

GERMAN INTERESTS  
AND TURKEY'S EU  
ACCESSION PROCESS:  
**A HOLISTIC  
PERSPECTIVE**

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GÜNTER SEUFERT

**IPC**

**ISTANBUL POLICY CENTER**

SABANCI UNIVERSITY

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November 2015

## ABOUT

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## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

Turkey and the European Union (EU) are undergoing a tremendous crisis in their relationship. On the one hand, the EU is now more than ever preoccupied with internal challenges, ranging from the rise of Euroskepticism and nationalist tendencies among the population to questions regarding the future architecture of the buffeted supranational unit. Member states appear to be looking inward and increasingly unable to speak with a single voice on matters of common foreign and security policy, neighborhood policy, and enlargement. On the other hand, it has been often argued that Turkey has abandoned reforms in adhering to the EU's political criteria, has shown tendencies of polarization in domestic politics, and has been in a state of perplexity in foreign relations. Today, the continuation of membership negotiations with Turkey is subject to debate in Brussels, Berlin, and Ankara.

Germany's stance toward Turkey seems to have a major impact on Turkey's relations with the EU in general and on the EU's perception of Turkey's membership in particular. This proved true not only when Turkey was granted EU candidacy status and began accession negotiations but also throughout the slowdown in the membership process that has been witnessed in recent years. Germany's prominent position in the EU, mainly due to its economic and political weight, is widely considered an important determinant of the characteristics, scope, and content of the EU's enlargement policy. Therefore, throughout Turkey's extended EU accession process Ankara has paid particular attention to the official German stance towards Turkish membership in the EU.

Germany and Turkey are tied to each other through a unique variety of historical, economic, cultural, and societal linkages. For decades, Germany has not only been Turkey's leading partner in trade but also the biggest foreign investor in the country. The number

of German companies and Turkish companies with German capital operating in Turkey has risen to nearly 6,000, whereas Turkish companies have been increasingly involved in investments in Germany and setting up businesses in sectors of strategic importance for both countries. The two countries cooperate under the umbrella of various major international organizations including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), G20, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The initiation of the German-Turkish Strategic Dialogue Mechanism in 2013 and the recent announcement to hold regular intergovernmental consultations starting from 2016 indicate the intensity of political dialogue between Germany and Turkey. As far as societal ties are concerned, the presence of nearly three million people of Turkish origin residing in Germany adds an important dimension to the German-Turkish relation and brings issues related to migration and integration to the forefront of bilateral dialogue. It therefore appears necessary to take a closer look at different aspects and dimensions of bilateral relations between Germany and Turkey, and scrutinize the limits and potentials of Turkey as an economic, foreign, and security policy partner for both Germany and the EU, taking into account global and regional challenges as well as the visions discussed in both Germany and Turkey regarding the future shape of Europe.

Officially, accession negotiations are proceeding. But amongst Turks, initial EU-euphoria has given way to disenchantment, and in Europe the enlargement fatigue seems to superimpose every debate on further enlargement. Therefore, it appears advisable not only to scrutinize the current status quo in the EU-Turkish dialogue but also to modernize various dimensions of this bilateral relationship framework to ensure a harmonious partnership. With its aggregate capabili-

ties and position within the Union, Germany can play a major role in this process. But with one precondition: Germany's interests and preferences should be taken into account.

Against this background, this publication brings together analyses of preeminent scholars and experts who have specialized in different aspects of the EU/German-Turkish dialogue with the aim of developing a critical and holistic approach to the study of German preferences pertaining to Turkey's relations with the EU.

Ahmet Evin argues that despite close and deep-rooted bilateral relations, lack of a deeper understanding between Turkey and Germany exists. Against this background, Evin sheds light on various factors that affect Turkey's complex and multi-dimensional dialogue with Germany and the formation of Germany's preferences and policies vis-à-vis Turkey.

Scrutinizing the nature of crises faced by Turkey and the EU, Werner Weidenfeld and Ludwig Schulz contribute their comparative insight into the external and internal challenges Turkey and the EU are confronted with. Both authors plead for a solution-oriented common partnership dialogue between Turkey and the EU as an alternative to collective despair.

Emre Hatipoğlu argues that a thorough understanding of Turkey's diverse foreign policy tools and the dynamics behind the construction of Turkish foreign policy are key to defining the limits and scope of Turkey-EU cooperation with respect to foreign policy. Hatipoğlu claims that Turkey's "soft" foreign policy tools make the country a natural partner for the EU's new security concept that emphasizes fast response and civilian capacity building.

Michael Nowak highlights the interests Germany and Turkey share with regard to foreign policy issues. Turkey's specific role as an anchor for stability and its capacity to become a model of democracy for a

region in conflict make the country an indispensable partner for both Germany and Europe. The contribution highlights cooperation opportunities in three pivotal regions.

Ebru Turhan's article draws attention to the asymmetrical development of political and economic relations between Turkey and the EU/Germany. While Turkey's political integration into the EU has slowed down over the past few years, economic cooperation has continued without significant drawbacks. Turhan warns of the negative consequences of this asymmetry for both parties.

Kerem Öktem discusses the key principles and goals of Turkey's diaspora policies and draws attention to the challenges posed to the German political elite by the (partial) integration of Germany's Turks into Turkey's political space. Öktem argues that the modernization of legal and societal conditions in Germany is likely to minimize the counter-productive effects of the diaspora policies.

Yaşar Aydın's contribution examines the leading motives behind the Turkish government's diaspora policy. Aydın argues that Ankara pursues its diaspora policy in order to realize reasonable political goals such as Turkey's EU membership. However, the author claims also that Turkey's diaspora policy holds the danger of increasing cultural and ethnic fragmentation among Germany's Turks.

Günter Seufert relates the shift in Turkey's foreign policy in the era of Ahmet Davutoğlu to irreversible caesuras in the country's social structure and political system, which partly explains the secondary or even tertiary significance the EU holds for Turkey today. Providing a sober assessment, Seufert claims that the EU, despite Ankara's initial glance toward its wider neighborhood in its new foreign policy discourse, must be able to handle its relationship with a more Muslim conservative Turkey.

*Ebru Turhan & Günter Seufert, November 2015*

## GERMAN INTERESTS AND TURKISH PREOCCUPATIONS: AN ELLIPTICAL CONSIDERATION

Ahmet Evin

How well are German interests understood in Turkey? That is the first question that comes to mind in considering how German interests might affect bilateral relations between the two countries. Although more than 50 years have elapsed since the 1961 Turkish-(West) German labor recruitment agreement and although, as a result, there are now over three million persons of Turkish nationality or origin living in the Federal Republic, it cannot be said that Turks and Germans have developed a great deal of familiarity with one another. Neither Germany nor German values and culture are well understood in Turkey nor is Turkey, its society and culture well known in Germany. The lack of a deeper understanding between the two sides is all the more baffling considering the fact that Germany is Turkey's leading trade partner and the leading source of its foreign direct investment.

Despite close economic relations between the two countries and a significant Turkish presence in Germany, the perception of either side of the other still remains influenced by stereotypes and misconceptions ingrained in the popular imagination. Inasmuch as the early modern image of the terrible Turk did not totally vacate the German imagination, so, too, that of the somewhat xenophobic, robotic German in uniform continued to be implanted in the Turkish mind. These formidable prejudices have stood in the way of obtaining a clear perspective on one side of the other.

