

# Global Turkey in Europe II

**Energy, Migration, Civil Society  
and Citizenship Issues in  
Turkey-EU Relations**

IAI RESEARCH PAPERS

Edited by  
**Senem Aydın-Düzgit, Daniela Huber,  
Meltem Müftüler-Baç, E. Fuat Keyman,  
Jan Tasci and Nathalie Tocci**



Edizioni Nuova Cultura



**IAI**

*Istituto Affari Internazionali*

# IAI Research Papers

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*In cooperation with*



**Stiftung  
Mercator**

**IPC**

ISTANBUL POLICY CENTER  
SABANCI UNIVERSITY  
STIFTUNG MERCATOR INITIATIVE



Edizioni Nuova Cultura

**Acknowledgments**

This publication has been generously supported by the Mercator Stiftung.  
Special thanks to Alessandra Bertino for her invaluable assistance in copy-editing.

***Series Editor***

Natalino Ronzitti

First published 2014 by Edizioni Nuova Cultura

For Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)  
Via Angelo Brunetti 9 - I-00186 Roma  
[www.iai.it](http://www.iai.it)

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ISBN: 9788868122829

Cover: by the author

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# List of Abbreviations

ANAP	Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party)
AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
BCM	Billion Cubic Meters
BDP	Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (Peace and Democracy Party)
BOTAŞ	Boru Hatları İle Petrol Taşıma Anonim Şirketi (Turkish Petroleum Pipeline Corporation)
BTC	Baku-Tiblisi-Cehyan Pipeline
BTE	Baku-Tiblisi-Ezurum Pipeline
BTU	British Thermal Unit
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
CSDP	Common Security and Defense Policy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DGM	Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemeleri (State Security Courts)
DISK	Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions)
DTP	Demokratik Toplum Partisi (Democratic Society Party)
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EEC	European Economic Community
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EMRA	Energy Market Regulatory Authority
EPIAŞ	Enerji Piyasaları İşletme Anonim Şirketi (Energy Markets Operating Corporation)
EU	European Union
EURODAC	European Dactyloscopy
EUROSUR	European Border Surveillance System
HAK-İŞ	Hak İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (Confederation of Justice-Seekers' Trade Union)
HSYK	Hâkimler ve Savcılar Yüksek Kurulu (Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors)
IEA	International Energy Agency
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organisation

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IKV	Iktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı (Economic Development Foundation)
KADER Kadın	Adayları Destekleme ve Eğitim Derneği (Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates)
KAGIDER	Türkiye Kadın Girişimciler Derneği (Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey)
KRETYK	Cyprus National Hydrocarbons Company
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MASAK Mali	Suçları Araştırma Kurulu (Turkish Financial Crimes Investigation Board)
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Movement Party)
MIT	Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı (Turkish National Intelligence Organization)
MÜSİAD	Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği (Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PBO	Peak Business Organisation
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers' Party)
PPP	Private-Public Partnership
PYD	Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat (Democratic Union Party)
RoC	Republic of Cyprus
RPP	Regional Protection Program
RTÜK	Radyo Televizyon Üst Kurulu (Radio and Television Supreme Council)
SCP	South Caucasus Pipeline
CAR	State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic
TANAP	Trans-Anatolia gas pipeline
TAP	Trans-Adriatic pipeline
TESEV	Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation)
TOBB	Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği (Union of Chamber and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey)
TPAO	Türkiye Petrolleri Anonim Ortaklığı (Turkish National Oil and Gas Company)
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

*LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS*

TRT	Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation)
TÜRK-İŞ	Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu (Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions)
TÜSEV	Türkiye Üçüncü Sektör Vakfı (Third Sector Foundation of Turkey)
TÜSİAD	Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği (Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association)
UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
YÖK	Yükseköğretim Kurulu (Board of Higher Education)



# Introduction

*Senem Aydın-Düzgit, Daniela Huber,  
E. Fuat Keyman and Nathalie Tocci*

*Global Turkey in Europe*, a project led by the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) and the Istanbul Policy Center (IPC) and supported by the Mercator Foundation, was launched in 2012 when the European Union and Turkey found themselves in the midst of crises – the Eurozone crisis, as well as the crises triggered by the Arab uprisings. The project was therefore built on the idea of exploring how the EU and Turkey could enhance their cooperation in the political, economic and foreign policy domains, and concomitantly find a way out of the stalemate that Turkey's accession process had reached.

The record for EU-Turkey relations was mixed in 2013-2014. A long awaited chapter in accession negotiations was opened in November 2013 with the lifting of the French veto on the Regional Policy chapter. Although it was not sufficient to revitalize the negotiation process, it carried symbolic importance for being the first chapter to be opened in the stalled accession negotiations since June 2010. It also marked a softening of Turkish-French relations which were largely troubled under the Presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy. Closer cooperation was also visible in certain policy areas, most notably in the field of migration and mobility, where Turkey and the EU finally signed a readmission/visa liberalization agreement in December 2013. This can be considered as an important breakthrough given that the parties had been negotiating a deal since 2003. Stalled negotiations on Cyprus resumed in February 2014, with high hopes for reunification of the island amidst the discovery of significant natural gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean raising the potential for the removal of a major hurdle in Turkey's accession process to the EU.

Despite these positive developments, relations between the two sides were also mired by developments in Turkish domestic politics, particularly regarding the substantive reversal of democratic reforms in areas such as freedom of expression and association. The Gezi revolts of June 2013 were noteworthy in this respect. EU criticism of the government's harsh suppression of the demonstrations was rebuffed

by the Turkish government, starkly demonstrating the diminished influence of the EU on Turkey's domestic governance. Nonetheless, the Gezi events have also shown the appeal of the European anchor for the reformist segments of Turkish civil society in their call for effective citizenship and democratic governance.

This collective volume aims precisely at shedding light on this mixed picture of conflict and cooperation across a variety of areas in EU-Turkey relations, ranging from energy, migration and mobility, through to citizenship and civil society.

## ENERGY

Turkey is central for European energy interests. It is not only a significant energy consumer, but also at the heart of energy geopolitics, being a central transit state located at the intersection of the east-west and north-south energy corridors. Since Europe must import considerable volumes of energy, cooperation with Turkey is a crucial component in the transportation of hydrocarbons from the Caspian sea and the Middle East to Europe. This presents opportunities for joint Turkish-European partnerships in the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Caucasus. The contributions in the first part of this volume explore ways to break the logjam of the blocked accession chapter on energy. They analyse how the Eurozone crisis and the evolution of the EU will impact on EU-Turkish energy relations and could mitigate challenges therein.

## MIGRATION

The presence of Turkish communities in Europe and the prospects of further migration into Europe have traditionally been prime factors stalling Turkey's accession process and have driven the EU into highly conservative policies on Turkish EU membership and on visa policy. But the reality is that Turkey is rapidly changing, having become a country of net immigration in recent years. It has dramatically changed its policies towards migration, in particular on the issues of asylum, irregular migration and visas, and is in the process of becoming a more rule-bound, less security-oriented and in some areas more liberal country.

Turkish migration policies have become part of Turkish foreign policy, leading Turkey to be more fully connected with its neighborhood. This is not to say that problems do not abound. Turkey is in fact one of the most important passage countries of (non-Turkish) irregular migrants to the EU through the Greek-Turkish border. In sharp contrast to the EU, Turkey's liberalized visa policy in the past years has led to a stark increase in the number of people entering Turkey from the neighborhood. The Syrian crisis is adding fuel to the fire, in view of the constantly mounting numbers of Syrian refugees entering Turkey. The future evolution of the EU will also have an important impact on EU-Turkey relations in the area of migration. Will the EU become more inward looking and closed in wake of the Eurozone crisis and what impact will the visa liberalization process have on Turkey's accession process in a future EU? These questions are approached in the second part of this volume.

## CITIZENSHIP AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Turkish civil society has evolved immensely in the past decade. The third part of this book observes the evolution of civil society's approach towards Europe, and in particular how the Eurozone crisis is affecting Turkish civil society's perception of the EU. Vice versa, European public opinion and civil society attitudes towards Turkey are also changing. This section thus addresses whether and how the Eurozone crisis and Turkey's economic strength are shaping European views of Turkey, and how new forms of populism in Europe are impacting on the Turkey question, possibly impeding Turkey's accession process. Finally, contributors explore whether the debate on the future of Europe and the ensuing prospects for a re-energized European public space will open new avenues for Turkish-European civil society collaboration.

Preliminary findings on all these issues were presented and discussed with academics, experts, policy makers and civil society representatives from the EU and Turkey in various conference in European capitals. Collecting the main studies published in the second cycle of the project, this collective volume - *Global Turkey in Europe II* - intends to contribute to a comprehensive discussion on shaping a common Turkish-European future with an eye to key global challenges and opportunities facing both the EU and Turkey.





# Executive Summary

This study is comprised of three main parts. The first chapter deals with **energy issues** in EU-Turkey relations. It is kicked off by David Koranyi's and Nicolò Sartori's contribution on *EU-Turkish Energy Relations in the Context of EU Accession Negotiations: Focus on Natural Gas*. The authors argue that the European Union (EU) and Turkey have been on a divergent path over the past five years, but energy security is one of those sectors where the two partners would clearly benefit from closer cooperation. The continuous stalling and ambiguity on the part of the EU as regards the opening of the energy chapter of Turkey's accession negotiations may encourage a less cooperative energy policy from Ankara that is in the interests of no member state. At the same time, Ankara should recognize that thinking long-term, acceding to the Energy Community and thus adopting the energy acquis at the earliest possible occasion will ultimately benefit Turkey and act as a safeguard against regional suppliers abusing their dominant positions, without undermining Turkey's negotiating positions with Brussels on eventual EU membership. In *The Potential Role of Turkey in a Globalising Gas Market* Mehmet Doğan Üçok continues this theme and suggests that in a changing global energy landscape, Turkey and the EU could have more opportunities to enhance their energy security, benefiting from the developments in the global LNG scenario and of the energy fields in Shah Deniz, the Eastern Mediterranean, and Iraq. Especially the recent TANAP agreements show that Turkey is starting to play a significant role in the transportation of the region's resources to the west, and become a "geographically natural" gas bridge, or a possible energy hub. To facilitate this further, Turkey's main policy objective in the governance of natural gas should be the formation of a transparent, liberal and competitive gas market. In *Can Eastern Mediterranean Gas Discoveries Have a Positive Impact on Turkey-EU Relations?* Ayla Gürel and Fiona Mullen turn to the significance which gas finds in the Eastern Mediterranean can have for the Cyprus problem. A Cyprus settlement would allow the transfer of Eastern Mediterranean gas to the EU via Turkey, thus increasing Turkey's strategic significance for the EU as a key gas transit country for Europe's gas supplies. More critically, it would clear the way for meaningful progress in Turkey's EU accession process,

which has been stalled because many chapters are being blocked for reasons related to the Cyprus problem. To date, gas found offshore Cyprus has made such a settlement more difficult by deepening the parties' divisions over sovereignty and has thus become an impediment to progress in Turkey-EU relations. Yet, the authors argue, there is a way in which the gas discovered in the Eastern Mediterranean could conceivably help Turkey-EU relations: namely, a gas-cooperation scenario involving Israel, Cyprus and Turkey that offers strong enough incentives for all parties to solve the Cyprus problem. The next contribution – *Untangling the Turkey-KRG Energy Partnership: Looking Beyond Economic Drivers* by Gönül Tol – looks at Turkish energy politics in the context of another long-standing conflict. The author points out that for decades Turkey has viewed Iraq primarily through the lens of its own Kurdish problem. In the aftermath of the first Gulf War, Ankara shunned direct contact with Iraqi Kurds and opposed the incorporation of the oil-rich city of Kirkuk into a Kurdish federal state, fearing that it would strengthen Iraqi Kurds' drive for independence and lead to similar demands on the part of Turkey's own Kurdish community. But Turkey's Iraq policy began to shift in late 2008 under the ruling Justice and Development Party. Past tensions have been supplanted by a new energy partnership. In May 2012, Turkey and the Kurdistan Regional Government cut a deal to build one gas and two oil pipelines directly from Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq. Gönül Tol argues that Turkey's recent energy partnership with the KRG is not driven solely by energy considerations but has become an essential component of Turkey's regional strategic outlook. Changing regional and domestic dynamics have pushed Turkey to recalibrate its Iraq policy, making the KRG a strategic ally as an alternative source of energy, a buffer against a hostile Baghdad and Iran, and a partner in Turkey's quest to resolve its Kurdish problem.

The second chapter deals with **migration** and the special case of the Syrian crisis within this context. In *Turkey's Migration Transition and its Implications for the Euro-Turkish Transnational Space* Ahmet İçduygu looks at an area of the Euro-Turkish migration regime that has been overlooked: the migration transition of Turkey as it rapidly develops from a net emigration setting to a net immigration setting. Focusing on the last hundred-year history of emigration and immigration flows in Turkey, İçduygu analyses various stages of migration transition in the country. Turkey has changed its migration profile from the massive emigration of the 1960s and 1970s to extensive immigration during the

1990s and 2000s. The transformation of Turkey's migration policies has been greatly affected by the country's exposure to globalization and its integration into the European migratory system. At the same time, Turkey's migration transition has also had repercussions on this transnational space. As Turkey undergoes migration transition, the asymmetric relationship between the EU and Turkey tends to evolve towards relatively symmetrical relations as reflected in the readmission agreement and the launching of the "visa liberalization dialogue". The issue of visa liberalization is further elaborated in Gerald Knaus' contribution on *EU-Turkey Relations: A Visa Breakthrough?* He argues that visa liberalization holds out a promise of restoring trust between the EU and Turkey, unlike any other measure that might be implemented in the coming years. Progress towards visa liberalization for Turkish citizens would create a win-win situation, it would be good for Turkish students and businesspeople, and tourism from Turkey could provide a boost to European economies. By 2015, Turkish citizens might be able to travel to 30 EU member states and Schengen countries without a visa, which would be the most important breakthrough in EU-Turkey relations since the launch of EU accession talks in 2005. The book then turns to asylum policy and the Syrian special case. Juliette Tolay argues in *The EU and Turkey's Asylum Policy in Light of the Syrian Crisis* that in the past, Turkey's asylum policy was considered as highly deficient, in comparison with the higher standards of the EU. Recently, this perception has been changing, with Turkey's newly adopted law on foreigners, which contrasts with the EU's slow-paced moves towards standardizing asylum policies and its restrictive approaches towards Syrian refugees. Unlike the EU's de facto closed-door policy for many Syrian refugees, Turkey has applied so far an open-door policy towards Syrian citizens seeking refuge at its southern borders. Moving forward, there seem to be many ways in which Turkey and the EU could work together on refugee policy in general, and on the Syrian refugee crisis in particular. At the core of this reassessment of asylum practices is the need to take seriously the concept of solidarity, meaning solidarity among EU member states, solidarity with countries hosting large numbers of refugees in the region, and, most importantly, solidarity with the refugees themselves. Delving further into the Syrian crisis and its meaning for EU-Turkey relations, Nathalie Tocci in *Turkey, Europe and the Syrian Crisis: What Went Wrong?* maintains that Syria should have united, not torn, Turkey and Europe apart. It should have led both sides to work together, and through closer

foreign policy coordination, possibly rebuild part of that long-lost trust that is badly needed to re-launch the broader EU-Turkey agenda. But when on August 21 a chemical bombardment killed hundreds on the outskirts of Damascus, the debate polarized. Turkey was quick to jump on the interventionist bandwagon. The European Union took a different line. With the sole exception of France, no member state openly backed the idea of a military attack without a UN Security Council resolution.

The third chapter deals with the **citizenship and civil society** questions and is opened by Ayhan Kaya and Raffaele Marchetti with a contribution on *Europeanization, Framing Competition and Civil Society in the EU and Turkey*. The authors examine the relationship between the European Union and Turkey with a particular focus on the Europeanization of Turkish civil society. They explore three different framings developed by civil society organizations in Turkey with regard to the Europeanization process since the 1999 Helsinki Summit of the European Union: Euro-enthusiastic, Euro-sceptic and critical Europeanist attitudes generated by different civil society actors as a response to the changing political, social, economic and cultural climate between Turkey and the European Union as well as within Turkey itself. Consequently, the authors also show the transformative effect of the Occupygezi movement on the mindsets of secular groups, who were previously Euro-sceptic. Turning to a more specific citizenship question, in *"Euro-Turks": A Commentary* Anna Triandafyllidou comments on the relevance of the term Euro-Turks which has been coined to distinguish Turks who live in continental Europe from those who live in Turkey. The term may be seen as a fundamental contradiction with the political discourses that consider Turkey as part of Europe and hence as a future member of the European Union. The relevant populations do not use this term to refer to themselves and part of the reason why the term Euro-Turks has not gained high currency in either political or academic debates is precisely its ambivalent connotation, that can be seen as positive, signaling belonging, but also negative, as signaling separation both from "other Europeans" and from "other Turks". Finally, Eduard Soler I Lecha in *Crises and Elections: What are the Consequences for Turkey's EU Bid?* examines the effects of the economic crisis in Europe and the political tensions in Turkey on Turkey-EU relations. The EU crisis has weakened Turkey's traditional allies, made European public opinion more reluctant to enlarging the EU further, deteriorated the EU's image in Turkey and had an ambivalent effect for the prospects of conflict-resolution in the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey, in turn, has entered a

zone of political turbulence that has created serious concerns in the EU. With these crises in the background, Turkey and the EU will hold crucial elections. The May 2014 European elections will offer a certain picture of the impact of the economic crisis on European citizens' views regarding the European project, which will have a significant influence on many EU policies, including enlargement. With the rise of anti-establishment and populist forces, the number of MEPs that vehemently oppose Turkey's membership in the EU will increase. This could have an unexpected effect: if they employ an aggressive Islamophobic discourse regarding Turkey, mainstream parties could be forced to reaffirm the need for a fair treatment of Turkey's candidacy. Yet, the author suggests, European politicians and EU institutions will think twice before making any gesture that could be interpreted as supporting or rewarding the Turkish government, unless there is a consistent effort to reduce domestic political polarisation and to bring the reform process back on track.

In her conclusions to this collective volume, *The Future of Europe, Differentiated Integration and Turkey's Role*, Meltem Müftüler-Baç suggests that the future of the European Union in terms of its final frontiers and political structure lies at the epicentre of the European public debate. What impact would Turkish EU membership have on the future of Europe? Turkish membership could be a blessing in disguise. The evolution of the EU towards a path of differentiated integration, with a new type of membership for Turkey, could provide the Union with further opportunities to deepen integration in different policy areas. It might adopt the EU *acquis* on key policies such as energy, transport, the single market or common security and defence, but remain outside of the EU framework for the Social Charter, or the Schengen regime. If Turkey becomes one of the first examples of such a scheme, the future of European integration would drastically change, transforming the EU into a new blend of an organizational core, and a system of functionally differentiated units.



# 1.

## EU-Turkish Energy Relations in the Context of EU Accession Negotiations: Focus on Natural Gas

*David Koranyi and Nicolò Sartori*

### INTRODUCTION: THE STATE OF EU-TURKEY RELATIONS

The European Union (EU) and Turkey have been on a divergent path over the past five years. The EU has been preoccupied with its own financial and economic crisis, while struggling with enlargement fatigue. Turkey, buoyed by its own dynamic economic growth, has been increasingly alienated from the EU. Accession negotiations have been practically frozen over the past three years. The alienation of the partners escalated after the police crackdown on the Gezi Park protests in Turkey in May/June 2013, when criticism on the EU's part was met with indignation and hostility on the part of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and other leading Turkish government officials.<sup>1</sup>

Tensions have been reduced markedly since. The passage of the German elections in September – coupled with the more amenable administration of President François Hollande in France since last year – have helped to create a calmer, mildly more supportive atmosphere towards Turkey within the EU. While Turkey's economy is slowing down, Ankara's ambitious political and market expansion strategy towards the Middle East and North Africa is increasingly under threat from an escalating turmoil in Syria, Egypt and Iraq in particular.

Turkey has therefore also been prompted to reconsider its cooling relations with the EU. Indeed, on 23 October 2013 the EU announced that it will rekindle accession talks with Turkey in early November. The announcement is a cautious, yet encouraging sign that EU-Turkish relations may return to a more constructive path after years of misgivings and mutual accusations.

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<sup>1</sup> “Erdogan Lashes out at EU, UN over Egypt v Turkey Unrest Reaction,” in *RT News*, 28 July 2013, <http://rt.com/news/erdogan-slams-eu-reaction-egypt-695>.

Energy security is one of those sectors where the two partners could benefit from closer cooperation. In April 2013, Commissioner Füle, responsible for enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy, called for the opening of the energy chapter in the accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU.<sup>2</sup> A few months later, the Commission highlighted that “Turkey is a [...] a strategic partner for the European Union. Turkey, with its large, dynamic economy, is an important trading partner for the EU and a valuable component of EU competitiveness through the Customs Union. *Turkey has a strategic location, including on energy security, and plays an important regional role.*” [emphasis added]<sup>3</sup>

In this contribution we will explore energy relations between Turkey and the EU in the context of EU accession talks. The paper focuses strongly on natural gas as a strategic component of these relations.

## TURKEY’S ENERGY POLICY

Turkey’s total primary energy consumption has more than doubled over the last two decades as a result of its exceptional economic performance, passing from roughly two quadrillion British thermal unit (Btu) in 1990 to five quadrillion in 2011. Today, the country is one of the fastest-growing energy markets in the world, and it tops the list of members of the International Energy Agency (IEA) as for total energy consumption.<sup>4</sup> In terms of increase in natural gas and electricity demand, over the last decade, Turkey was second only to China.<sup>5</sup>

Turkey is heavily dependent on external hydrocarbon supplies in

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<sup>2</sup> “EU Commission calls for opening of energy chapter in Turkish accession process”, in *Hurriyet Daily News*, 16 April 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/?pageID=238&nID=45042&NewsCatID=351>.

<sup>3</sup> European Commission, *Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014* (COM(2013) 700 final), 16 October 2013, p. 21 and 40, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52013dc0700:en:not>. See also European Commission, *Turkey 2013 Progress Report* (SWD(2013) 417 final), 16 October 2013, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=swd:2013:0417:fin:en:pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> The IEA is composed of a total 28 members. For a complete list of members, see the IEA website: <http://www.iea.org/countries>. For further details on Turkey, see IEA, *Energy Policies of IEA Countries. Turkey 2009 Review*, Paris, IEA, 2010, <http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/name,3909,en.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: *Turkey’s Energy Strategy*, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkeys-energy-strategy.en.mfa>.



order to meet its growing demand as a result of the limited indigenous conventional fossil fuel resources available under its soil.<sup>6</sup> Today, external resources meet 75 percent of the country's total energy demand. The country imports around 90 percent of its total liquid fuels consumption and – according to the IEA – its imports are expected to double over the next decade, though a slowing economy and improvements in energy intensity rates might mitigate that growth. Turkey relies almost exclusively on imports to meet its domestic demand for natural gas, which nearly tripled in the decade between 2001 and 2011 and is expected to almost double again by 2030. Natural gas has overtaken oil in the Turkish energy mix, becoming the most important fuel in terms of volume consumed (45.3 billion cubic meters (bcm) in 2012) and contributing to roughly half of the country's electricity generation.<sup>7</sup>

The pillars of Ankara's strategy to meet such an extraordinary consumption increase are: "(i) diversify its energy supply routes and sources; (ii) increase the share of renewables and include the nuclear in its energy mix; (iii) take significant steps to increase energy efficiency; (iv) contribute to Europe's energy security."<sup>8</sup> Over the last decade the Turkish government has developed an ambitious external energy policy. Thanks to a fortunate position – surrounded by producing countries to its north, east and south – and to its new pivotal regional role, Turkey has been able to implement a successful energy policy, which has secured significant volumes of hydrocarbons and attracted huge investments for the realization of ambitious energy transportation projects (see Annex).

Turkey has managed to develop a diverse portfolio of external gas suppliers. As of 2011, Russia is the main gas supplier with 24 bcm delivered annually, followed by Azerbaijan (6 bcm), Iran (5 bcm), Algeria (4 bcm via liquefied natural gas (LNG)) and Nigeria (1.2 bcm via LNG). With the completion of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ezurum (BTE) pipeline in 2006, Turkey achieved

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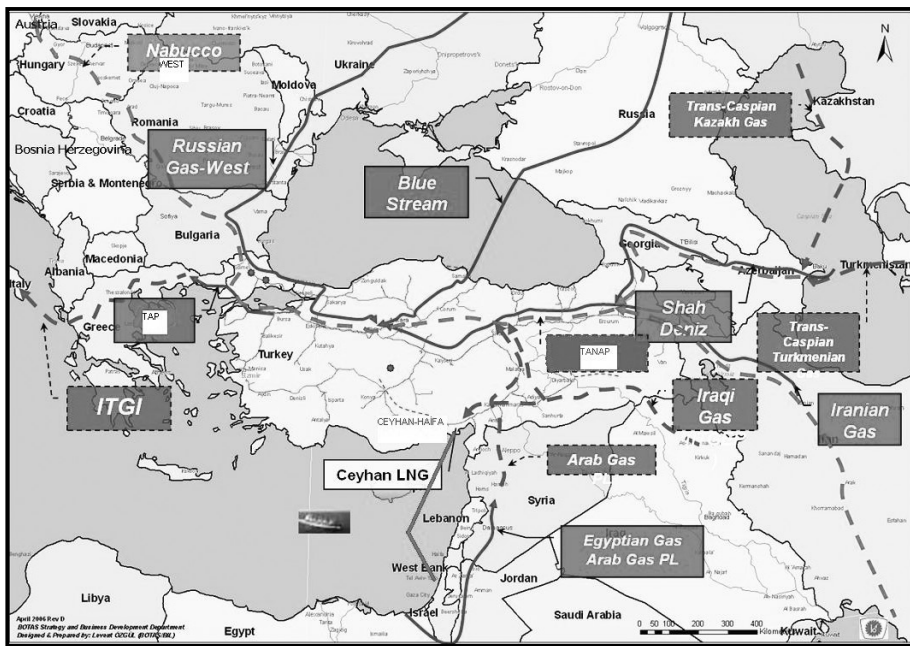
<sup>6</sup> According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), Turkey has a potentially significant shale oil and gas resource base, exploration of which started recently. For details, see Ch. 26 in: EIA, *Technically Recoverable Shale Oil and Shale Gas Resources: An Assessment of 137 Shale Formations in 41 Countries Outside the United States*, Washington, U.S. Department of Energy, June 2013, <http://www.eia.gov/analysis/studies/worldshalegas>.

<sup>7</sup> IEA, *Oil and Gas Security Emergency Response of IEA Countries. Turkey 2013 update*, Paris, IEA, 2013, <http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/name,38110,en.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: *Turkey's Energy Strategy*, cit.

the objective of transporting westward the gas resources available in the Caspian region. At the same time, the construction of the Blue Stream undersea pipeline – volumes of which add to the Russian gas transported via Romania and Bulgaria through the Trans-Balkan pipeline – ensures secure and direct access to additional Russian resources, and cements the energy partnership between Ankara and Moscow. The Baku-Tiblisi-Cehyan (BTC) oil pipeline that bypasses both Russian territory and the congested Bosphorus Strait, the Kirkuk-Ceyhan oil pipeline from Iraq and the Tabriz-Ankara gas pipeline from Iran complete the Turkish international pipeline network. In total, there are two international oil pipelines in operation, with a total annual handling capacity of 2.6 million barrels per day (mb/d), and four gas import pipelines,<sup>9</sup> with a total capacity of 46.6 bcm.<sup>10</sup>

### Map 1. International Gas Pipeline Projects



Source: BOTAŞ website, <http://www.botas.gov.tr/images/icerik/harita/BotasProjeE.jpg>.

<sup>9</sup> There is a fifth existing international (undersea) pipeline that is used to ship gas from Turkey to Greece. This pipeline is called the Turkey-Greece Interconnector, and was inaugurated in 2008.

<sup>10</sup> IEA, *Oil and Gas Security Emergency Response of IEA Countries ...*, cit.

Yet, as the bulk of gas supplies come from Russia and Iran at a high price,<sup>11</sup> the effects of which are further amplified by a low Turkish lira, Turkey is determined to secure additional sources of lower-priced supply. Turkey's energy bill makes up the bulk of the current account deficit endangering its dynamic economic growth; for this reason, decreasing its dependence on expensive Iranian and Russian gas and developing a better negotiating position *vis-à-vis* external suppliers are considered strategic goals.

Turkey's primary strategic interest is, therefore, to further diversify and increase access to gas resources in order to satisfy its skyrocketing gas demand. At the same time, Ankara hopes that this effort will help to put Turkey at the core of a regional energy trading system, and have the potential to transform it from a transit country into a strategic energy hub. The already-planned Trans-Anatolia gas pipeline (TANAP), which is expected to bring gas from the Caspian fields to the EU border, a gas pipeline possibly connecting Iraq and Turkey and sourcing gas primarily from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), and potential gas linkages with Israel/Cyprus and Iran are the hallmarks of this ambitious strategy.

Turkey's own structural weakness – the heavy dependence on foreign energy resources – has become a driver for closer cooperation between Ankara and the neighbouring resource-rich countries. Moreover, as repeatedly stressed by government officials and policy-makers, contributing to Europe's energy security is one of the country's strategic objectives in the energy domain. Nevertheless, satisfying domestic demand enjoys primacy under any circumstances. Turkey's own dynamic increase in gas demand may affect the country's role as a crucial transit state to Europe, as significant quantities of gas could be “caught” in Turkey.

The two sides would benefit from enhanced energy cooperation. On the one hand, the EU would gain a reliable alternative supply route to access Caspian and potentially Eastern Mediterranean, Central Asian, Iraqi and perhaps even Iranian volumes, with the result that it would further diversify its imports from Russia. Turkey, on the other hand, would benefit from transit fees and other energy-generated revenues. Even more importantly, closer energy cooperation could demonstrate the fundamen-

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<sup>11</sup> “Turkey to sue Iran over natural gas price”, in *Today's Zaman*, 14 March 2012, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-274244-turkey-to-sue-iran-over-natural-gas-price.html>; see also Alex Jackson, “Turkey puts Pressure on Iran over Gas Prices”, in *Natural Gas Europe*, 23 January 2012, <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/turkey-iran-over-gas-prices->

tal role of Turkey as partner for, and eventually as a member of, the EU. In theory, the centrality of Turkey's position in the EU energy diversification strategy gives Ankara strong political leverage in its relationship with Brussels. In practice, however, the perception of a drift of Turkey in Europe and the increasing irrelevance of the EU in Turkey, the slowness of the accession negotiations and Turkey's own domestic and foreign exigencies may push Ankara into a less cooperative and more self-absorbed energy partnership, to the detriment of the EU's energy security and EU-Turkish relations.

## ENERGY AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EU

Turkey's energy security policy has a strong European dimension, which is expected to play an important role in accession negotiations with the EU. At the same time, however, the uncertain status of those negotiations could negatively impact on the success of EU-Turkey cooperation in the field of energy.

The link between Turkey's indispensable role for European energy security and the EU accession process has been underlined repeatedly by high-level policymakers in Ankara. In 2007, the then Energy Minister Hilmi Güler confirmed such an approach, arguing that "Turkey's membership perspective and the [...] accession negotiations with the EU will be a driving force for the realization of joint projects which will enhance the supply security of Turkey and the EU."<sup>12</sup> Under these assumptions, Ankara has announced its availability to go ahead with closer cooperation in the energy sector, stressing that "the opening of the energy chapter [of the EU accession negotiations] will surely pave the way for negotiations with the EU on Turkey's membership to the Energy Community."<sup>13</sup>

Given the diverse perceptions among Members States both of Turkey's accession and of energy security priorities and interests within the EU, the approach on the EU's side has proved to be rather mixed. In 2007, Olli Rehn, then Commissioner responsible for enlargement, stressed that the progressive and well-managed integration of Turkey into the EU should

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<sup>12</sup> EU-Turkey Joint Press Release: *Turkey and the EU: Together for a European Energy Policy. High Level Conference in Istanbul on 5 June*, Istanbul, 5 June 2007, <http://www.avrupainfo.isomertest.com/Files/File/jointprelase-en.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: *Turkey's Energy Strategy*, cit.

be part of a strategy to manage efficiently, among other things, future energy security challenges.<sup>14</sup> However, his energy counterpart, Andris Piebalgs, preferred to keep the two issues separate, clarifying that the process of energy cooperation with Turkey in the framework of the Energy Community “has nothing to do with the EU accession [and that] the one does not prejudge the other or vice versa.”<sup>15</sup>

Since 2005, accession negotiations have been delayed for long periods due to stagnation in the political relations between the EU and Turkey.<sup>16</sup> Within the EU, enlargement fatigue and the preponderance of the Eurozone crisis, allied to increasing criticism of Turkey’s democratic development and the continuing standoff over the Cyprus settlement, have resulted in little overall enthusiasm in pursuing Turkish membership in earnest. On Turkey’s side, a growing frustration with what it sees as the EU’s stalling tactics, and new-found confidence resulting from its dynamic economic development and increasing regional and indeed global clout have led to a reduced willingness to comply with the EU’s conditions (regarding for example the democratic reform process).<sup>17</sup>

Energy is technically among the issues on which Turkey and the EU could start negotiations right away, as it is among neither the eight chapters<sup>18</sup> that cannot be opened as a result of the Council Decision of December 2006 adopted in retaliation for Turkey’s refusal to implement the 2005 Ankara protocol that would allow Greek Cypriot ships and aircrafts

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<sup>14</sup> “Olli Rehn: Turkey membership ‘vital’ for EU”, in *EurActiv*, 23 October 2007, <http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/olli-rehn-turkey-membership-vital-eu/article-167807>.

<sup>15</sup> Andris Piebalgs, *EU and Turkey: Together for a European Energy Policy*, Speech at the conference “Turkey and the EU”, Istanbul, 5 June 2007 (Speech/07/368), [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-07-368\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-07-368_en.htm).

<sup>16</sup> For in-depth analyses of this political stagnation, see several contributions published in the *Global Turkey in Europe* series, <http://www.iai.it/content.asp?langid=2&contentid=778>.

<sup>17</sup> Senem Aydın-Düzgit and E. Fuat Keyman, “EU-Turkey Relations and the Stagnation of Turkish Democracy”, in *Global Turkey in Europe Working Papers*, No. 2 (December 2012), [http://www.iai.it/pdf/GTE/GTE\\_WP\\_02.pdf](http://www.iai.it/pdf/GTE/GTE_WP_02.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> These eight chapters are 1-Free Movement of Goods, 3-Right of Establishment and Freedom to Provide Services, 9-Financial Services, 11-Agriculture and Rural Development, 13-Fisheries, 14-Transport Policy, 29-Customs Union and 30-External Relations. For details, see Council of the European Union, *2770th Council Meeting General Affairs*, Brussels, 11 December 2006 (16289/06 Presse 352), p. 8-9, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/92122.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/92122.pdf).

to use Turkish ports and airports, nor the five chapters<sup>19</sup> on which France casted its veto in 2007. Energy has nevertheless not been among the 13 chapters<sup>20</sup> already opened, since Nicosia has threatened to block any attempt to deepen negotiations on energy issues as part of its unilateral blockage of the opening of six chapters<sup>21</sup> since December 2009.

The Commission, and Commissioner Füle in particular, are determined to revive the accession process on topics that are of strategic interest to both parties, including energy. Commissioner Füle called for the opening of the energy chapter in Turkey's EU accession negotiations in April 2013, on the basis of the success in – theoretically at least – allowing for the opening of the negotiations on Chapter 22, which was supported both by France (that blocked it earlier) and Germany.<sup>22</sup> The final aim of the Commission is to implement and enforce the EU energy *acquis* which, according to Chapter 15, “consists of rules and policies, notably regarding competition and state aids (including in the coal sector), the internal energy market (opening up of the electricity and gas markets, promotion of renewable energy sources), energy efficiency, nuclear energy and nuclear safety and radiation protection.”<sup>23</sup>

Commissioner Füle's initiative represents the last institutional attempt to strengthen energy cooperation between the EU and Turkey, finally – and explicitly – linking it to the accession negotiations. One year before,

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<sup>19</sup> These five chapters are 11-Agriculture and Rural Development, 17-Economic and Monetary Policy, 22-Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments, 33-Financial and Budgetary Provisions, and 34-Institutions. See Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: *Turkey-EU Relations*, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/reasons-between-turkey-and-the-european-union.en.mfa>.

<sup>20</sup> These are 4-Free Movement of Capital, 6-Company Law, 7-Intellectual Property Law, 10-Information Society and Media, 12-Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy, 16-Taxation, 18-Statistics, 20-Enterprise and Industrial Policy, 21-Trans-European Networks, 25-Science and Research, 27-Environment, 28-Consumer and Health Protection, and 32-Financial Control. Chapter 25 has been provisionally closed. See *Ibidem*.

<sup>21</sup> These chapters are 2-Freedom of Movement for Workers, 15-Energy, 23-Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, 24-Justice, Freedom and Security, 26-Education and Culture, and 31-Foreign, Security and Defence Policy. See *Ibidem*.

<sup>22</sup> For an analysis of the impact of the opening of Chapter 22, see: Szymon Ananicz, “A new impetus in relations between Ankara and Brussels”, in *CeWeekly*, No. 314 (23 October 2013), <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/ceweekly/2013-10-23/a-new-impetus-relations-between-ankara-and-brussels>.

<sup>23</sup> See European Commission website: *Chapters of the acquis* (last update: 27 June 2013), <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/chapters-of-the-acquis>.

in May 2012, Brussels launched the “Positive EU-Turkey Agenda” as an effort to find a way around the Cypriot veto. The Commission repeatedly emphasized that the Positive Agenda was not aimed at replacing Turkey’s accession process, but instead at supporting the country towards integration into the EU energy system. Nevertheless, the launch of the Positive Agenda initiative was perceived by many Turkish stakeholders as a European attempt to dissociate energy cooperation from the thorny issue of Turkey’s accession to the EU, as earlier attempts to accelerate EU-Turkish cooperation on energy had proved.

Furthermore, the 2009 negotiations between the EU and Turkey on the country’s accession to the Energy Community – which would have transposed most of the energy *acquis* into Turkish law – ended in failure. In fact, already in 2007, the Turkish side argued that such an arrangement may suit countries that are not eligible for membership, but not an EU candidate, which expects the European “energy *acquis*” as part of its accession negotiations, not as part of some alternative process.”<sup>24</sup>

The continuous stall of the accession negotiations and the ambiguity around the opening of the energy chapter represent a serious barrier to the deepening of EU-Turkish gas cooperation and have practical repercussions on Turkey’s role as a key state for the transit of natural gas resources to Europe. As circumventing Turkey is difficult both physically and commercially, this might constitute a serious impediment to the EU’s efforts to bring additional gas supplies from the Caspian, Iraq and beyond.

## THE SOUTHERN GAS CORRIDOR: A TEST CASE FOR EU-TURKISH ENERGY COOPERATION

The diversification of oil and gas transit routes is one of the key objectives of the EU’s external energy strategy. In this context, the development of the Southern Gas Corridor represents a policy priority and a fundamental test case for energy cooperation between Brussels and Ankara. The Corridor is a transit route running from the gas-rich Caspian basin to the EU, bypassing Russian soil. In the initial plans of the Commission, the Corridor was to be based on “the integration of multiple pipeline systems

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<sup>24</sup> Katinka Barysch, “Turkey’s role in European energy security”, in *CER Essays*, December 2007, p. 6, <http://www.cer.org.uk/publications/archive/essay/2007/turkeys-role-european-energy-security>.

which would [have] transport[ed] gas not from a single supplier but from multiple sources, including Caspian countries, Iran, Iraq and the broader MENA region.”<sup>25</sup> While the objectives and nature of the Corridor itself have been reviewed on a number of occasions over the years for political, geographical, industrial and commercial reasons, the role of Turkey as a key transit country has never been called into question.

In the original plan conceived back in 2002, Turkey was to be crossed from east to west by Nabucco, a 3825 km-long pipeline implemented by national midstreamers, connecting the Turkish gas hub in Erzurum with Baumgarten in Austria, and delivering 31 bcm/year of gas to Southeast and Central Europe. Yet despite the strong political support of the Commission, and the backing of successive US administrations, the “Grand Nabucco” concept essentially failed, largely on account of the financial weakness of the consortium and the commercial shortcomings of the project (i.e. a lack of sufficient supplies in the early years, and a lack of sufficient demand in the Central European target markets).

Nevertheless, in May 2012, the Nabucco consortium revised its original plan, putting forward a shorter, cheaper, and less capable pipeline – Nabucco West – to transport Azerbaijani gas from the Turkish-Bulgarian border to Central Europe. The modifications proposed, however, were not sufficient to convince the Shah Deniz partners of the viability of Nabucco West, and in July 2013 the producing consortium selected the Trans-Adriatic pipeline (TAP), which is expected to deliver Azerbaijani gas to Italy via Greece and Albania.

The Southern Gas Corridor in general and Nabucco in particular played a central role in Ankara’s conception of its strategic relations with the EU. As highlighted by Turkish Deputy Undersecretary for Energy and Natural Resources Yusuf Yazar, “the ‘energy corridor’ role has strengthened Turkey’s position in the accession period [...]. In terms of European vital interests, the EU must shorten and ease the accession period to guarantee both the realization and operation of this ‘energy corridor’.”<sup>26</sup> In 2009, Prime Minister Erdogan confirmed this approach, saying that “If we are faced with a situation where the energy chapter is blocked, we would of

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<sup>25</sup> Tolga Demiryol, “The Geopolitics of Energy Cooperation between Turkey and the European Union”, in *L’Europe en Formation*, Vol. 54, No. 367 (Spring 2013), p. 109-134 at p. 16.

<sup>26</sup> Yusuf Yazar and Hasan Hüseyin Erkaya, “Whither Turkey’s Energy Policy?”, in *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (October- December 2007), p. 7-22 at p. 18, <http://files.setav.org/uploads/Pdf/yazar-erkaya.pdf>.



course review our position [on Nabucco].”<sup>27</sup> Similarly, the Turkish Minister of Energy Taner Yildiz argued that “with Nabucco, we believe we deserved [to be a member of] the EU.”<sup>28</sup> This – though to a much more limited degree – was echoed within the EU. In 2008, Jozias van Aarsten, EU coordinator for Nabucco, stressed that the success of the pipeline was to be considered a “stepping stone” toward Turkey’s EU membership.<sup>29</sup>

The reasons for Nabucco’s long delay and eventual failure are manifold,<sup>30</sup> and Turkey’s role was not insignificant in the final outcome. The lack of an agreement on gas cost and transit across Turkey has long been a significant obstacle to the EU’s Southern Corridor initiative. Since April 2008, when talks between Ankara and Baku started, the Turkish government proved to be a tough negotiator. The parties, in fact, were not able to fix a gas price, with Turkey willing to keep the price of \$120 per 1,000 cubic meters set in 2001, while their Azerbaijani counterparts expected to be able almost to double that price. Turkey’s 2008-09 normalization initiative with Armenia also possibly encouraged Azerbaijan’s intransigence. The parties were able to reach an overall<sup>31</sup> agreement only at the end of October 2011, meaning that there had therefore been a three-year period of uncertainty about the future of the supplies for the Corridor.

Turkey also revitalized its energy dialogue with Russia, with significant results. On 28 December 2011, the parties reached a deal allowing the Gazprom-led South Stream pipeline to pass through Turkey’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In exchange, Ankara secured significant price concessions from Gazprom, as Moscow agreed to renegotiate long-term oil-indexed gas contracts. The decision to negotiate transit access for

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<sup>27</sup> “Turkey tries to revive EU drive”, in *BBC News*, 19 January 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7837145.stm>.

<sup>28</sup> Cited in Tolga Demiryol, “The Geopolitics of Energy Cooperation between Turkey and the European Union”, cit., p. 120.

<sup>29</sup> “EU official says Nabucco gas pipeline project is now ‘more of a reality’”, in *Kiyvpost*, 18 February 2008, <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/world/eu-official-says-nabucco-gas-pipeline-project-is-n.html>.

<sup>30</sup> For a detailed analysis of why TAP eventually won, see Matthew Bryza and David Koranyi, “A Tale of Two Pipelines: Why TAP has won the day”, in *Natural Gas Europe*, 2 July 2013, <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/southern-corridor-strategic-importance-tap-nabucco>. See also Nicolò Sartori, “Energy and Politics: Behind the Scenes of the Nabucco-TAP Competition”, in *IAI Working Papers*, No. 13|27 (July 2013), <http://www.iai.it/pdf/DocIAI/iaiwp1327.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> A partial agreement on purchase and sale was reached in April 2011, while decisions concerning transit were agreed in October.

cheaper prices, however, was criticized by the EU: the success of South Stream, in fact, was clearly perceived as a vital risk for the feasibility of the Nabucco project and – more generally – for the Southern Gas Corridor initiative. Turkey's reliability as an energy partner of the EU was thus called into question.

Turkey also played an active role in the materialisation of what can be considered the ultimate killer of "Grand Nabucco": TANAP. The signature of a Memorandum of Understanding creating the TANAP pipeline consortium was almost simultaneous with the South Stream deal (26 December 2011), but its effects were much more dramatic for the future of the Nabucco project. TANAP is a pipeline expected to transport Azerbaijani natural gas from the Georgian-Turkish border to the Turkish-European border. SOCAR, Azerbaijan's national energy company, is the initial promoter and founding member of the consortium, with a controlling 80 percent stake.<sup>32</sup> Turkish firms BOTAŞ and TPAO are junior partners, with 15 percent and 5 percent stakes respectively. A major breakthrough in the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor, TANAP came about after it became apparent that the original Nabucco consortium was in no position to implement the project. Upstreamers, first and foremost SOCAR and key Shah Deniz consortium members BP and Statoil, took center stage. Turkey – eager to secure additional volumes of gas at a lower price from Azerbaijan – played along and agreed to take part in TANAP, albeit with a diminished role.

Turkey's move was instrumental in supporting Azerbaijan's attempt to acquire a much greater role throughout the whole Southern Gas Corridor value chain. Perceiving that deeper energy cooperation with the EU was unlikely to produce any significant – short-term – advantage (e.g. a gas price reduction), Ankara – exasperated by the lack of support from the EU for its accession, and also facing the commercial shortcomings of Nabucco – opted to pursue its own interests, turning to Azerbaijan (rather than to Brussels, which was mired in divisions between Member States) for leadership. The TANAP deal effectively gave impetus to the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor, but in doing so relegated the EU to the role of passive spectator, with potentially disadvantageous long-term consequences for both Turkey and the EU.

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<sup>32</sup> To be reduced to a - still controlling - 51 percent stake after the Shah Deniz II consortium members BP and Statoil take a 12 percent stake and Total a 5 percent stake in the near future.

## TURKEY'S ROLE AS STRATEGIC GAS TRANSIT CORRIDOR TO THE EU IN JEOPARDY?

The regional gas supply picture today is in stark contrast with that of five years ago, when – as mentioned above – one of the key weaknesses of the grand Nabucco concept was the lack of sufficient resources. Additional supplies of gas available for export to Europe from the Eastern Mediterranean, Iraq, Central Asia and Iran may come online over the next five to ten years, a significant portion of which could be – at least theoretically – shipped to Europe through Turkey. Though the availability of these resources for export cannot be taken for granted as the political obstacles to their export in particular are daunting (the Iranian nuclear dossier, the unresolved legal status of the Caspian Sea, the lack of a Cyprus settlement, among other things), they all potentially enhance the centrality of Turkey as a natural gas transit hub.

Recent major gas discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean (offshore Israel, Cyprus and potentially Lebanon and Syria) may be sourced to supply the Turkish market and transported beyond to Europe, should the underlying geopolitical frictions – first and foremost the Israeli-Turkish relationship – be sorted out. There are discussions over gas deliveries from Israel's Leviathan field to Turkey via an undersea pipeline to Mersin or Ceyhan which could amount to up to 8-16 bcm per year in the second half of the decade. A direct pipeline from Cyprus to Turkey seems utterly unfeasible short of a – currently distant-looking – settlement of the Cyprus problem, but cannot be excluded in the long-term. This would potentially bring additional volumes of Cypriot gas to Turkey (subject to further successful exploration around the island). On mainland Turkey, these pipelines could connect to the Turkish gas grid and potentially TANAP.

The rapprochement between the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq (KRG) and Turkey in recent years has opened up the option of gas supplies from Northern Iraq. The KRG's strong support was key in launching the still fresh and fragile "Kurdish opening" within Turkey, which already has the largest share of foreign direct investment in the KRI, including investment in many energy projects. Opening up KRG and Iraqi energy resources to the growing Turkish market, while diversifying oil and gas export routes to Europe and the world beyond, would contribute to the stabilization of Iraq and the region. The KRG could play a large part in supplying Turkey with natural gas, and, given its huge gas reserves, it could also become a supplier of Europe in the long run.

KRG estimates put its gas reserves between 2.8 and 5.6 trillion cubic meters (in addition to 45 billion barrels of oil). The KRG has already announced its plans to sell Turkey at least 10 bcm of gas annually beginning in late 2016 or early 2017 under a prospective gas sales agreement.<sup>33</sup> The KRG leadership talks of further quantities being available for export to Turkey and perhaps Europe, though even the first 10 bcm could be politically problematic due to the rise in domestic Iraqi demand provoked by additional needs for electricity generation. Furthermore, the KRG is facing a delicate balancing act: there is strong opposition from both the Iraqi federal government and the US to KRG gas exports to Turkey. Erbil prefers an agreement that grants a share of all exported Iraqi resources as opposed to only those from the KRI, but is using the prospect of independent export routes to put pressure on Baghdad to resolve the outstanding dispute over the sharing and management of hydrocarbon revenues. A comprehensive resolution is unlikely before the Iraqi elections next year, and will depend on the complex and evolving power relations between various Iraqi domestic and external actors. In any case, the KRG wants to press ahead with capitalizing on its natural resources, and Turkey is a hungry customer for its relatively cheap onshore gas.

Related to Iraqi gas exports to Turkey is the question of Iran. It is worth recalling that the original Nabucco concept, conceived in 2002, planned on shipping Iranian gas to Europe. As the nuclear stand-off with Iran intensified, the option of Iranian gas for Europe became a no-go. In the context of a potential resolution of the nuclear issue – a big if – Iran is still eyeing exporting gas to Europe via Turkey. At the same time, Iran is not interested in seeing Iraqi gas shipped to Turkey as it would compete against its own, and is therefore putting pressure on the (Shiite-led) Iraqi government to put off gas exports from the KRI.

A long sought-after source of European gas supply diversification is Central Asia, primarily Turkmenistan, but also Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. In devising the Southern Gas Corridor concept, the EU counted on supplies from at least Turkmenistan. Yet China is proactively buying up most supplies from all Central Asian suppliers and thus likely precluding supplies to Europe for the foreseeable future. In addition, the realization of the Trans-Caspian Pipeline has long been stalled and will likely remain elusive in the coming years due to the disagreements between Azerbaijan

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<sup>33</sup> "Iraqi Kurdish Autonomy to start exporting gas to Turkey in 2016", in *The Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 20 June 2013, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/152167>.

and Turkmenistan as well as the legal uncertainty surrounding the status of the Caspian Sea. Nevertheless, some gas from offshore Turkmenistan might make it to Europe should the completion of a Southern Gas Corridor with expanded capacities change the calculus in both Baku and Ashgabat.

As far as European exports of the above resources are concerned, TANAP could act as an impediment but also an enabler. The original Nabucco concept had a strategic advantage for Turkey and the EU inasmuch as it was a pipeline which was to be regulated by intergovernmental agreements that complied with EU rules throughout the entire length of the pipeline, including those on Third Party Access and unbundling. This is not the case as far as TANAP is concerned. Since Turkey is neither a member of the Energy Community, nor at the moment is planning to transpose the EU energy *acquis* into its legislation in the context of the EU accession negotiations, Azerbaijan, with a 51 percent stake in TANAP, will enjoy control over gas transits via the pipeline in Turkey, and will be able to allow the transit of additional gas volumes from other sources and to set transit tariffs. This is indeed an enviable position, one that Gazprom was longing for but unable to achieve in the past two decades in Ukraine.

