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European Perspectives on Turkey's Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy

Edited by
Elena Baracani
Merve Çalımlı

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European Perspectives on Turkey's Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy

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Elena Baracani and Merve Çalimli

Turkey has become an increasingly important state due to its different roles stemming from both its domestic and regional challenges. This edited volume aims to contribute to the recent scholarly debates on Turkey by analyzing the challenges faced by Turkey on both the internal and external level, and by reflecting on the implications of Turkey's multiple roles in the period following the coming to power in November 2002 of the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP). To this end, the book focuses on two main thematic research areas: 1) Turkey's thorny accession process to the European Union (EU) since 1999 and the induced process of political transformation; and 2) the increasing importance of Turkey's cooperation with Europe to tackle common security challenges.

In Chapter 1, Elena Baracani and Merve Çalimli, using the concepts of leverage and linkage, show how a combination of EU-oriented and domestic oriented factors favored democratization in Turkey until 2007, while since then the EU lost its leverage on Ankara. Democratization was favorable because the costs of domestic reforms were low due to the high credibility of EU membership and the need of the incumbent government to strengthen its domestic and external legitimation. However, democratization was constrained as the credibility in EU membership perspective and the consistency in the implementation of the pre-accession policy decreased. In addition, the increasing electoral support for the incumbent government reduced its vulnerability to EU pressures.

In Chapter 2, Ziya Öniş and Mustafa Kutlay explore the impact of recent multiple crises on the EU's transformative power from a global political economy point of view. Offering an analytical framework, based on push-and-pull factors derived from the mutually inclusive interaction of European-level dynamics and global transformations, this chapter explains the declining appeal of the EU, with reference to the Turkish

case. The authors identify two main pull factors at the EU level. The first factor is the poor economic performance related to the EU's flawed crisis management strategy. The second factor is the crisis of internal solidarity, causing a decrease in the credibility of its commitment as a "normative power". This is illustrated by the paradigm shift in response to the Arab Spring and the indecisive approach in addressing the recent refugee crisis and the unfolding humanitarian crisis. As for the push factors, the authors mention the identity crisis of the early and mid-2000s due to the constitutional stalemate, the economic and financial crises of post-2008, and the recent refugee crisis. When applied to the Turkish case, reversing economic performance of the EU, the rise of non-Western political economy models, and the internal solidarity crisis of the EU resulted in decreased EU leverage over Turkey. Furthermore, the authors emphasize that geostrategic concerns, stemming from the Arab uprisings and the refugee crisis, intensified the decline of the EU's appeal over Turkey. Reflecting on the failed coup attempt in July 2016, the authors argue that the rising nationalistic and anti-Western sentiments led to a further loss of EU appeal.

In Chapter 3, Rocco Polin offers a condensed account of the evolution of cooperation between the EU and Turkey on migration, with a particular focus on the year-long period lasting from mid-2015, when an increase in migratory flows was registered at the Turkish-Greek border, to mid-2016, after the signature of the controversial EU-Turkey Joint Statement of March 18, 2016. The chapter argues that EU-Turkey cooperation in the field of migration should be developed as an element of a bigger strategic partnership, grounded in common values, as well as in mutual interests.

In Chapter 4, Serena Giusti and Chiara Franco explore the impact of the opening of negotiations with the EU on Turkey's foreign policy. Their empirical grounding suggests that while at the initial stages Turkish alignment with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was more in line with Brussels, as the credibility of membership perspective decreased, Turkish foreign policy orientation shifted. The authors suggest that factors such as the authoritarian drift, the ambition to become a regional hegemonic power, and geo-economic considerations such as energy transit and supplies, have contributed to this shift in Turkish alignment with the EU on CFSP.

In Chapter 5, Merve Çalıklı addresses the issue of democracy promotion in Turkish foreign policy to explain and illustrate why Turkey

adopted such a foreign policy turn. The chapter empirically demonstrates that, with the AKP coming to power, Turkey implemented democracy promotion projects as part of its broader foreign policy activism. As far as motivational aspects are concerned; while Turkey is driven by regional security concerns, the country also attempted to fulfill the role of democracy model for the region, which was a national role conception tailored in the early years of AKP rule.

In Chapter 6, Carlo Frappi analyzes Turkish foreign policy with a particular focus on the Caucasus area by using the “double coupling” dilemma. Focusing on energy cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan, this chapter explores the main drivers of Turkish-Azerbaijani strategic axis, the shifting balance in bargaining power and the evolution of the bilateral relations due to changing energy strategies. The analysis of the bilateral relations with Azerbaijan over energy cooperation illustrates the strategic significance of Turkey at the regional level and the challenges it faces in the pursuit of its economic as well as political interests.

This volume draws the following conclusions with reference to the multiple roles played by Turkey. The declining appeal of EU membership influences Turkey’s role as both a regional actor and a democratizing country. The analyses show that the democratization process, favored by the granting of the accession candidate status, can no longer trigger further democratization, as mutually reinforcing EU-related and Turkey-related factors contribute to the recent authoritarian turn. The declining appeal of the EU, accompanied by the increasing geostrategic significance of Turkey, transformed the country’s relation with the EU into a *de facto* strategic partner. Combined with Turkey’s foreign policy activism, its regional hegemonic aspirations and regional security challenges, EU cooperation with Turkey has evolved into more strategic terms, as illustrated by the policies adopted during the migration crisis of 2015/16 or in the energy sphere.

The analyses put forth reveal that, while on strategic terms there is the necessity to fulfill bilateral cooperation on issues of regional security, on normative terms there is the difficulty to ensure the push for internal democratic mechanisms. The dilemma is how to achieve the balance on the strategic-normative axis. While regional and EU-related factors transformed Turkey into a strategic partner, and the push for a virtuous democratization and Europeanization process of Turkey evaporated, nationalistic and anti-Western sentiments increased, combined with ongoing democratic setbacks.

The editors of the volume are very grateful to the Director of the Research Center on International Politics and Conflict Resolution of the Fondazione Bruno Kessler (FBK-Cerpica)—Filippo Andreatta—and to the Director of the Department of Political and Social Sciences at the University of Bologna—Fabio Giusberti—for having supported and encouraged their research project on Turkey, which led to the realization of an international conference held in Bologna on May 27, 2016, and of this publication.

EU-Turkey Relations: Facilitating or Constraining Democratization?

Elena Baracani and Merve Çalimli

Introduction

Since the 1999 European Council decision to grant Turkey accession candidate status, EU-Turkey relations have been studied mainly in the framework of the Union's enlargement policy, widely defined as the most successful foreign policy tool at the disposal of the Union. Indeed, most of these studies have focused on the diffusion of EU norms in Turkey and its consequent transformation through the process of pre-accession¹, while others have concentrated on how the issues of identity and religion might affect the process of European integration². Recently, new studies have emerged taking specifically into consideration the growing importance of Turkey for the EU in terms of its security and the external dimension of its energy and migration policy³.

Empirical studies on the effects of the enlargement policy on the transformation of Turkey represent an important contribution to the theoretical literature on external governance and Europeanization⁴. Overall, this literature has shown that the Europeanization process of accession candidate countries relies predominantly on the mechanism of conditionality, through which the EU promotes its rules of gover-

¹ See, for example, Faucompret and Konings (2008); Engert (2010); Usul (2010); Avci and Çarkoğlu; Nas and Özer; Ketola (2013).

² See, for example, Jung and Raudvere (2008); Verney and Ifantis (2008); Bogdani (2011); Aydın-Düzgüt (2012).

³ See, for example, Tekin and Williams (2010); Ustun (2010); Biresselioglu (2011); Aydın-Düzgüt and Tocci (2015).

⁴ See Lavenex and Ucarer (2004); Lavenex and Schimmelfennig (2009); Lavenex (2011); Schimmelfennig (2012).

nance by setting them as conditions that acceding countries have to meet if they want to advance in the accession process. However, as this mechanism follows the logic of consequences (March and Olsen 1989), the acceding country's government will comply with EU conditions only if the benefits of EU rewards exceed the domestic costs of adoption. Therefore, it is necessary to take into consideration the preferences and the political agenda of the incumbent government, and/or the eventual presence of veto-players in order to examine the domestic costs of compliance with EU conditions. This literature also highlights the different EU-related factors under which this mode of Europeanization is more likely to have an impact on accession candidate countries. The most important are the speed of reward, the credibility of the promises, and the consistency of the approach. The "speed of reward" involves that the closer the temporal distance is to the payment of rewards, such as, for example, the granting of the accession candidate status or the opening of accession negotiations or new chapters in the negotiations, the higher the incentive will be for the candidate country to comply with the EU conditions. The "credibility of the EU's promises" suggests that it is more likely for the candidate country to comply with the EU conditions when it perceives as "credible" the EU's promise to deliver the reward in case of compliance with its conditions. The "consistency of the EU's conditionality approach" implies that it is more likely that a candidate country will comply with EU political conditions when it perceives that the EU is not subordinating political conditionality to other strategic or economic considerations, and/or when it perceives that there is not conflict among its member states on the application of political conditionality.

This literature on external Europeanization intertwines with democratization studies that underline the increasingly significant role played by the external context in promoting or preventing democratic transition and its outcome⁵. As summarized by Philippe Schmitter (2010, pp. 27-28), the international context, as a variable, is difficult to pin down, its causal impact is often indirect, working through national agents, and it varies greatly according to the size, resource base, regional context, geostrategic location, and alliance structure of the country involved. In their path-breaking conceptualization on the external influence on democratization, Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way (2010, pp. 40-43) argue that this influence is determined by the degree to which governments

⁵ See, for example, Huntington (1991); Whitehead (1996); Pridham et al. (1997); Grugel (1999); Levitsky and Way (2010); Morlino (2012).

are vulnerable to external democratizing pressure (leverage) and the density of economic, geo-political, and social ties between a country and an external actor (linkage). Based on their empirical analysis of 35 competitive authoritarian regimes, they show that since the end of the Cold War, leverage—in the absence of linkage—has rarely been sufficient to induce democratization, as the more diffuse and difficult-to-measure effects of linkage have contributed more consistently (than leverage) to democratization. This involves that linkage can also be considered as a foreign policy tool at the disposal of the EU to anchor third countries and to socialize them to its norms. Indeed, through linkages the EU can persuade third countries—at the level of political and economic elite, but also of the civil society—of the legitimacy and appropriateness of the norms it is promoting. In addition, it is in the framework of its linkages with the target country that the EU develops its conditionality approach and thus exerts its democratic pressures on the target state. Recently Jakob Tolstrup (2014), analyzing the case studies of Belarus and Ukraine, and their linkages with the EU and Russia, has highlighted the role of domestic “gatekeepers”—including state officials, opposition groups, and the economic elite—in contributing to shape a country’s linkage levels. More specifically, he contends that domestic elites actively seek to mold relations with the outside world in ways that help them to gain and keep political and economic power (*ibid.*, p. 127). Thus, linkages would result from both structural conditions, determined by geography and long-term historical relationships, and policy choices at the level of both the external actor and the domestic elite.

In trying to bridge between external Europeanization literature and studies on the international dimension of democratization, this chapter uses the concepts of leverage and linkage in order to analyse how EU-Turkey relations, in combination with domestic related factors, favored democratization in Turkey in the period 2002-2007, and constrained it since then. The period of 2002-2007 is addressed by Ziya Öniş (2015) as the golden age of Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP), as far as economic and political reforms are concerned; whereas 2007-2011 is addressed as stagnation period, and since 2011, a period of decline is displayed. Instead of analysing Turkish democratic reforms, as it is not in the scope of this paper, here we adopt a macro-analysis approach, emphasizing neither structural nor agent-related factors⁶, but their interrelation at different levels, which

⁶ For the debate on the role of structural-related versus agent-related factors in promoting democratization, see Tolstrup (2014); and Levitsky and Way (2014).

14 | favored or constrained democratization. Whereas in the first part, we reconstruct EU economic and political linkages with Turkey in order to show how bilateral ties are developed and what EU-related factors affect EU leverage *vis à vis* Turkey, in the second part we identify the combination with domestic factors, which facilitated democratization until 2007 and constrained it since then.

EU linkages with Turkey

While the first section focuses on the early years and the beginning of economic integration through the Customs Union (CU), the second section deals with the last decades and the beginning of political integration in the framework of the enlargement policy.

Economic linkages

Economic linkages between the EU and Turkey are rooted in the Association Agreement (AA), the so-called Ankara Agreement, concluded in 1963. This agreement was grounded from the perspective of the European Economic Community (EEC) members in geostrategic terms as, in the logic of the Cold War, it was important to anchor the most important member of NATO on its Eastern flank to a Western organization. It specifically aimed “to promote the continuous and balanced strengthening of trade and economic relations between the Parties” through the creation of a CU for industrial goods, which was established in December 1995, in anticipation of full membership. Indeed, as shown in a World Bank evaluation, the establishment of the CU played an important role in strengthening bilateral economic ties and integrating the Turkish economy into the European market (World Bank 2014). The value of bilateral trade increased more than fourfold since 1996, and there was a similar rise in foreign direct investment⁷.

Data on world trade show that the EU has been a major trading partner for Turkey ever since the EEC was established in 1957 and that the value of bilateral trade increased constantly (World Bank 2014, pp. 7-8). The only exception was 2009, because of the Eurozone crisis, when there was a decrease of 21.3% in EU imports from Turkey and

⁷ The CU also committed Turkey to align its legislation with the EU *acquis* in the areas covered by this Union, representing a unique case of transpositions of EU laws with an associate country.

of 18.3% in EU exports to Turkey (European Commission 2015, p. 5). EU imports from Turkey started to record growth again in 2010/11, but then in 2012 the growth percentage was zero and in 2013 it was only 3.7%, while ten years before it was 20%. Notwithstanding this, the EU continues to be Turkey's main trade partner with 38.5% of total trade in 2013, followed by Russia (7.9%), China (7%), the USA (4.5%), Iran (3.6%), and other minor partners (European Commission 2015, p. 9). However, data reported in Table 1 show a relevant new trend in economic linkages: the reduction of the percentage of Turkey-EU trade on its world trade. This percentage started to diminish in 2005 and continued to diminish in the following years, reaching the lowest level of 38.5% in 2013, which indicates the increasing relevance of other trade partners for Turkey, like Russia and China.

Table 1. *Turkey-EU trade in goods, 2003-2014 (in million €)*

	Turkey-world	Turkey-EU	EU imports from Turkey	EU exports to Turkey	% of Turkey-EU on Turkey world
2003	103.07	58.23	27.3	30.8	56.5
2004	128.91	73.04	32.8	40.1	56.6
2005	152.74	80.86	36.2	44.6	52.9
2006	179.09	91.94	41.9	50.0	51.3
2007	202.21	100.2	47.3	52.8	49.5
2008	227.08	100.76	46.2	54.4	44.3
2009	174.26	80.93	36.4	44.4	46.4
2010	225.86	104.66	43.0	61.8	46.3
2011	269.93	121.66	48.5	73.2	45.0
2012	302.77	123.65	48.6	75.4	40.8
2013	309.36	128.15	50.4	77.7	38.5
2014	291.73	129.01	54.3	74.6	39.3

Source: European Commission, 2015

Overall, this data on trade linkages indicate that the 1963 decision to conclude an AA and the subsequent decision to establish a CU with Turkey facilitated the anchoring of the country to the EU, which became its first trade partner, with long-term effects. For example, this strong economic linkage contributes to explain the pro-EU position of the primary Turkish association representing the business community (Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association, TÜSİAD), which

in the wake of the 1995 CU decision established its first representative office in Brussels in order to contribute to strengthening Turkey-EU relations. This suggests that the establishment of economic linkages—in the form of strong trade relations—can favor the formation of pro-EU actors over the long-term and thus change the domestic opportunity structure in favor of the EU and the norms it promotes.

The 2008 Eurozone crisis adversely affected EU economic relations with Turkey in both real and symbolic terms. Not only the Turkish economy suffered from the decrease in EU imports, but it also had a massive impact on how the EU was perceived⁸. For the first time, the EU was considered as a weak economic actor, unable to solve the Eurozone crisis. This confirmed the necessity to diversify its trade partners and made Turkey less inclined to comply with the EU's conditions. In the long-term, a further reduction of economic linkages—as in the form of bilateral trade—might affect the existence of the pro-EU economic elite in Turkey. The deepening of the CU, which currently covers only industrial goods and processed agricultural goods (20% of the national economy), to service industries, the agricultural sector, and public procurement, incorporating all areas of the economy related to international trade, might represent an important opportunity for the EU to invert this trend. As observed by TÜSİAD the deepening of the CU “will accelerate Turkey's integration with the European economy and thus enhance the dynamics of the accession process” (TÜSİAD 2015, p. 8).

Political linkages

In 1987, following the restoration of democracy after military takeover and encouraged by the Mediterranean enlargement, Turkey applied for membership in the European Community, expressing its wish to deepen the existing linkages with the organization. Even if Turkey's application was widely perceived as highly problematical within the EU, the Helsinki European Council of December 1999 decided that “Turkey is a candidate state destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate states”. This decision resulted from a change of attitude on Turkish membership by Greece and Germany (Müftüler-Bac and McLaren 2003) and from a diplomatic compromise to avoid a crisis with the United States, which exerted a lot of pressure to make EU member states accept Turkish accession

⁸ Interview with an economic expert of the DG NEAR, Brussels, February 2015.

candidacy as a means to stabilize the country (Dorronsoro 2004). The Helsinki decision, creating expectations in Turkey of a fast opening of accession negotiations and a credible membership perspective, played a fundamental role in favoring compliance with the political criteria, which led the European Commission to suggest, in October 2004, the opening of accession negotiations.

The following paragraphs identify key EU decisions and events, which, affecting the credibility of the Turkish membership promise and the consistency in the implementation of the EU's conditionality approach, inverted this virtuous cycle in bilateral relations and gradually led to a re-orientation in EU-Turkey relations.

The nationalization of the enlargement policy

In October 2005, notwithstanding a proposal by the French president to establish a privileged partnership between the EU and Turkey, the 25 heads of the member states accepted that accession negotiations should be opened. However, EU member state reservations on Turkish membership were reflected in the imposition of “unprecedentedly tough” accession negotiating terms on the country (Nugent 2007). Indeed, the accession-negotiating framework for Turkey was a clear result of the nationalization of the enlargement policy, through which, following the “enlargement fatigue”, the member states strengthened their control over the conduct of this policy (Hillion 2010). First, the Council, acting on unanimity, was entitled to lay down benchmarks for the provisional closure and, where appropriate, for the opening of each chapter (Negotiating Framework for Turkey 2005, point 21). It is thanks to this provision that, in 2007, France blocked the opening of five chapters: economic and monetary policy, regional policy and coordination of structural instruments (veto lifted in November 2011), financial and budgetary provisions, and institutions. Second, the negotiating framework introduced a sort of exit option for the EU, in the form of a suspension clause, according to which negotiations could be broken off in case of any major reversal in the country's program of political reforms (*ibid.*, point 5). Third, on the result of negotiations, the framework for Turkey established, for the first time, that “negotiations are an open-ended process, the outcome of which cannot be guaranteed beforehand”, and that in case of Turkey's non-accession, “it must be ensured that Turkey is fully anchored in the European structure through the strongest possible bond” (*ibid.*, point 2). Finally, it also envisaged the possibility to include

safeguard clauses with respect to movement of persons, agricultural and structural policies in order to eventually avoid the integration of Turkey in selected policy areas (*ibid.*, point 12). It should not surprise that, overall, these new elements, even if they were following the new standards established by the European Council for all candidates, were largely perceived as a discriminatory treatment for Turkey, raising realistic questions on the credibility of the EU's promises (Karakas 2013, p. 1066). In addition to these unprecedentedly tough accession negotiating terms, some member states strengthened their control over the conduct of the enlargement policy also at the national level, further contributing to reduce the credibility of the Union's promises. In 2008, for example, France introduced a constitutional provision to the effect of which future accession treaties have to be ratified by referendum. Austria also has reserved the right to hold a referendum on the accession of Turkey following the conclusion of the negotiations.

The Cyprus issue

Turkish chances of integrating and joining the EU were further jeopardized by the decision of letting the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) join the EU in the absence of a settlement of the conflict. Indeed, this decision had several consequences in EU-Turkey relations and some argue—especially in Turkey—that it was a specific strategy of some member states to avoid the accession of Turkey⁹. First, the policy of double standards on the settlement of the Cyprus conflict adopted by the European Council—at the time of accession negotiations with the RoC—showed the lack of consistency in the Union's implementation of its conditionality approach. Indeed, in the case of the RoC, the European Council established that a settlement of the conflict was not a precondition for a decision on accession (European Council 1999, point 9b), while for Turkey, the normalization of its relations with Cyprus (meaning settlement of the conflict) was, and still is, a condition for making progress in joining the EU (Negotiating Framework for Turkey 2005, point 6). Second, the fact that the RoC joined the EU in 2004, without a settlement of the conflict, further reduced the credibility of EU commitments towards Turkey, as it will not be possible for Turkey to join the Union as long as the conflict is not solved and it does not recognize the RoC (*ibid.*). In addition, the

⁹ Interview with the Head of the Unit for Turkey of the DG NEAR, Brussels, February 2015.

lack of full implementation by Turkey of the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement¹⁰, led the Council, in December 2006, to a negative reaction, resulting in a *de facto* partial suspension of accession negotiations. In particular, it decided that negotiations should not be opened on chapters covering policy areas relevant to Turkey's restrictions on the RoC¹¹, and that no chapter could be provisionally closed until Turkey is not fully implementing its commitments with respect to the Additional Protocol (European Union Council 2006). Finally, the lack of settlement in the Cyprus conflict, combined with the power of the member states to establish benchmarks for the opening of chapters, led the RoC to state in 2009 that it would not allow the opening of six chapters¹². All these events, consequential to the failure of the EU to solve the Cyprus issue before the accession of the RoC, reduced the credibility of the EU *vis à vis* Turkey, both in terms of its promises and of the consistency of its approach, making the country less incline to comply with the Union' conditions.

The Eurozone crisis and the migration crisis

This stalemate in the accession negotiations was followed by the Eurozone crisis, which strongly affected EU relations with Turkey. The crisis made both the agendas of the newly created President of the European Council—Herman Van Rompuy—and the President of the European Commission—José Manuel Barroso—focus on the economic governance of the Eurozone, further moving enlargement and the difficult negotiation process with Turkey to the background. Moreover, the crisis further challenged the EU absorption capacity—the fourth Copenhagen criterion—*vis à vis* Turkey, not only in financial and institutional terms, but also from the point of view of its democratic legitimacy. This context did not improve with the new Commission, with the agenda of the new President—Jean Claude Juncker—still focused on internal economic priorities and promoting, in foreign policy, a “pause for enlargement” (Juncker 2014). This means not only that no further enlargement will

¹⁰ The Additional Protocol extends the AA to all new EU member states, thus RoC included.

¹¹ These chapters are free movement of goods, right of establishment and freedom to provide services, financial services, agriculture and rural development, fisheries, transport policy, customs union, and external relations.

¹² On freedom of movement for workers, energy, judiciary and fundamental rights, justice and freedom of security, education and culture, foreign security and defence policy.

take place over the next five years, but also that Turkey's EU membership is not on the agenda of the new Commission.

This situation pulled the newly established division on Turkey in the European External Action Service to further develop an additional and new path of cooperation with this increasingly important partner¹³. This new trend dates back to the "positive EU-Turkey agenda", launched in May 2012, during the darkest times in bilateral relations¹⁴, by Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Stefan Füle. It represented the first attempt to complement the accession process with joint strategic interests, covering all-important elements of the bilateral relationship and introducing a new approach for cooperation, based on a new way to communicate and interact "as two equal partners" (Füle 2012). This initiative was important in overcoming the opposition of the member states in the framework of accession negotiations and starting a new path of cooperation with Turkey on key issues of geostrategic importance, as foreign policy, energy policy, and migration issues, but it had the counter effect of changing the nature of bilateral relations, making them become more symmetric.

The strategic importance of Turkey for the EU, in order to manage the influx of irregular migrants and discuss international issues, is well illustrated by the EU-Turkey summit held in Brussels in November 2015, and attended by the EU heads of state or government and Turkey, represented by the Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu. During this high-level meeting, the EU committed to provide an initial 3 billion euro of humanitarian assistance for the 2.2 million Syrian refugees hosted by Turkey in exchange for its support in stemming the influx of irregular migrants towards Europe (EU-Turkey statement 2015, points 6-7). It also decided to have "a structured and more frequent high-level dialogue" with Turkey. The formats agreed to intensify the existing political dialogue¹⁵ are: 1) regular summits twice a year "to assess the development Turkey-EU relations and discuss international issues", and 2) "comprehensive regular political dialogue meetings at Ministerial/High Representative/Commissioner level" (*ibid.*, point 1). In addition, they welcomed the establishment of a "High Level Energy Dialogue" and the launch in March 2015 of the "Strategic Energy Cooperation", they agreed to launch a "High Level Economic Dialogue Mechanism" in

¹³ Interview with the Head of the Division on Turkey of the EEAS, Brussels, February 2015.

¹⁴ On July 1, 2012, the RoC was to assume the six-monthly term presidency.

¹⁵ Regular Association Council meetings and accession negotiations.

the first quarter of 2016, and they affirmed that formal negotiations for upgrading the CU could be launched towards the end of 2016 (*ibid.*, points 8-10). Even if this bilateral statement affirms that “the accession process needs to be re-energized” (*ibid.*, point 2), and in December 2015 negotiations on Chapter 17 (economic and monetary policy) opened, it seems that the new path of bilateral relations, as between strategic partners, is becoming the pre-eminent one. The paradox is that while, on the one hand, this new path increases political linkages, creating new levels for dialogue and cooperation; on the other hand, it further reduces EU leverage on Turkey, as it is the EU to need Turkey to manage the influx of migrants from its eastern front.

Combining factors: Facilitating or constraining democratization?

Following the analysis of EU-driven factors that shaped political and economic linkages, in this section, domestic factors will be analysed to understand why EU relations were facilitative until 2007, but constraining since then, displaying a period of decline in reform momentum and democratization in Turkey.