The value of such debates as captured in this policy report is obvious, given the urgent need for a sober assessment of complex regional and global devel-

opments that affects both Germany and Turkey as well as their relationship with each other. The EU triangulation further adds to the challenge, given the long history of Turkey's volatile relations with the European entity and Germany's less than sanguine views of Turkey's EU membership.

Although the German government, unlike the French one, never single-handedly blocked any negotiation chapter, Germany's ruling Christian Democrat party rejects Turkey's full membership and proposed an undefined "privileged relationship" between Turkey and the EU. This policy met with a stiff rebuff from the Turkish government. Although Ankara's official position has not changed with respect to this matter, a de facto special relationship has gradually evolved between the EU (particularly Germany) and Turkey in the wake of a decline of support in Turkey of EU membership. Concomitantly, Turkey began to focus attention on its own neighborhood with a view to increasing its regional influence. Its fast economic growth and its penetration of new markets in developing countries lent credence to its enhanced regional role. Ankara's priority of becoming the regional power was seen as an opportunity by its EU allies (as well as the United States) to enhance cooperation with Turkey in the Balkans and the Middle East. Europe, it appears, failed to discern the hubris behind Turkey's geopolitical ambitions but considered Turkey's engagement with this neighborhood a significant contribution towards helping to project the EU's soft power onto the region. Then foreign minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's thesis, *Strategic Depth*,

which had been adopted as the governing principle of Turkish foreign policy, emphasized, among other points, how Turkey's historic familiarity with the neighborhood makes the country almost naturally the leading actor in the entire region that the Ottomans once ruled.

This is a tall order. It is understandable that Turkey's affinity with the region would enable it to establish better rapport with the neighboring countries than major EU powers. Indeed, Turkey's assistance programs in the Balkans and Afghanistan have been more successful, as discussed in this volume, than heavy-handed EU interventions that aimed to improve institutions rather than the conditions on the ground. However, what is not taken into consideration by an overwhelming majority of European (and American) policymakers and political observers was the fact that, in the eyes of its non-Turkish subjects, the Ottoman Empire was not so different from the colonial powers of Europe and that they did not have particularly fond memories of the Ottoman rule. As Ankara adopted increasingly sectarian policies, it lost its credibility as an effective mediator and put itself in a position of being drawn into regional conflicts.

The Candidesque optimism with which then foreign minister Davutoğlu's principle of "zero problems with neighbors" was received in all Western capitals gradually evaporated. The difficulty of sustaining amicable relations with all actors in a Hobbesian neighborhood should have been obvious from the beginning. With its regional policy in shambles, Turkey now is party to several conflicts in its immediate neighborhood. Its security policies meanwhile seem to be bafflingly contradictory, partially in line with and partially contradictory to those of the EU and United States. Even if Ankara recently decided to allow Washington to use Turkish air bases to attack the so-called Islamic State in Syria and the Levant (ISIL), the Turkish government does not seem to be pursuing the fight against ISIL

vigorously or to be anxious to find opportunities for security cooperation in the region with Germany or other EU member states.

On the other hand, economic cooperation between Germany and Turkey, as cited in this volume, is strong and is likely to remain so. Turkey has become a significant regional production base for German industries; German goods are favored by the increasingly affluent Turkish consumers. German foreign direct investment in Turkey has been running high since Turkey's entry into a customs union with the EU (1996) and has accelerated since its official EU candidacy three years later. In Germany, increasing numbers of expatriate Turks and Germans of Turkish origin have joined the ranks of the *Mittelstand*. Expanding economic opportunities in Turkey over the past decade have reversed the pattern of migration with more Turks returning from Germany to work in Turkey than the other way round.

The large Turkish community in Germany has served both to reinforce bilateral relations and, at the same time, to create tensions not only between the two countries but also within Germany. The question of integration has been a key factor that sharpens German perceptions toward the Turkish community and, by extension, toward Turkey itself. Perceptions, however, widely differ. Those who get to meet well-adapted and well-integrated members of the Turkish community develop positive or, at least, neutral attitudes toward Turkish presence in Germany. High visibility of those who resist integrating into the German society, on the other hand, significantly detracts from a positive attitude toward immigrant groups, particularly those from Turkey. High unemployment among school dropouts of Turkish descent and rising violence, as a result, in immigrant ghettos present a disturbing picture. Those who resist integration on religious/ideological grounds present an even more damaging picture, since they are associated with

Islamic radicals on account of their appearance. They also constitute the most strikingly visible Muslim group and, as such, reinforce perceptions of the vast difference between Muslim immigrant groups and European society— by extension raising further doubts in Germany about Turkey’s European credentials.

The German perception of the Turkish government’s diaspora policies, also discussed in this volume, are likely to detract from the Turkish community’s integration into the German milieu. Successive Turkish governments have maintained direct contact with expatriate communities abroad, providing these communities with teachers and religious officials whose educational background did not necessarily conform to the host country’s standards. Since the establishment of the Presidency for Turks Abroad in the Prime Ministry, the Turkish government has intensified its efforts not only to keep in close touch and directly communication with the expatriate community but also to extend the effects of the Presidency of Religious Affairs across Europe. Moreover, Turkish political leaders’ election campaigning conducted on German soil is often viewed uncomfortably as Ankara’s effort to extend its tutelage over the entire expatriate Turkish community.

A cursory glance, such as the foregoing, at some of the topics covered in this policy report reveals the depth and complexity of Turkey’s relations with Germany. Those relations also demonstrate paradoxical and even contradictory features. The two countries share a great deal in terms of economic interests both within the EU context and in respect to Turkey’s broader neighborhood. Their overlapping interests are reinforced by the emphasis both countries place on trade. Germany, moreover, is the most crucial actor, which has the weight to influence the EU’s relationship with Turkey. It would not be realistic, however, to expect any progress in the foreseeable future in Turkey’s EU negotiations.

This is so not only because of Germany’s reluctance to imagine Turkey as a member of the Union, as is often not all together correctly claimed, but also because of Ankara’s growing indifference to the EU. Meanwhile, the Turkish tendency to put domestic issues before foreign relations continues to detract from an accurate understanding of German interests and policies.

PARTNERSHIP BY CRISIS – A STRATEGIC OUTLOOK FOR A COMMON EUROPEAN FUTURE

Werner Weidenfeld & Ludwig Schulz

For some years now, both Turkey and the European Union have been experiencing a period of profound crisis and substantial change. For Turkey,<sup>1</sup> first the so-called “Arab Spring” had quickly turned its southern neighborhood into chaos, with repercussions on Turkey’s own security, economy, and societal balance being felt almost daily on the streets. Then, all of the sudden, the events of 2013 at “Gezi Park” and on “December 17” had deeply shaken the country’s relative political stability, while the state’s reaction has since contributed intensively to an increase in political and social polarization. Furthermore, the Turkish economy continues to face ongoing structural deficits, enormous ups and downs in the currency, growing inflation and unemployment, and much uncertainty in domestic and international business circles concerning the country’s prospective stability. And, last but not least, Turkish policymakers have been undergoing a series of elections, which both the ruling party and the opposition have marked as decisive for Turkey’s future. Thus, in the fierce election campaigns that have actually been ongoing since 2013, polarization within Turkish society has escalated, and fears about the future of Turkey’s liberal democracy have spread widely.