Whereas the initial 10 bcm of gas is now locked down for European consumers for a period of 25 years (starting in 2019),<sup>34</sup> the transit of additional gas volumes from the wider region to Europe via TANAP can effectively be blocked by Azerbaijan, if Baku deems that these supplies compete against its own gas shipments to Europe. In the 2020s, Baku plans on shipping additional quantities of gas to Europe beyond the initial 10 bcm from Shah Deniz 2 from prospective Caspian offshore fields such as Absheron, Umid or ACG Deep, and may want to keep TANAP open to those volumes. Feeding East Med gas into TANAP and onward to Europe may not therefore be an option, and this might lead to the development of a separate, dedicated pipeline infrastructure to ship Iraqi and perhaps Eastern Mediterranean gas to Europe at significantly higher prices. On the other hand, TANAP may well prove to be an enabler if additional non-Azeri gas is transited through it in order to make the expensive pipeline more bankable with the help of early transit fees. It is worth mentioning that at the time of writing of this paper, the exact size and throughput capacity of TANAP was undecided as a result of disagreement between the consor-

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<sup>34</sup> BP, *Shah Deniz Major Sales Agreements with European Gas Purchasers Concluded*, 19 September 2013, <http://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/press/press-releases/shah-deniz-major-sales-agreements-with-european-gas-purchasers-c.html>.

tium members. Options range from a pipeline with an initial capacity of 16 bcm, scalable to between 24 bcm and 60 bcm.<sup>35</sup> This last figure would enable additional quantities of gas to be transferred to Europe, but would add significantly to the costs of TANAP, to which the private shareholders, especially BP and Statoil, which have no upstream projects beyond Shah Deniz II, object.

To be sure, TANAP does not sink once and for all Turkey's ambition to become a transit hub, nor does it preclude additional gas volumes reaching Europe later on. Other existing pipelines (through the revamp of Bortas's aging network) could be used, or new, dedicated pipelines could be built. But that would in all likelihood add significantly to costs and preclude or limit gas shipments to Europe at competitive prices. Thus TANAP may end up being a missed strategic opportunity for both Turkey and the EU in terms of the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor as a strategic project that goes beyond transporting gas from Azerbaijan and becomes the fourth gas superhighway to Europe.

## CONCLUSIONS

Turkey is in an ambiguous situation when it comes to its role as a strategic transit hub for energy supplies to Europe that defines its strategic posture in negotiations with the EU as well as regional suppliers. On the one hand, Turkey is in a strong position due to its geographic location. Turkey is also by far the fastest growing natural gas market in Europe and thus an important buyer of gas. On the other hand, its heavy dependence on gas imports, an expected increase in gas demand, exposure to high gas prices, scarce financial resources and lack of strategic focus weaken its ability effectively to leverage its role as gas transit hub with the EU and regional suppliers. As Turkey's decision-makers are squeezed to secure additional quantities of gas supplies, short-term political and economic considerations (securing price discounts) often trump strategic considerations.

The EU is to a large degree responsible for pushing Turkey into such a position. Its reluctance to proceed with the accession negotiations and the energy chapter in particular significantly reduced its ability to

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<sup>35</sup> Vladimir Socor, "Turkey Sees Opportunity in Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline Project", in *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 9, No. 164 (11 September 2012), [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=39826](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=39826).

drive the development of the Southern Gas Corridor and to influence Turkey's stance. The continuous stalling and ambiguity on the part of the EU as regards the opening of the energy chapter of Turkey's accession negotiations may encourage a less cooperative energy policy from Ankara that is in the interests of no member state. At the same time, Turkish foot-dragging on the Energy Community – though the misgivings are understandable – further precludes elevating EU-Turkish energy cooperation to a more strategic level. Ankara should recognize that thinking long-term, acceding to the Energy Community and thus adopting the energy *acquis* at the earliest possible occasion will ultimately benefit Turkey and act as a safeguard against regional suppliers abusing their dominant positions, without undermining Turkey's negotiating positions with Brussels on eventual EU membership.

To be sure, Turkey still has a very long way to go in terms of accession. It has opened only 14 of the 35 chapters and closed only one. The major stumbling blocks remain in place: low support in the public opinion of crucial EU member states such as Germany and France, the lack of a Cyprus settlement and slow progress and even relapse in terms of domestic reforms in Turkey. But reenergizing the accession process and the opening of the regional policy chapter is a positive step. This momentum should be seized by both Turkey and the EU to make progress in the realm of energy as well.





## 2.

# The Potential Role of Turkey in a Globalising Gas Market

*Mehmet Doğan Üçok*

The global energy landscape is changing rapidly and evolving towards a more globalised market. New connections between the regionalized markets in North America, Europe and industrialized Asia are anticipated as demand for gas grows strongly and new trade routes and flows emerge. The continued rise in the supply of unconventional gas plays an important role in the global picture, accounting for nearly half of the growth in global gas production. This is taking place first and foremost in North America, but has implications worldwide.

Conventional gas output has long been in decline in the US, but this is being more than compensated by a surge in unconventional gas. US liquified natural gas (LNG) exports could be strong enough to scale down the difference in gas price in regions importing US LNG. This changing outlook for gas production, in addition to developments in global LNG, have already started to redefine the global economic and geopolitical balances.

US natural gas imports of 76 billion cubic metres (bcm) in 2010 are projected to switch to exports of 34 bcm in 2035, due to increasing US unconventional gas production, which over the last five years has been comparable to the annual gas exports of Russia in 2012.<sup>1</sup> As John Deutch of the Massachusetts Institute for Technology remarks, "A United States hopelessly dependent on imported oil and natural gas is a thing of the past. Most energy experts now project that North America will have the capacity to be a net exporter of oil and natural gas by the end of this decade."<sup>2</sup> And as Robert Cekuta puts it, "If someone had suggested that just five years ago, they probably would have been laughed at."<sup>3</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Fatih Birol, *Global Energy Markets & Economic Competitiveness*, presentation at the IIEEC 4th Annual Energy Forum, Istanbul, 10 May 2013. Birol's opening address is available at <http://iieec.sabanciuniv.edu/events/4th-Annual-Energy-Forum-10-May-2013-IIEEC>.

<sup>2</sup> John Deutch, "The U.S. Natural-Gas Boom Will Transform the World", in *The Wall Street Journal*, 14 August 2012, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303343404577514622469426012.html>.

<sup>3</sup> According to Cekuta: "The United States Energy Information Administration projects that, due to increased domestic production, the U.S. will be almost completely self-sufficient

most significant question that still remains unanswered is the possible global geopolitical reach of this silent revolution and its implications.

In addition to the excess in the US, supply could be further extended by producing shale gas in Europe or China, if several difficulties such as the public's reluctance in the EU and water scarcity in China were resolved. If the success continues, unconventional gas production could help to accelerate the process of globalisation of gas markets, putting pressure on conventional gas suppliers.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN LNG

In addition to the developments in the US and the surge in unconventional gas, the volume of international LNG trade has grown exponentially during the 2000-2013 period,<sup>4</sup> as shown in Graph 1.

Although there was an unexpected 2% fall in the global LNG trade in 2012, largely driven by supply-side issues,<sup>5</sup> a significant expansion in global LNG trade is currently under way, and sources of LNG supply are becoming more diverse globally. The International Energy Agency (IEA) predicts, “[i]nter-regional natural gas trade increases by 2% per year, to reach nearly 1.1 tcm [trillions of cubic meters] in 2035. LNG accounts for nearly 60% of the increase in trade and, in combination with new sources of supply (conventional and unconventional) and evolving contractual structures, boosts the flexibility of global gas supply.”<sup>6</sup>

Looking ahead, price relationships between regional gas markets are set to strengthen as the liquefied natural gas trade becomes more flexible and contract terms evolve, meaning that changes in one part of the world will be

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in natural gas by 2035. Not that long ago, analysts maintained the U.S. would be importing 65% of our natural gas by 2035. We have granted export licenses already for two facilities to export liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the United States, exports which could begin as early as 2014 or 2015. If someone had suggested that just five years ago, they probably would have been laughed at.” See Robert F. Cekuta, *Unconventional Natural Gas: The U.S. Experience and Global Energy Security*, Address to the 2nd U.S.-Indonesia Energy Investment Roundtable, Jakarta, 6 February 2012, <http://www.state.gov/e/enr/rls/rem/2012/183875.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> Volume of LNG trade as a share of natural gas trade has also grown exponentially during the mentioned period. See Source: International Gas Union (IGU), *World LNG Report 2013*, p. 8, [http://www.igu.org/gas-knowhow/publications/igu-publications/IGU\\_world\\_LNG\\_report\\_2013.pdf](http://www.igu.org/gas-knowhow/publications/igu-publications/IGU_world_LNG_report_2013.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> International Energy Agency (IEA), *Medium-Term Gas Market Report 2013. Market Trends and Projections to 2018. Executive Summary*, Paris, IEA, 2013, p. 3, <http://www.iea.org/w/bookshop/add.aspx?id=446>.

<sup>6</sup> IEA, *World Energy Outlook 2013*, Paris, IEA, November 2013, p. 78.

felt more quickly in other parts. At its lowest level in 2012, natural gas in the United States traded at around a fifth of import prices in Europe and an eighth of those in Japan<sup>7</sup> (Graph 2). Due to the increasing unconventional gas supply, US LNG exports could scale down the difference in gas prices in regions importing US LNG, and not surprisingly, this could cause gas exporting countries to suffer a decline in trade revenues.

Within this changing global energy landscape, Turkey and the EU could have more opportunities to enhance their energy security, benefiting from the developments in the global LNG scenario, and development of the energy fields in Shah Deniz, the Eastern Mediterranean, and Iraq.

Considering that two thirds of the current contracts will expire in both Turkey and the EU within the next ten years, “there will be important leverage in the hands of European governments and European companies in order to negotiate the new contracts, which can reflect the market realities better than the existing contracts, which may be a way of Europe narrowing the gap between European and American gas prices. When those contracts were made, it was the market of sellers. Now the market is going to be a market of buyers.”<sup>8</sup>

Altogether, these developments could provide Turkey and the EU with better chances when signing new contracts. To facilitate this, and to bridge East and West, Turkey’s main policy objective in the governance of natural gas should be the formation of a transparent, liberal and competitive gas market. The following sections will elaborate on this issue.

## ENERGY OVERVIEW OF TURKEY

Turkey is projected to be the fastest growing energy market in the OECD in the next 10 years, with the main drivers of the growth in demand linked to economic growth, industrialisation and urbanisation. Energy consumption in Turkey, 1.5 toe/capita is still less than one-third the OECD average, reflecting a significant potential for growth, especially for electricity and natural gas demand. Turkey’s electricity demand has increased four-fold since 1990 and is estimated to almost double by 2020. In 2011, Turkey’s natural gas consumption showed a significant increase of about 18 percent with respect to the

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<sup>7</sup> IEA, *World Energy Outlook 2013*, cit., p. 46.

<sup>8</sup> Fatih Birol quoted in: Sarah Kent, “Expiring Gas Contracts Offer Europe Chance to Renegotiate Prices”, in *The Wall Street Journal*, 3 April 2013, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887323646604578400671019683206>.

previous year, in which it had consumed 37.7 bcm; in 2012, gas consumption increased to 45.3 bcm.<sup>9</sup>

Overall natural gas provides approximately one third of Turkey's total primary energy supply, which is the largest share of its energy supply mix, followed by oil, coal and renewables, and provides 43 percent, the largest share, of power generation, followed by coal, hydro and other renewables.<sup>10</sup>

The Turkish Petroleum Pipeline Corporation (BOTAŞ) announced that the expected demand for gas will reach 70 bcm in 2020.<sup>11</sup> While this growth in demand appears to be the highest rate among European countries, Turkey has limited domestic energy resources and imports approximately 75 percent of its total energy requirements. Since 99 percent of natural gas comes from imports, it constitutes an important energy security element for Turkey (Graph 3). Total energy imports constitute approximately 70 percent of Turkey's current account deficit.

According to the Turkish Energy Strategic Plan (2010-2014), Turkey is geographically close to two thirds (~72 percent) of the world's oil and gas reserves located in the Middle East, Russia, North Africa, the Caspian area and Central Asia<sup>12</sup> (see Graph 4). Current exploration and production activities in the Mediterranean will increase this figure. Utilizing this geostrategic proximity to the world's proven gas reserves to become an energy corridor (or

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<sup>9</sup> Turkish Energy Market Regulatory Authority (EMRA), *Natural Gas Market 2011 Sector Report*, August 2012 <http://www.emra.org.tr/index.php/naturalgas-market/naturalgas-publishments>. See also IEA, *Oil and Gas Security Emergency Response of IEA Countries. Turkey 2013 update*, 2013, <http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/name,38110,en.html>; EMRA, *Turkish Energy Market: An Investor's Guide 2012*, 2012, <http://www.emra.org.tr/index.php/epdk-yayinrapor/energy-investors-guide>.

<sup>10</sup> Grand National Assembly of Turkey, *Hearing of Taner Yıldız, Turkish Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, before the Plan and Budget Committee*, 14 November 2013 [in Turkish], [http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/dosya\\_p.indir?pDosyaAdi=F-1689806633/pbk14112013.pdf](http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/dosya_p.indir?pDosyaAdi=F-1689806633/pbk14112013.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Speech by Mehmet Konuk, BOTAŞ Acting General Manager, at the *Istanbul Energy and Economic Summit 2012*, Istanbul, 15 November 2012, <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/news/in-the-news/istanbul-energy-and-economic-summit-2012-realizing-shah-deniz-and-southern-gas-corridor-11-15-12-transcript>. The demand for gas 70 bcm (by 2020) is in line with IIEEC calculations of 66.42 bcm, based on compound annual growth rate (CAGR of 5% until 2020 and 3.6% in 2020-2030).

<sup>12</sup> Turkish Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, *Strategic Plan (2010-2014)*, April 2010, p. 29, [http://www.enerji.gov.tr/yayinlar\\_raporlar\\_EN/ETKB\\_2010\\_2014\\_Stratejik\\_Plani\\_EN.pdf](http://www.enerji.gov.tr/yayinlar_raporlar_EN/ETKB_2010_2014_Stratejik_Plani_EN.pdf). However, Russia has little interest in utilising Turkey as a transit country and Iran is heavily sanctioned. Russia and Iran together hold almost 50 percent of worlds proven conventional gas reserves.

a possible hub) between East and West, Turkey could enhance both its own energy security and contribute to EU's energy security.

Development of the Shah Deniz gas field in Azerbaijan will be significant for the establishment of the Southern Gas Corridor – via the Trans-Anatolian (TANAP) and Trans-Adriatic (TAP) pipelines – which will bring gas to Europe from the Caucasus as an alternative to Russian gas. In the future, gas coming from Iraq and the Mediterranean could also be tied in. Indeed, the arrival of Iraq with its plans to increase its natural gas production rapidly is important.

These developments, especially the recent TANAP agreements,<sup>13</sup> show that Turkey is starting to play a significant role in the transportation of the region's resources to the west, and become a “geographically natural” gas bridge, or a possible energy hub. If the Turkish energy market is liberalised with a strong legal base, and if a competitive environment – where supply and demand transparently creates a floating price delivering signals to investors – is created, then creation of gas-to-gas competition would be enhanced via attracting more companies to invest in the gas rich regions surrounding Turkey, enabling Turkey to become a regional hub. Hence, moving from a government-centered system to a market-based system emerges as an urgent need for Turkey, which is presented in the next section.

## STRUCTURE OF THE TURKISH NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY AND THE NEED FOR REFORM IN THE GOVERNANCE OF GAS

BOTAŞ was established in 1974 as a subsidiary of TPAO (Turkish Petroleum Corporation) for transporting crude oil through pipelines and importing natural gas, and was put in charge of the utilization of natural gas in 1990. Since then, BOTAŞ has had the monopolistic right to import natural gas (including LNG), transport, distribute, and sell it in Turkey at the price it sets. In 1995 BOTAŞ was restructured as a state-owned enterprise, but continued the activities of import, wholesale, transmission and distribution of natural gas until the Natural Gas Market Law No.4646 was passed in 2001.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> On 25 October 2011, an agreement for the purchasing and conveyance of gas from Azerbaijan in the context of the Trans-Anatolia pipeline project (TANAP) has been signed as a result of the negotiations which have been carried out between Turkey and Azerbaijan for about 3 years. On 28 November 2012 President of Azerbaijan İlham Aliyev has signed a series of law that the National Assembly of Azerbaijan sent him regarding the agreement for the purchasing and conveyance of gas.

<sup>14</sup> Law No. 4646, *Natural Gas Market Law* (Law on the Natural Gas Market and Amending the Law on Electricity Market), 18 April 2001, <http://www.erranet.org/>

This law was created to introduce competition into the Turkish gas market, legally unbundling the market activities and eliminating the market's monopolistic structure, and creating a market open to new entrants in all areas. Accordingly, the aim was to reduce BOTAS' market share to 20 percent by 2009. However, with the exception of the successful implementation of the distribution services transfer, certain provisions set out in the law, such as the contract release process and the restructuring process, have not yet been implemented. BOTAS is still responsible for the construction and operation of gas pipelines, and imports<sup>15</sup> and transports gas to consumers (power producers, large industrial customers and local distribution companies).

Furthermore, BOTAS sets the Turkish gas wholesale price each month and this is currently well below the average cost of imports. This artificially low gas price acts as a barrier to the entry of any potential participant in the wholesale gas market. While BOTAS' pricing methodology provides stability for consumers, the lack of price responsiveness to market conditions does not offer companies the commercial basis to enter, compete and invest in essential infrastructure such as gas storage and LNG re-gasification.

As of 2013, however, Turkey's energy market is entering a new, liberal era with a strong breakthrough, the establishment of EPIAŞ (*Enerji Piyasaları İşletme Anonim Şirketi*, Energy Markets Operating Corporation) with the new law regulating the Turkish electricity market (Electricity Market Law No. 6446, enacted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 14 March 2013). The new law – replacing all provisions of the previous one (Electricity Market Law No. 4628 of 3 March 2001) – establishes the legal grounds for a competitive, transparent, liquid and liberal electricity market. However, a comprehensive revision of the Natural Gas Market Law No. 4646 remains unrealized.

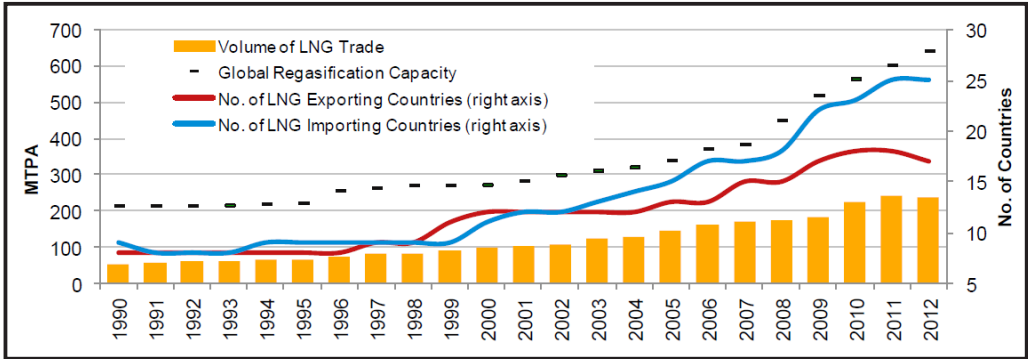
The establishment of EPIAŞ also opens up the possibility of extending the stock exchange to natural gas, oil and coal markets, carbon certificates and other related derivatives, upon the authorization of the Energy Market Regulatory Authority (EMRA). If the liberalisation of the Turkish natural gas market is also successfully accomplished in the following years, Turkey would then attract more investors to her energy stock market and to the surrounding gas rich regions, paving the way for gas-to-gas competition. Turkey would then have a stronger potential to develop into a regional energy trade hub, providing a bridge to the European energy exchange markets.

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[index.php?name=OE-eLibrary&file=download&id=262](http://index.php?name=OE-eLibrary&file=download&id=262).

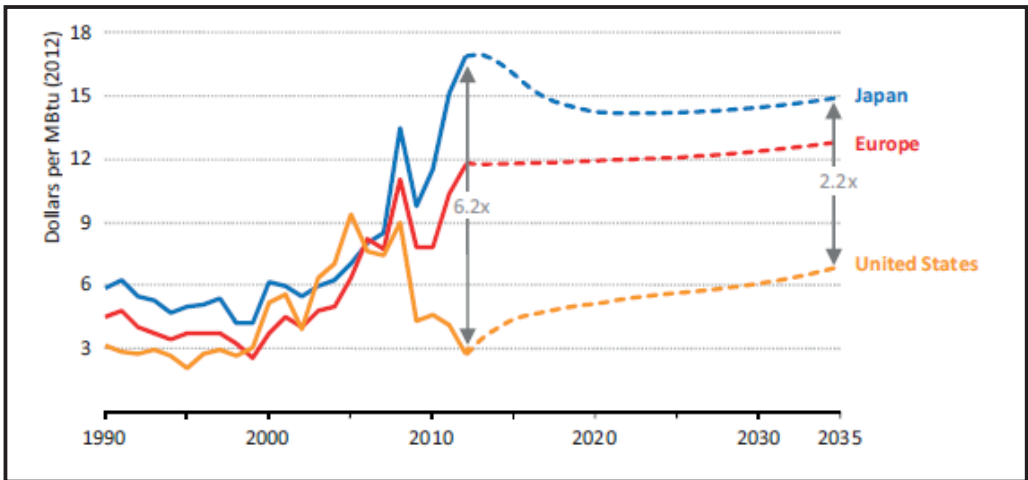
<sup>15</sup> At the end of 2012, 92.25 percent of the gas imports to Turkey has been realized via BOTAS.

**Graph 1. International Trade in LNG, 1990-2012**



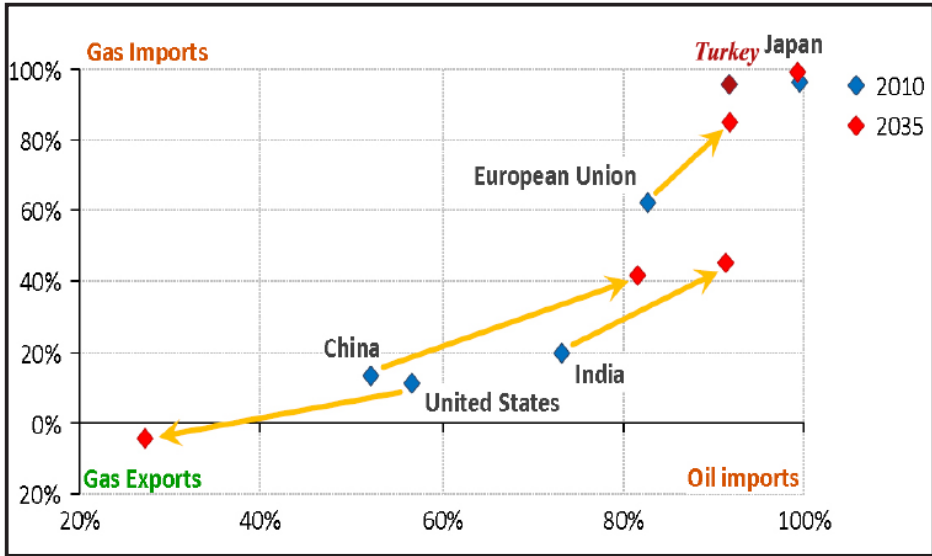
Source: International Gas Union (IGU), *World LNG Report 2013*, cit. p. 8.

**Graph 2. Natural Gas Prices by Region (US, Japan and Europe, 1990-2013-2035)**



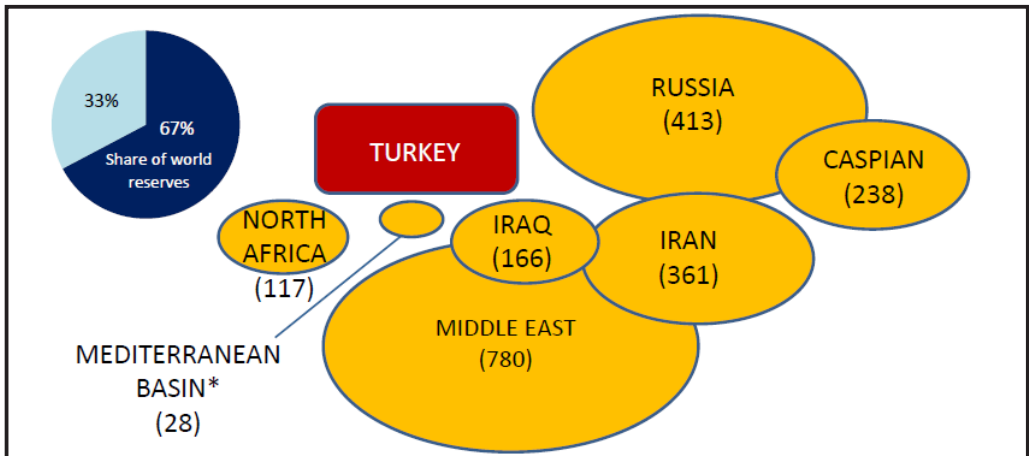
Source: IEA, *World Energy Outlook 2013*, cit., p. 46.

**Graph 3. Net Oil And Gas Import Dependency in Selected Countries (2010-2035)**



Source: IEA, *World Energy Outlook 2012 - Presentation to the press*, London, 12 November 2012, p. 8, <http://www.worldenergyoutlook.org/media/weowebiste/2012/Presentation-toPress.pdf>.

**Graph 4. Global Oil and Gas Reserves close to Turkey (billion boe)**



Source: Fatih Birol, *Global Energy Markets & Economic Competitiveness*, cit.



### 3.

## Can Eastern Mediterranean Gas Discoveries Have a Positive Impact on Turkey-EU Relations?

*Ayla Gürel and Fiona Mullen*

In this contribution we shall examine the implications for Turkey-EU relations of the recent natural gas finds in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. In particular, we shall ask whether the Eastern Mediterranean gas could play a role in revitalising the relationship or whether, instead, it could pose further obstacles to closer EU-Turkey ties.

We shall start by noting the current state of relations between the EU and Turkey. This will help us to identify some of the factors that might improve the relationship, as well as specific developments that would be necessary for this improvement to be possible. We shall focus in particular on two aspects of Turkey's relations with the EU: first, Turkey's role in promoting greater EU energy security as a transit country for natural gas along the so-called Southern Gas Corridor; and second, Turkey's EU accession process. These are technically separate issues, but they are often perceived to be linked by various actors both in the EU and in Turkey.<sup>1</sup> We shall examine what impact the gas discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly offshore Cyprus and Israel, could have on these two aspects of Turkey-EU relations.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, John Daly, "Turkey Gets More EU Roadblocks Towards Accession, Now Energy Chapters", in *OilPrice.com*, 13 February 2012, <http://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/Turkeys-EU-Dreams-Hit-New-Snag-Energy-Production.html>; and Turkish Presidency, *President Gül Delivers Speech at Economy and Energy Summit*, 21 November 2013, <http://www.tccb.gov.tr/news/397/87824/presiden-t-gul-delivers-speech-at-economy-and-energy-summit.html>.

## TURKEY'S ROLE AS A TRANSIT STATE FOR GAS SUPPLIES TO THE EU

The EU is a major natural gas consumer and is highly dependent on imports from non-EU countries,<sup>2</sup> with Russia as its main supplier.<sup>3</sup> Thus, ensuring security of external gas supplies is a key priority in the EU's energy policy. In this context, its dependence on Russia has been a concern for the EU, especially since the supply crises of 2006-2009, and has led to a drive to diversify supplies.<sup>4</sup> One of the main constituents of this effort is the development of a "Southern Corridor", which "aims at supplying Europe with gas coming directly from the Caspian basin and the Middle East [by-passing Russia]."<sup>5</sup>

Turkey, which is a natural bridge linking Europe to the Caspian Basin and the Middle East, is identified by the EU as the "key transit state" in its Southern Corridor strategy.<sup>6</sup> Over the years, this strategy has seen a number of revisions and adjustments, but Turkey's role as a key transit state has not changed.<sup>7</sup>

After the fading out of the originally proposed Nabucco pipeline project,<sup>8</sup> the realisation of the Southern Corridor now depends on the construction of the planned Trans-Anatolian natural gas pipeline (TANAP)

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<sup>2</sup> In 2010 the EU imported 62.4% of the gas it consumed. See Eurostat, *Energy production and imports*, August 2012, [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Energy\\_production\\_and\\_imports](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Energy_production_and_imports). In 2030 the EU's import dependency with regard to gas is expected to reach about 80%. See Mott MacDonald, *Supplying the EU Natural Gas Market*, November 2010, [http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/studies/doc/2010\\_11\\_supplying\\_eu\\_gas\\_market.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/international/studies/doc/2010_11_supplying_eu_gas_market.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Eurostat, *Natural gas consumption statistics*, May 2013, [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Natural\\_gas\\_consumption\\_statistics](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Natural_gas_consumption_statistics).

<sup>4</sup> Michael Ratner et al., "Europe's Energy Security: Options and Challenges to Natural Gas Supply Diversification", in *CRS Report for Congress*, No. R42405 (August 2013), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42405.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> European Commission, *EU starts negotiations on Caspian pipeline to bring gas to Europe* (IP/11/1023), 12 September 2011, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-11-1023\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-11-1023_en.htm).

<sup>6</sup> European Commission, *Energy infrastructure: Studies*, 2010, [http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/studies/cdc\\_report\\_2010\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/studies/cdc_report_2010_en.htm).

<sup>7</sup> David Koranyi and Nicolò Sartori, "EU-Turkish Energy Relations in the Context of EU Accession Negotiations: Focus on Natural Gas", in *GTE Working Papers*, No. 5 (December 2013), <http://www.iai.it/content.asp?langid=2&contentid=1019>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

and the Trans-Adriatic pipeline (TAP). TANAP is aimed at “transportation of the natural gas to be produced in Shah Deniz 2 field and other fields of Azerbaijan (and other possible neighboring countries) through Turkey to Europe.”<sup>9</sup> An Azeri-Turkish initiative, it would stretch from the Georgian-Turkish border in the east to the Turkish-Greek border in the west, where it would connect to TAP. In the east, TANAP would receive gas from the existing South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP).

Recent gas findings in the Eastern Mediterranean have led a number of experts to believe that the region could be a source of gas for the Southern Corridor. For example, it has been suggested that gas from the Eastern Mediterranean could be linked to TANAP.<sup>10</sup> This would be complicated in practice, and not only for political reasons: Azerbaijan may want to reserve any available capacity of TANAP for potential gas from its other offshore fields.<sup>11</sup> The Eastern Mediterranean gas reserves, though not critical to the viability of the Southern Corridor, could still make a significant contribution. The latest estimate from Noble Energy for the resources in Cyprus’ Aphrodite field is 3.6 to 6 trillion cubic feet (tcf) with a gross mean of approximately 5 tcf,<sup>12</sup> while the resources of the giant Israeli Leviathan field, which will be used for export as well as domestic consumption, are estimated at 19 tcf.<sup>13</sup> Charles Ellinas, the executive president of the Cyprus National Hydrocarbons Company (KRETYK), has said that with a lot more gas expected to be found offshore Cyprus, the Eastern Mediterranean region could supply up to a third of the EU’s additional gas needs, which are expected to reach 100 bcm by 2025.<sup>14</sup>

If Eastern Mediterranean gas can be sent to Europe via Turkey, it would support Turkey-EU relations by increasing Turkey’s importance as a gas

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<sup>9</sup> TANAP, *What is TANAP*, 2014, <http://www.tanap.com/en/what-is-tanap>.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Matt Bryza, “A Tale of Two Pipelines: Why TAP has Won the Day”, in *Natural Gas Europe*, 2 July 2013, <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/southern-corridor-strategic-importance-tap-nabucco>; and David Koranyi and Nicolò Sartori, “EU-Turkish Energy Relations in the Context of EU Accession Negotiations...”, cit.

<sup>11</sup> For a useful discussion of this issue, see *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Noble Energy, *Noble Energy announces appraisal drilling and flow test results offshore Republic of Cyprus*, 3 October 2013, <http://investors.nobleenergyinc.com/releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID=794694>.

<sup>13</sup> Noble Energy, *Eastern Mediterranean Analyst Presentation*, 17 December 2013, <http://www.nobleenergyinc.com/Operations/International/Eastern-Mediterranean-128.html>.

<sup>14</sup> Charles Ellinas, *Cyprus on the Mend? Cyprus Energy Reserves*, presentation at *The Economist Ninth Cyprus Summit*, Nicosia, 25 November 2013, [http://www.hazliseconomist.com/en/event/Cyprus\\_on\\_the\\_mend/Speeches](http://www.hazliseconomist.com/en/event/Cyprus_on_the_mend/Speeches).

transit country and thereby helping the EU's quest to free itself from over-dependence on Russian gas. Additionally, it would have a positive impact on relations by helping to sustain the long-term alliance between the EU and Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean – a region of key interest for the EU.<sup>15</sup> The alliance has recently suffered because of the two sides' profoundly different positions regarding Cyprus' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and hydrocarbons exploration in the area.

In terms of exportable resources, Eastern Mediterranean gas currently means gas from Cyprus and Israel. Obviously, a prerequisite for exports of gas from Cyprus or Israel to Turkey is a certain level of geopolitical harmony between Turkey and the other two countries. Relations between Turkey and Israel, which broke down after the Gaza Freedom Flotilla incident of 31 May 2010, have been on a very slow course of recovery so far.<sup>16</sup> The situation regarding Cyprus is even more complex: there are no diplomatic relations between Turkey and the (*de facto* Greek Cypriot) Republic of Cyprus (RoC) as a result of the Cyprus problem, which is the greatest impediment to exports of gas from Cyprus to Turkey. The lack of a political settlement in Cyprus also hinders exports of gas via a pipeline from Israel to Turkey. Given the lack of diplomatic relations between Israel and Lebanon and the on-going civil war in Syria, a pipeline from Israel to Turkey would most likely have to run through Cyprus' EEZ, including the section controlled by the RoC. Although the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) does not give the right to a coastal state (in this case, the RoC) to prevent other states from laying cables or pipelines in its EEZ [Articles 58 and 79(2)], in the case of pipelines it does require that the owner of a pipeline obtain the coastal state's consent regarding the pipeline's trajectory [Article 79(3)]. Indeed, speaking at the Annual Conference of the Cyprus Centre of the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) in November 2013, Ambassador Michael Lotem, special envoy for energy of the Foreign Ministry of Israel, said, "For sure Israel will not try to pass the EEZ without Cypriot [i.e., the RoC's] consent."<sup>17</sup> Moreover, RoC officials have made

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<sup>15</sup> Patrick Nopens, "Geopolitical Shifts in the Eastern Mediterranean", in *Egmont Security Policy Brief*, No. 43 (February 2013), <http://www.egmontinstitute.be/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/SPB43.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Barak Ravid, "Obama to Erdogan: Conclude normalization agreement with Israel", in *Haaretz*, 20 February 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Authors' own notes from the conference; also tweeted at <https://twitter.com/FionaMullenCY/status/400978821517946880>.

it clear that this cannot happen before a settlement in Cyprus.<sup>18</sup> Thus, if the Cyprus problem were resolved it would also facilitate gas exports from Israel to Turkey and potentially onwards to Europe, thereby bolstering Turkey's position as a transit country for EU gas supplies.

## TURKEY'S EU ACCESSION PROCESS

As well as acting as an impediment to exports of Eastern Mediterranean gas to the EU via Turkey, the Cyprus problem also affects Turkey's EU accession negotiations. As of November 2013, 21 negotiating chapters had yet to be opened out of the total 35. The opening of 18 of these 21 chapters is still blocked, 14 of them for reasons linked to the Cyprus problem. Because of the Cyprus problem, Turkey does not recognize the RoC and hence refuses to open its ports and airports to traffic from the RoC, which is part of its commitment in the implementation of the Additional Protocol extending the Ankara Agreement to the new member states that acceded to the EU in 2004. As a result the EU Council suspended negotiations on eight chapters in December 2006.<sup>19</sup> Since December 2009 the RoC has, on its own initiative, been blocking the opening of an additional six chapters, including the one on energy.<sup>20</sup> The RoC government explains this position, especially in regard to the energy chapter, as its response to Turkey's efforts to prevent it from exploring for offshore hydrocarbons in Cyprus' waters.<sup>21</sup>

In fact, one could go so far as to say that the main issue (albeit not the only issue) that has brought Turkey's accession process to a *de facto* standstill is the Cyprus problem.

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<sup>18</sup> See, for example, RoC Minister of Foreign Affairs Ioannis Kasoulides, *Geopolitics in the Eastern Mediterranean: A Cypriot Perspective*, speech given at the Brookings Institution, Washington, 9 May 2013, <http://www.brookings.edu/events/2013/05/09-cyprus-kasoulides>.

<sup>19</sup> It was also decided that no chapter would be provisionally closed until Turkey fulfils its commitments. See the EU Delegation to Turkey website: *What is the current status?*, <http://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/turkey-the-eu/accession-negotiations/what-is-the-current-status.html>. France is blocking the opening of 5 chapters, one of which is among those blocked by the EU Council.

<sup>20</sup> Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey-EU Relations*, 2011, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/reasons-between-turkey-and-the-european-union.en.mfa>.

<sup>21</sup> Lucia Kubosova, "Cyprus remains tough on Turkey's EU talks", in *EUobserver*, 21 July 2009, <http://euobserver.com/article/28475>.

The blocking of chapters, in particular the energy chapter, also affects Turkey-EU cooperation on energy security, in particular with regard to their common objective of Turkey becoming a gas transit country for the EU along the Southern Corridor. Closer cooperation on energy requires harmonisation of Turkey's energy legislation with the EU energy *acquis*,<sup>22</sup> which would make Turkey and the EU part of "a single transit regime."<sup>23</sup> Turkey could, in fact, adopt the energy *acquis* by becoming a member of the Energy Community Treaty. However, since Turkey feels it has leverage over the EU on energy, it is reluctant to separate the issue of energy from the issue of EU accession in this way, and discussions about becoming a member of the Energy Community Treaty have stalled.<sup>24</sup>

## THE NEED TO SOLVE THE CYPRUS PROBLEM

The Cyprus problem thus arises as a major obstacle to any significant improvement in Turkey-EU relations in both of the aspects we have discussed. Resolution of the Cyprus problem would allow transfer of Eastern Mediterranean gas to the EU through Turkey, thus bolstering Turkey's key transit country role for the EU's Southern Gas Corridor. At the same time, it would clear the way to significant progress in Turkey's EU accession negotiations, not least the opening of the energy chapter, which is key to closer EU-Turkey cooperation on energy security.

## IMPACT OF CYPRUS GAS ON EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE CYPRUS PROBLEM: THE SOVEREIGNTY QUESTION

The discovery of natural gas offshore Cyprus has led many to ask whether this could act as a catalyst to solve the Cyprus problem. The reasoning be-

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<sup>22</sup> See European Commission, "Chapter 15: Energy", in *Chapters of the acquis*, 27 June 2013, <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/chapters-of-the-acquis>.

<sup>23</sup> See Written evidence from John Roberts, 23 October 2011, in House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, *UK-Turkey relations and Turkey's regional role*, Twelfth Report of Session 2010-12, HC 1567, published on 4 April 2012, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmfaff/1567/1567we23.htm>.

<sup>24</sup> See David Koranyi and Nicolò Sartori, "EU-Turkish Energy Relations in the Context of EU Accession Negotiations...", cit.

hind this question is that the commercial benefits of mutual cooperation on gas, as well as the geopolitical benefits of supporting the diversification of EU gas supplies, could constitute strong enough incentives for all parties to reach a settlement.

However, one has to argue that until very recently the reverse has been the case. Not only has unilateral exploration for natural gas (by Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots and Turkey) led to mutual tensions, it was arguably an underlying cause of the delay in the re-launch of the UN-sponsored inter-communal negotiations for a settlement of the Cyprus problem.

To explain this in more detail, it is necessary to outline in brief the different positions of the parties on gas exploration.<sup>25</sup>

The Greek Cypriots, being in charge of the internationally recognised RoC government, maintain that they have the sovereign right to explore for natural resources in the Republic's EEZ. They accept that natural resources will be a federal competence in the event of a settlement of the Cyprus problem and, by implication, a shared resource. But to date they have not been willing to discuss current hydrocarbons exploration either within the context of, or parallel to, the settlement negotiations. Concerning EEZ exploration rights, the international community supports the Greek Cypriot position, although most international actors generally make it clear that the revenues should be shared with the Turkish Cypriots in the event of a solution.

The Turkish Cypriots and Turkey, on the other hand, argue that the Greek Cypriots alone cannot legitimately represent the government of the RoC, which was co-founded by both communities. Hence, they may not unilaterally exercise sovereign rights at the international level (e.g., rights in the EEZ) that are jointly possessed by both communities as equal founders of the 1960 Republic. In other words, the argument is that the Greek Cypriots do not have the right, by themselves, to explore for offshore hydrocarbons.

Based on this reasoning, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots argue that any offshore exploration or exploitation carried out or authorised by the Greek Cypriots is the unilateral act of one community. The (internationally unrecognised) Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) has therefore reciprocated with its own unilateral steps, signing a continental shelf

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<sup>25</sup> For a full discussion of the positions of all interested parties and references, see chapter 4 in Ayla Gürel, Fiona Mullen and Harry Tzimitras, "The Cyprus Hydrocarbons Issue: Context, Positions and Future Scenarios", in *PRIO Cyprus Centre Reports*, No. 1/2013, <http://www.prio.no/Publications/Publication/?x=7365>.

delimitation agreement<sup>26</sup> with Turkey in September 2011 – about the time when Noble Energy started drilling in the RoC’s offshore Block 12. In the same month, the TRNC issued licences to TPAO for seven offshore and one onshore blocks. Two of these blocks overlap approximately 40% of the RoC exploration area in the island’s southeast. Meanwhile, Turkey also claims that parts of RoC blocks 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7 in the southwest of Cyprus overlap its own continental shelf and has made quite strong statements about its intentions should there be any exploration by the RoC in these areas.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps not accidentally, these five blocks have to date not been licensed by the RoC, although seismic activity has recently taken place in these areas. Seismic surveys have been conducted on behalf of TPAO, most recently in November and December 2013, in both of the areas licensed by the TRNC and in the area claimed by Turkey.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, the discovery of natural gas offshore Cyprus has so far led to tensions in the maritime areas and “tit for tat” exploration. More importantly, perhaps, for the question under discussion, it has reinforced the parties’ differing positions on the question of sovereignty and thereby made the resumption of negotiations even more difficult. At the time of writing in February 2014, the two communities had only just agreed on a joint communiqué allowing for the resumption of negotiations to solve the Cyprus problem that had petered out after March 2012. The agreement was

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<sup>26</sup> See Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Press Statement On the Continental Shelf Delimitation Agreement Signed Between Turkey and the TRNC*, No. 216, 21 September 2011, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no\\_-216\\_-21-september-2011\\_-press-statement-on-the-continental-shelf-delimitation-agreement-signed-between-turkey-and-the-trnc.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-216_-21-september-2011_-press-statement-on-the-continental-shelf-delimitation-agreement-signed-between-turkey-and-the-trnc.en.mfa).

<sup>27</sup> Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Press Release Regarding the International Tender for Off-shore Hydrocarbon Exploration and Exploitation Opened by the Greek Cypriot Administration*, No. 140, 18 May 2012, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no\\_-140\\_-18-may-2012\\_-press-release-regarding-the-international-tender-for-off\\_shore-hydrocarbon-exploration-and-exploitation-opened-by-the-greek-cypriot-administration.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-140_-18-may-2012_-press-release-regarding-the-international-tender-for-off_shore-hydrocarbon-exploration-and-exploitation-opened-by-the-greek-cypriot-administration.en.mfa). For example, on 13 November 2008, a Turkish warship intercepted two foreign-flagged exploratory ships conducting surveys on behalf of the RoC in the relevant areas. See RoC Press and Information Office, “Turkish Foreign Ministry over the oil exploration by the Republic of Cyprus”, *Turkish Press and Other Media*, No. 226/08 (25 November 2008), <http://www.hri.org/news/cyprus/tcpr/2008/08-11-25.tcpr.html#03>. Similar incidences occurred at other times, including during June-July 2013. See “Italian vessel was harassed by Turkish navy off Paphos”, in *Cyprus Mail*, 31 July 2013, <http://cyprus-mail.com/?p=6831>.

<sup>28</sup> See Elias Hazou, “Turkey carries out seismic surveys north of the island”, in *Cyprus Mail*, 27 November 2013, <http://cyprus-mail.com/?p=13949>; and “Barbaros also at Akamas” (in Greek), in *Phileleftheros*, 23 December 2013.



reached some five months after the initially planned date, and the manner in which the sovereignty of a putative united Cyprus and its organs would be described was the primary obstacle to agreeing on a final text for the joint communiqué.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, the discovery of natural gas, far from being a catalyst for a solution of the Cyprus problem and therefore for improved Turkey-EU relations, has to date proven to be a stumbling block. It has exacerbated the sovereignty dispute, and hence it is no surprise that sovereignty became the key sticking point in the drafting of the joint communiqué. Moreover, natural gas has introduced an additional strain into Turkey-EU relations because of the discord between them regarding the legality of offshore exploration by the (*de facto* Greek Cypriot) RoC.<sup>30</sup>

## WHY CYPRUS GAS ALONE IS NOT A STRONG ENOUGH INCENTIVE

Notwithstanding the problems it raises over the difficult sovereignty question, could the discovery of natural gas offshore Cyprus provide a strong enough *commercial* incentive for the resolution of the Cyprus problem, which would, in turn, improve Turkey's relations with the EU? The argument, crudely put, is that Cyprus (both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots) needs cash and Turkey needs gas. Following the banking crisis in March 2013, the troika of international lenders expects the debt/GDP ratio of the RoC to peak at 126.2% of GDP in 2015.<sup>31</sup> This will be nearly 1.5 times its ratio in 2012 and will take many years to be brought back to pre-crisis levels. In the north, Turkey spends around 500 million Turkish liras (170 million euros) each year subsidizing the public-sector payroll, which accumulates as unpaid debt, and around 300 million Turkish liras (100 million euros) paying for infrastructure projects (which is counted

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<sup>29</sup> Stefanos Evripidou, "Little hope of breaking impasse at the moment", *Cyprus Mail*, 13 December 2013, <http://cyprus-mail.com/?p=15045>.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, the Council conclusions on enlargement and stabilisation and association process, 5 December 2011, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/126577.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/126577.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> IMF's Second Cyprus Review, 23 December 2013, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.aspx?sk=41165>.

as aid).<sup>32</sup> As a result of the loans, we estimate that TRNC debt to Turkey (excluding any accumulated interest, which appears not to be counted) had reached 62% of GDP by 2010, or more than 80% of GDP if an assumed interest rate of 6% is added each year. Moreover, as a result of the Cyprus problem, the TRNC is not integrated with international markets,<sup>33</sup> which further holds back its economic development potential. At the same time, Turkey is a very energy-hungry market, especially with regard to gas, which currently has the largest share (32% in 2012) in the country's energy mix.<sup>34</sup> Turkey's natural gas demand was 46.3 bcm in 2012<sup>35</sup> and is expected to reach 65.2 bcm in 2023.<sup>36</sup> In 2011 the country's total natural gas imports constituted 98% of its total demand.<sup>37</sup> Diversifying sources of its gas supplies is an important energy policy priority for Turkey.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, if Cyprus could benefit from gas exports and Turkey could benefit from gas imports, then maybe there are incentives to solve the Cyprus problem. Indeed, since the joint communiqué was concluded in February there has been much speculation that gas might have formed part of a wider deal that made it possible. However, even as negotiations restart, there will remain one obstacle to this potential catalyst, namely that each side perceives the other side's need to be greater than its own and hence presumes that the other side has a greater need to solve the Cyprus problem (i.e., to compromise at the negotiations).

As can be gathered from official statements and media analyses, Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots appear to think roughly as follows. The

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<sup>32</sup> Based on 2010 figures (latest available) from TRNC State Planning Organisation, *Economic and Social Indicators*, <http://www.devplan.org>.

<sup>33</sup> Mainly as a result of the European Court of Justice ruling, Case C-432/92, *The Queen v. Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, ex parte S. P. Anastasiou (Pissouri) Ltd and others*, 5 July 1994, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:61992cj0432:en:not>.

<sup>34</sup> See Turkish Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, *2014 Yılı bütçe sunumu* [Presentation of the Ministry's budget for the year 2014], 14 November 2013, p. 12, [http://www.enerji.gov.tr/yayinlar\\_raporlar/2014\\_Genel\\_Kurul\\_Konusmasi.pdf](http://www.enerji.gov.tr/yayinlar_raporlar/2014_Genel_Kurul_Konusmasi.pdf).

<sup>35</sup> BP, *Statistical Review of World Energy 2013*, June 2013, [http://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/pdf/statistical-review/statistical\\_review\\_of\\_world\\_energy\\_2013.pdf](http://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/pdf/statistical-review/statistical_review_of_world_energy_2013.pdf).

<sup>36</sup> See Turkish Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, *2014 Yılı bütçe sunumu* [Presentation of the Ministry's budget for the year 2014], cit., p. 13.

<sup>37</sup> See International Energy Agency, *Oil & Gas Emergency Policy - Turkey 2013 Update*, 2013, p. 14, <http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/name,38110,en.html>.

<sup>38</sup> See Turkish Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, *2014 Yılı bütçe sunumu* [Presentation of the Ministry's budget for the year 2014], cit., p. 2.

Greek Cypriots, because of the dire state of their economy, need revenues from gas as quickly as possible. The only way that this can happen, so the Turkish argument goes, is by exporting the gas to Turkey via a pipeline, which experts assert is also the most commercially feasible option for monetising Cyprus gas. The fact that a solution in Cyprus is a prerequisite for this should induce the Greek Cypriots to be more flexible at the negotiations.<sup>39</sup>

However, the Greek Cypriots' determination so far to consider only those gas export options that exclude Turkey makes this reasoning questionable. In particular, the Greek Cypriots have been committed since mid-2012 to building a liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facility at Vasilikos on the island's south coast. There are a number of reasons for the focus on LNG. First, LNG can be sold to Asia, where demand is expected to grow much faster than in Europe.<sup>40</sup> Second, LNG, together with the Vitol oil terminal that is currently under construction and due to be completed in July 2014,<sup>41</sup> will bolster the RoC's position as a regional hub, which has related benefits for security. A likely third reason is that Greek Cypriots are probably very wary of depending solely on a route via Turkey for their most promising export.<sup>42</sup>

The grand plan is that this plant would process not only Cyprus gas but also potentially gas from Israel and Lebanon, thus "making it possible to create a world class LNG hub at Vasilikos."<sup>43</sup> Indeed, despite the downward adjustment in early October 2013 of the estimated size of the Aphrodite field in Block 12, which means more gas needs to be found to make

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<sup>39</sup> See, for example, "Davutoğlu: Greek Cyprus dependent on Turkey to sell gas", in *Today's Zaman*, 28 March 2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-311001-.html>; Deniz Arslan, "Natural gas a likely incentive for Cyprus solution", in *Today's Zaman*, 22 November 2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-332175-.html>; and "Greek Cypriots realize it's time to start benefiting from peace", in *Hürriyet Daily News*, 23 December 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/?pageID=517&nID=59952>.

<sup>40</sup> "IEA Sees 50% Gas Demand Increase by 2035", in *Natural Gas Europe*, 29 November 2013, <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/iea-natural-gas-demand-increase-2035>.