Golden age (2002-2007)

The period between 2002-2007 can be referred to as the “golden age” of Europeanization in Turkey, as it represents a virtuous period in terms of interrelated major political and economic transformations, which was initiated by the EU membership perspective (Öniş 2008, p. 37). We argue that these changes were possible thanks to a specific combination of EU and domestic factors, which reinforced each other. It has been stressed that the 1999 Helsinki European Council decision to grant candidacy status to Turkey was an important external impetus, which triggered the process of domestic reformation¹⁶. Indeed, this EU decision, creating expectations on behalf of domestic political and economic elites of a fast opening of accession negotiations and a credible membership, provided a significant incentive for compliance with the EU conditions. However, the process of domestic reformation was also facilitated by specific internal dynamics, as in particular the 2001 financial crisis, the strong support of the business elite for political and economic reforms,

¹⁶ See, for example, Sozen and Shaw (2003); Uğur (2003 and 2010); Kubicek (2005); Müftüler-Baç (2005); Öniş (2008); Yesilada (2013).

and the creation of the first AKP single government in search of domestic and external legitimation.

The 2001 financial crisis was the worst economic crisis that Turkey had to face in modern history¹⁷. Although the crisis seemed to be economic and financial, it was also political, as emerged from the populist, clientelistic, and corruption-producing nature of Turkish politics in the 1990s, underlining the need for a more democratic and efficient government to achieve macroeconomic stability and sustainable economic development (Derviş et al 2004, p. 14; Aydın-Düzgit and Keyman 2012, p. 70). In addition, this period was caught up in severe distributive tensions, intense party fragmentation, weak coalition governments along with the destructive cycle of populist side payments, soaring fiscal deficits and high inflation, which resulted in an unruly integration with global financial markets (Öniş and Güven 2010, p. 590).

During this crisis, the business elite became an important agent of economic and political change and emerged as a key element of the pro-EU coalition (Öniş 2004, p. 500). It emphasized that integration with the West and EU full membership prospect were dynamics that would favor economic development as well as democratization. TÜSİAD, for example, acted in a very influential manner, underlining that the crisis stemmed not only from economic imbalances but also from political gridlock, which required Turkey to speed up the democratization reforms (see, for example, Hürriyet 2001).

Within such politically and economically unstable atmosphere during the parliamentary electoral campaign of 2002, the AKP maintained the strong economic program initiated by Kemal Derviş at the time of the financial crisis¹⁸, and accession to the EU became its foreign policy priority (AKP 2002). It managed to obtain 34% of the votes and became the first party since 1987 to secure a clear majority in Parliament (Carkoglu 2002, p. 30). The AKP rise to power was favored by both the need for a strong political will to guide the reformation process and the positive attitude of the business elite, showing how the effects of the crisis influenced the preferences of the economic elite as well as the electoral campaign. Once in power, the AKP government was able to increase the pace of economic and political reforms, showing the syn-

¹⁷ See Öniş and Rubin (2003); Altuğ and Filiztekin (2006); Öniş and Senses (2009); Öniş, and Bakır (2007).

¹⁸ Kemal Derviş was appointed Minister of State for Economic Affairs, with the aim of maintaining a cross-class coalition of support during this period of political and financial turmoil.

ergies between domestic reforms and closer relations with the EU (Öniş and Bakır 2007, p. 156). In this way, it demonstrated its commitment to democratization, and thus obtained external legitimation and domestic support. In addition, by implementing private-sector-friendly policies while adjusting to International Monetary Fund (IMF) and EU conditions, the first AKP government managed to lead a strong economic recovery process that reinforced its legitimation (Altug et al 2008, p. 418).

Stagnation (2007-2011)

During this new phase, a mixture of EU and domestic factors began to reverse the previous virtuous cycle in bilateral relations and slow down the reform and democratization processes. On the EU side, this period was characterized, in chronological order, by enlargement fatigue, the nationalization of enlargement procedure, the consequences of letting the RoC join the EU in the absence of a settlement of the conflict, and the Eurozone crisis. Overall, these factors made the Turkish elite and civil society perceive the EU commitment to Turkish membership as not credible¹⁹, making Turkey not only less inclined to comply with its political conditions, but also favoring a reorientation in Turkish foreign policy. In addition, the second electoral victory of the AKP led the incumbent government to start a process aimed at strengthening its position in the state apparatus.

The first effect of the loss of a credible EU membership perspective was to make the incumbent government become less inclined to comply with the Union's conditions. As observed by Keyman and Aydın-Düzgüt (2013, p. 278), since 2005 the AKP adopted a more instrumentalist and functional EU discourse, rather than demonstrating a political and vision-based commitment to EU membership as in the previous phase. The loss of a credible EU membership perspective, together with the country's good economic performance, also led AKP foreign policy to diversify its external relations and reconsider EU membership as significant but not the only priority (AKP 2007). This reformulation originated from the conceptualization of a hybrid identity of Turkey as both Western/European and Islamic/Asian, which was initially formulated by İsmail Cem, the Foreign Minister of the Ecevit-led coalition government of the late 1990s (Rumelili 2011, p. 241). This conceptualization was refor-

¹⁹ From 2004 to 2008, the percentage of Turkish citizens who thought Turkish membership of the EU "a good thing" dropped by 20%.

mulated through Ahmet Davutoğlu's thesis of "strategic depth", which led the country to claim a bigger role at not only the regional but also the global level (Aydın-Düzgüt and Tocci 2015). In this new framework, the AKP government started to search for new markets and economic opportunities, especially in the Middle East and North Africa, with the support of key private sector associations such as the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), the Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey (TUSKON), and the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (MÜSİAD) (Öniş 2011, p. 56).

In domestic politics, the second electoral victory of the AKP, with almost 47% of the votes, demonstrated an increasing legitimation by the Turkish people for the incumbent government. This allowed the AKP government to start a process aimed at strengthening its position by changing the power dynamics in the state apparatus. During the severe constitutional crisis of 2007 between the AKP and the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP) over the presidency, the AKP managed not only to elect its candidate to the Presidency²⁰, but also to change the existing constitutional provisions introducing direct presidential elections. The Ergenekon trials²¹ in 2008 and the Balyoz trials²² in 2010, which led to a large number of high-rank military figures to be imprisoned for long periods, cast doubt on the fairness of the Turkish judicial system. In August 2009, the government announced the "Judicial Reform Strategy", which claimed at democratizing the judiciary, but received strong criticism for retaining substantial provisions that compromise judicial independence (Aydın-Düzgüt and Keyman 2012, p. 5). Nevertheless, the constitutional referendum of September 2010 resulted in 58% of the votes in favor of changing the constitution.

Decline (2011-?)

This period was characterized by growing democratic reversal, as shown by the steady decline in freedom of expression and media freedoms, the politicization of the judicial system, and serious charges of corruption

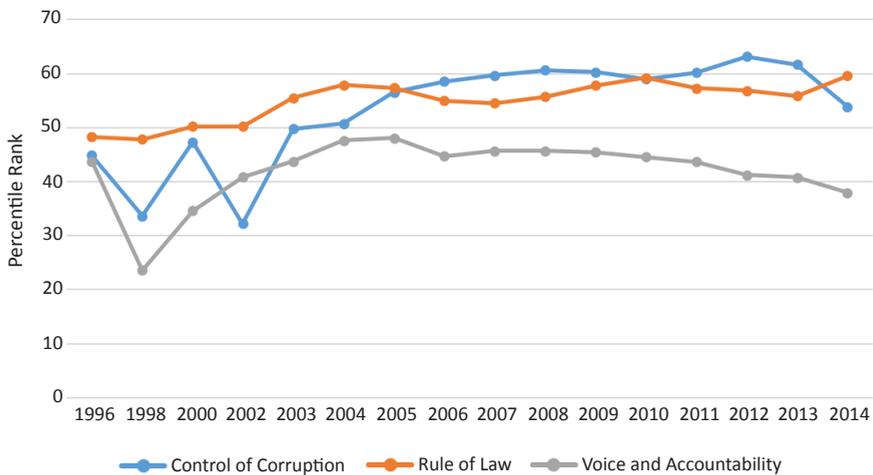
²⁰ On August 28, 2007, the newly elected parliament managed, on the third round, to elect Abdullah Gül to the presidency.

²¹ On the grounds that Ergenekon, a neo-nationalist gang, was planning a violent uprising against the government, some strong opponents of the AKP in the military, academia, press, and the business community were taken into custody.

²² Balyoz (Sledgehammer) trials started in December 2010 against around 200 officers in the Turkish military on the grounds of plotting a coup against the government (Aydın-Düzgüt 2012, p. 332).

against key AKP figures. According to the *Freedom of the Press* report, there is a 5-year decline in press freedom as of 2015 in Turkey, which ranks Turkey “not free” as for its press status. The report underlines that new laws and amendments adopted in 2014 significantly eroded freedom of expression, while the powers of the Telecommunication Authority (TİB) and of the National Intelligence Organization (MİT) were expanded. Moreover, the authorities used the penal code, criminal defamation laws, and the antiterrorism law to take severe measures against journalists and media outlets (Freedom House 2015). Figure 1 shows the trajectory of Turkey on three dimensions—control of corruption, rule of law, voice and accountability—, which demonstrate a downturn trend as of the decline phase started in 2011.

Figure 1. *Control of corruption, rule of law, and voice and accountability in Turkey (1998-2012)*



Source: World Bank, 2015

As in the previous periods, this output resulted from a specific combination of EU and domestic factors. On the EU’s side, the evaporation of Turkish membership from its agenda had the effect of further reducing EU leverage *vis à vis* Turkey, while the new path of cooperation with Turkey, as a strategic partner, highlighted Turkey’s potential leverage on the EU for the first time. All this combined with the third consecutive electoral victory of the AKP with 50% of the votes in 2011, and the first direct election of the President with 51% of the votes in 2014,

which strengthened domestic support for the incumbent government and made it further monopolize its power.

The escalation of the conflict in Syria contributed to the significance of Turkey's regional role for the settlement of the conflict and for the management of the huge flow of refugees from Syria that use Turkey as a transit country. This contributed to make Ankara perceive itself as a fundamental strategic partner for the EU. For example, in *Turkey's New European Union Strategy*, it is affirmed that "Turkey is still an important strategic partner for the EU despite the problems encountered during the negotiation process", and that "[c]ivil wars and conflicts in our region attest that Turkey is key for EU's political and economic stability" (Turkish Ministry for EU Affairs 2014, pp. 1-3).

It seems that this strategic importance of Turkey for the EU has led Ankara to relaunch the country's commitment to EU accession, as well as other benefits like visa liberalization for Turkish citizens and the deepening of the CU. For example, in January 2014, the then Prime Minister Erdoğan proclaimed 2014 to be "the year of the European Union" and paid his first visit to Brussels in five years, where he met the Presidents of the European Council, the European Commission, and the European Parliament. Then, in his inauguration speech (on August 28, 2014), as the first directly elected President, he declared that accession negotiations remain a strategic target for Turkey. The new government, led by Davutoğlu, identified EU membership as Turkey's strategic goal and, in September, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, Volkan Bozkir, presented the country's new European Union Strategy intended to reinvigorate the accession process (Turkish Ministry for EU Affairs, 2014). This document reiterated the Turkish government's strong commitment to the EU accession process "despite being prolonged for more than half a century, the belief that there are double standards for Turkey, the visa obstacles faced by Turkish citizens and the ongoing political problems such as the Cyprus issues" (*ibid.*, p. 2).

At the domestic level, the third consecutive electoral victory of the AKP with the record share of 50% of the total votes in the June 2011 parliamentary elections, and the direct election of Erdoğan to the Presidency with 51% of the votes in August 2014, rendered AKP even less vulnerable to external pressure and domestic opposition forces. The only opposing dynamic to the rising authoritarianism of the Erdoğan government was represented by the Gezi Park protests, also referred as Occupy Gezi movement, which started as a protest against the demolition

of a park in the city center of Istanbul. Soon afterwards, the Occupy Gezi movement turned into anti-government demonstrations against the excessive use of force by the police, which resulted in a number of casualties, media censorship, and the violation of democratic rights, and the demonstrations spread to other cities in Turkey. Yet, the Occupy Gezi movement did not directly result in a new political opening.

The general elections of June 2015 suggested that the political climate in Turkey had changed as the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (Halkların Demokratik Partisi, HDP) rose over the electoral threshold of 10%, for the first time and obtained 13% of the votes. This led the AKP to lose its single majority government position after 13 years and to necessitate a coalition government. However, the negotiations to establish coalition government failed and the early election of November 1 resulted in the upsurge of AKP electoral support and reconfirmed its supermajority. Table 2 shows the distribution of votes among the parties since 2002 and the corresponding number of seats.

Table 2. *Votes and seats of the main parties in Turkish parliamentary elections (2002-2015)*

Parties	2002		2007		2011		2015 (June)		2015 (November)	
	No. seats	Votes %	No. seats	Votes %	No. seats	Votes %	No. seats	Votes %	No. seats	Votes %
AKP	363	34.3	341	46.7	327	49.8	258	40.8	317	49.5
CHP	178	19.4	112	20.9	135	26	132	24.9	134	25.3
MHP	0	8.4	71	14.3	53	13	80	16.2	40	11.9
DEHAP ^a (2002)	0	6.2	21	5.3	35	6.6	80	13.1	59	10.8
HDP (2015) ^b										

^a The Democratic People's Party (Demokratik Halk Partisi, DEHAP) was a pro-Kurdish political party founded in 1997. In 2005, the DEHAP dissolved and merged with the Democratic Society Movement (DTH) to form the Democratic Society Party (DTP).

^b Pro-Kurdish Member of Parliament candidates attained the elections as independent candidates in 2007 and 2011 to skip the 10% electoral threshold.

While the June 2015 elections implied that the success of the HDP challenged the overconfidence of AKP, the November 2015 elections reassured the AKP's stance. As the AKP holds the single-majority, the government's vulnerability to opposition forces is further diminished.

In addition, it seems that the new framework of bilateral relations with the EU has already allowed the “new” Turkish government to obtain first concessions, underlining its strengthened negotiating power *vis à vis* the EU. For example, during the EU-Turkey summit of November 2015, EU leaders offered Ankara not only humanitarian assistance in exchange for its help in stemming the influx of irregular migrants, but also the establishment of a high level political dialogue and relatively close dates for the (eventual) lifting of visa requirements and for the beginning of formal negotiations for upgrading the CU (EU-Turkey statement, points 3, 5 and 10).

Conclusions

We used the case study of Turkey to analyze the role played by the EU in facilitating or constraining democratization in the country, and the concepts of leverage and linkage, elaborated by Levitsky and Way (2010), to evaluate how EU policy choices, in combination with domestic-related factors, can facilitate or constrain this process over the short and long-term.

This chapter shows that while in the “golden age” period, EU and domestic factors resulted in a virtuous combination that facilitated EU leverage and democratization in Turkey, in the following periods, factors on the EU and domestic level combined in a vicious way constraining both EU leverage and democratization. During the virtuous cycle, the costs of domestic reforms were reduced by the perception of a fast and credible EU membership and the need of the incumbent government to strengthen its domestic and external legitimation, which made it vulnerable to EU pressure, thus having positive effects in terms of the reform momentum and the democratization process in Turkey. This positive trend was interrupted by the lack of credibility in EU membership perspective and of consistency in the implementation of the pre-accession policy, which increased the cost of reforms in Turkey, where the increasing electoral support for the incumbent government reduced its vulnerability to EU pressure and, therefore, the cost of autocratic setbacks. This confirms that EU leverage on third countries is dependent on EU policy choices, which should guarantee the credibility of its initial promises and consistency in the implementation of its approach, at least, towards the same category of third countries. However, this is not enough, as the incumbent government is vulnerable to the EU pressure only as long as it needs to comply with the EU in order to increase its domestic and external legitimation and therefore to strengthen its grip on power. Indeed, the

case of Turkey clearly exemplifies that EU leverage decreases not only because of EU policy choices, but also because of the stronger domestic legitimation obtained by the incumbent government in the elections.

Even if they have longer-term effects, EU-Turkey linkages were also affected by EU policy choices and/or the gatekeeping role of the domestic political and economic elite. For example, we argued that thanks to the decision to establish a CU with Turkey, the country was economically anchored strongly to the EU. Over the long-term, this favored the formation of pro-EU actors, like TÜSİAD, which became an important agent of economic and political change and emerged as a key element of the pro-EU coalition. This confirms Tolstrup's hypothesis that the business elite, driven by its profit motive, lobbies political decision makers in ways that shape relations with foreign countries. This also involves that an eventual EU decision on finalizing the deepening of the CU with Turkey might have positive long-term effects in terms of reinforcing existing pro-EU domestic actors or creating new ones with a stake in pro-EU policies. Another example of the gatekeeping role of the political elite in Turkey is represented by the reaction of the second AKP government to the loss of a credible EU membership perspective. Indeed, it decided to reevaluate EU membership as a significant but not the only priority, diversifying its external relations and starting to search for new markets and economic opportunities. This shows that loss of credible EU membership, reducing the audience cost—cost of displeasing its supporters—of the incumbent government, led it to start thinking of diversifying its external relations, thus confirming Tolstrup's hypothesis that ruling elites will most likely reduce ties to external actors when they think that doing this will not weaken their grip on power.

Remarkably, the case of Turkey also illustrates the role played by the regional context and its dynamics in affecting bilateral relations in terms of both leverage and linkage. Indeed, the conflict in Syria and the huge flux of refugees in Europe through Turkey increased the strategic importance of Turkey for the EU, especially to manage its migration crisis. This resulted in a paradox, as while on the one hand, the EU is deepening the existing linkages with the ruling elite, creating new formats for dialogue and cooperation; on the other hand, it has no more leverage on Turkish ruling elite on which it is dependent in order to manage the migration crisis. Therefore, in this new cycle of bilateral relations, only extensive linkages at the level of civil society, business groups and the opposition elite, could contribute to favor democratization over the long-term.

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The EU's Declining Transformative Capacity in a Shifting Global Context: The Turkish Experience

Ziya Öniş and Mustafa Kutlay

Introduction

In his speech at the dawn of third millennium, Romano Prodi (2000), then president of the European Commission, claimed that the “[EU has] forged a model of development and continental integration based on the principles of democracy, freedom and solidarity, and it is a model that works”. Indeed, the EU entered the twenty-first century with remarkable achievements. The launch of the euro, the big-bang enlargement towards post-Communist countries, and expanding neighborhood policies in Europe’s outer periphery solidified its position as a *sui generis* power in international politics (Leonard 2005; Reid 2005). The EU became a center of attraction for countries in its inner and outer periphery in their quest to construct a liberal democracy and a market economy (Vachudova 2005). Recently, however, the situation changed dramatically. The euro’s devastating crisis, the weakening of the liberal democratic ethos in member countries following the spectacular rise of Eurosceptic nationalist-populist parties, and foreign policy failures *vis-à-vis* the Middle Eastern and Ukrainian crises cast growing doubts on the EU’s standard-setting capabilities in regional and global governance (Phinnemore 2015; Menon 2014; Whitman and Juncos 2014). Finally, the “Brexit” vote may also have dramatic implications for the future of the European integration project (Niblett 2015). The EU model is clearly not working as originally envisaged by the European elites, since the EU finds itself in a stalemate in responding to new challenges. Considering this dramatic shift, we will address two critical questions: How do the

For a more elaborate and extended version of the arguments contained in the present chapter with an explicit comparative perspective, see Öniş and Kutlay, 2017.

recent multiple crises impact the EU's transformative power over its inner and outer periphery? What accounts for the EU's declining appeal and rising illiberal practices in several member and candidate countries?

This study offers a global political economy perspective that complements the existing literature by adding the mutually inclusive interaction of European-level dynamics and global transformations based on a push-and-pull framework. The first part sketches the details of the proposed framework; the second applies it to the Turkish case. The final part concludes the essay.

The push-and-pull model of the EU's declining transformative capacity

The 2008 global financial crisis represents a watershed in the political economy of contemporary capitalism (Krugman 2012; Helleiner 2010). The crisis was not the first shock that the world economy experienced in the neoliberal era, but certainly the most devastating one since the Great Depression. Contrary to previous economic crises during the 1990s and early 2000s in the global periphery, the recent financial crisis erupted at the center of global capitalism (Öniş and Güven 2011). The sub-prime crisis in the US economy affected the European economies more deeply than any other corner of the world. In the short term, the crisis spread throughout the transatlantic economies, the bedrock of free market economy and liberal democracy. What is important here is that the global crisis led to the bifurcation of global governance along the lines of liberal market economies and models of state-led strategic capitalism, both accompanied by a distinct set of political institutions (Ikenberry 2010; Kagan 2008). The increasing fluidity and disorder in global governance paved the way for the emergence of a new set of push as well as pull factors, which dramatically undermined the EU's transformative influence.

Push factors

The EU's declining appeal is closely associated with the "multiple crises of the Union". These started with the identity crisis of the early and mid-2000s due to the constitutional stalemate, continued with the post-2008 economic and financial crises, and culminated in the refugee crises, which gathered momentum in early 2015. Added to these are security threats due to consecutive terrorist attacks in several EU coun-

tries. The growing sense of insecurity within the EU embodies several critical political implications.

The push factors weakening the EU's transformative capacity have two interrelated dimensions. The first is correlated with the poor economic performance that has led to unfulfilled promises of the European project, especially after 2008. Most commentators and policy-makers agree that the euro crisis is the most compelling challenge in the history of European integration (Zielonka 2014; Matthijs and Blyth 2015). When first launched, the euro project was conceived not only as economic instrument to deepen a single market and to position the euro as alternative reserve currency *vis à vis* the US dollar, but it was also perceived as a strong leverage to consolidate European political identity and solidarity. Furthermore, economic benefits had been utilized as strong incentive tools that underpinned the effectiveness of EU conditionality on target countries.

The management of the crisis, however, has undermined the economic attractiveness of the European project. In the initial phases, the core European countries, notably Germany, framed Southern Europe's crisis as the outcome of irresponsible domestic policies and urged, for instance, Greek leaders to rely on their own means to deal with it. Conversely, countries in the periphery accused the European core of remaining ignorant to the crisis systemic nature that stemmed from euro area's institutional flawed fundamentals, triggering a vicious cycle of "blame games" (Hall 2012). Once it became apparent that Southern European countries had neither the capacity nor the resources to halt the crisis, the German-led troika (European Commission, European Central Bank, IMF) programs were put into implementation, a step considered too little too late and insufficient to fix the euro's structural problems (Jones 2015).

The EU's flawed crisis management strategy had devastating consequences for the EU's economic might and political cohesion. The prioritization of excessive austerity packages by core member states deteriorated the social fabric of crisis-ridden EU members and amplified the "peripheralization of southern countries" (Gambarotto and Solari 2015). The manner in which the EU dealt with the euro crisis also represented a powerful blow to the very notion of democracy (Watkins 2012). Indeed, the replacement of elected politicians with appointed technocratic governments in Greece and Italy struck a sensitive nerve and further aggravated the "democratic deficit" debates (Matthijs 2014,

p. 102). The public opinion in these countries increasingly questioned the EU's solidarity ethos, as they felt punished by core members and EU institutions, leading to a growing sense of alienation. The crisis, in turn, consolidated the core-periphery divide in the EU. Central and Eastern European countries and Southern European members felt themselves pushed progressively further into the periphery (Bonatti and Fracasso 2013). As Jones (2015) put it, the European crisis was "over-determined," and inadequate analysis of the problems' multiple and interlinked nature resulted in Europe's "muddling through" (Blyth 2013). Furthermore, the EU's inability to ensure economic recovery and the sluggish growth rates after 2008 decreased the appeal of the EU as a source of wealth and prosperity. For instance, the average growth rate in 2010-2014 remained 1% in the EU and 0.7 in the euro zone, which in turn, decreased its role in shaping the preferences of member and candidate countries, especially for those in European periphery.

The second dimension of the EU's weakening transformative power concerns the crisis of internal solidarity, which gradually amplified problems with the credibility of its commitment and the EU's normative paradoxes. It has long been claimed that the EU is a distinct actor in international relations, thanks to its "normative power". Without necessarily resorting to hard-power instruments, the "EU's ability to shape conceptions of normal in international relations" constitutes its main competitive advantage (Manners 2001, p. 239; Kagan 2003). The EU's primary norms include peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is supposed to place these principles at the core of its relations with third countries and to help transform the domestic policies of target countries in line with them (Diez 2005). The coherently implemented principle-based conditionality as part of enlargement, neighborhood, trade, and development policies and the material incentives it provides in return create the main mechanisms through which the EU exerts influence and legitimacy in global politics (Menon 2014, p. 13).

But the EU did not fare well in terms of internal solidarity in the aftermath of the euro crisis that led to the amplifying normative paradoxes. Two main examples illustrate the case in point. The first concerns the EU's disappointing approach to the "Arab Spring". Beforehand, its stance towards Middle Eastern countries had been formed around unspoken assumptions about the national sovereignty of inherently authoritarian states (Hollis 2012). The EU tried to gather as much support as possible from deeply authoritarian regimes in Syria, Libya, and Egypt, in terms of

controlling illegal migration and countering radicalism at home. Moreover, the EU encouraged these countries to liberalize their markets and sustain bilateral trade relations (Grant 2011, p. 4). In return for economic benefits and better protection against illegal migration and radicalism, the EU refrained from issuing sharp statements on the exceptionally poor democratization and human rights records there (Tocci and Cassarino 2011). These over-pragmatic EU policies were heavily criticized following the Arab uprisings. Stefan Füle (2011), then European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy, even felt obliged to make a self-critical statement:

“First, we must show humility about the past. Europe was not vocal enough in defending human rights and local democratic forces in the region. Too many of us fell prey to the assumption [that those] authoritarian regimes were a guarantee of stability in the region. This was not even Realpolitik. It was, at best, short-termism—and the kind of short-termism that makes the long term ever more difficult to build”.