In contrast to expectations and claims made by policymakers and opinion-shapers who predicted that after the 2015 parliamentary elections the country will be heading into calmer waters again, this state of crisis will continue for three main reasons. First,

polarization in Turkey’s domestic political scene will continue mainly due to the Justice and Development Party’s dominating, majoritarian, and conservative policies and discourses, which trigger harsh reactions from opposition forces inside and outside of the parliament; the incumbent president’s rigid attitude toward many issues in public affairs, especially with regard to his unburied and highly controversial intention to turn “New Turkey’s” political system into a presidential one; and the important, yet highly fragile reconciliation process of the state with the country’s Kurdish minority. Second, the economic outlook still raises concerns as to whether Turkey will meet the necessary conditions for sustainable economic growth and employment, and thus, societal satisfaction. And third, there is no clear prospect that Turkey will be able to return to its pro-active, stability and progress oriented foreign policy given the distressing political trends of growing instability, insecurity, and untamed conflict in the regional surrounding. Consequently, Turkey’s state of crisis is not over.

For Europe, the situation remains critical, too.<sup>2</sup> Although in 2014 the EU electorate chose new leadership that optimistically and more explicitly stresses that the Union has been overcoming its financial and economic crisis, a closer look reveals that there are still profound problems and challenges that European policymakers have so far failed to effectively address. Such problems are not only limited to the

1 E. Fuat Keyman, “The AK Party: Dominant Party, New Turkey and Polarization,” *Insight Turkey* 16, no.2 (2014): 19-31; Subidey Toğan, Ömer Gençkaya, Ludwig Schulz, and Roy Karadağ, *Sustainable Governance Indicators: 2015 Turkey Report*, (Bertelsmann Stiftung: Gütersloh, 2015).

2 Werner Weidenfeld, “Europe in a state of crisis: the strategic perspectives,” *Journal of Global Policy and Governance* 2, no.1 (2013): 79-83; see also various contributions in Werner Weidenfeld and Wolfgang Wessels (eds.), *Jahrbuch der Europäischen Integration* (Nomos Verlag: Baden-Baden, 2014); Ahmet Evin and Megan Gisclon, *The Liberal Order in Peril: The Future of the World Order with the West against the Rising Rest* (Istanbul: Istanbul Policy Center, 2015).

vortex of public debt, economic slow-down, and unemployment but also a lack of necessary reforms in some major economies of the Union; an eastern and southern neighborhood in a state of political insecurity, social instability, and cultural disorientation; and a globalized environment in which rising powers in Asia and elsewhere tend to defy Western concerns and values while pursuing policies largely based on national interests, thus, exacerbating the potential and risk of global confrontation and conflict.

Other indications of — although not necessarily the reasons for — the EU's state of crisis are, first, the widespread disorientation in the EU integration and enlargement policies, which is most clearly seen in the increasingly complicated differentiation (or even fragmentation) of Europe into various clusters such as the “core group” of Euro and Schengen countries, a group of EU members that willingly and regularly “opt-out” of common policies, or the group of accession candidates, on the one hand, and random “neighbors” on the other. Second, there is the widespread perplexity and reluctance of European policymakers to engage in dialogue and deliberate with the public on major issues of common concern, especially on the future of the European integration project. This is more obviously becoming an issue given the raising number of unsolved Europe-wide problems such as the Euro crisis, the refugee issue, and the question of how to ensure Europe's socio-economic prosperity in the era of increasing global competition. Almost as a result of this comes, as a third indicator for Europe's state of crisis, the rise of Euroskeptic social movements within and beyond the EU. A growing number of nationalist and populist parties in “core” countries of the European integration process, such as France, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria or the Scandinavian countries, have gained ground in Europe's public sphere by polarizing domestic politics at the expense of the idea of the common Europe. Their rise comes along with increasing extremism at the periphery, in countries such as Ukraine or Russia, or with regard to Muslim radicals in Northern Africa and the Middle

East (and within Europe's societies, too) who directly fight against the order and values of Europe.

As a result, the EU's ongoing and deep-rooted crisis is multidimensional in terms of identity and orientation, leadership and decision-making, as well as public legitimacy and institutional trust. The Union continues to show signs of structural weaknesses while merely paying lip service to its honorable, yet rarely practiced ideals, norms, and values, and lacking in visionary leadership, strategic culture, and an engaged public debate. Moreover, in this obvious state of crisis, the EU constantly sends negative and disappointing signals to countries in its eastern and southern neighborhood, which similar to the EU suffer from disorientation and instability as a result of authoritarianism, paternalism and nepotism, economic inefficiency, and a defective state of the rule of law and political participation. Thus, Europe's image from the outside seems rather at odds with its own wishful thinking about itself.

### **Redefining Europe's self and revitalizing the partnership with Turkey**

Taking its perception of profound and widespread crisis for granted means that Europe must find an immediate and effective solution. In this decisive moment, Europe should try to redefine itself by returning to its core narrative — the institutionalization of sustainable peace and prosperity under the commonly agreed conditions of secured freedom, equality, and justice. It is this narrative that must again be reinforced within Europe's public and its official discourse. Europe must invest in smart power, develop a new vision of a common future, and draw up an ambitious working agenda for the decades to come. It must openly reemphasize its liberal democratic values and identify itself as a leading and inspiring power in the age of globalization. It has to regain its power to inspire its own society, as well as those in its surrounding, if it wants to avoid disintegration and a fall from grace.

In this urgent process of redefining Europe's self, it is again likely that Russia, the Middle East and North Africa, as well as Turkey, will again serve as Europe's "others" like they did in the past. Yet, in comparison, now more than ever Turkey plays a vital role as one of the EU's oldest and most important partners.<sup>3</sup> Despite all justified doubts about the widely controversial, crisis-ridden evolution of "New Turkey" and the still rather gloomy state of the European Union in general (and of the EU enlargement and neighborhood policy in particular), there is still so far no evidence that either Turkey or the EU and its members would unilaterally and ultimately break with Turkey's accession process – simply because both are aware of their various interdependencies and the high potentials of their partnership in terms of politics and security, economy, trade and energy, as well as socio-cultural relations. Even a resumption of the accession talks may become reality in the future, especially if the Cyprus conflict draws closer to a solution as recent indicators from the island show.

However, both parties have so far failed completely to meet the most crucial challenges of this process: to make Turkey's democratization sustainable, to start preparing the EU for a future round of expansion, and to convince the EU public that the citizens of Turkey and other neighboring countries are accepted as active participants in the project to create the future Europe, i.e. to advance today's "differentiated" European integration.<sup>4</sup> Compared to the past, when "othering" was used as a means to construct a

common European identity and to proceed with the integration process by excluding those who seemingly did not fit into the "club," this approach is no more logical or adequate to meet the needs of the Union today in times of globalization and increasing transnational interconnections. What is necessary instead is the creation of a strong, inclusive European narration in order to form a common identity, agency, and capability for joint action.<sup>5</sup>

### A decisive moment for common strategic action

The word "crisis," from its Greek root *krísis*, means "decision." It should be understood less as a situation full of desperation than as a strategic moment in which "a decisive intervention can, and indeed must, be made."<sup>6</sup> Despite all widespread perplexity and pessimism about the current and continuing state of a deep-rooted and multidimensional crisis that Turkey and Europe find themselves in nowadays, acknowledging this state of crisis leads to a common horizon of perception and to the recognition of shared experiences. There is hope that through this, Turkey and the EU may join political and societal forces, and that challenges can be met and crisis can ultimately be overcome. Against this background, strategic thinking, deliberation, and action for a common future seem both feasible and urgent. Policymakers within and beyond the EU, thus including Turkey and other neighboring countries, should enter into open and mutually inspirational dialogue with each other and with intellectuals, multipliers, and opinion-shapers in their societies for the sake of Europe's unity in diversity.