<sup>41</sup> VTTI, *VTT Vasiliko, Cyprus, 2013*, [http://www.vtti.com/terminals\\_vasiliko.php](http://www.vtti.com/terminals_vasiliko.php).

<sup>42</sup> Evidence for this comes from communications on Twitter by one of the authors. The general tone of the responses is that "Turkey the occupier" cannot be trusted in business. As one tweeter put it, "Imagine I illegally occupy and claim half of your home and at the same time offer you a business deal based on trust". Christos Sava (ChristosSava1), 25 September 2013, 3:11 a.m.

<sup>43</sup> See Charles Ellinas, *Cyprus on the Mend? Cyprus Energy Reserves*, cit.

the LNG plant commercially viable,<sup>44</sup> plans remain unchanged.<sup>45</sup>

This may be partly because Greek Cypriot politicians, and in some cases energy officials, have raised very high and probably unrealistic expectations about potential gas revenues.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, Mr Lakkotrypīs has emphasized that the government is not relying on natural gas to get it out of the economic crisis,<sup>47</sup> which suggests that the government is not in desperate need of a gas deal with Turkey.

Consequently, the Greek Cypriots believe that the Turkish Cypriots should have the stronger incentive to solve the Cyprus problem because without a solution they cannot have their share of the gas revenues. Similarly, they think that Turkey, being eager to find alternative cheap supplies, wants the Cyprus gas, which it can access only if there is a solution in Cyprus. From the Greek Cypriot perspective, this fact should make Turkey more willing to agree to the compromises necessary for a solution.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Elias Hazou, "Gas plans have precedence over oil for Noble", in *Cyprus Mail*, 19 December 2013, <http://cyprus-mail.com/?p=15434>. See also Fiona Mullen, presentation at *The Economist* Ninth Cyprus Summit, Nicosia, 25 November 2013, [http://www.hazliseconomist.com/en/event/Cyprus\\_on\\_the\\_mend/Speeches](http://www.hazliseconomist.com/en/event/Cyprus_on_the_mend/Speeches).

<sup>45</sup> Stefanos Evripidou, "Experts agree that an LNG plant is best option for Cyprus", in *Cyprus Mail*, 23 November 2013, <http://cyprus-mail.com/?p=13698>.

<sup>46</sup> As Energy Service Director, Solon Kassinis was cited as saying that the reserves were worth 300 billion euros, which many assume means the value of the gas to the government. See "Eastern Mediterranean region may play a decisive role in the supply of energy to Europe", in *Financial Mirror*, 7 December 2012, <http://www.financialmirror.com/news-details.php?nid=28311>. These estimates have been questioned elsewhere: Kevin Allison and Henning Gloystein, "Analysis: Cypriot gas no fix for country's funding gap", in *Reuters*, 22 March 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/22/us-eurozone-cyprus-gas-idUSBRE92L11H20130322>.

<sup>47</sup> Answers to questions at *The Economist* Ninth Cyprus Summit, 25 November 2013. See Fiona Mullen (FionaMullenCY), "Commerce Minister Lakkotrypīs: 'We do not depend on hydrocarbons to try and come back to economic growth and development' says", 25 November 2013, 5:26 a.m., Tweet.

<sup>48</sup> As a former Greek Cypriot finance minister and member of the Working Group on Economic Matters in the Cyprus talks put it, "[Sharing of gas wealth] should be a catalyst to finding a solution ... [Gas] should be a strong incentive to redress somewhat the current balance of power that has Turkey being extremely powerful and therefore not willing to compromise." See p. 90 in Elias Hazou, "Offshore Hydrocarbons and Wealth Distribution in Cyprus: Interviews with Michael Sarris and Mustafa Besim", in Hubert Faustmann, Ayla Gürel and Gregory M. Reichberg (eds.), "Cyprus Offshore Hydrocarbons: Regional Politics and Wealth Distribution", in *PRIO Cyprus Centre Reports*, No. 1/2012, p. 87-96, <http://www.prio.no/Publications/Publication/?x=7237>. See also: "Government: Natural gas an incentive for Cyprus settlement", *Cyprus News Agency: News in English*,

As with Turkish and Turkish Cypriot assessments of the Greek Cypriot interests, this Greek Cypriot assessment of the interests of Turkey and Turkish Cypriots is not compatible with what actually appears to concern the latter. In fact, Turkish Cypriots do not feel “they have to give anything in order to get what rightfully belongs to them” – as “Turkish Cypriots have equal rights in natural resources around the island.”<sup>49</sup> Indeed, they have actually acted to assert these rights – and hence, as they see it, retain their bargaining power at the negotiations – by giving exploration licences to TPAO in waters around the island. Turkey, for its part, though not completely indifferent to Cyprus gas, appears to find the amount discovered so far not large enough to be of significant interest,<sup>50</sup> and is pursuing other closer alternatives, e.g., in Iraq, especially northern Iraq.<sup>51</sup>

The conclusion is that, given the parties’ perspectives, incentives stemming from Cyprus gas alone do not have the force to bring them closer to solving the Cyprus problem.

## CAN GAS FROM CYPRUS AND ISRAEL PROVIDE THE MOTIVATION?

If gas offshore Cyprus is not large enough in volumes to be attractive to Turkey, would the addition of Israeli gas make a difference? In other words, could the benefits of cooperation over Eastern Mediterranean gas, as opposed to just Cypriot gas, induce the parties to resolve the Cyprus problem?<sup>52</sup> Israel certainly has more discovered natural gas resources

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20 December 2011, [http://www.hri.org/news/cyprus/cna/2011/11-12-20\\_1.cna.html#01](http://www.hri.org/news/cyprus/cna/2011/11-12-20_1.cna.html#01); Ioannis Kasoulides, “Geopolitics in the Eastern Mediterranean: A Cypriot Perspective”, cit.; and Cyprus Embassy in Washington, *Energy shifts Cyprus’ foreign policy character, says FM Kasoulides*, 6 December 2013, <http://www.cyprusembassy.net/home/index.php?module=article&id=4860>.

<sup>49</sup> Source: a former Turkish Cypriot negotiator.

<sup>50</sup> This is based on reports by Turkish academics and experts at three recent conferences held under the Chatham House rule (in the UK and Cyprus) and attended by the authors.

<sup>51</sup> Orhan Coskun and Humeyra Pamuk, “Exclusive: Turkey, Iraqi Kurdistan ink landmark energy contracts”, in *Reuters*, 29 November 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/29/us-turkey-iraq-oil-idUSBRE9AS0BO20131129>.

<sup>52</sup> Cooperation among Turkey, Israel and Cyprus in advance of a solution appears unachievable. Satisfying Turkey’s demand for gas before a solution would, in Greek Cypriot eyes, remove one of Turkey’s key incentives for solving the Cyprus problem.

than Cyprus. The estimated amount of gas in its Leviathan field is around four times larger than the estimates to date for Cyprus' Block 12. Israel also has interests in trilateral cooperation involving an Israel-Turkey pipeline based on Israeli gas and an LNG plant in Cyprus based on Cypriot and Israeli gas. It is attractive to Israel because in this way Israel will diversify its export routes and hence avoid "putting all its eggs in one basket."<sup>53</sup> Officials from both Israel and Turkey have promoted the idea and the Israel-Turkey pipeline for economic as well as political reasons.<sup>54</sup> Such a pipeline fits in with Israel's strategy of exploring regional markets first before venturing further afield and is one of the most cost-effective export options for the Leviathan field mooted by the Israeli government and the Leviathan partners.<sup>55</sup> It offers Israel a link to the largest – and still growing – gas market in the region and the possibility of accessing European markets through Turkey. This could potentially bolster Israel's relations with Turkey and the EU. Also, Israel is interested in LNG exports to Europe and East Asia, but, because of environmentalists' objections and security concerns, it has difficulty finding a coastal location in Israel for an LNG plant. Using the Greek Cypriots' planned LNG terminal is a practical way around this problem given the short distance between Israel's offshore fields and its newfound friendship with the Greek Cypriots (other possibilities also under consideration are a floating LNG plant and the use of Egypt's currently underused LNG facilities).

Various suggestions have been made for gas cooperation among Israel, Cyprus and Turkey, all based on the RoC agreeing to an Israel-Turkey

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Indeed, RoC Foreign Minister Kasoulides has said that there will be no Israel-Turkey gas pipeline through Cyprus' EEZ in advance of a solution. See Ioannis Kasoulides, "Geopolitics in the Eastern Mediterranean: A Cypriot Perspective", cit.

<sup>53</sup> Sharon Udasin, "Israel must not put all gas export eggs in one basket, industry expert tells *Post*", in *The Jerusalem Post*, 18 November 2013, <http://www.jpost.com/Article.aspx?id=332129>.

<sup>54</sup> Amiram Barkat, "Turkish official proposes gas pipeline from Israel", in *Globes*, 21 November 2012, <http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-1000800189>; Amiram Barkat, "Turkey could be anchor customer for Israeli gas", in *Globes*, 29 January 2013, <http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-1000818049>; Sevil Erkuş, "Israel sees 'Med-Streams' in service of regional diplomacy", in *Hürriyet Daily News*, 12 April 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/?pageID=238&nid=44766>; Turkish Presidency, *President Gül Delivers Speech at Economy and Energy Summit*, cit.

<sup>55</sup> "Changing Tides for East Med Natural Gas", in *Natural Gas Europe*, 10 December 2013, <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/eastern-mediterranean-natural-gas-regional-politics>; Sharon Udasin, "Israel must not put all gas export eggs in one basket...", cit.

pipeline running through its EEZ.<sup>56</sup> In the following we shall consider two of these suggestions.

In the first variant, Israel buys gas from the RoC in return for the RoC granting permission for the use of its EEZ. This arrangement would generate revenues for the RoC and liberate more Israeli gas to sell to Turkey, since under Israeli government rules only 40% of Israeli gas may be exported.<sup>57</sup>

The second variant is what might be termed the “pipeline plus LNG promise”; that is, in return for agreeing to a pipeline to Turkey, Israel supplies natural gas to the RoC. This would mean that, together with gas in Block 12, the RoC would now have enough gas volumes to be able to secure financing for an LNG plant.

Might either of these options help Turkey-EU relations by giving the relevant parties sufficient incentives to solve the Cyprus problem?

In the first option, Turkey increases and diversifies its gas supplies, Greek Cypriots receive gas revenues but without depending (directly) on Turkey, and Israel secures a lucrative export market. However, there are two reasons why the economic gains for the Greek Cypriots are unlikely to be high enough in this option. First, it pushes their strategic goal of building an LNG plant further away, since selling gas to Israel will reduce the already insufficient volumes of Cyprus gas available to make that LNG plant viable. Second, it involves political risk over that which the Greek Cypriots cannot control, namely Israeli-Turkish relations. If these break down and Israel stops selling gas to Turkey, Israel might no longer want gas from Cyprus.

The second option, in which Israel supplies gas for an LNG plant in Cyprus, would be more attractive to the Greek Cypriots. Given the uncertainties about the future direction of gas prices, timing is critical for the viability of an LNG plant.<sup>58</sup> This option would allow them to build an LNG plant faster and hence would be more appealing than the first option. It

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<sup>56</sup> See, for example, Hugh Pope, “Israel’s plan to bring Cyprus and Turkey together”, in ICG blog *Solving the EU-Turkey-Cyprus Triangle*, 17 September 2013, <http://www.crisisgroupblogs.org/eu-turkey-cyprus/?p=369>; and Matthew J. Bryza, “Eastern Mediterranean Natural Gas: Potential for Historic Breakthroughs Among Israel, Turkey, and Cyprus”, in *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Fall 2013), [http://www.turkishpolicy.com/dosyalar/files/vol\\_12-no\\_3-bryza.pdf](http://www.turkishpolicy.com/dosyalar/files/vol_12-no_3-bryza.pdf).

<sup>57</sup> Yifa Yaakov, “High Court gives green light to gas export”, in *The Times of Israel*, 21 October 2013, <http://toi.sr/1a2FKou>.

<sup>58</sup> Charles Ellinas, *Cyprus on the Mend? Cyprus Energy Reserves*, cit.

also would reduce one of the risks in the first option, namely the risk of Israel-Turkey relations going sour. If that occurred, Israel could divert additional export volumes to the LNG plant. In addition, the Greek Cypriots would not depend on Turkey for gas exports. Given all this, the “pipeline plus LNG promise” could be a strong incentive for the Greek Cypriots to conclude the negotiations for a settlement of the Cyprus problem quickly.

For Turkey, it would also be the prize of a Cyprus settlement, along with Turkey mending its EU relations. Indeed, there are signs that Turkey might not object to such an option. In May 2013 Turkey’s President, Abdullah Gül, spoke about Turkey’s readiness “to contribute to any constructive project” for energy cooperation among [both parts of] Cyprus, Israel and Turkey.<sup>59</sup> As for Israel, it would acquire a large Turkish gas market, potentially with a strategically important link to the EU,<sup>60</sup> and it would diversify its exports by having both a pipeline and an LNG plant.

Leaving aside the uneven course of Turkey-Israel relations, there is a serious caveat to this option, however. Given Israel’s security concerns, it is not at all clear that Israel will ever agree to export gas via a land-based LNG facility in another country.<sup>61</sup> Recent suggestions in the media that the island of Cyprus has been home to training camps for Hezbollah<sup>62</sup> will make Israel even less keen on this option. It is perhaps for this reason that the notion of a floating LNG (FLNG) plant, which would presumably be easier for Israel’s formidable air force to defend than a land-based LNG plant, appears to be gaining ground.<sup>63</sup> FLNG is a new technology, meaning that the equipment is likely to be more expensive than land-based LNG, but lately there have been suggestions that in certain circumstances it

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<sup>59</sup> Ergin Hava, “Ankara ‘closer’ to joint energy projects with Israel, Greek Cyprus”, in *Today’s Zaman*, 10 May 2013, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-315092-.html>.

<sup>60</sup> Amiram Barkat, “Pipeline to Turkey or LNG to China?”, in *Globes*, 19 June 2013, <http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-1000854063>.

<sup>61</sup> The Zemach Committee policy report recommended “an absolute preference for the export of Israeli natural gas from an export facility (marine or on land) in an area under Israeli control (including in Israel’s exclusive economic zone”. Israel, *The Recommendations of the Inter-Ministerial Committee to Examine the Government’s Policy Regarding Natural Gas in Israel: Executive Summary*, September 2012, <http://energy.gov.il/English/Subjects/Natural%20Gas/Pages/GxmsMniNGPolicyIsrael.aspx>.

<sup>62</sup> “Hezbollah fighters train in Cyprus, claims report”, in *World Bulletin*, 28 December 2013, <http://www.worldbulletin.net/?aType=haber&ArticleID=125867>.

<sup>63</sup> Amiram Barkat, “All at sea”, in *Globes*, 4 December 2013, <http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-1000899328>.



could be more viable than LNG.<sup>64</sup> If Cyprus were able to share FLNG production facilities, this might still be an attractive option for Greek Cypriots, but it would not be quite as attractive as a land-based LNG plant that would give a greater boost to Cyprus' role as a regional hub.

There is also a potential spoiler, namely the possibility of Israel deciding to supply gas to Turkey via a compressed natural gas (CNG) ship<sup>65</sup> instead of a pipeline.<sup>66</sup> This scenario, which does not require a Cyprus settlement, would not provide any incentives to solve the Cyprus problem and therefore would not have any impact on Turkey-EU relations.

## WILL RECENT DEVELOPMENTS CHANGE THE PARTIES' CALCULATIONS?

Despite the abovementioned uncertainties surrounding the "pipeline plus LNG" option, there are some signs that Greek Cypriots may be warming more generally to the idea of post-settlement gas cooperation with Turkey. Speaking at an Oil and Gas Association event on 5 December 2013, RoC Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides is reported to have said that the government's long-term plans for hydrocarbons include Turkey. In December 2013, Commerce, Industry and Tourism Minister George Lakkotrypīs was more specific, saying that he ruled out a pipeline in advance of a solution, but that it could be an option after a settlement of the Cyprus problem.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Energy economist Amit Mor, CEO and owner of ECO Energy Ltd., said via email correspondence, "In the long run it can turn out that FLNG could be a most effective alternative to develop LNG liquefaction plants. FLNG could also be the preferred option in cases of developing relatively small stranded gas reserve sources or when technically or politically onshore LNG schemes are not viable".

<sup>65</sup> The technology has not yet been commercialized, but the Coselle ship solution offered by SeaNG has been tested and approved for construction by the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS), while the ship design has also been approved for construction. Source: personal correspondence with SeaNG staff.

<sup>66</sup> This does not mean that Cyprus and Israel will not continue (separately or together) to pursue an LNG or FLNG plant. Since CNG can only supply local markets, LNG would remain desirable for both Israel and Cyprus in the long term.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with George Lakkotrypīs (in Greek), in *Kathimerini*, 23 December 2013, <http://www.kathimerini.com.cy/index.php?pageaction=k&modid=1&artid=157824>. If a pipeline to Turkey is still a serious option for Cyprus gas exports - albeit after a Cyprus settlement - the RoC could be said to have an interest in lifting its objection to the

Willingness to consider gas cooperation with Turkey may be related to Noble Energy's downward revision in October 2013 of its estimate for natural gas discovered in Block 12, from a mean of 7 tcf to a mean of 5 tcf. Officials have begun to admit that this puts the financing of an LNG plant beyond reach until more gas volumes are found.<sup>68</sup> As regards the value of natural gas to the government, Minister Lakkotrypīs has also been notably careful about making predictions, referring, in connection with the latest revised average estimate for the gas at Aphrodite, to "a net profit for Cyprus of between US\$12 billion to US\$18 billion."<sup>69</sup> Until the announcement of the revised estimates, the RoC government's official line had been that LNG might be produced by 2018 or 2019. Now, industry experts do not expect that to happen before 2021.<sup>70</sup>

Similarly, recent events in Turkey may increase Turkey's need for cheaper gas supplies and therefore its incentive to solve the Cyprus problem. As a result of the political crisis that started to engulf Turkey in December 2013, the Turkish lira hit a new record low against the dollar on 2 January 2014.<sup>71</sup> A weak lira will lead to a significant rise in the price of imported energy, which, in turn, will push up the already large current-account deficit and could lead to a serious balance-of-payments crisis if international markets stop lending.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, despite assertions

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opening of the energy chapter in Turkey's EU accession talks. Harmonisation with the energy *acquis* would make Turkey's domestic market and regulatory framework more efficient and transparent, thus rendering it a more reliable prospective partner for gas cooperation. However, under the current political circumstances it would be difficult to persuade the Greek Cypriots to take this view, except perhaps as part of a "confidence building measures" package that includes a substantial offer to them, e.g., the return of the fenced-off city of Varosha. See RoC Press and Information Office, *Meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs with the UN Secretary-General*, 9 May 2013, <http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/pio/pio.nsf/All/D58ABCF527572A09C2257B66003E1E54>.

<sup>68</sup> See *ibid.* and Charles Ellinas, *Cyprus on the Mend? Cyprus Energy Reserves*, *cit.*

<sup>69</sup> Poly Pantelides, "Noble: Cyprus' gas world class", in *Cyprus Mail*, 4 October 2013, <http://cyprus-mail.com/?p=10529>.

<sup>70</sup> Elias Hazou, "Foreign experts suggest LNG plant be in private hands", in *Cyprus Mail*, 12 November 2013, <http://cyprus-mail.com/?p=12897>. See also Charles Ellinas, *Cyprus on the Mend? Cyprus Energy Reserves*, *cit.*

<sup>71</sup> Daniel Dombey and Delphine Strauss, "Turkish lira hits all time low amid corruption probe", in FT blog *beyondbrics*, 2 January 2014, <http://blogs.ft.com/beyondbrics/2014/01/02/turkish-lira-hits-all-time-low-amid-corruptionprobe>.

<sup>72</sup> Andrew Torchia, "Analysis: Economy becomes liability for Turkey's scandal-hit government", in *Reuters*, 3 January 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/01/03/us-turkey-corruption-economy-analysis-idUSBREA020GT20140103>.

that current Cyprus gas volumes are not large enough to be of interest, even Cyprus gas alone could have supplied 15% of Turkey's annual gas consumption in 2012.<sup>73</sup>

Finally, there may also be new incentives for Israel to choose the "pipeline plus LNG" option. Analysts at Deutsche Bank are reported to have said that sending the gas via pipeline would produce greater returns than building an LNG plant.<sup>74</sup> However, abandoning an LNG plant altogether carries the risk of losing an experienced partner, namely the Australian company Woodside Petroleum. In interviews with the press in December 2013, Woodside showed clear frustration with Israel's delay in finalizing export options and hinted that it might pull out of its investment in Leviathan, saying that there needed to be "a compelling value case",<sup>75</sup> although it has since signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding with the Leviathan partners for a stake in the Leviathan field.<sup>76</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In this paper we have examined whether the discovery of natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, specifically offshore Cyprus and Israel, can revitalize the relationship between Turkey and the EU. We have argued that to date, contrary to expectations, gas found offshore Cyprus has in fact acted as an impediment to any significant improvement in Turkey-EU relations. This is because any significant improvement in Turkey-EU relations depends on a solution to the Cyprus problem, and natural gas has made such a solution more difficult by deepening the parties' divisions over sovereignty.

Yet, there is a way in which the gas discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean could conceivably help Turkey-EU relations, namely a gas-cooperation scenario that offers strong enough incentives for all parties to solve

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<sup>73</sup> The current estimate in Block 12 is 140 bcm. If one divides that by a typical supply period of 20 years, it represents 15% of Turkey's gas consumption in 2012, which was 46.3 bcm.

<sup>74</sup> James Paton, "Woodside Sees Israel Deal Alternatives With Decision in 2014", in *Bloomberg*, 10 December 2013, <http://bloom.bg/1btbpxy>.

<sup>75</sup> Jonathan Ferziger, "Israel Gas Riddle Has Woodside, Gazprom Hanging", in *Bloomberg*, 30 December 2013, <http://bloom.bg/1dNR3Pj>.

<sup>76</sup> "Woodside closes in on entry to Leviathan gas project offshore Israel", in *Offshore*, 7 February 2014, <http://fw.to/1658NCY>.

the Cyprus problem. Out of the various ideas that have been proposed, the “pipeline plus LNG” option has the most promise. A pipeline plus a land-based LNG plant in Vasilikos would be the most attractive arrangement for Greek Cypriots, although they might have to settle for a pipeline plus an FLNG plant shared with Israel. Either way, the “pipeline plus LNG/FLNG” option offers Turkey gas supply that should be cheaper than some of its current options; it offers Israel diversity of gas exports and geopolitical benefits; and it offers Greek Cypriots the opportunity to build the LNG plant they desire faster than would otherwise be the case, and without having to depend on Turkey as an export market. While this option is also dependent on further improvement in Turkey-Israel relations as well as a final decision by Israel on its export options, it might be evolving into a more attractive option for all players in light of recent developments: lower estimates in Block 12, a collapsing Turkish lira and pressure from foreign companies on Israel to finalize its export plans.

Whether or not these calculations will encourage the parties to push for a Cyprus solution, or whether new evolving uncertainties will simply make them more risk-averse, remains to be seen.

## 4.

# Untangling the Turkey-KRG Energy Partnership: Looking Beyond Economic Drivers

*Gönül Tol*

For decades, Turkey viewed Iraq primarily through the lens of its own Kurdish problem. In the aftermath of the 1990-91 Gulf War, Ankara shunned direct contact with Iraqi Kurds and opposed the incorporation of the oil-rich city of Kirkuk into a Kurdish federal state, fearing that it would strengthen Iraqi Kurds' drive for independence and lead to similar demands for greater autonomy and independence on the part of Turkey's own Kurdish community.<sup>1</sup> The Turkish military, the main architect of Turkish foreign policy in those years, made little differentiation between the PKK and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in northern Iraq, an attitude shared by many high-ranking officials.<sup>2</sup> Containing the political ambitions of Iraqi Kurds formed the backbone of Turkey's Iraq policy. To that end, Turkey tried to cooperate with Saddam Hussein to promote the territorial integrity of Iraq, worked with Iraq's Turkmens to slow down Kurdish ambitions, and supported Baghdad's firm control of Iraq's oil resources to deny Kurds the economic means to push for independence.

But Turkey's Iraq policy began to shift in late 2008 under the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP). Past tensions have been supplanted by a new energy partnership, and Turkey seems far less worried about the prospect of an independent Kurdistan in northern Iraq. In May 2012, Turkey and the KRG cut a deal to build one gas and two oil pipelines directly from Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq to Turkey without the approval of Baghdad, taking the rapprochement started between the two in 2008 one step further. If realized, the Kurdish pipelines will, for the

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<sup>1</sup> Henri J. Barkey, "Turkey's New Engagement in Iraq: Embracing Iraqi Kurdistan", in *USIP Special Reports*, No. 237 (May 2010), <http://www.usip.org/node/5418>. F. Stephen Larrabee and Gönül Tol, "Turkey's Kurdish Challenge", in *Survival*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (August-September 2011), p. 143-152 at p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

first time, provide the Kurds direct access to world markets, bypassing the Baghdad-controlled Kirkuk-Ceyhan (Turkey) pipeline and bringing the KRG one step closer to the long-held dream of Kurdish independence.<sup>3</sup>

Turkey's recent energy partnership with the KRG is not driven solely by energy considerations but has become an essential component of Turkey's regional strategic outlook. Changing regional and domestic dynamics have pushed Turkey to recalibrate its Iraq policy, making the KRG a strategic ally as an alternative source of energy, a buffer against a hostile Baghdad and Iran, and a partner in Turkey's quest to resolve its Kurdish problem. The KRG is not seen as part of the problem anymore; it is now viewed as part of the solution.<sup>4</sup> This article discusses the domestic and regional factors that led to this sea change. It then presents Turkey's new energy policy as a response to these changes. It concludes with addressing potential problems in the Turkey-KRG energy partnership.

## DOMESTIC FACTORS

Two domestic factors played an important role in Turkey's decision to forge closer energy ties to the KRG: Turkey's unprecedented economic growth, which has led to a growing demand for energy, and the shift in Turkey's Kurdish policy as a result of the political marginalization of the military and the AKP's quest to expand its base among the Kurds.

### *Economic Growth*

According to a recent analysis by Erdal Karagöl, the expansion of global markets and the availability of cheap credits after the 2001 financial crisis resulted in an increase in the flow of capital from financial markets to developing economies. Availability of liquidity in world markets and high real interest rates in Turkey made the country an attractive destination. Increasing volume of goods and services exported and an increase in domestic demand contributed to economic growth while rising foreign direct investment boosted domestic production. As a result, the economy recorded one of the most rapid growth periods since 1950; a 6.2 percent

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<sup>3</sup> Gönül Tol, "Turkey's KRG Energy Partnership", in *The Middle East Channel*, 29 January 2013, <http://www.mei.edu/node/2621>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem.

growth in 2002, 5.3 percent in 2003, 9.4 percent in 2004, 8.4 percent in 2005 and 6.9 percent in 2006. After a 4.8 stagnation due to the 2008 financial crisis, Turkey embarked on a quest to open up to new markets. Trade connections with new markets, increasing domestic demand and export volumes contributed to the recovery of Turkish economy.<sup>5</sup>

This unprecedented economic growth and the increase in per capita income by nearly 400 percent have fuelled the rapidly growing demand for energy, making the country one of the fastest-growing energy markets in the world. Due to the lack of energy resources of its own, Turkey has to import more oil and gas to underpin its economic growth.

The KRG, with its vast energy resources, offers an attractive option. Yet, an energy partnership with the KRG is not only an economic decision but also a strategic one that is directly linked to Turkey's own Kurdish problem. Therefore, closer ties to the KRG require a domestic structural change.

#### *The New Approach to Turkey's Own Kurds*

The AKP government brought about that change. The militarist view that considers the Kurdish issue a terror issue has been the main stumbling block to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. This security-oriented paradigm lost its primacy due to a series of reforms that curbed the Turkish military's power and influence in politics. Between 2002 and 2004, based on a consensus between the AKP and the main opposition, the Republican People's Party (CHP), Parliament adopted constitutional amendments that removed the legal basis for the political role of the military.<sup>6</sup>

The Ergenekon trials of hundreds of people, including military top brass who were accused of plotting against the Islamic government, further marginalized the military. With new appointments, a new military cadre that had a different approach to the Kurdish issue emerged, paving the way for bold initiatives by the government. Early in his tenure, Prime Minister Erdoğan signalled the stark change. In a 2005 speech in Diyarbakır, the spiritual capital of the Kurdish nationalist movement, he admitted that Turkey had mishandled the Kurdish question and committed his

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<sup>5</sup> Erdal Tanas Karagöl, "The Turkish Economy During the Justice and Development Party Decade", in *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (November 2013), p. 115-129 at p. 116.

<sup>6</sup> Gönül Tol, "Turkey's Chance for Reconciliation", in *The Middle East Channel*, 9 September 2010, <http://www.mei.edu/node/462>.

government to taking a more inclusive, less security-focused approach to the issue.<sup>7</sup>

Concerned about its declining share of votes among Kurds in 2009 local elections and free from the structural constraints of a strong military that opposes any concessions to the Kurds, the AKP launched the Kurdish Opening (later called the Democratic Opening) in that same year.<sup>8</sup> The opening aimed to extend greater rights to all of Turkey's ethnic and religious minority groups, including the Kurds, and promised legal reforms to combat discrimination and lift obstacles to all-day Kurdish broadcasting by private channels.<sup>9</sup>

Unfortunately, the opening ran aground in the run-up to the Turkish general elections in June 2011. This resulted in a re-escalation of violence that increased casualties to a level not seen in more than a decade.<sup>10</sup> By late 2012 it became obvious to both Ankara and the PKK that no clear winner would emerge from this new round of violence.<sup>11</sup>

Late in December 2012, Erdoğan announced that Turkey's National Intelligence Organization (MIT) had been holding talks with Öcalan in an attempt to convince the PKK to lay down arms and withdraw from Turkish soil. Unlike previous peace attempts, which were very secretive, the public has been informed of this round of talks and is somewhat supportive. These negotiations also have the backing of the CHP, the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), many civil society organizations, and the mainstream Turkish media. In contrast to the previous peace attempts, Öcalan stands at the center of the negotiations with a seemingly

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<sup>7</sup> Gönül Tol, "Kurdish Consensus at Home Can Serve Ankara Abroad", in *The National*, 10 February 2012, <http://shar.es/RNrZO>. See also Ertan Efeğil, "Analysis of the AKP Government's Policy Toward the Kurdish Issue", in *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March 2011), p. 27-40, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2011.563938>.

<sup>8</sup> Cengiz Çandar, "The Kurdish Question: The Reasons and Fortunes of the 'Opening'", in *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (October-December 2009), p. 13-19, [http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/insight\\_turkey\\_vol\\_11\\_no\\_4\\_2009\\_candar.pdf](http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/insight_turkey_vol_11_no_4_2009_candar.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Gönül Tol, "Kurdish Consensus at Home Can Serve Ankara Abroad", cit.

<sup>10</sup> International Crisis Group, "Turkey: Ending the PKK Insurgency", in *ICG Europe Reports*, No. 213 (20 September 2011), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/213-turkey-ending-the-pkk-insurgency.aspx>.

<sup>11</sup> Ömer Taşpınar and Gönül Tol, "Turkey and the Kurds: From Predicament to Opportunity", in *US-Europe Analysis*, No. 54 (22 January 2014), p. 3-4, <http://bit.ly/1mlLcbB>.



softer approach.<sup>12</sup> In meetings with BDP members of parliament, the PKK cadres in Europe and Iraq have also expressed their support for the ongoing talks. Erdoğan also seems intent on pushing the negotiation process forward and has considerable political capital at his disposal as long as the process delivers peace and quiet in the Kurdish southeast.<sup>13</sup>

The broad outlines of the agreement between Öcalan and the MIT include a ceasefire declaration by the PKK, the release of Turkish hostages held by the PKK, and a withdrawal into northern Iraq after laying down their arms. In return, the Turkish government is expected to craft legislation to overhaul the definition of terrorism, which would pave the way for the release of hundreds of imprisoned Kurdish activists. As part of settlement talks, the PKK declared a ceasefire in March 2013 and in May began its withdrawal from Turkey toward its camps in northern Iraq. Although no major casualties have been reported since, the political situation remains tense because of unfulfilled mutual expectations. Progress has been limited, but the ceasefire is holding.<sup>14</sup>

The “Democratic Opening” signals a new era in Turkish politics where the Kurdish question is not viewed through a security lens. Regional factors have also contributed to this new thinking and pushed Turkey to forge close relations with the KRG.

## REGIONAL FACTORS

Three regional developments played an important role in Turkey’s policy change: US withdrawal from Iraq, increasing tension between Baghdad and Ankara, and the ongoing civil war in Syria.

Under its “zero problems with neighbours” policy, the AKP government established economic and political alliances in the Middle East, forged strategic relationships with regional actors, took part in regional initiatives,

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<sup>12</sup> For a scholarly assessment of Erdoğan’s earlier efforts on the Kurdish issue, see Cuma Çiçek, “Elimination or Integration of Pro-Kurdish Politics: Limits of the AKP’s Democratic Initiative”, in *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March 2011), p. 15-26, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2011.563498>.

<sup>13</sup> Ömer Taşpınar and Gönül Tol, “Turkey and the Kurds: From Predicament to Opportunity”, cit., p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem. Aydın Albayrak, “Terrorist PKK Halts Withdrawal from Turkey, Maintains Cease-Fire”, in *Today’s Zaman*, 9 September 2013, [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?newsId=325823](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=325823).

and sought to play an active role in the resolution of regional conflicts. Turkey's mediating role in regional conflicts won it favourable notice in the Arab world. For instance, Ankara's efforts to break the isolation imposed on Syria and Iran by the United States were well-received, contributing to Turkey's image as an independent actor willing to defy Western powers if necessary. However, all that changed with the Arab Spring. Particularly challenging has been the outbreak of the Syrian uprising.<sup>15</sup>

Syria occupies a central place in Turkey's regional and domestic calculations for several reasons. Regionally, Syria has been a key component of the AKP's "zero problems with neighbours" policy. Domestically, engagement with the Syrian regime ensured Syrian cooperation on Turkey's three-decade fight against the PKK.<sup>16</sup> Assad's brutal crackdown on his own people, however, forced Turkey to cut ties with its one-time ally and altered Turkey's strategic calculations. Turkey started to actively support the Syrian opposition and became an organizational hub for the anti-Assad camp. Deteriorating security conditions in Syria, coupled with suspicions of Assad's support for the PKK, have made the Kurdish issue the focal point in Turkey's Syria policy.<sup>17</sup>

Syrian Kurds, for their part, are wary about Ankara's close ties to the Syrian opposition, affording Turkey little leverage with them. Unaware of Barzani's little influence over Syrian Kurds, Turkey sought to use its leverage over Barzani to marginalize the PYD, the PKK's Syrian offshoot, within the Syrian opposition and among Syrian Kurds.<sup>18</sup> Thus, cultivating closer ties to the KRG has become part of Turkey's strategic calculations in Syria.<sup>19</sup>

The Syrian crisis has also dealt a blow to Ankara-Baghdad relations, which had already been severed due to differences over several issues.<sup>20</sup> First, Maliki didn't much appreciate Turkey's relatively open support for

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<sup>15</sup> Gönül Tol, "Turkey's Search for a 'Zero Problem' Policy", in *The Middle East Channel*, 25 November 2013, <http://www.mei.edu/node/9134>.

<sup>16</sup> Soner Cagaptay, "Syria and Turkey: The PKK Dimension", in *The Washington Institute Policywatch*, No. 1919 (5 April 2012), <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/syria-and-turkey-the-pkk-dimension>.

<sup>17</sup> Gönül Tol, "The Kurdish Dimension to Turkey's Syria Policy", in *The Middle East Channel*, 12 April 2012, <http://www.mei.edu/node/1645>.

<sup>18</sup> Gönül Tol, "Erdogan's Syria Frustrations", in *The Middle East Channel*, 26 September 2013, <http://www.mei.edu/node/7905>.

<sup>19</sup> Alakbar Raufoglu, "Turkey looks to Iraqi Kurdistan govt for help against the PKK rebels", in *Ekurd*, 5 July 2012, <http://www.ekurd.net/mismas/articles/misc2012/7/turkey4015.htm>.

<sup>20</sup> Gönül Tol, "Turkey's Search for a 'Zero Problem' Policy", cit.

his rival, Ayad Allawi, in the 2010 Iraqi elections. Second, Baghdad's rapprochement with Iran makes Turkey nervous, as it does Iraq's Sunni Arab neighbors to the south. Third, the two governments differ starkly in their reaction to the Syrian crisis, with Turkey voicing sharp criticism of the Assad regime and hosting opposition elements while Iraq has tacitly backed Assad, fearing a civil war in Syria would have a violent spillover effect. Fourth, the Turks perceive that Maliki has been trying to push influential Sunnis out of positions of power, thereby increasing the likelihood of a reversion to the kind of sectarian war witnessed in 2006-2007. Erdoğan and Maliki accused each other of stoking sectarian tensions, with Erdoğan warning that Ankara would not remain silent if it felt Baghdad was pushing Iraq into a sectarian conflict. In January 2012, rockets were fired at the Turkish embassy in Baghdad, which Turkey took as a warning by Maliki's forces.<sup>21</sup> Relations were strained further after Maliki's government issued an arrest warrant for Sunni Vice President Tarek Al-Hashemi on charges of supporting terrorist acts and Turkey then granted refuge to al-Hashemi.<sup>22</sup> Davutoğlu's visit to Kirkuk without the approval of Maliki and Turkey's energy deals with the KRG only added to the tension.<sup>23</sup>

Faced with the challenges and uncertainties of the Syrian civil war, which complicates its Kurdish policy, as well as a strained relationship with Baghdad, Ankara has recalibrated its regional policy to form a strategic alliance with the KRG. The US withdrawal from Iraq and the KRG-Baghdad tension have provided the opening Turkey was looking for to become the new ally that Iraqi Kurds needed in an increasingly hostile Iraq.

## TURKEY'S ENERGY POLICY: IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT ENERGY<sup>24</sup>

Thus, political and economic considerations converged in the energy deal with the KRG. To cope with a fast-growing economy and an increasing

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<sup>21</sup> Gönül Tol, "A crisis in Ankara's backyard that does not involve Assad, in *The National*, 4 March 2012, <http://shar.es/RNCwY>.

<sup>22</sup> Gönül Tol, "Turkey's Other Troublesome Neighbor", in *The National*, 5 March 2012, <http://www.mei.edu/node/1325>.

<sup>23</sup> "Davutoglu's Kirkuk Visit Ignites Rage in Baghdad", in *Al-Monitor*, 3 August 2012, <http://almon.co/1xv>.

<sup>24</sup> This is based on Gönül Tol, "Has Energy-hungry Turkey Finally Solved 'the Kurdish Problem'?", in *CNN*, 1 November 2013, <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/11/01/opinion/turkey-kurdish-energy>.

demand for energy, Turkey must ensure an adequate energy supply. Its power generation has largely relied on Russian and Iranian imports.<sup>25</sup> The Syria crisis, however, has created a rift between Turkey and these energy suppliers, leaving the Turkish economy vulnerable to regional dynamics and price shocks. To fuel its growing economy, reduce its account deficit driven by high prices of oil and gas and decrease its dependency on Iran and Russia, Turkey has been scrambling to find alternative energy resources. As domestic and regional factors push Turkey to resolve its Kurdish problem urgently, Turkey capitalized on the openings in Turkey and the region to cultivate energy ties to the KRG.

To that end, the Turkish government has quietly been building up its energy presence in the KRG's oil and gas industry. In 2013, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and KRG Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani negotiated a framework deal that included Turkish stakes in exploration blocks and terms for the direct pipeline export of oil and gas from the KRG.<sup>26</sup>

The pipeline will allow Kurdish crude oil to be transported from the KRG directly into Turkey, bypassing Baghdad and setting up the KRG as a competitive supplier of oil to Turkey.

In an effort to stave off political tension with Baghdad, the parties did not sign a government-to-government deal; instead, they turned the KRG energy portfolio over to public and private energy companies.

In the spring of 2013, Turkey established a state-backed firm to explore for oil and gas in northern Iraq. In January 2013, Genel Energy, an Anglo-Turkish exploration and production company, was awarded the right to ship oil directly from the area.<sup>27</sup> Since then, the company has been exporting crude oil from the KRG's Taq Taq fields to Turkey's Ceyhan port by truck. The amount of oil exported from Taq Taq will grow significantly when the construction of the pipeline is completed.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> World Nuclear Association, "Nuclear Power in Turkey", updated February 2014, <http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/Country-Profiles/Countries-T-Z/Turkey>.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Knights, "Turkey's Choice in Iraq: Burned Bridges or Win-Win-Win", in *The Washington Institute Policywatch*, No. 2066, 15 April 2013, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/turkeys-choice-in-iraq-burned-bridges-or-win-win-win>.

<sup>27</sup> Olgü Okumuş, "Turkey's Cross Border Energy Policy's Tone Shifted", in *Natural Gas Europe*, 24 September 2013, <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/turkey-cross-border-energy-policys-tone-shifted>.

<sup>28</sup> "Crude Exports Begin in Kurdistan", in *Pipelines International*, 16 January 2014, [http://pipelinesinternational.com/news/crude\\_oil\\_exports\\_begin\\_in\\_kurdistan/085061](http://pipelinesinternational.com/news/crude_oil_exports_begin_in_kurdistan/085061).

The KRG's gas resources are even more appealing to Turkey. In 2012, Turkey's daily gas demand was 125 million cubic meters; this figure is likely to double this winter.<sup>29</sup> As such, Turkey is expected to be one of Europe's biggest gas consumers in a decade. Kurdish gas is attractive to Turkey because the framework agreement between Turkey and the KRG includes specific terms on the price of gas.<sup>30</sup> Turkey thus has leverage over pricing. Some experts have said that the KRG's supplies could be three times cheaper than Russian and Iranian sources due to this leverage.

Despite opposition from Baghdad and the US, energy cooperation between the KRG and Turkey will continue to expand rapidly. About a dozen Turkish companies have applied to Turkey's energy watchdog to obtain licenses to import gas from and construct oil pipelines in the KRG, and the KRG recently granted six Turkish companies permission to explore for oil.<sup>31</sup>

In September, news was leaked that a Turkish company was issued a license to import natural gas directly from the KRG. The Turkish state company Botas has also started construction of a gas pipeline from the KRG to Turkey's south-eastern city of Mardin. Through this energy partnership, Turkey can secure an alternative low-cost supplier and realize Erdoğan's goal of promoting Turkey as an energy hub, and the KRG can ensure its economic independence from Baghdad.

All these dynamics clearly suggest that the KRG's economic future will depend heavily on its relationship with Turkey. Although the KRG is rich in oil and natural gas, it needs to be able to extract and transport it to Western markets. Oil pipelines from northern Iraq to Turkish ports on the Mediterranean provide the most efficient and cost-effective means of getting Kurdish oil to Europe. A potentially nuclear-armed Iran with regional ambitions, the growing power of a Shia-dominated central government in Baghdad, and the waning influence of the United States as it draws down its military forces only add to the Iraqi Kurdish conviction that their best option is to mend fences with Turkey.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> International Energy Agency (IEA), *Oil and Gas Security Emergency Response of IEA Countries. Turkey 2013*, Paris, OECD/IEA, 2013, <http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/name,38110,en.html>.

<sup>30</sup> Michael Knights, "Turkey's Choice in Iraq: Burned Bridges or Win-Win-Win", cit.

<sup>31</sup> Olgu Okumuş, "Turkey's Cross Border Energy Policy's Tone Shifted", cit.

<sup>32</sup> Ömer Taşpınar and Gönül Tol, "Turkey and the Kurds: From Predicament to Opportunity", cit. p. 7.

## POTENTIAL PROBLEMS IN THE TURKEY-KRG ENERGY PARTNERSHIP<sup>33</sup>

The success of the Turkey-KRG energy partnership hinges on the peaceful resolution of Turkey's Kurdish problem. The PKK has used pipeline attacks as a means of targeting Turkey's strategic assets. Until very recently, PKK attacks on pipelines knocked out oil and gas flows, forcing Turkey to buy Russian and Azeri gas at higher prices and keeping the Iraq-Turkey route mostly idle.

In order to assure pipeline security and investment confidence, Turkey must finish what it started in 2012. It must resolve its Kurdish question peacefully. Since the PKK declared a ceasefire in March 2013 and started its withdrawal from Turkey toward its camps in northern Iraq in May, no serious fighting has been reported, but that could change. In September, the PKK announced that it had halted its pullout as both sides accused each other of failing to respect their part of the deal.

Late September, the Turkish government unveiled a reform package that allows the use of the Kurdish language in election campaigns, lifts restrictions on the use of the Kurdish language in private schools, abolishes the requirement to recite the pledge of allegiance that forced schoolchildren to declare that "I am a Turk", and allows Kurdish towns to use their Kurdish names.<sup>34</sup>

For the Kurds, however, the reform package seems to only move forward halfway. Kurds have long asked for the right to public education in Kurdish, and the package only applies to private schools. The democratization package also does not offer concrete steps to address the Kurdish demand to lower the 10 per cent electoral threshold, which has mainly been used to keep pro-Kurdish parties out of Parliament.<sup>35</sup>

After the announcement, the PKK warned that it may end the unilateral ceasefire. After a visit by Kurdish politicians to the prison island of Imrali, where Öcalan has been held since 1999, the Kurdish leader also relayed a message asking the government to lay the legal groundwork to address all Kurdish demands, or risk a breakdown in talks.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> This is based on Gönül Tol, "Has Energy-hungry Turkey Finally Solved 'the Kurdish Problem'?", *cit.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

But for the Turkish government, there is no easy way forward. With the 2014 local and presidential elections looming and no end in sight for the Syrian civil war, political uncertainty seems guaranteed. In the highly charged pre-election atmosphere, the Turkish government has to operate such that it does not alienate nationalists while at the same time keeps the peace process moving.

Yet the bigger challenge facing Turkish decision-makers is the regional fallout from the war in Syria. Turkish media are reporting that in retaliation to Turkey's stance in Syria, Iranian intelligence has been talking to the PKK leadership in northern Iraq's Qandil Mountains in order to convince it to abandon the peace process, promising support for Kurdish demands for autonomy in northern Syria in return. Despite challenges, resolving its domestic Kurdish problem through carrying out reforms that will address Kurdish demands remains the only way out of this conundrum for Turkey. Otherwise, Turkey will continue to render itself vulnerable to the vicissitudes of its neighbours' Kurdish politics.<sup>37</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The normalization of ties with the Iraqi Kurds through energy partnership has become an important component of the AKP's "democratic opening" and Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's new regional policy. To fulfil the ambitious objectives of the ruling party's energy policy, Turkey needs to foster peace and stability in the region and work closely with its neighbours. To attain all these, Turkey must find a peaceful solution to its Kurdish question.<sup>38</sup>

After decades of refusing to extend legitimacy to the KRG and opposing Iraqi Kurds' attempts to control oil-rich Kirkuk, Turkey seems to have reversed course in Iraq. The energy deals foreshadow a major shift in Turkey's KRG policy. Gone are the days when the KRG was seen as part of the problem; it is now viewed as part of the solution. There are now clear signs that Turkey would like to empower Kurdish sovereignty in northern Iraq since Ankara greatly benefits from the region's energy source.

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<sup>37</sup> Gönül Tol, "Syria's Kurdish Challenge to Turkey", in *The Middle East Channel*, 29 August 2012, <http://www.mei.edu/node/2084>.

<sup>38</sup> Cengiz Çandar, "The Kurdish Question: The Reasons and Fortunes of the 'Opening'", cit., p. 15.

Barzani's most recent visit to Turkey's Kurdish-majority south-eastern province, Diyarbakır, is a testament to the growth Turkey has seen in its relations with Iraq's Kurds. In his first official visit to Diyarbakır, Barzani wore traditional Kurdish clothes, gave a speech in Kurdish, and met with Turkish President Erdoğan, who said the word "Kurdistan" in public for the first time.<sup>39</sup> The two have also privately discussed issues such as the peace process between Turkey and the PKK. The visit underlined the new push in the AKP's policy to further deepen relations with the KRG.<sup>40</sup>

In addition to economic benefits, there are clear geopolitical implications in Turkey's rapprochement with the KRG. Through this energy partnership, Turkey has not only secured a low-cost supplier but has also created an unprecedented level of cooperation against the PKK through economic interdependence. Not surprisingly, in the last several years, KRG authorities have increasingly come to view PKK attacks against Turkey as an obstacle to rapprochement with Ankara.<sup>41</sup>

For Turkey, the stakes are higher than ever. Finding a peaceful resolution to its Kurdish problem will not only remove a strategic vulnerability; it will also secure Turkey's neighbourhood for the realization of new energy transportation projects and ensure a less costly and politically less risky energy alternative to Russia and Iran. Iraqi Kurds have vast hydrocarbon resources and will become important players in the energy field. The solution of the Kurdish problem will remove the biggest hurdle hindering cooperation with Iraqi Kurds.<sup>42</sup> It will realize Erdoğan's dream of making Turkey an energy hub and one of the world's ten largest economies by 2023—the hundredth anniversary of the Turkish Republic.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See Ahmed Hussein, "Turkish Prime Minister uses word Kurdistan for the first time in history", 16 November 2013, <http://www.iraqinews.com/baghdad-politics/erdogan-salutes-kurds-in-kurdistan-region>.

<sup>40</sup> Gönül Tol, "Turkey's KRG Energy Partnership", cit.

<sup>41</sup> Ömer Taşpınar and Gönül Tol, "Turkey and the Kurds: From Predicament to Opportunity", cit., p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> Cengiz Candar, "The Kurdish Question: The Reasons and Fortunes of the Openin", cit., p.15.

<sup>43</sup> Gönül Tol, "Has Energy-hungry Turkey Finally Solved 'the Kurdish Problem'?", cit.



## 5.

# Turkey's Migration Transition and its Implications for the Euro-Turkish Transnational Space

Ahmet İçduygu

## INTRODUCTION

Turkey's policies on international migration and migrants, concerning both inflows and outflows, have undergone a great transformation since the early 1990s.<sup>1</sup> This process includes a variety of changes in the administrative and legislative arrangements in the country: from dual citizenship policies to diaspora politics, from asylum regimes to visa regulations, from work permits for foreigners to new border management. This process has been greatly affected by the country's relations with the European Union (EU) and its exposure to globalization. Indeed, Turkey's new policies on international migration are being made in the context of both processes.<sup>2</sup> Globalization and EU-iza-

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<sup>1</sup> Liza Mügge, "Managing Transnationalism: Continuity and Change in Turkish State Policy", in *International Migration*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (February 2012), p. 20-38; Ahmet İçduygu and Damla B. Aksel, "Turkish Migration Policies: A Critical Historical Retrospective", in *Perceptions*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Autumn 2013), p. 167-190, <http://sam.gov.tr/?p=4233>; Seçil Paçacı Elitok, "Turkey's Prospective EU Membership from a Migration Perspective: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back?", in *Perceptions*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Autumn 2013), p. 1-11, <http://sam.gov.tr/?p=4257>.

<sup>2</sup> As noted by Flockhart in 2010, "'EU-ization' is different from 'Europeanization' because of its focus on the EU and because it is predominantly concerned with 'political encounters', where specific political entities such as the EU and Member State representatives engage in the transfer of institutional and organizational practices and policies". Trine Flockhart, "Europeanization or EU-ization? The Transfer of European Norms across Time and Space", in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (September 2010), p. 790-791. In the context of the EU-ization of migration policies in Turkey, see Ahmet İçduygu, "EU-ization Matters: Changes in Immigration and Asylum Practices in Turkey", in Thomas Faist and Andreas Ette (eds.), *The Europeanization of National Policies and Politics of Immigration*, Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2007, p.

tion have been a central part of the discourse shaping the debate over these policies since at least the early 1990s. Previously, widespread nationalism and later developmentalism made conservative and conventional national migration policies politically viable. However, since the 1990s and 2000s, the idea that a degree of openness and liberalism could contribute to migration policies has dominated the related domestic policy debates. As a result, the Turkish state has been faced with increased challenges in the so-called management of migratory regimes affecting the country.