The EU appeared to undergo a paradigm change immediately after the Arab uprisings. The EU member states sided with popular movements against authoritarian regimes, implemented a comprehensive aid package promoting democratization and pro-democracy forces, and launched new policies (Dinçer and Kutlay 2013, pp. 423-424). The picture, however, dramatically changed once the Muslim Brotherhood gained a popular victory in Egypt’s first democratic elections. The rise of political Islam in Egypt, combined with the policy mistakes of the recently elected Morsi government, led to skepticism among the EU members, as a result of which it failed to adopt a coherent approach in confronting Sisi’s military coup in 2013. The crisis of internal solidarity among member states and, therefore, diverging policy responses in Egypt, Libya, and Syria paved the way for widespread suspicion about the EU’s intentions, capabilities, and commitment to democratization beyond its own borders (Hollis 2012).

The second crucial test for the EU’s internal solidarity, which also seems to contribute to the illiberal turn in its periphery, relates to the recent refugee crisis and the EU’s relatively inept response to the unfolding humanitarian crisis. The EU for a long time remained virtually silent on the Syrian civil war and stayed on the sidelines until refugees started pouring into Europe in early 2015. Although the serious nature of the problem was henceforth recognized, the EU still failed to develop a comprehensive plan to stem the migrant flow. Due to acute collective action problems among the member states and the EU’s inability to

address the challenge at the supra-national level, member states and neighboring countries tried to deal with the issue via unilateral policies. The EU's weak internal solidarity and hazy approach in tackling the refugee crisis brings two major consequences regarding its appeal. Domestically, it created disappointment especially among recent members. As Krastev (2015) points out, "many Eastern Europeans feel betrayed by their hope that joining the EU would mean the beginning of prosperity and an end to crisis". Externally, narrowly constructed interest-based refugee policies undermined the EU's image as promoter of human rights. This, in turn, created ample opportunity for nationalist-populist leaders in the periphery to exploit the EU's crumbling internal solidarity so as to further their political agenda at home.

Pull factors

The EU's multiple crises and inability to adequately respond to contemporary challenges are not the only mechanisms leading to substantial changes in its relations with countries in the periphery. We argue that the pull factors associated with the political economy of the changing global order and the rising powers in the post-crisis equilibrium are equally important. Two main factors deserve particular emphasis here.

First, after 2008 we not only observed a disappointing performance of liberal market economies and liberal democracy, but also a spectacular rise of non-western political economy models—the most striking being China. China's transformation has sparked a lively discussion about the dynamics, nature, and consequences of a possible move from a western-centered to a multi-polar global order (Walt 2011; Kupchan 2012). There exists a quasi consensus that the world has entered a post-American era, triggered by the 2008 global financial crisis. The crisis galvanized debates about alternative modes of economic governance as the pendulum of economic thinking began to swing away from the neoliberalism promoted primarily by Western countries and institutions (Williams 2014). Indeed, it accelerated the very pace of global transformations, with BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, with China as dominant actor) and near-BRICS countries (such as Mexico, Indonesia, Turkey, and South Korea) consolidating their place as new centers of global economic activity. The high growth-rates of emerging powers in comparison to the US's weak recovery and the EU's deepening crisis have accelerated the "west vs. the rest" debate (Ferguson 2011). With the ascendance of non-western powers, rival economic

governance models compete with each other; it appears that “strategic capitalism” has gained the upper hand over the Anglo-Saxon and social market variants of Western-style liberal governance. Following the crisis, the rising powers have become engines of global growth in a world of sluggish European economic performance. BRICS grew 5% annually, China being the locomotive with 8.6. BRICS also became new economic actors in a world economy including Europe’s periphery, through large-scale investment projects and trade opportunities. The hallmarks of strategic capitalism, however, exceed growth performance (“The Economist” 2012). Accordingly, the neo-mercantilist and post-Listian investment and trade policies constitute the backbone of strategic capitalist models (Gerard 2014). Bremmer (2010) suggests that strategic capitalism fundamentally differs from free-market capitalism in two ways.

First, policy-makers do not approach state intervention as a temporary phenomenon to jump-start the economy after a recession. Rather, they consider it a strategic choice to design long-term economic strategy. Second, strategic capitalists think that, rather than being an end in itself to expand individuals’ opportunities, markets are primarily “tools that serve national interests, or at least those of ruling elites” (Bremmer 2010, p. 250). China, in particular, promotes controlled FDI policies that encourage technology transfer of foreign companies and selective state intervention in production, import, and export sectors (Gerard 2011). Rather than leaving resource allocation mechanisms to the market’s “invisible hand,” strategic capitalist models promote the state’s active involvement to regulate resource allocation, especially in high-value-added industries as in the case of China and geo-economically strategic sectors such as energy as in the case of Russia.

Second, strategic capitalist models offer distinct political systems in comparison to liberal democratic European models. As Diamond (2015) suggests, the world is now “facing the recession of liberal democracy”. Accordingly, illiberal democracy practices are on the rise everywhere (Youngs 2015). In an era of intense anxiety and uncertainty, charismatic leadership and strong governments are perceived as the safest route to power and prosperity, while consensus-based pluralist politics is increasingly equated with fragmentation and dilution of national power. The alleged success of the strategic capitalist models that rely on illiberal practices—promoting majoritarianism rather than pluralism through a rather narrow understanding of democracy—in the most influential rising powers create demonstration effects elsewhere, particularly for emerging middle powers aspiring to punch above their weight. In a period when

democratic efficacy, self-confidence, and economic dynamism recede in Europe, the enviable growth performance of illiberal regimes turns into a source of admiration for elites who increasingly look to the East as a reference point for future economic and political development (Öniş 2016a). This admiration, then, influences alliance patterns and role model perceptions of various countries (Bader, Gravinghold, and Kastner 2010). Not surprisingly, authoritarian BRICS, such as Russia and China, emerge as the most visible role models, even for countries located within the EU's sphere of influence (Nathan 2015; Gat 2007).

The increasing investment and trade opportunities that authoritarian emerging powers provide constitute another incentive for countries in Europe's periphery to enter into these states' sphere of influence. Recently, authoritarian BRICS, particularly China, have become important investment and trade partners for several countries in Europe's periphery (Corre and Sepulchre 2016). What makes strategic capitalism models more attractive to recipient countries is that economic incentives and credit opportunities are not tied to democratic conditionality principles advocated by the EU. As a cautionary note, drawing from ample evidence one may suggest here that the sustainability of illiberal regimes' economic growth performance under extractive institutions is highly dubious (Rodrik, Subramanian and Trebbi 2002; Acemoğlu and Robinson 2012). Yet, these arguments do not seem to have immediate practical impact in the current global context, as long as strategic models of capitalism continue to exhibit success and offer new opportunities for other rising states.

Crisis in the European periphery: Turkey in perspective

In this section, we apply the push-and-pull framework to the Turkish case as striking representative of the EU's declining appeal in its outer periphery. The evolution and dynamics of Turkey-EU relations has witnessed many ebbs and flows. The early 2000s were marked by the Europeanization of Turkey (Öniş 2008; Demirtaş 2015). However, the EU-factor in the Turkish political economy started to wane after a short-lived golden age, in a gradual but decisive manner (Öniş 2016b). The 2011 general elections turned into a watershed moment, not only for the trajectory of Turkish politics, but also for the way in which the EU is perceived in Turkey. Following the 2011 elections, the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) obtained half of the total vote. For the first time in Turkey, a political party had won

three successive elections (2002, 2007, and 2011), with increasing vote shares. This unprecedented success consolidated Erdoğan's power as the party's unquestioned leader. Consequently, the gradual erosion of institutional checks and balances mechanisms characterized domestic politics, and the country moved away from the previous reformist spirit (Özbudun 2014).

First, important setbacks occurred in the realms of freedom of expression and media independence (Freedom House 2015). Second, successive reform attempts to democratize Turkey's current constitution did not achieve its potential (Cengiz 2014); on the contrary, the judiciary's independence has been curtailed and the politicization of legal decisions jeopardizes trust in the judicial system (Öniş 2015). Third, in the economic realm, the independence of the central bank and other regulatory institutions has been increasingly undermined as these institutions have been increasingly subjected to intense political pressure. The state's role in the economy became increasingly non-transparent, representing a significant shift away from EU standards (Acemoğlu and Üçer 2015). Both the number and value of non-transparent public procurements, for instance, reached almost 45% (quoted in Acemoğlu and Üçer 2015, pp. 15-16). All these developments demonstrate the EU's weakened anchor role, so much so that the EU ceased to be an influential norm-setter in Turkish politics (Yılmaz 2015, p. 91). Again, the push-and-pull framework captures the underlying dynamics of the EU's declining appeal.

The first push factor is closely related to the reversing fortunes of the European and Turkish economies. The membership's anticipated economic benefits have always been a key driving conditionality factor for Turkey's EU bid. The EU member states' economic welfare and the Turkish economy's poor developmental performance played a catalyst role for Turkey to adjust its economy in line with European standards. Over the past decade, the situation started to change, however. Thanks to an uninterrupted growth performance in a single-digit inflation environment, the per capita wealth of average Turkish citizens increased from 3,500 to around 10,000 dollars in current prices; consequently, the gap between the EU average and Turkey decreased from 61 to 47% in a decade. Following the global economic crisis, when the Euro area grew only 0.7% in 2010-2014, Turkey managed to grow 5.4% annually. Turkey's high growth-performance *vis à vis* EU economies boosted the government's confidence, so much so that Erdoğan (2012) argued that the EU no longer represents an ideal model in terms of "economic and

political stability". Prime Minister at the time, Ahmet Davutoğlu (2011) also hailed Turkey's economic success and suggested that it now represented a role model for Europe, rather than vice versa:

"Turkey is no longer a country that waits on the doorstep of the EU and IMF for a couple of billion [dollars]. Turkey has turned into a country that is capable of aiding other countries and contributes to solving their economic problems thanks to the dynamism of its economy. We are not a burden to the EU; we are the cure [for European economies]".

Second, the EU's weakening role over Turkey stems from its internal solidarity crisis, which resulted in normative paradoxes and reduced credibility of commitment. In fact, worsening Turkey-EU relations predate Europe's economic crisis (Müftüler-Baç 2008; Öniş 2008). Bilateral relations plunged into a stalemate following the EU's request to sign the Additional Protocol in 2004. The EU asked Turkey to open its ports to Greek Cypriot vessels as part of its Customs Union with the EU, on the ground that Cyprus also became EU member following the 2004 enlargement. Turkish policy-makers, however, claimed in a 2005 declaration that the EU did not live up to its promises regarding the improvement of Turkish Cypriots' status, although they had voted for a solution in the referendum with a 65% approval of the Annan Plan (Yaka 2016, pp. 152-153; Müftüler-Baç 2008). In return, the Council of the European Union suspended negotiations on eight chapters and decided not to provisionally close others until Turkey would implement the customs union fully and in a non-discriminatory manner. Furthermore, the EU did not allow direct trade to alleviate Northern Cyprus' isolation and adopted an indifferent approach, despite pre-referendum promises to the contrary.

Turkish rule-makers interpreted the EU's approach as a violation of its normative credentials, as Greek Cypriots were rewarded with membership, even though they had overwhelmingly rejected the Annan Plan. Moreover, the "privileged partnership" status offered by core EU countries instead of full membership and adding more criteria—such as absorption capacity—that had not been highlighted in the *acquis* further decreased the EU's credibility in the eyes of Turkish policy-makers and public opinion alike (Aydın-Düzgüt 2006; Keyman and Aydın-Düzgüt 2013). Davutoğlu (2013) openly stressed this point: "[Turkey] does not trust the EU anymore ... [and] cannot any longer rely on the EU's verbal promises".

The EU's appeal over Turkey was substantially jeopardized with the Arab uprisings and subsequent tectonic shifts in the Middle East. The EU's inconsistent approach to the Arab upheavals (Dandashly

2015) and the way in which the Turkish ruling elite perceived it was a particular turning point in this regard. The apparent contradictions of its policy choices due to the lack of internal coherence and solidarity undermined the EU's credibility in the eyes of the Turkish ruling elite. For instance, Erdoğan (2013) expressed his frustration in the following way: "The EU did not even gather its courage to call the military coup in Egypt a 'coup.'" According to Erdoğan (2013), the EU's appeasement policies towards the Sisi regime, combined with its inaction in the Syrian crisis, transformed it into an ineffective foreign policy actor in the Middle East. He criticized the EU for remaining "silent about Syria [and Egypt] in such a region where very important events are taking place".

The refugee crisis constituted the last straw in the series of disappointments. Turkey has become one of the main destinations for refugees; it currently hosts more than 2.5 million Syrians, for whom Ankara has spent almost 10 billion dollars as of early 2016. Once the refugees flocked to Europe, the EU institutions and member countries' hastily crafted policies that, again, stemmed from its internal crisis of solidarity and attracted severe criticism of regional countries, including Turkey. Accordingly, Turkey directs two distinct criticisms against the EU. First, the Turkish government questioned the EU's stance for its overly pragmatic approach and hesitance to allocate refugees as being in direct contradiction to Europe's alleged values, norms, and principles. Erdoğan (2015) held European countries directly responsible for "the death of each refugee in the Mediterranean," and Davutoğlu (2015) invited Europe "to look in the mirror, be honest about what it sees in the reflection, to stop procrastinating and start assuming more than its fair share of the burden". Second, the traditional supporters of Turkey's EU membership, mainly left- and right-wing liberals, expressed their frustration about the EU abandoning its principles for the sake of immediate realpolitik interests (Aktar 2015). Europe, so the opponents maintain, is now overwhelmingly concerned with the refugee masses flowing over its borders, often from Turkish territory, and willing to shelve worries about democracy in Turkey (Aktar 2015). It is claimed that German Chancellor Merkel's visit to Turkey shortly before the November 2015 election clearly strengthened Erdoğan's position and lent further credibility, despite the backsliding of the rule of law, fundamental rights, and the freedom of media and academia (İdiz 2015). Strikingly, European Commission President Jean Claude Juncker admitted in leaked talks with Erdoğan dating back to October 2015 that the Commission's annual progress report on Turkey would be held back until after the election so as not to jeopardize

bilateral security cooperation (New Europe 2016). These developments prompted the perception among pro-European segments that Turkey-EU cooperation on refugees “is misplaced and illegitimate when it happens in disregard of the democratic values that the EU has long sought to project onto its candidates” (Saatçioğlu 2016).

The events of summer 2016 have effectively undermined the EU’s leverage on Turkish politics even further. The failed coup attempt in July constituted a critical juncture in this context. The fact that the notorious coup attempt ended in failure illustrated the resilience of democratic forces in Turkey. In the aftermath of the failed coup attempt, EU leaders were accused by the Turkish leadership for their indifference and lack of enthusiasm in their reception of Turkey’s ability to avert a major coup attempt. The fact that large number of people took to the streets and played an important role in preventing the coup was a significant sign of public support for democracy. The fact that both the United States and the EU were not willing to embrace the failure of a coup attempt as a major victory for democracy in Turkey has generated very strong nationalistic and anti-Western sentiments. The growing perception on the part of Erdoğan and the AKP leadership, which was widely shared by large segments of the public, was that the western powers provided support or at least implicit endorsement for the coup attempt.

Indeed, from the summer 2016 onwards, the relations between Turkey and the EU became more than ever before part of a Turkey-US-EU triangle, or even Turkey-Russia-US-EU quadrangle in the context of which the EU increasingly assumed a marginal role. Turkish leadership and the public opinion were particularly critical of the US for failing to extradite Gulen, since the affiliates of the Gulen movement were identified as the principal contributors to the failed coup attempt. The US, more than the EU, was in the spotlight with allegations that the US directly supported the coup given that the alleged leader of the coup resided in the US and the US authorities were unwilling to extradite him. Although no similar allegations were made for the EU directly, the EU also became the natural target of growing anti-Western sentiment. It is interesting and perhaps ironic to note that these sentiments were also shared by secular, western-oriented segments of society.

Whilst the failure of the coup attempt was a clear victory for democracy and civilian rule in Turkey, the aftermath of the coup attempt was increasingly associated with a new illiberal wave under the imposition of state of emergency in a *de facto* hyper-presidential system. Most

commentators would recognize that the extent of the clamp down was far bigger than any conceivable attempt to bring those responsible for the coup to justice. The concerns about the scale of the purges involving journalists, academics, teachers, public sector employees, and business people in Turkey had very little impact and indeed seemed to backfire in an environment where strong anti-Western sentiment had become firmly established. In any case, the US needed Turkey in the context of the fight against the ISIS and the EU in the context of controlling the flow of refugees. These immediate and practical concerns also meant that any criticism of post-coup developments in Turkey in Western circles remained fundamentally subdued.

It is fair to say that the Turkey-EU relations have been radically transformed in recent years. Given the current stalemate, the best scenario that one could hope for is the continuation of shallow economic and security co-operation. This relationship would not be different from any kind of bilateral relation that Turkey has with countries in the Middle East, Eurasia, or other parts of the world. Crucial normative elements such as the deepening of democracy and the rule of law would be sadly absent from such a relationship.

Not only push factors, but also the emergence of new centers of attraction and the pull dynamics they generate should be taken into consideration. In this sense, AKP leadership has been influenced by the experiences of the authoritarian BRICS. Indeed, the Russia-China axis has become the primary reference point for Turkey's external relations, with obvious implications for the choice of the developmental model. The governing elite's boosted confidence led them to pursue more assertive economic policies blended with nationalist and centralized rhetoric. The increasing frequency of interventions in the central bank's functioning and the declining independence of regulatory institutions clearly illustrate this trend (Özel 2015, p. 3). This turn is closely related to the substantial challenges to liberal democracy and market economy in Europe and the allure of more statist strategic capitalism models in the emerging economies. For instance, the Turkish president's chief advisor repeatedly claimed that the "EU is a declining power destined to break up" (Bulut 2014a) and implied the virtual abandonment of Turkey's membership based on the growing desire to be an integral part of a shifting global order where China and Russia are expanding their spheres of influence (Bulut 2014b). Indeed, Erdoğan pronounced his desire for Turkey to abandon its long-standing EU aspirations and become a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Berberoğlu 2013;

Öniş and Kutlay 2013). Increasing economic linkages with Russia turned into an important motivation behind this shift. Despite a short interval of setback in Turkey-Russia relations, their trade relations skyrocketed to more than 30 billion dollars over the last decade, and Turkey became an important destination for Russian investors and tourists (Öniş and Yılmaz 2016). Turkish-Russian relations had severely deteriorated following the aircraft crisis of late 2015. Yet, during the summer of 2016, significant steps were taken towards a new rapprochement in Turkish-Russian relations. It is fair to say that by late summer of 2016, the Turkish-Russian axis became the principal reference point for Turkish foreign policy, which also provided further political space for Turkey to act independently from Western powers, which clearly helped restrict the degree of leverage that the US or the EU could exercise in Turkey's domestic politics. From Putin's perspective Turkey is a key geo-political partner and the further Turkey is torn from the West and brought into the geo-political sphere of Russia, the better is the outcome from a purely interest-based perspective. Not surprisingly, Putin has strongly shared the Turkish government's anti-coup sentiments, perhaps far more than its counterparts, but then has been largely insensitive to the domestic political developments that followed.

The point to re-emphasize is that in the emerging Turkey-Russia-USA-EU quadrangle, the EU increasingly appeared as a peripheral partner. The attempt to introduce some element of political conditionality into the visa deal did not seem to have bargaining leverage. The Turkish leadership was prepared to abandon the visa deal. The broader point from the point of debates on EU conditionality and transformative capacity, is that attempts to integrate elements of conditionality to partial deals, which are not ultimately linked to full-membership, have rather limited impact. This also highlights the more general problem of the inherent weakness of EU conditionality on "important outsiders," countries that are significant to the EU in general political terms but are not considered as potential members.

The EU institutions or leaders concerned with Turkey as an important partner are confronted with a serious dilemma. Harsh criticism or tough conditionality practices such as suspending or abandoning membership negotiations altogether would raise nationalist sentiments in Turkey and would do even more damage in the long run. However, going ahead with the visa deal in return for co-operation in regulating the flow of refugees, without any political conditionality, would create serious tensions and criticisms within European domestic politics. Hence,

the European leaders also find themselves in a knife-edge equilibrium situation. Given such a state of affairs, one would naturally predict a growing isolation of Turkey and the EU from one another, but without a complete collapse of the long-standing relationship (Öniş 2016a).

Conclusions

We highlighted the weakening of the EU's transformative capacity in the broader European periphery in a rapidly shifting global political economy with reference to the Turkish case. This contribution specified an analytical framework based on a combination of push-and-pull factors, which explains the declining appeal of the EU over its periphery with reference to the changing dynamics of global political economy. It takes into account not only the internal dynamics of European integration and its multiple crises, but also the appeal of strategic capitalism employed by the rising powers, which increasingly serves as reference point for the elites of several states in diverse geographical settings.

The decline in the European Union's transformative capacity is not unique to Turkey. It is part of a more general problem, which is affecting both "insiders" (member states) and "outsiders" (non-member states) in its periphery. The EU is currently facing serious problems of fragmentation. The resurgence of nationalism and right-wing populism has emerged as a serious threat in all major member states in both Western and Eastern Europe. The unexpected outcome of the Brexit referendum was another development during the turbulent summer of 2016, which suggests that the EU is facing serious challenges in keeping the Union together in the coming years. The exit of the UK from the EU may trigger a domino effect, which may be followed by further departures. Whilst the formal departure of Eastern European member states looks unlikely at this point, it also makes the EU's task more difficult in terms of imposing disciplines and sanctions on Eastern European member states such as Hungary and Poland, which have also experienced serious illiberal turns in their domestic politics in recent years. The EU has to revitalize itself and restore its internal solidarity to deal with its deep-seated economic problems in order to become once more a source of attraction for many countries both in the inner and outer Europe. The economic and moral recovery of Europe is critical in a world where powerful shifts are taking place in a global context and where the EU model is increasingly challenged by more dynamic states

such as China and the emergence of the powerful Russia-China axis. Ultimately, the normative appeal of the EU heavily relies on its democratic credentials. To restore this normative appeal against politically illiberal and economically more dynamic counterparts and to prevent many hybrid states from swinging in the other direction will require very serious efforts.

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EU-Turkey Cooperation on Migration

Rocco Polin

Introduction

While cooperation on migration is only one among many important aspects in the rich and complex relationship between the EU and Turkey, it is also arguably the policy area that received most attention in the past few years. The purpose of this chapter is thus to give a short account of the evolution of cooperation between the EU and Turkey in this field in the context of the so-called “European migrant and refugee crisis” of 2015 and 2016. This contribution will focus in particular on the yearlong period lasting from mid-2015, when a steep increase in migratory flows was registered at the Turkish-Greek border, to mid-2016, after the signature of the controversial EU-Turkey *Joint Statement* of March 18, 2016.

An unprecedented global crisis with profound effects on Europe

In order to understand the rapid evolution of EU-Turkey cooperation in the field of migration, it is important to also understand the real dimension of the migratory challenge currently facing Europe. While migratory flows do not amount to the unstoppable invasion that populist politicians across the continent like to portray, they did reach an unprecedented level in the past two years.

Numbers should always be treated with the outmost caution. Particularly in the area of migration, they are rarely fully accurate and often hide the complexity of a multi-faced phenomenon behind aggregate figures. Nevertheless, in a field marred by incorrect information and often subject to biased interpretations and political prejudices, numbers can also represent a solid and somewhat objective base for an informed discussion.

The first thing numbers clearly tell us is that the current migratory and refugee crisis is not a European phenomenon, nor is it a sudden emergency for which we can hope to find some kind of short-term fix.

According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR 2016), by the end of 2015 the total number of forcibly displaced people worldwide reached a record of 65.3 million: 21.3 million refugees¹, 40.8 million internally displaced, and 3.2 million asylum seekers. Far from being a European problem, this constitutes the largest global displacement crisis since World War II, with poor and fragile countries often shouldering most of the burden. Developing regions currently host 86% of the world's refugees under UNHCR mandate, corresponding to almost 14 million people². Of these, 4.2 million (or about 26% of global total) reside in the least developed countries (LDC).

Moreover, numbers continue to rise. In 2015, an average of 24 people were displaced from their homes every minute of every day; by the end of the year, the total number of forcible displaced people had grown by almost 5 million compared to 2014. Protracted displacement, defined as situations in which 25,000 or more refugees from the same nationality have been in exile for five years or more in a given asylum country, affects 41% of refugees under UNHCR mandate, or 6.7 million people. Far from being a short-term fixable emergency, migration and forcible displacement seem destined to remain one of the defining international challenges of the decades to come.

Within this larger context, it is however fair to acknowledge that in the past few years the European Union and its member states have also been confronted with an unprecedented migratory challenge, albeit of minor scale if compared to the situation of many of our partners around the world.

According to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX 2016), the number of detected illegal border crossings at the EU's external borders reached 1.8 million in 2015³, over six times the figure of

¹ The number of refugees also includes 5.2 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA (thus not falling under UNHCR mandate).

² With 2.5 million people, Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees worldwide, followed by Pakistan (1.6 million), Lebanon (1.1 million), Iran (979,400), Ethiopia (736,100), and Jordan (664,100).

³ It should be noted that figures for illegal border crossing might encounter a significant number of double counting, particularly as irregular migrants coming from the Eastern Mediterranean usually cross EU borders twice, first between Turkey and Greece and then between non-EU Balkan countries and EU Member States (e.g. between Serbia and Hungary).

2014 (280,000) and seventeen times the figure of 2013 (107,000). The number of asylum applications reached 1.2 million in 2015, doubling the number of 2014 (627,000), which was itself a record year⁴.