3 See also Martti Ahtisaari et al., "An EU-Turkey reset," Project-Syndicate, March 13, 2015, accessed April 27, 2015, <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/eu-turkey-accession-talks-by-martti-ah-tisaari-et-al-2015-03>.

4 On the latter, as a concept, see Bertelsmann Stiftung, *The new Europe – Strategies for differentiated integration* (Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers: Gütersloh, 1997); or, rather recently, see also Nicolai von Ondarza, *Strengthening the core or splitting Europe? Prospects and pitfalls of a strategy of differentiated integration* (SWP Research Paper 2: Berlin, 2013). With regard to Turkey, see Meltem Müftüler-Bağ, "The future of Europe, differentiated integration and Turkey's role" (Rome: Global Turkey in Europe Commentary 9, 2013).

5 See also Gerard Delanty (ed.), *Europe and Asia beyond East and West* (Routledge: London/ New York, 2006).

6 Colin Hay, "Crisis and the structural transformation of the state: Interrogating the process of change," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 1, no.3 (1999): 317. Hay reconsiders the classical terminology of "crisis" developed by linguist Reinhart Koselleck (1988), who defines crisis as "a moment of objective contradiction, yet subjective intervention" (*ibid.*, 323).

## TURKEY – EU COOPERATION IN FOREIGN POLICY: SOME THOUGHTS

Emre Hatipoğlu

Many have contributed to the debate on whether continuity or change has marked the evolution of Turkish foreign policy during the last decade. However, this debate has often failed to distinguish between foreign policy *aims* and foreign policy *tools*. Such a conflation of concepts makes it difficult to identify the issue areas and where Turkey and the EU can cooperate with respect to foreign policy. If the two parties can manage to define common aims and coordinate their tools according to such aims in a partnership scheme, a number of cooperation opportunities exist. I also argue that a thorough understanding of the internal drives that have shaped Turkey's foreign policy is key in identifying where and how Turkey and the EU can cooperate. These drives are: (1) the unipolar environment as a result of the end of Cold War; (2) Turkey's increasing power; and, finally, (3) the popularization of foreign policy in Turkey's domestic politics.

Historically, the multifaceted alliance with Western powers forced Turkey to relinquish a substantial portion of its autonomy for formulating foreign policy. One illustrative consequence of opting for such a "mono-track foreign policy shaped by NATO's preferences" was Turkey distancing itself from the Middle East. In return, Turkey was able to balance against revisionist demands of the Soviet Union.

As Turkey grew more capable and domestic concerns became more relevant, however, the Cold War conception of Turkey's role as a mere container became obsolete. With the end of the Soviet threat, Turkey started exploring its options to shape the environment around it to its liking. The 1990s,

however, marked a mismatch between Turkey's aims and the tools it could afford. This mismatch was gradually addressed during the following decade.

To illustrate, Turkey has been trying to shape the political turmoil in many Arab countries, occasionally taking unilateral action to change the status quo around it.<sup>7</sup> Such domestic concerns especially manifested themselves in Turkey's attitude towards the Syrian civil war, where the AKP government adopted a pro-Sunni sectarian foreign policy using overt and covert means to assist the Sunni rebels against the Assad regime. The Turkish government has supplemented such efforts in the Arab countries with other tools of engagement such as mediation efforts, economic sanctions, and preferential trade schemes. That being said, Turkey has also repeatedly proved its commitment to NATO to maintain its security status quo, be it against an acute threat (as was the case with the stationing of the Patriot missiles in Southern Turkey against Syrian Scuds), or conventional threats.<sup>8</sup> Turkey has also been maintaining the status quo on a number of issues, such as the Aegean issue and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation initiative it revitalized about a decade ago.

Turkey has been trying to substantiate its foreign policy aims by resorting to an increasingly diverse portfolio of foreign policy *tools*. To illustrate, Turkey has been frequently issuing sanction threats and

7 Ziya Öniş, "Turkey and the Arab Spring: Between ethics and self-interest," *Insight Turkey* 14, no. 1 (2012): 45-63.

8 F. Stephen Larrabee, "Turkey's New Geopolitics," *Survival* 52, no. 2 (2010): 157-180.

sometimes carrying out these threats (e.g. Armenia, Syria). Turkey has also been investing in becoming a mediation hub in the region and has been occasionally successful. Comparing Turkey's successful mediation attempt in the Balkans, which resulted in the Istanbul Declaration, with the concomitant failure of the Prud/Butmir process illustrates that Turkey's historical ties can add richness to an otherwise bureaucratized European foreign policy.<sup>9</sup> Foreign aid has become another forte of Turkish foreign policy. Turkey has become one of the larger donors of foreign aid, with its public aid reaching more than three billion USD in 2013, a figure that is roughly on par with those of Italy and Switzerland.

In addition to putting such emphasis on "soft" foreign policy tools intended to change the behavior of its partners, Turkey has also been transforming its military towards a change-seeking one. Parting with its status quo-seeking, manpower intensive military structure, Turkey has decided to invest in capital-intensive power projection capabilities, such as tanker planes, longer-range warships, and unmanned aerial vehicles. To illustrate, since 1980, the amount of military spending per personnel increased almost five times, from 4,200 to in excess of 20,000 constant USD. Such a transformation of Turkey's military structure also makes Turkey a natural partner for the EU's new security concept, which emphasizes fast response and civilian capacity building. Turkey's civilian capacity building efforts in the Balkans, Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and Afghanistan in particular over the last decade are especially of note.<sup>10</sup>

The final point to be emphasized regarding Turkish foreign policy is the increasing connection between domestic politics and foreign policy. Turkish foreign

policy is increasingly responsive to domestic politics: water no longer stops at the water's edge. Such domestic interest will inevitably translate into foreign policy commitments for the Turkish government, like the issue of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar. As such, it is of utmost interest for EU officials to consider (i) whether they want to share the burden of their global commitments with Turkey, and if so, (ii) under what type of an institutional structure the two partners can cooperate.

9 Reina Zenelaj, Nimet Beriker and Emre Hatipoglu, forthcoming, "Determinants of Mediation Success in Post-Conflict Bosnia: A Focused Comparison," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*.

10 Teri Murphy and Onur Sazak, *Turkey's Civilian Capacity in Post-Conflict Reconstruction* (Istanbul Policy Center: Istanbul, 2012).

## TURKEY AND GERMANY: JOINT FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION IN THE REGION

Michael Nowak

*Preliminary note: The views expressed here are personal and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Federal Foreign Office.*

Turkey and Germany share many foreign policy interests. There is one reason for this convergence that may not come to mind immediately but is nonetheless fundamental: Both countries are particularly exposed to external markets. The McKinsey Global Institute's Connectedness Index, which ranks 131 countries on total flows of goods, services, finance, people, data, and communication, shows that Germany is interlinked with the world more than any other country. Turkey, too, clearly has profited tremendously from globalization, be it in the construction business or through companies with worldwide operations such as Turkish Airlines. Turkey's foreign trade increased from 300 billion USD to 400 billion USD in the period between 2010 and 2014. Despite a recent slow-down, Turkey's export industry remains strong. Many Turkish companies are globally competitive and keep looking for business opportunities beyond their immediate neighborhood. But companies prepared to take extra risks abroad also need a framework to operate in. The same applies for such agencies as TIKA or GIZ, Yunus Emre, or the Goethe-Institute.