Globalization and EU-ization of Turkey's international migration policies do not mean that these policies are now being completely aligned with modern international standards. Indeed, a number of scholars, policy makers and activists still criticize the country's policies for their failures in dealing with the migratory flows and in providing services for the well-being of migrants.<sup>3</sup> The claim being made here is not that the migration policies of Turkey are fully changed and modernized. In fact, these policies are mostly old-fashioned, incomplete, and insufficient. Nevertheless, in recent years, relatively more liberal discourse has been a fundamental factor in determining the policy alternatives available to the Turkish state in its efforts to reformulate its migration policies. The factual transition in migration is accompanied by discursive and policy developments that take place on a terrain fraught with tension between nationalist and statist legacies which are rooted in the politics of the past, and the current worldviews which are based on neo-liberalism in an age of globalism. As such, the Turkish state is steadily adapting itself to the new role that countries plays in emigration and immigration in a globalized world that increasingly implies an environment of rights. Migrant-centred perspectives now tend to capture some portions of the state-centred realms of dominant migration policies.

The main purpose of this paper is to advance the understanding of past and present changes in the migratory status of Turkey, as well as to identify the wider economic, demographic and political transforma-

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201-222; Ahmet İçduygu and E. Fuat Keyman, "Globalization, Security and Migration: The Case of Turkey", in *Global Governance*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (July-September 2000), p. 383-398.

<sup>3</sup> Seçil Paçacı Elitok, "Turkey's Prospective EU Membership from a Migration Perspective...", cit., p. 1; Alexander Bürgin, "European Commission's agency meets Ankara's agenda: why Turkey is ready for a readmission agreement", in *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 19, No. 6 (August 2012), p. 883-899.

tions explaining these trends. A central question is the extent to which the most recent migration- and migrant-related policies are related to and different from past ones and why this is the case. Answering these questions can help us not only to better understand the impact of the past on the present, but also that of the present on the future. In this context, specific reference is made to the migratory system between Europe and Turkey and to its implications for the future of the Euro-Turkish transnational space.

## TURKEY'S TRANSFORMATION INTO A COUNTRY OF IMMIGRATION

Turkey has changed its migration profile decisively over the course of the last century, during which it has gone through various stages in migration transition, which are visualized in Table 1. Turkey's history of migration transition incorporates periods where the management of different migration patterns overlapped. Modern Turkey's earliest recorded migration was prompted by the uneasy process of nation-building and the nationalist policies of un-mixing, which created a two-way immigration and emigration circulation cycle. During the 1960s, policies that encouraged mass emigration, especially to European countries, intersected with state-led developmentalist policies, rapid urbanization, and internal migration. Another instance of overlapping occurred with the advent of liberalization and globalization after the 1980s, in which the state became increasingly responsive to the demands of emigrants abroad and the rising flow of migrants of non-Muslim origin. The impact of Europeanization in the 2000s created new alliances, as well as tensions in the management of migration and led to the establishment of new administrative and legal structures, boosting state authority.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Damla B. Aksel, "Turkish Migration Policies: A Critical Historical Retrospective", cit., p. 167.

**Table 1. An Overview of the International Migration Transition in Turkey**

Period	Dominant Types of International Migration	Dominant State Ideology Related to Migration
1923-1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emigration of non-Muslims</li> <li>• Immigration of Muslims and/or Turks</li> </ul>	Nationalism/ Statism
1960-1980/90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour Emigration (Muslims and/or Turks)</li> </ul>	Developmentalism/Liberalism
1990-2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigration of foreigners (non-Muslims and/or non-Turks)</li> </ul>	Neo-liberal Institutionalism

The prominent ideology that shaped Turkish migration policies, regarding both immigration and emigration for most of the country's early history was nationalism, which viewed mobility and population management as one of the main tools of nation-state building. During the debate on the establishment of a new ministry on Population Exchange, Development and Settlement, in his address to the Turkish Parliament on 13 October 1923, Mr. Tunalı Hilmi, a powerful member of the parliament, conveyed a simple vision of the basic goals of Turkish immigration policy:

I don't need ostentatiousness but people. Let more than a hundred Turkish families come from Adakale (Ada Kaleh) in Tuna: let them build Anatolian villages on the shores of Sakarya –Tuna of Anatolia – or in any other islet! We should remember: we have a countless number of [my] Turks not only right besides us, in Aleppo and Damascus, but also as far away as Basra, Mecca, Yemen, and not only in Egypt, but in Sudan and Morocco [...] They should all come [...] They should be brought if they don't come [...] The law about "there is no such thing as empty space in nature, it gets filled and it disappears" led me to deep thoughts in school during science classes. Thinking of it in terms of "Sociology," which I had not heard of at that time, the ques-

tion of “If I don’t fill the empty country with Turks, who else would fill it?” would make my soul shiver. It still does [...] Yes, if God bestows us with such a sublime victory; but if we don’t respond swiftly in “developing [the country] with population”, I would not be providing the real salvation to the nation: We can be sure that if we do not provide such a real victory, then the victory will fall through.<sup>5</sup>

During this period, while people of Turkish origin and Islamic faith were encouraged to migrate to Turkey, non-Muslims in Turkey were discouraged from remaining in the country. According to estimates, nearly one million people of Turkish origin and Islamic faith arrived in the country in the period of 1923-39: around 200,000 from Bulgaria, 400,000 from Greece, nearly 150,000 Romania and another 150,000 from other parts of the Balkans.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, about 16 million people were living in Turkey at the start of the First World War, including 13 million Muslims and 3 million non-Muslims. Among the 3 million non-Muslims were 1.5 million Rums, 1.2 million Armenians, 128,000 Jews and 176,000 non-Rum and non-Armenian Christians.<sup>7</sup> The mobility patterns based on the forced migration of Armenians and Rums resulted in the reduction of the non-Muslim population in Turkey from 19 percent in 1914 to 3 percent in 1927, and then later on decreased to nearly 1 percent in the 1950s – constituting only 200,000 people.<sup>8</sup> In short, in the first half of the 20th century, there were mass emigration and immigration movements shaping the Turkish population (see Graph 5 below).

Nationalist ideology influenced the earliest republican legislation addressing the treatment of immigration and emigration. The state-led emigration was maintained by agreements of reciprocity with other countries (in 1913 and 1925 with Bulgaria, in 1923 with Greece),

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<sup>5</sup> Obtained (and translated) from the Parliamentary Archives of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, by Damla B. Aksel, assistant of the author and PhD Scholar in the Department of International Relations at Koç University, İstanbul.

<sup>6</sup> Ahmet İçduygu, Şule Toktaş and B. Ali Soner, “The Politics of Population in a Nation-Building Process: Emigration of Non-Muslims from Turkey”, in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (February 2008), p. 358-389.

<sup>7</sup> Youssef Courbage and Phillipe Fargues, *Christians and Jews under Islam*, London and New York, I.B. Tauris, 1998, p. 128.

<sup>8</sup> Ahmet İçduygu, Şule Toktaş and Ali Soner, “The Politics of Population in a Nation-Building Process...”, cit., p. 363-365.

forced displacements (as in the case of the 1915 Armenian emigration) and migrations triggered by deterrence policies (including The Wealth Tax of 1942). Among the social engineering initiatives for Turkifying the population living in the Turkish Republic were also the administrative and legal arrangements facilitating the immigration and settlement of Turkish populations, which were put in force primarily in the 1930s.<sup>9</sup> The 1934 *Law on Settlement*, which was designed primarily as a legal tool of immigration and settlement in the country,<sup>10</sup> established two divergent statuses by: (a) facilitating the migration and integration of those of “Turkish origin and culture” either as migrants or as refugees, and (b) preventing and impeding the entry as migrants or refugees of those who did not meet this criterion. While these two statuses were in line with what had been the state’s migration policy since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, they also paved the way for succeeding patterns of migration to and from Turkey. As a result of these patterns of migration, both the quantity and quality of the population of Turkey changed. This in turn meant that the population of Turkey was enlarged, and membership in the national bourgeoisie changed hands from the non-Muslims to the newly enriched Muslim merchants. This new bourgeoisie was also supported by the state elites who were attempting to grow and modernize the national economy through paternalistic policies.<sup>11</sup>

Nationalism provided the foundation for the migration policies of Turkey in the first half of the 20th century.<sup>12</sup> Exclusion of the non-Turkish and non-Muslim populations and inclusion of Turks and Muslims

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<sup>9</sup> Ayhan Aktar, *Varlık Vergisi ve Türkleştirme Politikaları*, İstanbul, İletişim, 2000; Ahmet Yıldız, *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene*, İstanbul, İletişim, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmet İçduygu, “Den Nationalstaat errichten und bewahren, auch in der globalisierten Welt: Der politische Hintergrund internationaler Migration in die Türkei”, in Barbara Pusch and Tomas Wilkoszewski (eds.), *Facetten internationaler Migration in die Türkei: Gesellschaftliche Rahmenbedingungen und persönliche Lebenswelten*, Würzburg, Ergon, 2008, p. 3-23; Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkey: A Transformation from Emigration to Immigration”, in *MPI’s Online Journal*, 1 November 2003, <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/node/4802>; Soner Çağaptay, “Kemalist Dönemde Göç ve İskan Politikaları: Türk Kimliği üzerine bir Çalışma”, in *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 93 (Summer 2002), p. 218-241; Ahmet Yıldız, *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyebilene*, cit.

<sup>11</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye’de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, İstanbul, İletişim, 1989, p. 136-137.

<sup>12</sup> Ahmet İçduygu, “Den Nationalstaat errichten und bewahren auch in der globalisierten Welt...”, cit., p. 5-8; Ahmet İçduygu and Damla B. Aksel, “Turkish Migration Policies: A Critical Historical Retrospective”, cit., p. 169-180.

was the first comprehensive system of migration policy in the country. During the Second World War and the following period, both domestic and foreign policy concerns contributed to strengthening these two-way operations of emigration and immigration. In the decades after the war, however, these factors would converge with the growing liberal economic values, and ultimately would result in significant changes in the Turkish migration policies.

The post-Second World War period had implications on the economic, social and political transformations all around the world, bringing economic dynamism, increases in industrial production, as well as social and geographical mobility. Meanwhile rapid integration of Turkey, both economically and politically, into the world capitalist system was a noticeable part of these transformations. Consequently, all these changes also had implications for Turkey, where traditional migration values of nationalism were affected by a mentality of developmentalism and market freedoms. As a result, the primary focus of the international migration policies in Turkey in this period somehow shifted from a nationalism-centred paradigm to a more developmentalism-originated liberal paradigm (see Table 1 above).<sup>13</sup>

Formulating a strategy of labour exporting as a tool of its economic development, Turkey entered into new relations with labour demanding industrialized countries through labour recruitment agreements beginning with the 1961 Agreement with Germany. Thousands of Turkish workers left their home to find their employments in various European countries (see Graph 5 below). Modern Turkey witnessed for the first time in its history mass emigration of its Turkish and Muslim populations abroad. The main goals regarding these labour agreements were different from the viewpoints of the labour demanding versus the labour supplying country (i.e. Turkey), which reflects the classical core-peripheral model of migration theories. The interests of the European core countries were to respond to the post-war labour shortage via short term migration from less developed countries, while the interests of the peripheral countries were to send migrants abroad, in order to benefit from emigrants' economic (export of surplus labour power and remittances) and social (transfer of knowledge and know-how) capital that

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<sup>13</sup> Ahmet İçduygu, "50 Years After the Labour Recruitment Agreement with Germany: The Consequences of Emigration for Turkey", in *Perceptions*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Summer 2012), p. 13, <http://sam.gov.tr/?p=2727>.

they would gain in Europe. For both sides, migration was supposed to be temporary.<sup>14</sup>

In his talk to the parliament on 25 February 1962, the Minister of Labour, Mr. Bülent Ecevit reflects on the state's perspectives on labour emigration providing the foundation of migration policies with a developmentalist approach.

As you know workers from various countries work in Germany. Based on the information we received from Germany I should tell you proudly that the Germans, who are known to be meticulous about work discipline, are more satisfied with the Turkish worker than all other foreign workers. This is a living example of how efficient the Turkish worker can be under the administration of a manager who knows how to employ a worker, who knows the staff relations and the art of managing. [...] Sending workers to Germany is not disadvantageous for the worker's public and professional life, but rather helpful. This is because for a few years now, it has been known that unemployment has become a source of trouble in our country. Under such circumstances, the opening of this door has reduced the problem of unemployment, and increased the possibility for negotiation between employees and business owners. [...] If I understood correctly, a spokesman friend demanded that it be obligatory for the Turkish workers in Germany to send money to Turkey. Our opinion is that this is impractical and against human rights. In practice, many workers already send back money to their families that they leave behind. However, I should note the bitter truth that the difference between the official and free market exchange rate unfortunately decreases the amount of foreign exchange earnings that our country and our treasury receive through the money sent to Turkey.<sup>15</sup>

However, many migrants confounded expectations by settling down in Europe, and even bringing their families to join them. The economic downturn in Western Europe in the 1970s ended the recruitment of labour from Turkey; Turkish emigration to Europe, however, did not come

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<sup>14</sup> Ahmet Akgündüz, *Labour Migration from Turkey to Western Europe, 1960-1974. A Multidisciplinary Analysis*, Aldershot and Burlington, Ashgate, 2008, p. 7-15.

<sup>15</sup> Obtained (and translated) from the Parliamentary Archives of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, by Damla B. Aksel.



to an end.<sup>16</sup> The evolution of Turkish migrant communities in Europe was remarkable.<sup>17</sup> Starting with the outflow of a few Turkish migrants in late 1961, there were more than half a million Turkish migrants and their relatives living in Europe by the early 1970s, almost two million by the early 1980s, more than two and a half million by the early 1990s, and over three million by the early 2000s.<sup>18</sup> What seems primarily to have contributed to this increase was, firstly, family reunification and marriage migration over time, and, secondly, asylum flows – initially due to the military intervention in civilian politics in Turkey in 1980 and later due to an increase in violence surrounding efforts to suppress a separatist movement by Turkey's large Kurdish minority. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) statistics, between 1980 and 2010, almost one million Turkish citizens applied for asylum in various European countries.<sup>19</sup>

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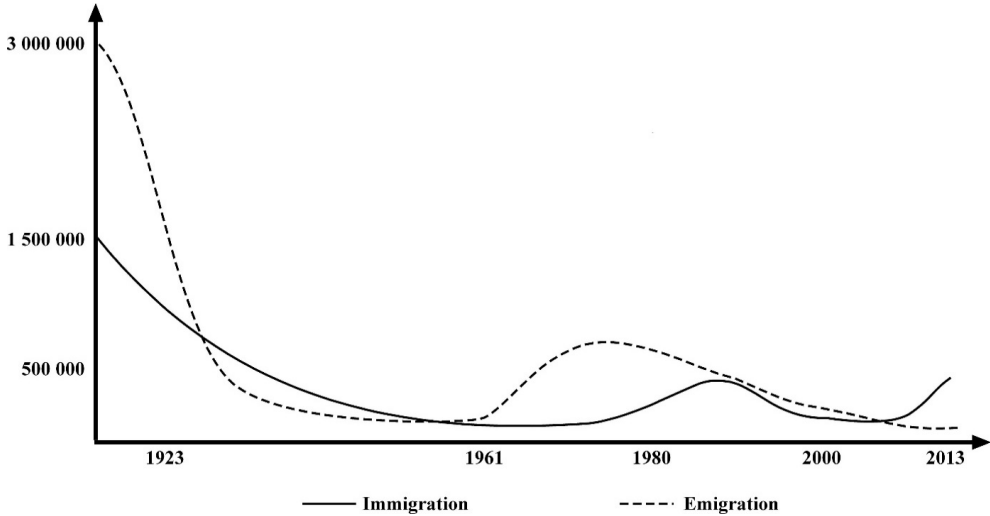
<sup>16</sup> Czarina Wilpert, "Returning and Remaining: Return among Turkish Migrants in Germany", in Daniel Kubat (ed.), *The Politics of Return. International Return Migration in Europe*, Rome, Centro Studi Emigrazione, 1984, p. 101-112; Nermin Abadan-Unat, *Turks in Europe. From Guest Worker to Transnational Citizen*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2011; Heinz Fassmann and Ahmet İçduygu, "Turks in Europe: Migration Flows, Migrant Stocks and Demographic Structure", in *European Review*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (July 2013), p. 349-361.

<sup>17</sup> Ahmet İçduygu, *Europe, Turkey, and International Migration: An Uneasy Negotiation*, Paper presented at the EUI Migration Working Group, 26 January 2011, <http://www.eui.eu/seminarsandevents/index.aspx?eventid=60065>.

<sup>18</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Kemal Kirişçi, "Introduction: Turkey's International Migration Transition", in Ahmet İçduygu and Kemal Kirişçi (eds.), *Land of Diverse Migrations. Challenges of Emigration and Immigration in Turkey*, Istanbul, İstanbul Bilgi University Press, 2009, p. 9; Heinz Fassmann and Ahmet İçduygu, "Turks in Europe...", cit., p. 349-361.

<sup>19</sup> Heinz Fassmann and Ahmet İçduygu, "Turks in Europe...", cit., p. 352.

**Graph 5. Various Stages of the Migration Transition in Turkey, 1923-2013**



Source: Author's calculation based on data collected over time from various sources.

It appears that persisting economic under-development intensified the push factors that encouraged emigration in the 1960s and 1970s in Turkey. It was not, however, only the economic conditions that created extreme push conditions in the country. The political instability that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, the economic and political liberalization that took place in the 1990s, and, in general, the dynamics of contemporary globalization all contributed to various types of mobilities in the last two decades and are, in large part, responsible for new migration trends:<sup>20</sup> among them, in particular, declining flows of new labour migration over time, asylum seekers and irregular migrants, and the increasing movement of highly skilled professionals and students.

Today, it is estimated that 15 to 20 thousand Turkish citizens arrive in Europe annually, and intend to stay long-term.<sup>21</sup> More than one-third

<sup>20</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Damla B. Aksel, *Migrant Realities and State Responses: Rethinking International Migration Policies in Turkey*, paper presented at the International Workshop of Social Transformation and International Migration (STIM) project on Challenge for Social Theory and National Identities, Sydney, 22-23 August 2013.

<sup>21</sup> For some details see, Ahmet İçduygu, *International Migration and Turkey, 2012*, OECD SOPEMI Country Report for Turkey, Istanbul, MiReKoc, Koç University, 2012.

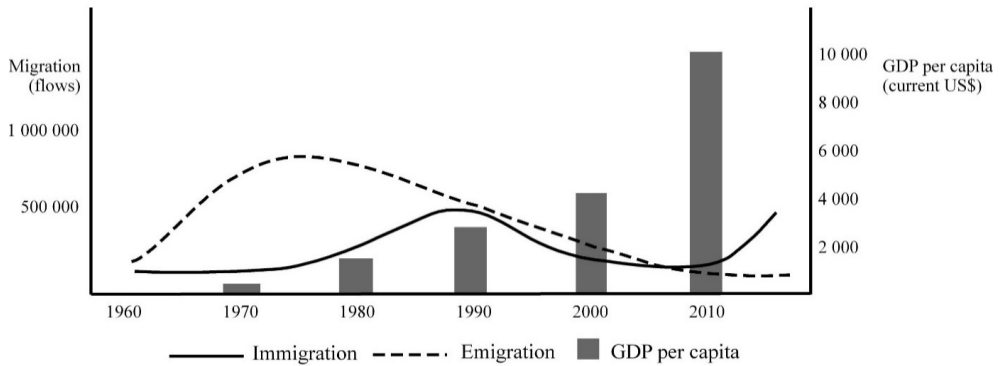
of these are highly skilled professionals and students. There are almost no new labour migrants, except those who arrive through family reunification, asylum seeking, and irregular flows. There are now over 4 million people of Turkish-origin living in Europe, of whom over 1.5 million have taken up the citizenship of their host countries.<sup>22</sup> Turkish migrants and their European-born family members are the largest group of non-nationals residing in the EU, accounting for 0.6 per cent of the EU population.<sup>23</sup> Of course, these percentages vary widely from country to country. Given the emerging sizable Turkish immigrant communities in Europe, the Turkish state has been overtly producing proactive policies since the 1980s, in particular during the last two decades, to maintain its ties with the diaspora communities, and to utilize them in its diaspora politics both nationally and internationally. These policies include the formulation of some forms of dual citizenship and voting rights granted to Turkish migrants living abroad, and the provision of institutional assistance for the pro-state lobbying activities of Turkish communities in Europe, on behalf of Turkey. It must be noted here, however, that in the fifty-year history of Turkish labour emigration to Europe, the period of 1960-2010 showed a classical trend of transformation from a net emigration setting to a net immigration setting (see Graph 6).

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<sup>22</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Damla B. Aksel, *Migrant Realities and State Responses...*, cit.

<sup>23</sup> Author's calculation based on data from OECD, *International Migration Outlook 2010*, Paris, OECD, 2010.

**Graph 6. Classical (Labour) Migration Transition in Turkey, 1960-2013**



*Source:* Immigration and Emigration: Author's calculation based on data collected over time from various sources. GDP: World Bank Data Bank.

Even though modern Turkey had been affected by immigration waves since the 1920s, they were based on the arrival of people with “Turkish descent and culture”. There was, however, a remarkable change in the early 1980s (see Table 1 above). The incoming migration during the 1980s was for the first time comprised of “foreigners” who were neither Turks nor Muslim.<sup>24</sup> Some of the immigration flows to Turkey were related to the overall globalization process that facilitated and boosted the movement of people as well as goods, technologies, ideas and finances. In addition, the political turmoil and the economic transformations in the region over the last thirty years drove people to move to safer and more developed countries, making Turkey a passageway. In the East, the draconian politics in Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq, especially towards minorities, as well as the humanitarian insecurity after the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf crisis,

<sup>24</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Kemal Kirişçi, “Introduction: Turkey’s International Migration Transition”, cit., p. 1-25; Ahmet İçduygu, “Den Nationalstaat errichten und bewahren auch in der globalisierten Welt...”, cit.; Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkey: A Transformation from Emigration to Immigration”, cit.

pushed people to enter Turkey seeking asylum. In the West, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist systems in Eastern Europe prompted the citizens of these countries to arrive in Turkey in search of temporary work. Moreover, increasing economic prosperity and political stability in the country attracted foreigners of different status such as professionals, sun seekers and retirees, students, temporary or permanent workers, to work, study, or live in Turkey.

In an address to a conference on migration, Islam and multiculturalism in Europe in Ankara on 11 April 2013,<sup>25</sup> President Abdullah Gül revealed the changing nature of migration policies in Turkey.

Turkey is changing. Turkey is a country that has accepted migrants and is used as a transit point for migration to Europe. Not only are people from our neighbouring countries arriving in Turkey, but also people from other parts of the world are coming to our country. As Turkey is enjoying successful economic development, the country is becoming a country of immigration... We used to send our citizens to other countries [...] to Germany [...] to France, to Austria, to Australia [...] we now have thousands of Turkish migrants living in other countries [...] But foreigners are also beginning to live in Turkey [...] We have so many refugees coming to Turkey [...] In the Ottoman period we were a multicultural country, with people of different religion, ethnicity and culture [...] now again Turkey will be a place with this diversity [...] this is the reason that we will now have a new Law on Foreigners and International Protection.<sup>26</sup>

It is estimated that in the last two decades, more than half a million transit migrants have been absorbed in the country – primarily from Middle Eastern, Asian and African countries – as they tried to make their way to Europe. Another half a million, mostly coming from the post-Soviet countries, have come and worked as irregulars in various sectors. In the same period, more than a hundred thousand asylum seekers have arrived

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<sup>25</sup> The conference entitled “Migration, Islam and Multiculturalism in Europe” was organized in Ankara on 11-12 April 2013 by Hacettepe University Center for Migration and Political Studies (HUGO). See Turkish Presidency, *Cumhurbaşkanı Gül, “Avrupa’da Göç, İslam ve Çokkültürlülük” Sempozyumuna Katıldı*, 11 April 2013, <http://www.tccb.gov.tr/haberler/170/85728/cumhurbaskani-gul-avrupada-goc-islam-ve-cokkulturluluk-sempozyumuna-katildi.html>.

<sup>26</sup> Author’s translation.

individually in Turkey, in addition to the mass movements of half a million Kurds from Iraq in the first Gulf War in 1991, and nearly a million Syrians fleeing the recent crisis. In addition to these groups, around a quarter of million foreigners, most of which are professionals, students, and retired “sun” migrants, have residence permits and reside in Turkey. As a result, the first part of the 2000s has witnessed immigration flows from four different categories:<sup>27</sup> (1) irregular labour migrants; (2) transit migrants; (3) asylum seekers and refugees and (4) regular migrants. The irregular migrants (labour/shuttle and transit migrants) are those who either use Turkey as a way to cross into a third country, or stay or work in the country without the necessary permits. The asylum seekers and refugees are considered in parallel with the irregular migrants, due to their type of entry into Turkey, often via irregular border crossings. Regular migrants are composed of the immigrants and their family members who arrive in Turkey for employment, education, settlement or long-term living and recreational purposes.

A number of factors are behind this transition from a country of emigration to immigration. In general, globalization is clearly a major external force behind Turkey’s rapid transformation into a “migration transition” country.<sup>28</sup> However, there were also internal developments within Turkey that have influenced Turkey’s transformation into a migration transition country. Turkey’s new liberal market economy characterized by informality attracts migration into Turkey. Furthermore, government policies have made entry into Turkey much easier than was the case during the Cold War. In fact, the single party rule of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) with its partly liberal stands, has been instrumental in reforming the country’s immigration policy since the early 2000s.<sup>29</sup> Lastly, Turkey’s current ambition to become a member of the EU and the accompanying political liberalization is altering the state’s traditional conception of national identity. There has been growing pressure to adopt policies that recognize Turkey’s own ethnic and cultural diversity. Inevitably, this has

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<sup>27</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Deniz Yüksek, “Rethinking transit migration in Turkey: reality and re-presentation in the creation of a migratory phenomenon”, in *Population, Space and Place*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (July-August 2012), p. 441-456.

<sup>28</sup> Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkey: A Transformation from Emigration to Immigration”, cit.

<sup>29</sup> Secil Paçacı Elitok, “Turkish Migration Policy Over the Last Decade: A Gradual Shift Towards Better Management and Good Governance”, in *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Spring 2013), p. 161-172, [http://www.turkishpolicy.com/dosyalar/files/vol\\_12-no\\_1-ELITOK.pdf](http://www.turkishpolicy.com/dosyalar/files/vol_12-no_1-ELITOK.pdf).

a bearing on how the Turkish state and society regards foreigners and migrants. Similarly, in the context of the EU-Turkey membership negotiation process, the EU-ization of migration policies in Turkey has been a pressing concern on the agenda of EU-Turkey relations. In turn, government policy is under growing pressure to reform and adapt to the realities of Turkey's transformation from being mainly a country of emigration to a country of immigration.

A significant portion of the “non-Turk, non-Muslim” immigration to Turkey since the 1980s is irregular, and such immigrants are defined by Turkish law as “illegal”. Until the 1994 *Asylum Regulation*,<sup>30</sup> a handful of texts laid down the clauses and modalities regarding the entry, exit, stay and residence of aliens, without touching on topics such as asylum or labour. The 1994 Regulation defined the conditions for applying for asylum in Turkey; however, this remained a limited opportunity for being recognized legally due to the geographical limitation clause of the 1951 Geneva Convention.<sup>31</sup> Despite criticism, the Turkish state did not lift the limitation and allowed only temporary asylum to non-European asylum seekers until they resettled in a third country. Analysing this from the perspective of the nation-state paradigm and international migration, the policies regarding immigrants in Turkey have been slow to recognize the immigration of non-co-ethnics and move away from the nation-state centred migration policies.

Yet, signs of policy change in the area of immigration are becoming increasingly apparent and the EU has been a driving force in this regard since the early 2000s.<sup>32</sup> For example, Turkey, as part of its pre-accession requirements, has to harmonize its legislation in areas identified in the EU “Accession Partnership” document.<sup>33</sup> Specifically, the *Action Plan on Asylum and Migration* adopted by the government in March of 2005, lays

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<sup>30</sup> Regulation No. 6169 of 1994.

<sup>31</sup> Kemal Kirişçi, “UNHCR and Turkey: Cooperating for Improved Implementation of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees”, in *International Journal of Refugee Law*, Vol. 13, Nos. 1-2 (January 2001), p. 71-97; Kemal Kirişçi, “Border Management and EU-Turkish Relations: Convergence or Deadlock”, in *CARIM Research Report*, No. 2007/03 (2007), <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/7988>.

<sup>32</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Damla B. Aksel, “Turkish Migration Policies: A Critical Historical Retrospective”, cit., p. 180-185.

<sup>33</sup> “Accession Partnership” documents lay down the tasks that Turkey has to implement to harmonize its laws and policies with that of the EU *acquis*. There is a whole section relating to issues under immigration. The most recent one is the *Council Decision 2008/157/EC* of 18 February 2008 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained

out the tasks and timetable Turkey intends to follow in order to adopt EU directives on asylum and migration. It is within this context that Turkey experienced the EU-ization of its migration and asylum legislation. For instance, the Turkish state enacted a new law, the *Law on Work Permits of Foreigners*,<sup>34</sup> that enabled labour migrants to obtain their documents in Turkey more easily. The enactment of this law facilitates foreign nationals' search for work and employment in Turkey, and heralds the state's more welcoming attitude towards its migrant labour force. A new *Law on Foreigners and International Protection* was adopted by the Parliament in April 2013.<sup>35</sup> Combining the previously planned two separate laws, the *Law on Aliens* and the *Law on Asylum*, this law introduces some landmark reforms that provide Turkey with a modern, efficient and fair management system, in line with core international and European standards. With the new law, Turkey commits itself to integrating immigrants into the country and treating asylum seekers and irregular migrants in accordance with international norms. Considering that these tasks are currently being carried out by the Security General Directorate of the country, but that the General Directorate of Migration Management will replace it gradually after its complete establishment in one year, the developments introduced by this new law mark genuine progress in the idea of "migration management" or "management of immigration" in the country's public policy agenda.

Even though Turkey's migration policies have been undergoing a remarkable transformation towards liberalization since the early 2000s, there seem to be various paradoxical developments in the direction of these changes. In some policy areas, including citizenship, the prospects of Turkey loosening its traditional immigration policies seem less likely. Although the new *Settlement Law* of 2006<sup>36</sup> has made similar changes towards the liberalization of migration policies, it continues to limit formal immigration to Turkey to individuals and groups of "Turkish descent and

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in the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Turkey..., <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/NOT/?uri=celex:32008D0157>.

<sup>34</sup> Law No. 4817 of 27 February 2003.

<sup>35</sup> Law No. 6458 of 4 April 2013. For a detailed elaboration of this legal arrangement, see Esra Dardağan Kibar, "An Overview and Discussion of the New Turkish Law on Foreigners and International Protection", in *Perceptions*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Autumn 2013), p. 109-128, <http://sam.gov.tr/?p=4239>.

<sup>36</sup> Law No. 5543 of 26 September 2006.



culture".<sup>37</sup> This approach is very closely related with the traditional conception of "Turkishness" reminiscent of the 1930s. The identifying features of "Turkishness" are not solely related to Turkish ethnicity, but the ability and willingness to adopt the Turkish language and to be a member of the Muslim Sunni ethnic group often closely associated with past Ottoman rule. Technically, Albanians, Bosnians, Circassians, Pomaks, Tatars, and Turks — mostly from the Balkans — who are included in this definition will be able to immigrate to Turkey. Minorities claiming a link to Turkey who are not Sunni Muslims, that is everyone from Armenians and Assyrians to Greeks and Jews, as well as unassimilated Kurds and Alevis are likely to face difficulties in immigrating to Turkey. Such a policy is not in accord with the emerging EU common immigration policy, which increasingly emphasizes civic connections to host territories, and employment prospects rather than ethnic or national origin, as grounds for immigration. Another point, which indicates that the Turkish government has not always taken a position compatible with the harmonization efforts of the EU pre-accession period, is related to the easing of travel restrictions and visa requirements for travellers from nearby countries:<sup>38</sup> interestingly, many of these new visa-free arrangements contradict the EU *acquis* and create problems for Turkey's EU membership agenda.

Over the last few years, the policies for preserving ties with emigrant communities abroad have been remarkable.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, the reflections of this newly emerged ideological setting of neo-Ottomanism have become very clear with the establishment of a new government department - the Prime Ministry Presidency for Turks Abroad and Relative Communities (*Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Toplulukları Başkanlığı*). The presidency was set up in 2010 with the objective of maintaining and strengthening the relationship of the Turkish state with Turkish citizens living abroad, those of Turkish origin living outside of Turkish territories and with foreign students in Turkey. This is the first time that the emigrants abroad and the Turkish ethnic communities who are not citizens of Turkey have been brought together under the same institutional roof. According to the Presidency, close contact with Turkish citizens living abroad is of the

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<sup>37</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Damla B. Aksel, *Migrant Realities and State Responses*, cit.

<sup>38</sup> Zeynep Özler, "Visa Politics Under JDP Rule with Respect to EU Visa Policies", in *Perceptions*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Autumn 2013), p. 33-61, <http://sam.gov.tr/?p=4249>.

<sup>39</sup> Özge Bilgili, "Turkey's Multifarious Attitude Towards Migration and its Migrants", in *Migration Policy Centre Research Report*, No. 2012/02 (2012), <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/23498>.

foremost importance and “citizens who are dispersed across the vast geographies in the world, from Germany to Jordan, Balkans to Australia, are increasingly becoming more effective and successful in their residence countries in different fields including economics, science, arts, sports and politics.”<sup>40</sup> Besides this interest, the presidency projects a discourse, which often deploys references to its glorified Ottoman past, to its history, people, and geography. Together this rhetoric and the promotion of the Turkish language and culture abroad through the establishment of Yunus Emre Cultural Centers, reflect the Turkish state’s emphasis on making use of the neo-Ottoman discourse as an alternative form of modernity, challenging the linear European model.<sup>41</sup>

It appears that since the early 2000s, various external and internal factors have made Turkey take more systematic steps toward institutionalising the “management of international migration flows and their outcomes.”<sup>42</sup> It seems that a considerable shift has taken place during the last decade towards a proactive policy-making position on emigration and immigration issues. However, it also seems that the path of policy-making on international migration has not been smooth. Policy makers are faced with several dilemmas. On the one hand, the nationalist restrictive rhetoric that has partly dominated migration policy debates in recent years is unlikely to be matched by the reality of migration flows. On the other hand, certainly, the new liberal tendencies are real and cannot be disregarded. The debate over Turkish migration policies seems to continue to be marked by conflict between traditional and modern forces. Nevertheless, the legislative compromises that result from this conflictual debate are likely to give Turkish policy-makers the tools necessary to carefully and considerably transform the country’s migration policies. There is no doubt that for the last two decades, globalization in general and EU-ization in specific have played a significant role in the changes experienced in Turkey. As noted by Sassen,<sup>43</sup> “an emerging de facto regime, centered in international agreements and conventions as well as in various rights gained by immigrants, limits the state’s role” in managing migration con-

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<sup>40</sup> T.C. Başbakanlık Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı (YTB), *Yurtdışı Vatandaşlar Danışma Kurulu*, Ankara, YTB, 2013, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Damla B. Aksel, *Migrant Realities and State Responses*, cit.

<sup>42</sup> Secil Paçacı Elitok, “Turkish Migration Policy Over the Last Decade...”, cit., p. 161-172.

<sup>43</sup> Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996, p. 67.

trol. To assess the long-term impact of this development, the influence of the EU accession process on Turkish migration policies and the formation of a transnational space between Europe and Turkey in this context will now be explored.

## EUROPE, TURKEY, AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION: FORMING A TRANSNATIONAL SPACE<sup>44</sup>

In 1963, two years after the initiation of intense migratory movement from Turkey to Europe in 1961,<sup>45</sup> Turkey received associate membership in the European Community with the signing of the Ankara agreement. Migration from Turkey to Europe – in the words of Article 12, the “gradual realisation of the free flow of workers” to the European Community – was considered a significant and *positive* issue, and treated accordingly. Later, Article 36 of the Additional Protocol of 1973 noted that “the free movement of workers among Turkey and the member states of the European Community will be gradually realised from the end of the 12th year until the end of the 22nd year after the Agreement comes into effect in compliance with the principles set forth in Article 12 of the Association Agreement.”<sup>46</sup> It is important to emphasize that in the period in which the Ankara Agreement was signed, Europe’s reconstruction and economic development following World War II was still continuing. Therefore, there was an intense demand for foreign labourers in the European labour market. Consequently, on the basis of bilateral agreements, thousands of people from Turkey moved to European countries (beginning with Germany) as workers. In short, the first half of the 1960s and 1970s were years when European economies required labour, and guest worker migrants from Turkey filled that economic demand.

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<sup>44</sup> Based on Ahmet İçduygu, *Europe, Turkey, and International Migration: An Uneasy Negotiation*, cit.

<sup>45</sup> Bülent Çiçekli, *The Legal Position of Turkish Immigrants in the European Union*, Ankara, Karmap, 1998.

<sup>46</sup> Ahmet İçduygu, *Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri Bağlamında Uluslararası Göç Tartışmaları*, İstanbul, TÜSİAD, 2006, <http://www.tusiad.org/information-center/reports/international-migration-debates-within-the-context-of-turkey-european-union-relations>; Ahmet İçduygu, “The Politics of Demography and International Migration. Implications for the EU-Turkey Relationship”, in *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March 2010), p. 59-71.

However, 42 years after the Ankara agreement, in the Negotiating Framework regarding Turkey's accession to the EU of October 3, 2005, it was stated that long transition periods, derogations, specific arrangements or provisions of permanent protection might also apply to the free movement of people when necessary. Such conditions again emphasized the importance of the issue of the free flow of workers in the Euro-Turkish space, yet it was now viewed in a *negative* light.<sup>47</sup> Given that in Europe during the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, international migration was increasingly becoming "a broad catch phrase that embraces such diverse processes as the maintenance of political stability, economic development, demographic change, and shifting ethnic allegiances,"<sup>48</sup> the emergence of new perspectives on international migration under changing economic, social, political, cultural, and demographic conditions was an expected development.

For Turkey, which inched open the door to the EU by obtaining a date for accession talks on December 17, 2004, and entered a new and challenging period in its forty-two year long journey towards EU membership with the decision to start negotiations targeting full membership on October 3, 2005, issues of international migration have become pressing concerns, particularly as they influence EU relations. This step towards membership, while considered a "historical milestone", at the same time signals the beginning of a challenging process of negotiation for both Turkey and the EU. Various reports by the European Commission on Turkey emphasize that this EU enlargement will be different from previous ones, in large part because of serious concerns over migration. As the hegemonic actor in the process of accession, the EU has the primary power to set the agenda in which various migration and membership issues are carefully intertwined.<sup>49</sup> For instance, in one of the earliest key EU documents, which signalled the start of the membership negotiation process

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<sup>47</sup> Ahmet İçduygu, *Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri Bağlamında Uluslararası Göç Tartışmaları*, cit.

<sup>48</sup> Kimberley A. Hamilton, "Europe, Africa, and international migration: An uncomfortable triangle of interests", in *New Community*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (October 1997), p. 550.

<sup>49</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Ayşem Biriz Karaçay, "Demography and Migration in Transitions: Reflections on EU-Turkey Relations", in Seçil Paçacı Elitok and Thomas Straubhaar (eds.), *Turkey, Migration and the EU: Potentials, Challenges and Opportunities*, Hamburg, Hamburg University Press, 2012, p. 19-38, <http://www.hwwi.org/publikationen/edition/edition-hwwi-band-5.html>.

between the EU and Turkey, the *Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards accession* dated October 6, 2004, the following points are stated:

With over three million, Turks constitute by far the largest group of third-country nationals legally residing in today's EU. Available studies give varying estimates of expected additional migration following Turkey's accession. Long transition periods and a permanent safeguard clause can be considered to avoid serious disturbances on the EU labour market. However, the population dynamics of Turkey could make a contribution to offsetting the ageing of EU societies. In this context, the EU also has a strong interest in that reforms and investments should be made in education and training in Turkey over the next decade [...] The management of the EU's long new external borders would constitute an important policy challenge and require significant investment. Managing migration and asylum as well as fighting organised crime, terrorism, trafficking of human beings, drugs and arms smuggling would all be facilitated through closer cooperation both before and after accession.<sup>50</sup>

By establishing these arguments before the start of accession talks, the EU document not only had a decisive impact on pro- and anti-positions towards the accession of Turkey in EU circles, it also widely shaped the discourses of the pro- and anti-positions towards EU membership in Turkey. It is within this context that discussions of the issue of international migration in the EU in relation to Turkey focus on *two* points of concern:<sup>51</sup> The *first* point of concern is whether or not possibly intense migratory flows due to the free circulation of labour will create serious adjustment problems for the labour market and migrants. This point is often made

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<sup>50</sup> European Commission, *Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards accession* (COM(2004) 656 final), 6 October 2006, p. 5, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/NOT/?uri=celex:52004DC0656>.

<sup>51</sup> Refik Erzan and Kemal Kirişçi (eds.), *Turkish Immigrants in the European Union. Determinants of Immigration and Integration*, London and New York, Routledge, 2008; Ahmet İçduygu, *Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri Bağlamında Uluslararası Göç Tartışmaları*, cit.; Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey's Pre-Accession and Immigration Issues", in *Population Challenges, International Migration, and Reproductive Health in Turkey and the European Union: Issues and Policy Implications*, Istanbul, Turkish Family, Health and Planning Foundation (TAPV), 2004, p. 193-202.

with special reference to the adjustment problems encountered by Turkish migrants in Europe.<sup>52</sup> Related to this point, on the flip side of coin, is the question of whether or not Turkey's demography will produce migration flows that could play an ameliorating role regarding the challenges of population shrinkage of working age adults and a mounting elderly population in the EU. The *second* point of concern is whether or not Turkey, in its position as a "receiving country" and as a "transit country", will be successful in producing and implementing policies in compliance with the EU's international migration and asylum regimes. This point is directly related to questions surrounding the border control and management problems that are believed to be associated with Turkish membership.

Gravitating towards these two areas of concern, which also include a type of cost-and-benefit analysis among economic, social, cultural, political, and demographic spheres, the climate of membership negotiations between the EU and Turkey has often been coloured by debates over international migration issues. While the process of membership negotiations has been going on, states on both sides have become directly or indirectly, implicitly or explicitly deeply engaged in migration-related issues. During the course of this engagement, while the EU naturally was often an agenda and tone setter, Turkey often tried to alter the tone of the debates.

Certainly, concern about the issue of the "free circulation of labour", which was quite often described as an influx of Turkish migrants fleeing into EU countries after Turkey's membership, contributed to the calls for long transition periods, derogations, specific arrangements, or provisions of permanent protection. These calls were heavily responsible for the fact that debates over Turkish membership have been dominated by the question of migration. At the level of economic interest, this is closely tied to labour market issues.<sup>53</sup> As the unemployment rate in many EU states seems to be highly disturbing for native workers, and even more alarming for migrants, the idea of restrictions on migration from a prospective member state is appealing for many. Similarly, for the dominant social-cultural and political interests in many EU-states, it is also desirable to prevent migration flows from Turkey at a time when there is growing

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<sup>52</sup> Ayhan Kaya and Ferhat Kentel, "Euro-Turks: A Bridge or a Breach between Turkey and the European Union? A Comparative Study of German-Turks and French-Turks", in *EU-Turkey Working Papers*, No. 14 (January 2005), <http://www.ceps.be/node/1035>.

<sup>53</sup> Hubert Krieger and Bertrand Maître, "Migration Trends in an Enlarging European Union", in *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (March 2006), p. 45-66; Ahmet İçduygu and Ayşem Biriz Karaçay, "Demography and Migration in Transitions...", cit.

concern about the integration of current Turkish immigrants, and more importantly, concern about the definition of European identity, and the place of immigrants and especially Muslims in Europe.<sup>54</sup> Despite the fact that these economic, social-cultural and political interests feed pessimistic views, some argue that the relatively young population of Turkey could be a partial remedy for the labour market needs of the EU, particularly if it can use the power of its demographic windows of opportunity efficiently by investing in the education and training of its youth for contemporary labour market needs.<sup>55</sup>

Not surprisingly, these demographic concerns at the EU level, which regard Turkish membership positively have also been widely shared and used by advocates of pro-EU positions in Turkey. These advocates even argue that the demographic transition in Turkey will reach a stage within the next two-three decades where increased aging and a shrinking working age population will make Turkey unable to export its labour to other countries.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, as the central argument of this essay underlines, as Turkey is experiencing a migration transition, emigration flows will naturally fall and immigration flows rise, making the country mostly a country of destination rather than a country of departure in the future. As a result, the size of the first, and partly, second generation migrants in the Turkish communities in Europe, who are more prone to integration difficulties in settlement countries, will eventually decrease; and thus the dominant rhetoric on the integration difficulties of Turkish migrants will gradually lose cogency. Over time, during the integration process many Turkish migrants and their family members have already integrated themselves successfully into the receiving communities. As noted by Toktaş,<sup>57</sup> despite their differences in ethnic background, language, faith,

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<sup>54</sup> Esra Lagro, "Why is President Sarkozy Actually Against Turkish Accession to the EU? Facts and Challenges", in *Perceptions*, Vol. 13, Nos. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 2008), p. 58-78, <http://sam.gov.tr/?p=1977>.

<sup>55</sup> Hubert Krieger and Bertrand Maître, "Migration Trends in an Enlarging European Union", cit.

<sup>56</sup> Attila Hancioğlu, Banu Ergöçmen and Turgay Ünalın, "The population of Turkey at the Turn of the XXI. Century: Past Trends, Current Situation and Future Prospects", in *Population Challenges, International Migration, and Reproductive Health in Turkey and the European Union: Issues and Policy Implications*, Istanbul, Turkish Family, Health and Planning Foundation (TAPV), 2004, p. 43-50.

<sup>57</sup> Şule Toktaş, "Introduction: 50 Years of Emigration from Turkey to Germany. A Success Story?", in *Perceptions*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Summer 2012), p. 6, <http://sam.gov.tr/?p=2725>.

gender, age or town of origin, the members of Euro-Turkish communities have experienced integration in their new homelands to varying degrees. More than the first-generation migrants, the second, third, even fourth generations today represent a unique profile of denizens or citizens in the emerging cosmopolitan environment of a new multicultural Europe. These Euro-Turks are today the main actors of the transnational space formed between Europe and Turkey.

Even more important than free movement today is the issue of Turkey as a country of immigration and transit, which has led to the very deep penetration of migration-related issues in EU-Turkey relations. Since the 1990s, the involvement of Turkey in irregular migration flows, both as a source and transit country, has proven to be among the most contentious issues in the EU.<sup>58</sup> Due to its geographical position between Europe, Asia and Africa, Turkey has emerged as a major corridor for irregular migrants and asylum seekers who are coming from politically and economically unstable neighbouring countries and who are aiming for better and safer lives in Europe. For the EU, fighting against irregular immigration has been a central priority of the Union's common immigration policy. Therefore, a number of broad policy areas, such as border security, combating "illegal" border crossings, "illegal" employment, return, and developing a common asylum policy have inevitably become intrinsic to EU-Turkey relations. For both the EU and Turkey, these aspects of irregular migration are very closely linked to their similar economic and political interests, yet it appears that they are engaged in very different strategies to their own benefit.

One could expect that both the EU and Turkey would not have many conflicting positions in terms of realizing the strict control of borders, providing close supervision and management of the movement of people across those borders, combating illegal migration, and developing a common asylum policy, if Turkey were to perceive that there is burden sharing in this negotiation period, rather than burden shifting. For instance, after a tortuous negotiation process, on December 16, 2013, the EU and Turkey signed the Readmission Agreement, which facilitates the readmission of third country nationals and thus functions to combat irregular migration flows, in return for the "visa liberalization dialogue" which targets a vi-

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<sup>58</sup> Europol, *Facilitated illegal immigration into the European Union*, September 2009; Frontex General Reports 2008 and 2009, available at <http://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/governance-documents>.



sa-free regime for Turkish citizens who are currently subject to a harsh visa procedure before entering European countries.<sup>59</sup>

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Certainly, Turkey has entered into a new era of migration transition in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Its migration profile has changed from the massive emigration of the 1960s and 1970s to extensive immigration during the 1990s and 2000s. This essay examined the evolution of international migration starting with the early 20th century in the context of the broader transition process and offered prospects regarding an ongoing migration transition in the early 21st century in the country. Historical evidence suggests that migration policies, concerning both emigration and immigration, in the first half the 20th century in Turkey were influenced by nationalist ideologies. What determined the migration policies of the post Second World War period was the idea of developmentalism that gave preference to labour emigration with a mixture of realist and liberal understanding of state affairs. Finally, Turkey has been faced with the dynamics and mechanisms of an authentic migration transition for the last two-three decades: net migration has become positive with more arrivals than departures. Globalization and EU-ization have produced a transformation of migration policies that goes hand by hand, as both a cause and a consequence, with the migration transition. In particular, it is obvious that the new migration policies are a part of the process of EU-ization. More caution however is needed when relating the migration transition in Turkey strictly to EU-Turkey relations. Naturally, the differences between the migratory regimes of Turkey and the EU member states are still such that it is not possible to speak of a uniform regime. Yet migration regimes are in need of amendment rather than outright replacement or elimination. In the last two decades, the phenomenon of convergence has been broadly reflected in similar approaches: for instance, in spite of some pressures from the EU for a restrictive migratory regime, some of the latest policy developments, such as visa-free-arrangements with many countries and a very generous asylum system, can be characterized

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<sup>59</sup> Ahmet İçduygu and Damla B. Aksel, *Two-to-Tango, in Migration Diplomacy: Negotiating Readmission Agreement between the EU and Turkey*, Migration Research Center (MiReKoc), Koç University, 2014 unpublished.

as liberal. At the same time, Turkey's domestic and neighbouring conditions – particularly of political instability – are so different that diverging patterns are as likely to emerge as converging ones.

Although Turkey is also linked to other migratory regimes outside Europe, such as the ones in Australia, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Middle East and North Africa, and North America, its integration into the European migratory system is long-standing and dynamic. Since the early 1960s, the transnational space involving Europe and Turkey has been enlarging. As Turkey has experienced its own migration transition and become a country of immigration and transit, this transnational space has grown even bigger, involving other parts of the world, and thus strengthening the migratory links between Europe and Turkey. Whether Turkey becomes a full member of the EU or not, it appears that the transnational space of EU-Turkey relations shaped through international migration flows will remain a platform of both conflict and co-operation that offers immense political leverage for both the EU and Turkey during the course of talks both inside and outside of the accession negotiations. It also appears that as Turkey undergoes migration transition, the asymmetric relationship between the EU and Turkey, which was reflected in Turkey's emigration flows, is tending to evolve towards a relatively symmetrical relationship between them. Indeed, the heavy negotiation period of the EU-Turkey readmission agreement and the launching of the "visa liberalization dialogue" was a clear sign of this move towards symmetry-based relations between the EU and Turkey.

## 6. EU-Turkey Relations: A Visa Breakthrough?

*Gerald Knaus*

In June 2012 the European Council authorized the European Commission to begin talks with Turkey on visa liberalisation.<sup>1</sup> The Council also presented Turkey a list of official requirements for visa-free travel, known as a “visa liberalisation roadmap”.