During 2014 and the first half of 2015, the largest flow of refugees and irregular migrants came via the so called Central Mediterranean Route (CMR), essentially from Libya to Italy. FRONTEX 2016 figures show that irregular arrivals by sea in Italy in 2014 were around four times as high as in Greece (170,095 vs 44,053). This situation however radically changed in the summer of 2015, when flows shifted to the so-called “Eastern Mediterranean Route” (EMR). Detected illegal border crossings along this route increased from 14,152 in the first three months of 2015, to 68,178 in the second quarter, to 319,146 in the third quarter, and finally 483,910 in the last quarter of the year (FRONTEX 2016). This meant that in the last three months of 2015 irregular border crossings along the EMR were more than 30 times higher than in the same period of the previous year (483,910 vs. 15,533)⁵. Migrants and asylum seekers arriving in Europe via the Eastern Mediterranean Route were not only departing from neighbouring areas like the Arab Mashreq but also from further east in Asia⁶ and even from Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa. In some cases Turkey’s generous visa policies and its well-developed smuggling industry could even trump geography: in the course of 2015, 7,419 Moroccans reached the EU via Turkish territory despite the fact that Morocco shares a direct border with the EU over 3,000 km west of Turkey (European Commission 2016d, p. 6).

In the second half of 2015, Europe thus witnessed a marked eastwards shift of migratory flows and a steep increase in the number of overall arrivals. As a consequence, a parallel movement took place in the public debate: on one hand, migration arrived on top of the political agenda in almost all member states, including those which had previously been less affected by migratory flows; on the other hand, the attention shifted from the tragedies in the Central Mediterranean to the developments along the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkans Route.

⁴ Asylum applications had already passed half a million in 1992 when the EU only counted 15 members, mainly because of the war in former Yugoslavia.

⁵ During this time, flows in the Central Mediterranean, which always vary a lot with the seasons, were decreasing (from 106,554 in the second semester of 2014 to 83,518 in July-December 2015). Overall numbers were nevertheless increasing dramatically, going far beyond a simple “redirection of flows” from West to East.

⁶ Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are key countries of origin for migration in Europe, with around 213,000 Afghans representing the second largest group of migrants and asylum seekers to the EU after Syrians in 2015 (Frontex 2016).

In the second half of 2015, Turkey took the place of Libya as the country from which the majority of migrants reached EU territory, thus becoming the most important partner in the external dimension of European migration policies. Unlike Libya, however, Turkey was a strong state, an accession candidate and a country with the potential to become an effective and trustworthy partner in managing migratory flows. It was also a country with a long list of demands of its own; demands that the EU had ignored for too long and was now forced to address if it wanted to obtain Turkish cooperation and support in a moment of crisis. The history of the following months, from the EU-Turkey Action Plan of November 2015 to the *Joint Statement* of March 2016, is thus the story of two allies working together to face a common challenge but also the story of difficult negotiations between partners linked by a rich and multifaceted relationship and by a complex history of grievances and unfulfilled expectations.

The way to the “Joint Statement” of March 2016

2014: The readmission agreement and the visa liberalization dialogue

Turkey was of course an important partner for the EU in the field of migration well before the migratory shift of summer 2015. In particular, two milestones of EU-Turkey cooperation were set in December 2013 when Commissioner Malstrom signed the EU-Turkey readmission agreement in Ankara and initiated, jointly, the EU-Turkey visa liberalisation dialogue.

The readmission agreement established procedures for the rapid and orderly readmission, by each side, of persons having entered or residing on the territory of the other side in an irregular manner. It contained provisions related to the readmission of both nationals of the two sides and nationals of third countries. However, while the provisions related to the readmission of nationals of the two sides (as well as of stateless persons and nationals from third countries with which Turkey had concluded bilateral agreements) entered into force on October 1, 2014, those related to the readmission of third country nationals were set to enter into force only three years later, in October 2017.

The aim of the visa liberalization dialogue, on the other hand, was to make progress towards the elimination of visa obligations for Turkish citizens travelling in the Schengen area for short stays of 90 days within any 180-day period for business, tourist, or family pur-

poses. The dialogue was based on a detailed “roadmap”, which listed the requirements that Turkey had to fulfil and it was built around four blocks: document security, migration and border management, public order, and security and fundamental rights. In addition, the roadmap included a set of requirements in the area of readmission of illegal migrants. The roadmap did not set a specific timetable by when the dialogue should have been completed, as the speed of the process was made dependent only on the progress made by Turkey. Once the Commission would have considered all requirements met, it would have presented a proposal for the lifting of visas to be voted by qualified majority by the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament.

End of 2015: the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan

In summer 2015, the great increase in migratory flows along the Eastern Mediterranean injected a new sense of urgency into EU-Turkey cooperation and the timelines foreseen in the 2013 deals were quickly overtaken by the events.

Already at the end of April, a Special European Council on migration—still mainly focused on the central Mediterranean route—committed to step up cooperation with Turkey (European Council 2015a). This engagement was repeated in a joint EU-Turkey statement on May 17 (European Commission 2015a) and then again in a Statement by EU Heads of State and Government on September 23 (European Council 2015b). Behind these words, the pressure was mounting as thousands of migrants and asylum seekers were making their way from Turkey to Greece and from there to central and northern Europe. In September 2015, daily arrivals from Turkey to Greece had reached an unmanageable average of 4,921, to increase even further in October to a record average 6,929 arrivals per day (European Commission 2016a, p. 2).

On October 15, the EU and Turkey translated their joint statements and political commitments into a more operational *Joint Action Plan* (European Commission 2015b). This document was composed of two parts: one on “supporting Syrians under temporary protection and their Turkish hosting communities”⁷ and the other one on “strengthening cooperation

⁷ Turkey retains a geographic limitation to its ratification of the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees, which means that only those fleeing because of “events occurring in Europe” can be given refugee status. Turkey implements a “temporary protection” regime for refugees from Syria, which was formalized by the Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR) of October 22, 2014. The Turkish “temporary protection” status grants beneficiaries the right to legal stay, protection from refoulement, and access to a set of basic rights and services.

to prevent irregular immigration". Under the first part, the *Action Plan* recognized the commendable efforts made by Turkey to provide humanitarian aid and support to over 2.2 million Syrians, estimating the cost already borne by Turkey to more than 7 billion euro of its own resources. Consequently, and coherently with an approach based on solidarity and shared responsibility, the EU committed to mobilizing additional funds to support the Turkish government in coping with such a daunting challenge⁸. Turkey, on the other hand, agreed to facilitate access to public services, including education, health services, and participation in the economy, to Syrians under temporary protection for the duration of their stay in Turkey⁹. The second part of the *Action Plan* explicitly built on the visa liberalisation dialogue, the visa roadmap, and the provisions of the EU-Turkey readmission agreement; it foresaw a number of measures by the two parties to enhance operational coordination and exchange of information, as well as increased EU support for the capacity-building of Turkish authorities and notably of the Turkish Coast Guard.

The October *Joint Action Plan* was activated at the end of November during a crucial meeting of EU heads of state and government with Turkey. The joint statement issued at the end of the meeting (European Council 2015c) went beyond the operational and sectorial focus of the *Action Plan*, accompanying it with a political commitment to step up EU-Turkey relations and to fulfil their vast potential. *Inter alia*, it contained the re-energization of the accession process with the opening of new chapters, the acceleration of the visa liberalization process with the mention of a target date (October 2016), the entry into force of the third country nationals clause of the readmission agreement in June 2016 (instead of October 2017 as originally foreseen) and the provision of an initial 3 billion euro of additional EU financial resources in support of Turkey.

Beginning 2016: EU solidarity at a breaking point

By the end of 2015, few months after the shift in migratory flows, which had taken place around the summer, the EU and Turkey had thus

⁸ The EU also committed to provide humanitarian aid via the relevant humanitarian organizations in Turkey, support existing resettlement programs and continue providing assistance to Syrian refugees hosted in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, as well as to Syrians displaced within Syria (over and beyond the 4.2 billion euro which the EU had already mobilized).

⁹ Turkey also committed to enhance the implementation of the law on foreigners and international protection, ensure the registration of migrants and the identification of the most vulnerable among them.

managed to agree on a political framework and an operational action plan to face together the challenge of an unprecedented migratory and refugee crisis.

The implementation report on the *Joint Action Plan*, issued by the European Commission in February (European Commission 2016a), was cautiously positive. On January 8, 2016, Turkey introduced visa obligations for Syrians travelling to a Turkish airport or seaport coming from a third country; a measure which immediately led to a decrease in the number of Syrians admitted into Turkey from Lebanon and Jordan and possibly directed towards the EU. On January 15, Turkey adopted a regulation giving the Syrians under temporary protection effective access to the labor market (although under some conditions and limitations), thus addressing one of the main factors pushing Syrians to cross irregularly to the EU in search of better perspectives.

Partially as a result of these actions and of the new attitude of Turkish authorities, but also as a result of the arrival of winter and the changing weather conditions, the number of irregular migrants arriving in Greece began to decline. Daily averages, which had peaked at 6,929 in October, decreased to 5,146 in November, 3,575 in December, and 2,186 in January (European Commission 2016a). Despite this positive trend, however, figures remained very high: arguably too high for the overstretched migration management capacities of the Greek government and for the weakened political resolve and solidarity of the European Union and its member states.

By early 2016, the Dublin system had *de facto* stopped working¹⁰ and a “wave-through policy” had prevailed in Greece and all along the Western Balkans route: migrants were allowed to reach central and northern Europe without being stopped or registered along the route. On February 2, the Commission adopted a *Schengen Evaluation Report on Greece* which, whilst acknowledging the strong pressure put on the Greek authorities by the crisis, concluded that Greece was seriously neglecting its obligations under EU law in the carrying out of external border controls. In particular, the report found that there was no effective identification and registration of irregular migrants, that fingerprints were not being systematically entered into the system, and that travel

¹⁰ The *Dublin Regulation* (no. 604/2013) establishes the criteria to determine the member state responsible for the examination of the asylum application. Greece, as country of first arrival, would have been responsible for the overwhelming majority of applications by migrants that landed on its shores.

documents were not being systematically checked for authenticity or against security databases. The adoption of this report was the first step towards the application of the procedure provided for in Article 26 of the Schengen Border Code, which foresees the reintroduction of border controls for a maximum duration period of two years. This possibility would have not amounted to an “expulsion of Greece from Schengen”, as many media incorrectly purported, but would have dealt a serious blow to EU solidarity and credibility, possibly jeopardizing the very survival of the Schengen system.

In the meantime, the relocation scheme approved by the European Council in summer 2015 was miserably failing. This scheme consisted in two decisions to relocate a total of 160,000 asylum seekers from Greece and Italy to other member states over two years, with the goal of alleviating the pressure on the two “frontline” countries (Council of the European Union 2015a, 2015b). Despite the binding legal nature of these decisions, by March 16 only 937 people had been relocated. The *First Report on Relocation and Resettlement* (European Commission 2016c) diplomatically defined this outcome as an “unsatisfactory level of implementation”. Far from being simply “unsatisfactory”, this was a dramatic indicator of a collective failure by EU member states to jointly face a common challenge in an effective spirit of solidarity and responsibility-sharing.

In the first months of 2016, EU solidarity indeed reached a breaking point: Hungary and Slovakia had lodged actions before the Court of Justice against the relocation decisions, Austria and Sweden had asked for a temporary suspension of their relocation obligations, the calls for additional personnel issued by EU agencies like FRONTEX and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) went largely unheard and, at various times, as many as eight countries reintroduced controls at their internal borders for reasons related to the refugee crisis (European Commission 2016g).

At the beginning of 2016, the end of the Schengen system was starting to look like a plausible scenario and the consequences for the European Union could have been enormous. The creation of an area without internal borders was not only an important practical achievement, which facilitated the lives of European citizens and boosted EU economy, it was also one of the key symbolic successes of the European integration, indissolubly linked to the vision of a free, peaceful and prosperous continent that underpinned the legitimacy of the EU and

its institutions. The situation required decisive action. On March 4, following a set of conclusions adopted by the European Council (2016a), the European Commission (2016b) published a roadmap to restore the normal functioning of Schengen and, on March 9, President Tusk declared the end of irregular flows of migrants along Western Balkans route on twitter (Tusk 2016).

The closure of the Western Balkans route and the end of the “wave-through approach”, which had prevailed until March, were necessary steps to restore the normal functioning of the Schengen area and to bring back order and coordination to the management of migratory flows in Europe. At the same time, however, these decisions risked to transform Greece into a giant refugee camp, where migrants would have been stranded after arriving from Turkey and unable to continue along the route. In order to be viable, the restoration of the normal functioning of the Schengen area had to be accompanied by other measures able to alleviate the burden on Greece and to quickly decrease migratory inflows from Turkey. The daily average of irregular arrivals from Turkey to Greece in February was 1,943, slightly below the January average but still high considering winter weather conditions¹¹ (European Commission 2016d, p. 4).

The March agreement

The EU-Turkey Statement of March 18

On March 7, in a difficult political context marked by deep divisions among member states, continued high flows of irregular migrants to Greece, and an increasingly frantic attempt to “save Schengen”, EU heads of state or government held a meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Davutoğlu to strengthen EU-Turkey cooperation on migration and refugees.

It should be noted that while Turkey was becoming an indispensable partner for Europe in the management of the migration crisis, political developments inside the country were increasingly worrying. On March 4, just few days before the summit in Brussels, the Turkish government had ordered the seizure of the newspaper “Zaman”, a decision that had received wide coverage in EU press and forced the EU to

¹¹ Furthermore, even though the monthly average confirmed the decreasing trend observed since October, numbers began to rise again in the last two weeks of February.

publicly recall the need for Turkey to respect and promote high democratic standards and practices (European External Action Service 2016).

Against this backdrop, and to the surprise of many, Prime Minister Davutoğlu arrived in Brussels on March 7 with a quite innovative set of proposals. The way these proposals were brought to the table, with almost no preliminary consultation and very little space to negotiate amendments, was badly received by many EU leaders and led several observers to interpret this as an extortion attempt by Turkey. Nevertheless, in the final statement issued after the summit, EU heads of state or government were forced to recognize that “bold moves were needed” and thus welcomed Turkey’s proposals and agreed to work on the basis of the principles they contained (European Council 2016b). After ten more days of intense diplomatic work and political discussions, the European Council essentially accepted the proposals made by Davutoğlu and agreed to a new set of Conclusions (European Council 2016c) and a new Joint Statement with Turkey (European Council 2016d).

The EU Turkey Statement of March 18 contained nine points. The first four points dealt with the establishment of an innovative return and readmission scheme (see *infra*). The fifth point moved up the target date for the lifting of visa requirements for Turkish citizens to end of June 2016 (see *infra*). The sixth point foresaw the accelerated disbursement of the 3 billion euros allocated to the Facility for Refugees in Turkey and the mobilization of additional 3 billion once these initial resources would have been used to the full. Points seven and eight welcomed the ongoing work on the upgrading of the Customs Union and reconfirmed EU-Turkey commitment to re-energise the accession process. Point nine dealt with the need to improve humanitarian conditions inside Syria¹².

The request of 3 extra billion was initially picked up by the European press as a key component of the agreement. As it quickly became clear however, it was probably one of its least controversial elements. Turkey was hosting more than 2.7 million registered Syrian refugees and was making commendable efforts to provide them with humanitarian aid and support. According to the figures mentioned in EU press statements, by spring 2016 Turkey had already spent more than 7 billion euros of its own resources. The EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey, set up at the end of 2015, had already made pledges for 95 million: 55 million euros to address the immediate needs of Syrian schoolchildren

¹² As this part of the agreement is linked more with the politics of the Syrian conflict than with the migratory crisis *strictu sensu*, it will not be analysed in details in this contribution.

in Turkey via UNICEF, and 40 million in humanitarian aid through the World Food Programme. Speeding up disbursements and committing to provide an additional 3 billion once the initial resources had been used to the full, was thus not to be seen as a cynical pay-out of a third country willing to do the dirty job on Europe's behalf. It was rather a concrete translation of the European commitment to global solidarity and responsibility-sharing, directly benefitting the refugees and their, often vulnerable, host communities in Turkey.

The one to one scheme

Certainly more controversial than the promise of additional financial help was the provision of a so-called "one to one scheme", set out in the first two points of the joint statement (European Council 2016d). Point one stated that "All new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into Greek islands as from 20 March 2016 will be returned to Turkey ..."; point two stated that "For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey to the EU ...". In addition, point four committed Turkey to take any necessary measures to prevent the opening of new sea or land routes for illegal migration, and point five foresaw the activation of a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme once irregular crossing between Turkey and EU would have stopped or at least substantially reduced¹³.

The return of all irregular migrants to Turkey was probably the most delicate element of the entire agreement. The statement defined it as a "temporary and extraordinary measure" which had to take place in full accordance with EU and international law. This is quite straightforward for people who do not have the right to international protection and can thus be returned to Turkey on the basis of existing readmission agreements¹⁴, but a more delicate situation applies to those migrants who decide to apply for asylum in Greece. In line with relevant international and European standards, and in respect of the principle of non-refoulement, their applications have to be treated on a case by case basis, guaranteeing individual interviews, individual assessments and rights of appeal. Nevertheless, EU asylum rules allow Greece, in

¹³ Otherwise, the end of irregular crossing would have the paradoxical effect of putting an end also to the readmission scheme.

¹⁴ On June 1, the EU-Turkey readmission agreement succeeded the bilateral readmission agreement between Greece and Turkey, following the entry into force of provisions related to the readmission of third-country nationals.

certain clearly defined circumstances, to declare an asylum application “inadmissible”, that is to say, to reject the application without examining the substance. This can happen in two circumstances: if Turkey is recognized as “first country of asylum”—meaning the applicant has been already recognized as a refugee or otherwise enjoys sufficient protection—or if it is recognized as a “safe third country”—meaning it can guarantee effective access to protection to the readmitted person even if he/she has not already received protection there¹⁵. Central to the entire scheme is thus the need to ensure the effective protection of migrants returned to Turkey, both Syrians and non-Syrians. In this respect, the guarantees provided by Turkey¹⁶ have been judged sufficient by the European Commission and the Council¹⁷, although of course the final decision is taken on a case by case basis by judicial authorities after having examined each individual file¹⁸.

The other element of the “one to one scheme” concerned the resettlement of Syrians from Turkey. This procedure is organized on the basis of standard operating procedures developed in close cooperation between the Commission, member states, EASO, UNHCR, and Turkey

¹⁵ On April 3, Greece adopted a law setting out the necessary legal provisions to apply, in full, the concepts of safe third country and safe first country of asylum, as well as ensuring fast-track procedures for the examination of asylum applications, including appeal procedures (Law 4375: O.G. A'51 / 03-04-2016).

¹⁶ On April 6, Turkey adopted a law to clarify that Syrian nationals returning under the new arrangements may request and be granted temporary protection, covering both previously registered and non-registered Syrians in Turkey. Furthermore the Commission reported that: “In addition to providing assurances that all returned Syrians will be granted temporary protection upon return, the Turkish authorities have provided further written assurances to the Commission that each non-Syrian who seeks international protection in Turkey will enjoy protection from re-oulement, in line with international standards, in accordance with the applicable Law on Foreigners and International Protection. Turkey has also adopted a Regulation on work permits for international protection applicants and international protection status holders. It has also started to implement a roadmap aimed at significantly reducing (12,000 to 13,000 per month) the backlog of pending applications for international protection, which will speed up processing of asylum applications by non-Syrian ... Turkey has also agreed to allow the EU to monitor regularly the situation of Syrians and non-Syrians returned to Turkey, including access to refugee camps and centres, and has concluded an agreement with UNHCR to provide access to removal centres to monitor implementation of international protection procedures” (European Commission, 2016f, p. 5).

¹⁷ On May 5, 2016, the Commission sent a written analysis of the measures taken by Turkey to the Greek authorities, including its assessment that Turkey has taken all the necessary steps identified in the Communication of March 16. This assessment was shared by member states at the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting of May 20, when they expressed “their conviction that migrants can and should be returned to Turkey in conformity with the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March” (Council of the European Union 2016).

¹⁸ By June 12, 2016, 252 appeals had been lodged against decisions by the Greek Asylum Service declaring asylum applications inadmissible. By the same date, the Greek Appeal Committees had taken 70 decisions granting the appeal and 2 decisions rejecting the appeal.

and finally agreed at the end of April. The system foresees that an initial list of resettlement candidates is prepared by the Turkish authorities on the basis of vulnerability criteria. This list is then assessed by UNHCR in order to identify the eligible cases to be submitted to EU member states for resettlement, especially taking into account their situation and vulnerability. Member states make the final decision on candidates submitted to them by the UNHCR, and carry out their own security checks. Priority is given to migrants who have not previously entered or tried to enter the EU irregularly.

The visa liberalization

Another key element of the March agreement, is the decision to accelerate the process of visa liberalization, setting a target date “at the latest by the end of June 2016, provided that all benchmarks have been met” (European Council, 2016d). As discussed, the visa liberalization process was ongoing at least since December 2013 and had already been accelerated by the *Joint Statement* of November 2015: this part of the agreement could therefore be seen as a mere anticipation of an existing process by four months. In reality, however, the end of June 2016 was a very ambitious deadline and this was arguably the most interesting element of the entire package for the Turkish leadership (and for Turkish citizens). In any case, it is important to stress that the lifting of visa requirements by end of June 2016 was always clearly subject to the fulfilment by Turkey of all the benchmarks set in the visa liberalization roadmap of 2013, and was never intended or promised as an automatic reward for cooperation in stemming the flows of irregular migration.

On May 4, the European Commission (2016d) adopted the third report on the visa liberalization, attesting that Turkey had met 65 out of 72 benchmarks. Two of the remaining seven objectively could not be completed within the timeframe¹⁹, but the report called upon Turkey to act without delay on the remaining five: adopting measures to prevent corruption, align data protection legislation with EU standards, concluding an operational agreement with Europol, offering judicial cooperation in criminal matters with all European member states, and revising legislation and practices on terrorism. Together with the report,

¹⁹ One of the two benchmarks related to implementing the provision of the EU-Turkey readmission agreement (which only entered into force in June) and the other one to upgrading the existing biometric passport (a lengthy procedure for which a satisfactory interim solution could be found).

the Commission adopted a proposal to place Turkey on the visa free list, on the understanding that the five remaining benchmarks would have been met as a matter of urgency²⁰. By doing so, the Commission somehow put the ball in the court of Turkey (which had to fulfil the remaining requirements) and of the European Parliament and European Council, which ultimately had to approve the Commission proposal under ordinary legislative procedure (qualified majority in Council, simple majority in Parliament)²¹.

Conclusions

By mid-June, when the European Commission published its second report on the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, its assessment was cautiously positive. According to the European Commission (2016f, p. 2):

“The sharp decrease in the number of irregular migrants and asylum seekers crossing from Turkey into Greece is proof of the Statement’s effectiveness—and in particular, that the business model of smugglers can be broken. The clear message to migrants is that getting on a boat in Turkey, and endangering lives in the process, is not worth the risk given that there is a legal and safe pathway through resettlement”.

The average number of daily arrivals from Turkey to the Greek islands had indeed decreased from a little below 2,000 in the months preceding the agreement to around 50. This decrease crucially led to a parallel drop in the number of lives lost in the Aegean Sea (7 from March 20 to June 15 against 366 from the beginning of the year to March 20). Greece and Turkey both took a number of legislative and administrative steps in order to allow the return of irregular migrants in full respect of EU and international law, even if the report signalled the need for a further increase in Greek capacities to deal with the individual assessment of asylum applications and appeals²². In parallel, more than

²⁰ On May 4, the Commission also presented a proposal to strengthen the suspension mechanism of the visa liberalization. Such a mechanism allows to re-impose visa requirements for nationals of a third country in case of a substantial and sudden increase of irregular migration and can be triggered by any member state (European Commission 2016e).

²¹ By mid-June, it had become abundantly clear that the July 1 deadline could not be met, also because of Turkish unwillingness to meet the remaining benchmarks and in particular to revise its legislation and practices on terrorism.

²² The closure of the Western Balkan Route caused a steep increase of asylum applications lodged in Greece. Before March 2016, most migrants attempted to pass through Greece without being registered in order to ask for asylum in the countries of their choice in central and northern Europe. Since the closure of the Western Balkan Route and the agreement with Turkey, however,

500 Syrians were resettled from Turkey to the EU in the framework of the “one to one scheme”²³ and considerable resources were allocated to improve the conditions of migrants and refugees in Turkey. Moreover, increased cooperation with the EU, had provided Turkey the political momentum to achieve, often with considerable technical and financial support, important results in the field of protection of refugees, migration management, fight against smuggling and trafficking, as well as justice and home affairs more generally²⁴.

At the same time, both the implementation of the March agreement and the overall development of EU-Turkey cooperation in the field of migration remain extremely fragile. The Commission in its June report stressed that, despite the important results achieved, “there is no scope for complacency, particularly as one of the most challenging elements—the daily operation of the actual return and resettlement processes in full compliance with EU and international rules—can still not be considered fully implemented” (European Commission 2016f, p. 15). Indeed, the March Statement itself, while approving the one to one scheme, acknowledged that the return of all irregular migrants to Turkey was to be considered a “temporary and extraordinary measure which is necessary to end the human suffering and restore public order”.

Even more importantly EU-Turkey cooperation in the field of migration can only develop as one element within a much bigger strategic partnership, grounded in common values as well as in mutual interests. The very same European Council conclusions of March 17-18, which confirmed the agreement reached by the Joint Statement, reiterated that the EU “expects Turkey to respect the highest standards when it comes to democracy, rule of law, respect of fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression” (European Council 2016c, paragraph 5). At the time of writing, summer 2016, developments in Turkey are calling such expectations into question and cast serious doubts on the future of EU-Turkey cooperation.

most migrants decided to lodge their applications in Greece, in order to avoid immediate return to Turkey.

²³ As of mid-June, the number of Syrians resettled substantially exceeded the number of those returned to Turkey.

²⁴ Among other things, the focus on the 5+2 benchmarks of the visa liberalization, which Turkey has not yet met, should not overshadow the important progress made on the other 65 (European Commission 2016d).

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The Europeanization of Turkey's Foreign Policy: From Alignment to Misalignment?

Serena Giusti and Chiara Franco

The Europeanization of foreign policy

The first seminal work on Europeanization defined the concept as “an incremental process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC (European Community) political and economic dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national politics and policy-making” (Ladrech 1994, p. 69). Because the mainstream approaches to European integration failed to account for certain phenomena and dynamics of the process and the entry into force of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) in 1993 produced a further “communitarisation” of the policies, the concept became particularly valuable and workable (Graziano and Vink 2013, p. 33). The Europeanization approach had the merit of shifting the research focus from the EU's ontology to the outcomes of the process of integration, highlighting the connection between the supranational and the national level.