As we are reminded daily, the existing world order is under attack, especially in the region—be it through the current geopolitical confrontation in Europe, the dissolution of state structures in the Middle East and Northern Africa, or the emergence of powerful and violent non-state actors. Stabiliza-

tion efforts and the promotion of universal norms and principles are more important now than ever.

One obvious way to serve these goals is strengthening Euro-Atlantic structures, first and foremost through cohesion within NATO. Turkey has proven its reliability as a NATO ally time and again. A particularly salient example was the decision taken in 2011 to participate in the missile defense program, despite great pressure from regional powers such as Iran. Germany for its part has shown solidarity by participating in the "Active Fence" mission, stationing patriot missiles in Kahramanmaraş since 2013 to defend Turkish territory against possible attacks. Beyond NATO, there is a common interest in linking Turkey closer to the European Union. In this context, it is encouraging to see that in its 2014 Transatlantic Trends Study, GMF found that 53% of respondents in Turkey favored a European orientation of their country as opposed to only 45% the year before.

We, Germany, need Turkey, and Turkey needs us. As Fuat Keyman has put it, Turkey is an "indispensable country." For Germany and its European partners, it is of particular importance that Turkey be an anchor of stability in its neighborhood. The June 2015 parliamentary elections were a forceful demonstration that Turkey does have the capacity to be a model of democracy for a region in turmoil. Turkey can also exert considerable soft power by virtue of its relative economic strength, having become a net IMF contributor after repaying its last debt tranche in 2013 and being able to disburse humanitarian and development aid. Moreover,

Turkey has a popular culture that strikes a chord with people in many countries.

In this view, it is crucial that Turkey use its strong position in order to be a mediator that can communicate with a variety of actors through different channels. Turkey is most effective when it shows pragmatism and a will for compromise, and it avoids falling into the trap of following openly partisan politics. What makes Turkey so attractive to the outside world is not its imperial heritage but its very special mix of a modern and diverse society with a secular state and moderate Islam, economic success, and democracy – a country that geographically lies both in Europe and in Asia, shares a common history with the Middle East and Northern Africa, but at the same time is a member of NATO and the EU Customs Union.

As to opportunities for concrete cooperation in the region, I would like to focus on three priority areas. For one thing, there is Russia. We should closely coordinate our policies, be it on sanctions or on energy. The diversification of our energy supplies is vital for the resilience and the stability of our economic systems. Turkey aspires to become an energy hub for Europe. At the same time, it is highly dependent on energy imports, especially from Russia, which provide roughly two-thirds of gas consumed in Turkey. Our common goal must be not to destroy beneficial interdependence between suppliers such as Russia and consumers such as Turkey or Germany, but rather to reduce existing vulnerabilities. The more options there are the better. There is great potential for regional energy cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean. Together, we must work towards setting the right conditions for making use of this potential.

Second, there is the broader Black Sea region, with Ukraine and the countries of the Southern Caucasus, where there is an ongoing state and nation building effort. The Azeri-Armenian conflict is far from

being resolved and could come back to the headlines if not properly managed. Turkey should use its influence on Baku to promote peaceful means of conflict resolution as well as the implementation of standards set by OSCE and the Council of Europe. We also encourage Turkey to continue normalization efforts with Armenia, which had a promising start with the Zurich protocols in 2009 but have been suspended since 2010.

Third, we face a common challenge in the Middle East and Northern Africa. The war in Syria poses very concrete threats to Turkey, as shown by the hostage crisis with the Consulate General in Mosul and fights along the border, most recently in Tel Abyad. The great number of Syrian refugees in Turkey, over 2 million people by now, is a huge strain on the Turkish state. There may be differences between Turkey and Germany on which groups to support in Syria and in which way. But there are no easy answers, and probably no good options to choose from. However, one thing is clear: The fight against IS in Syria and Iraq must be a joint endeavor. Common action must be continued against foreign terrorist fighters. Beyond the immediate armed conflict, Germany and Turkey should also identify projects for institution building and civil society development in Syria and Iraq.

The dossiers outlined will remain on our common agenda for the years to come. Now that the Strategic Dialogue between our countries has been elevated to the level of heads of state, there is an additional framework to discuss and prepare measures with which we can make a true difference in the region.

## THE ASYMMETRICAL DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE EU

Ebru Turhan

Turkey presents a special case in the widening of the European Union (EU). Each enlargement round of the EU had its particularities. Yet, the Turkish accession process greatly differs from previous expansions of the EU. Still, a decade after Turkey began its accession talks, uncertainty remains whether it will ever join the Union as a full member. Only 14 out of 35 negotiation chapters have been opened throughout the 10 years of Turkey's accession talks with the EU, while 17 remain blocked by the Council of the EU or two member states (France and Cyprus). Turkey's crooked EU path is in fact the result of "cyclical trends" in European-Turkish relations.<sup>11</sup> A typical pattern of EU-Turkish dialogue is usually marked by moments of intensive cooperation followed by periods of crisis and conflict.

Recently, however, the cyclical relationship between Turkey and the EU has been replaced by an apparent stalemate. Within the last five years of Turkey's EU accession process, only two negotiation chapters [Chapter 12: Food safety, veterinary, phytosanitary policy, and Chapter 22: Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments] have been opened. The accession talks on strategically important chapters related to issues such as energy, judiciary and fundamental rights, justice, and customs union are likely to remain blocked until positive and productive steps can be taken towards a permanent solution to the Cyprus conflict. The standstill in the Turkish reform process also obstructs the consistent

continuation of accession talks. The European Commission's (EC) 2014 Progress Report on Turkey raised concerns about the stability of democratic institutions and rule of law in Turkey. The document particularly criticized serious shortcomings in Ankara's response to corruption allegations and the independence, impartiality, and effectiveness of the judiciary.<sup>12</sup> As for now, the new Commission does not provide explicit support for Turkish membership in the EU. In his political guidelines, the new President of the EC, Jean-Claude Juncker, does not mention Turkey when it comes to the enlargement of the EU, instead placing strong emphasis on talks with the Western Balkans.<sup>13</sup> This clearly signifies the new EC's prioritization of EU enlargement into the Western Balkans over Turkish accession to the EU.

While the political dialogue between Turkey and the EU has been rather icy over the past few years, economic relations between the two parties have continued without a significant hitch and have even gradually improved. The EU is by far Turkey's most important trading partner; in 2014 Turkey remained the EU's sixth largest trading partner with a total trade volume of €128 billion. In 2013, Turkey was the only country among the Union's top ten trading partners that increased its exports to

11 Luigi Narbone and Nathalie Tocci, "Running around in circles? The cyclical relationship between Turkey and the European Union," *Journal of Southern Europe and Balkans* 9, no. 3 (2007): 233-245.

12 European Commission, *Turkey 2014 Progress Report*, COM (2014) 700 final, October 8, 2014, Brussels.

13 Jean-Claude Juncker, *A New Start for Europe: My Agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change: Political Guidelines for the Next Commission*, Strasbourg, July 15, 2014, 11.

the EU.<sup>14</sup> Over the past five years, EU member states have accounted for about 75% of the total foreign direct investment (FDI) to Turkey.