On 24 September 2013, the European Court of Justice delivered a judgment<sup>2</sup> that made clear to everyone in Ankara that the only realistic way for Turks to obtain visa-free travel was to successfully complete the visa liberalisation process. The issue at stake before the court was visa-free access to EU countries for Turkish citizens based on rights emanating from the Association Agreement with the EU. At the centre of this court case was Leyla Demirkan, a 20-year old Turkish woman who had asked the German consulate in Ankara in October 2007 for a visa. Her request was denied. She went to court, arguing that Germany’s visa requirement for Turkish citizens was illegal. The European Court of Justice rejected her claim. This ruling made it clear that the abolition of the visa requirement will not be achieved through court rulings.

On 16 December 2013, Turkey accepted the EU’s roadmap.<sup>3</sup> The process of implementing it will require vital reforms: among other things Turkey will have to improve its border management, establish an asylum

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<sup>1</sup> Council of the European Union, *Council conclusions on developing cooperation with Turkey in the areas of Justice and Home Affairs*, 21 June 2012, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/131103.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/131103.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Court of Justice of the European Union, *Judgment in case Leyla Ecem Demirkan v Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (C-221/11), 24 September 2013, <http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?cid=38014>.

<sup>3</sup> European Commission, *Cecilia Malmström signs the Readmission Agreement and launches the Visa Liberalisation Dialogue with Turkey* (IP/13/1259), 16 December 2013, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-1259\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1259_en.htm). See also: *First Meeting of the EU-Turkey Visa Liberalization Dialogue. Agreed Minutes*, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/data/agreed%20minutes%20ve%20annotated%20roadmap.pdf>.

system in line with international standards and improve its human rights record. Once these conditions are met, the European Commission will submit a proposal to the Council to take Turkey off the list of countries that require a Schengen visa.

Visa liberalisation holds out a promise of restoring trust between the EU and Turkey, unlike any other measure that might be implemented in the coming years. As Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu stated in December 2013 visa-free travel could trigger "a psychological revolution [...] In Europe, the way they look at Turkey will change, and in Turkey, the way they look at Europe will change."<sup>4</sup>

But will the visa liberalisation process succeed? Will Turkey carry out the required reforms? And if it does, will the EU keep its word and treat Turkey fairly?

## WHY VISA LIBERALISATION MATTERS

In 1963, more than half a century ago, Turkey and the EU signed an Association Agreement. In the half century since then the European continent has seen dramatic change. Regimes have collapsed (fascist, communist, military dictatorships); states have disappeared; borders have been redrawn across Europe. In 1963 a majority of Turks, and a large majority of Turkish women, was illiterate. The total population was less than 30 million. The average life expectancy stood at 48 years. By 2010 it had risen to 74 years.

Throughout this half century the bonds created in 1963 have remained solid. However, today this relationship clearly suffers from deep distrust. A central policy question for the future of EU-Turkey relations is the question what "Europe" means to a new generation of Turks, the 31 million young people below age 24 in one of Europe's youngest nations? This is a generation coming of age after the end of the Cold War. It does not remember the days when ties between Turkey and the West were based on fears of a common Soviet enemy. How much life, how much promise will there be in that relationship looking forward?

Today Turkey has a population of 76 million people whose median age is 30 years (the median age of the EU-27 is 42). This young generation is

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<sup>4</sup> Cited in ESI, *Why a EU visa liberalisation process for Turkey is in both the EU's and Turkey's interest*, <http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=446>.

the most educated in Turkey's history. 20 million Turks attend school; 3.5 million go to university. The number of pupils attending Turkish secondary schools has doubled in one decade. And yet it is this generation that suffers most from the visa requirement.<sup>5</sup>

During research the European Stability Initiative (ESI) has come across recent cases when even Turkish students who had been accepted for Erasmus programs at EU universities were denied a Schengen visa.<sup>6</sup> The visa requirement also blocks young Turks from simply taking a budget flight or packing a backpack to join the EU-inter-rail generation and explore the EU. It poses problems for entrepreneurs, Turks as well as EU businesspeople, who have invested in Turkey and have Turkish employees. While Turks today travel abroad more than ever before, the most striking increases in terms of destination in the past decade were to Georgia, Syria (before the war), Azerbaijan and East Asia. In the EU only Greece and Italy saw similar increases in the number of Turkish tourists (see Table 2). It is not a coincidence that both of these countries also have visa application rejection rates in Turkey of 1 percent or less.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> More on this: ESI, *Happy Anniversary? EU-Turkey relations at age 50 - An appeal*, 12 September 2013, p. 6, <http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/Happy%20Anniversary%20-%20EU-Turkey%20relations%20at%20age%2050%20-%20An%20appeal%20-%2012%20September%202013.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>7</sup> ESI, *Facts and figures related to visa-free travel for Turkey. Background reader*, 15 June 2012, <http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/Turkey%20-%20Facts%20and%20figures%20related%20to%20visa-free%20travel%20for%20Turkey%20-%2015%20June%202012.pdf>.

**Table 2. Refusal rates applications from Turkish nationals in 2011**

	<b>Short-stay visas applied</b>	<b>Short-stay visas issued</b>	<b>Refusal rate (%)</b>
Germany	156,165	141,114	9.6
France	117,919	113,913	3.4
<b>Italy</b>	<b>100,242</b>	<b>99,032</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>Greece</b>	<b>62,329</b>	<b>62,039</b>	<b>0.5</b>
Netherlands	41,523	38,601	7.0
Spain	32,598	31,828	2.4
Czech Rep.	18,027	16,728	7.2
Hungary	14,314	14,116	1.4
Austria	13,242	11,961	9.7
Belgium	12,412	10,631	14.3
Sweden	7,860	6,946	11.6
Poland	7,414	7,111	4.1
All Schengen countries	624,361	591,950	5.2

*Source: ESI, Facts and figures related to visa-free travel for Turkey, cit., p. 3.*

The European Union's Erasmus exchange program, the biggest university exchange program in the world, also shows much untapped potential for contacts. Turkey joined it in 2004. Since then the number of Turkish students spending from 3 to 12 months at another European university has gone from 1,100 to 10,100 in six years. However, while the trend is positive, the potential for further exchange is huge. The number of Turkish Erasmus students is just one third of the number of German Erasmus students, and much lower than the number of Erasmus students from (much smaller) Poland<sup>8</sup> (see Table 3).

<sup>8</sup> ESI, *Happy Anniversary? EU-Turkey relations at age 50 – An appeal*, cit., p. 5.

**Table 3. Erasmus student sent per country, 2010**

Country	Outgoing	Total population (million)
1. Spain	36,186	46
2. France	31,747	65
3. Germany	30,274	82
4. Italy	22,031	60
5. Poland	14,234	38
6. UK	12,833	62
<b>7. Turkey</b>	<b>10,095</b>	<b>72</b>
8. Netherlands	8,590	17
9. Belgium	6,824	11
10. Portugal	5,964	11

*Source: ESI, Happy Anniversary? EU-Turkey relations at age 50 - An appeal, cit., p. 6.*

Of course it is not only students who have limited contacts with their European counterparts: this is true for a whole generation of young Turks, who have no personal experience of the EU. A recent survey found that only one in ten young Turks (age 15 to 29) ever left the country.<sup>9</sup> Even in Istanbul only 13 per cent of young Turks have been abroad. Twice as many young men than women travelled. And those who travel mostly go to neighbouring, non-EU countries.

The EU understood that for citizens from Poland or Bulgaria to believe in a common European future, they had to be able to travel freely. In 2009, the European Parliament marked the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain with a debate among 20-year olds from across the EU. "What does Europe mean to you?", the participants were asked. "Free-

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, p. 6.

dom to travel” was the most popular response.<sup>10</sup> It is an issue of huge importance for the future EU-Turkey relations that young Turks can give a similar answer soon.

## WHY VISA LIBERALISATION IS REALISTIC

In 1991, the EU lifted the visa requirement for Polish citizens travelling to Schengen countries. In 2001 and 2002, it abolished it for Bulgarians and Romanians. In 2009, it was time for Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. In 2010, visa-free travel arrived for citizens of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina (see Table 4). In 2014 Moldovans will also be able to travel visa free to the EU. Georgia is hoping to achieve the same one year later. Since 2008 visa liberalisation has been both one of the boldest and the most successful EU policy in its neighbourhood.

**Table 4. Visa-free travel and GDP per capita in South East Europe**

Country	Visa-free travel	GDP per capita 2011 EU average is 100
Albania	2010	30
Bosnia	2010	30
Macedonia	2009	35
Serbia	2009	35
Montenegro	2009	42
Bulgaria	2001	46
Romania	2002	49
<b>Turkey</b>	<b>?</b>	<b>52</b>

Source: ESI, *Cutting the Visa Knot*, cit., p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> ESI, *Cutting the Visa Knot. How Turks can travel freely to Europe*, 21 May 2013, p. 2, [http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=156&document\\_ID=139](http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=156&document_ID=139).



If one tries to understand why this is so one has to take a closer look at the interests behind and the design of this process. Until now it was always very similar. In 2008, when the EU launched a visa liberalisation process for five Western Balkans states, each of them received a “visa roadmap” with close to 50 specific and demanding conditions. Balkan leaders also received a clear promise that they would be treated fairly.<sup>11</sup> The EU then monitored progress at every step, sending many fact-finding missions to the field. These missions were led by the European Commission, but also included experts from EU member states. When countries fulfilled the EU’s conditions (ranging from passport security to improved border control to intensified police cooperation with the EU) in 2009 and 2010, it was easy to verify this, and even sceptical member states were convinced. Then the visa requirement was lifted.

This process was always based on the recognition of mutual interests, including the interest on the part of the EU to have credible partners to help it protect its own security and borders. The countries which wanted visa free travel contributed to making Europe as a whole safer.

Starting with the Balkans the process of assessing progress has also been designed in a robust manner. It was vital for its success that it was merit-based, strict but fair. As the ESI Schengen White List Project advisory board, chaired by former Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato, wrote in 2008 about the process:

The EU’s conditions are demanding. To meet them requires money and effort. But their fulfilment will make the whole of Europe, not just the Western Balkans, safer. Having well-secured borders, regulated asylum procedures, forgery-proof passports and police structures able to cooperate with law enforcement agencies throughout Europe is a good in itself. It is cooperation, not exclusion, which works best in fighting organised crime and illegal migration [...] We call on leaders in the Western Balkans to carry out the required reforms. We are glad to see civil society in the region increase efforts to monitor progress. We call on EU leaders and institutions to take this process seriously. The EU must not postpone rewarding countries that have made serious efforts to meet its demanding condi-

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<sup>11</sup> Gerald Knaus, “The time is now: changing EU visa policy on Turkey”, in *ESI Newsletter*, No. 2/2012 (13 March 2012), [http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=67&newsletter\\_ID=57](http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=67&newsletter_ID=57).

tions. It is appropriate for the EU to be strict; it is incumbent upon it to be fair.<sup>12</sup>

The success of the reform process also required that it be transparent. The citizens of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia had to know what had been asked of their governments in order to hold them accountable for progress (or lack thereof). The European public deserved to know about the far-reaching reforms that the countries are undertaking in order to keep the EU safe and to prevent illegal migration, organised crime and terrorism. The process itself became more credible and resistant to manipulation as a result.<sup>13</sup>

## WHAT TURKEY BRINGS TO THE TABLE

There are many areas where the EU has security interests that a roadmap process for Turkey would help address, and where Turkey can help the EU immediately. One such area is reducing irregular migration to the EU via Turkey's land and maritime borders. The other is readmission of irregular third-country migrants who reach the EU through Turkey.

The visa roadmap suggests a host of measures aimed at achieving "a significant and sustained reduction of the number of persons managing to illegally cross the Turkish borders either for entering or for exiting Turkey." These range from deploying more and better-trained border guards and modern equipment at the borders to improving border controls and working closely with Frontex, the EU's border agency.

Turkey has already begun to make serious efforts in 2012. In 2011 - between September and December - 26,500 irregular migrants were detected crossing the land border. In 2012 the number was only 500.<sup>14</sup> Since then this trend has continued. This also has profound implications for the second area where Turkey can help the EU: readmission of third-country nationals. If fewer migrants cross Turkey en route to the EU, there are also fewer that Turkey would have to take back. If Turkey continues to co-

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<sup>12</sup> ESI, *Strict but fair. The Declaration*, 19 March 2009, <http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=343>.

<sup>13</sup> Gerald Knaus, "'The EU is not a Belgian company' and other European visa stories", in *ESI Newsletter*, No. 2/2009 (20 March 2009), [http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=67&newsletter\\_ID=36](http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=67&newsletter_ID=36).

<sup>14</sup> ESI, *Cutting the Visa Knot*, cit., p. 14.

operate with both Frontex and Greece, the numbers are bound to remain significantly lower than between 2008 and 2011.

Concerning readmission, although Turkey has now signed a readmission agreement, even if it ratifies it now it is under no legal obligation to take back third-country nationals for three years. There are in fact very good reasons to believe that requests for readmission of third-country nationals would turn out to be far less frequent than many sceptics in Turkey suggested during debates in recent years.

In February 2011 the European Commission presented an evaluation of all twelve readmission agreements then in force with the EU.<sup>15</sup> It concluded that, leaving out Ukraine, a total of only 91 applications were filed under all the readmission agreements. The reason is that some member states, as a matter of policy, only send migrants back to their countries of origin, and never to their countries of transit. The study concluded that “the third-country national clause is actually rarely used by member states, even with transit countries like the Western Balkans.”<sup>16</sup> As for Ukraine, the experience is also telling. Like Turkey, Ukraine has been a major transit country for irregular migrants. It concluded a readmission agreement with the EU, which entered into force on 1 January 2008 and which stipulated a two-year transitional period concerning the return of third-country nationals. Many Ukrainians were alarmed, convinced that the readmission agreement would “turn Ukraine into a storehouse for illegal migrants,” as one tabloid wrote.<sup>17</sup> Just before the transitional period expired, a nationalist party leader called the agreement “a crime against the nation.” “Experts estimate that just the first wave of migrants that will be sent to Ukraine immediately after 1 January will reach 150,000 people,” he warned.<sup>18</sup> Reality proved to be very different. Instead of 150,000, only 398 third-country nationals (and 71 Ukrainian citizens) were returned to Ukraine in 2010. In 2011, it was even less: 243 third-country nationals. In 2012, the number of returned third-country nationals dropped to 108.

The only important number of requests for readmission of third-country nationals to Turkey would likely come from Greece. Turkey has had a bilateral readmission agreement with Greece for more than a decade

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<sup>15</sup> European Commission, *Evaluation of EU Readmission Agreements* (COM(2011) 76 final), 23 February 2011, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52011dc0076:en:not>.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> Cited in ESI, *Cutting the Visa Knot*, cit., p. 16.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*.

already. Between 2002 and 2011, Greece submitted 101,500 requests, almost exclusively third-country nationals. Turkey accepted 11,500 requests. 3,700 migrants were actually returned to Turkey. However, in the first six years of the readmission agreement between Greece and Turkey, the average annual number of requests for readmission from Greece was below 5,000. With current effort on the border showing an effect already, this is a realistic figure to base assessments on.

It would be a strong political signal if Turkey offered to effectively take back from Greece up to 5,000 third-country nationals a year as a measure of good will. This would be a very impressive improvement of the current situation. What would the costs to Turkey be if it made such an offer? The negotiated agreement specifies that the country requesting the readmission of an irregular migrant has to bear “all transport costs incurred” until “the border crossing point of the Requested State.”<sup>19</sup> The costs in Turkey after readmission are also manageable. In recent years, Turkey itself has apprehended more than 40,000 irregular migrants per year. It has deported around 25,000 people per year. It should be able to cope with an additional 5,000 migrants returned from Greece. Since there is no legal obligation under the readmission agreement to take back third-country nationals for three years, it remains up to Turkey to increase or decrease this figure.

At the same time the reforms listed in the roadmap would strengthen cooperation between Turkish and European law enforcement bodies across the board. Among the provisions listed in the roadmap are the following:

- Take necessary steps to ensure effective and efficient law enforcement co-operation among relevant national agencies [...];
- Reinforce regional law enforcement services co-operation [...] including by on time sharing of relevant information with competent law enforcement authorities of EU Member States;
- Effectively cooperate with OLAF and EUROPOL in protecting the Euro against counterfeiting;
- Strengthen the capacities of the Turkish Financial Crimes Investigation Board (MASAK) [...];
- Continue implementing the Strategic Agreement with EUROPOL;

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<sup>19</sup> European Commission, *Proposal for a Council decision concerning the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation* (COM(2012) 239 final), 22 June 2012, art. 16, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52012pc0239:en:not>.

- Conclude with EUROPOL and fully and effectively implement an Operational Cooperation Agreement.<sup>20</sup>

In short, one major reason why it is realistic to expect a success in the roadmap process is that seen from the EU it is based not (just) on political concerns to improve relations but also on concrete security interests. The reforms Turkey is asked to carry out will help protect EU citizens. This is important, since it is EU ministries of interior or justice who have the most say when it comes to taking the decision to lift the visa requirement in the end.

## THE VISA ROADMAP AND HUMAN RIGHTS

To recognise that the visa process is focusing on security issues does not mean that it does not also have many other dimensions. One of the most important concerns human rights. Among the conditions listed in the Turkish visa liberalisation roadmap are these:

Revise - in line with the ECHR and with the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) case law, the EU *acquis* and EU Member States practices - the legal framework as regards organised crime and terrorism, as well as its interpretation by the courts and by the security forces and the law enforcement agencies, so as to ensure the right to liberty and security, the right to a fair trial and freedom of expression, of assembly and association in practice.<sup>21</sup>

In light of current concerns over the state of these fundamental rights in Turkey the importance of including these provisions in the roadmap is obvious.

In addition the roadmap considers the rights of refugees and asylum seekers in Turkey:

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<sup>20</sup> European Commission, *Roadmap Towards a Visa-Free Regime with Turkey*, 13 December 2013, [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-is-new/news/news/docs/20131216-roadmap\\_towards\\_the\\_visa-free\\_regime\\_with\\_turkey\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-is-new/news/news/docs/20131216-roadmap_towards_the_visa-free_regime_with_turkey_en.pdf). See also ESI, *Cutting the Visa Knot. How Turks can travel freely to Europe*, 21 May 2013, [http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=156&document\\_ID=139](http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=156&document_ID=139).

<sup>21</sup> European Commission, *Roadmap Towards a Visa-Free Regime with Turkey*, cit.

Provide adequate infrastructures and sufficient human resources and funds ensuring a decent reception and protection of the rights and dignity of asylum seekers and refugees; Persons who are granted a refugee status should be given the possibility to self-sustain, to access to public services, enjoy social rights and be put in the condition to integrate in Turkey.<sup>22</sup>

There are provisions concerning the victims of human trafficking in the roadmap:

Sign and ratify the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Human Trafficking [...]. Provide adequate infrastructures and sufficient human resources and funds ensuring a decent reception and protection of the rights and dignity of victims of trafficking [...].<sup>23</sup>

Given the experience of the EU following visa liberalisation with the Balkans the following provision in the roadmap, relating to the situation of Roma, is also likely to be a focus:

Develop and implement policies addressing effectively the condition of the Roma social exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination in access to education and health services, as well as its difficulty to access to identity cards, housing, employment and participation in public life.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, there is the matter of non-discrimination of sexual minorities. In the Western Balkans, as well as in Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine the EU insisted on legal provisions guaranteeing non-discrimination of sexual minorities. In fact, for over a decade, Turkish LGBT organizations have also been campaigning for the explicit integration of "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" in the article on equality of the Turkish Constitution. The EU has also highlighted the issue of LGBT rights in Turkey in its Progress reports:

There was repeated application by the judiciary of the principle of

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<sup>22</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem.

‘undue provocation’ and reduced sentences due to the ‘good behaviour’ of perpetrators of crimes against LGBTI persons. [...] Instances of discrimination against LGBTI individuals were frequent. There were cases of police officers, teachers and bank personnel being dismissed from their jobs due to the disclosure of their sexual identity. [...] The Penal Code and the Law on Misdemeanours were used against transgender persons in a discriminatory and arbitrary manner.<sup>25</sup>

Recently, on 25 December 2013, efforts to draft a new constitution came to an end. The Constitution Reconciliation Committee of the Turkish Parliament formally abolished itself. Thus the issue of finding a clear legal basis for non-discrimination - in legislation such as the Penal and Labor Code - remains unresolved. Currently the only law in Turkey that directly refers to sexual orientation is the Turkish Armed Forces Health Ability Regulations; Article 17 of which refers to homosexuality, transvestism, and trans-sexuality as illnesses (psychosexual disorder).<sup>26</sup>

It remains to be seen if human rights organisations in Turkey and in the EU will be able to use the liberalisation process to advocate effectively for the realisation of these rights, as was the case most recently in Moldova.

## THE NEED FOR ADVOCACY - FOLLOWING REFORM

Once the Commission concludes that Turkey has met all the conditions it will issue a legislative proposal to amend Council Regulation 539/2001.<sup>27</sup> The Commission’s proposal is then sent to the Council and the European Parliament. The parliament decides by simple majority. In the Council, the proposal will require a qualified majority. No single EU member state

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<sup>25</sup> European Commission, *Turkey 2013 progress report* (SWD(2013) 417 final), 16 October 2013, p. 59, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52013sc0417:en:not>.

<sup>26</sup> In January 2013, a review of the Turkish Armed Forces’ disciplinary system “defined homosexuality as ‘unnatural’ and envisaged that ‘morally indecent’ personnel would be discharged. [...] In addition, the military’s Medical Competence Regulation continued to refer to homosexuality and trans-sexuality as illnesses”. Ibidem.

<sup>27</sup> European Union, *Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders ...*, 15 March 2001, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:32001r0539:en:not>.

will be able to block it.

ESI has outlined a possible strategy how to achieve a qualified majority.<sup>28</sup> Turkey first secures the support of five already Turkey-friendly EU member states that have many votes or are particularly influential: Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain and Sweden. They should come out and state that – if there is a good record of reform and continued strong results from cooperation with Turkey on migration and readmission – they would be prepared to vote for lifting the visa by 2015. Turkey also secures the support of a large number of smaller member states that have already declared their support or are likely to be supportive: Bulgaria, Croatia (which joined the EU on 1 July 2013), Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia and Slovenia. Finally Turkey secures the support of Germany. Under the current voting system including Croatia, this would be enough votes. In this case the votes of Austria, Cyprus, Luxembourg, France and the Netherlands are not needed (see Table 5).

**Table 5. Council voting scenarios for Turkish visa free travel**

	Current voting system (it can also be requested between Nov. 2014 and March 2017) <b>234 votes needed</b>	Double majority system (from 1 Nov. 2014) <b>55 per cent of mem- ber states, at least 15 states representing 65 per cent of the EU population</b>
Countries	Votes	Inhabitants (millions)
<b>Friends of Turkey:</b>		
Italy	29	60.8
Poland	27	38.5
Romania	14	21.4

<sup>28</sup> ESI, *How Turkey can get on the Visa White List in Seven Steps. Background Paper*, 21 March 2012, <http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/ESI%20Ankara%20Paper%2011%20-%20Turkey%20and%20the%20Visa%20White%20List%20in%20seven%20steps%20-%2021%20March%202012.pdf>.



Spain	27	46.2
Sweden	10	9.5
<b>Likely to be supportive:</b>		
Bulgaria	10	7.3
Croatia (from 1 July 2013)	7	4.4
Czech Republic	12	10.5
Denmark	7	5.6
Estonia	4	1.3
Finland	7	5.4
Greece	12	11.3
Hungary	12	10
Latvia	4	2
Lithuania	7	3
Malta	3	0.4
Portugal	12	10.5
Slovakia	7	5.4
Slovenia	4	2.1
<b>Interim total</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>256</b>
<i>Germany</i>	<b>29</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>244 votes (enough)</b>	<b>20 member states of 26 = 77 per cent (enough) 337.5 million inhabi- tants = 67 per cent (enough)</b>

Source: ESI, *Cutting the Visa Knot*, cit., p. 20.

To achieve this Turkey would certainly need to engage in active diplomacy and outreach to persuade a critical number of EU member states to vote for visa liberalisation. Again, there are many successful precedents, from Serbia to Moldova, how to best make this case in EU capitals.

## TOWARDS A HAPPY END? NOT YET

In conclusion, progress towards visa liberalisation for Turkish citizens would create a win-win situation. Reforms necessitated by the roadmap process would improve the human rights situation in Turkey. The situation of illegal aliens would benefit from changes to Turkey's asylum system. So would the situation of the LGBT community. At the same time increased Turkish cooperation with Frontex would help Greece remain in Schengen and allow Bulgaria and Romania to join without further delay. EU-Turkey relations would improve.

Visa-free travel would be good for Turkish students and businesspeople, and tourism from Turkey could provide a boost to European economies, especially Greece. It would above all change perceptions of the EU among Turkey's young generation. If things go well, and both Turkey and the EU do what they have committed to do, Turkish citizens might be able to travel to 30 EU member states and Schengen countries by the end of 2015 without a visa. This would be the most important breakthrough in EU-Turkey relations since the launch of EU accession talks in 2005. Considering its direct impact on millions of Turkish citizens it would rival the impact of the Customs Union concluded between Turkey and the EU in 1995. It is hard to exaggerate the potential importance of this process.

However, until this happens it will be necessary to mobilise a large number of people and institutions. Much will depend on the Turkish government, its focus and reform efforts; but the role of the political opposition and civil society, pushing the government to take the roadmap seriously while supporting needed reform efforts, will also matter. A lot will then depend on the communication of results. Once reforms have been carried out it is vital that the European Commission establishes this clearly and communicates it also to critical member states. Then the role of civil society and the media in the EU, dispelling false fears and recognising and articulating the interest in the EU in this process, will also be crucial.

## 7.

# The EU and Turkey's Asylum Policy in Light of the Syrian Crisis

*Juliette Tolay*

In the first half of 2013, both Turkey and the European Union (EU) witnessed important legislative developments in the field of asylum. In April 2013, Turkey adopted the “Law on Foreigners and International Protection,” and in June 2013, the European Parliament endorsed the “Common European Asylum System” (CEAS). Both legislations are now in the process of being implemented, with the expectation that the Turkish Law on Foreigners will come into effect in April 2014, while the CEAS should be implemented by fall 2015.

However, the broader contexts of these new legislations tell two different stories, as they have contrasting tones. On the one hand, Turkey has been commended for its adoption of the Law on Foreigners, and for the way it has welcomed more than 600,000 (as of November 2013) Syrian refugees since June 2011.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the EU is facing criticism for its slow-paced move towards standardizing asylum policies across member states and adopting the right policies to assist the Syrian refugee crisis. This state of affairs is somewhat surprising given that Turkey has long been seen as having a relatively poor asylum policy, in comparison to the higher standards of the EU (as repeatedly highlighted in the yearly Progress report issued by the European Commission). Partially, the contrasting tone today has to do with Turkey's ability to catch up on European criteria, as well as with inherent complications stemming from the EU's complex institutional arrangements. But beyond that, there seems to be a deeper change in approach towards the issue of asylum and refugees, with Turkey turning towards a more humanitarian approach, while the EU is paralyzed by the security approach privileged by member states.

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<sup>1</sup> Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al., “Turkey and Syrian Refugees: The Limits of Hospitality”, in *Brookings Doha Center Publications*, No. 28 (November 2013), p. 2, <http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2013/11/14-syria-turkey-refugees-ferris-kirisci-federici>.

Paradoxically, these contrasting approaches create unique issues in the traditional framework of the Turkey-EU relationship. Nevertheless, there is room for bridging the EU and Turkish policies in a way that can benefit both parties, as well as refugees and asylum seekers.

## EUROPEAN AND TURKISH ASYLUM POLICIES

Since 1999, the EU has committed to developing a Common European Asylum system, ultimately aiming at moving the issue of asylum from an intergovernmental to a supranational level of governance. Since then, a number of legislative measures have been passed (such as the 2001 Directive on Temporary Protection), a European Refugee Fund was created, the European Asylum Support Office was established, and a number of additional initiatives were launched (including Frontex, EURODAC, recently EUROSUR and revisions of the Dublin agreement). And finally, on June 2013, the CEAS was adopted. The CEAS is composed of five main documents, the revised Asylum Procedures Directive, the revised Reception Conditions Directive, the revised Qualification Directive, the revised Dublin Regulation (also referred to as Dublin III) and the revised EURODAC Regulation.<sup>2</sup> All of these measures aim at making the asylum practices of member countries more uniform, in order both to enhance cooperation and share responsibilities among member states more equitably, and to improve the quality of protection offered to asylum seekers within the EU. While it is too early to tell how the CEAS will be implemented by member states, a number of NGOs, and to a lesser extent the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), critically welcomed this development, acknowledging improvements, but also pointing out that the CEAS could have provided a stronger and more protective legal framework by avoiding some unclear and ambiguous language that is likely to be an incentive for member states to align to the lower, rather than the higher standards of protection.<sup>3</sup> In particular, concerns have been voiced

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<sup>2</sup> European Commission, *A Common European Asylum System*, May 2012, [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/docs/ceas-fact-sheets/ceas\\_factsheet\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/docs/ceas-fact-sheets/ceas_factsheet_en.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Citizenspact for European Democracy, *Monitor the Implementation of the Common European Asylum System*, 23 September 2013, <http://www.citizenspact.eu/?p=1975>; UNHCR, *Moving Further Toward a Common European Asylum System*, June 2013, p. 1, <http://www.unhcr.org/51b7348c9.html>.

regarding “the detention of asylum seekers, legal assistance to asylum seekers in increasingly complex asylum procedures, the lack of sufficient procedural safeguards with regard to vulnerable asylum seekers and the detrimental impact of the Dublin Regulation on the fundamental rights of asylum seekers.”<sup>4</sup> Most observers have emphasized that the current phase of transposition and implementation of the new EU legislation by member states is critical, and that the Commission should closely monitor this process to prevent the CEAS from derailing.

Beyond the CEAS, the EU's approach to asylum also entails an external dimension. Asylum is one of the components of the “Global approach to migration and mobility”<sup>5</sup> adopted in 2005 and renewed in 2011, whereby issues of migration and asylum are comprehensively covered as one aspect of EU foreign policy. Since 2005, the EU has also created a number of “Regional Protection Programmes” (RPPs)<sup>6</sup> to enhance the protection capacity of the regions in which refugee flows originate. Finally, in 2012, the EU adopted a Joint Resettlement Programme<sup>7</sup> to involve member states more in resettlement of refugees. While these programs are being implemented differently depending on the partners, observers have been critical of the gap between promises of high levels of protection and the actual low levels of protection delivered. They have also mentioned that the EU seems to have better capabilities to fund and enforce projects that focus on migration control (border security, information system, etc.) than projects dealing with migrants' rights, especially in the case of asy-

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<sup>4</sup> Joint NGO Statement: “Establishing a common European Asylum System: Still a Long Way to Go”, in *Asylum Information Database*, 13 June 2013, <http://www.asylumineurope.org/node/918>. See also: JRS and ECRE, *The Dublin III Regulation enter into Force*, 19 July 2013, in *Asylum Information Database*, <http://www.asylumineurope.org/node/989>; UNHCR, *Moving Further Toward a Common European Asylum System*, June 2013, <http://www.unhcr.org/51b7348c9.html>.

<sup>5</sup> European Commission, *The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility* (COM(2011) 743 final), 18 November 2011, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52011dc0743:en:not>.

<sup>6</sup> European Commission, *On Regional Protection Programmes* (COM(2005) 388 final), 1 September 2005, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52005dc0388:en:not>.

<sup>7</sup> European Parliament and Council of the European Union, *Decision No 281/2012/EU amending Decision No 573/2007/EC establishing the European Refugees Fund*, 29 March 2012, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:32012d0281:en:not>.

lum seekers.<sup>8</sup>

While the EU is struggling to harmonize the existing asylum policies of member states, Turkey has recently created an altogether new asylum policy. Prior to April 2013, Turkey's asylum policy was composed of layers of piecemeal regulations (the 1934 Settlement Law – renewed in 2006, the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1994 Asylum regulation, and recently an increasing number of executive directives and circulars), which did not provide a comprehensive coverage for asylum seekers reaching Turkey's territory. In April 2013, the Turkish parliament adopted the "Law on Foreigners and International Protection," which now represents Turkey's main legislative document defining its asylum policy (as well as regulating the status of foreigners in Turkey and immigration). Most importantly, the law clearly recognizes the principle of "non-refoulement," formalizes the status of "subsidiary protection" (also referred to as "secondary protection" or "conditional refugee status") and creates an agency (the General Directorate on Migration Management, under the Ministry of the Interior) that will centralize asylum applications in the country. The new law does not lift the geographical limitation of the Geneva Convention, whereby only asylum seekers from Europe can be granted the status of "refugee" as defined by the Convention. There have also been some concerns voiced regarding the adoption of EU asylum concepts such as "safe country of origin" and "safe-third country" and "fast-track procedures" that limit the extent of protection offered to asylum seekers.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the new law represents a significant step forward, and has been recognized as such by both the EU<sup>10</sup> and the UNHCR.<sup>11</sup>

There are many explanations for Turkey's adoption of such a law, and

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<sup>8</sup> Marie-Laure Basilien-Gainche, "The EU immigration and asylum policy in the post-Lisbon institutional context", in Martin Trybus and Luca Rubini (eds.), *The Treaty of Lisbon and the Future of European Law and Policy*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar, 2012, p. 355-378.

<sup>9</sup> Cavidan Soykan, "The New Draft Law on Foreigners and International Protection in Turkey", in *Oxford Monitor of Forced Migration*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (November 2012), p. 38-47 at p. 42, <http://oxmofm.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Cavidan-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> European Commission, *Joint statement by Commissioners Štefan Füle and Cecilia Malmström on the adoption by the Turkish Parliament of the law on foreigners and international protection*, Brussels, 5 April 2013, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-13-297\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-297_en.htm).

<sup>11</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR welcomes Turkey's new law on asylum*, 12 April 2013, <http://www.unhcr.org/5167e7d09.html>.

many have to do with the Turkish accession process to the EU and Turkey's broader intentions to harmonize its legislation with the EU *acquis*. However, Turkey's significant improvements have come while the negotiation process is stalled, and several observers have pointed at the more critical role played by other actors, such as the UNHCR or the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), and to Turkey's willingness to redefine itself as a responsible and exemplary actor on the international stage.<sup>12</sup> The intersection, or lack thereof, between Turkey's and the EU's asylum policies offers a fascinating example of adaptation to new international and domestic political realities. Recently, it has been illustrated and tested by the dramatic refugee situation resulting from the conflict in Syria.

## THE SYRIAN CRITICAL CASE

Since the spring of 2011, the ongoing fighting in Syria has created a mass influx of refugees in neighboring countries, with about 2,300,000 Syrian refugees recorded by the UNHCR by mid-December 2013.<sup>13</sup> Among them, more than 600,000 Syrians have found refuge in Turkey,<sup>14</sup> while only 55,000 Syrian refugees have come to Europe.<sup>15</sup> The scope of this humanitarian crisis and its likely continuation in the months to come present not only a practical illustration of the EU's and Turkey's asylum policies, but also a critical case for understanding and comparing the approaches of the two partners.

The EU's response to the Syrian refugee crisis has centered on four aspects so far. The largest component is financial help. EU (the Commission and individual member states combined) humanitarian funding has ex-

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<sup>12</sup> Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey's New Draft Law on Asylum: What to Make of It?", in Seçil Paçacı and Thomas Straubhaar (eds.), *Turkey, Migration and the EU: Potentials, Challenges and Opportunities*, Hamburg, Hamburg University Press, 2012, p. 63-83, [http://hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/HamburgUP/HWW15\\_Elitok\\_Migration](http://hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/HamburgUP/HWW15_Elitok_Migration).

<sup>13</sup> UNHCR, *Syrian Refugees in the Region as of Dec 15 2013*, 15 December 2013, available at <http://www.refworld.org/docid/52b02ff94.html>. For updated data see: UNHCR, *Syria Regional Refugee Response*, <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>.

<sup>14</sup> Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al., "Turkey and Syrian Refugees: The Limits of Hospitality", cit., p. 1-2.

<sup>15</sup> Amnesty International, *An International Failure: The Syrian Refugee Crisis*, 13 December 2013, p. 5, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ACT34/001/2013/en>.

ceeded € 1.6 billion for Syrians in need inside and outside Syria.<sup>16</sup> These funds have mainly been directed at international governmental and non-governmental organizations in the region.<sup>17</sup> The second aspect is the protection granted to Syrian refugees by member states: between July 1, 2012 and July 1, 2013, about 34,200 asylum applications were lodged in the EU by Syrians,<sup>18</sup> and most of them received either conventional refugee status or a form of subsidiary protection.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, in October 2013, a number of member states pledged to resettle about 9,500 Syrian refugees under the joint EU resettlement program.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, Germany has committed to providing 5,000 temporary relocations,<sup>21</sup> and Sweden has announced that it will grant permanent citizenship to all Syrians in Sweden.<sup>22</sup> The third aspect is the establishment, with the UNHCR, of an RPP for Syrian refugees, which, according to an announcement from the Commission, should be in place by the end of 2013.<sup>23</sup> The fourth aspect has been the reinforcement of border controls, especially along the Greek-Turkey border, where most Syrians cross the border into the EU.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> European Commission, "Syria Crisis", in *ECHO Factsheets*, updated 9 January 2014, [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/syria\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/syria_en.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al., "Turkey and Syrian Refugees: The Limits of Hospitality", cit., p. 29.

<sup>18</sup> Alexandros Bitoulas, "Asylum applicants and first instance decisions on asylum applications: second quarter 2013", in *EUROSTAT Data in Focus*, No. 12/2013 (October 2013), p. 5, [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product\\_details/publication?p\\_product\\_code=KS-QA-13-012](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-QA-13-012).

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, p. 12. See also Philippe Fargues and Christine Fandrich, "The European Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis: What Next?", in *Migration Policy Centre Research Reports*, No. 2012/14 (November 2012), p. 13, <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/24836>.

<sup>20</sup> Nick Cumming-Bruce, "Countries Agree to Special Quotas for Syrian Refugees", in *New York Times*, 1 October 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/02/world/europe/special-quotas-for-syrian-refugees.html>. For updated data see: European Resettlement Network, *The Crisis in Syria*, <http://www.resettlement.eu/news/crisis-syria>.

<sup>21</sup> Ray Smith, "Europe Failing Syrian Refugees", in *IPS News Agency*, 12 September 2013, <http://www.ipsnews.net/?p=127462>.

<sup>22</sup> Behzad Yaghmaian, "Syrian Refugees: A Need for Global Burden Sharing", in *The Globalist*, 31 October 2013, <http://www.theglobalist.com/?p=18722>.

<sup>23</sup> European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *Towards a Comprehensive EU Approach to the Syrian Crisis* (JOIN(2013) 22 final), 24 June 2013, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52013jc0022:en:not>.

<sup>24</sup> Christine Fandrich, "Healing a neighborhood: Potential EU Responses to the Syrian refugee crisis", in *Migration Policy Centre Policy Briefs*, July 2013, <http://wp.me/p386xX-ux>.



Many observers deem the European response to the Syrian refugee crisis inadequate. Member states have been criticized for failing to deliver on promised aid, as well as for committing to too little funds<sup>25</sup> and admitting too few Syrians for settlement in the EU.<sup>26</sup> EU numbers indeed pale in comparison to the number of Syrians received by Lebanon, Jordan or Turkey. Many reports have raised concerns about the *de facto* closed-door policy adopted by EU member states. Syrians are required to have a Schengen visa to come to Europe, while many refugees do not even have a passport, and hence attempt to enter the EU through irregular channels. In fall 2013, the UNHCR reported a sharp increase in the number of Syrians attempting to enter the EU illegally, especially via Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Malta and Italy.<sup>27</sup> While most member states have suspended the deportation of Syrians, some cases of “refoulement” have still been documented (at the Greek border for instance). The tragedies in Lampedusa in October 2013<sup>28</sup> also illustrate the dangers awaiting Syrian refugees with no other choice but to put their fate in the hands of smugglers to reach European shores. Finally, there is growing concern over the differences between countries in their ability to address the Syrian asylum crisis. Some countries have been more protective than others: while Sweden is ready to accommodate all Syrian citizens on its territory, Greece grants the status of refugee to less than 1 percent of asylum seekers.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, countries across the EU are affected differently by the number of Syrian asylum seekers, with countries of South and Southeast Europe having to face many more asylum applications. The stipulation of Dublin III – whereby an asylum seeker is to be sent back to the first member state s/he arrived at and the asylum application processed there<sup>30</sup> – does not

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<sup>25</sup> Nikolaj Nielson, “Lack of funding may force Syrian refugees into Europe”, in *EUobserver*, 31 July 2013, <http://euobserver.com/foreign/117110>.

<sup>26</sup> Behzad Yaghmaian, “Syrian Refugees: A Need for Global Burden Sharing”, cit.

<sup>27</sup> “Syrian refugees at EU border increase”, in *Anadolu Agency*, 17 September 2013, <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/229145--syrian-refugees-at-eu-border-increasing-unhcr>.

<sup>28</sup> More than 300 migrants trying to reach the European shore lost their life in early October 2013 as their boat sunk off Italian island Lampedusa. See Nick Squires, “Italy mourns 300 dead in Lampedusa migrant boat tragedy”, in *The Telegraph*, 4 October 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/italy/10355661/Italy-mourns-300-dead-in-Lampedusa-migrant-boat-tragedy.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Behzad Yaghmaian, “Syrian Refugees: A Need for Global Burden Sharing”, cit.

<sup>30</sup> Cecilia Wikström, *The Dublin III Regulation*, <http://ceciliawikstrom.eu/en/politik/migration-och-asyl/dublinforordningen>.

help with solidarity among member states. Most importantly, it hinders refugees' rights and their access to adequate protection. Even though initiatives and declarations made at the EU level call for a humanitarian approach to the Syrian conflict and refugee situation, in practice, Syrian refugees are being denied protection due to the security concerns of EU member states.

In contrast to the EU's *de facto* closed-door policy for many Syrian refugees, Turkey has so far applied an open-door policy towards Syrian citizens seeking refuge at its southern border. In October 2011, Turkey extended the status of "temporary protection" to Syrians, in practice granting them facilitated access to Turkish territory, guarantees against "refoulement" (even if smuggled into the country), and access to basic humanitarian services, including healthcare (since January 2013).<sup>31</sup> Syrians who enter with a valid passport are free to settle wherever they want, while refugees without papers are settled in camps. A third of Syrian refugees in Turkey (about 200,000) live in camps, while two thirds live outside of camps. Syrian refugees are also free to voluntarily return to Syria whenever they want. By November 2013, Turkey had set up 21 refugee camps, which have earned the praise of the international community for their high-level quality and standards.<sup>32</sup> Turkish funds for humanitarian help to Syrian refugees have exceeded USD 2 billion (about € 1.5 billion, that is as much as the combined EU aid).<sup>33</sup> However, since August 2012, Turkish authorities have started to put restrictions on official entries of Syrians without valid passports, until more space become available in camps. This has led to the creation of makeshift camps on the Syrian side of the Turkish border. To accommodate this situation, Turkish authorities have also put into place a "zero-point delivery system," whereby humanitarian help is delivered at the border with Syria, to be picked up by Syrian organizations and distributed to

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<sup>31</sup> Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al., "Turkey and Syrian Refugees: The Limits of Hospitality", cit., p. 24-25.

<sup>32</sup> International Crisis Group, "Blurring the Borders: Syrian Spillover Risks for Turkey", in *ICG Europe Reports*, No. 225 (30 April 2013), p. 8-11, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/225-blurring-the-borders-syrian-spillover-risks-for-turkey.aspx>.

<sup>33</sup> Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al., "Turkey and Syrian Refugees: The Limits of Hospitality", cit., p. 26.

people in need on the other side of the border.<sup>34</sup>

Turkish policies towards Syrian refugees have been evaluated differently in three phases. The initial phase, starting in April 2011 with low numbers of refugees coming in, was one in which Turkish authorities were intent on providing protection on their own, without assistance and/or monitoring from the international community. This led to criticism regarding a lack of openness, especially when access to camps was restricted even to the UNHCR. There were also some concerns regarding the limbo status of these refugees,<sup>35</sup> although that critique was mitigated after Turkish authorities granted temporary protection in October 2011.<sup>36</sup> The second phase was one in which observers could enter the camps and access information, and were, overall, impressed by the hospitality and high level of resources allocated to assisting Syrian refugees.<sup>37</sup> Even if issues persist regarding access to camps, access to services and access to determination of refugee status, given the seriousness of the refugee situation, Turkish authorities have been able to provide adequate protection and refugee services and have been commended for that. The third phase has evolved incrementally since summer 2013 and is characterized by an emerging alarmism. Syrian refugees are entering Turkish territory at an increasingly high rate, with the UN expecting 1 million Syrian refugees in Turkey by the end of 2014.<sup>38</sup> Not only is the Turkish government now openly calling for more help from foreign donors and the international community, but observers are highlighting how the mass influx of refugees is testing the limits of Turkey's reception capabilities, and will in-

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<sup>34</sup> International Crisis Group, "Blurring the Borders: Syrian Spillover Risks for Turkey", cit., p. 31-33; Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al., "Turkey and Syrian Refugees: The Limits of Hospitality", cit., p. 21-22; Kemal Kirişçi, "Syrian Refugees in Turkey: The Limits of an Open Door Policy", in *Up Front Blog*, 27 June 2013, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2013/06/27-syrian-refugees-in-turkey-kirischi>.

<sup>35</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, *Syrian Refugees in Turkey: A Status in Limbo*, 14 October 2011, <http://www.euromedrights.org/eng/?p=10444>.

<sup>36</sup> Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, *Syrian refugees on the Turkish border: Report on the visit to Antakya (Turkey)*, 26 July 2011 (AS/Mig/AhLarg(2011) 04 Rev.), 29 November 2011, p. 7-8, <http://www.assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2011/amahlarg042011.pdf>.

<sup>37</sup> International Crisis Group, "Blurring the Borders: Syrian Spillover Risks for Turkey", cit., p. 8-11.

<sup>38</sup> UNHCR, "Turkey", in *2014 Syrian Regional Response Plan*, December 2013, p. 3, <http://www.unhcr.org/syriarrp6>.

creasingly lead to a lowering of the protection offered to refugees.<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless, the contrast in the way external actors have assessed EU and Turkish responses to the Syrian refugee crisis is striking. This higher praise received by Turkey is partly due to Turkey surpassing the relatively low initial expectations, given Turkey's previous experience with the mass influx of refugees from Iraq in 1991, when the government actively worked to prevent too many entries and precipitated early returns. The expectations for the EU were much higher, given the EU's relative wealth and material capabilities and its self-portrayal as upholding high standards of human rights and its readiness to lecture other countries on that. The structure of a single, centralized state in the case of Turkey also allows for easier immediate implementation of decisions regarding Syrian refugees, whereas any decisions taken at the EU level have to rely on the administrations of 28 individual member states to be implemented. Nonetheless, it seems that political willingness in Turkey has paid off and is helping Syrian refugees in a way that European actors, with hesitant steps, have not been able to do.

## TAKING SOLIDARITY SERIOUSLY

Looking forward, there seem to be many ways in which both Turkey and the EU could work together and find ways to address more adequately the protection needs of refugees in general, and Syrian refugees in particular. At the core of this reassessment of asylum practices is the need to take seriously the concept of solidarity so often called upon in speeches and texts, but not sufficiently applied in practice. Solidarity in this context means solidarity among EU member states, solidarity with countries hosting large numbers of refugees in the region, and, most importantly, solidarity with refugees themselves.

The Syrian refugees crisis is highlighting even more sharply how the various EU member states are unequally affected by the influx of refugees. Countries of the South and East of Europe (especially Greece, Malta, Italy and increasingly Bulgaria), as well as countries with maritime borders, face a substantially larger amount of entries and asylum applications than other countries. Affected countries have adapted to this situation by tightening border controls and interpreting refugee status determination

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<sup>39</sup> Kemal Kirişci, "Syrian Refugees in Turkey: The Limits of an Open Door Policy", cit.

with greater restrictions in order to encourage asylum seekers to seek asylum further along in another member state. Dublin regulations try to compensate for that by allowing the deportation of asylum seekers to the first country of asylum, yet Dublin does not sufficiently compensate the costs of first arrival countries. This is detrimental both to relations between member states and to the protection offered refugees.

In general, with the perceived blurred line between asylum seekers and irregular migrants, softening access policies towards asylum seekers will often be politically problematic. However, with Syria, the situation is more straightforward: any Syrian has a reasonable claim to asylum and the burden of proof in denying refugee status should be on the state, not on the individual. An EU directive dating from July 2001<sup>40</sup> envisions exactly this type of situation, by defining a regime of temporary protection in case of mass influx. Under such a regime, Syrians would be granted a number of rights (work authorization, access to accommodation, medical treatment) that would facilitate their stay in the EU until a political solution in Syria is found. Therefore, this would not commit member states in the long term, yet would substantially increase their protection capabilities. Many different actors are calling for such a measure, highlighting how the failure to adopt it during the Libyan crisis should not be repeated.<sup>41</sup> In addition, some clauses of Dublin III should be suspended for Syrians to allow for a fairer distribution of Syrian refugees throughout Europe.

But solidarity among states should be extended beyond the EU. The existing channels of EU assistance (availabilities of funds and regional protection program) are appropriate, but these operations (1) should be fine-tuned by being more inclusive, at the decision-making level, of local actors, including national and local governments (and not only international governmental and non-governmental organizations),<sup>42</sup> (2) should deliver the funds promised, (3) should invest more in mid-term to long-term solutions given the apparent impasse in the Syrian conflict, and (4) should step up the amount allocated to assistance (by both the Commission and member states). The EU is indeed priding itself on being the number one international contributor of humanitarian funds to the

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<sup>40</sup> Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons ..., <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:3200110055:en:not>.

<sup>41</sup> Ray Smith, "Europe Failing Syrian Refugees", cit.

<sup>42</sup> Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al., "Turkey and Syrian Refugees: The Limits of Hospitality", cit., p. 29.

Syrian crisis, with more than 50% of funds flowing to the region originating in the EU.<sup>43</sup>

However, these figures do not reflect the financial capabilities of the 28 member states and, given the seriousness of the conflict, it is clear that more should be done. Also, from a more self-centered perspective, it is clear that the more the EU helps Syrian neighboring countries to build reception capabilities for Syrian refugees, the less the asylum pressure on the EU's border and asylum agencies.<sup>44</sup> It should also be kept in mind that investing in building Syria's neighbors' protection and reception capabilities for refugees is a much less costly way of helping the Syrian population than any military option, and seems more likely to make a stronger qualitative difference in the long term.

More funding going to the region means more funding to Turkey in particular. While Lebanon and Jordan are certainly facing a proportionally much higher number of Syrian refugees, hence deserving more immediate attention, the EU should not miss the medium-term advantages of investing in Turkey's capabilities. First of all, it seems that as Turkey started to coordinate with the international community later as part of the UN's Regional Response Plan, the percentage of pledged funding is lower than for other countries.<sup>45</sup> Now that Turkey is cooperating fully with the international community, it is important that donors catch up on the promised funding so that Turkey can appropriately build new capabilities.

Second, as a bigger, richer and more stable country, Turkey's potential capabilities to receive large amount of refugees is relatively higher, and so it is important to start investing now in Turkey's medium-term capabilities. Third, being a larger country, if Turkey were to be seriously destabilized by the influx of Syrian refugees – conflict spill-over, rekindling of the Kurdish conflict, rise in discontent and repressive policies – the impact on the broader Turkish neighborhood, both in Europe and in the Middle East, would be consequential. We are far from reaching that threshold, but the acceleration of the humanitarian drama unfolding around Syria is

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<sup>43</sup> These numbers account only for "international contributions", hence does not include assistance provided by Syrian neighboring countries such as Turkey. European Commission, *Syria: EU biggest donor, leads international aid response, reaching 7 million people in need*, 25 September 2013, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-865\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-865_en.htm).

<sup>44</sup> Nikolaj Nielson, "Lack of funding may force Syrian refugees into Europe", cit.