The EU is considered the independent variable, while national politics and policies are the dependent variables to be explained. The phenomenon of Europeanization needs constant contextualisation as many intervening variables, both at the domestic and external (regional and international) levels, can affect it. The risk of overestimating the influence of Europeanization while underestimating or ignoring other possible causes of change is very high.

The first wave of research on Europeanization mainly focused on supranational policies; only recently, the research agenda has been broadened to embrace intergovernmental policies, including foreign policy (FP).

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In the case of non-communitarian policies, Europeanization explicates only on a voluntary and non-hierarchical basis (Bulmer and Radaelli 2004, p. 7). Being conceptualized as high politics (issues that are vital to the survival of a state, as national security, or warfare), FP is perhaps the most resilient to exogenous influence. The Europeanization of FP appears very complex (Moumoutzis 2011, pp. 607-629) as it entails “a transformation in the way that national foreign policies are constructed, in the ways that professional roles are defined and pursued and in the consequent internalization of norms and expectations arising from a complex system of collective European policy making” (Tonra 2000, p. 245).

The literature appears divided regarding the efficacy of Europeanization when addressing issues of FP. Some scholars consider that national FPs had “significantly been changed, if not transformed, by participation over time in foreign policy making at the European level” (White 2001, p. 6). There are some others, among them, Hix and Goetz (2000, p. 6), who are less optimistic and retain that the EU could “at best, have a weak impact on national policies”. Clearly, as much as the European FP is strengthened its Europeanizing capacity should also rise.

The debate on European FP that has traditionally revolved around two extreme positions—“state centrism” and “European idealism”—has benefitted from the Europeanization perspective. The former emphasizes that states remain the only essential actors and that any convergence on Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is the lowest common denominator of intergovernmental bargaining. The latter considers European FP as a given variable that constrains the states from the outside. As a third approach, Europeanization “accepts that member states adapt to CFSP decision-making structures and norms, while at the same time recognizing that these same member states are themselves actively involved in creating these structures and norms” (Wong 2008, p. 323). Therefore, the EU’s FP is not an external and static variable, but it is rather constantly constructed and reconstructed by the states, while being able to offer feedback on them. As a result of the continuous debate and negotiations of different positions, FP’s conduct has gradually moved away

“... from the old nation–state sovereignty model towards a collective endeavor, a form of high-level networking with transformationalist effects and even more potential” (Hill and Wallace 1996, p. 6).

The effects of socialization were furthered by the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS), contributing to the

professionalization and transformation into a mature bureaucracy of the EU's external representation (Dimier and McGeever 2006).

Europeanization has a high probability of success when the EU's FP positions match the interests of member states or when these interests are better pursued at the European rather than the national level. By cooperating, states realize a "politics of scale" and achieve greater results. Hill and Wong (2011, p. 222) underline "the increase in power and leverage which the EU as a whole can derive from acting together, and the associated sense that an individual member state will have more capacity to influence events through pooling resources than it would do on its own".

Turkey's EU candidate status implications

If the Europeanization of member states' FP is an already contentious issue, this is even more so as far as candidates, "quasi members" (such as Norway and Switzerland), and third countries, not yet engaged in the accession process and with no realistic perspective to become candidates in the near future, are concerned. Candidate countries are required to progressively adopt the EU's *acquis communautaire*. In the occasion of the latest waves of enlargement, the EU has developed a set of sophisticated mechanisms, both formal and informal, which boost Europeanization beyond traditional boundaries.

It is a common practice among the candidates to also align with the *acquis politique*. The inherent asymmetry of the accession process induces candidates to behave as *de facto* members before becoming *de jure* members. The determination to enter the EU and the competition with other candidates induce them to engage in an "anticipatory adaptation", consisting of accepting, or even anticipating, Brussels' requests (Giusti 2002, p. 12). If the membership perspective is credible and the perceived benefits of accession exceed the costs, this tendency is likely to be reinforcing. In the case of Turkey, the EU's commitment has often been put in doubt¹.

¹ The possibility of a "privileged partnership", ventilated by Germany and France (Macmillan 2010, p. 457), has not been encouraging for Turkey towards adaptation. Although the European Commission never formally endorsed this format, it has, nevertheless, often made reference, in its documents to the "open-ended nature" of the accession process. The European Council seemed to already make allusions to the possibility of a privileged partnership in 2005

The anticipatory adaptation has gradually concerned FP too. The introduction on the part of the EU of the alignment—a procedure by which different categories of EU’s third countries governments are invited to support previously adopted CFSP documents—has been seminal in the progressive Europeanization of candidates’ FP. As a country is accepted as an official candidate (the opening of the FP’s chapter is not a prerequisite)², it is expected to align on political declarations, actions and agreements, including international legally binding agreements of which the EU is a part and to apply agreed restrictive measures. Although alignment is not compulsory, a candidate position is constantly monitored (since the practice requires an upload on the EU’s protected access website). The alignment is therefore a sneaky process, giving the EU the possibility of influencing, through the membership incentive, a very sensitive policy for a country’s sovereignty. Nevertheless, it is worth remembering that for candidates, aligning to the CFSP might not be very costly as the aligned documents are often simply declaratory and rhetorical (Barbé et al. 2009, p. 390).

The European Commission’s yearly Progress Report, assessing the state of a candidate’s policies in all areas of the *acquis*, including those related to chapters still to be opened, was a further incentive for accelerating Europeanization. Candidates seek to be depicted positively and are disposed to implement the reforms suggested by the Commission. The publication of the Progress Report is normally highly advertised and is likely to stir a public debate in the candidate country. In the case of Turkey, Reports have pointed out urgent reforms (e.g. the signature of the statute of the International Criminal Court and normalisation of the relations with Israel and Armenia, the ratification of the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Missile Technology Control Regime). The European Parliament (EP), as well, plays a role in the Europeanization of FP through formal venues and the yearly resolutions regarding the European Commission’s Progress Reports. When the EP approved the 2013 Progress Report on Turkey, for instance, it called upon the Commission to consider some critical elements as the violation of the Greek airspace and territorial waters, the veto upon the inclusion of Cyprus in the NATO-EU cooperation, and the question of the entry of

when it stated that “if Turkey is not in a position to assume, in full, all the obligations of membership, it must be ensured that Turkey is fully anchored in the European structures through the strongest possible bond” (European Council 2005).

² Because of the veto imposed by Cyprus, the chapter on FP has not yet been formally opened in the negotiations with Turkey.

fighters and arms to the benefit of groups presumably implicated in systematic human rights violations in Syria (European Parliament 2013).

Another instrument for promoting Europeanization was the EU-Turkey “Positive Agenda”, launched in Ankara in May 2012, aimed at “bringing fresh dynamics into the EU–Turkey relations after a period of stagnation” (European Commission 2012). Its mission is to deal with those issues not yet under discussion in the accession negotiations because they concern chapters that were blocked, either by the Council’s decision or by France and Cyprus’ vetoes. In particular, the Agenda has set up eight bilateral working groups, each focusing on one “blocked” chapter. Even though a specific working group on Chapter 31 (Foreign, Security, and Defence Policy) has not been established, a strengthened dialogue on issues like energy cooperation and FP (including a coordination regarding Syria) was mentioned among the priorities of the Agenda (*ibid.*).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that Turkey, as a NATO member, has been involved in the decision-making process that has generated the most significant orientations of FP of the majority of the EU’s member states. Turkish permanence in NATO has made the country highly compatible with the main positions of EU’s FP.

Turkey in the Alignment Procedure

In order to assess the impact of Europeanization on Turkey’s FP, we analyzed the country’s alignment to the Council of the European Union’s CFSP statements³. Most statements are open to an “alignment procedure” to acceding countries⁴, candidate countries and potential candidates, members of the European Economic Area (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway), and even to some European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) partners. We looked at Turkey’s alignment, starting from 2000 when the country was included in the procedure (after being recognized as an official candidate and before the opening of accession negotiations) until

³ The statements for the period 1993-2009 were issued by the Presidency, after the entry into effect of the Lisbon Treaty by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. For the statements, see [www.consilium.europa.eu/press/press-releases/common-foreign-and-security-policy-\(cfsp\)-statements](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press/press-releases/common-foreign-and-security-policy-(cfsp)-statements).

⁴ Those countries that have already signed the treaty of accession and are expected to become full members of the EU on the date set out in the treaty are named as “acceding country”.

2014. The Turkish alignment with CFSP was examined diachronically and across different topics and was compared with that of other candidates.

Once a statement has been approved by member states, the EU uploads it to a protected-access website accessible to countries participating in the alignment procedure. Concerned countries can officially express their alignment by a deadline (usually 48 or 72 hours). If they do not reply before the deadline expires, they are considered not aligned (meaning that no silence procedure is in place, so alignment cannot be presumed if it is not explicitly expressed).

Turkey's rate of alignment was calculated for every year between 2000-2014 using the percentage of statements "aligned" compared with the total number of statements that were opened to the alignment procedure. Data on Turkey's alignment were gathered in two ways: through the European Commission's yearly Progress Reports and through the Council of the EU's official website. The Commission Progress Reports included Turkey's rate of alignment with CFSP's declarations and decisions since 2007. Therefore, the percentage of Turkey's alignment during the period of 2007-2014 was taken directly from such Reports. The rate of alignment was not included in the Reports from 2000-2006; as a consequence, the rates for such years were calculated using the Council of the EU's website, which publishes the EU's declarations and decisions, including the list of countries that have expressed alignment with them. In all cases in which Turkey was not cited among the countries that expressed alignment, it was considered "not aligned". The same two methods were applied in the analysis of the other countries' rates of alignment; when available, the percentages included in the Progress Reports were used; when not available, the percentages were calculated using the Council of the EU's website.

Then, all CFSP statements published in the Council of the EU's website for the whole period of 2000-2014⁵ were collected in a database by classifying them according to their subject matter. More specifically, they were first divided into country-specific statements (all statements concerning the same country were grouped together) and statements not referring to a single country. Then, statements that were not country-specific were classified into different categories according to their subject, such as "terrorism", "human rights", "non-proliferation" and "conflict".

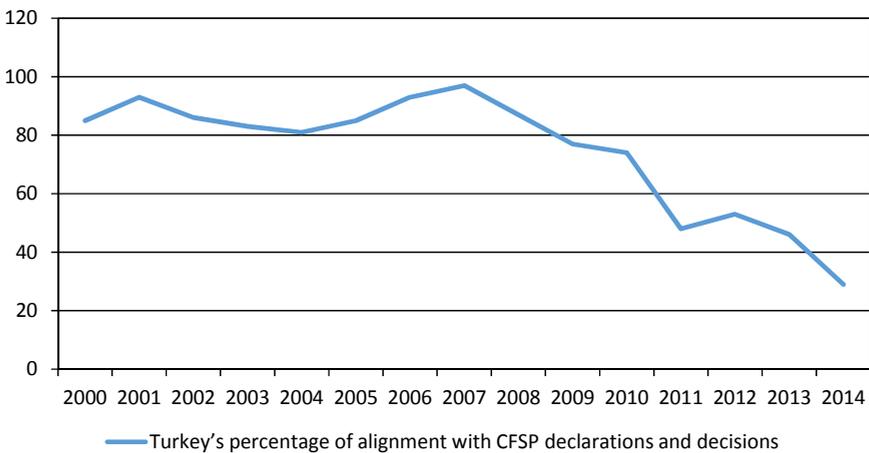
⁵ A total of 1568 statements: 130 in 2000; 135 in 2001; 148 in 2002; 134 in 2003; 136 in 2004; 144 in 2005; 138 in 2006; 101 in 2007; 145 in 2008; 130 in 2009; 36 in 2010; 75 in 2011; 54 in 2012; 28 in 2013; 34 in 2014.

For each group of statements (both country-specific and issue-specific), Turkey's overall rates of alignment over the years were calculated. Such classifications were used in order to determine the variation of Turkey's alignment depending on the country or subject that the statements refer to.

This approach faced some methodological limits: 1) the number of statements varies from year to year (while for the years 2000-2009, there were an average of 134 statements, for the years 2010-2014, the average plummeted to 45 statements) and 2) the procedure of alignment does not allow for ascertaining if countries do not express their alignment because they are against it or rather if they simply failed to meet the deadline. We then presumed that any time Turkey did not align with an EU's statement, it was because of disagreement with the EU. In addition, 3) although some hypotheses could be formulated on the basis of data gathered, we were not able to establish a causal relationship due to the number and relevance of intervening variables, in particular at the domestic and regional level.

As shown in Figure 1, Turkey's rate of alignment with CFSP statements was constantly above 80% until 2007, with a peak of 93.3% in 2001. For every ten statements to which Turkey was able to express its alignment, at least eight were in line with the EU. Such a high convergence can be attributed to the starting of the accession negotiations that enabled the EU to exert a strong influence on candidates that are usually more receptive.

Figure 1. *Turkey's rate of alignment, 2000-2014*

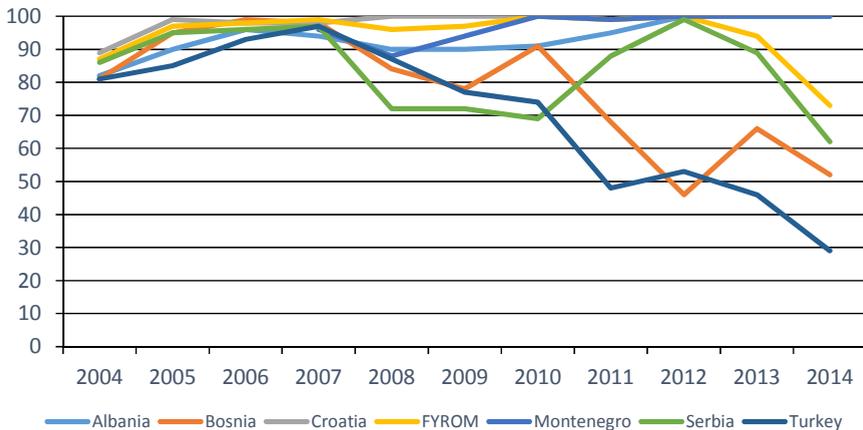


Source: Authors' elaboration

The slightly decreased rate of alignment recorded from 2001 to 2004 might depend on the delay of the opening of accession negotiations, which only started in 2005, when in fact the rate returned to growth. However, the rate of alignment declined abruptly already in 2008 (from 97% to 87%) and then continuously decreased (the only exception being the rise from 48% in 2011 to 53% in 2012), plummeting to 29% in 2014.

The decline in alignment seems to have a predominantly domestic explanation: the start of the AKP's second term (2007-2011), which had a dramatic impact on the country's internal and external political course. The trend is so neat that the fact that fewer data are available for the years 2010-2014 should not invalidate our hypothesis. We can then assume that the alignment procedure itself may have become less efficient or the EU may have lost interest in promoting participation in the procedure among the candidates. We can even presume that the EU's statements have become more general. Finally, we can assume that the EU has more explicitly "taken sides" in conflicts and contentious issues, making it more difficult for third countries to express their alignment. The only way to test these hypotheses is to consider the trend in the rate of alignment of other candidates during the same period (see Figure 2). If a drop similar to that of Turkey is found to have occurred since 2007, then our hypotheses might be plausible.

Figure 2. *Comparison of candidates' and potential candidates' rates of alignment, 2004-2014*



Source: Authors' elaboration

Turkey's rate of alignment can be compared with that of the other candidates and potential candidates during the period 2004-2014. Albania, Bosnia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), and Serbia were included in the alignment procedure since 2004, as well as Croatia (Croatia exited it in 2013 as it joined the EU). Montenegro entered the procedure in 2007.

Figure 2 shows that the patterns of alignment of the different countries were very similar during the years 2004-2007 (when they were all above 80%), then starting to diverge in 2008. In 2008, the rates of Croatia and FYROM were still 100% and 96%, respectively, but the rates of the other countries generally decreased. In the case of Montenegro and Albania, the rate declined in 2008, but it has risen again since then, and the two countries have aligned with all statements (100%) since 2012. As for Bosnia and Serbia, the trend has been much more inconsistent, with several increases and decreases. They present diverging patterns, with Serbia reaching its highest alignment peak in 2012 (99%) and decreasing the following year (89%), and Bosnia, in contrast, reaching its lowest point in 2012 (46%) and sharply increasing the following year (66%).

All countries, except Albania and Montenegro, registered a decline in 2014; this was particularly remarkable in the cases of Serbia and FYROM, along with Turkey. With the exception of Serbia in the years 2008-2010 and Bosnia in 2012, Turkey has always maintained the lowest rate of alignment among this group of countries since 2004, and the gap has consistently widened since 2008. The gap between Turkey and the other countries was particularly remarkable in 2012 and in 2014. Turkey is the only country experiencing a progressive decline.

The change of the nature of EU statements might explain the consistent drops registered. In the last few years, most EU statements have concerned very contentious topics such as the events related to the Arab Springs and the Ukrainian crisis. Such statements have made it more difficult for candidate countries (especially those having special relations with either Russia or Middle Eastern countries) to express alignment. However, it can be argued that such variables account only partially for the sharp decline in Turkey's rate of alignment, while the persistence of the decline is due mainly to domestic factors. Although some drops were observed for other countries, in none of them has the trend been as deep and as constant as in Turkey. Croatia, the only country that finally joined the EU in 2013, had a rate of alignment close

to 100% for several years preceding accession. The same trend was recorded for the Central Eastern European Countries in 2000-2005 (or 2000-2007 in the case of Romania and Bulgaria). We can thus deduce that in proximity of accession, candidates are very prone to adhere to the EU's CFSP indications.

Since 2005, some of the ENP partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine) took part in the alignment procedure⁶. These countries, on average, had rates of alignment that were much lower in comparison to candidates and potential candidates, with the only exception being Moldova. Similarly, Ukraine, in the years 2005-2009, recorded a high rate of alignment that sharply declined until 2013. On the contrary, Azerbaijan has rarely aligned (no declaration nor decision in 2014), while Georgia and Armenia were more participative, oscillating between roughly 50% and 70%, with the exception of 2014, when their rate was well below 50%. In the course of 2014, there was a general decline in the rate of alignment that leads to deducing that there were some external factors having an impact on all countries, independently from domestic politics and closeness/distance to the EU. In particular, those countries still under Russia's ascendant were recalcitrant to take a clear position on the Ukrainian case, considering that even EU member states were divided over the topic. Ukraine was the subject of almost one fourth of EU declarations and decisions within CFSP in 2014. Turkey's rate of alignment since 2007 was more attuned with third countries rather than with candidate countries.

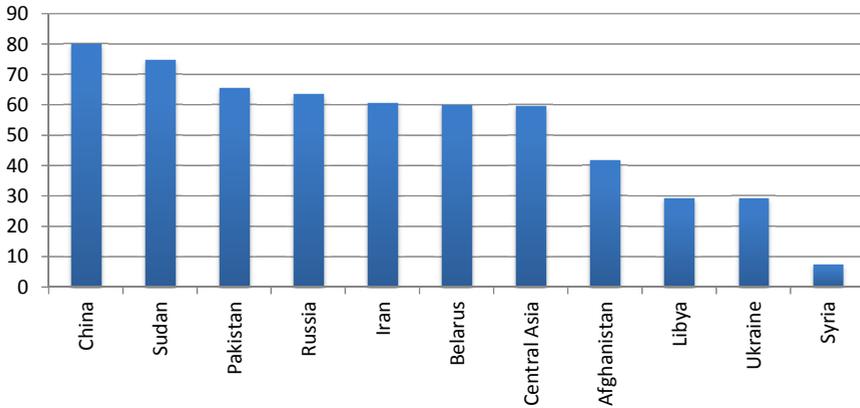
Figure 3 highlights the EU's policies directed to specific countries on which Turkey was more sympathetic; Turkey aligned with the EU's declarations and decisions concerning China in 80% of the cases, and Syria on 7% of cases. In addition, Turkey's position towards Afghanistan, Libya, and Ukraine seem to diverge from those endorsed by Brussels, with a rate of alignment of 42%, 29%, and 29%, respectively. The policies towards Sudan and Pakistan present minor divergences, with a rate of alignment of 75% and 65%, respectively, while the alignment on declarations and decisions concerning Russia, Iran, Belarus, and Central Asia⁷ is around 60%.

Concerning China, Turkey did not align with some declarations on human rights, while it aligned with all declarations on Tibet and Taiwan.

⁶ On the alignment in the Southern Caucasus, see Mayer's (2014) very insightful article that offers a comparative theory test of CFSP alignment in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, exploring cross-country and cross-issue variance.

⁷ Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Figure 3. *Turkey's rate of alignment with country-specific statements, 2000-2014*

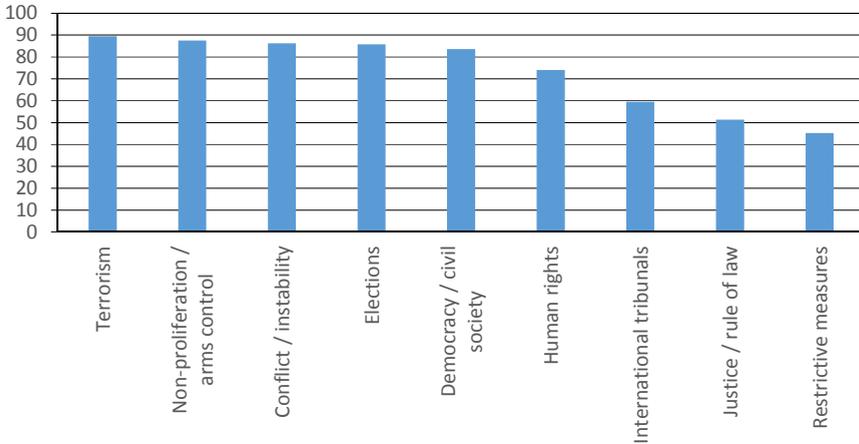


Source: Authors' elaboration

Regarding Sudan, there is a mixed record of alignment on Darfur and no alignment on the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant against Al-Bashir. In the case of Pakistan, the area in which Turkey and the EU converge most is that of fighting terrorism, while Turkey did not align with all statements concerning the elections held in the country in 2002 and 2008. Also in the case of Russia, most cases of non-alignment concerned elections (in 2003 and 2008), while there was a good rate of alignment reported for human rights, and especially for freedom of expression and freedom of the media. Turkey did not align with the restrictive measures imposed by the EU to both Belarus and Iran. In the case of Iran, Turkey did not align with several statements on human rights, and especially freedom of religion and religious minorities, while it aligned with all statements concerning the rule of law and the death penalty.

As for the Central Asian republics, most cases of non-alignment concerned elections or human rights. Turkey did not align with any of the statements on Afghanistan's elections in 2009, while it aligned with the restrictive measures imposed against the Taliban in 2011. It aligned only with a few decisions imposing restricting measures against Libya since 2011, and it did not align with restrictive measures against Ukraine and Syria. Such results seem to suggest that Turkey still maintains specific "areas of interest" and "special relations" with certain countries that it is not willing to change or renounce, even if this is in conflict with the EU's position.

Figure 4. *Turkey's rate of alignment with statements on different subject matters, 2000-2014*



Source: Authors' elaboration

Finally, we assessed alignment on the basis of salient topics. As shown in Figure 4, the least controversial areas concerning Turkey's alignment are terrorism and non-proliferation, as well as arms control; the rate of alignment is, respectively, 89% and 87%. Turkey presents remarkable rates of alignment regarding conflict and instability (86%), which regroups all EU declarations regarding risky situations for international peace and security, and of elections (86%). The rate of convergence on declarations concerning democracy and civil society is 84%; among the statements on democracy, with which Turkey has not aligned, there are several concerning Russia, Belarus, Myanmar, Venezuela, and Indonesia. Concerning declarations on human rights, Turkey's overall rate of alignment is 74%, but there are some particular areas of divergence, especially freedom of expression and freedom of the media, non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and freedom of religion. Moreover, Turkey did not align with declarations on the death penalty in 2000 and 2001, but has done so ever since⁸.

The most problematic areas regard international tribunals (59%), justice and rule of law (51%), and restrictive measures (45%). On international tribunals, Turkey does not align with all statements concerning the ICC, not having ratified its statute, while it has a mixed record of

⁸ Turkey abolished death penalty in 2004.

alignment on the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). In the category of justice and rule of law, most cases of non-alignment regard Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, and Belarus.

Regarding restrictive measures that imply not only sharing a view but also an effective implementation of the measures undertaken by the EU, Turkish alignment registered the lowest percentage. While Turkey has aligned with restrictive measures targeting individuals in Afghanistan, FYROM, Moldova, and many African countries (including Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Liberia, and Somalia), it has not aligned with restrictive measures adopted against Syria, Ukraine, Belarus, and Myanmar.

What might alignment signal?

Turkey's data on alignment need to be interpreted in the light of domestic politics and FP orientations at the regional and international level. A dramatic change was represented by the advent to power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002. The AKP rejected Turkey's traditional preference for non-interventionism and neutrality, choosing instead to adopt a proactive FP aimed at creating "strategic depth" by expanding Turkey's zone of influence in its immediate neighborhood and beyond. Ahmet Davutoğlu, who served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2009 to 2014, believes that the Eurasian landmass is of crucial importance to global geopolitics. Turkey is deemed to have a unique opportunity to expand its influence, converting from a passive "consumer" to an active contributor to world security and prosperity. In this perspective, the EU is not considered as the main vector of the country's FP so that Turkey has acted with less concern regarding Brussels' hints. Nevertheless, Davutoğlu believes that asserting its interests, both in the region and in the world, makes his country more, not less, attractive to the West (The Economist 2010).

The Europeanization of FP was mostly achieved during the first years of the 2000s; an intense program of domestic reforms⁹ was, in fact, accompanied by a consistent entente with the EU decisions on

⁹ In October 2001, Bulent Ecevit's coalition government passed 34 constitutional amendments, mostly concerning human rights and the Turkish Grand National Assembly, between 2001 and 2003, approved seven harmonization packages. In May 2004, a new set of constitutional amendments regarding the abolishment of the State Security Courts, gender equality and the military role within the Higher Education Board were approved, followed by a new Penal Code, which strengthened women's rights.