Turkey's economic ties with Germany are particularly strong. Germany is Turkey's most important trading partner and its biggest foreign direct investor, with the operations of around 6,000 German companies or companies with German capital interest in Turkey. Various German companies manage their regional operations from Turkey, improving Turkey's status as a regional business hub. The Eurozone crisis and the gathering of clouds over Germany's other key export markets have provided a window of opportunity for the enhancement of German-Turkish business relations. Germany's interest in expanding the bilateral ties with Turkey in the crisis era has been demonstrated by the increasing number of German delegations composed of relevant ministers and high-level entrepreneurs who have visited Turkey. These visits also reflect the intensification of state-private sector dialogue in Germany to boost German-Turkish economic ties.

Looking at the status quo in EU-Turkish relations, it may seem at first sight that the stagnation of Turkey's political integration into the EU, on the one hand, and steadily developing bilateral economic relations, on the other, may be tolerable for both parties. However, a closer look reveals that the asymmetrical development of political and economic relations between Turkey and the EU has already started to present important challenges for effective bilateral cooperation.

EU negotiations with the United States over the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) reveal the implications of the deadlock in Turkey's accession talks for bilateral economic

relations. In 1995, Turkey initiated the Customs Union (CU) with the EU, thereby passing its control over trade policies to the Union, predicting that it would soon become a full member state.<sup>15</sup> The CU provides for common external tariffs allowing the countries that the EU signs preferential trade agreements with to access the Turkish market without having to open up their own markets to Turkey. Since Turkey did not (and still has yet to) become a full member of the EU following its entrance into the CU, this has put the country in an unfavorable position in the global economic order. According to the calculations of the German Ifo Institute, an EU-U.S. free trade agreement would lead to a decrease in Turkish gross domestic product (GDP) by over 1.5%.<sup>16</sup> Since Turkey's automatic inclusion in TTIP without being a full member of the EU is fairly unlikely, Turkey and the EU agreed in May 2015 to a road map to modernize and deepen the CU in order to minimize the short-term losses from TTIP and other future free trade agreements between the EU and third parties.

The gradual enhancement of EU/German-Turkish economic relations, on the one hand, and the stagnation of Turkey's political integration into the EU, on the other, does not provide a sustainable status quo for both actors. The stalemate in Turkey's EU accession talks has held negative implications for the maintenance of a stable political environment and for doing business in Turkey. The political turmoil during the Gezi Park protests revealed the strong tie between political and economic stability when the stock market witnessed the biggest daily drop in a decade and the Turkish lira weakened remarkably. Such incidents affected foreign companies' business performance in Turkey. Consequently, the Federation of German Industries (BDI) warned

14 "Extra-EU28 trade, by main partners, total product," *Eurostat*, accessed May 25, 2015, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tet00035&language=en>.

15 Ebru Turhan and Erdal Yalçın, "Çok Vitesli Avrupa'ya Uyum Sürecinde Gümrük Birliği'nin Rolü," *TÜSIAD Görüş Dergisi*, January 2015, No. 86, 60-63.

16 *Ibid.*

Turkey about the economic implications of political instability.<sup>17</sup> Economic and political stability greatly facilitates the influx of FDI. It should not come as a surprise that since the outbreak of domestic turmoil in Turkey in 2013, with Gezi events serving as a fundamental catalyst, there has been a decrease in the number of newly established German companies in Turkey each year (See Table 1).

**Table 1: Number of companies with German capital established in mentioned year**

Year	Number of New German Companies in Turkey
2009	492
2010	468
2011	599
2012	491
2013	349
2014	338

Source: Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, FDI Data Monthly Newsletters (2009-2014)

Turkish and European leaders should be mindful of both short and long-term consequences of the asymmetrical development of political and economic relations between Turkey and the EU and evaluate the Turkish-European relationship in view of changing systemic and institutional conditions. The Eurozone crisis and European efforts to tackle the crisis through the implementation of structural reforms and the introduction of tighter regulations at the supranational level revealed that not all member states have been ready for and capable of putting the appropriate measures into practice. The latest statements of the EU and its member states indicate the tendency towards a multi-tier Europe founded on the principle of

differentiated integration.<sup>18</sup> Within the framework of this rather flexible integration model, Turkey's gradual political and economic integration with the EU should continue, whereas a full Turkish membership in the EU shall remain a long-term goal and option. By implementing this political agenda, the EU could confirm that it still acts as a fundamental and credible anchor for democratic reform and consolidation in Turkey, on the one hand, and safeguard its economic interests, on the other.<sup>19</sup>

17 "Industrie beklagt 'Kakophonie' der Euro-Retter," *Handelsblatt*, July 3, 2012.

18 European Council, *Conclusions of the European Council, 26-27 June 2014*, EUCO 79/14, Brussels, June 27, 2014, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/143478.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/143478.pdf).

19 For a more detailed discussion on this topic please see Erdal Yalçın and Ebru Turhan, "Die Integration der Türkei in die EU am Scheideweg? Optionen für eine Vertiefung der Wirtschaftsbeziehungen im Zeichen von TTIP," *Südsteuropa Mitteilungen* 55, no. 3 (2015): 32-41.

## TURKEY'S DIASPORA POLICIES AND GERMANY'S TURKS: NO FIFTH COLUMN, BUT MULTIPLE TENSIONS

Kerem Öktem

Turkey's diaspora policies have been in the making for a while. Since the first AKP government in 2002, Turkish leaders have shown increasing interest in Turkish immigrant communities in Western Europe. It was not before the inauguration of the "Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities" (henceforth "Presidency") in 2010, however, that Turkey launched a concerted policy towards its expatriate citizens. This new interest in the "brothers and sisters" abroad has created new opportunity spaces for people related to the Republic of Turkey. It has also pushed Turks in Europe into a political space where homeland and country of residence interests are constantly being negotiated. Consequently, Turkey-related communities in Germany have become re-politicized in a fashion that has raised more than a few eyebrows among German decision makers and the general public. This brief explores the creation of the new political field of the Turkish diaspora. It does so by examining the origins of Turkey's diaspora policy, the foundation of the Presidency, and by seeking to evaluate its impact on Turks in Germany.

Since the beginning of Turkish labor migration to Germany in the 1960s, Turkish state agencies have sought to control and shape the emerging communities there. Initially, they employed Turkish nationalist groups like the Nationalist Action Party (MHP) for these aims. After the military coup of 1980, Turkish state policy shifted towards the creation of a Turkish-Islamic bond with the homeland. It was the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the Diyanet, and its German organization, DITIB

(Turkish Islamic Union of the Presidency of Religious Affairs), that were tasked with establishing this bond.

The "Presidency of Turks abroad and related communities" is anything but a simple continuation of this state policy. Earlier efforts had been implemented by Kemalist state elites that were less than sympathetic to Turkish labor migrants - whose mostly rural origins and relative conservatism they saw as a stain on the country's Western self-image. The Presidency, however, was established under very different conditions and with two interrelated aims. It is a pet project of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, at the time Prime Minister and leader of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). Both have been successful in projecting a self-image crafted along conservative Muslim social values and pride in Ottoman history. In this "neo-Ottoman" and Muslim self-image of Turkishness, Turkish communities abroad could be reimagined as both representatives of Turkish interests and as citizens who enjoy the full support of the Turkish Republic. This civilizational bonding exercise led to organic relations of mutual interest between parts of the Turkish community in Germany and the AKP government. It also created the conditions for another AKP policy: Harnessing the voter's potential in the diaspora and benefiting from stronger support for the AKP abroad than in the homeland. This second goal has been the main reason for the swift introduction of extra-territorial voting in Europe and beyond. Such a step could have been construed as a commendable extension of Turkey's

democratic space to its citizens abroad. This step, however, was driven by anything but democratic concerns: It was a clear attempt to consolidate power in Turkey by galvanizing Turks abroad through integrating them into the ruling party's clientelist logic of mutual interest.