<sup>45</sup> Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al., "Turkey and Syrian Refugees: The Limits of Hospitality", cit., p. 29.

worrisome even for a more established country like Turkey.

Finally, and most importantly, Turkey's recent legislative development and practices in the field of asylum is redefining the broader role that Turkey can play in the asylum field at the international level. Turkey is establishing itself as a responsible and reliable partner regarding refugee policies, and the EU should take advantage of these new changes to empower Turkey (as opposed to leaving it on its own). The combination of the close political relationship between the EU and Turkey (as a candidate country and a powerful neighbor) and Turkey's new signals in the field of asylum, should establish Turkey as a "special partner" for the EU. The allocation of funds could be decided in consultation between the EU and Turkey; the process of resettlement of Syrian refugees from Turkey to the EU should be streamlined and facilitated; better dialogue should be facilitated on border issues between Turkey and Greece on the one hand, and Turkey and Bulgaria on the other.

Such a new approach of close collaboration with Turkey on the Syrian refugee crisis could also become the basis for EU-Turkey cooperation on matters of asylum beyond Syria. In the previous decade, the EU had an important impact in helping Turkey reform and reformulate its migration and asylum policy, especially through a number of twinning projects. With the adoption of the new Law on Foreigners and International Protection last April, the reformulation phase is over for now. What is left is a number of projects funded by the EU to improve Turkey's capabilities. With the possible exception of the building of seven reception centers (focusing on pre-registration, screening and accommodation), the large majority of projects funded by the EU focus on migration control (creation of removal centers for irregular migrants, creation of integrated information systems, most recently installation of heat-cameras at border crossing areas, etc.).<sup>46</sup> This security/control approach may be necessary and useful to Turkey, but it should be compensated by other projects that focus more on the protection and provision of services to asylum seekers, refugees, immigrants and undocumented migrants alike. Moving ahead in a redefined cooperation between the EU and Turkey on asylum issues might well mean working on creating a more protective (rather than more orderly) system of asylum.

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<sup>46</sup> European Union Delegation in Turkey, *EU supports border surveillance in Turkey with thermal Cameras*, 25 November 2013, <http://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/en/resource/press-room/press-releases-single-view/article/eu-supports-border-surveillance-in-turkey-with-thermal-cameras.html>.

Turkey itself should not rest on the laurels it is receiving from the international community. There are still things that it could do to improve the well-being of Syrian refugees on its territory. Turkey has gone a long way in shedding a mindset of suspicion towards Western actors (be they officials or workers for non-governmental organizations), however, there are still areas where distrust prevail. It is important that Turkey fully embrace international assistance in the case of Syrian refugees, and facilitate the registration of INGOs that propose to work in the area as much as possible.<sup>47</sup> More transparency in sharing the data collected in the field is also important. Finally, Turkish authorities could share some of their experience and expertise with authorities in Lebanon, Jordan (and increasingly Iraq and Egypt) to assist them in coping with the immediate inflows of refugees, but also in transitioning to a system that can accommodate refugees' needs in the medium and long term.

The sad realization that the Syrian refugee crisis is unlikely to go away within the next few months, and that increasingly long-term solutions for refugees need to be put in place calls for an open discussion that needs to be taken seriously both in the EU and in Turkey. As Syrian refugees interact more intensely with the Turkish population, it is important to open a public debate in Turkey regarding the long-term integration of these refugees. Turkey traditionally has eschewed a discussion of the integration of foreign populations, but given the way the discourse is emerging in traditional and social Turkish media, with misunderstandings, misinformation and hostility expressed towards Syrian refugees, this topic cannot be put off any longer. The EU, and especially member states, have longer experience with public discussions on the integration of refugees (or other immigrants), and the EU and Turkey might want to open a dialogue together about this issue.

In recent months, Turkey is setting an interesting example: even in a situation of massive refugee inflows, it is possible to uphold a humanitarian approach and enact policies that prioritize the needs of refugees over the immediate security interests of the state. This is not an easy thing to do, and there are some dark spots in Turkey's practices, but nevertheless it illustrates that a change of mindset can be translated into different policy practices. This is hopefully a fact that can be heard by EU member states to help them overcome the division between protective states that

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<sup>47</sup> Osman Bahadır Dinçer et al., "Turkey and Syrian Refugees: The Limits of Hospitality", *cit.*, p. 29.



are isolated from massive inflows, and restrictive states that are so because they have to deal with the immediate consequences of large numbers of refugees. A new mindset could help the EU as a whole to be more efficient and protective which, in turn, can assist Turkey in providing more effectively for refugees.



## 8.

# Turkey, Europe and the Syrian Crisis: What Went Wrong?

*Nathalie Tocci*

How did we end up like this? Syria should have united, not torn, Turkey and Europe apart. It should have led both sides to work together, and through closer foreign policy coordination, possibly rebuild part of that long-lost trust that is badly needed to re-launch the broader EU-Turkey agenda.

We were all on the same side. Since the beginning of the Syrian uprising, the EU and its member states and Turkey first attempted to nudge Bashar al-Assad to reform. Turkey exerted significant effort to this end, attempting to leverage the political capital built up with the Syrian regime, the poster-child of its now beleaguered “zero problems with neighbours” policy. By the summer of 2011, Turkey, Europe and the United States concluded this was a lost cause. The regime was bent on a strategy of survival and would have used all means at its disposal to fight back against the opposition. The more the spiral of violence spun out of control, the more Turkey and Europe, alongside the United States and the Arab Gulf countries, converged, in the framework of the Friends of Syria, on their support for the Syrian opposition.

Views were not always identical. While all applauded Turkey’s response to the Syrian refugee crisis – approximately 500,000 Syrian refugees have found shelter in Turkey –, many criticized its reluctance to embrace greater international involvement in the management of the humanitarian crisis. More acutely, and increasingly so as the months dragged on, Europeans questioned Turkey’s deepening alliance with Qatar in the Syrian war, its under-appreciation of the risks posed by the radical Syrian opposition, and its unwilling but nonetheless real fuelling of the sectarian underpinnings of the Syrian and regional context. Both within and outside Turkey, some suspect that the AKP’s Syria policy is often dictated by a domestic agenda rather than by a pursuit of Turkey’s foreign policy interests and values. Differences aside, the leitmotif in Europe, Turkey and across the Atlantic was that goals were shared – the

ousting of Assad and a democratic transition in Syria – and their pursuit was so arduous that working together was of the essence.

Then came Gouta. When on August 21 a chemical bombardment killed hundreds on the outskirts of Damascus, the debate polarized. Turkey had long called for a more muscular international involvement in support of the Syrian opposition. It appealed for a humanitarian corridor, it supported the arming of the rebels, and repeatedly called for a no-fly-zone. Yet it never considered acting alone and would have only endorsed a more forceful involvement in Syria in the framework of a broader regional and international effort. This meant winning over the United States, a goal that Prime Minister Erdoğan pursued, notably during his May visit to the White House, but notoriously failed to achieve. Turkey backed down and toed the line: the goal shared by Europe, the United States and Turkey was a political solution to be sought at Geneva II. Although after the fall of Qusayr in June, the prospects for Geneva II waned, diplomacy was still, predominantly, the name of the game. The attack in Gouta turned the tables once again. The proverbial red line had been crossed and a sequencing of events brought a reluctant American president to the brink of a military attack.

Turkey was quick to jump on the interventionist bandwagon. It immediately backed President Obama's call for a military strike. It officially stated that a chemical weapons attack could not go unanswered. Even after the international community converged on the need to give diplomacy a last chance by endorsing the Russian plan for the Syrian regime to hand over its chemical weapons arsenal and put it under international supervision, Turkey continued to argue that Gouta could not go unpunished. The credibility and values of the international community were at stake.

The European Union took a different line. With the sole exception of France, no member state openly backed the idea of a military attack without a UN Security Council resolution. Even the United Kingdom moved to the sidelines, after the Cameron government was embarrassingly defeated with a 285-272 vote in the Commons, due to resistance not only from the Labour opposition but also from the Liberals and his own Conservative Party. Most other member states either refrained from taking a clear line – Spain –, or more commonly declared they would support an intervention only after international inspections verified the culpability of the Syrian regime and it received UNSC backing – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden.. Some member states went beyond. Italy, for instance, beyond insisting on the imperative of waiting for the result of

inspections and respecting international law, expressed clear doubts about the political desirability of an intervention, claiming that a diplomatic solution remained first best. Germany went a step further (or more accurately too far) delaying its endorsement of the G20 statement calling for an international, but not necessarily military, response in Syria until the EU Gymnich meeting in Vilnius a day later. France, as said, was left alone in its support for an attack. But President Hollande was dumbfounded when Cameron lost in the House of Commons and President Obama made one step forward by calling for an attack and two steps backwards by abdicating his leadership to Congress. On its own and confronting a palpably hostile domestic public opinion, the French government converged on the EU consensus in Vilnius. When Russia pulled the rabbit out of the hat – which President Assad readily caught –, proposing its plan to place Syria's chemical weapons under international supervision, the European Union and its member states sighed in relief. A military attack, while not off the cards altogether, had at least been postponed.

But why is Turkey so keen on an attack? Why is a traditionally staunch supporter of national sovereignty so gung-ho on Syria? Ever since the Syrian regime, with the support of its allies, has regained the upper hand in the Syrian conflict, Turkey considers it imperative to alter the balance of forces on the ground. A limited attack in response to the chemical weapons attack would thus not be ideal in this respect. But it would be better than nothing. In many respects, what many in Europe (and the US) view as a serious risk and reason to refrain from action – that a limited attack could trigger a broader military conflagration – was viewed in Ankara as an opportunity in disguise. Turkish policymakers, well aware that the planned surgical strike would do little to alter the course of the Syrian civil war, behind closed doors hoped that a limited attack could end up in a more substantial military involvement. A broader military engagement by the West, alongside Turkey and the Arab Gulf countries, could have reversed the course of the Syrian war in favour of the opposition.

Why does Turkey not seriously embrace the alternative to an attack: a political solution? The reasoning is straightforward. According to Ankara, were the diplomatic track to be pursued today, even in the best of possible worlds in which an agreement could be reached, such an agreement would be woefully deficient.; It would essentially foresee Bashar al-Assad remaining in power behind the scenes; allowing (and assisting?) the regime in eradicating jihadist and takfiri groups and closing a blind eye to the fact that, barring a few cosmetic changes, the regime would wipe out

– à la Egypt? – the Brotherhood and the democratic opposition over time. According to Turkey, it is only after the Syrian National Coalition and the Free Syria Army gain the upper hand both in the confrontation with the regime and within the Syrian opposition vis-à-vis al-Nusra and other radical groups that a political solution should be energetically pursued. And to gain the upper hand, military backing by the West is necessary to counterbalance the military involvement of the Syrian regime's allies.

Turkish concerns are not far-fetched. There is indeed a tangible risk that a diplomatic solution would end up in de facto acceptance of the status quo ante, coupled with the continuation of low level violence in the months and years ahead. This said, it is also clear that Turkey seriously underplays the costs of a military strike.. A strike would, at the very best, entail a violation of international law, tarnish further America's battered reputation in the region and have no visible impact on the Syrian war – were an attack to remain limited. At worse, an attack would provoke a broad military conflagration in which Iran, Lebanon and possibly also Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Israel and the Arab Gulf would not be spared. Added to this, a clear-cut victory of the opposition may threaten Syria's survival as a multi-religious state. Just like Turkey is rightly concerned that the regime's victory would lead to a political wipeout of the Brotherhood, the reverse may also be true. In view of the preponderance of radical elements within the opposition, one could legitimately fear that their military victory would end up undermining the rights and role of Alawites and Christians in the country.

The key question, particularly now that the Russian initiative on chemical weapons has given diplomacy a temporary lease of life, is what to do in order to set in motion a political track that offers some hope for a solution that moves beyond a mere endorsement of the status quo. To the extent that the Syrian crisis is as local as it is regional and international, what is evident is that a diplomatic solution requires the regional and international actors to exert meaningful pressure on their respective allies in order to reach a genuine compromise. The Arab Gulf ought thus to rein in the Islamist – radical and non – opposition. Turkey should do likewise with the Free Syria Army. In doing so they should be backed and prompted by the United States and EU member states.

The trickier part of the equation regards the Syrian regime and its allies. Insofar as the military balance on the ground is heavily tilted in their favour, what would it take for al-Assad's regime and its allies to accept a meaningful compromise? In order for Moscow and Tehran to

exert the necessary pressure on the Syrian regime for it to yield, it is clear that their underlying desiderata would need to be satisfied. And such satisfaction calls upon the United States and Europe to do some serious soul-searching.

Russia's basic needs appear to boil down to concrete action to stem radical Islamism in Syria and the region and recognition of its great power status. In the Russian narrative, the secular Assad regime is engaged in a worthy struggle against jihadist forces, a struggle Moscow knows well in view of its unruly Northern Caucasian periphery. Alongside its allergy to Islamism in all shapes and forms, Russia wants to be acknowledged as a force to be reckoned with in the Middle East and the world. Hence, to the extent that a political solution would entail Russian stalling, and reassurances regarding radical Islamism, one could foreseeably imagine Moscow playing ball.

Iran is a tougher nut to crack. While Russian interests in Syria are strategic, Iran's are vital. Like all authoritarian regimes, Iran's basic interest is survival. And in view of its regional and international isolation, maintaining Syria as an ally and a lifeline to Hizbollah is vital for Iran. The bottom line is thus whether Europe and the United States are willing to provide Iran with the inclusion it seeks as an alternative strategy to its political survival. Are EU member states and, most critically, the United States willing to fully accept Iran in the regional order in exchange for its cooperation on Syria and beyond? Unless and until this question is genuinely addressed, Turkish concerns about a political solution should not be dismissed out of hand.

But where does Turkey stand on all this? Only a few years ago, Ankara had stuck its neck out for Tehran, despite Iran being a traditional Turkish rival. The 2010 nuclear fuel swap deal mediated together with Brazil had put Ankara at loggerheads with its traditional allies in the West. Yet Turkey, intent on pursuing its zero problems with neighbours strategy and actively resisting coercive responses to international crises, steadfastly attempted mediation. Since then much has changed. The growing sectarianization of Iraq and above all the Syrian civil war have starkly brought to the fore Turkish-Iranian divisions. This said, as much as Europe and the United States should do their share of soul-searching on the Iranian question, Turkey should do likewise, and revive the promise it held out for the Middle East only a few years ago: that of a soft power that defied rather than fed on the conflictual dichotomies of the region. To do so there is no better place to start than Tehran.

Concretely, what would this mean? A promising thread to follow regards precisely the Russian initiative on chemical weapons. The goal is now that of broadening consensus on that initiative at the regional and international – UNSC – level and using it as a first step towards a broader dialogue on Syria's future. Not least in view of its own history as a victim of chemical attacks in the Iran-Iraq war, Iran is keen on bolstering the international chemical weapons regime. Engaging Tehran on this front is thus a promising place to start. On this and eventually on the nuclear file, the ultimate objective is a direct US-Iranian engagement. But Europe and Turkey are the possible path-breakers towards that end and could create a contact group, eventually inviting the US to join. Working together in this regard would serve the double goal of pursuing an end of violence in Syria and restoring trust and cooperation between Turkey and Europe.



## 9.

# Europeanization, Framing Competition and Civil Society in the EU and Turkey

*Ayhan Kaya and Raffaele Marchetti*

## INTRODUCTION

In this article, we aim to examine the relationship between the European Union and Turkey from the specific angle of the process of Europeanization. We believe that economic or geopolitical arguments do not exhaust the debate on Turkey's EU accession. A more comprehensive approach needs to be taken in order to understand the deep socio-political drives underpinning the Turkish bid for EU membership. From this perspective, understanding the broader process of Europeanization in political and social terms is crucial in order to capture the real drives of the European integration process in its entirety. In this vein, special attention needs to be paid to the ideational factors that shape the political discourse in Turkey concerning the attitude towards the EU. This is important not only in order to understand what push and pull factors are animating and perhaps transforming Turkish society, but also for two other reasons. First, it is important to correctly understand the debate in Turkey because only by doing that can the EU develop an effective discourse in its approach to Turkish political elites and society more broadly. Second, understanding the debate in Turkey also helps in understanding the debate within the EU, either through contrast or through illuminating the extent to which the EU debate is also influenced and reshaped by the debates in its neighborhood.

This article focuses specifically on three different framings developed by the civil society organizations (CSOs) in Turkey with respect to the European integration process, which is believed to have deepened since the 1999 Helsinki Summit of the European Union. These three main frames are *Euro-enthusiastic*, *Euro-sceptic* and *critical Europeanist* attitudes generated by different civil society actors as a response to the changing political, social, economic and cultural climate between Turkey and the European Union as well as within Turkey itself. Theoretically speaking,

the *Euro-enthusiastic* frame proposes a positive assessment of European development and detects some problems in the implementation of the project, which are believed to be resulting from the EU institutions. The *Euro-sceptic* frame tends to read the regional integration process as a set of detrimental dynamics that threaten the communitarian bases necessary for the sustainability of the local and national political projects. This frame is a more local and nationalist interpretation of European integration, which is perceived as a direct intervention in the sovereignty of the nation-states. The *critical Europeanist* frame searches for a more social and democratic Europe rather than a market-based Europe. As will be further delineated, this last frame was developed during and after the Gezi movement, which spilled over to the entire country in June 2013 as a popular form of resistance against the authoritarian rule of the Justice and Development Party, which has governed the country since 2002. It will be argued that it was this last form of framing that has made at least some Turkish civil society actors embrace the European integration process as an anchor for the democratization of the country.

The paper proceeds according to the following structure: it first sets the stage conceptually by examining the role of civil society in the political arena and specifically in the context of Europeanization. It then identifies the major functions played by CSOs within the European governance system. Special attention is paid to the three different overall framings underpinning the debate in Europe over European CSOs. Once the EU side is clarified, the paper turns its focus to the Turkish debate itself. It first provides an interpretation of the Europeanization process in Turkey and then applies the framings of the debate in Europe to the Turkish debate and tests to what extent those framings can offer a better grasp of this debate. It further deepens the analysis by examining the specific actors in the Turkish national debate on Europe and their differing stances. The paper concludes by suggesting ways to better understand the actual and potential interaction between the EU debate and the Turkish debate on Europe, and hence the relationship between the EU and Turkey more generally.

## UNDERSTANDING CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEANIZATION

The mainstream understanding of civil society sprung from specific historical, political and socio-economic backgrounds. The early philosoph-

ical debates on civil society emerged from and were grounded in Western Europe, in contexts of state formation (Hobbes, Locke and Ferguson), emerging capitalism and class struggle (Hegel and Marx) and democratization and democracy (Gramsci and Habermas). Likewise, in the 1970s and 1980s civil society activity and literature was firmly grounded in the West, having played an active role in issues such as nuclear disarmament, environmental sustainability and gender and race struggles. Since the end of the Cold War, the more recent wave of civil society literature is also mostly grounded in the West, this time couched in the wider framework of globalization and international relations studies. A specific and more recent trend in the study of civil society concerns the process of Europeanization. This study fits into this latter trend.

The specific contexts in which these literatures are embedded are often taken for granted. Rarely are the implications of context in the development of civil society openly acknowledged and taken into account.<sup>1</sup> Yet a study of the role of civil society in the wider Europeanization process must account for the role and implications of context. Hence a first variable in this analysis of civil society is the context within which it operates. In this respect, several core questions need to be raised at the outset. Can and does civil society exist in contexts beyond the traditional background of the state? The underlying premise of this chapter is that civil society can and does exist in these situations. Yet its nature as well as its role and functions are fundamentally shaped by the specific context in question, i.e. the context of Europeanization within the EU and in the candidate country Turkey. Insofar as civil society is both an independent agent for change<sup>2</sup> and a dependent product of existing structures,<sup>3</sup> we are likely to encounter a wide range of civil society actors carrying out a wide range of actions in this context. In this paper, we aim to suggest that in order to understand the relation between the

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<sup>1</sup> David Lewis, "Civil Society in Non-Western Contexts: Reflections on the Usefulness of a Concept", in *Civil Society Working Paper series*, No. 13 (October 2001), <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/29052>; Raffaele Marchetti and Nathalie Tocci, "Conflict Society: Understanding the Role of Civil Society in Conflict", in *Global Change, Peace and Security*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (June 2009), p. 201-217.

<sup>2</sup> Robert D. Putnam with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Y. Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1992.

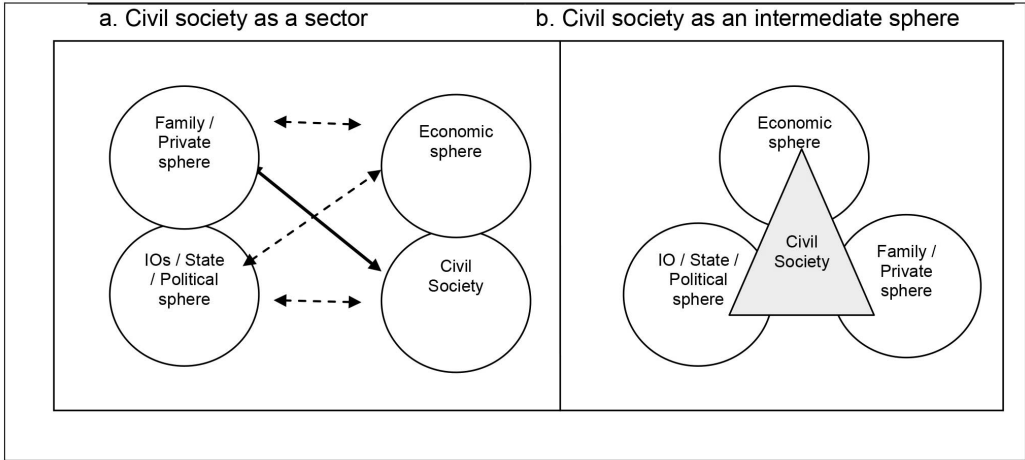
<sup>3</sup> Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, Mayer N. Zald (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements. Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

EU and Turkey, and in particular Turkey's process of accession, we need to take into account the full complexity of this interaction, including its development in the domain of civil society. This may indeed prove crucial for the sustainability in the long term of the prolonged EU accession process in which Turkey is involved.

While the standard definition of civil society identifies it as the space outside of the government, the family and the market in which individuals and collective organizations advance allegedly common interests in a competitive environment (see graph 7 below), a more encompassing definition understands civil society as referring to the sphere in which citizens and social initiatives organize themselves around objectives, constituencies and thematic interests with a public nature, be it local, national or transnational. Accordingly, civil society organizations usually include community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social movements, labor unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, media operators, academia, diaspora groups, lobby and consultancy groups, think tanks and research centers and professional associations and foundations (with political parties and private companies remaining the most controversial cases). An even wider definition of non-state actors also includes criminal networks, terrorists and combatant groups. Analytically, four broad categories of civil society organizations (CSOs) can be distinguished: membership organizations, interest organizations, service organizations and support organizations.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Annette Zimmer et al., "The Legacy of Subsidiarity: The Nonprofit Sector in Germany", in Annette Zimmer, Eckhard Priller (eds.), *Future of Civil Society. Making Central European Nonprofit-Organizations Work*, Wiesbaden, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2004, p. 681-711.

**Graph 7. The position of civil society**

Source: Author's elaboration from Paffenholz, 2010, p. 7.<sup>5</sup>

The term civil society was rediscovered after the fall of the Wall and was frequently deployed in the policies formulation in the laboratory of Central and Eastern Europe as well as Latin America and East Asia. In this context, a particularly important dimension of the action of civil society organizations was its relation with the state. In general terms, this relation is seen alternatively as either competitive or cooperative. According to the first perspective deriving from John Locke, popular control of political institutions requires an external, independent actor, and civil society constitutes a fitting functional counterpart to the institutional power. On the opposite side, according to the tradition of cooperation inspired by Montesquieu and Hegel, civil society is seen in its integrative function either as cooperating with the institutions in terms of inputs (CSOs have an associative function that generates legitimacy of the state, close to communitarianism) or as a subcontractor for facilitating the outputs. From this perspective, the sense of community and solidarity is grounded in the broad societal environment (lifeworld). CSOs have precisely the role of transmitting such sense into the public institutions: they are intermediaries, but at the same time they are also constitutive of the social cement

<sup>5</sup> Thania Paffenholz, *Civil Society and Peacebuilding. A Critical Assessment*, Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 2010.

underpinning any political endeavor.

In particular, concerning the relation between civil society and democracy, CSOs are usually seen as democracy-enhancers. Accordingly, CSOs are expected to play a significant role in the different phases of the democratic transition. In the moment of liberalization of the autocratic regime, CSOs are usually united in the strategic fight against the *ancient regime*. In the phase of institutionalization of democracy, they tend to cooperate in the building of the new regime. And finally, in the process of consolidation of democracy, CSOs are understood as schools of democracy, contestation and pluralism, as in the reflexive function. It has to be noted, however, that such a democratic reading of civil society is normatively biased insofar as it precludes the possibility to analyze the whole range of actors engaged in politics from a non-governmental stance. It is usually based on a very specific notion of what constitutes a “good” CSO, thus excluding from the radar many politically significant organizations. Hence, it is important to recognize that the contribution to democracy enhancement may come from many different directions and through indirect paths.

In the context of the EU, civil society is usually understood in a functionally broad way, though it may be limited in political terms. It is functionally broad in that definitions of civil society usually include different kinds of interest groups: non-governmental organizations, social movements, advocacy and promotional groups, functional interest groups (such as trade unions and employers’ organizations), sectoral organizations (such as entrepreneurs’ and consumers’ associations) and also universities, research institutes and epistemic communities. In the EU, CSOs are usually expected to play the collaborative role (rather than only enacting contentious politics) in a procedural manner within the policy-making process. As we will see, EU procedures tend to favor a functional, output-oriented conception of civil society involvement. For this reason, politically antagonistic groups are usually marginalized, if not ostracized and even criminalized.

From a civil society perspective, Europeanization has to be understood as a complex process of European integration that transforms actors and makes them supranationally part of a single demos, a single public space in which CSOs interact transnationally. More formally, Radaelli interprets Europeanization as a

construction; diffusion; and the institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ways of doing things,

and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies.<sup>6</sup>

In sum, it is a process (of diffusion, learning, adjusting and the reorientation of politics), an effect (of engagement with Europe), a cause (of further integration) and a relation (between the EU and other actors).<sup>7</sup>

## THE EU'S OPENINGS TO CIVIL SOCIETY<sup>8</sup>

The topic of civil society participation entered the EU agenda after the foundation of the European Union in 1993 with the Maastricht Treaty. Setting the goal of the political union, the treaty indirectly generated a long term debate on the democratic deficit and more generally on the increasing politicization of the EU integration process. This discursive shift signaled the end of the “permissive consensus” of the elite-driven project: from that moment on the previously depoliticized process of the EU integration became more contentious.<sup>9</sup> In this context, participation of civil society became more and more essential from the point of view of both CSOs and practitioners who saw CSOs as a solution, as legitimacy-enhancers that could solve their problems. Together with civil society, the other strategy to enhance legitimacy was to strengthen the European Parliament and shift from the output (result-based) to the input (participation-based) dimension of legitimacy.

The European Commission has a long history of consultation with civil

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<sup>6</sup> Claudio Radaelli, “The Europeanization of Public Policies”, in Kevin Featherstone and Claudio M. Radaelli (eds.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 27-56, at p. 30.

<sup>7</sup> Karolina Borońska-Hryniewiecka, “Europeanization of Non-State Actors: Towards a Framework for Analysis”, in David Armstrong, et al. (eds.), *Civil Society and International Governance. The Role of Non-State Actors in Global and Regional Regulatory Frameworks*, London, Routledge, 2011, p. 73-91.

<sup>8</sup> This section is based on Raffaele Marchetti, “What Function? Which Frame? Dilemmas for Civil Society in the EU System”, in *WPFDC Blog*, 3 December 2013, <http://wpfdc.org/blog/our-columnists/raffaele-marchetti/18940>.

<sup>9</sup> Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, “A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus”, in *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (January 2009), p. 1-23.

experts, but it has changed and expanded its attitude over time.<sup>10</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s the Commission focused on “consultation” within European economic integration and on dialogue with primarily economic experts within industrial and agrarian interest groups.<sup>11</sup> Other CSOs were still outside of this interaction with the EEC, except the long-standing European federalist movements.

Later on in the 1980s and 1990s, the Commission focused on developing a “partnership” with nongovernmental actors within the Social Dialogue on specific policy areas such as security, social and educational policy<sup>12</sup>. While the Commission demanded greater participation of civil society, European civil society itself expanded its reach to the regional level. A multitude of associations opened their branches in Brussels, such as the European Trade Union Confederation. Better IT technology and improved European coordination facilitated this scale shift towards the EU level.

However, only in the 1990s and 2000s was attention moved to the idea of “participation” itself and the concept of participatory democracy.<sup>13</sup> The White Paper on Governance drew the framework for such cooperation,<sup>14</sup> and the Leaken Conference of 2001 established a qualitative milestone for the recognition of NGO participation in European

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<sup>10</sup> Christine Quittkat and Barbara Finke, “The EU Commission Consultation Regime”, in Beate Kohler-Koch, Dirk De Bièvre, William A. Maloney (eds.), “Opening EU-Governance to Civil Society. Gains and Challenges”, in *Connex Report Series*, No. 5 (February 2008), p. 183-222, at p. 184, <http://www.mzes.uni-mannheim.de/d7/en/node/2413>.

<sup>11</sup> In 2009 there were 1,316 EU-level interest representatives on the EC register, with approximately 60% stemming from business and trade associations and the rest representing diffuse or public interests.

<sup>12</sup> The European social dialogue refers to discussions, consultations, negotiations and joint actions involving organisations representing the two sides of industry (employers and workers). It takes two main forms: a tripartite dialogue involving the public authorities, and a bipartite dialogue between the European employers and trade union organisations.

<sup>13</sup> Economic and Social Committee, *Opinion on ‘The role and contribution of civil society organisations in the building of Europe’* (1999/C 329/10), 22 September 1999, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:51999ie0851:en:not>.

<sup>14</sup> European Commission, *European Governance: A White Paper* (COM(2001) 428 final), 25 July 2001, p. 428, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52001dc0428:en:not>; and Kenneth A. Armstrong, “Rediscovering Civil Society: The European Union and the White Paper on Governance”, in *European Law Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (March 2002), p. 102-132.



governance by including for the first time the representation of civil society in the convention working on the Constitutional Treaty. The most recent development in the integration of civil society is constituted by the Lisbon Treaty, which further enhances the European Social Dialogue and institutionalizes citizens' initiatives. Today, "Your Voice in Europe," an online consultation system, offers the opportunity for all recorded groups to express their views during the Commission's policy formation phase. As a result, the process of policy formation has widened beyond the traditional intergovernmental method to include voluntary, informal, inclusive and participatory forms of coordination, the so-called new era of the EU's multilevel governance.

These transformations in the EU's attitude towards civil society created a structure of opportunities that CSOs repeatedly use to influence the decision-making process at the European level. In fact, we can expect that "the more political decisions are dispersed, the more open (and less repressive) a system is considered. The prevalent assumption is that the greater the number of actors who share political power (the more the checks and balances), the greater the chance that social movements will emerge and develop."<sup>15</sup> The EU governance structure tends to be fairly open to the inputs of civil society, if compared with similar political regimes throughout the world. While it is fairly clear by now that the system is more open to conventional, pragmatic lobbying than to ideological and disruptive action, it still leaves room for windows of opportunities for different kinds of mobilizations on different levels. Depending on the circumstances, CSOs may, for instance, adopt strategies of either domestication (putting pressure on the national constituencies) or externalization (targeting the EU institutions) in order to adapt better to the political opportunity structure that is presented to them, or, alternatively, adopt multiple strategies in which both the local and the European level is targeted. Especially in specific sectors such as the defining of the EU democracy and human rights external policies, civil society has played a significant role in setting the agenda. A recent case in point is represented by the successful mobilization of the LGBT groups that managed to include their political goals in the official agenda of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, or EIDHR.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Donatella Della Porta and Manuela Caiani, *Social Movements and Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Council of the European Union, *EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy* (11855/12), 25 June 2012, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/>

## FUNCTIONS AND FRAMINGS OF CSOs WITHIN THE EUROPEAN GOVERNANCE SYSTEM<sup>17</sup>

The debate on the specific role played by CSOs within the European governance system is very intense.<sup>18</sup> Two of the principal options in the reading of the functions assigned and played by CSOs within the EU system are as functional collaborators or as constitutive sources for the creation of a European public space, as summarized in Table 6 below.

**Table 6. Two main political interpretations of the role played by civil society**

	<b>Collaborator of public bodies</b>	<b>Constitutive source for trans-European public space</b>
<i>Modes of interaction</i>	Multi-stakeholder partnership	Deliberative Europeanization
<i>Official documents</i>	White Paper on Governance, 2001	Convention methods applied in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000), European Convention 2001-2003, the Treaty on a Constitution for Europe (2003) and later in the Treaty of Lisbon (2009)

uedocs/cms\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf.

<sup>17</sup> This section is based on Raffaele Marchetti, "What Function? Which Frame? ...", cit.

<sup>18</sup> Olivier De Schutter, "Europe in Search of Its Civil Society", in *European Law Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (June 2002), p. 198-217; Erik Oddvar Eriksen and John Erik Fossum, "Democracy through Strong Publics in the European Union?", in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (September 2002), p. 401-424; Chris Rumford, "European Civil Society or Transnational Social Space? Conceptions of Society in Discourses of EU Citizenship, Governance and the Democratic Deficit: an Emerging Agenda", in *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (February 2003), p. 25-43; and Carlo Ruzza, *Europe and Civil Society. Movement Coalitions and European Governance*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2004.

<i>Types of CSOs</i>	Organized interests, interest intermediation and lobbying	Civil society as a whole, but also as a site of contestation
<i>Functions</i>	Partners, not expected to control accountability	Public sphere for both open participation and challenge to public authority
<i>Activities</i>	Service provision in a demand-offer scheme	Training for social and political virtues, producing social ties and social capital and providing opportunities for mobilization and collective action
<i>Composition</i>	NGOs, experts, the educated	Social movements, laymen

Source: Author's elaboration from Heidbreder, 2012.<sup>19</sup>

Among the European institutions, the European Commission has by far the greater role *vis-à-vis* CSOs. The European Parliament only comes second on this. The Commission deploys an activation strategy for the inclusion of CSOs in the predominantly supranational policy formulation. Over the years, the Commission has tried to institutionalize CSOs' structures along policy areas (so called NGO families) by expanding the notion of civil society as a provider of information and input in its policy-making. The highly developed system of comitology is characterized by the extensive use of informal practices beyond intergovernmentalism, a type of problem-solving interaction, and the spillover effect of socialization on participants.<sup>20</sup>

It is by now clear that the mode of interaction of the European Com-

<sup>19</sup> Eva G. Heidbreder, "Civil Society Participation in EU Governance", in *Living Reviews in European Governance*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2012), <http://dx.doi.org/10.12942/lreg-2012-2>.

<sup>20</sup> Deirdre Curtin, "Private Interest Representation or Civil Society Deliberation? A Contemporary Dilemma for European Union Governance", in *Social and Legal Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (March 2003), p. 55-75; and Christian Joerges and Jürgen Neyer, "'Deliberative Supranationalism' Revisited", in *EUI Working Papers*, No. LAW 2006/20 (2006), <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/6251>.

mission is highly biased towards CSOs rather than less organized grassroots movements. Institutionalized, professional CSOs are part and parcel of the functional mode of governance insofar as they act as governance partners in the implementation of sector-comprehensive strategies on different policy levels, while at the same time providing alternative, deliberative paths for the re-legitimization of the EU. It is clear, however, that a difference remains between participatory governance (with stakeholders) and participatory democracy from below. In principle, participatory governance remains centered on an instrumental input legitimacy and an output legitimacy anchored on the private-public partnerships (PPPs), whereas participatory democracy is based on a mode of intrinsic input legitimacy in which discursive involvement in the policy formation is promoted by a growing transnational and European civil society. The Commission is currently implementing the first and only aspiring to realize the second.

Such fracture between instrumental and intrinsic logic of legitimacy is also evident in the assessment of the actual and potential impact of CSOs on the EU system. At times CSOs are conceived as a threat to input legitimacy as based on formally institutionalized representative democracy. Often, CSOs are seen as an asset to increase the quality of policies and services delivered by the EU (outputs), but also as a pragmatic answer to shortcomings in input legitimacy that cannot be fully overcome due to the multilevel system of governance. More rarely or rather in principle, CSOs are ideally perceived as a carrier of an emerging EU order with a genuine EU public sphere and input legitimacy in its own right. The contrast between these differing readings also entails a serious political dilemma, possibly the most crucial dysfunction in the relation between the EU institutions and civil society: “the conditions civil society has to meet to participate limit the very virtues for which the Commission pursues its normative and material activation strategy.”<sup>21</sup> The more the Commission seeks professionalized NGOs, the less it will have bottom-up and contentious civil actors, which limits the potential for fulfilling the legitimizing and communicative role of civil society. It is a sort of catch-22 situation in which CSOs need to be highly professionalized in order to have a voice in Brussels, and yet at the same time, CSOs are also supposed to remain deeply rooted in order to provide genuine legitimacy from below. It seems that all the attempts developed by the EU institutions to engage with civil

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<sup>21</sup> Eva G. Heidbreder, “Civil Society Participation in EU Governance”, cit., p. 19.

society and to bridge the EU with the European citizens have simply created a pro-Brussels CSO elite working in the interest of deeper integration and left behind all the other politically significant actors. Such tension can also be noted by looking at the frames developed by CSOs with reference to the European project itself.

The Europeanization of the public sphere is growing through the development of a number of ideational references that are increasingly shaping the mobilization of civil society actors at the European level. Common framing, controversies, parallelism of themes and cross-referencing are contributing to the definition of a common and yet plural European social agenda. In this vein, "the growing Europeanization of social movements is cognitively driven: as with the nation-state, social movement organizations and actions tend increasingly to move towards the EU institutions due to a growing acknowledgment of the increasing competences of the EU, as well as a preoccupation with the direction in which the competences are used. Cognitive processes include not only the increasing shift of the target (and therefore of prognostic and diagnostic frames) towards the EU, but also a growing recognition of similarities among national causes and, therefore, the construction of a shared European identity."<sup>22</sup>

Three main frames can be distinguished in the current debate among European CSOs. The predominant frame (at least before the eruption of the crises) for the political action of many CSOs is the *Euro-enthusiastic* attitude. Despite entailing different degrees of support for the European project, the Euro-enthusiastic frame proposes a positive assessment of the European development so far, and more importantly detects in the insufficient implementation of the project the actual origin of the current problems of the EU institutions. A second frame is constituted by the classic *Euro-scepticism*. This frame suggests a reading of the regional integration process as a set of detrimental dynamics that threatens the communitarian bases necessary for the sustainability of the local and national political projects. Finally, a third growing frame is represented by the *critical Europeanists*. According to this, a social Europe should be strengthened in opposition to the Europe of markets. A more political Europe, it holds, is needed to counter the apolitical and elite-driven Europe that we have known so far. The process of Europeanization is seen from

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<sup>22</sup> Donatella Della Porta and Manuela Caiani, *Social Movements and Europeanization*, p. 171.

this angle as developing also by contestation: a contested public debate is the surest path towards supranational legitimacy.

In the remainder of this paper, the aforementioned notions of Europeanization, Euro-framings and CSOs will be applied to the case of Turkey to see to what extent Turkish civil society has been part of the wider Europeanization trend, how the Euro-frames have been received and revised in the Turkish public debate, what the key facilitating elements or indeed the major obstacles to its limited participation have been and, finally, what its potential for future developments in this direction is. In what follows, starting with the deepening of the Europeanization process of Turkey since the 1999 Helsinki Summit of the European Union, three different forms of framing were generated by the civil society actors with regard to the European integration: a) *Euro-enthusiastic attitudes* developed by organized civil society actors ranging from ethno-cultural and religious groups to business associations; b) *Euro-sceptical attitudes* generated by various political parties, business circles and various other civil society organizations that blamed the European Union for the transformation of the country between 1999 and 2005, the period immediately prior to the beginning of the accession negotiations; and c) *critical Europeanist attitudes* cultivated mainly by individual actors, oppositional political parties, Alevis, LGBT members, anti-capitalist Muslims and middle class and upper-middle class youth, who have all been eager to express their growing opposition to the authoritarian and condescending rule of the AKP, the policies of which were previously embraced by the European circles.

## EUROPEANIZATION OF TURKEY<sup>23</sup>

One of the peculiar aspects of the Turkish political culture is that Europeanization and “EU-ization” are two different concepts for Turkish citizens. While Europeanization refers to a long-standing transformation process on the societal level in terms of values, “EU-ization” refers to the technical and structural transformation of the political and legal systems in terms of the implementation of the *acquis*. To put it differently, the procedural elements of Europeanization are assigned to the EU, while Europe is per-

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<sup>23</sup> This section is based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey. The Myth of Toleration*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, p. 3-6, 55-58.

ceived in a more identity-related basis.<sup>24</sup>

The term ‘Europeanization’ is often understood differently in various national discourses. In Turkey, references to the recent Europeanization are generally legalistic and are related to the broad and deep process of reform undertaken since the late 1990s. Yet, in other national contexts where such deep reforms and transformations were not necessary, the term is used to signify other things, such as “adopting European issues into national political discourses,” “Europeanization of political parties,” “undertaking necessary socio-economic and agricultural reforms, first to have a claim for EU funds and then for compatibility with the single market,” “general programs for increasing public awareness about Europe and the EU,” or else referred to the reformulation of the candidates’ foreign policies and relations so that they broadly conform to EU policies.<sup>25</sup> The Europeanization process in Turkey goes back to the early 19th century. Deeming it to be part of its Westernization, modernization and secularization efforts, Turkey was very quick to establish relations with the EU. It was in 1959 that the Menderes government in Turkey tried to establish a relationship with the European communities of the time. After a long period of problems and obstacles, the negotiations for membership between the two parties began in the year 2005. The period between 1999 and 2005, when Turkey was granted candidacy status and the negotiations started, was a period in which Europeanization in political terms was at its peak level. Yet by the end of 2005 this virtuous cycle quickly turned back into a vicious one.<sup>26</sup> The carrot of the promise of membership does not seem to work in the same manner as in Central and Eastern European countries, for the prospect in the case of Turkey seems to be getting more and more indefinite. Currently, there are many impediments in the way of the negotiations, one of which is the recognition of Southern Cyprus. Furthermore, the brutal acts of the state security

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<sup>24</sup> Alper Kaliber, “Türk Modernleşmesini Sorunsallaştıran Üç Ana Paradigma Üzerine” [On Three Main Paradigms Problematising Turkish Modernization], in Uygur Kocabaşoğlu (ed.), *Modernleşme ve Batıcılık* [Modernization and Westernism], İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2002 (Modern Türkiye’de siyasî düşünce 3), p. 107-125.

<sup>25</sup> Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 4.

<sup>26</sup> Ayhan Kaya and Ayşe Tecmen, “Turkish Modernity: A Continuous Journey of Europeanization”, Turkish Case Report for the FP7 project *Identities and Modernities in Europe* (IME) - Work Package 4: The state of the art: various paths to modernity, 2010, p. 29, <https://www.academia.edu/540133>.

forces against the *Occupygezi* protesters in May and June 2013 made it even more difficult for the European heads of state and public to deepen the negotiations with the Turkish state.

Turkey's enthusiastic hopes and efforts towards integration into the European Union and the Helsinki Summit were path-breakers in the rupture of a number of traditional discourses in Turkish society. The post-Helsinki period corresponds to Turkey's willingness to go through certain constitutional and legal changes in many respects. These changes have also had an impact on the discourses developed by various ethnic, cultural and religious groups in the country. For instance, the discursive shift from *homogenization* to *diversity* owes a lot to the Helsinki Summit decisions in 1999 declaring Turkey a candidate country to the EU,<sup>27</sup> as well as to the democratization process which accelerated in the aftermath of the Summit.

At the Helsinki Summit in December 1999, the European heads of state and government offered Turkey the concrete prospect of full membership in the European Union for the first time, more than four decades after Turkey's application for association with the European Economic Community (EEC) in July 1959. Subsequently, in 1963, Turkey signed the Ankara Agreement, which foresaw the establishment of a Customs Union between Turkey and the EEC. Although the Customs Union was an economic cooperation model, Article 28 of the Agreement stipulated Turkey's membership as a long-term goal. Accordingly, this stipulation had ramifications in the political realm; the economic interests of elites had a "conditioning effect" on democracy.<sup>28</sup> In 1987, Turkey applied for full EEC membership. Although Turkey was deemed eligible for membership, the Opinion of the Commission in 1989 stated that there were several economic and political difficulties that needed to be addressed before membership, "such as the expansion of political pluralism, the state of democracy, the persistence of disputes with a Member State (namely Greece), the lack of a viable solution to the Cyprus problem, relative economic backwardness, especially in macroeconomic terms, the Kurdish question,

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<sup>27</sup> Hakan Yılmaz, "Europeanisation and its Discontents: Turkey, 1959-2007", in Constantine Arvanitopoulos (ed.), *Turkey's Accession to the European Union. An Unusual Candidacy*, Berlin and Heidelberg, Springer, 2009, p. 53-64.

<sup>28</sup> E. Fuat Keyman and Ziya Öniş, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World. Global Dynamics and Domestic Transformations*, Istanbul, Bilgi University Press, 2007, p. 61.



and problems related to human rights.”<sup>29</sup> However, the official reason for this rejection was the internal dynamic of the EEC, namely, the ongoing process of establishing a single market.

The decision taken in Helsinki was in almost direct opposition to that taken at the Luxembourg Summit of 1997, which made Turkey’s hopes for EU membership crash. European leaders had chosen then to ignore Turkey because there was no chance that Greece would not veto Turkey’s candidate status, as this was a period of high intensity in the Turkish-Greek conflict. Besides, as the summit took place in December, the EU’s “disqualification of Turkey” was very much influenced by the perception of Turkey’s instability as proven during the 28th February 1997 military intervention targeting the growth of Islamist forces in local administrations.<sup>30</sup> In view of this, they did not want to give the same position to Turkey as to the other candidates who were left out of the “Luxembourg group” of countries that were to commence their accession negotiations in 1998 (Poland, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary and Slovenia). In the aftermath of the Luxembourg Summit, the public response in Turkey was immediate and harsh. Popular nationalism, minority nationalisms, Kemalism, religiosity, Occidentalism and Euro-scepticism all reached their peaks shortly afterwards, but thanks to the Helsinki Summit, this destructive atmosphere in Turkey did not last long.

The EU perspective delivered to Turkey in Helsinki owed much to the letter that had been sent by Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit to the German Chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, in May 1999.<sup>31</sup> The letter was crucial because it expressed Turkey’s willingness to undertake structural reforms in the political, social and economic spheres in order to fulfill the Copenhagen political criteria. These commitments were optimistically interpreted by the political elite of the EU member states and particularly by the German Greens and Social Democratic Party. The letter was sent in the immediate aftermath of the arrest of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party) leader, Abdullah Öcalan, in January 1999. As one can imagine, the capture of Abdullah Öcalan was regarded as the end of a traumatic reign

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<sup>29</sup> Meltem Müftüler-Bac, “Through the Looking Glass: Turkey in Europe”, in *Turkish Studies*. Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 2000), p. 21-35, at p. 22-23.

<sup>30</sup> For a further analysis of the 28th February military intervention, or “postmodern coup”, see Murat Belge, “Between Turkey and Europe: why friendship is welcome”, in *openDemocracy*, 15 December 2004, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/node/2268>.

<sup>31</sup> Şahin Alpay, “EU’s Soft Power: The Case of Turkey”, in *Fokus Türkei*, No. 3/2006 (December 2006), p. 3, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/tuerkei/04799.pdf>.

of terror and violence, both for the political establishment and the nation in general. Furthermore, one should also bear in mind that the most fundamental difference between the 1997 and 1999 summits was the change of the Greek stance towards Turkey's application. It was only after the mutual agreement between Turkey and Greece in 1999 to work closely on mutual rapprochement and to resolve their bilateral disputes by 2004 that Greece lifted its veto and recognized Turkey as a candidate. Furthermore, recognizing Turkey's candidacy at this moment allowed the EU not to put the later 2004/2007 entrants and Turkey at the same level. In fact, Turkey was recognized as candidate only after the rest of the "Helsinki group" of the future 2004 and 2007 entrants was allowed to start negotiations.

In 2002 the Copenhagen Summit introduced new concerns and discussions regarding the nature of European identity, the notion of Europeanization and the borders of Europe, which led to identity-based concerns regarding Turkey's place in Europe and the situation of Islamic identity in European societies. According to Keyman and Öniş, the main concern was whether the EU aspired to become a global actor or rather preferred inward-oriented integration. Subsequently, while the former aspiration was accommodating towards Turkish membership, the latter perceived Turkey as a liability given the social, political and economic disparities between the EU member states and Turkey.<sup>32</sup> The Copenhagen Summit and the subsequent discussions linked for the first time the question of culture with European enlargement and the EU's capacity to embrace cultural differences.

The discussions over Turkish accession revealed another dimension of "absorption capacity," that of "cultural" and "social" absorption, which are directly related to the "identity" of the Union. Jean-Louis Bourlanges, a MEP from a French center-right party who is vocal about Turkish accession, argued that the accession of Turkey would not only have a huge economic impact on the EU but would also introduce a great deal of cultural and social heterogeneity that would endanger the formation of a solid and democratically organized political community.<sup>33</sup> José Casanova, on the other hand, has a completely different perspective about Turkey's entry into the Union. He argues that as one territorial expansion "comes

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<sup>32</sup> E. Fuat Keyman and Ziya Öniş, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World*, cit., p. 48-50.

<sup>33</sup> Michael Emerson et al., "Just what is this 'absorption capacity' of the European Union?", in *CEPS Policy Briefs*, No. 113 (September 2006), p. 3, <http://www.ceps.be/node/1219>.

to an end and Europe closes its borders to further immigration in order to protect its cosmopolitan, universal values, what remains is exclusionist fortress Europe."<sup>34</sup>

## THE COMPETING FRAMES IN TURKISH DISCOURSE ON EUROPE

In this section, different types of euro-framings generated by the Turkish CSOs will be delineated to see to what extent Turkish civil society has internalized and/or externalized the wider Europeanization trend. In this regard, three different forms of framing will be discussed: a) *Euro-enthusiastic attitudes*; b) *Euro-sceptic attitudes*; and c) *critical Europeanist attitudes*.

### *Turkish Euro-enthusiasm*<sup>35</sup>

The European Union perspective offered in Helsinki has radically transformed the political establishment in Turkey, opening up new prospects for various ethnic, religious, social and political groups in Turkish civil society. Kurds, Alevis, Islamists, Circassians, Armenians and a number of religious and ethnic groups in Turkey have become true advocates of the European Union in a way that has affirmed the pillars of the political union as a project for peace and integration. The normative and transformative power of the EU provided immediately after 1999 a great incentive and motivation for numerous groups in Turkey to reinforce their willingness to coexist in harmony. What lies beneath this willingness no longer seems to be the *glorious retrospective past*, which has lately been perceived to be full of ideological and political disagreements among various groups, but rather the *prospective future*, in which ethnic, religious and cultural differences are expected to be embraced in a democratic

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<sup>34</sup> José Casanova, "The Long, Difficult, and Tortuous Journey of Turkey into Europe and the Dilemmas of European Civilization", in *Constellations*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (June 2006), p. 234-247, at p. 246, <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/publications/the-long-difficult-and-tortuous-journey-of-turkey-into-europe-and-the-dilemmas-of-european-civilization>.

<sup>35</sup> This section is based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 59-62.

way.<sup>36</sup> The EU has thus appeared to be the major catalyst in accelerating the process of democratization in Turkey, or in other words, a lighthouse illuminating Turkey's road to modernization and liberalization.