FP. While diversifying its international partners, the relationship with the Euro-Atlantic Community remained the preeminent “axis” of Turkish FP. The expansion of Turkey’s “soft power”, most notably through economic and cultural diplomacy, the multilateral approach, the discourse on democracy promotion, the active role as peacemaker and humanitarian actors and the commitment to interreligious and intercultural dialogue, were also in line with the EU’s FP. The Europeanization of Turkish FP brought as a positive outcome the limitation of the power of the military in FP decision-making and the general improvement of relations with neighbors.

Turkey’s FP became more Europeanized because of the improvement of relations with Greece, Cyprus and Syria. At the beginning of the 2000s, following the principle of “zero problems with neighbours”, Turkey adopted a less confrontational and more constructive approach towards all three. Concerning Greece, the change since the end of the 1990s is demonstrated by the increased level of official visits between the two countries’ leaders, the removal of landmines along the border, the reduction of military exercises and the inauguration of a natural gas pipeline project in 2005 (Aydin and Acikmese 2007, p. 270). While such shifts were frequently explained by both sides as the result of “earthquake diplomacy”¹⁰, favored by close personal relationships between the two foreign ministries (Ismail Cem and George Papandreou), it is doubtful whether there would have been the same kind of improvement in Greek-Turkish relations and a turnaround in Turkey’s Cyprus policy without the incentive of EU membership (Kirisci 2006).

Talking about the Turco-Greek rapprochement, Erdogan claimed that this is possible “because we have a common ground through which mutual perceptions are formed. That common ground is the EU” (Erdogan 2004). Regarding Cyprus, the more constructive approach on the Turkish side was demonstrated by the support for a yes vote in the 2004 referendum, which was part of the Annan Plan. As for Syria, while there was a rapprochement between the two countries, it is less clear whether it was the effect of negotiations with the EU or of other factors. Most notably, a major factor was the convergence of positions as a result of the 2003 Iraq war, and the common interest in granting a post-war unity in Iraq (Kahraman 2011). Therefore, while the Kurdish question has in the past been a major matter of disagreement between Turkey and Syria, it became a catalyst for increased cooperation.

¹⁰ In the summer of 1999, both Turkey and Greece were hit by a series of earthquakes that generated a wave of solidarity and exchange of aid and assistance between the two countries.

Between 2001 and 2007, Turkey aligned with more than 80% of the EU's declarations and decisions under CFSP, showing a highly Europeanized FP. Furthermore, Turkey participated in military operations under the framework of the European/Common Security and Defence Policy and adopted documents relating to CFSP, such as the official documents on terrorism. This phase of Europeanization was not only the result of the EU's pressures combined with a credible membership perspective, but it was also the product of domestic and international factors.

Indeed, embracing the EU values and firmly engaging in the process of EU accession allowed the AKP to gain a much stronger legitimacy in spite of the suspicion with which Islamic parties were regarded. In order to pursue its own interests, the AKP was pushed to act as a change agent (or norm entrepreneur) favoring Europeanization. The international framework was also beneficial to the Europeanization process insofar as the relative regional stability and the benign economic environment did not hamper the development of soft power resources and the commitment to multilateralism and democracy promotion abroad, in line with EU values.

As already explained, such conditions started to change during the second half of the 2000s, and especially since AKP's second term in 2007. Öniş and Yılmaz (2009) notice that the wide support at the 2007 elections could have been exploited by AKP to revitalize the European agenda. On the contrary, the path of Europeanization was reversed since Turkey's policies increasingly diverged from the EU. The country underwent a process of redefinition of its own identity, in line with the AKP's desire to overcome the Kemalist tradition. Turkey moved closer to the Eurasian world as the AKP's leadership was convinced that cooperation with other regions could be an alternative to the EU (Keyman 2013, p. 3).

The drastic drop in the rate of alignment testifies to this; divergences persisted on the issues of the Iranian nuclear program, Israel, the Iraqi Kurdistan and the sanctions against Russia. As far as the Arab Springs are concerned, both Turkey and the EU embraced the same political discourse on "democracy promotion", but their actual policies often differed. Turkey was initially reluctant to intervene in Libya and it was frequently criticized by the EU for, on the one hand, covertly supporting extremist forces in Syria and, on the other hand, refusing to take part in the international coalition's humanitarian operations in favor of the Kurdish community in the north.

Oğuzlu claims that Turkey eventually realized that having strong institutional relations with both the EU and NATO does not necessarily imply that Turkey is “part of the Western international community” (Oğuzlu 2008, p. 5). He also stresses that Turkey’s traditionally Western-oriented elites “have increasingly begun to question the rationale of Turkey’s EU vocation on the grounds of structural incompatibilities between the foundational logics of the Turkish Republic and the EU’s FP rationale. These circles fret that the Europeanization process might, in the end, result in the weakening of Turkey’s unitary, homogenous, and secular state identity. They fear that Turkey might one day come out of this process as a federated/decentralized state with Turkish society transformed into a multi-cultural entity alongside ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences” (Oğuzlu 2010, p. 670).

There were, over time, some attempts to reignite the credibility of the process: the establishment of the Ministry for EU Affairs in 2011 and Erdogan’s visit to Brussels in January 2014 after an absence of five years in the EU capital, the launch of the Positive Agenda in May 2012, the opening of a new chapter (Chapter 22 on Regional Policy) in 2013 after no chapter had been opened for more than three years (since June 2010¹¹), and the signature of the readmission agreement in December 2013. Nevertheless, in the post-2013 Gezi protests, Turkey’s different cultural background was yet emphasized and Erdogan’s increasing authoritarianism was considered a serious impediment to a rapprochement to the EU.

The data collected on the alignment procedure during the period of 2000-2014 offered interesting insights on the path of Turkey’s FP Europeanization. Turkey’s rate of alignment with the EU’s declarations and decisions under CFSP was high during the period of 2000-2007 (between 81% and 97%), while it progressively decreased since then, reaching a low of 29% in 2014. It was also shown that, while the rates of several other candidates also declined at times, Turkey always maintained the lowest rate among candidates during the period of 2004-2014, with the only exceptions being Serbia in 2008-2010 and Bosnia in 2012. Furthermore, Turkey was the only country experiencing not an occasional, but rather, a progressive decline. Turkey’s rate of alignment since 2007 was more similar to those of third countries that, while participating in the alignment procedure, were not invited to join the EU, in contrast to the rates of candidate countries with credible membership perspectives.

¹¹ The last had been the Chapter on Food Safety, Veterinary, and Phytosanitary Policy.

First, it was found that Turkey aligned with significantly fewer country-specific statements on Syria, Ukraine, Libya, and Afghanistan. In addition, the policies towards Sudan and Pakistan presented some divergences. This seems to suggest that Turkey maintained specific “areas of interest” and “special relations” with certain countries, although they were not close to the EU¹².

Turkey maintains low rates of alignment with declarations and decisions concerning international tribunals, justice and the rule of law, and restrictive measures. Also in the area of human rights, Turkey has a mixed record, and it finds it difficult to align with declarations on freedom of expression, non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and freedom of religion. This suggests that, contrary to the expectation that the opening of EU accession negotiations would have had an extraordinary impact on Europeanization, Turkey has followed an opposite path, since its FP has progressively diverged from the EU’s. In order to understand such an apparent reversal of Europeanization, the mechanisms, conditions, and outcomes of EU’s pressures upon Turkey were analyzed. After 2007, the reversal of Europeanization was assessed in the two dimensions of policy convergence and identity reconstruction. Concerning policy convergence, the reversal of Europeanization is clearly shown by the drastic drop in the rate of alignment. Some major issues on which the EU and Turkey diverged were the Iranian nuclear question, the attitude towards Israel, the Iraqi Kurdistan, and sanctions against Russia on the occasion of the Ukraine crisis. Concerning the Arab Springs, Turkey and the EU adopted the same discourse on “democracy promotion”, but their actual policies often diverged, for instance regarding the intervention in Libya and the attitude towards extremist forces in Syria¹³.

Regarding the dimension of identity reconstruction, while Turkey’s Western identity had been questioned since the end of the Cold War, its sustained commitment to entering the EU at the beginning of the 2000s has contributed to enhancing the feeling of Western belonging. Although Davutoglu’s policy of strategic depth policy entails a new

¹² The 2005 European Commission Progress Report (p. 127) affirmed that “Turkey’s overall record suggests that alignment has been somewhat selective from a geographical point of view”.

¹³ As violence erupted in Libya in 2011, Turkey remained sceptical of military intervention (BBC Monitoring Europe 2011; Deutsche Presse-Agentur 2011). After the approval of the UN Security Council Resolution 1973, allowing the use of force to protect civilians, Turkey started to moderate its tone (Stein 2015 pp. 51-52). In the case of Syria, allegations on Turkey’s collaboration with ISIS have been put forward (Philips 2015).

engagement with the region, and refuses to enter into conflict with the West, Turkey is seen as a bridge between Western and Muslim civilizations (Tüysüzoğlu, 2014, pp. 85-104).

Instead, the strengthening of AKP might lead to a re-thinking of the Turkish identity in an Eurasianism perspective, as an alternative to Turkey's pro-Western foreign policy orientation (Akçali and Perinçek 2009). It is very likely that as Oğuzlu (2008, p. 3) underlines "The nature of Turkey's future relations with the West will increasingly be determined by what transpires to Turkey's south and east rather than west".

Conclusions

The assessment of Europeanization in the field of FP is very recent and intricate, even more so if we consider the case of a candidate country. As FP is an intergovernmental policy, the EU's leverage has proven itself weak, although various kinds of pressure can be exerted in a less orthodox way. The practice of alignment in FP is a way to induce candidates into compliance. It is an innovative approach since it involves different status countries and it is not based on traditional formal/informal conditionality. Countries, on a voluntary basis, can align with the EU's FP decisions. However, their decision, expressed in a dichotomic way, is recorded and supposedly judged by the EU when considering their chances of membership.

Turkish discontinuity in the compliance with the EU's FP positions evidences that membership promises must be credible for a high alignment on the part of a candidate. The first AKP term was marked by a significant alignment. Not only was the membership perspective credible, but also the Turkish government was eager to undertake some reforms, which in fact corresponded to the EU's desiderata. In a few years, the EU's promise of membership progressively lost credibility as the possibility of "privileged partnership" was gaining support and the EU Council decided to suspend the opening of six negotiating chapters and the closing of every other one.

At the beginning of the 2000s, the AKP promoted certain reforms to push Turkey's policies in line with the EU's, also with the goal of legitimizing itself as a moderate progressive party rather than an Islamist one. After 2005, the AKP did not need the EU as an external anchor any more since it had already implemented key reforms (especially the limitation of the role of the military) and its legitimacy was solid,

as demonstrated by success in the 2007 elections. Thanks to its firm lead of the country, the AKP felt legitimated to act more autonomously from the EU and to pursue a more interest-based FP. Consequently, Turkish FP has started to diverge from the EU's positions and much of the Europeanization progress achieved in the early 2000s was reversed or stagnated (Cornell 2012, p. 14). The alignment had become casual (coincidental Europeanization) and achieved some specific policies (variable geometry). In some cases, Turkey's NATO membership contributed to making the country more sympathetic to certain EU positions (e.g. Libya). We also have to consider that there are some structural impediments (e.g. the question of Cyprus, treatment of the Kurds, the Armenian genocide), which have constantly hindered the convergence between Turkey and the EU.

However, what seems to count more for Turkey's declining alignment is the domestic political course and the ambition to become a regional hegemonic power. Geo-economic considerations, related in particular to energy transit and supplies, have also affected Turkey's posture. Turkey was more lenient with some countries (Russia, Syria, Belarus, and Iran) as the EU positions touched upon questions that were very sensitive for Turkey too. The country has tended not to align on election-related topics concerning countries like Pakistan and Russia and with restrictive measures imposed by the EU to Iran and Belarus. Concerning declarations on human rights, Turkey's overall rate of alignment is 74%, but there are some particular areas of divergence, especially freedom of expression and freedom of the media, non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and freedom of religion. The most problematic areas regard international tribunals, justice and rule of law, and restrictive measures (45%), for which the lowest percentage of alignment was recorded.

To sum up, we can affirm that the analysis of the Turkish case shows that Europeanization of FP has more chances to succeed when the membership perspective is realistic and equally pursued on both sides. Alignment otherwise can occur in a sporadic way when the EU preferences reflect the candidate's interests. The candidate tends to pick up and choose EU positions if these are compatible with both its domestic politics and its external ambitions. In addition, more recently it has been clear that Turkey is using its fundamental role in the various crises of the Middle East for appeasing the EU, although its aspiration to membership still appears modest.

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Is Democracy Promotion a Part of Turkish Foreign Policy? Practices and Implications

Merve Çalimli

Introduction

Democracy promotion has become an important aspect of state and non-state actors' foreign policy. Started in the third wave of democratization in 1974 with the revolutions in Portugal, Spain, and Greece, external actors emerged as crucial players in contributing to the outcome of democratization processes through the foreign policy strategies aimed at promoting democracy. Therefore, a distinctive element of the third wave is the role played by international actors in furthering democratization. Moreover, it is in the third wave, that democracy—meaning a political system in which people can choose and replace their leaders in regular, free, fair, and meaningful elections—becomes a truly global phenomenon as the most common form of government in the world (Diamond 2011, p. 299).

The focus of the democracy promotion research agenda is mainly on the role played by the United States (US) and the European Union (EU) as they are the dominant actors. Accordingly, the literature is shaped around two overriding styles on democracy promotion (Kopstein 2006; McFaul et al 2009), the US approaching democracy promotion as a grand-strategy (Ikenberry 1999; Cox et al. 2000), and the EU as a policy-oriented approach (see Youngs 2006). However, the recent literature on democracy promotion argues that it is no longer viable to consider solely US and EU democracy promotion programs as the only game in town within increasingly interdependent and globalized international affairs (Risse and Babayan 2015, p. 384). In fact, newly emerged actors, once recipients of democracy promotion, have become democracy promoters mainly working in their own neighborhoods, as illustrated by the foreign policies of Brazil, South Africa, South Korea, and Poland (Petrova 2012, p. 133).

In this section, I aim to further this debate on the role of newly emerged countries in democracy promotion from the foreign policy perspective of Turkey as a regional actor, hence elaborate on two major issues. First, from a theoretical point of view, by focusing on one understudied strand of democracy promotion; I ask under what conditions democracy promotion emerges in foreign policy of such a regional actor as Turkey. Second, from an empirical point of view, I aim to reveal the distinct motivations behind such a foreign policy turn in the context of Turkey. This will be done considering the shift in Turkish foreign policy since the AKP has come to power in 2002 and tailoring Turkey as a model of democracy in its neighborhood, thus aimed to pursue a “zero-problem with neighbors” strategy, developed by the then Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu.

This section is organized in three parts. First, I will offer conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of democracy promotion to explain what the concept entails and why an actor would prefer to promote democracy. Second, I will lay the grounds for the Turkish foreign policy shift since the AKP’s coming to power and explain the democracy promotion efforts of Turkey. Finally, I will offer an analysis regarding the implications derived from this foreign policy shift.

Democracy promotion: Conceptual and theoretical underpinnings

Democracy promotion consists of attributions to the foreign policies that encompass efforts and normative pressures to advance the quality of democracy and democratic governance in respective countries. In fact, Grimm and Leininger (2012, p. 396) argue that democracy promotion entails activities by external actors to support domestic actors in establishing and developing democratic institutions compatible with democratic rules. A most recent contribution to the definition of democracy promotion is given by Petrova (2014) who describes democracy promotion as “purposeful actions taken to encourage a transition to democracy, enhance the quality of democracy in regimes that have already moved toward democratic governance, or prevent the backsliding from or the breakdown of democracy in such regimes”.

One can posit that democracy promotion entails maintaining and advancing pro-democratic norms in a domestic political setting with a focus on the following target sectors; free and fair elections, effective and legitimate functioning of governing institutions i.e. executive, leg-

islature, and the judiciary, and also participation in the civil society. In fact, borrowing from Carothers' (2000, p. 188) categorization of democracy promotion targets in US foreign policy, Petrova (2014, p. 130) subsumes democracy promotion efforts under three general categories: 1) governing institutions, including strengthening of the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary at the national and local levels as well as their checks and balances and the rule of law; 2) political processes, including promoting regular, free, and fair elections as well as political rights and civil liberties and investments in political party development; and 3) civil society, including support for civic groups and for individual non-state actors with important civic functions such as the media, educators, etc.

To explain the motives behind democracy promotion by external actors, I first focus on the democratic peace theory, since the general acceptance in the literature is that the intellectual foundations of democracy promotion are based on this theoretical premise (Goldsmith 2008, p. 131). Especially in the post-Cold War era with the emergence of newly democratizing states, democratic peace theory had an explanatory value in analyzing the efforts and practices of democracy promotion by Western powers. Democratic peace theory, having its philosophical foundation in the writings of Immanuel Kant, assumes that human beings are capable of discovering and acting upon universally valid moral imperatives, which concern a gradual process of moral improvement by which individuals perceive themselves as part of a global community of mankind, a "universal cosmopolitan existence" (Hurrell 1990, pp. 197-198). The core argument of democratic peace theory is derived from this philosophical stance, which reflects on the literature as "...constitutionally secure liberal states have yet to engage in war with one another" (Doyle 1983, p. 213) or "democracies rarely clash with one another, and never fight one another in war" (Maoz and Abdolali 1989; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1991; Lake 1992; Russett 1993; Chan 1993)¹. Following this, it is argued that "democratic polities transform conflicts of interests into moral crusades, demand nothing less than total victory and unconditional surrender, and engage in 'liberal interventionism' to promote their own vision of the morally proper international order" (Levy 1988, p. 659). Hence, the argument that the more democratic the

¹ The democratic-peace argument also received challenging arguments. For example, Mansfield and Snyder (1995, p. 8) showed that democratizing states are much more war-prone than states that have undergone no regime change, and are somewhat more war-prone than those that have undergone a change in an autocratic direction..

world becomes, the more peaceful it will be, provides the foundation to try to expand the spread of democracy (Mandelbaum 2007, p. 138), and explains the international commitment to democracy promotion through the lenses of liberal foreign policy. Liberal foreign policy analysis focuses on whether individual rights, domestic commercial interests, or a combination of both, together with republican institutions and international perceptions, shape policy (Doyle 2012, p. 65). In this realm, liberals put emphasis on the political bond of liberal rights and interests as foundation for mutual alliances (Doyle 1983, p. 232), the role of human rights, multilateral institutions, and the progressive political effects of economic interdependence (Ikenberry 1999, p. 58). In effect, by these foundational principles, Talbott (1996, p. 49) explains the essence of the national security rationale for strongly supporting, promoting, and—when necessary—defending democracy in other countries.

While for liberalism, the promotion and defense of democratic values, ideas, and concepts has a significant importance, for realism, on the other hand, international norms are perceived as instruments for great powers to expand their influence and realize their interests (Stuenkel 2013, p. 340). Realism, being the dominant theoretical approach, argues that international politics is characterized by anarchy (Ashley 1987, p. 404). Arguing that international politics is an anarchic, self-help realm, meaning the absence of a rule-making and enforcing authority, realism holds each unit in the system responsible to ensure its own survival, to define its own interests (Layne 1994, p. 11), and to act within the limits of their material capabilities in an anarchic international system (Pevehouse 2002, p. 516). International relations is perceived as a constant state of security competition, always with the possibility of war and constraints on cooperation by the dominating logic of security competition (Mearsheimer 1994, p. 9). According to realist notions, democracy is promoted as long as decision-makers see it as improving a country's geostrategic situation in the long term, without having immediate negative effects on national security and the relative power position (Wolff and Wurm 2011, p. 83).

Even though liberalism and realism provide the foundational theoretical outlook to explain states' motives with respect to promoting democracy, they remain limited when it comes to understanding the particularities of various foreign policy approaches. In fact, the need for a particular analysis of foreign policy is revealed by the critical changes in the international environment resulting from the end of the Cold War, which shifted the established understandings to explain the new reality

(Breuning 2007, p. 154). Therefore, to explain the distinct motives behind Turkish foreign policy with respect to democracy promotion, I first focus on national role conception, which is one type of image theory, first developed by Kalevi Holsti (1970) and second, on the “two-level game”, developed by Robert Putnam (1988).

First, as for national role conception, Holsti (1970, p. 236) offers an approach based on perceptions and asks how policymakers view the roles their nations should play in international affairs. Holsti assumes that perceptions of national roles were influenced by societal character, which is a product of the nation’s socialization process and emphasizes the national role of elite perceptions, arguing that these perceptions are more important to foreign policy choice (Hudson and Vore 1995, p. 219). Holsti (1970, pp. 245-246) notes that “a national role conception includes the policymakers’ own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems”. Thus, typical national role conceptions would be regional defenders, with the function of protecting other states in a defined area, or mediators, with the continuing function of assisting in international conflict resolution. Moreover, to explain different national role conceptions in different states, Holsti suggests to look to various sources such as location and major topographical features of the state; natural, economic, and technical resources; available capabilities; traditional policies; socio-economic demands and needs as expressed through political parties, mass movements, or interest groups; national values, doctrines, or ideologies; public opinion “mood”; and the personality or political needs of key policymakers (*ibid.*).

Following Holsti, Wish (1980, p. 533) contends that national role conceptions are defined as the perceptions of foreign policy makers with respect to their nations’ positions in the international system, which consists of perceptions of the general kinds of decisions, rules, commitments, and long-term functions associated with these international positions and they provide norms, guidelines, and standards, which affect many aspects of decision making. Therefore, role conceptions have profound explanatory value as they help to identify national interest (Adigbuo 2007, p. 91). Second, following the national role conception, the two-level game is useful for understanding how foreign-policy making is depicted. Putnam’s (1988) conceptualization shows that foreign policy making is not only limited to the international level but that it is also

being used as a tool to influence the domestic level. He sees foreign policy making as a “two-level game” in which a nation’s leaders simultaneously play an international and a domestic game with every move they make in foreign policy. By doing so, leaders can strategically use developments at one level to affect choices made at the other (Hudson and Vore 1995, p. 227).

Derived from the theoretical framework put above, I propose that democracy promotion becomes a part of foreign policy when the governing elites perceive that adopting the role of “democracy promoter” favors the fulfillment of strategic and normative interests both at the external and internal levels. National role conception contributes to foreign policy envisioned as a two-level game; first by strategically making democracy promotion part of foreign policy, policymakers attempt to extend the sphere of influence in the region. Second, such a strategic commitment also facilitates legitimizing the ruling government domestically. Therefore, democracy promotion becomes an important aspect of foreign policy for policy-makers especially for the newly emerged regional actors such as Turkey, both in strategic and normative terms.

In the following part, an analysis of the conception of democracy promotion as part of Turkish foreign policy will be offered and supported with empirical data.

Does Turkey promote democracy? Conceptual and empirical grounds

The shift in Turkish foreign policy since the AKP’s coming to power in 2002 had a democratic veil as the country has been imaged as a model of democracy in its neighborhood, which aimed at “zero-problem with neighbors”, a strategy developed by the then Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu. At the origin of this conception lies the geostrategic positioning of Turkey and the historical, cultural, religious, political, and economic ties in its neighborhood. With such a geostrategic capital, Turkey aimed to strengthen its regional and global role with a shift toward active foreign policy. As the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) states:

“Since coming to power in 2002, the Turkish government has sought to strengthen its global role through active engagement in the problems faced by its immediate neighbors and in surrounding regions. The Turkish government has explicitly tried to reinvigorate relations with its wider region through building on historical, cultural, religious, political and economic ties” (quoted in Saferworld and Istanbul Policy Center 2015).

The guiding principles of Turkish foreign policy activism are enumerated by Davutoglu (2010) as follows: balance between security and democracy, zero problems toward neighbors, proactive and pre-emptive peace diplomacy, multi-dimensional foreign policy, and rhythmic diplomacy. Turkey's democracy promotion efforts can be understood alongside the aforementioned guiding principles as a policy tool to carry out foreign policy activism. In this respect, with the AKP's coming to power, Turkey's national role conception was tailored as a model of democracy for the region. I argue that this new outlook, concerning promoting democracy, is guided by hybrid motives. Indeed, Turkey not only holds a strategic commitment to extend its sphere of influence by using its geographical positioning and to exercise its regional actorness in regional and global stability, but also demonstrates a normative commitment by promoting itself as a model of democracy in its region, which in turn, contributes to the AKP's domestic legitimacy.

To analyze if and how democracy promotion is undertaken, domestic actors in this particular aspect of foreign policy require particular attention. The Turkish Co-operation and Co-ordination Agency (TIKA), established in 1992, an autonomous institution attached to the Prime Minister's office, co-ordinates Turkey's bilateral development co-operation activities and implements projects in collaboration with other ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector. TIKA is the sole institution responsible for channeling Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the target states through agents such as the governmental institutions, civil society organizations, and international multilateral organizations. Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Office (AFAD) and the Turkish Red Crescent (Kizilay) are the other institutions that help TIKA to deliver Turkey's development assistance to the target states. In addition, Turkish NGOs (and especially some that are ideologically close to the AKP) increased their interest. For example, in 2003, Mazlum-Der formed a foreign-affairs commission monitoring rights-related matters in 38 countries, in February 2010, it published an open letter to Bashar al-Assad calling on him to stop rights abuses in Syria. Moreover, the Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) became increasingly interested in supporting Balkan and African Muslims while forging close ties with groups in the Arab world. It became well known when the aid flotilla, MV Mavi Marmara, which had organized to take supplies to Gaza, was raided by Israeli troops in international waters on May 31, 2010; nine Turks lost their lives in the assault, and dozens more (along with seven Israeli commandos) were wounded (Ozel and Ozcan 2011, p. 136).