While it is the AKP's power politics that has led to the (partial) integration of Turks abroad into Turkey's political space, this integration creates significant challenges for German decision makers. By reimagining Turks abroad as part of a political and cultural community with Turkey at its center, the diaspora approach is an immediate retaliation to German efforts at "integration" and inclusive citizenship. It would not be exaggerated to speak of a clash of "models of integration." From a German point of view, this must be particularly frustrating, as the country has finally come around to a more sensible engagement with its many immigrant communities. As German immigration, identity, and citizenship politics are becoming modernized and globalized, a significant section of its largest immigrant community is being pulled back into the political field of a third country. And this is not just any political field but one of extreme political polarization between its constituents. It ranges from the increasingly conservative and authoritarian AKP to the Kemalists of the Republican People's Party, the gradually less ethno-nationalist pro-Kurdish Democratic Peoples' Party (HDP) to the diehard nationalists of the MHP.

Yet, for Germany, as well as for Germany's Turks, Turkey's diaspora policies do not have to lead to the worst-case scenario of a "Turkish Fifth Column" in Europe, exemplified by the disquieting election appearances of Erdoğan in Germany and other EU countries (before the presidential election in 2014 and the national elections in June 2015). It may even bear some potential for both. Firstly, the capacity of Turkey's diaspora policy is limited and owes much to the power of symbolic mobilization.

The Presidency has not even one hundred, much less a very motivated one hundred, employees loyal to Erdoğan. They are not only tasked with the organization of immigrant communities in Western Europe, but they also supply cultural services for Turkic people in Central Asia, mobilize Muslims in the Balkans, and administer tens of thousands of scholarships for foreign students in Turkey. Deprived of the now waning symbolic power of Erdoğan, the Presidency has begun to lose much of its appeal. As the AKP power project is facing a severe impasse, Turkey's pull on Turks abroad is diminishing. More importantly, Turkey's diaspora policy can also be taken as a reminder for German decision makers to continue to modernize the legal and societal conditions of an open society. A society that is proud of its diversity and able to provide a fair deal for all of its members does not have to be afraid of third party interventions. When this happens, Turkey's diaspora policy in Germany will become a side story, no matter which political party constitutes the government in Ankara.<sup>20</sup>

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20 For a more detailed discussion, please consult Kerem Ökten, *Turkey's New Diaspora Policy: The challenge of inclusivity, outreach and capacity* (Istanbul: Istanbul Policy Center 2014). It is also available online: [http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/14627\\_KeremÖktenWEB.18.08.pdf](http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/14627_KeremÖktenWEB.18.08.pdf).

## TURKEY'S NEW DIASPORA POLICY: LEVERAGE OR OBSTACLE FOR TURKEY'S EU-MEMBERSHIP CAUSE?

Yaşar Aydın

In recent years, Turkish politicians have increasingly intervened into political and social matters that concern Turks in Germany. The former Turkish prime minister, now President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited Germany several times and held speeches in which he condemned assimilation as a “crime against humanity,” calling on Turks not only to maintain their relationship with Turkey and Turkish culture but also to work in the interests of Turkey. As such, Erdoğan’s speeches and other high-ranking Turkish politicians’ similar comments have caused friction in German-Turkish relations.

Ankara’s enhanced interest in Turkish migrants in Germany is part of a more deliberate diaspora policy: Turkey has categorized such a group as diaspora in order to pursue a strategy of establishing or maintaining permanent, institutionalized relationships with migrants of Turkish decent in Europe, especially in Germany. Classifying the Turkish community in Germany and elsewhere in Europe as “diaspora” marks a clear break with the perception of Turkish migrants as “guest workers” who are only in Europe temporarily.

According to scientific literature, four distinguishing features constitute a diaspora, which are also characteristic of migrants in Europe that originate from Turkey:

- a) *Dispersion*: spread of an ethnic group or citizens of a state beyond the territory of origin;
- b) *Retrospection*: ties of a migrant group to the country of origin and identification with it;

- c) *Community spirit*: collective experience of exclusion and discrimination of a migrant group in the host country;
- d) *Exterritoriality*: a collective identity that is no longer necessarily tied to belonging to only a specific territorial area—be it the host country, the region of residence, or the country or region of origin.<sup>21</sup>

The presence of people originating from Turkey in Germany justifies the use of the term “diaspora,” as this group has an identity that can be distinguished from that of the majority of society. They maintain close and permanent relationships to Turkey and possess a high degree of organization. Although they have not been entirely included in the formation of public opinion in Germany, they are nevertheless now recognized as a primary target group – as electors and potential voters of special political parties – more so than in the past. However, this transnational diaspora in Germany is far from being homogeneous – either in culture, ethnicity, religion, or with respect to the spectrum of employment. The occupational positions of people of Turkish origin in Germany vary, from those working in highly qualified positions and entrepreneurs to those working 3D jobs.

The Turkish government aims at mobilizing the Turkish diaspora in order to achieve its political aspirations such as Turkey’s EU membership. The diaspora is intended to be a mouthpiece for the inter-

<sup>21</sup> Helmuth Berking, “‘Homes away from Home’: Zum Spannungsverhältnis von Diaspora und Nationalstaat,” *Berliner Journal für Soziologie*, no. 1 (2000): 53.

ests of Turkey. For this purpose, the Turkish government encourages Turks to be well integrated in Germany, because only then can they have an impact on institutions such as political parties and associations and thus act as lobbyists for Turkey. Ankara is of the opinion that a poorly integrated community could have unfavorable effects for Turkey's EU membership because it would produce a poor image of Turkey among the majority in German society.

From Ankara's point of view, globalization is forcing Turkey to reposition itself in the web of international relations and to make use of the potential of Turkish migrants who are scattered across the world. Therefore, Turkey will continue to focus its attention on the Turkish diaspora especially in Germany.

Why then is it often so difficult for Germany to make a balanced assessment of the interests of the Turkish government in regards to its Turkish migrants? First, it is due to the skepticism of many German decision makers towards the transnational connections of Turks in Germany, which are regarded as an obstacle to their integration into German society. Second, there are widespread concerns about the Turkish government exercising "externally controlled penetration" of the Turkish diaspora in order to support the group. Third, in its judgment of "diaspora" and "diaspora policy" in general, numerous German decision makers are influenced by the specter of a "fifth column" or "Trojan horse." Consequently, these decision makers are losing sight of the integrative aspects of both the diaspora as a way of life and of Turkey's diaspora policy.