The 1999 Helsinki Summit decision stimulated a great stream of reforms in Turkey. In fact, the country achieved more reforms in just over two years than during the whole of the previous decade. With the rise of political and economic incentives in the aftermath of the Summit, several pressure groups, such as civil society organizations and business associations (TUSIAD and MUSIAD) emerged as pro-European actors, which supported the reformation process. Several laws were immediately passed in the National Parliament to fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria (democracy, free market and human rights). These included the right to broadcast in one's mother tongue, freedom of association, the limitation of military impact on the judiciary, more civilian control over the military, bringing extra-budgetary funds to which the military had access within the general budget of the Defence Ministry, removing military members from the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) and the Board of Higher Education (YÖK), removing military judges from the State Security Courts (DGM) and eventually the abolition of those Courts, the extension of civil rights to officially recognized minorities (Armenians, Jews and Greeks), reformation of the Penal Code, the abolition of the death penalty, release of political prisoners, the abolition of torture by the security forces and greater protection for the press.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, strict anti-inflationist economic policies have been successfully enforced along with the International Monetary Fund directives, institutional transparency and liberalism have been endorsed and both formal nationalism and minority nationalism have been precluded. Broadcasting in languages other than Turkish, such as Kurdish and Circassian, has also been permitted, and socio-economic disparities between regions have also been dealt with.

The EU perspective has also provided the Turkish public with an opportunity to come to terms with its own past, a Turkish "*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*" (coming to terms with the past).<sup>38</sup> Two widely debated and

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>37</sup> Ergun Özbudun and Serap Yazıcı, *Democratization Reforms in Turkey*, Istanbul, TESEV, 2004.

<sup>38</sup> For a detailed overview of the German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past) see Ernst Nolte, "Vergangenheit, die nicht vergehen will", in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 June 1986; Jürgen Habermas, "Eine Art Schadensabwicklung. Die apologetischen Tendenzen in der deutschen Zeitgeschichtsschreibung", in *Die Zeit*, 11

polemical conferences on the “Ottoman Armenians during the Demise of the Empire” and the “Kurdish Question” were organized at the Istanbul Bilgi University on 25th-26th September 2005 and 11th-12th March 2006, respectively, a point to which we shall return shortly. Although the judiciary acted favourably towards the lawsuits instituted by some ultra-nationalist lawyers, both conferences paved the way for public discussion of two subjects that had hitherto been taboo in contemporary Turkish history. Also, the protests of the few activists at this conference were a kind of “show business” motivated by media interest. This was also a time when the debates revolving around the Habermasian idea of *constitutional patriotism* became more vocal.<sup>39</sup> All of these legal and political changes bear witness to the transformation of Turkey regarding its position *vis-à-vis* the notion of diversity. This transformation corresponds to a discursive shift which officially recognizes Turkey as a multicultural country. That is to say, multiculturalism is no longer just a phenomenon in Turkey; it is also an officially recognized legal and political fact.

One should also bear in mind that the Justice and Development Party government has successfully made use of Turkey’s Islamic identity to boost the discourse of *alliance of civilizations* in which Turkey has been presented as a bridge between the East and West, or between Islam and Christianity. The moderate Islamists in the AKP government have also seen the importance of EU membership for Turkey as an instrument to consolidate and solidify their own position against the danger of any kind of possible attack coming from the ultra-laicists as well as other segments of Turkish society, such as the middle and/or upper-middle classes and Alevis. Hence, as Ziya Öniş rightfully stated, European integration has become a mechanism to preserve Turkey’s Islamic identity and make “it more compatible with a secular, democratic and pluralistic political order.”<sup>40</sup> Hence, during the first half of the 2000s, many civil society organi-

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July 1986; and Jürgen Habermas, “Vom öffentlichen Gebrauch der Historie”, in *Die Zeit*, 7 November 1986.

<sup>39</sup> Ayhan Kaya and Turgut Tarhanlı (eds.), *Türkiye’de Çoğunluk ve Azınlık Politikaları. AB Sürecinde Yurttaşlık Tartışmaları* [Majority and Minority Policies in Turkey. Citizenship Debates on the way to the EU], Istanbul, TESEV, 2005, <http://www.tesev.org.tr/turkiye-de-cogunluk-ve-azinlik-politikalari--ab-surecinde-yurttaslik-tartismalari/content/169>.

<sup>40</sup> Ziya Öniş, “Turkish Modernization and Challenges for the New Europe”, in *Perceptions*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Autumn 2004), p. 5-28, at p. 16, <http://sam.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/ZiyaOnis.pdf>.

zations as well as the government were content with the positive assets of the European integration leading Turkey to a more democratic level of governance.

### *Turkish Euro-scepticism*<sup>41</sup>

In the Turkish debate on Europe, however, there have been moments and dimensions that have been critical of the EU. From 17th December 2004 to 3rd October 2005, when EU state and national government leaders decided to start negotiations with Turkey, tensions began to rise between nationalist, patriotic, statist, pro-status-quo groups on the one hand and pro-EU groups on the other hand. This was the time when the *virtuous cycle* of the period between 1999 and 2005 was replaced by the *vicious cycle* starting in late 2005. A new nationalist and religious wave embraced the country, especially among middle class and upper middle-class groups. The actual start of the accession negotiations in 2005 was a turning point towards Euro-scepticism. This was also observed in several previous cases during the accession negotiations of the 2004/2007 entrants. The political elite and the government had come to realize that accession negotiations are not in fact “negotiations” but rather a unilateral imposition from the EU. The only “negotiable” matters that would benefit the candidates are generally some minor exceptions and few transition periods.

Furthermore, this reality of actual accession negotiations is often abused by politicians to unfoundedly blame many governmental actions on the EU. Whether the “blaming of Brussels” is honest or not, the overall impact on public support was almost surely negative. The electoral cycle of presidential and general elections witnessed militarist, nationalist and Euro-sceptic aspirations coupled with rising violence and terror in the country prior to the elections in 2007. The fight between the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the other statist political parties, backed by the military establishment, became crystallized during the presidential election in May 2007.

Preceding the presidential election, tension arose between the government and the General Staff of the armed forces, which became known as the “e-Coup” affair. Just before midnight on 27th April 2007, the General

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<sup>41</sup> This section is based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 62-67.

Staff posted a declaration on its website cautioning the Prime Minister against nominating his right-hand man, the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gül, for the presidency. Erdogan did the unthinkable and publicly warned off the military the following day. It was later argued that the “e-Coup” strengthened the AKP in the subsequent general elections to the tune of an additional 10 percent of the vote. However, Mr. Gül did not fit the expectations of Turkey’s traditional political and military establishment, and he failed to attain the required two-thirds majority in the Parliament. This failure was a result of the fact that the presidential post has had a symbolic importance in Turkey since it was first occupied by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey. The establishment argued that, as someone with pro-Islamist values and a wife who wore a headscarf, Abdullah Gül was an inappropriate candidate for the office of president. The conflict even led to military intervention in politics on 27th April 2007, an intervention notoriously labelled “e-intervention” because of the way it was announced on the web page of the military’s Chief of Staff. However, the nationalist-military alliance against the AKP was unsuccessful in the general election, and on 22nd July 2007 the party won a landslide victory, with 47 percent of the votes cast. Following the elections, Abdullah Gül was elected to the office of president.

However, prior to the constitutional referendum in late 2010, minorities had become outspoken again to contribute to the idea of creating a completely new and democratic constitution. This constitution was to be prepared in the new Parliament summoned after the general elections of July 2011, which consolidated the power of the AKP with a landslide victory of more than 50 percent of the vote.<sup>42</sup> Economic prosperity, growing Turkish Lira nationalism, strong political determination against the traditional legacy of the Turkish army, Turkey’s becoming a soft power in the region, developing friendly relations with Middle Eastern, North African, the Caucasus and former Soviet countries, the creating of a political climate receptive to the claims of several different ethno-cultural groups in the process of preparing a new constitution and other similar factors were all decisive in the consolidation of the AKP’s power in Turkey.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Gözde Yılmaz, “Is There a Puzzle? Compliance with Minority Rights in Turkey (1999- 2010)”, in *KFG Working Papers*, No. 23 (January 2011), [http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/en/v/transformeurope/publications/working\\_paper/wp/wp23](http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/en/v/transformeurope/publications/working_paper/wp/wp23).

<sup>43</sup> Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkey’s ‘Demonstrative Effect’ and the Transformation of the Middle East”, in *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (April-June 2011), p. 33-55, [http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/insight\\_turkey\\_vol\\_13\\_no\\_2\\_2011\\_kirisci.pdf](http://file.insightturkey.com/Files/Pdf/insight_turkey_vol_13_no_2_2011_kirisci.pdf).

Minorities have now become more vocal in raising their claims to see a more democratic and inclusive constitution, which should be prepared with the inclusion of all the segments of society. They express their willingness to see a country in which rights are granted to all communities in Turkey without having to resort to violence or racism. In the meetings held by various ethno-cultural and religious groups in different cities of Turkey between 2010 and 2012, it was commonly agreed that the constitution should be renewed to better ensure individual rights and to remove any mention of ethnicity, specifically referring to their wish to see a change in Article 66 of the Constitution defining Turkish citizenship: "Everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk." The other claim raised in these meetings was the need to ensure that rights are granted in Turkey on the basis of citizenship rather than on ethnicity favoring Sunni Muslim Turks.

Similar to the divide during and after the Democratic Party rule of the 1950s, the recent social and political divide in Turkey has both internal and external sources. The divide actually seems to have economic reasons, as the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) has so far represented the interests of newly emerging middle class groups with rural origins and conservative backgrounds, who are competing against the established middle and upper-middle classes with urban backgrounds. The divide also springs from the fact that the legitimate political centre is now accessible to several social groups including not only laicists, republicans, Kemalists and liberal business circles, but also Muslims, Kurds, conservative business circles and several other groups. International sources of the divide are the internal crisis of the European Union, enlargement fatigue of the Union, ongoing instability in the Middle East, changing American interests in the region, the rise of political Islam as a reaction to the ongoing Islamophobia in the world and the global evocative ascendancy of civilizationist/culturalist/religious discourse.

Euro-scepticism, nationalism and parochialism in Turkey were triggered by the sentiments of disapproval towards the American occupation of Iraq, the limitations on national sovereignty posed by the EU integration, the high tide of the 90th anniversary in 2005 of the Armenian "deportation"/"genocide" among the Armenian diaspora, the "risk of recognition" of southern Cyprus by Turkey for the sake of EU integration, anti-Turkey public opinion in the EU countries framed by conservative powers (e.g. France and Austria), and Israel's attacks on Lebanon in 2006. Against such a background the state elite has also become very sceptical



of the Europeanization process. The best way to explain the sources of such scepticism among the state elite is to refer to the “Sèvres Syndrome,” which is based on a fear deriving from the post-World War I era and characterized by popular belief regarding the risk of the break-up of the Turkish state.<sup>44</sup> AKP immediately stepped back after 2005 from its pro-European position, as it was perceived by the party that the EU no longer paid off. Actually, it was not the nationalist climax in the country that turned the AKP into a Euro-sceptic party, but rather the decision of the European Court of Human Rights *vis-à-vis* the headscarf case *Leyla Şahin v. Turkey*, which challenged a Turkish law banning wearing the Islamic headscarf at universities and other educational and state institutions.

In 2005, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) made a decision on the headscarf case between a Turkish citizen, Leyla Şahin, and Turkey. In this case, the conflict between Şahin wearing a headscarf in a Turkish university and the Turkish state was discussed in relation to the right to publicly express religious belief as well as the right to education. Drawing on the principle of fundamental rights, the Court decided that the interference of the Turkish state with Şahin’s education was rightful and legal since the state intended to protect the right of others to education and to maintain public order.<sup>45</sup> It was a monumental development that the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR agreed to hear Şahin’s case at all, since two previous applications concerning the Turkish headscarf issue had been ruled inadmissible. In Şahin’s case, however, the outcome was a temporary defeat for headscarf supporters. The court ruled that there had been no violation of Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights (freedom of thought, conscience and religion), Article 10 (freedom of expression), Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) and Article 2, Protocol No. 1 (right to education).<sup>46</sup> In short, the Grand Chamber concluded that in the case of the headscarf, the interference with fundamental rights might be necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and maintain public order. While the Chamber recognized that the ban interfered with Şahin’s right to publicly manifest

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<sup>44</sup> Ziya Öniş, “Turkish Modernization and Challenges for the New Europe”, cit., p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> See Ayhan Kaya, “Turkey-EU Relations: The Impact of Islam on Europe”, in Jørgen S. Nielsen et al. (eds.), *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe. Vol. 1*, Leiden, Brill, 2009, p. 377-402; Ayşe Saktanber and Gül Çorbacıoğlu, “Veiling and Headscarf Skepticism in Turkey”, in *Social Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (Winter 2008), p. 514-538.

<sup>46</sup> For further discussion on the decision of the ECtHR see, Ayşe Saktanber and Gül Çorbacıoğlu, “Veiling and Headscarf Skepticism in Turkey”, cit.

her religion, it stated that the ban was acceptable if it was imposed to protect the rights of third parties, preserve public order and safeguard the principles of secularism and equality in Turkey. Since the ECtHR is an institution within the framework of the Council of Europe, in which Turkey has been a member since 1949, it could be difficult to see how its judgment could have an impact on the support for EU membership. The only interpretation, then, would be that Euro-scepticism is understood as a general perception and attitude of civil society towards Europe, not only towards the EU and the prospect of membership. This is actually a remarkable phenomenon, indicating that “Europe” and “European Union” are often used interchangeably in Turkey.

The public frustration about the European stance on Turkey’s membership and the associated Euro-scepticism reached high levels. The Transatlantic trend survey of the German Marshall Fund undertaken in 2013 reveals this negative mood within civil society.<sup>47</sup> When asked for the relation between Turkey and the European Union, 37 percent of the Turkish public indicated a negative relation, 33 percent a mixed relation and only 20 percent a positive relation. When asked for the countries that Turkey should act in closest cooperation with on international affairs, the EU scored only 21 percent (countries from the Middle East dropped significantly between 2012 and 2013 from 20 to 8 percent). In the meantime, 38 percent argued that Turkey should act alone. Additionally, when asked for a general assessment of Turkish membership in the EU, while 73 percent of the Turkish public considered an EU membership a *good thing* in 2004, the rate had declined to 44 percent by 2013. Furthermore, while in 2004 only 9 percent considered EU membership a *bad thing*, 34 percent viewed it as undesirable in 2013. However, after the *Occupygezi* movement, which will be discussed in the following section, the support for European Union membership went up to 48 percent.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trend Survey 2013*, <http://trends.gmfus.org/transatlantic-trends>.

<sup>48</sup> According to the Eurobarometer spring 2013 survey, 48% (+8 since autumn 2012) of respondents in Turkey think that Turkey would benefit from European membership. The number of respondents who share this view has fallen to 43% in autumn 2013. See European Commission, *Standard Eurobarometer 79 (Spring 2013)*, and *Standard Eurobarometer 80 (Autumn 2013)*, [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb\\_arch\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm).

### *Turkish critical Europeanism*

*Occupygezi* is one of those new global social movements which has similar characteristics to its predecessors such as Tahrir Square, Occupy Wall Street and the European Indignado movement. The Gezi movement has become very instrumental in the sense that Turkish civil society actors have reframed European integration. Following the Gezi Movement, Turkish civil society has become more pro-European, and the European Union circles have also changed their perceptions of Turkish society. In the meantime, the main oppositional party, Republican People's Party (CHP), has also become more pro-European after the Gezi movement. The leader of the CHP, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, even wrote a letter to German Chancellor Angela Merkel urging her not to block Turkey's EU accession talks.<sup>49</sup> It was very remarkable that the Gezi movement actually made the CHP as well as some other civil society organizations like the labour unions (e.g. the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions, or *DISK*) and certain oppositional newspapers such as *Sözcü* and *Cumhuriyet*, which were previously Euro-sceptic, become pro-European, or critical Europeanists.<sup>50</sup> In a way, they have generated a more critical stance on Turkey-EU relations as they have become more in favour of a socially, democratically and politically prosperous European Union.

The *Occupygezi* movement also bears various characteristics similar to its predecessors such as Tahrir, Occupy Wall Street, and *Indignado* protests. Alain Badiou argued that Tahrir Square and all the activities which took place there, such as fighting, barricading, camping, debating, cooking, bartering and caring for the wounded, constituted the "communism of movement" in a way that posited an alternative to the neoliberal democratic and authoritarian state.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, Slavoj Žižek claimed that only these totally new political and social movements without hegemonic

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<sup>49</sup> EU leaders including Angela Merkel heavily criticized Erdogan's AKP for being so intolerant to the peaceful civilian protests and threatened to cut off Turkey from the accession negotiation talks. See "Main opposition urges Merkel not to block Turkey's EU path", in *Hurriyet Daily News*, 22 June 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?PageID=238&NID=49191>.

<sup>50</sup> See Hüseyin Hayatsever, "World socialists discuss Gezi protests in Istanbul", in *Hurriyet Daily News*, 11 November 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?PageID=238&NID=57727>.

<sup>51</sup> Alain Badiou, *The Rebirth of History. Times of Riots and Uprisings*, London, Verso, 2012.

organizations and charismatic leaderships could create what he called the “magic of Tahrir.”<sup>52</sup> And, Hardt and Negri also joined them in arguing that the Arab Spring, Europe’s *indignado* protests and Occupy Wall Street expressed the longing of the multitude for a “real democracy” against corporate capitalism.<sup>53</sup> The *Occupygezi* movement is similar to the others in the sense that it provided us with a *prefigurative form of politics*, as it symbolized the rejection in all walks of life of Erdogan’s vanguardism and engineering of the lifeworlds of Turkish citizens: raising “religious and conservative youth”, his call to mothers to have at least three children, his direct intervention in the content of Turkish soap operas, his direct order banning alcohol on university campuses, his intention to build mosques in Taksim Square and Camlica Hill, his condescending say over the lives of individuals and his increasing authoritarian discourse, which is based in Islamic references.

As Marina Sitrin put it in the context of the Occupy Wall Street protests, the purpose of the Gezi movement was “not to determine *the* path the country should take but to create the space for a conversation in which all can participate and determine together what the future should look like.”<sup>54</sup> Rejecting all kinds of hierarchies and embracing prefigurative politics, citizens of all kinds (youngsters, socialists, Muslims, nationalists, Kemalists, Kurds, Alevis, gays/lesbians, ecologists, football fans, hackers, artists, activists, academics, anarchists, anti-war activists, women’s groups, and others) gathered in Gezi Park in Taksim. Gezi Park has in the past been a site for left-wing working-class demonstrations, to create a multiplicity of spaces such as social centres, graffiti walls, libraries, collective kitchens, music venues, conference venues, day care corners, bookfairs, barter tables, utopic streets and squares<sup>55</sup> and democratic forums, which provide room for experimentation, creativity, innovation

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<sup>52</sup> Slavoj Žižek, “The simple courage of decision: a leftist tribute to Thatcher”, in *New Statesman*, 17 April 2013, <http://www.newstatesman.com/node/194351>.

<sup>53</sup> Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Declaration*, New York, Melanie Jackson Agency, 2012, <http://antonionegriinenglish.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/93152857-hardt-negri-declaration-2012.pdf>.

<sup>54</sup> Marina Sitrin, “What does democracy look like?”, in *The Nation*, April 2012, <http://www.thenation.com/node/166824>.

<sup>55</sup> Hrant Dink Street, Ceylan Özkol Street, Pınar Selek Square and Mustafa Sarı Street are some of those names used by the protestors to demonstrate their solidarity with those who had been exposed to the discrimination of the state machinery either in the past or during the demonstrations. Naming the fictional streets of squares after those persons, the protestors aimed to restore justice which was not secured by the state.

and dissent. These civil utopias brought about a form of solidarity which is cross-cultural, cross-religion, cross-ethnicity, cross-class and cross-gender. Respecting difference was also embedded in these civil utopias, where practicing Muslims respected atheists, atheists respected practicing Muslims, all respected homosexuals, Kemalists respected the Kurdish activists, Kurds respected the Kemalists, Besiktas football fans respected Fenerbahce fans and the elderly respected the youngsters. In the spaces of communication created by the demonstrators, individual civil society actors coming from different ideological grounds had the chance to experience a form of deliberative democracy. In one of her works on the current social movements, Donatella Della Porta draws our attention to the critical trust generated by the demonstrators in such deliberative settings:

By relating with each other - recognizing the others and being by them recognized - citizens would have the chance to understand the reasons of the others, assessing them against emerging standards of fairness. Communication not only allows for the development of better solutions, by allowing for carriers of different knowledge and expertise to interact, but it also changes the perception of one's own preferences, making participants less concerned with individual, material interests and more with collective goods. Critical trust would develop from encounter with the other in deliberative settings.<sup>56</sup>

The Gezi movement also provided its participants with an experience of direct democracy by which the holders of different points of view interact and reciprocally transform each other's views.<sup>57</sup>

As in Tahrir Square and Zucotti Park, the demonstrators of Gezi Park also made a point of keeping the park clean throughout the demonstrations to show the capacity of "the people" to govern themselves.<sup>58</sup> The

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Personal interview with one of the activists, Yigit Aksakoglu, Istanbul, 16 September 2013.

<sup>56</sup> Donatella Della Porta, "Critical Trust: Social Movements and Democracy in Times of Crisis", in *Cambio*, Vol. II, No. 4 (December 2012), p. 33-44, at p. 40, [http://www.cambio.unifi.it/upload/sub/Numero%204/02\\_DellaPorta.pdf](http://www.cambio.unifi.it/upload/sub/Numero%204/02_DellaPorta.pdf).

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>58</sup> For further information on Zucotti Park see Craig Calhoun, "Occupy Wall Street in Perspective", in *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (March 2013), p. 26-38.

*Occupygezi* movement was also meant to be an attempt to reassemble the social sphere, which had been polarized in different spheres of life between the so-called secularists and the Islamists. It was revealed that most of the demonstrators had not been involved in any organized demonstration before.<sup>59</sup> Gezi Park provided those youngsters who usually only communicate online with a meeting ground where they experienced communicating face to face. Against the segregation and isolation of everyday life, *Occupy* offered participatory structures and open communication. It invited passive citizens to experience an active sense of what James Holston calls “insurgent citizenship” by which they could see what an inclusive and egalitarian society might look like.<sup>60</sup> The Gezi movement was about creating alternative pathways for political organization and communication to prefigure the real democracy and active citizenery to come. The movement introduced millions of citizens all around the country to the experience of direct democracy. It radicalized an entire generation of previously discouraged and apathetic youth, and it built test zones for imagining and living out a post-capitalist utopia organized outside profit, competition and the corporate world.<sup>61</sup>

As Engin F. Isin put it very well in the aftermath of World War II, we witnessed different practices that were originally deemed to be outside the political and which assembled themselves as relatively routinized, durable and effective strategies and technologies, making, enacting, and instituting political demands and translating them into claims for citizenship rights.<sup>62</sup> These practices were, at first, interpreted as *social movements*, then as *cultural politics*. Now, these practices are increasingly being perceived as *insurgent citizenship practices* by members of civil society. Thomas Janoski and Brian Gran define active citizens as those citizens who participate in political activities and have concern for the

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<sup>59</sup> Konda public survey: *Gezi Parkı Araştırması. Kimler, neden oradalar ve ne istiyorlar?*, 6-7 June 2013, <http://t24.com.tr/files/GeziPark%C4%B1Final.pdf>.

<sup>60</sup> James Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship. Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2008.

<sup>61</sup> Ayhan Kaya, “Right to the City: Insurgent Citizens of the Occupy Gezi Movement”, paper prepared for the *PSA 64th Annual International Conference*, Manchester, 14-16 April 2014 (forthcoming).

<sup>62</sup> Engin F. Isin, “City, Democracy and Citizenship: Historical Images, Contemporary Practices”, in Engin F. Isin and Bryan S. Turner (eds.), *Handbook of Citizenship Studies*, London, Sage, 2002, p. 305-317, at p. 306.

people in their group.<sup>63</sup> Active citizens are often engaged in conflict with established elites and most often approach problems from the grassroots level. They may belong to a political party, social movement or some other active civil society organization involved in promoting an ideology of change. They are not necessarily left or right, but tend to be in the opposition and among the more radical of each political persuasion. They are often social reformers of an established party, grassroots organizers of any political position or radical revolutionaries with an activist orientation. They believe that many things can be done altruistically for “the people” or for “the country.” However, in dealing with the opposition, they can be somewhat ruthless.<sup>64</sup> What is narrated here defines very well the type of citizenry experienced in the Gezi movement. As John Stuart Mill had already stated in the second half of the 19th century, active citizenship widens individuals’ horizons and deepens their sense of how their lives are involved with others,’ including the lives of people who are unknown to them.<sup>65</sup> In this way participation works to overcome individualism. This is indeed what happened in the *Occupygezi* movement.

Another very important element of the Gezi movement was that it was premised on the right to the city and to the public space. Many dwellers of Istanbul as well as other parts of Turkey were becoming more concerned with the decisions of the political centre in Ankara, which was turning their everyday life into a kind of turmoil dominated by chaos, traffic jam, pollution, crowdedness, hopelessness, anomy and confusion. Since the late 1990s, Turkish citizens have been becoming more and more critical, demanding and outspoken in parallel with the Europeanization of the civil society in Turkey. They have been becoming less supportive of the military tutelage in power. As explained earlier, the Turkish *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, the outspoken claims of ethno-cultural and religious minorities and the growing power of civil society organizations were all the signs of Europeanization, of the ways in which public space is being constructed outside of the monopoly of the state. Especially the younger generation with the most education was also becoming

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<sup>63</sup> Thomas Janoski and Brian Gran, “Political Citizenship: Foundations of Rights”, in Engin F. Isin and Bryan S. Turner (eds.), *Handbook of Citizenship Studies*, London, Sage, 2002, p. 13-52.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39-40.

<sup>65</sup> John Stuart Mill, *Three Essays: ‘On Liberty,’ ‘Representative Government,’ and ‘The Subjection of Women’*, edited by R. Wollheim, Oxford, Oxford University Press, [1861] 1975, p. 196-197.

more and more concerned with the re-Islamization of Turkish society along with AKP rule in the 2000s. The state in Turkey has so far had the monopoly of shaping the public space. The campaigns of “Citizens speak Turkish!” in the 1930s and 1940s, the headscarf ban of the last decades<sup>66</sup> and the AKP’s insistence on the discourse underlining that “*Cemevis* (Alevi communion houses) are not places of worship” in the 2000s are all examples of the statist understanding of public space. This understanding was recently reproduced repeatedly during AKP rule by the building of shopping malls, skyscrapers, bridges, airports and other gigantic projects without consulting the inhabitants of the cities themselves, e.g. Istanbul and Ankara.<sup>67</sup> The *Occupygezi* movement is a revolt of the citizens, or the dwellers of Istanbul and other cities, against the repressive hegemony of the state restricting the right of individual city-dwellers to the city.

Henri Lefebvre’s path-breaking notion of “the right to the city” is probably the most meaningful theoretical intervention to be used to explain what the *Occupygezi* movement actually refers to. Lefebvre defines the city as “an oeuvre,” a work in which all citizens participate.<sup>68</sup> Lefebvre does not accept the monopoly of the state in constructing the urban space. The city is a public space of interaction and exchange, and the right to the city enfranchises dwellers to participate in the use and reproduction of urban space. The right to the city is the right to “urban life, to renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange, to life rhythms and time uses, enabling the full and complete *usage* of [...] moments and places.”<sup>69</sup> Similarly, David Harvey defines the right to the city as being

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<sup>66</sup> In October 2013, the AKP government lifted the ban on the headscarf for public officers other than the police, judiciary and the army, within the framework of democratic reforms.

<sup>67</sup> One could look at the article of Timothy Mitchell to see the similarities between Erdogan’s government in Turkey and Mubarak’s government in Egypt and their turning of Istanbul and Cairo into huge construction sites in which alternative cities, rich families and gigantic and crazy urban projects were created in a way that has disturbed at least some segments of the urban population. The article also shows that Mubarak’s secular government and Erdogan’s Islamist government acted very similarly with regard to their neo-liberal projections. See Timothy Mitchell, “Dreamland: The Neoliberalism of Your Desires”, in Jeannie Sowers and Chris Toensing (eds.), *The Journey to Tahrir. Revolution, Protest, and Social Change in Egypt*, London, Verso, 2012, p. 224-235.

<sup>68</sup> Henri Lefebvre, “The Right to the City”, English transl. of the 1968 text in *Writings on Cities*, edited by Eleonore Koffman and Elizabeth Lebas, London, Blackwell, 1996, p. 158.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.



far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change and reinvent the city more after our hearts' desire. It is, moreover, a collective rather than an individual right, since reinventing the city inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities is [...] one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.<sup>70</sup>

What happened in Gezi Park was a revolt of the masses against the everlasting authority of the state in shaping the public space as well as the city. The revolt was spontaneously organized by youngsters of every kind, who were mobilized through new social media like Twitter and Facebook. The choice of Gezi Park, which is located at the very centre of the city, was also symbolically important, as it was meant to be the space restored from the hands of the corporate world collaborating with the neo-liberal state. Lefebvre finds the use of the city centre by the dwellers of that city to be very important with regard to the materialization of the right to the city:

“The right to the city, complemented by the right to difference and the right to information, should modify, concretize and make more practical the rights of the citizen as an urban citizen (*citadin*) and user of multiple services. It would affirm, on the one hand, the right of users to make known their ideas on the space and time of their activities in the urban area; it would also cover the right to the use of the center, a privileged place, instead of being dispersed and stuck in ghettos (for workers, immigrants, the ‘marginal’ and even for the ‘privileged’).”<sup>71</sup>

Hence, the *Occupygezi* movement has become a civil-political venue in which youngsters of every kind have communicated with each other in a deliberative form and become active agents of civil society in a way that has proved the merits of the ongoing Europeanization processes. One should also not forget about the symbolic importance of Taksim Square, in the centre of the city next to the Gezi Park, which is very meaningful to secular segments of Turkish civil society. The

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<sup>70</sup> David Harvey, *Rebel Cities. From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*, London, Verso, 2012, p. 4.

<sup>71</sup> Henri Lefebvre, “The Right to the City”, p. 170.

historical Republican Monument (*Cumhuriyet Aniti*) symbolizing the independence war and the foundation of the Turkish Republic, the Atatürk Cultural Centre (*Atatürk Kültür Merkezi*) symbolizing Kemalist modernity, modern arts, and music, and Taksim Square symbolizing the history of the working-class movements and May Day celebrations are all very important symbols of modernity, Westernization, secularization and Europeanization, terms which are likely to be used interchangeably by Turkish citizens.<sup>72</sup>

## THE ACTORS IN THE TURKISH PUBLIC DEBATE ON EUROPE<sup>73</sup>

Europe and Europeanization are perceived very differently by various actors depending on the ways in which these two entities have been operationalized by the actors in question. As mentioned earlier, Europe has been an important anchor for the democratization process of Turkey in the last decade or so. Particularly in the aftermath of the Helsinki Summit of 1999, EU harmonization efforts to align Turkey's policies with those of Europe occupied the political agenda and led to various constitutional amendment packages.<sup>74</sup> However, while 1999-2005 marks the rapid reformation of the Turkish legal framework, 2005 marks the loss of momentum for said reformation process along the lines of the Copenhagen criteria. The EU anchor, which was considered to be at its strongest in the 1999-2005 period, hence its being considered the "virtuous cycle," yielded to the "vicious cycle," where the EU anchor weakened and the reformation process came to a halt. This shift in "cycles" also coincided with the rise of Euro-scepticism. Euro-scepticism has certainly influenced the perceptions of state actors towards Europe and particularly the EU. In effect, the state actors' discourses do not necessarily depend on the EU anymore, but rather on the rising significance of Turkey as a global and regional actor. While Europe does not remain the sole anchor for reform,

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<sup>72</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the interchangeable use of the terms Europeanization, modernization, secularization and Westernization see Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., chapter. 1.

<sup>73</sup> This section is partly based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 183-197; and Ayhan Kaya and Ayşe Tecmen, "Turkish Modernity: A Continuous Journey of Europeanization", cit., p. 37-44.

<sup>74</sup> Ergun Özbudun and Serap Yazıcı, *Democratization Reforms in Turkey*, cit., p. 14-16.

it still constitutes an important element in the transformation of Turkish politics.

Europe and the EU are also framed and discussed with references to globalization. As such, globalization has influenced the formation of different meanings for “identity.” Turkish modernization subsequently began to reflect “alternative modernities” with different political discourses of and different future prospects for Turkish social and political life.<sup>75</sup> There are several different social and political actors shaping the Europeanization process of Turkey: major political parties, civil society organizations, trade unions and the media. This section will elaborate on the perspectives of these actors on the EU. In doing so, we shall mainly scrutinize the mainstream actors without touching upon the minor actors due to the space limitations of the work.

### *Political parties*

From the 1960s onwards, political parties in Turkey displayed different levels of commitment to EU membership, while the left-right division of political parties became more visible and class politics began to emerge as a result of the industrialization process. From the mid-1980s onwards, issues of identity took over the political sphere and in time gained an ideological dimension. The Kurdish issue and political Islam became two important subjects of discussion during this period. Subsequent to the 1999 Helsinki Summit, the prospect of EU membership led to the realignment of political parties with regard to their perceptions on EU membership, yet there was a common element to both pro- and anti-European sentiments. In that regard, the major political parties were not willing to challenge the fundamental precepts of state ideology on key issues of concern such as “cultural rights” and “the Cyprus problem.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> E. Fuat Keyman and Ahmet İçduygu, “Globalization, Civil Society and Citizenship in Turkey: Actors, Boundaries and Discourses”, in *Citizenship Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2003), p. 219-234, at p. 225, <http://portal.ku.edu.tr/~aicduygu/article%206.pdf>; Nilüfer Göle, *The Forbidden Modern. Civilization and Veiling*, Ann Arbor, Michigan University Press, 1996; Ibrahim Kaya, *Social Theory and Later Modernities. The Turkish Experience*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2004.

<sup>76</sup> Ziya Öniş, “Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki era”, in Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin (eds.), *Turkey and the European Union. Domestic Politics, Economic Integration and International Dynamics*, London, Frank Cass, 2003, p. 9-34, at p. 17.

In the early and mid-1990s leading up to the Helsinki Summit, ANAP (*Anavatan Partisi*, Motherland Party), the center-right party under the leadership of Mesut Yılmaz, emerged as one of the key political actors supporting EU membership with a rather more evident political stance. However, being the opposition party in the early 1990s, ANAP was not able to implement considerable reforms. As a counterpart, in the early 1990s the ultra-nationalist MHP (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, Nationalist Movement Party), the far-right party, emerged as the major anti-EU political party with concerns over the effects of EU membership on “national sovereignty and security.”<sup>77</sup> However, the military elite, left-wing nationalists and extremists have also repeatedly voiced their concern or opposition on certain EU issues.<sup>78</sup> These concerns were mainly over sovereignty and territorial integrity. It should also be noted that in the late 1990s, the MHP became one of the key political actors, a development attributable to the rise of Turkish nationalism. The rise of the PKK insurgency and the increasing political attention to the situation in the southeastern parts of Turkey leading to the rise of nationalism revived concerns over the territorial integrity of the country. Subsequently, the political debates around EU membership turned into “ideological” confrontations between the nationalists and the rest of the parties.<sup>79</sup>

While the far-right and the center-right took opposite sides on the debate over EU accession, there was another common element to the stances of the political parties. The left had taken a highly nationalistic stand on many of the key issues involved. Parties of the center-right in Turkey do not appear to have been particularly influenced by the debates on multiculturalism, liberal internationalism and third-way politics that seem to have occupied the European social democratic left during the first half of the 2000s.<sup>80</sup> Consequently, the defensive nationalist characteristics of the left-right political spectrum, which refer to the parties’ broad support for membership, were accompanied by a tendency to feel uncomfortable with the key elements of conditionality. While the EU

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>78</sup> Gamze Avcı, “Turkey’s Slow EU Candidacy: Insurmountable Hurdles to Membership or Simple Euro-skepticism”, in Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin (eds.), *Turkey and the European Union. Domestic Politics, Economic Integration and International Dynamics*, London, Frank Cass, 2003, p. 149-170, at p. 157.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ziya Öniş, “Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State”, cit., p. 18.

membership is a part of the state-supported Westernization process, the stances of political parties can be distinguished as “hard Euro-scepticism” and “soft Euro-scepticism.” Ziya Öniş summarizes the distribution of hard and soft sceptics as follows:

‘Hard euroscepticism’, entailing the rejection of EU membership, is confined to fringe elements in the party system, namely, extreme leftists or nationalists and radical Islamists, who constitute a very small percentage of the total electorate. Nevertheless, ‘soft euroscepticism’, involving a certain dislike of the conditions associated with full membership if not the idea of membership itself, is quite widespread and can be identified in political parties across the the political spectrum.<sup>81</sup>

On the other hand, the CHP (Republican People’s Party), the major social-democratic party in Turkish politics, traditionally equated Westernization, secularization and modernization with Europeanization.<sup>82</sup> However, in the reign of the AKP, the CHP has displayed a highly nationalistic and restrictive stance in recent years when it comes to relations with the EU and EU democratization reforms.<sup>83</sup> As the founder of the modern Turkish state during the 1920s and afterwards, the main rationale of the CHP became to save the state against any kind of opposition trying to disintegrate the Turkish nation-state, be it the Kurdish separatist movement, radical Islamists or the communist challenge. Furthermore, the CHP’s historical alliance with the military, which established the Turkish Republic and helped modernize the country, led it to adopt an inconsistent policy with respect to civil-military relations. Following the 2002 parliamentary elections, and in particular from 2005 onwards, the CHP has tended towards an authoritarian form of Kemalism, adopting an overly laicist

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<sup>81</sup> Ziya Öniş, “Conservative globalists versus defensive nationalists: political parties and paradoxes of Europeanization in Turkey”, in *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (December 2007), p. 247-271, at p. 249.

<sup>82</sup> For further analysis of the CHP’s constituency, voting structure and ideology, see Ayşe Güneş-Ayata, “The Republican People’s Party”, in Barry Rubin and Metin Heper (eds.), *Political Parties in Turkey*, London, Frank Cass, 2002, p. 102-121.

<sup>83</sup> Mehmet Bardakçı, “Turkish Parties’ Positions towards the EU: Between Europhilia and Europhobia”, in *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (December 2010), p. 26-41, at p. 30, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1727245>.

and nationalist agenda aligning with the military. In the run-up to the 2007 general and presidential elections, the CHP's ultra-laicist and ultra-nationalist rhetoric peaked.<sup>84</sup> However, the CHP changed its rhetoric on the European integration after the leadership of Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who replaced the former party leader Deniz Baykal in May 2010. Kilicdaroglu's efforts made it possible for the CHP to open a representative office in Brussels to express the party line to the Eurocrats and the relevant bodies of the member states.<sup>85</sup> As explained earlier, Kilicdaroglu's letter to the German Chancellor Angela Merkel during the Gezi movement was instrumental in preventing the EU-Turkey relations from derailing, and from the interruption of the accession negotiation talks. His continuous efforts to express the CHP party line with regard to the European integration process coincided with the increasingly Euro-sceptical attitude of the AKP. CHP has become even more pro-European during and after the Gezi movement in search of new international allies against AKP rule.

Another important political phenomenon in the 1990s was the rise of an oppositional form of political Islam, which brought about a different dynamic in domestic politics. Necmettin Erbakan defined his movement against the West in general, and the Kemalist vision of Europeanization in particular.<sup>86</sup> Although Erbakan incorporated EU membership into his agenda in the 1999 elections, the formation of the AKP introduced yet another form of political Islam. To that effect, Yavuz suggests that the prospect of European integration had strong influences on political Islamic movements in Turkey. He argues that:

Since the early 1990s, however, a dramatic cognitive shift has taken place in Turkey. Islamic political identity is shifting from an anti-Western to a pro-European position, while conversely, the Kemalist bureaucratic-military establishment, which has defined its historic mission as that of guardians leading the nation westward, has become increasingly recalcitrant in regard to integration with Europe. Today one of the few unifying platforms of Turkey's diverse

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>85</sup> See the website of the CHP Representation to the EU: <http://brussels.chp.org.tr>.

<sup>86</sup> M. Hakan Yavuz, "Islam and Europeanization in Turkish-Muslim socio-political movements", in Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein (eds.), *Religion in an Expanding Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 225-245, at p. 243.

ethnic and religious groups is one favoring membership in the EU.<sup>87</sup>

In analyzing the wide public support for the AKP, Yavuz also suggests that the party's promotion of accession is a search for political identity through the EU process, which is founded on identification with the European norms of the Christian Democratic parties. In relation to that, he argues that the AKP utilized the process of accession to reduce the power of the military through defining "itself against the military."<sup>88</sup> In other words, he attributes the pro-EU stance of the AKP to the search for self-identification, which occurred in opposition to the military establishment in Turkey. As explained earlier, the AKP became Euro-sceptic after 2005 due to various internal and external factors. A very recent move of the party clearly shows its changing position from Europhilia to Europhobia, i.e. its decision to leave the European People's Party (EPP) group of the European Parliament in which it had an observer status, and to become a member of the Euro-sceptic group of the European Parliament, the Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists (AECR) in November 2013.<sup>89</sup>

Political parties of Kurdish origin were also pro-European due to the democratic results of European integration leading to the freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of expression in mother tongue. It has been the Kurds who have benefited most from democratization and the opening up of the regime with the EU integration process. The Kurds have seen their cultural rights broaden since the 1990s. Rights granted to the Kurds increased in scope and scale in the post-Helsinki era of 1999. Thus, it is not surprising to find that ethnic Kurdish parties were among the most ardent supporters of Turkey's EU vocation.<sup>90</sup> Following the EU accession process, the state of emergency was lifted in the predominantly Kurdish-populated provinces in southeastern Turkey. The expression of pro-Kurdish views was made possible through amendments in Anti-Terror Law, the Turkish Penal Code and the Constitution. Broadcasting in Kurdish was permitted. Restrictions on the use of Kurdish in education were eased. Kurdish parliamentarians who had been in jail for a decade were released in

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 226.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>89</sup> See <http://www.aecr.eu/membership>.

<sup>90</sup> Mehmet Bardakçı, "Turkish Parties' Positions towards the EU: Between Europhilia and Europhobia", cit., p. 34.

2003. The AKP government's recent Kurdish initiative promises further expansion of rights for the Kurdish segments of the population.<sup>91</sup> However, the DTP (Democratic Society Party), which was later replaced by the BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) in December 2009 upon the closure of the former by the Constitutional Court, became Euro-sceptic due to the fact that the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) was added to the list of terrorist organizations by the Council of European Union Commission in 2004.

### *Civil society organizations*

Regarding the nature of civil organizations in Turkey, an important argument was made by Keyman and İçduygu that the direction of Turkish modernization since the 1980s and the increasing participation of civil society actors in the policy-making process is a result of four processes. They are as follows: (1) the changing meaning of modernity, or in other words the emergence of alternative modernities, which refers to, first, the emergence of the critique of the status of secular-rational thinking as the exclusive source of modernity in Turkey, and second, the increasing strength of Islamic discourse both as a "political actor" and as a "symbolic foundation" for identity formation; (2) the legitimacy crisis of the strong state tradition, which occurred as a result of the shift towards civil society and culture as new reference points in the language and terms of politics; (3) the process of European integration, referring to the assertion that reforms also indicate that the sources of democratization in Turkey are no longer only national but also global, and therefore that the EU plays an important role in the changing nature of state-society relations in Turkey, and functions as a powerful actor generating a transformative power in Turkish politics; and (4) the process of globalization in which Turkish politics functions as a significant external variable for understanding the current state of the political process in Turkey.<sup>92</sup>

Although Turkish civil society organizations have been deemed weak

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<sup>91</sup> Senem Aydın-Düzgit and E. Fuat Keyman, "EU-Turkey Relations and the Stagnation of Turkish Democracy", in Senem Aydın-Düzgit et al. (eds.), *Global Turkey in Europe. Political, Economic, and Foreign Policy Dimensions of Turkey's Evolving Relationship with the EU*, Roma, Nuova Cultura, 2013, p. 103-164 (IAI Research Papers 9), <http://www.iai.it/content.asp?langid=2&contentid=914>.

<sup>92</sup> E. Fuat Keyman and Ahmet İçduygu, "Globalization, Civil Society and Citizenship in Turkey ...", cit., p. 222-226.



policy actors due to the assertion that respect for authority is stressed over citizen empowerment and participation while democracy has been shallow, imposed from above by Westernizing elites on a largely peasant, passive society, in the 1980s and particularly in the 1990s civil society organizations began to proliferate.<sup>93</sup> While it is agreed upon that this proliferation was highly contingent on economic liberalization, Keyman and İçduygu argue that this increase can also be associated with the political parties, such that

the center-Right and center-Left political parties have continuously been declining in terms of their popular support and their ability to produce effective and convincing policies, while at the same time both the resurgence of identity politics and civil society have become strong and influential actors of social and political change.<sup>94</sup>

Ersin Kalaycıoğlu agrees that although the visible statist orientation (étatisme) in Turkey stresses community over the individual, uniformity over diversity and an understanding of law that privileges collective reason, the reasons for this phenomenon are founded on the critical relations between the center and the periphery.<sup>95</sup>

Perhaps as a part of this dynamic, namely the association of the center with the state, Kalaycıoğlu argues that, among others, TÜSİAD (*Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği*, Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association), Türk-İş (*Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions) and TOBB (*Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği*, The Union of Chamber and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey) often benefit from their cooperation with the state, rather than cooperation with other voluntary associations to pressure the state. As a rule, voluntary associations do not seem to consider the state as an adversary, but rather as an ally to be mobilized against their competitors.<sup>96</sup> On the other hand, protest movements and advocacy

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<sup>93</sup> Paul Kubicek, "Turkish Accession to the European Union: Challenges and Opportunities", in *World Affairs*, Vol. 168, No. 2 (Fall 2005), p. 67-78, at p. 76.

<sup>94</sup> E. Fuat Keyman and Ahmet İçduygu, "Globalization, Civil Society and Citizenship in Turkey ...", cit., p. 222.

<sup>95</sup> Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, "State and Civil Society in Turkey: Democracy, Development and Protest", in Aryn B. Sajoo (ed.), *Civil Society in the Muslim World. Contemporary Perspectives*, London and New York, I.B. Tauris, 2002, p. 247-272, at p. 250-252.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258.

associations which confront the Turkish state and advocate drastic change in the republican system or in the political regime are not received well by the state, though they receive media attention.<sup>97</sup> In contrast, Atan argues that certain civil society organizations do not necessarily cooperate with the state and that

[w]hile Turkish civil society is traditionally weak *vis-à-vis* the state, Turkish PBOs [Peak Business Organisations] appear as significant actors to challenge the government's policy agenda. Familiarisation with the EU-level governance system has provided them with additional resources to act upon the domestic agenda-setting process.<sup>98</sup>

To that effect, it should be noted that TÜSİAD, an association including big business, has been one of the most-discussed civil society actors in literature. In terms of EU membership, Atan argues that TÜSİAD played an important role in the aftermath of 1997 by strengthening their ties with their European counterparts through the EU institutions and governments in order to encourage Turkey's EU membership.<sup>99</sup> Additionally, TÜSİAD prompted domestic policy changes in Turkey in favor of harmonization with the EU member states through the 1997 report entitled *The Perspectives on Democratization in Turkey*.<sup>100</sup> These reports have been discussed and cited by several scholars as a reflection of the growing civil society participation in the domestic policy-making process.

MÜSİAD (*Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği*, Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association) is another business association, which mainly consists of AKP supporters. According to Atan, MÜSİAD appears to be an organization advocating a different model of economic and social development using a certain interpretation

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>98</sup> Serap Atan, "Europeanisation of Turkish peak business organisations and Turkey-EU Relations", in Mehmet Uğur and Nergis Canefe (eds.), *Turkey and European Integration. Accession Prospects and Issues*, London and New York, Routledge, 2004, p. 100-121, at p. 109.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p.107.

<sup>100</sup> Follow-up reports have been published in 1999 and 2001. For texts of these reports see the archived pages of the TÜSİAD-US website: [http://web.archive.org/web/20071009071123/http://www.tusiad.us/second\\_page.cfm?TYPE\\_ID=12](http://web.archive.org/web/20071009071123/http://www.tusiad.us/second_page.cfm?TYPE_ID=12).

of Islam to ensure the cohesion of its members and to represent their economic interest as an integral component of an ideological mission.<sup>101</sup> Consequently, MÜSİAD followed a discourse emphasizing the compatibility of EU membership with the “Islamic and democratic identity” of the Turkish society,<sup>102</sup> a discourse which is quite similar to the arguments made by the members of the AKP. On the other hand, as Yankaya stated earlier in the case of MÜSİAD, the Europeanization process has produced two dynamics: firstly, economic Europeanization as a social learning process and political Europeanization as political opportunism, and secondly, an ongoing Euro-scepticism.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, one could also observe that there is an interesting shift from hard Euro-scepticism based on a civilizational divergence argument towards a soft Euro-scepticism expressed in national interest and in a new Islamic rhetoric in line with the assumption that Turkey is becoming a soft power in its region.

In addition to business associations, it should be noted that the IKV (*Iktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı*, Economic Development Foundation) was established as an initiative of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce in 1965 to inform the public about the internal affairs of the EU as well as the relations between Turkey and the EU. Similarly, TESEV (*Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı*, Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation) is a non-governmental think tank focusing on social, political and economic policies in Turkey. Both IKV and TESEV have been very active in informing the public and the government on EU-related issues. One should also note that there have been several other civil society organizations such as environmental groups (WWF, Regional Environment Centre), human rights organizations (Helsinki Citizens Assembly, TÜSEV, Anadolu Kültür), women rights organizations (KADER, KAGIDER), LGBT groups, and international foundations (Heinrich Böll Foundation, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Open Society Foundation, British Council, etc.) advocating the EU in Turkey.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Serap Atan, “Europeanisation of Turkish peak business organisations and Turkey-EU Relations”, cit., p. 111.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>103</sup> Dilek Yankaya, “The Europeanization of MÜSİAD: Political Opportunism, Economic Europeanization, Islamic Euroscepticism”, in *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, No. 9 (December 2009), <http://ejts.revues.org/3696>.

<sup>104</sup> For a list of some of these organizations see the World Movement for Democracy’s website, <http://www.wmd.org/node/26>.

### *Trade unions*

In comparison to the literature on civil society organizations and political parties, the literature on trade unions with respect to their role in the Europeanization of Turkey during the post-Helsinki period is rather limited. Nevertheless, it is possible to characterize the stances of trade unions as rather cautious and inconsistent. For instance, on the one hand they argue that the Europeanization process would cause unemployment and the disintegration of the country; on the other hand, EU membership is seen as providing an opportunity to move forward and to improve labor rights.<sup>105</sup> However, it is also noted by others that

[m]any of the labor market problems currently experienced in Turkey emerge in a context of rapid structural change. Until quite recently, the bulk of employment was in the agricultural sector, whereas today urban labor force in industry and services is much larger than rural workforce.<sup>106</sup>

In reference to her in-depth interviews with members of the labor unions, Zeynep Alemdar argues that although the literature expects them to appeal to the EU for better labor standards or workers' rights, Turkish domestic actors' use of the EU depends heavily on the domestic environment and their respective perceptions of the EU.<sup>107</sup> In fact, Alemdar's argument in general is also reflective of shifting views towards the EU, but she relies on the premise that the domestic environment, such as the military coups, political party alliances and labor regulations, influences the ways in which trade unions perceive the EU. Consequently, the unions appeal to the EU when they are not satisfied with the domestic politics.

In order to examine the perceptions of the labor unions on EU

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<sup>105</sup> Engin Yıldırım, Suayyip Çalış and Abdurrahman Benli, "Turkish Labour Confederations and Turkey's Membership of the European Union", in *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (August 2008), p. 362-387, at p. 363.