The importance given to democracy assistance by Turkey is clearly indicated in the emphasis put on ODA as a crucial tool in foreign policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that

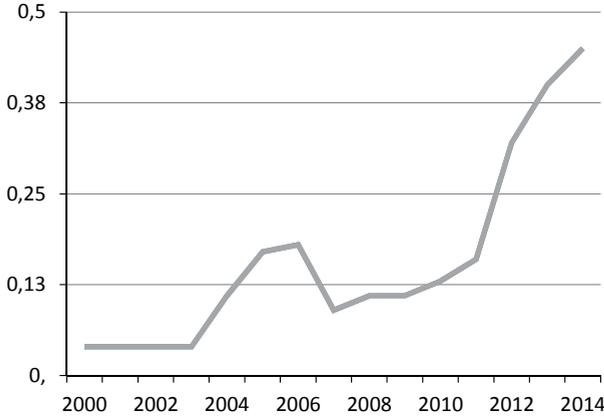
“official development assistance has increasingly become an integral part of Turkey’s proactive foreign policy. In line with the policy objective of contributing to the creation of a more peaceful and stable environment in the neighboring regions, Turkey has come forward as an active stakeholder in regional and global stability. As part of its policy of utilizing a wide range of soft power instruments such as assuming a mediator role in regional conflicts, Turkey also increased its ODA to various countries affected by conflicts and other sources of instability such as natural disasters” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs a).

To illustrate this, Figure 1 shows the share of development assistance in Turkey’s gross national income while Figure 2 shows Turkey’s contributions in development assistance in million US dollars.

There are two increasing trends. First, an increase starting from 2003 until 2007 and second, an increase starting from 2011 onwards. To explain why these critical junctures emerged particularly in 2003 and 2011, the domestic level together with the international level should be taken into consideration. First, at the domestic level, 2003 corresponds to the first term of the AKP rule following the 2002 elections when AKP obtained the 34.3% of the votes with 363 seats in the parliament out of 550. As far as the international level is concerned, following the US-led ousting of Saddam Hussein’s dictatorship in Iraq, the Turkish government actively tried to convince the Sunnis to participate in the 2005 voting. Likewise, in the case of Palestinian Authority, the Turkish government favored the holding of elections and following Hamas’s victory in early 2006, Turkey took strong exception to the Western position of refusing to recognize the Hamas government on the grounds that it did not renounce violence and did not accept Israel’s right to exist. Furthermore, Turkey maintained its political ties as indicated by the visit of Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal to Turkey right after the elections (Ozel and Ozcan 2011, p. 127).

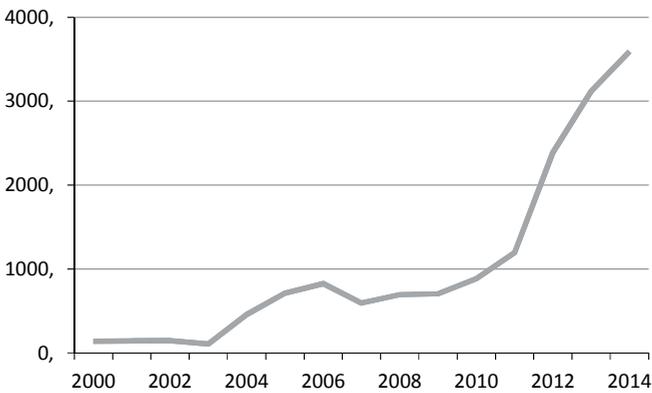
A second critical juncture in 2011, corresponds to the general elections at the domestic level, which resulted in the electoral victory for the incumbent AKP with 49.8% of the votes with 327 seats in the parliament out of 550. Before the elections, in July 2010, a new law mandating that the Ministry should, among other things, “defend and promote human rights and democratic values ... and fight against all sorts of discrimination based on language, race, color, political thought,

Figure 1. *Turkey's Official Development Assistance in GNP % (ODA) 2000-2014*



Source: OECD

Figure 2. *Turkey's Official Development Assistance (ODA) in million US dollars*



Source: OECD

philosophical belief, religion, confession, etc.” was accepted. It also added new departments, including a Directorate on Global and Humanitarian Issues, which would deal with human-rights issues. This meant that, for the first time ever, the Ministry’s annual report for 2010 highlighted the promotion of democracy and human rights as one of the policies that

would help achieve Turkey's foreign-policy aims in the Middle East (Ozel and Ozcan 2011, p. 134).

Coupled with this electoral victory and the unfolding of Arab uprisings, Turkey had found itself in the position to act in a more proactive manner in its foreign policy across the region. For example, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, as the then Prime Minister, attributed a long speech with respect to democracy promotion following the June 2011. Erdoğan stated, "we will continue our support for the struggle for independence in Syria and we will keep up our efforts for the establishment of a system, which is based on constitutional parliamentary system where all parts of society are represented rightfully" (Erdoğan 2011). Moreover, Erdoğan ensured that the support given to the changes aimed at the will of the people for pluralism would be continued and that the legitimate demands leading to revolutions in Arab countries would be evaluated and supported from this perspective (*ibid.*). Subsequently, the escalation of the conflict in Syria increased Turkey's importance as a regional actor for the management of Syrian refugees transiting to Europe through Turkey. This example clearly shows how democracy promotion as part of foreign policy takes place within the framework of two-level game analysis, as foreign policy-making is being used at the domestic level as a tool for further legitimacy.

The recent records of ODA also indicated the importance attributed to development assistance as a foreign policy tool. In 2014, Turkey's net ODA amounted to USD 3.6 billion, representing an increase of 15% in real terms over 2013. The ratio of ODA as a share of the GNI rose from 0.40% in 2013 to 0.45% in 2014. Preliminary data show that ODA reached USD 3.9 billion in 2015 (0.54% of GNI). In 2014, Turkey provided the largest share of its bilateral development co-operation to Syria, Somalia, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan. The main sectors of Turkey's bilateral development co-operation were humanitarian aid and refugee support, education and governance and civil society (OECD). With regard to ODA and the target countries, TIKA put forward the following statistics: total ODA delivered by Turkey in 2014 increased by 8.6% as a pioneering country in terms of international humanitarian aid. Turkey increased official development assistance from 85 million US dollars (2012) to 3,591 million US dollars (2014). Major assistance was delivered to Syrian refugees. In this framework, 799.52 million dollars in aid were provided for Syrian, Afghan, African, Asian, and Middle Eastern refugees who came to Turkey in 2014. 683.57 million dollars was allotted to Syrian guests, while Afghan and African guests benefited from the

aid the most. Similar to the past three years, the major part of Turkish bilateral official development assistance in 2014 was directed to the Middle East region. In parallel with the aid granted to Syrian refugees, the amount topped 2.5 billion dollars. South and Middle Asia follows the Middle East with 486.6 million, the African region with 383.3 million, the Balkans and Eastern Europe with 133.8 million dollars. Syria is the country that benefited most from Turkish ODA in 2014 followed by Tunisia, Kyrgyzstan, Somali, and Palestine (TIKA 2015b).

In order to mold the conceptual ground with empirical data, the following part examines the efforts of democracy promotion in Turkish foreign policy. Analyzing democracy promotion efforts in three main categories by definition—governing institutions, political processes, civil society—the following part aims to show the influence Turkey attempts to exert in its region.

Democracy promotion efforts in the region by Turkey

Influence on political processes and civil society in Afghanistan

There are historical and religious ties between Afghanistan and Turkey, with Afghanistan being the first country to officially recognize the Ankara government in 1921, and with Turkey providing development assistance to Afghanistan from the very beginning of the republic (Bayer and Keyman 2012). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that:

“Turkey actively supports Afghanistan’s efforts in the aspects of security, development and capacity building. Turkey’s foreign policy towards Afghanistan is based on four pillars: maintenance of unity and integrity of Afghanistan; providing security and stability in the country; formation of a broad based political structure in which popular participation is a priority and finally restoration of peace and prosperity by eliminating terrorism and extremism. In line with these objectives, Turkey makes comprehensive contributions to Afghanistan both on a bilateral level and through the efforts of the UN and NATO. Contributing to enhancing Afghanistan’s relations with its neighbors also constitutes one of the principal aspects of Turkey’s foreign policy towards Afghanistan. In line with this priority, the Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Summit Process was launched in 2007 and the Istanbul Process was initiated with the participation of Heart of Asia countries in 2011” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs b).

Following the downfall of the Taliban regime, Turkey prioritized the reconstruction of this war-torn society, the provision of basic services, the creation of a new system respectful of basic liberties, as well as the

reinstitution of domestic settings. Within this framework, TIKA has been executing operations through three operational field offices in Kabul, Mazar-i Sharif, and Wardak, all of which are working in close cooperation with the Turkish Embassy in Kabul. As far as assistance is concerned, Turkey has spent over 200 million US dollars on reconstruction in Afghanistan (Dymond 2009). TIKA organized over 800 projects in various fields between the years of 2005-2014. In the field of education, 83 schools were built, 200 schools were restored and equipped, and over 200,000 students were provided with education opportunities (TIKA 2015a).

On the military front, Turkey has contributed troops to NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan since its establishment. It has twice commanded the ISAF since 2001 and being in charge of the Kabul command since, Turkey trained 17,500 Afghan soldiers, with 3,500 others trained in Turkey, and the Afghan National Army was supplied with 50 million US dollars in equipment, 7 million US dollars in training, and 184,000 US dollars in medical assistance (Gurcan 2014). In January 2015, within the framework of its Resolute Support Mission, NATO replaced the ISAF mission, and Turkey increased its troops from 900 to 1,500. The Turkish contingent is responsible for operating the Kabul Train Advise and Assist Command; providing personnel for the Train Advise Assist Command-North, which is under German command; operating Kabul International Airport and supporting the Kabul military hospital with medical personnel; furthermore, the Turkish ambassador in Kabul, Ismail Aramaz, has been appointed senior NATO civilian representative to Afghanistan (Gurcan 2014). Turkey is also sponsoring the Kabul Military High School with advisors, educational material, and construction assistance through TIKA (Bayer and Keyman 2012, p. 81).

Influence on political process in Iraq

In the aftermath of the Iraq War, Sunnis largely boycotted Iraq's first free elections in January 2005, corresponding only 0.1% of the vote and empowering the Shia majority and the Kurds by default, yet, Turkey ensured that the legislative elections of December 15, 2005 took place by helping to convince Iraqi Sunnis to participate in the general elections (Binyon 2010).

Prior to the elections, Turkey pursued a multilateral approach towards Iraq by founding the Iraq's Neighboring Countries Process in 2003. Global humanitarian data shows that humanitarian assistance in

2004 raised up to 28.8 million US dollars compared to 1.7 million US dollars in 2003 (Global Humanitarian Assistance).

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that this process

“played an important role in coordinating the efforts of Iraq’s neighbors and other interested countries, as well as international organizations, in contributing to stability and development of Iraq until 2008. Establishment of the ‘High Level Strategic Cooperation Council’ with Iraq in 2008 and signing in this context of 48 Memoranda of Understanding in a broad array of cooperation fields, ranging from security to energy in 2009, opening of a Consulate-General in Erbil in 2010 in addition to those in Mosul and Basra, are important milestones in our bilateral relations. These steps are aimed at creating a long-term mutually beneficial strategic partnership between Turkey and Iraq, through development of bilateral relations in all fields” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs c).

Influence on political processes in Egypt

With regard to the relations with Egypt, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasizes the legitimate demands of the Egyptian people since the Tahrir revolution and underlines the importance of the democratization process:

“Turkey and Egypt share deep-rooted relations, based on close historical, cultural and social ties. Starting from the earliest stages of the Tahrir Revolution back in January 2011, Turkey supported the legitimate demands of the Egyptian people and steps towards democratization in Egypt. Nevertheless, the coup that took place on 3 July 2013 and led to the ousting of the first democratically elected President, Mohammed Morsi, and the consequent derailment of the natural progress of the democratization process of the country, has adversely affected the relationship between Turkey and Egypt. Based on a principled stand on the issue, Turkey advocates the view that Egypt’s long term political and economic stability and development can only be achieved by respecting people’s democratic will without exclusion” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs d).

Considering the emphasis put on political processes by Turkey, the Turkish state provided the Egyptian Freedom and Justice Party, led by Mohamed Mursi, with a 1 billion US dollar loan, half of it to be paid in 2012 and the other half in 2013 (Reuters 2012). Moreover, Turkey agreed to provide a 2 billion dollar aid package to help Egypt finance infrastructure projects and increase its dwindling foreign currency reserves (“The Wall Street Journal” 2012). The July 2013 coup against Mursi and the AKP government’s support for Mursi, backed by the Muslim-brotherhood, turned a critical eye on Turkish foreign policy on the basis of following a sectarian outlook.

As far as humanitarian assistance is concerned, global humanitarian assistance data only shows 1 million US dollars in aid in 2011 (Global Humanitarian Assistance).

Influence on governing institutions in Syria

Since the start of the escalation of violence in Syria, Turkey has been putting pressure on the Al-Assad rule, taking sides with the opposition, and harshly criticizing the regime. The then Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu paid a visit to Damascus in 2011 to warn the Al-Assad regime and press for an end to the bloodshed, which fell on deaf ears (“Hurriyet Daily News” 2011). Erdogan said,

“We do not see Syria as a foreign problem, Syria is our domestic problem because we have a 850 kilometer border with this country, we have historical and cultural ties, we have kinship. Therefore, Turkey could never be just a spectator of what was going on in Syria, but on the contrary, Turkey had to hear the voices and do what was necessary” (Erdogan 2011).

The influx of Syrian refugees to Turkey began in April 2011 as Turkey pursued an “open door policy”. In 2012, global humanitarian assistance to Syria was recorded at 979.9 million US dollars (Global Humanitarian Assistance)². According to the UNHCR, registered Syrian Refugees in Turkey are 2,749,140 (UNHCR). The latest fact sheet by the European Commission says that the number has reached over 3.1 million people (European Commission). Recently, the European Commission and its member states began funding the “Refugee Facility for Turkey”, which will provide 3 billion euros for humanitarian and development projects in 2016 and 2017. In March and April 2016, a first package of 90 million euros under the Facility had been contracted for humanitarian aid.

Influence on civil society in Somalia

Turkish aid history in Somalia traces back to the 2011 famine and extended from physical and social infrastructure, the health and education sector, to technical training.

In 2011, the Turkish government donated 49 million US dollars to Somalia, further private donations in the order of 365 million US

² Data available until 2012.

dollars, plus a budget of nearly 70 million US dollars for over 1,200 Somali students who received full scholarships to study in Turkey in 2012 (“The Guardian” 2013). With the duty of coordinating the Turkish Relief Operation in Somalia, TİKA opened its Mogadishu Program Coordination Office on September 12, 2011. Since then, Turkey has not only provided relief, but as of June 2014, 350,000 people were treated by 361 Turkish doctors in four different field hospitals operated in cooperation with the Turkish Ministry of Health, in addition to transportation infrastructure through renovation of city roads and Mogadishu’s Aden Abdulle Airport, further enhancing the civil aviation infrastructure by training programs (TIKA 2016). One of TİKA’s largest development projects focused on water infrastructure, besides support given to the health sector, with 35 million US dollars spent on the renovation of Digfeer hospital in Mogadishu, now named the Somalia-Turkey Training and Research Hospital (Saferworld and IPC Report 2015).

In 2015, Turkey committed to building 10,000 houses for low-income groups in Mogadishu, and Turkish aid supported social infrastructure development as in the case of the education sector through scholarships to study at Turkish universities, with 440 places offered in 2012, and small amounts of aid provided to universities and schools directly in Mogadishu (*ibid.*).

Capacity building, especially in the health and education sectors, is provided through training for Somali officials in a number of ways. For example, the Turkish MFA trained Somali diplomats, while courses on urban policy have been delivered to officials from local municipalities in Somalia and some 52 Turkish doctors and managers working at the Somalia-Turkey Training and Research Hospital plan to train their Somali counterparts and turn the hospital over to full Somali control within five years (Saferworld and Istanbul Policy Center 2015). Besides, Turkey has also provided direct budget support. Between June and December 2013, the Turkish government provided the Somali Central Bank with 4.5 million US dollars in cash every month (*ibid.*).

According to the data derived from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) the humanitarian aid supplied to Somalia between 2006-2012 amounts to 55,075,000 US dollars³.

³ Dataset only indicates Somali aid in 2006, 2008, 2011, and 2012 (retrieved on April 16, 2016), available at: <https://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=Profile-donorCountrylist>.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “High level political dialogue, security for all, utmost economic integration and the preservation of the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious social structures in the region constitute four main axes of Turkey’s Balkan policy, which is shaped by the principles of ‘regional ownership’ and ‘inclusiveness’” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs e). With this perspective, Turkey contributes to regional cooperation through consultation mechanisms founded upon initiatives between Turkey-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Serbia and Turkey-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Croatia with the aim to enhance peace, stability, and prosperity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the one hand and transforming the whole Balkan area into a more stable place, on the other (*ibid.*).

TIKA indicates that the sectoral distribution of projects and activities carried out by TIKA and their proportional values are as follows: 45.5% health, 20.49% administrative and civil society, 15.81% education, 14.78 cultural cooperation and restoration, 3.45% water and water hygiene (TIKA). In countries such as Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo, Bosnia Herzegovina, Moldova, Macedonia, and Ukraine, through TIKA, Turkey undertakes projects for historical and cultural renovation (for example mosque renovations), rural development and water supply, educational infrastructure, and media communications (*ibid.*).

Conclusions

This contribution attempted to offer an analysis of Turkish foreign policy considering the shift toward foreign policy activism by using democracy promotion since the AKP’s coming to power in 2003. Theoretically, the analysis approaches the question of “why promote democracy” in the context of Turkey from multiple perspectives. On one hand, by using the theories of international relations, it is shown that, with the AKP coming to power, Turkey adopted hybrid motives, combined of geostrategic and normative terms. As for geostrategic terms, Turkey aimed at strengthening its regional actorship by capitalizing on its strategic position, thus maximizing its leadership role in the region. Combined with this, on normative terms, the AKP government embraced an image of “model of democracy” for the region. On the other hand, when an in-depth analysis is done as to the causality behind such a foreign policy choice, first, national role conception and second, two-level game analysis help understanding Turkey’s efforts to promote democracy.

From the perspective of national role conception, one can argue that the AKP's image of Turkey as a model of democracy emerged from the policymakers' own perceptions with respect to the role Turkey could perform in the region. Second, a two-level game helps us to understand the distinct motivation behind Turkey's efforts to promote democracy with respect to domestic and international levels. In the case of Turkey, the analysis for the amount of ODA since 2003 also has domestic and international implications as to the promotion of democracy. For example, at the internal level, the increase in 2003 corresponds to the first term of AKP government when the shift to active foreign policy also emerged together with the new national role conception as a model of democracy. Embracing the role of being a democracy model for the region, democracy promotion efforts are also used as a tool for domestic legitimacy for the newly elected government. The increase in 2011 stems from the geostrategic and normative motives, which were exercised especially with the room for maneuver created by the Arab uprisings. Thus at the external level, Turkey strategically made democracy promotion part of its foreign policy, with the motivation to extend the sphere of influence in the region.

Empirically, the analysis confirms that Turkey has engaged in democracy promotion efforts, under three main categories: governing institutions, political processes, and civil society. The question "why promote democracy" is driven by a mix of strategic and normative motives, as Turkey strategically and normatively attempted to benefit from a loophole created by regional and global volatilities. While Turkey is driven by regional security concerns on the strategic level; on the normative level, Turkey attempted to fulfill the national role conception imaged for itself as a model of democracy and a regional actor, which makes democracy promotion a part of Turkish foreign policy.

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Turkish Foreign Policy in the Caucasus: The Azerbaijan Pillar

Carlo Frappi

Introduction

Over the last twenty-five years and since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Southern Caucasus has come to play a relevant—and in some case pivotal—role to Turkish foreign policy. The relevance of the area to Ankara’s foreign policy results primarily from the central role it gained within what Lesser (2000, p. 205) called the “double coupling” dilemma¹. It refers to the need for Turkey in the post-Cold War era to reinvent and relaunch its relations with the Western partners, while simultaneously trying to exploit the regional “windows of opportunities” disclosed by the Soviet Union’s dissolution. Theorized with reference to the first phase of the post-bipolar era, the double coupling dilemma in its essence—i.e. the need to find a balance between global and regional aims, projections and alliances—seems instead to cut across all the post-1991 Turkish foreign policy (Frappi 2008), standing as a the main reason behind the continuous relevance of the Caucasus area.

There are two structural elements, with deep historical roots, which underlie the Turkish projection towards the Southern Caucasus: these elements, intertwining with regional trends, marked the course of Ankara’s regional foreign policy in the aftermath of the USSR’s dissolution. The first of them consists in the ethno-linguistic affinity between Turkey and Azerbaijan—embodied by the widespread motto “one nation two states”—which, ever since the first half of the 1990s, supported and facilitated the formation of a privileged partnership between the two countries. The second and opposite element is giv-

¹ In the same vein, Kramer (2000), pp. 93-94.

en by the deep scar dividing Turkey and Armenia. It results primarily from the historical memory of the “Great Evil”—the extermination and deportation of the Armenian population settled in Central and Eastern Anatolia by the Ottoman authorities between 1915 and 1923—to which Yerevan traditionally advocates the recognition of a genocidal nature, both from Turkey and at the international level. Far from bearing a mere historical or historicist nature, the genocide quarrel has a strong political and diplomatic connotation. The recognition of the genocide nature to the events following April 1915 could in fact pave the way for compensation demands, whose uncertain nature and entity represent a significant threat to Turkish national interests. Even more so when taking into consideration, on the one hand, the revanchism inscribed in the founding documents of the Republic of Armenia² and, on the other hand, Ankara’s traditional “besieged fortress” mentality³. Against this backdrop, Turkish policy toward the Southern Caucasus has been revolving around three parallel yet connected tracks, i.e. the simultaneous attempts to progressively strengthen the entente with Azerbaijan, to engage Georgia as a vital physical and political link with the latter, and—finally—to contain Armenia.

Notwithstanding the relevant role played by identity elements in shaping the relations between Turkey and the Caucasian countries, it would be nonetheless misleading to assign them a priority role. Rather, Ankara’s Caucasus policy can be better assessed by taking into consideration the Turkish decision-makers’ rational resolve to advance national interest and maximize state power within the international and regional systems through a cost-benefit analysis. This behavioral pattern—although it is still quite common to hear policymakers in both Ankara and Baku making use of the “one nation two states” rhetoric—seems to apply also to the relations with Azerbaijan⁴, which is by far the most important regional partner and a strategic actor facilitating Turkey’s resolve to project its influence in a multi-regional direction.

Besides aiming at highlighting the rationale behind the formation of the Turkish-Azerbaijani strategic axis, this chapter focuses on the

² Besides the ambiguity still surrounding the Armenian recognition of the Kars and Gyumri Treaties (1921) fixing the borders between the two countries, Armenian Declaration of Independence—itself recalled by the country’s Constitution—refers, at article no.11, to the Eastern Anatolia as “Western Armenia”.

³ See Jung (2003).

⁴ See, for instance, Cornell (2001); Uzer (2011). For an opposite view—i.e. assigning priority to identity factor—see Murinson (2010). See also Bozdağlıoğlu (2003).

bargaining power balance within the axis itself. It aims at demonstrating the progressive but steady reduction in power asymmetry between the two partners as well as the constraints to Ankara's room for regional diplomatic maneuver resulting from it. Indeed, the main contention of the chapter is that the course of Turkish foreign policy toward the Caucasus is not merely "centered" on Baku—as used to be the case in the '90s⁵—but is rather influenced by Azerbaijan as well as by the common partnership agenda.

Against this backdrop, this chapter will focus on energy cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan, presented as the backbone of the partnership, providing the latter with an interdependent feature and enabling both actors to pursue respective yet convergent economic and foreign policy goals. Therefore, building upon the political geography literature, the paper will portrait the Ankara-Baku axis within the wider context of the relations between a land-locked and a transit country. This will help in assessing the key drivers of the Turkish-Azerbaijani relation, the changing balance in bargaining power within the relation itself, as well as, finally, its evolution as a consequence of the Azerbaijani energy strategy.

The dependency relation between an energy producer and a transit state

The Azerbaijan's main geopolitical asset is given by significant hydrocarbons reserves, coupled with a strategic geographic position making the country a natural "cork in the bottle" (Brzezinski 1997, pp. 46-47) for the wider reserves of the Caspian Sea area. Indeed, although the total volume of Azerbaijani oil and gas reserves cannot compete with the ones available in other regional producer states, nevertheless the possibility for many of the latter to reach European markets without transiting through the Russian pipeline network almost necessarily involves the passage through Azerbaijani territory. Thus, it was exactly the "double role" played by Azerbaijan in the regional energy game—as a producer and potential transit country—that established Baku's post-bipolar relevance to regional and extra-regional actors. Among the latter, Turkey took a front position ever since the acquisition of independence of the Caucasian Republic and the opening of the national hydrocarbon sector to foreign capitals and technologies. Consistently, energy cooperation

⁵ The article borrows the expression from Bölükbaşı (1997), pp. 80-94.

became the backbone for the formation and successive strengthening of the bilateral axis.

Yet, as far as the Azerbaijani energy sector is concerned, subsoil wealth as a source of power and positive geo-political asset has to be balanced with a limiting factor, given by the landlocked condition of the country⁶. Such a condition implies that, in order to translate the extractive potential into economic and political advantages, the producing states need to interact and cooperate with the transit one(s) in order to cover the physical distance toward international outlets or consuming countries. In turn, the need for cooperation with transit state(s) generates a politically relevant dependency relationship between the latter and the landlocked countries. That is, the lack of access to the sea necessarily results in a condition of “political land-lockness” (Anglin 1973, p. 112), since the the land-locked countries find themselves being dependent on the transit states’ infrastructures, on peace and stability in their territories, on their administrative practices and, ultimately, on sound cross-border political relations⁷. Therefore, the Azerbaijani choice of Turkey as the main window to final energy markets—resulting from both economic and political calculations⁸—generated a dependency relation, which widened the already broad power asymmetry dividing the two partners in the aftermath of Soviet dissolution.