Additionally, Turkish diaspora policy attracts criticism because it has become less inclusive over time. It is not willing or able to integrate migrant associations that have a critical attitude towards the Turkish governments' domestic policies, such as the politicized Kurds, Alevis, and the secular Turks. Furthermore, following the wave of protests in Turkey in 2013, many Turkish migrant associations have lost

interest in diaspora activities. Excessive use of force and violence by the police to remove the peaceful camping protesters from Gezi Park led to criticism of migrant associations in Germany and triggered its own wave of protest campaigns in Germany against the Turkish government. This increased the alienation of the secular oriented migrants from the Turkish government and, consequently, German skepticism of the Turkish diaspora policy.

Turkey's diaspora policy, furthermore, holds the danger of reinforcing cultural fragmentation within the diaspora in Germany—precisely because of its emphasis on conservative social and Turkish national values. This fragmentation has clearly put limits on the Turkish government's attempts to intervene and control. Turkish diaspora policy and the rhetoric that accompanies it are thus no longer able to appeal to the cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity of the Turkish diaspora in Germany.

Therefore, Ankara should accept the autonomy of diaspora organizations, recognize the cultural and political diversity of the Turkish diaspora, and continue to support structural, social, and political integration and naturalization of Turks in Germany. Only then can Turkish diaspora policy function as leverage for Turkey's EU membership cause. Otherwise, if the government continues supporting a cultural-ethnically oriented national identity (Muslim Nationalism, Muslim Turkishness) or conservative social ethics, it can act as an obstacle to membership: Contributing to the reinforcement of anti-Turkey attitudes and even creating conflicts between the Turkish diaspora and their host countries.<sup>22</sup>

22 Further reading: Yaşar Aydın, *The New Turkish Diaspora Policy: Its Aims, Their Limits and the Challenges for Associations of People of Turkish Origin and Decision-makers in Germany* (SWP: Berlin, October 2014), [http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-research-papers/swp-research-paper-detail/article/neue\\_tuerkische\\_diasporapolitik.html](http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-research-papers/swp-research-paper-detail/article/neue_tuerkische_diasporapolitik.html).

## EUROPE CAN ALSO DEAL WITH A CONSERVATIVE MUSLIM TURKEY

Günter Seufert

For Turkey's former elite, Western European countries functioned as political (nation-state) and cultural (secularization) models. As far as security policy was concerned, the connection to Europe and the West seemed the only option. As a result, Turkey occupied a position at the edge of Europe, not only in territorial but also in cultural and political terms. This status was rejected by former foreign minister and current prime minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, who invoked powerful images of the Turks' own tradition and civilization and of the history of the Ottoman Empire. For him, this period in which Turkey was reduced to a factor in the policies of the West and, thus, culturally and politically marginalized was just one episode in the history of the country that had to come to an end sooner or later. Today, this assessment is shared by a new and aspiring economic elite, by the overwhelming majority of foreign policy experts, and by large swathes of the population.

The political, social, and economic developments that have contributed so decisively to the establishment of this new normality within Turkey appear irreversible. This applies equally to the collapse of the republican security paradigm, whose constituent foreign and domestic policy components have now ceased to exist. Important events in this context include the end of the Cold War and the elimination of taboos surrounding central domestic threat scenarios, namely "reactionary Islamism" and "Kurdish separatism." This also applies to the weakening of Kemalism, the former state ideology, and the resultant delegitimization of extra-parliamentary veto powers of the military, political bureaucracy, and supreme judiciary.

Like the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) itself, the ambitious entrepreneurial elite and new

pool of foreign policy experts financed by it embody the socio-conservative population's successful integration within politics, the economy, and educational establishments. For decades, the old Kemalist establishment blocked political participation by this section of Turkish society. Socio-conservative members of the population are united by a felt exclusion, which exceeds the limits of class and region. This experience also spawned a political discourse that presents an alternative to Kemalism and rejects cultural Westernization dictated from above just as vehemently as a foreign and security policy connection to the West that apparently brooks no alternative.

The encounter between the political, economic, and educational integration of the religious, socio-conservative population and processes of economic and cultural globalization enabled this milieu's elites to redefine their stance on modernism and present themselves as supporters of an alternative modernity. Their previous knee-jerk rejection of Westernization and connecting to the West (including EU membership) has now been replaced by a self-assured strategy that perceives Turkey as a potential regional center and comprehends the country's own pace of development in the context of global change.

Those who cling to this view assume that sustained economic success, as well as its contribution to an initial alteration in the grave development gap between the affluent West and the languishing East of the country, is the most important confirmation of the new strategy's validity.

Approval of the new foreign policy's fundamental parameters in Turkey's society extends far beyond the AKP's electorate. This is underlined by the new

foreign policy's compatibility with an explicitly nationalistic stance and refers to a series of conflicts between the former republican elite, the EU, and the United States.

What are the consequences for the European Union? Turkey's relations with the European Union and a number of its member states, on the one side, and with the United States, on the other, are affected in quite different ways. Notwithstanding the stir created by Turkey's policies in Iraq, Syria, and Israel, its relationship with the United States appears to have been less affected by the realignment of Turkish foreign policy than its ties with the European Union.

Military and security policy concerns have always been at the root of the Turkish-American cooperation, which is strongly interest-driven. Although major crises are possible, political about-turns often smooth things out. In addition, the United States is reliant on the existence of a strong Turkey in the region in the wake of modest success in regards to its Near and Middle East policies over the past decade. From the U.S. perspective, only a strong Turkey can play a useful, strategic role in the region and act as an indispensable political and military ally in crisis centers like Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Turkey's immense significance in the United States gives Ankara considerable political leeway as far as Washington is concerned. And Ankara uses this freedom when shaping its relations with Israel and Russia, doing so in a manner that partially contradicts U.S. perceptions and interests yet fails to seriously threaten the strategic collaboration between Ankara and Washington.

In contrast, Turkey's relations with the European Union and several major EU member states are in far poorer shape. Turkey's relationship with Europe has always been ambivalent. From the outset of the Republic onwards, the relationship is marked as greatly by resistance to European influence in the Middle East and mistrust of European attempts at democratization in Turkey itself as it is by the vision to become part of Europe in terms of culture

and civilization, as well as in terms of economic and security policy.

The paralyzed state of Turkey's EU accession process and simultaneous consolidation of the hegemony enjoyed by the new religious socio-conservative elite threaten to undermine the vision of Turkey's Europeanization both in terms of foreign and security policy, as well as its vision of civilization, while they concomitantly strengthen the "negative" aspects of relations with Europe, which are characterized by foreign policy competition, cultural alienation, and domestic mistrust. Economic and technical exchanges with Europe remain the most powerful unifying element and essential corrective factor against a continued deterioration in relations. Their significance for Turkey is still considerable. However, the European Union's influence is dwindling in this area, too, in proportion to the influence of newly emerging powers.

The Cyprus conflict and the renewed securitization of Turkish foreign policy in the context of Iraq and Syria are issues ideally suited to provoke a further decline in EU-Turkish relations. Nevertheless, Turkey remains the regional player closest to Europe, particularly in the Middle Eastern context, that is simultaneously capable of exercising the most positive influence within the region

As a result, European politics would be well advised to seize the opportunity offered by the more philosophical stance currently adopted by the Turkish leadership and population regarding their country's admission to the European Union. Precisely because Turkey is no longer seeking membership at any cost, the obstacles impeding the progress of accession negotiations, which are rooted in the domestic policies of several EU states, should now be navigable. Nothing would counteract the pervasively culturalistic interpretation of personal identity in Turkey more effectively than a revisitation of the grounds for the categorical rejection of Turkish membership by some governments in EU member states.

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