<sup>106</sup> Fikret Adaman, Ayşe Buğra and Ahmet Insel, "Societal Context of Labor Union Strategy: The Case of Turkey", in *Labor Studies Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (June 2009), p. 168-188, at p. 175.

<sup>107</sup> Zeynep Alemdar, "Turkish Trade Unions and the European Boomerang", in *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, No. 9 (December 2009), p. 3, <http://ejts.revues.org/3774>.

membership and the reforms it necessitates, scholars tend to look at the cases of Türk-İş (*Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions), Disk (*Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions) and Hak-İş (*Hak İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, Confederation of Justice-Seekers' Trade Union). These unions are all members of the European Trade Union Confederation. Alemdar describes Türk-İş as a state-centric labor union, showing that Türk-İş took an openly anti-EU stance after 2000 but have softened their position since 2005, as membership negotiations began. Türk-İş's position *vis-à-vis* the EU is very well explicated by Yıldırım Koç, who is one of the advocates of the syndicate:

The European Union's demands for Turkey are in opposition to the Turkish Republic's unitary state system and its independence. Abiding by these demands would tear our country apart and divide it, creating a new Yugoslavia. Turkey is not going to solve its problems through the EU. Turkey is not going to be stronger because of the EU. Turkey is going to solve its problems despite the EU, and it will be stronger. Turkey's admittance to the EU is dependent on this strength.<sup>108</sup>

It is important to note that Koç's argument is similar to the political parties' concerns over territorial integrity as well as the unity of the Republic. While Türk-İş did not necessarily reflect the structure of its counterparts in the EU, Disk, which is considered a supporter of the left wing, reformulated itself in the 1990s in line with the European trade unions.<sup>109</sup> Consequently, Disk has been adamant in pressuring the government and lobbying to harmonize Turkish labor regulations with those of the EU.<sup>110</sup>

Hak-İş, on the other hand, presents a different dynamic in the sense that Hak-İş' attitude towards the EU has been intricately linked with the organization's liaisons with the government. When the government was

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<sup>108</sup> Cited in Zeynep Alemdar, "Turkish Trade Unions and the European Boomerang", cit., p. 11.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>110</sup> Erhan Doğan, "Sendikalar ve Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği Siyaseti" [Trade Unions and Turkey's EU Journey], in *Akdeniz Üniversitesi İİBF Dergisi* [Akdeniz University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences Journal], Vol. 3, No. 6 (2003), p. 19-43.

pursuing the EU, the appeal of the EU was strong, and vice-versa.<sup>111</sup> In December 1999, Hak-İş declared its stance towards the EU as follows:

A major challenge to integration with Europe is Turkey's Muslim population. Turkey, because of its historical, moral, philosophical, religious and national characteristics, is not Western. 'Westernization' comes as a betrayal and alienation to Turkish culture [...] if membership in the EU is pushed, this would mean a total surrender [to Western values]. On the other hand, Turkey's application for EU membership means a heavy legal burden for the Constitution and other laws, and constitutes a threat to state's sovereignty and nation's unity [...] the fact that the government and the opposition parties are silent about this raises questions.<sup>112</sup>

However, as the Islamist political parties modified their perceptions of the EU and the notion of Westernization, Hak-İş also followed the same discourse, in line with the AKP.

### *Media*

First and foremost, it should be noted that similarly to the literature on trade unions, the literature on the role of the media in the process of modernization and Europeanization of Turkey is very limited. Nevertheless, scholars have studied the nature of the Turkish media, which can be used to indicate certain trends. During the period between 1982 and 1993, it is possible to observe a proliferation in media outlets, which was a result of non-media-related capital in the sector altering the structure of the media to resemble industrial enterprises.<sup>113</sup> The technological developments during this period contributed to the establishment of numerous television and radio channels, both local and national. As the intensity of competition increased in tandem with the rise of capitalist ideology, media enterprises began to focus more on sales. In correlation with the increased competition, this period was marked by, among other things, the rise of monopolies in

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<sup>111</sup> Zeynep Alemdar, "Turkish Trade Unions and the European Boomerang", cit., p. 18.

<sup>112</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>113</sup> Mehmet Sağnak, *Medya-Politik. 1983-1993 Yılları Arasında Medya-Politikacı İlişkileri* [Media and Politics. Relations between the media and politicians in 1983-1993], Ankara, Eti Kitapları, 1996, p. 55-56.

the sector, which in return created support for the government and politicians due to the growing need for “incentives, credits, and public announcements.”<sup>114</sup>

Esra Arsan argues that the Turkish media could be categorized as a part of the Mediterranean model. In this model, the journalists take sides as members of the political and literary elites.<sup>115</sup> According to Hallin and Mancini:

The Mediterranean, or Polarized Pluralist Model, is characterized by an elite-oriented press with relatively small circulation and a corresponding centrality of electronic media. Freedom of the press and the development of commercial media industries generally came late; newspapers have often been economically marginal and in need of subsidy. Political parallelism tends to be high; the press is marked by a strong focus on political life, external pluralism, and the tradition of commentary-oriented or advocacy journalism persists more strongly than in other parts of Europe. Instrumentalization of the media by the government, by political parties, and by industrialists with political ties is common. Professionalization of journalism is not as strongly developed as in the other models: journalism is not as strongly differentiated from political activism and the autonomy of journalism is often limited ...<sup>116</sup>

Turkish journalists have also been swinging between Euro-supportiveness and Euro-scepticism while framing the EU beyond traditional institutional news coverage, like “Turkey must fulfill its EU requirements by...” or “the EU must fulfill its promises...”<sup>117</sup> While Arsan depicts the problematic nature of journalists situated in Brussels, it is also necessary to examine the nature of domestic sources of information. In terms of the domestic television channels, Gencil Bek suggests that Turkish media has also gone through a “tabloidization process.” As a part of her research, she analyzes the state-owned TRT (*Türkiye Radyo*

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>115</sup> Esra Arsan, *Avrupa Birliği ve Gazetecilik. Brüksel’den Bildirenlerin Gözünden Avrupalılık* [EU and Journalism. Europeanness from the Perspective of those reporting from Brussels], Istanbul, Ütopya Yayınevi, 2008.

<sup>116</sup> Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 73.

<sup>117</sup> Esra Arsan, *Avrupa Birliği ve Gazetecilik ...*, cit., p. 72.

ve *Televizyon Kurumu*, Turkish Radio and Television Corporation), and characterizes the quality of the news as follows:

In general, the reports are quite bland accounts of cabinet meetings. There is no setting of context, interpretation, discussion or criticism. TRT just reports that such and such politicians met, in a formulaic way. The news gives no other information such as who else talked in the meeting, who said what, what the main aim of the meeting was, etc. What TRT does achieve, however, is full coverage of all the national ceremonies, reminding the public of national history from the perspective of the official memory. One could call TRT news the ‘news of the nation-state.’<sup>118</sup>

The above-mentioned argument is partly a result of the mentality followed by RTÜK (*Radyo Televizyon Üst Kurulu*, Radio and Television Supreme Council), which is a public legal entity that monitors television channels. On that issue Gencil Bek criticizes the operations of the RTÜK for being in favor of the state. She argues:

The peculiar characteristics of broadcasting regulation also have an effect on content: the RTÜK controls content to a far greater extent than media structure, concentration, increasing market mechanisms, etc. Content control and subsequent penalties are mainly directed towards the channels ‘which are against the state’. Protecting the state takes precedence over the citizen’s right to information.<sup>119</sup>

Even though Arsan and Gencil Bek examine different aspects of the Turkish media, it is possible to infer a common theme, which is that the news media – both journalists in Brussels and the TRT – filter the news before it reaches the public. In that sense, the lack of professional and extensive media coverage from Brussels and the domination of the public service channel by nationalist events indicate that the citizen’s right to information about the EU and the process of Europeanization has been

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<sup>118</sup> Mine Gencil Bek, “Tabloidization of News Media: An Analysis of Television News in Turkey”, in *European Journal of Communication*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (August 2004), p. 371-386, at p. 378.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 383.



overshadowed by political and social interests. Moreover, media coverage depends highly on the relations of media ventures with the government in particular, and with the political parties in general.

The media has been shifting between Euro-scepticism and pro-Europeanness. The EU has always been a practical source of legitimacy for the media in Turkey. *Cumhuriyet* and *Sözcü*, for instance, are two Kemalist daily newspapers with Euro-sceptic coverage prior to the Gezi movement. Both changed their discourses on the EU in parallel with that of the Republican People's Party. Both papers have become more pro-European during and after the Gezi movement. Another very interesting newspaper, which is likely to instrumentalise European integration for its own use, is *Daily Zaman*. It is publicly known that Zaman belongs to the Gülen Community, which was an ally of the ruling party AKP. But lately there is anecdotal evidence that AKP rule is trying to cut off its alliance with the Gülen community.<sup>120</sup> The divide between the party and the community became visible when Prime Minister Erdoğan publicly declared in November 2013 that they will ban preparatory schools (*dershane* in Turkish), specialized education centers that help prepare students for high school and university entrance examinations. The Gülen community has hundreds of prep schools all around the country, where teachers affiliated with the mission of the community indoctrinate students with a kind of moderate Islam while preparing them for university and high school exams. Interestingly, *Daily Zaman* used Chapter 22 (Regional Policy) to spread its message out to its readers, saying that

the government plan to close down Turkey's prep schools will widen the educational gap created by social and economic inequality and regional disparities in Turkey, and it may endanger the implementation

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<sup>120</sup> The spiritual leader of the Gülen community is Fethullah Gülen, who went to exile after the military coup of February 28, 1997. Gülen is now settled in Pennsylvania, and teaches an Anatolian (Hanafi) version of Islam, deriving from the Sunni-Muslim scholar Said Nursi's teachings and modernizing them. Gülen is one of the leading figures of interfaith dialogue in parallel with the Evangelical tradition in the USA. The Community has become widely organized in Turkey as well as in other parts of the world. It is renowned for its Turkish-language schools spreading all around the world as well as for its interest-based global business networks. For further detail on the Gülen movement see Berna Turam (ed.), *Secular State and Religious Society. Two Forces in Play in Turkey*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

of the recently opened Chapter 22 in Turkey's European Union accession process.<sup>121</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS: THE FUTURE OF THE EURO-DEBATE IN THE EU AND IN TURKEY<sup>122</sup>

The analysis developed in this paper points to the relevance of the discursive interaction between the EU internal debate on Europe and the Turkish debate on Europe. The study has shown that similar frames have been developed in the civil society debate in the EU and in Turkey. The fact that these are (partly) overlapping is evidence in itself of the ideational exchange between the two sides. Such exchange is both subterranean, channeled through a myriad of people-to-people micro-practices that create a de facto link between EU civil society and its Turkish counterpart, and explicit and public as reported in the media, in the conventional political debates or in the fora of elites.

In this regards, a particularly significant case study has been provided by the *Occupygezi* movement and its role in transforming part of the Turkish public debate on Europe. The harsh responses of the EU to the brutal acts of the Turkish state have contributed, perhaps unintentionally, to a radical turn in the mindsets of the secular groups, who were previously Euro-sceptic. After the recent events, these groups have become more pro-European than the supporters of AKP rule. This confirms once again that the transformation of Turkish civil society is deeply intermingled with the European integration process. Sometimes it follows a linear trajectory, other times it may follow unexpected paths.

The process of the modernization and Europeanization of Turkey dates back to the early 19th century. The journey is full of impediments, as the process was a rather politically-oriented one leading to the emergence of social divides and fault lines within the nation. The intensification of the process of Europeanization in the aftermath of the Helsinki Summit of December 1999 has brought about remarkable changes in the state

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<sup>121</sup> See Nesibe Hicret Soy, "Ban on prep schools deals blow to EU's Chapter 22", in *Today's Zaman*, 24 November 2013, [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?newsId=332130](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=332130).

<sup>122</sup> This section is partly based on Ayhan Kaya, *Europeanization and Tolerance in Turkey*, cit., p. 68-70.

elite. From that time onwards, a discursive shift can be observed in Turkey from a rather republican discourse of “unity over diversity” to a more democratic and pluralist discourse of “unity in diversity.” However, the period following the decision of the European heads of state to start accession talks with Turkey in late 2005 was marked by a rising tide of Euro-scepticism deriving from both internal and external dynamics. One should also keep in mind that Turkey’s links with the European Union had become stronger during AKP government rule preceding the Euro-sceptic cycle, which started in 2005.

It is evident that the continuation of the democratization process in Turkey and the development of civil society, both in Turkey itself and in its relation with the European counterparts, depend upon the path the EU is likely to take in the foreseeable future. One could also easily argue that Turkey’s EU bid strongly shapes the internal discussions within the EU concerning the identity of the Union. It is comprehensible that the Turkish democratization process can be expected to persist alongside a liberal, political and post-civilizational project of Europe that would be ready to welcome Turkey, whereas a culturally and religiously defined Europe would possibly abstain from welcoming Turkey and would thus certainly interrupt the democratization process. Turkey’s democracy is strongly linked to the ways in which the EU is being constructed and reconstructed. There are at least two definitions of Europe and the European Union. The first defines Europeanness as a static, retrospective, holistic, essentialist and culturally prescribed entity. The latter emphasizes the understanding of “Europe” as a fluid, ongoing, dynamic, prospective, syncretic and nonessentialist process of becoming. While the first definition highlights a *cultural project*, the latter definition welcomes a *political project* embracing cultural and religious differences, including Islam.

Accordingly, the conservative *civilizational idea* aims to build a culturally prescribed Europe based on Christian mythology, shared meanings and values, historical myths and memories, the Ancient Greek and/or Roman legacy, and ethno-religious homogeneity. Civilizational Europe does not intend to include any other culture or religion without a European/Christian legacy, hence neither Turkey nor Islam has a place in this project. On the other hand, the progressive *post-civilizational idea* proposes a politically dynamic Europe based on cultural diversity, dialogue, and heterogeneity. The advocates of a syncretic Europe, or what Jacques Derrida calls “new Europe,” or “Europe of hope” promote coexistence with Turkey and Islam, and underline that the EU is, by

origin, a peace and integration project.<sup>123</sup> Agency and self-reflexivity are indispensable constituents of such a form of syncretic Europe, which is always in the making and open to new input. Hence, Turkey's future in the EU depends on the weakening of the civilizational and cultural concept of the European Union. A post-civilizational, post-western, post-religious and secular concept of Europe would strengthen pro-European sentiments in Turkey.

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<sup>123</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading. Reflections on Today's Europe*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1992, p. 28. For details about the separation between "civilizational/cultural Europe" and "political Europe", see Senem Aydın-Düzgit, *Constructions of European Identity. Debates and Discourses on Turkey and the EU*, London and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, ch. 3 and 4.

# 10.

## Euro-Turks. A Commentary

*Anna Triandafyllidou*

The term Euro-Turks has been coined to refer to the Turkish immigrants in Europe, mainly in Germany but not only, and their offspring. The term has been coined to distinguish Turks who live in continental Europe from those who live in Turkey and it may be seen as a fundamental contradiction with the political discourses that consider Turkey as part of Europe and hence as a future member of the European Union. Indeed why should Turks living in Germany or France be called Euro-Turks? Does this imply that Turks who live in Turkey are not European? Is there a contradiction in terms between Europe/European and Turkish? Or is this term precisely noting that Turks are European by definition and actually emphasising this by turning the qualification European Turks into a single noun, notably Euro-Turks. This brief note comments on the relevance of the term Euro-Turks today.

### IS TURKEY PART OF EUROPE?

It would be worth providing here a brief history of the term Europe to actually demonstrate that at least Mediterranean Turkey should be seen as part and parcel of it. The name Europe is a transliteration of the Greek word Ευρώπη. The name finds its origins in Greek mythology: Ευρώπη is the name of a young woman, daughter of the Phoenician king Agenor (king of the city of Tyre on the coast of Sidon, in present day Lebanon) that was abducted by Zeus, the supreme ruler of Mount Olympus and of the pantheon of gods who resided there. Zeus, known in Greek mythology for his weakness for beautiful young women, disguised as a white bull, seduced and abducted Europe. He brought Europe to Crete to bear their offspring. There she later married the king of Crete. The place where she arrived (notably Crete) was to take her name, Europe, and their offspring would be called Europeans (Ευρωπαίοι), or so the story goes.

Europe was referred to by Homer as the daughter of Phoenix in line with the narrative above, while in ancient Greek mythology in general, she was frequently mentioned as the sister of Asia and Libya (Africa). The three sisters symbolized the three land masses. It was Herodotus who stated that he could not understand why three names, and women's names at that, should have been given to a tract of land that is in reality one. His argument is occasionally taken up today by scholars who note that Asia and Europe are in reality one land mass and that it is only our Euro-centric view of the world that makes us define contemporary Europe as a continent, separate from Asia and Africa.<sup>1</sup>

Regardless of which version of the myth is valid, it is clear from the writings of Greek historians like Herodotus or first century cartographer Strabo that Europe was geographically located in the southeastern part of the Mediterranean basin, quite far from where the geographical and political centre of Europe lies today. Europe was also about water, about the Aegean sea and about the Mediterranean, not about land, nor was it in any case a continent of any sort. It was rather the shores surrounding the well-known and well-travelled southeastern part of the Mediterranean. In this perspective, the Turkish coastline and Minor Asia can be considered an integral part of the history and mythology of Europe. And Turks are more 'European' than Germans or Poles or indeed the French who are considered to be 'in the heart' of Europe today.

Naturally there have been more than 2,000 years in between these two periods, which have slowly marked Europe's move westward, initially through the Roman Empire and later through the scission of the Catholic and Orthodox Church, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance which witnessed the centering of the cultural and geographical notion of Europe onto what is today continental Europe. Interestingly though, what makes the connection to antiquity of contemporary relevance is precisely the political and cultural value that was assigned to it from the Renaissance onwards, when the Mediterranean sea and the Greek world were heralded as the cradle of European civilisation.

Two points are worth considering here. First, that Europe had its origins outside the borders of contemporary Europe and even outside the borders of ancient Greece – indeed the mythical origins of Europe and

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony Pagden (ed.), *The Idea of Europe. From Antiquity to the European Union*, Washington, Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

its cultural and political distinctiveness had more to do with Asia Minor, which is part of Turkey today, than with Europe itself. Second, that Europe was born out of its opposition to Asia, just as Hellas contrasted itself to Phoenicia and Persia. Europe was based on the notion of Hellenism that implied an opposition and a dualism between civilizations combined with a strong ethno-centrism. Thus despite its geographical Europeanness, the opposition or the tension between Turkey and Europe find its roots in these proto-conceptions of Europe.

## EURO-TURKS: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

What is it that makes the Euro-Turks a contested group and a contested identity. The answer is less geographical or historical, as can be concluded from the above, and more political and indeed geopolitical.

The term Euro-Turks was coined to refer to those Turks that live in a European country other than Turkey and who are socially and economically integrated into that country, even though politically they may retain their Turkish citizenship. The relevant populations however do not use this term to refer to themselves, nor has the term any legal or political value for designating a certain status or set of rights. Part of the reason why the term Euro-Turks has not gained high currency in either political or academic debates is precisely its ambivalent connotation, that can be seen as positive, signaling belonging, but also negative, as signaling separation both from "other Europeans" and from "other Turks".

It is also worth noting that generally the term has been used to refer to migrant populations and their descendants, in western and northern Europe, and not to native European Turkish populations, like those of Greece and Bulgaria. This is of particular interest as it signals that the very notion of Euro-Turks neglects the very populations that it could designate, notably those people of Turkish ethnicity that are native of the European continent.

The emphasis on the Euro-Turks in the last 20 years has mainly derived from concerns over their (more or less) successful socio-economic integration into their destination countries, particularly France and Germany. It is only in the last ten years that a consideration of their role as diaspora populations that mediate the process of Turkey's European

integration has acquired salience.<sup>2</sup> However some 10 years after the EU granted Turkey the status of candidate country, in the process of acceding to the EU, the Euro-Turks appear more European than ever, while Turkey is drifting away from Europe.

Indeed we witness the debate on Europe's Turks coming to full circle today. While Europe is busy with its own economic (Eurozone crisis and global financial crisis) and political (worsening social conditions in the crisis-ridden countries, rise of the far right and xenophobia) concerns, Turkey is turning eastwards as a regional hegemon that can play a mediator's role in the crisis of Syria and in the overall international negotiation over what comes after the Arab spring in North Africa and the Middle East. Becoming a Member State of the troubled EU is becoming less and less appealing for Turkey as the EU is finding out the hard way that its economic unity as well as social solidarity among member states were pretty fragile. At the same time, the spread of the "Arab spring" in the Middle East and notably to Syria has opened up a new set of dangers of high instability in the region for Turkey but also a new opportunity to play the role of the quiet force that can act as a stabilizer. Turkey seems to be re-acquiring some of the strategic importance that it used to have during the Cold War. In other words, what frightens the EU, notably the rising Islamic political currents and Turkey's proximity to a number of not so stable countries, is Turkey's winning card as a regional power.

The importance of Islam and of the social and cultural integration of Turkish immigrants and their native descendants in different European destination countries is thus acquiring salience again today, while their role as diasporas mediating the interests of the home country as a prospective member state is receding.

Today, we are witnessing encouraging signs of not only socio-economic but also political integration of the Turkish origin populations of France, Belgium and Germany. This last, formerly a stronghold of ethnic nationalism, is experiencing today a pluralization of its public sphere, as two important German political figures are of Turkish origin. The co-chair person of the Green Party, Cem Özdemir, long known to be the only successful politician of Turkish origin, is now joined by a brand new State Secretary for migration, refugees and integration, Aydan Özoğuz, a Social

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<sup>2</sup> Ayhan Kaya and Ferhat Kentel, "Euro-Turks: A Bridge or a Breach between Turkey and the European Union? A Comparative Study of German-Turks and French-Turks", in *EU-Turkey Working Papers*, No. 14 (January 2005), <http://www.ceps.be/node/1035>.



Democrat in the new grand coalition government of Angela Merkel. Even if the political participation of Germans of Turkish origin remains under their actual potential (11 members in the Bundestag today compared to 5 in the previous Parliament, but still less than half of what they should be), the term Euro-Turks may be losing its currency further as we speak of Germans of Turkish origin or of Germans *tout court*.



# 11.

## Crises and Elections: What are the Consequences for Turkey's EU Bid?

*Eduard Soler i Lecha*

The EU crisis is not only an economic one. National democracies are also in a critical situation, and citizens have lost trust in the European institutions. National governments and the EU are being blamed for not having been able to find a quicker way out of the economic crisis, the North-South divide has widened, and all sorts of anti-establishment forces are taking advantage of citizens' disenchantment and fears.

Although the causes are radically different, Turkey is also in the midst of a political crisis with economic implications. Turkish politics are very tense since the Gezi events in June 2013, and particularly since the corruption scandal broke out in December 2013 with a criminal investigation against several AKP figures. Some controversial political and administrative decisions taken since then have damaged Turkey's image abroad. For instance, the new law tightening Internet control and the new regulation on the Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK) have overshadowed previous progresses, such as the September 2013 democratisation package. Moreover, political tensions have affected the economy negatively, and the Turkish central bank was compelled to raise the interest rate to stop the Lira's fall in a moment when other emerging market economies were also suffering a financial crisis and an intense pressure in the global markets.

With these crises in the background, the year 2014 opens a new political cycle for both Turkey and the EU. For Turkey, this process starts with the local elections in March, followed by presidential elections in the summer and parliamentary elections foreseen for June 2015. For the EU, the European Parliament elections in May 2014 are also a key moment. Anti-establishment, Euro-sceptic and populist forces are expected to do well in these elections. How will all this affect Turkey-EU relations in a context in which the economic crisis in Europe has not been overcome and Turkish politics are increasingly tense?

## THE CRISIS IN EUROPE: HOW DOES IT AFFECT TURKEY?

When discussing the effects of the European economic and financial crisis on Turkey's interests, it is quite natural to look at the negative effects on trade and investment flows as well as on Turkey's worrying current account deficit. Yet there are at least four less-evident political effects of this crisis for Turkey and for Turkey's relations with the EU.

The first effect is that some of Turkey's traditional allies in the EU find themselves in a weaker political position. This is the case for southern European countries such as Portugal, Spain and Italy, which have traditionally pushed for a revitalisation of Turkey-EU relations and which, as a result of the crisis, have to focus on their domestic problems.<sup>1</sup> In the case of Italy, this is aggravated by political instability. This is taking place at the very same moment in which the crisis and the "enlargement fatigue" have created an introspective mood in the EU. Moreover, a traditional ally of Turkey, the United Kingdom, has announced a referendum on EU membership by 2017, which affirms that it wishes to renegotiate its relations with the EU and is studying how to restrict the free movement of persons. Such a position harms the British capacity to shape key decisions on the future of the EU, including enlargement policy. Hence, the role of Germany and, to some extent, France becomes more important. Angela Merkel's recent statement that she is positive about the accession talks but sceptical of the membership perspective sums up the position of both countries.<sup>2</sup>

The second effect is that the crisis has eroded EU citizens' trust in the European institutions. This has specific repercussions for public attitudes towards future enlargements of the EU. Comparing the responses to the Eurobarometer surveys of 2008 and 2013 shows that opposition to EU enlargement has increased by 13 points across the Union (see Table 7).

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed analysis see Eduard Soler i Lecha, "Crisis and Decline in Southern Europe: Implications for Turkey", in *Franco-Turkish Papers*, No. 8 (July 2013), <http://www.ifri.org/?page=contribution-detail&id=7773>.

<sup>2</sup> "Merkel reiterates doubts on Turkey's EU membership, but supports talks", in *Today's Zaman*, 4 February 2014, [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?newsId=338454](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=338454).

**Table 7. Public opposition to further EU enlargement**

	Spring 2008 (%)	Autumn 2013 (%)	Variation
Austria	63	76	+13
Belgium	48	62	+14
Bulgaria	8	29	+21
Czech Republic	26	50	+24
Cyprus	23	56	+33
Denmark	41	51	+10
Estonia	25	40	+15
Finland	50	65	+15
France	60	70	+10
Germany	58	69	+11
Greece	38	51	+13
Hungary	23	32	+9
Ireland	31	46	+15
Italy	37	59	+22
Latvia	26	38	+12
Lithuania	16	20	+4
Luxembourg	59	64	+5
Malta	15	25	+10
Netherlands	46	64	+18
Poland	12	26	+14
Portugal	31	49	+18
Romania	8	18	+10
Slovakia	21	42	+21
Slovenia	21	42	+21
Spain	16	37	+21
Sweden	36	40	+4
United Kingdom	50	55	+5
EU27*	39	52	+13

\* Data for Autumn 2013 refer to 28 member countries, after the accession of Croatia on 1 July 2013.

Source: European Commission, *Standard Eurobarometer 69* (Spring 2008) and *Standard Eurobarometer 80* (Autumn 2013), [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb\\_arch\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm).

This trend is particularly clear in countries severely affected by economic or political crises, such as Cyprus (+33 points), Italy (+22), Spain (+21), Slovenia (+21) and Bulgaria (+21), but also in countries such as the Czech Republic (+24), Slovakia (+21) and the Netherlands (+18), where popular opinion has strongly opposed bailouts for southern Europe or where eurosceptic movements are growing. We can also observe that in countries such as Austria, France and Belgium, where right-wing populist parties are also strong, the increase in anti-enlargement attitudes is slower, but this is mainly due to the fact that the level of opposition was already very high. The UK is an interesting case, as rejection to enlargement is only at 55 percent and has only increased five points in the last five years despite the rise of UKIP and anti-migration discourses.

Third, the crisis in Europe may have contributed to the deterioration of the EU's image among ordinary people and elites in Turkey. The perception that Turkey was performing better than the EU in economic terms and the promises that Turkey would rank in the top ten economies by 2023 spread the feeling that the EU anchor was not as essential as it used to be, or at least that the EU needed Turkey as much as Turkey needed the EU.<sup>3</sup> The image of the EU and the support for EU membership among Turkish citizens have dropped since the mid-2000s. According to the 2013 *Transatlantic trends*, only 44 percent of citizens were in favour of joining the EU, compared to 73 percent in 2004.<sup>4</sup> The 2013 Eurobarometer showed that only 38 percent considered joining the EU to be a good thing, while in 2004 62 percent had given a positive response.<sup>5</sup> It remains to be seen whether the recent political and economic turmoil in Turkey will alter the Turkish population's attitudes towards the EU. The good news is that the margin for improvement is very large because in recent times the level of disappointment and mistrust has reached a peak.

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<sup>3</sup> Egemen Bağış, then-Minister for EU Affairs, repeatedly used those words. See, for instance, Betül Akkaya Demirbaş, "EU needs Turkey more than Turkey needs it, says Bağış", in *Today's Zaman*, 7 January 2011, [http://www.todayzaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?newsId=231759](http://www.todayzaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=231759).

<sup>4</sup> German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trend Survey 2013*, <http://trends.gmfus.org/transatlantic-trends>.

<sup>5</sup> European Commission, Annexes to *Standard Eurobarometer 62* (Autumn 2004) and *Standard Eurobarometer 80* (Autumn 2013), [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb\\_arch\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm).

Fourth, it also remains to be seen whether this economic crisis could impact the territorial disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean. As a result of the Greek crisis, Athens could have an interest in resolving its conflicts with Turkey as a way to reduce its high military spending.<sup>6</sup> Cyprus also suffered a devastating financial crisis due to the exaggerated size of its banking sector and the over-exposure to the Greek sovereign debt. This has increased the strategic importance of offshore gas findings and could offer a new set of incentives for finding a solution to this conflict.<sup>7</sup> However, the crisis has also fuelled the rise of extreme nationalists and Europhobic forces in Greece and, to a lesser extent, in Cyprus, and has undermined the popularity of incumbent governments. In these circumstances it might be more difficult for Athens and Nicosia to push for bold decisions, as this could feed a nationalist rhetoric in both countries.

## THE POLITICAL TENSION IN TURKEY: HOW DOES IT AFFECT RELATIONS WITH THE EU?

The Gezi protests in June 2013 were a test for EU-Turkey relations. The European Parliament released a very critical declaration that was met with strong words by the Turkish government. Erdoğan himself affirmed that he does not recognize any decision the European Parliament takes on Turkey and asked the European parliamentarians to look at how the police was repressing demonstrations in EU countries.<sup>8</sup> The Commission also criticised the Turkish government

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<sup>6</sup> Despite the budget cuts, Greek military spending as a percentage of GDP (2.3%), remains in comparative terms among the highest in Europe and the third-highest in NATO, just behind the US and the UK. See NATO, *Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence* (PR/CP(2014)028), 24 February 2014, p. 6, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_107359.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_107359.htm).

<sup>7</sup> See International Crisis Group, "Aphrodite's Gift: Can Cypriot Gas Power a New Dialogue?", in *ICG Europe Reports*, No. 216 (April 2012), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/turkey-cyprus/cyprus/216-aphrodites-gift-can-cypriot-gas-power-a-new-dialogue.aspx>; and "Divided Cyprus: Coming to Terms on an Imperfect Reality" in *ICG Europe Reports*, No. 229 (March 2014), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/turkey-cyprus/cyprus/229-divided-cyprus-coming-to-terms-on-an-imperfect-reality.aspx>.

<sup>8</sup> "I don't recognize European Parliament decision, Turkish PM Erdoğan says", in *Hürriyet Daily News*, 13 June 2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default>.

on the management of this crisis, but Commissioner Füle wisely combined those messages with statements asking everyone not to give up on Turkey's accession process.<sup>9</sup> As for member states the reactions were quite diverse. Germany, Austria and the Netherlands opposed the opening of a new chapter in the accession negotiations, considering that this would send the wrong signal.<sup>10</sup> On the contrary, some Foreign Affairs ministers, like Emma Bonino and Carl Bildt, argued that engagement with Turkey was even more needed.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, following Gezi there were some positive moves that indicated that EU-Turkey relations were gaining momentum. In October 2013 the Commission released a progress report, which was quite constructive, and although it pointed out the need for important political reforms, it recognised that there had been substantial advances and welcomed the adoption in September of a "democratisation package".<sup>12</sup> A few weeks later, after three years of paralysis, the EU opened chapter 22 of the accession negotiations, which deals with regional policy.<sup>13</sup> Even more importantly, on December 16, the EU and Turkey signed the readmission agreement, which opened up the possibility of establishing a visa-free regime by 2015.<sup>14</sup>

The plans of the Turkish government were to build on this much-awaited decision to boost the accession process. Yet just the day after, on December 17, the Financial Crimes and Battle against Criminal Incomes Department launched a large-scale operation that resulted in

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aspx?pageID=238&nID=48730.

<sup>9</sup> Štefan Füle, *EU-Turkey bound together* (Speech/13/517), 7 June 2013, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-13-517\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-13-517_en.htm).

<sup>10</sup> See Andrew Rettman, "Germany to delay Turkey talks until October", in *EUobserver*, 24 June 2013, <http://euobserver.com/enlargement/120625>.

<sup>11</sup> See Ian Traynor, "Turkey's EU membership bid falters as diplomatic row with Germany deepens", in *The Guardian*, 21 June 2013, <http://gu.com/p/3gn2h/tw>; Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey: The EU must not "freeze" talks, says Bonino*, 27 June 2013, [http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala\\_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Approfondimenti/2013/06/20130627\\_turchia\\_bonino\\_ue.htm](http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Approfondimenti/2013/06/20130627_turchia_bonino_ue.htm).

<sup>12</sup> European Commission, *Turkey 2013 Progress Report* (SWD(2013)417 final), 16 October 2013, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52013sc0417:en:not>.

<sup>13</sup> Eduard Soler i Lecha, "A New Chapter in EU-Turkey Negotiations: a Step too Small", in *Notes internacionals CIDOB*, No. 78 (November 2013), [http://www.cidob.org/en/publications/notes\\_internacionals/n1\\_78](http://www.cidob.org/en/publications/notes_internacionals/n1_78).

<sup>14</sup> Gerald Knaus, "EU-Turkey Relations: A Visa Breakthrough?", in *Global Turkey in Europe Policy Briefs*, No. 11 (March 2014), [http://www.iai.it/pdf/gte/gte\\_pb\\_11.pdf](http://www.iai.it/pdf/gte/gte_pb_11.pdf).



the detention of almost fifty people accused of corruption and bribery, among which were relatives of several ministers and figures close to the governmental circles. Turkish politics then entered a zone of turbulence. Political tension rose with the approval of administrative decisions and the adoption of new regulations, which created serious concerns in Turkey but also in the EU.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan affirmed in the New Year's Eve speech that 2014 would be a key year for Turkey-EU relations and an occasion to revamp full membership talks with the EU and speed up democratization reforms.<sup>15</sup> However, during his first visit in five years to the European institutions, EU leaders expressed their concern about recent political developments. José Manuel Barroso said after talks with Erdoğan that "whatever the problems are, the solutions should respect the principles of the rule of law and the separation of powers".<sup>16</sup> Herman Van Rompuy also stressed that Turkey, as a candidate country, ought to respect the political criteria, including the application of the rule of law and separation of powers. He said that "it is important not to backtrack on achievements and to assure that the judiciary is able to function without discrimination or preference, in a transparent and impartial manner".<sup>17</sup>

In order to revitalise the accession process and for the EU to remain engaged in the consolidation of Turkish democracy, one possibility is to open chapters 23 (basic rights) and 24 (justice, freedom and security). However, if political tension in Turkey is on the rise, European political leaders may think twice before making moves that could be interpreted as backing the current Turkish government, particularly while the country is in the midst of an electoral period.

Speed up or slow down the negotiations process? Member states will have the last say on this, but the new European Parliament and,

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<sup>15</sup> "Erdoğan promises EU talks will speed up in 2014", in *Today's Zaman*, 1 January 2014, [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?newsId=335494](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=335494).

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Ian Traynor and Constanze Letsch, "Brussels urges Turkish PM Erdoğan to redraft law purging police and judiciary", *The Guardian*, 21 January 2014, <http://gu.com/p/3m43y/tw>. See also European Commission, *Statement by President Barroso following the meeting with Prime Minister Erdoğan of Turkey* (Speech/14/43), Brussels, 21 January 2014, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-14-43\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-43_en.htm).

<sup>17</sup> European Council, *Remarks by President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy after his meeting with Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan* (EUCO 16/14), Brussels, 21 January 2014, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/140694.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/140694.pdf).

even more so, the new European Commission will also have a key role in taking one or the other direction.

## THE NEW POLITICAL CONFIGURATION IN EUROPE AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR TURKEY'S ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS

The May 2014 European Parliament elections mark the beginning of a new political cycle in the EU. The European citizens will be electing a Parliament that has gained powers since the Lisbon Treaty entered into force. According to the Treaty, the European Council will propose a candidate to be President of the Commission, taking into account the results of those elections. This proposal will then be put before the Parliament for approval or rejection. That is why European political parties have nominated their candidates to head the Commission and have attempted to raise awareness about the importance of these elections by affirming that European citizens, through their vote, will be choosing the European government for the next four years. Not only that, but with the appointment of the new Commission, other key posts will be renovated, such as the President of the European Council and the Vice-President of the Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The results of those elections will offer a certain picture of the impact of the economic crisis on European citizens' views regarding the European project. In these elections it is not only relevant which of Europe's main parties (social democrats or conservatives) comes first, but also how many votes and seats mainstream parties will lose, who will benefit from it and what this will mean for the sustainability of the European integration project. In that sense, all European policies could be affected by the results of these elections. Enlargement in general, and Turkey's accession negotiations in particular, will not be an exception.

According to the polls, the two main political forces will share power in the EU institutions. In other words, for the next four years the EU governance is likely to be based on a grand coalition both in Brussels and in Berlin. What does this mean for Turkey and for Turkey-EU relations? Social democrats have traditionally been more favourable to Turkey's accession process while Christian democrats have been more reluctant, some of them still insisting on the need to

study alternatives to full membership. Thus, in line with the agreement reached in Germany between the CDU-CSU and the SPD, the following form of compromise is likely to prevail at the EU level: let's keep the process going but with no particular interest in giving a boost to it. That said, this approach might be nuanced in one or another direction depending on who is appointed for the key posts, such as Commissioner for Enlargement.

The strength or weakness of smaller political parties will also have a certain impact. The new Parliament will be more fragmented and pro-integration parties will lose support. This could undermine the role of the Parliament as a natural ally of the Commission in pushing for a bold enlargement policy. Moreover, some of Turkey's traditional allies are not expected to do well in these elections. This is the case of the Liberals, who are expected to be the big losers. With some exceptions, members of this group as well as the Greens have maintained a pro-enlargement stance and have vocally opposed any discrimination against Turkey's candidacy based on cultural or religious arguments. At the same time, they have been very active in pushing for more ambitious political reforms in Turkey, understanding that these are two sides of the same coin.

The rise of anti-establishment parties of a very different kind is likely to be one of the main characteristics of the new Parliament, reflecting, and in some cases anticipating, profound transformations in member states' politics. Some of these parties are right-wing populist forces that are eurosceptic and in some cases even europhobic and which aspire to exit from the EU or fundamentally change the nature of the Union. This is the case of the National Front in France, the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands, the *Vlaams Belang* in Flanders, Austria's Freedom Party and the Sweden Democrats' Party, which have already constituted a European alliance and are expected to perform well in the May elections. If so, this will increase the number of voices against the prospect of Turkey joining the EU. However, this can have an unexpected effect: if those MEPs use racist and Islamophobic ideas against Turkey, this could force mainstream European political parties to reject those arguments and advocate a non-discriminatory policy.

Finally, the rise of left-wing parties like Tsipras-led Syriza and unclassifiable forces like the Five Star Movement in Italy is also expected to be one of the main novelties in the European Parliament. For those political forces Turkey will not be a priority. However,

their attitude regarding EU-Turkey relations will very much depend on the evolution of the political situation in Turkey and whether they perceive that supporting the accession talks contributes to the defence of human rights, political freedom and social justice in Turkey. Another element to take into account is that groups such as the Five Star Movement support direct democracy and criticise elite-driven decisions that don't take into account the people's will. Thus, the need to take into account European citizens' views regarding future enlargements could become one of their demands.<sup>18</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Political tension in Turkey and the economic crisis in Europe do not help to re-energise Turkey-EU relations. Yet this is not the end of the story. Precisely, in a situation of crisis neither of the two parties is willing to be held responsible for a failure in the negotiation process. For both the EU and Turkey, business as usual seems more affordable than taking the risk of aborting the whole process. For the European Union, this would suppose opening a crisis with a strategic partner, and the EU has enough crises to deal with at this moment. For an individual member state, the eventual costs of doing so are even bigger, which is why not even Cyprus has been either able or willing to halt the negotiations completely. The AKP government is also not willing to be pointed to as the main party responsible for a breakdown in the negotiating process. A good part of the opposition and the national and international media would consider it a failure of the government's foreign policy or even a corollary to an Islamising foreign policy. On top of that, in times of economic uncertainty, this could negatively impact an already vulnerable Turkish economy.

Assuming that neither the EU nor Turkey has an interest in putting an end to this process, what could be the effect of the next European Parliament elections? The most decisive element will be the rise

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<sup>18</sup> See, for instance, the conclusions on enlargement of Senator Luis Alberto Orellana in the Foreign Affairs Committee, 6 November 2013, available at: <http://www.listacivica5stellepavia.it/?p=6538>. See also the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee resolution of 28 November 2013 on the European Commission communication Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014, <http://www.senato.it/leg/17/BGT/Schede/docnonleg/26176.htm>.

of right-wing, eurosceptic and populist political forces in Europe that argue that Turkey has no place in the EU. This could have an ambivalent effect. It will increase the number of anti-Turkey voices in the Parliament but, depending on the aggressiveness of their arguments, this could push mainstream parties to reject such attitudes and consequently, support a fair treatment of Turkey's EU candidacy. Yet for them to do so some cooperation from the Turkish side is needed, namely reducing political polarisation and bringing the reform process back on track.



# Conclusions: The Future of Europe, Differentiated Integration and Turkey's Role

*Meltem Müftüleri-Baç*

The future of Europe is tied to the process of integration in the European Union, and the Union's ability to transform into a new type of a polity. The European Union is often defined as a *sui generis* organization that goes beyond an intergovernmental organization but falls short of a classically-defined state since it does not possess the critical elements of statehood. Whether the EU is seen as a "superstate", "an intergovernmental organization" or "a cosmopolitan union" depending on its degree of integration has important implications for the future of Europe.<sup>1</sup> This degree of integration could be measured through the schemes for cooperation and harmonization concluded by the EU member states. There seem to be differences in this vision, as there are member states which envisage enhanced cooperation beyond the traditional Treaty structure, and member states which favor a strengthening of Community structures. Nonetheless, the European project is about its members' capacity to take the political initiative; this capacity, in turn, depends on the Union's ability to reconcile integration and enlargement.<sup>2</sup> It is, therefore, clear that further enlarging the Union is tied to the Union's integrative path.

We therefore need to take into account the possible trajectories of Europe to understand the conditions under which enlargement would be likely. There are three different trajectories for the future of the Union. In one possible future scenario, the EU could evolve into a federal multinational and supranational state, which seems unlikely at the moment. In the second scenario, the EU would remain largely intergovernmental, with member states' cooperating on some

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<sup>1</sup> Helene Sjursen (ed.), *Questioning EU Enlargement. Europe in Search of Identity*, London and New York, Routledge, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Robin Hertz and Dirk Leuffen, "Too big to run? Analysing the impact of enlargement on the speed of EU decision-making", *European Union Politics*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (June 2011), p. 193-215.

key policies such as trade and economic integration, but remaining largely independent on other policies. The third possible scenario involves a “core group” of EU members transferring competencies to the supranational polity, while others pick and choose among common policies, leading to “differentiated integration”. In this trajectory, the EU acquires “a single organizational and member state core, and a territorial outreach that varies by function as a system of differentiated integration.”<sup>3</sup>

These different trajectories of European integration are all connected to the evolution of policy-making within the EU, as well as to the political will of its member states to deal with the multiple crisis which the EU is undergoing and which is complicating its *finalité politique*.<sup>4</sup> This *finalité politique* goes hand-in-hand with the EU’s enlargement process, and is tied to the overarching question “where does Europe begin and end?”

The future of the European Union in terms of its final frontiers and the political structure it will acquire lies at the epicenter of European public debate. The outcome of this debate will be particularly telling in terms of the future enlargement of the EU. The EU’s enlargement policy could be seen as a key instrument for advancing the EU’s foreign policy goals, such as uniting the European continent, securing the EU’s borders, expanding the EU’s global reach and enhancing security in Europe. According to the European Commission, “the EU has, since its inception, responded to the legitimate aspiration of the peoples of our continent to be united in a common European endeavour. It has brought nations and cultures together, enriching and injecting the EU with diversity and dynamism. More than three quarters of the EU Member States are former “enlargement” countries.”<sup>5</sup> An important concern here is how the natural limits of enlargement impact on the EU’s cohesion, sustainability, prosperity, institutional capacity and democratic representation. In other words, the extent to which the EU can continue enlarging without jeopardizing its integration process

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<sup>3</sup> Dirk Leuffen, Berthold Rittberger, Frank Schimmelfennig, *Differentiated Integration. Explaining Variation in the European Union*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Taggart, “Questions of Europe: the Domestic Politics of the 2005 French and Dutch Referendums and their Challenge for the Study of European Integration”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 44, Annual review (September 2006), p. 7-25.

<sup>5</sup> European Commission, *Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013* (COM(2012) 600 final), 10 October 2012, p. 2, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=celex:52012dc0600:en:not>.



becomes critical. This is also partly the reason why some EU member states are more hesitant both towards enlargement and towards the accession of specific countries. Then French President Nicholas Sarkozy reflected on this in 2011 as follows: “one cannot plead for federalism and at the same time for the enlargement of Europe. It’s impossible. There’s a contradiction.”<sup>6</sup>

## TURKEY AND DIFFERENTIATED INTEGRATION

Among the current candidate countries, one deserves special mention as a result of its possible impact on the future of Europe: Turkey. Turkey has been negotiating EU accession since 2005 with relatively little progress. Turkey has been part of the European political order since the end of World War II with its membership of the Council of Europe (1949), Organization for Economic Cooperation (1948) and NATO (1952). Under its 1963 Association Agreement with the then EC, Turkey was legally eligible for accession; it signed a Customs Union Agreement with the EU in 1995, and was declared a candidate for EU membership officially in 1999. As a result, it has a significant level of integration in multiple European policies. It is an integral part of European security and defence, while the customs union for industrial products has meant that Turkey has harmonized its laws with the EU customs union *acquis*. Turkey’s accession to the EU has material benefits for the EU in terms of its economic size and its security role. As regards its economic size, according to the World Bank, Turkey is the 15<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world, and 6<sup>th</sup> largest in Europe.<sup>7</sup> In terms of its military power, it is ranked as the 11<sup>th</sup> largest military power in the world in the Global Firepower index.<sup>8</sup> It is clear from these figures that Turkey’s integration into EU markets and European security would be to the EU’s advantage, especially in an increasingly multipolar world – but the pressing question is what kind of integration.

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<sup>6</sup> “Two Speed Europe, or Two Europes?”, *The Economist*, 10 November 2011, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/charlemagne/2011/11/future-eu>.

<sup>7</sup> World Bank, “Gross domestic product 2012, PPP”, *World Development Indicators*, updated 23 September 2013, [http://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP\\_PPP.pdf](http://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP_PPP.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Global Firepower, *Countries Ranked by Military Strength 2013*, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp>.

Turkey's accession to the EU goes beyond the rather simplistic analysis of whether Turkey meets the EU's accession criteria – though it is absolutely necessary that it does – and is tied to the debates on the future of Europe. Thus, a public debate on Turkish accession needs to touch upon the possible impact that Turkey would have on the European integration process. Two factors come into the forefront here: the size of the Turkish population, and its perceived cultural differences from the current EU member states. Turkey has a large population – around 78 million – and would be 2nd largest member after Germany if it became a member today. What is even more striking is that Turkey's population is predicted to increase to around 95 million by 2030, whereas Germany's is projected to decrease to 78 million.<sup>9</sup> Since the EU decision-making structures are heavily influenced by population numbers, Turkish membership would mean that in a union of 29 members, including itself, Turkey would have the largest group of European parliamentarians, and Turkish voting weight in the Council would be substantial under the double majority rules. To take the example of the European Parliament (EP), Turkey would have around 96 members – the maximum allowed under the terms of the Lisbon Treaty – as the Parliament will have a maximum of 751 members – 750 MEPs and a President from 2014 onwards. Since the maximum size of the EP is unlikely to change at the moment given the limitations of physical space, this would mean that, were Turkey to accede, other members would have to give up seats in order to make room for the Turkish delegation. While not only Germany would lose seats in this way, for Germany an additional loss would be to lose its primary position as the most populous member of the EU. Turkey's accession to the EU would also change the balance in the Council of Ministers under double majority voting. As the largest EU member, Turkey would have the greatest voting power, and would effectively act as a veto player in most EU legislation. This brings us to the argument that the EU's ability to function would be seriously hampered with the inclusion of another large country such as Turkey. Simply put, institutional gridlock might become harder to manage. So, is a form of membership other than accession possible?

This might be what the EU had in mind when it adopted the new "Positive Agenda" with Turkey on 17 May 2012. The Positive Agenda

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<sup>9</sup> United Nations, *World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision*, 2013, <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=world+population&d=PopDiv&f=variableID%3a12%3bcrID%3a900>.

targets increased dialogue and harmonization between Turkey and the EU on the Schengen regime, enhanced cooperation on energy issues, foreign policy, and the fight against terrorism, and increased participation in people-to-people programs, all mutually beneficial targets for both parties. The adoption of the Positive Agenda seems to indicate that, even in the absence of full membership, Turkey's integration in the EU could be possible in multiple new policy areas, clearly indicating a path of differentiated integration with Turkey. To put it concretely, a path of differentiated integration with Turkey would include increased harmonization with regards to the single market, extension of free trade arrangements on textiles and agriculture, and increased cooperation in the financial sector, in other words a deepening of the 1995 customs union agreement. Similarly, increased cooperation between Turkey and the EU on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) – which is already substantial, with Turkish participation in almost all EU-led operations – would be necessary. This would involve Turkey's membership in the European Defence Agency and the participation of the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs in the relevant Council meetings. Increased Turkish involvement in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) without formal membership would be a clear indication of differentiated integration as the EU's future trajectory.

The integration process, i.e. the adoption of common rules and procedures, as well as common positions on key foreign policy issues, requires a consensus-building mechanism and the mobilisation of like-minded states around common goals and common denominators. The inclusion of an institutionally powerful, yet most probably not like-minded, Turkey in this process might hamper the likelihood of common positions. This is not to say that all EU members converge around the same ideas, the very presence of the United Kingdom being a case in point. However, if the future path of integration is one of federalism, Turkish membership might slow down the process.

Alternatively, Turkish membership could be a blessing in disguise. The evolution of the EU towards a path of differentiated integration, with a new type of membership for Turkey, could provide the Union with further opportunities to deepen integration, with different policies being adopted by different member states. As long as all member states agree to a policy or a decision in principle, while also not requiring all member states to adopt it immediately, greater flexibility in common decisions could be possible.

This means that the very process of differentiated integration might lead to a situation where the “classical” forms of membership no longer are needed. As other European Union members have chosen to do, Turkey might adopt the EU *acquis* on key policies such as energy, transport, the common market or common security and defence, but remain outside of the EU framework for the Social Charter, or the Schengen regime. If the path of integration is differentiation, then full membership is not necessary in order to participate in it. If Turkey becomes one of the first examples of such a scheme, the future of European integration would also drastically change, transforming the EU into a new blend of an organizational core, and a system of functionally differentiated units.

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Finito di stampare nel mese di aprile 2014  
con tecnologia *print on demand*  
presso il Centro Stampa "Nuova Cultura"  
p.le Aldo Moro n. 5, 00185 Roma  
[www.nuovacultura.it](http://www.nuovacultura.it)  
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