The dependency condition characterizing Azerbaijan’s position *vis à vis* Turkey as key transit country was further deepened by three basic factors impinging upon the degree of land-lockedness. This feature, far from being assessed merely in absolute terms, has to be evaluated also in relative ones⁹—that is, keeping in consideration both the geographical location of the land-locked country and the peculiarities associated with energy trading compared to other types of goods.

⁶ The possibility for Azerbaijan to access the Volga River does not prevent the country to fall within the landlocked states category. Indeed, besides seasonal restrictions in accessing the River, the category under consideration includes, according to Glassner, those states, “which have access to the sea via internationalized navigable rivers ... Such states exhibit some of the characteristics of coastal states, but consider themselves land-locked and are here considered land-locked because they do not exercise ‘sovereign’ control over their aqueous highways to the sea” (Glassner 1970, p. 2).

⁷ See Faye et al. (2004), pp. 31-68.

⁸ See Idan and Shaffer (2011), pp. 257-258.

⁹ According to Anglin (1973) p. 112, “the measure of land-lockedness’, or the extent to which a country suffers economically or otherwise from its land-locked situation depends upon a complex combination of geographical, economic, political and psychological factors”.

The first of these factors results from the characteristic “rigidity” of the trade in hydrocarbons, and particularly in natural gas. Indeed, gas commercialization from a land-locked country by definition requires intubation, i.e. the laying of infrastructures that, once commissioned, bind together over the long-term producer, transit and consuming countries. Such rigidity—which naturally presupposes a minimal degree of political entente among the involved actors—applies also to the oil sector in the case of countries having no direct access to port terminals. Therefore, for the land-locked countries the rigidity of the trade in hydrocarbons ultimately results in an increase in the degree of physical isolation, since they suffer from the lack of alternative export routes both within and outside the transit country. The economic losses associated with the occasional interruption of the oil flows through the main Azerbaijani oil export pipeline—i.e. the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyan (BTC)—perfectly epitomize the risk and the vulnerability associated with the lack of alternative export routes for hydrocarbons¹⁰. In turn, any increase in the degree of isolation brings about a deepening of the political dependency upon transit state(s) along the above-mentioned four vectors.

Secondly, land-lockedness varies proportionally with the number of countries to be crossed in order to reach international outlets or final markets. As per Azerbaijan, the choice of the Anatolian-Mediterranean export route for national hydrocarbons resulted in the country *de facto* assuming a “double land-locked” position, being Georgia the indispensable physical—and political—link between Azerbaijan and Turkey. The preference accorded to the Anatolian-Mediterranean route by the Azerbaijani economic and political decision makers not only multiplied Baku’s “political land-lockedness” *vis à vis* transit countries, but also entailed a longer distance to be covered in order to reach international outlets and markets. While the physical distance between the land-locked country’s border and the final outlets *per se* represents a factor worsening the degree of isolation, it is all the more relevant in case of trade in hydrocarbons. Indeed, the longer the distance, the higher the infrastructural investments required and, therefore, the longer the payback time for investors and the deeper the necessity for cooperation required between exporting and transit countries.

The third and last factor impinging upon the measure of land-lockedness—and consequentially on the degree of political dependence on

¹⁰ For example, the 19 days long interruption of the oil flow occurred during the 2008 Russo-Georgian “Five-days War” resulted in a loss of about 1 billion US dollars in export revenue for Azerbaijan (Robertson and Riley 2014).

transit states—has to do with the relative importance of transit trade for the country’s economy, that is land-lockedness varies with the proportion of transit trade to total trade, as well as with the ratio of external trade to gross national product. As far as Azerbaijani energy exports are concerned, ever since the commissioning of the main oil and gas pipelines originating in the country—i.e. the rehabilitation of the Baku-Supsa oil pipeline (1999) and the inauguration of the BTC (2005) and the Southern Caucasus gas Pipeline (SCP, 2006)—hydrocarbon export gained a vital role for both external annual turnover and GDP¹¹. Such a vital role, in the wider context of a still-to-be-achieved diversification of the national productive apparatus, makes Azerbaijan all the more dependent on both Georgia and Turkey as energy transit states.

Moreover, more often than not the relevance of hydrocarbon trade to energy-exporting countries—and in particular to developing ones—goes well beyond the mere economic benefit to the state budget, acquiring a deeper significance in both political and institutional terms. This is especially the case for the so called “rentier state”. This expression refers to those states founding their budget upon revenues from external rents rather than upon taxation of domestic productive activities and which, being independent from society, “directly or indirectly supports a large part of the latter through the process of spending domestically the rent that it receives from the rest of the world” (Luciani 2013, p. 92). While the applicability of the rentier state label to Azerbaijan and its eventual domestic consequences falls outside the aims of this chapter¹², it is nevertheless indisputable that resource wealth served not only as a tool to get out of the economic hardship following the USSR’s dissolution, but also as a vehicle to build consensus ‘internally’ and to improve geopolitical relevance *vis à vis* consumer countries externally. Thus, the energy sector played a “double legitimizing role”, which provided the country with a typical “petro-state” posture¹³ and which, in the end, widened the scope of its land-locked condition.

¹¹ Since 2005 and until the drop in oil price resulting from the 2008 international crisis, natural resources rents stood around 65% of annual GDP. Since then, the natural resources’ share of the GDP fell progressively up to 29% in 2014 (World Bank 2016).

¹² See Franke et al. (2009); Meissner (2010); Luecke and Trofimenko (2008).

¹³ See Alieva (2009), pp. 112-119. See also O’Lear, (2007); Guliyev (2013).

Assessing the degree of land-lockedness in relative terms implies considering also those factors which inversely affect the degree itself and which, therefore, may act in reducing the measure of land-lockedness and the associated political dependency. For the present case study, four factors come into play¹⁴: (a) the benefits the transit states derive from the transit trade; (b) the interest of third parties in the transit trade; (c) the land-locked country's retaliatory capability; (d) the degree of control the land-locked state exercises over the transport systems. While the first factor seems to work eminently outside of Baku's control, the same does not hold true for the other three factors. By effectively exploiting the factors endogenous to the bilateral relation, Azerbaijan managed over time to progressively reduce the power imbalance *vis à vis* Turkey.

The benefits the transit states derive from the transit trade

The benefits Turkey derives from energy trade are as relevant as multifaceted, going well beyond the mere—yet significant—oil and gas transit fees¹⁵. From a purely economic standpoint, the benefits resulting from Turkey's active involvement in the exploitation and transportation of Azerbaijani oil and gas resources have been three-fold. First, in the absence of significant indigenous reserves, it has ensured Turkey the possibility of meeting the increasing energy demand coming from a quick-developing economy¹⁶. This trend has been particularly marked in the natural gas sector. Indeed, although natural gas entered the national energy mix only towards the end of the '80s, its annual quota of total consumption grew steadily until becoming the first fuel in Turkey's energy basket, surpassing both coal and oil¹⁷. Besides the quantitative increase in gas consumption—making Turkey the fourth largest European market

¹⁴ For the complete list of factors scaling down the land-locked country's dependency measure see Anglin (1973), pp. 113-116.

¹⁵ The amount of revenues in transit fees from BTC and SCP is not disclosed by either Turkish national oil company (BOTAS) or governmental sources. However, on the eve of BTC commissioning a senior Turkish government officer expected them to reach the amount of 300 million USD per year on average during the lifetime of the project (Babali 2005, p. 46).

¹⁶ In between 1991 and 2015 Turkey's primary energy consumption grew from 48,8 to 131,3 million tonnes of oil equivalent (Mtoe) (BP 2016).

¹⁷ Notwithstanding an annual decrease on a year-on-year basis, in 2015 natural gas accounted for 39,2% of total primary energy consumption (*ibid.*)

behind Germany, France, and Italy—the upward trend in its domestic demand came along with an increase in its strategic significance, as the resource currently accounts for 37.8% of total electricity generation and for 28.7% of the national installed power capacity (Republic of Turkey 2016). In this context, the inauguration of a gas supply channel from Azerbaijan in 2006 was all the more relevant to Turkey, allowing the country to satisfy both current and forecasted demand. Currently, around 11% of annual gas import—i.e. 5.3 billion cubic meters per year (bcm/y)—is provided through the SCP by the output of the Azerbaijani off-shore Shah Deniz field (BP 2016, author’s calculation). Moreover, on the basis of the intergovernmental agreement signed in October 2011, the second phase of the field’s development will ensure Turkey 6 additional Gmc per year from 2018—potentially doubling Azerbaijan’s gas market quota by the end of the decade.

Azerbaijani hydrocarbons are significant to Turkey not only in order to meet current and forthcoming domestic energy demands, but also in diversifying its supply sources. The sources’ diversification—a crucial element to safeguard the importing countries’ energy security and one of the pillars of Ankara’s energy strategy (Republic of Turkey 2016)—stands as the second benefit ensured to Turkey by the development of the energy partnership with Azerbaijan, in both the oil and gas sector. While important to the former, such benefits stand as crucial to the gas one where, given the rigidity of the market and in the absence of a global market, the vulnerability of the importing side to interruption of flows—no matter whether caused by natural, technical, or political circumstances—varies inversely with the number of suppliers. Thus, Azerbaijani gas has been and will be determinant for Turkey in order to downgrade the risk associated with the excessive concentration of gas suppliers, i.e. with the dominant position of Russian gas in national supply system.

Under this perspective, the mentioned “double role” played by Azerbaijan on the regional energy chessboard—i.e. producer and potential transit country—offers Turkey advantages in diversification terms, which go beyond the already relevant quota of the market enjoyed by Shah Deniz gas. Indeed, ever since the initial opening of the Azerbaijani energy sector, the infrastructural projects along the Caucasian-Anatolian axis were inextricably linked with the possibility of exporting the hydrocarbons produced in Central Asian fields along the same route. That is, the Caucasian-Anatolian axis has been traditionally perceived by its stakeholders as a vital component of a wider East-West energy corridor, linking the wider Caspian producing area to European markets.

The possibility for Turkey to multiply hydrocarbon supply sources exploiting the trans-Caspian route and Azerbaijan transit potential are closely connected with the third potential economic benefit resulting from the energy partnership with Baku, i.e. the possibility to take advantage of the strategic location of the country, carved in between the main Eurasian energy producing and consuming areas, to promote a regional hub role. That is, by maximizing supply channels and import volumes Turkey may re-export its hydrocarbon surplus, thereby reducing the elevated costs associated with import dependency.

Summing up, the growing relevance of Azerbaijani gas export—as well as the potential associated with in the country’s transit role—bestow Turkey with a hybrid nature *vis à vis* its land-locked partner, as it stands simultaneously as a transit and a client country. Raising the benefits and the interests in the transit trade, Turkey’s hybrid nature scales down the degree of dependency and vulnerability of Azerbaijan, enhancing its bargaining power within the bilateral relationship.

The interest of third parties in the transit trade

The interest of Turkey, as a transit country, in Azerbaijani hydrocarbon trade has traditionally gone far beyond the mere economic benefits resulting from its hybrid nature. Rather, it took on a political dimension strictly associated with the interest of third parties in the transit trade—i.e. with the second factor impinging favorably upon Azerbaijan’s degree of land-lockedness.

In the post-bipolar environment the possibility for Turkey to solve the “double coupling dilemma” has been strictly associated with the infrastructural projects proposed along the Central Asian-Caucasian-Anatolian axis. That is, in advancing the East-West energy corridor vision, Turkey was not only serving its own national economic interest, but also helping advance its Western partners’ regional strategy. The Turco-centric infrastructural project served, in particular, the US key aim of supporting newly independent states’ sovereignty and independence, simultaneously limiting Russian regional influence and preventing the spread of the Iranian one¹⁸. This “dual containment” logic had its main fulcrum in Turkey, a bi-directional bridge allowing Caspian hydrocarbons to move westward while channeling Western values, norms, and institutions eastward in the wider context of the proposition of a “Turkish

¹⁸ As per the drivers and means of US regional policies, see Frappi (2014).

model” for institutional and economic development. Therefore not only third party interests have always been at play in the energy trade, but they also overlapped to a great extent with the Turkish ones, providing the joint Turkish-Azerbaijani infrastructural projects with a political significance to Ankara as relevant as the economic one.

While the interest of US and British stakeholders in the exploitation of Azerbaijani extractive potential arose well before the country’s independence and represented one of the most important incentives for Turkey’s regional projection at the same time, Baku’s policies were nonetheless crucial in anchoring third party interests to its own strategy for development. This was particularly evident in the case of the so-called “Contract of the Century” through which, in September 1994, Azerbaijan ceded exploration and production rights to the Azerbaijan International Oil Company (AIOC) on the Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli oilfield—which would have fed the BTC pipeline. Consistently with the will of Azerbaijan’s leadership, the consortium was formed according to an inclusive logic, explicitly designed to provide the country with a diplomatic shield, which, securing strong multinational commercial interests backed by respective governments, would have acted as an “insurance policy” for Azerbaijan’s new-found independence (Pashayev 2009, p. 114.)

With the beginning of the new century and the progressive shift of the extractive industry’s focus from the oil to the gas sector, the US took a back-seat position in the regional energy competition¹⁹, leaving to the EU the “responsibility to lead” the implementation of further pipeline projects on the Caucasus-Anatolian axis, consistently with its own supply diversification needs. Indeed, ever since the publication of the European Commission’s 2000 Green Paper on energy security, the exploitation and transportation of the Caspian Basin gas resources become a priority vector of the policies aimed at safeguarding EU energy security from outside its borders (European Commission 2001, pp. 23 and 37).

Resulting in the resolve to inaugurate the fourth EU external gas supply channel—the so-called Southern Corridor—Brussels’ energy diversification policies ended up in revolving around Turkey’s energy bridging role between consuming and production areas. This, in turn, further raised Ankara’s economic and political stakes in the exploitation of Azerbaijani natural wealth and transit potential.

¹⁹ US partial retreat from the Caspian energy competition did not result in the disinterest in it. Quite on the contrary the White House resolutely supported EU energy diversification policies (see Frappi 2014).

First and foremost, the high degree of convergence between Brussels' and Ankara's energy security strategies—both revolving around the need to diversify supply sources in order to reduce over-dependence on Russian gas imports—allowed Turkey to directly benefit in economic terms from EU projection toward the Caspian area. That is, supporting EU regional energy policies helped Turkey advance two of its main energy policy goals, i.e. meeting a growing domestic gas demand through diversified sources and advancing the energy hub vision for the country. Simultaneously, and from a political perspective, the key role played by Turkey in the development of the Southern Corridor project enhanced the country's standing *vis à vis* both European consumers interested in diversifying import channels and producers in the wider Caspian area interested in diversifying export outlets. Against this backdrop, it is hard to underestimate the importance attached by Ankara to its rising strategic significance to European consumers' energy security policies. In particular, becoming a “key actor”²⁰ to EU diversification policy was all the more important since the implementation of the Southern Corridor vision overlapped in time with the granting to Turkey of candidate status for EU membership at first, and with the opening of the related negotiations successively.

In sum, the interest of third parties—both energy producers and consumers—in current and potential hydrocarbon trade along the Turkish-Azerbaijani axis stands, on the one hand, as a crucial factor in downgrading both the measure of Azerbaijan's land-lockedness and the gap in bargaining power between the two partners.

The land-locked country's retaliatory capability

Turkey's strong economic and political interest in developing the EU Southern gas Corridor—testified by its inclusion among the four main goals of its national energy strategy²¹—stood as the main factor providing Azerbaijan with a retaliatory capability *vis à vis* its partner. Nowhere the latter emerged clearer than in relation to the crisis in bilateral relations resulting from the October 2009 signing of the Turkish-Armenian Zurich Protocols on opening diplomatic relations and the common border. In-

²⁰ The expression is borrowed from the 2007 EU Enlargement Strategy (European Commission 2007, p. 11).

²¹ Contributing to Europe's energy security represents one of the main goals of Turkish energy strategy, along with supply diversification, increase in the share of renewables and increase in energy efficiency (Republic of Turkey 2016).

deed, by virtue of the protocols, Ankara's government tried *de facto* to decouple the path toward normalization of relations with Yerevan from the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh—whose occupation in April 1993 by Armenian forces represented the primary cause for the closing of the border, as well as for the freezing of the normalization attempts carried out since the USSR's dissolution.

Ankara's unilateral opening to Yerevan, pursued outside prior consultation with Baku, resulted for Azerbaijan in an unprecedented "risk of abandonment" from the alliance with Turkey (Snyder 1984). Consequently, in the context of an asymmetric and heterogeneous alliance, Azerbaijan reacted to Turkey's move by leveraging upon its muted bargaining power—and, therefore, upon its enhanced retaliatory capability. Baku benefited, in particular, from the concomitance between the Zurich process and the bilateral negotiations with Turkey on the renewal of the gas supply contract and on the laying of the pipelines along the EU Southern Corridor. Thus, Baku's retaliatory capability primarily took the form of a "threat of realignment" with Turkish energy rivals in the competition for the transportation of Azerbaijani gas. In fact, in a short timeframe following the signing of the Zurich Protocols, Socar re-vitalized negotiations for gas transport along Russian, Iranian, and Black Sea routes toward Romania and Bulgaria²², jeopardizing the basic aims of Ankara's energy strategy and related foreign policy goals.

While it would be misleading to attribute the sole responsibility for the derailment of a Turkish-Armenian rapprochement to the Azerbaijani reaction, it nevertheless definitively represented a key obstacle to its implementation. Capitalizing on the influence exerted by means of its energy potential, Baku proved therefore able to affect the outcome of the normalization process and, most importantly, to impose a revision of the bilateral relation with Ankara on more favorable terms. The latter essentially took the form of an enhanced cooperation in both the energy and security sector: besides finalizing a new gas supply contract and the intergovernmental agreement for laying down a dedicated gas pipeline, Ankara and Baku formalized military ties with the signing of a partnership and mutual assistance agreement ("Azer News" 2010).

The re-launching of the bilateral energy partnership was particularly relevant for the distribution of power within the alliance. It paved the way for the flowing of massive Azerbaijani investments in Turkey—all

²² See, for example IHS Markit 2009a; IHS Markit 2009b; SOCAR News 2010; IHS Markit 2010.

the more relevant since Baku's retaliatory capability *vis à vis* Ankara, enjoyed by virtue of bilateral negotiations on gas and exploited during the "Protocol Crisis", naturally faded with the finalization of the mentioned intergovernmental agreements on gas sales and transportation. Indeed, due to the peculiarities of gas marketing, once comprehensive agreements are reached and once upstream and midstream investments are launched, the room for bargaining shrinks and the partners turn out to be bounded together over the long-term by legal arrangements as well as by a mutual interest in trade, i.e. by functional interdependence. Therefore, the current strategy aimed at scaling down dependency on Turkey as the key transit country is rather based upon the enhancement of the control exerted by Azerbaijan's state oil company on both the Turkish transport system and the energy market.

The degree of control the land-locked state exercises over the transport systems

Sustained by the increasing financial power ensured by the energy rents, the second phase of Azerbaijani energy development has been focusing on the attempt to consolidate its role as energy exporter, along a dual track strategy. That is, besides investing in the upstream sector—i.e. in the development of second and third generation national fields—Baku initiated a "going abroad" strategy hinged on the participation of SOCAR the whole energy value chain. The resulting investment strategy in the midstream and downstream sectors primarily targeted its current and forthcoming gas transit countries along the EU Southern Corridor, with a particular focus on Turkey. Since 2009, the latter indeed became the first recipient of Azerbaijani FDI outflow, targeting energy and infrastructural sectors chiefly. The flow of Azerbaijani investments to Turkey jumped from a cumulative amount of 81 million US dollars in the decade between 2000 and 2010 to 3,125 million between 2011 and 2014²³. As a consequence, according to Baku's Ministry of Economy²⁴, the stock of Azerbaijani FDI in Turkey reached 8 billion US dollars in mid-2016 and it is expected to rise up to 20 billion by the beginning of next decade—making Azerbaijan the first foreign investor in the country.

The main pillar of Baku's investment strategy in Turkey is the Trans-Anatolian gas Pipeline (TANAP). It is a joint Azerbaijani-Turkish

²³ Author's calculation based upon: Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Economy, *Foreign Direct Investments in Turkey*, various editions.

²⁴ Trend (2016).

initiative, launched in November 2011, and aimed at tackling the financial and political shortcomings in EU-sponsored gas transportation projects between Anatolia and central Europe through the assumption of direct responsibility for the construction and operation of a pipeline connecting Turkey's eastern and western borders. Designed as the central segment of the pipelines system linking Caspian fields to southern European gas markets²⁵, TANAP perfectly matches both Azerbaijani and Turkish energy and foreign policy strategies in both the short and mid term. In particular, the scalability in its transport capacity from an initial 16 to 31 billion cubic meters per year is intended to allow the inauguration of the EU Southern Corridor by 2019. While making it possible, over the mid and long terms, to accommodate the transportation of gas extracted in Azerbaijan's third generation field as well as in Near Eastern and Caspian producing areas potentially connectable to Anatolia. Against this backdrop, a crucial element in Azerbaijani investment strategy has been the resolve to keep the majority stake in the infrastructural project, thereby accepting to bear the highest financial burden for its implementation in order to retain the control over its management as well as over the associated decision-making processes²⁶.

Significantly, besides investments in infrastructures Azerbaijani FDI also targeted the Turkish energy transformation and distribution sectors. In this context, the main results of the Azerbaijani "going abroad" strategy in Turkey were the SOCAR acquisition of the majority stake (currently 56.32%) in Petkim, Turkey's largest petrochemicals company, and construction of the STAR oil refinery, the first private-led initiative of the kind, which after 2018 will allow Turkey to reduce its dependence on foreign refined oil products²⁷.

²⁵ TANAP is going to be connected, on the Caucasus front, with the expanded SCP while, on the Thracian one, with the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline, devoted to transport 10 Bcm/y of gas from the Greek border to South-Eastern Italy, with possible spin-offs to Bulgaria and the Balkans.

²⁶ Nowhere Baku's resolve to retain control over strategic decision-making emerged clearer than in negotiations over possible transfer of shares to interested energy companies. At the time of its inception, SOCAR detained the 80% of TANAP consortium and refused to sell cumulatively more than 29% of the quota either to Total, Statoil or Turkish company explicitly referring to the will of retaining not less than 51% as well as the 'last word' over strategic decisions—such as potential additional suppliers. Consequentially SOCAR currently detains 58% of the consortium's shares, while the Turkish company BOTAŞ and BP respectively detain the remaining 30% and 12%. Accordingly, SOCAR is expected to contribute to the 9.3 billion USD project with 5.3 billion.

²⁷ For an overview of current Azerbaijani investment in Turkish energy sector and obstacles to further developments, see Rzayeva (2015).

Over the last 25 years, energy cooperation has been the leitmotiv behind the emergence and successive enhancement of the bilateral partnership between Turkey and Azerbaijan, facilitating the pursuit of both actors' national interests in economic as well as political terms. Indeed, energy cooperation with Baku not only ensured Turkey the safeguard of national energy security needs, but also presided over the rise of the country's strategic significance and bargaining power *vis à vis* energy consumer and producer countries interested in diversifying respective import or export channels. Under this perspective, energy cooperation with Baku has been crucial to Ankara in order to tackle the post-bipolar double coupling dilemma. This holds true not only for the period immediately following the dissolution of the USSR, but also with reference to the AKP government era, as a result of the "economization" trend in Ankara's foreign policy choices²⁸.

The growing relevance of the energy sector to foreign policy and the connected enhancement of the Turkish-Azerbaijani partnership upon an interdependent base went along with the progressive reduction in the bargaining power gap between Ankara and Baku. Although the political land-lockedness remains an unavoidable corollary of the lack of access to the sea—along with the associated vulnerability—Azerbaijan nevertheless managed in downgrading its measure. It exploited the incentives-disincentives system enjoyed by virtue of its energy potential in order to prevent Turkey from disaligning, as well as to relaunch and strengthen the partnership on a more favorable base.

As demonstrated by the outcome of the "Protocol Crisis", the growing importance attached by Ankara to the partnership with Baku along with the growth in the latter's bargaining power results in Turkish Caucasian policy being not only centered upon Azerbaijan, but to a great extent also influenced by the latter. That is, the partner's priorities and the partnership's common agenda and shared goals end up reducing Turkish room for diplomatic maneuver and reinforcing the traditional vectors of its Caucasian policy, i.e. the engagement of Georgia and the containment of Armenia.

As far as the latter is concerned, in a regional context where the Armenian Genocide, the Turkish-Armenia normalization process, and the

²⁸ See Kirişçi (2009); Kirişçi and Kaptanoğlu (2011).

Nagorno-Karabakh conflict issues tightly overlap, creating an inextricable diplomatic short-circuit, the gradual balancing of the Turkish-Azerbaijani relationship seems to add an additional polarization factor, and, simultaneously, an additional hurdle to the coherent and inclusive development of the area. In fact, Azerbaijan managed in re-launching and further hardening Turkish containment policy versus Armenia, making Ankara a key partner in the strategy aimed at isolating Yerevan. A strategy that, given the persistent impossibility of achieving a negotiated settlement of the Karabakh conflict, aims to capitalize on the exclusion of Armenia from the major Caucasian cooperation and infrastructure projects, deepening the already dire consequences of the closure of the Eastern and Western borders of the country²⁹.

The reverberations over Turkish-Georgian relations of the enhanced partnership with Baku are, ostensibly, opposite in sign. The relevance of Georgia as a physical and political link between Turkey and Azerbaijan presided over the gradual but steady formation of a trilateral axis for cooperation, progressively institutionalized by the launch of tripartite formats for cooperation. Therefore, as far as Georgia is concerned, energy cooperation had relevant spill-over effects, which fostered a tripartite engagement—in wider economic, financial, and security terms—and put forward a new model for transnational and interregional cooperation in the Caucasus area³⁰.

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²⁹ In the word of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, "We have our say in the region and our position will become even stronger. We can never allow Armenia to join any political, economic, energy and transport projects. We have isolated them and make no secret of that. In the future, our isolation policy must be continued. It is paying off" (Aliyev 2012).

³⁰ See Frappi and Valigi (2015).

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