusive notions of legal citizenship and value
orientations. On the other hand, concerns have begun to grow about the relationship between religion and the state in Turkey, about its cultural-religious history, and the value system to which it adheres. This was combined with fears over uncontrolled waves of immigration from Turkey into other EU member states, whereby almost 70 million Muslims would become European citizens overnight. These concerns have contributed to the growth of Turcoscepticism in Europe; in effect, there has been a growing perception within the public sphere that the Turkish Crescent would endanger the European Cross. Underlying this, there appears to be an anxiety felt among the European public that Europe is being 'Islamicised', with Islam perceived as a homogeneous, proselytising Other. The present chapter will address a number of questions raised by these issues:

- To what extent does the European public harbour Islamophobic sentiments?
- How does this affect relationships between Turkey and the EU?
- Is Turcoscepticism based on the fear of an influx of immigrants into Europe?
- To what extent does the European public believe that Islam and democracy are compatible systems of values, beliefs and norms?
- How are perceptions of Islam related to Turcoscepticism?

1. **Turcoscepticism, Islamophobia and Migration: The Dialectic between Islam and Western-Style Democracy**

The prospect of Turkey joining the EU has a long history and has generated unease among many Europeans, whether they are Christian or not. This unease revolves around issues relating to national identity, religion, culture, ethnicity and Europe's perceived secular values (Casanova 2006, Yavuz 2006). In 1989, two years after Turkey applied for full membership to the European Community, the poor Turkish economy, its large population and concerns over democratic incompatibility and cultural differences provided a convenient basis for rejection, as expressed in the European Commission's Opinion on Turkey's request for accession (20 December 1989). Turkey was eventually given the status of Candidate Country in 1999, while negotiations for accession began in earnest in 2005. However, these negotiations have been in deadlock since November 2006, ostensibly because Turkey was deemed not to have fulfilled essential administrative commitments. Others believe that this deadlock is a reflection of long-held European Turcoscepticism, which is itself based on the