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### Turkish Foreign Policy Toward Greece: From Europeanization to De-Europeanization

*Türkiye'nin Yunanistan'a Yönelik Dış Politikası:  
Avrupalılaşmadan Anti-Avrupalılaşmaya*

#### Abstract

This paper aims to examine Turkey's foreign policy toward Greece in the post-1999 era. It argues that the direction and changes in Turkish foreign policy toward Greece are impacted by the Turkey-EU relations. To examine these arguments, this study raises the following questions: What are the changes in Turkey's Greece policy after 1999? and what role has the EU played in these policy changes? This research utilizes Börzel and Risse's three-step Europeanisation framework and the de-Europeanisation and counter-conduct concepts to evaluate the Europeanisation and de-Europeanisation of Turkey's Greece policy. By doing so, it contributes to the Europeanisation and the growing de-Europeanisation literature in general and the literature on Turkish foreign policy towards Greece in specific.

**Keywords:** Europeanization, De-Europeanization, Counter conduct, the EU-Turkey relations, Turkey's Greece policy

#### Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'nin Yunanistan'a yönelik dış politikasını incelemektir. İlk olarak, 1999-2007 döneminde, geleneksel Türk dış politikasında güvenlik yönelimli bir politika ve söylemden diyalog ve diplomasi odaklı bir politika ve söyleme doğru bir kayma olduğu tartışılmaktadır. İkinci olarak, 2007 sonrası dönemde Avrupa Birliği'nin (AB) Türkiye'nin birliğe tam üyeliği ile ilgili artan isteksizliğinin Türk toplumunda AB'ye yönelik şüphe ve güvensizliği daha da artırdığı ve Türkiye'nin siyasetinde ve Yunanistan'a yönelik dış politikasında Avrupalılaşma sürecini zayıflattığı vurgulanmaktadır. Üçüncü olarak Yunanistan'a yönelik Türk dış politikasındaki değişimin yönünün

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ve boyutunun, Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinin kalitesi ve hızından doğrudan etkilendiği tartışılmaktadır. Bu olguları incelemek için çalışmada şu sorulara cevap aranmaktadır: 1999'dan sonra Türkiye'nin Yunanistan politikasında neler değişti? ve bu politika değişikliklerinde AB'nin rolü nedir? Çalışmada Börzel ve Risse'nin üç aşamalı Avrupalılaşma kuramı ile anti-Avrupalılaşma ve karşı davranış kavramlarından faydalanılmaktadır. Böylelikle Avrupalılaşma, anti-Avrupalılaşma ve Türkiye'nin Yunanistan politikası literatürüne katkı sunulması amaçlanmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Avrupalılaşma, Anti-Avrupalılaşma, karşı davranış, Türkiye'nin Yunanistan politikası, Türkiye-AB ilişkileri

## Introduction

Turkey followed a security-oriented foreign policy toward Greece for decades. The threat perceptions rising from the Enosis, Megali Idea, and the disputes over the Turkish minority's rights in West Thracian and Greek minority's status in Istanbul and maritime and aerial zones of the jurisdiction in the Aegean Sea were the main causes of the problematic relations between Greece and Turkey. Both Greece and Turkey securitized these issues and have not engaged in cooperative economic and political relations for decades. Throughout the first years of the 2000s, conversely, there had been a substantive transformation in Greece and Turkey's foreign policies toward each other. The issue of minority rights between the two countries has been solved pretty much through the expansion of minority rights in parallel with the EU requests. The other bilateral issues had also been desecuritized in line with the EU requests. With the increasing problems in Turkey-EU relations and the growing reluctance of the EU to Turkey's membership in the Union in the post-2007 period, however, traditional security-oriented unfriendly policy and discourse have again gradually replaced with the negotiation and diplomacy-oriented discourse and foreign policy. In this regard, this research examines the following questions: What are the alterations in Turkey's Greece policy after 1999? and what role has the EU played in these policy changes? Drawing on the de-Europeanisation and Europeanisation literature and the EU-Turkey and Turkey-Greece relations, it seems that: First there is a misfit gap between the EU/CSDP acquis and Turkey's Greece policy. Second, there is a relationship between the discourse and policies of the EU and Greece toward Turkey and Turkey's discourse and policy toward Greece. Third, there is a connection between the degree of certainty of Turkey's prospect of admission to the Union and the capability and credibility of the EU in making alterations at the Turkish level, including Turkey's Greece policy. The concept of de-Europeanisation, counter-conduct, and three-step theoretical framework of Europeanisation thereby provide key analytical toolkits for analyzing the different forms and processes of changes in Turkey's Greece policy and the EU's role in these policy changes.

This research argues that the alterations in Turkey's Greece policy during the first years of the 2000s have been created by Turkey's growing adaptation to the EU and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) acquis in this period. However, the pace and quality of EU-Turkey relations have declined in the post-2007 period. 14

negotiation chapters were blocked by Cyprus Greek Administration and the EU council. The degree of certainty in Turkey's prospect of admission to the Union has, therefore, decreased. As the FEUTURE Online Paper 12 and 26 demonstrate, this has produced the loss of interests in EU membership in the AK Party government and Turkish society.

Consequently, the increasing reluctance of the EU to Turkey's full membership in the Union in the post-2007 era has triggered Turkey's reluctance to the EU membership. This has brought about the changing aspect, preferences, interests, and direction of Turkish foreign policy. This has also caused the increasing counter-conduct discourse and policy of Turkey toward the EU and thus the de-Europeanisation in Turkey's polity and politics, including its Greece policy. Drawing on the Europeanisation literature, the majority of studies in the field focus on how the EU regulations and directives bring about changes in the members' and candidates' political and socio-economic implementations and policies in line with the EU *acquis*. The de-Europeanisation and counter-conduct processes are relatively new subjects of the Europeanisation study. This study embeds the Europeanisation with the de-Europeanisation and counter conduct concepts and identifies key behaviours and policies of the EU shaping Turkey's counter-conduct discourse and policies and the de-Europeanisation. In this regard, this study produces new empirical data to the existing but limited - literature on de-Europeanisation and counter conduct. It also uses extensive data to underpin arguments. it, thus, contributes to the Europeanisation and the growing de-Europeanisation literature in general and the literature on Turkey's Greece policy and the influence of the EU on Turkey's Greece policy in specific.

This study, first, briefly introduces Börzel and Risse's three-step Europeanisation framework (2003) and the de-Europeanisation and counter conduct concepts, and then the alterations in Turkey's Greece policy during the early 2000s. Finally, it examines Turkey's Greece policy in the post-2007 era. By doing so, it analyzes whether and if so, how the pace and quality of Turkey-EU relations and EU conditionality have influenced the deviations in Turkey's Greece policy.

### **Three-Step Europeanisation Framework, De-Europeanisation, and Counter-Conduct**

The three-step Europeanization framework (misfit, mediating factors, and domestic change) was developed by Börzel and Risse in 2003. According to this model, the EU adaptation pressure results from the incompatibility between the domestic policy, polity, and politics and the EU acquis. Börzel and Risse (2003) propose that incompatibility between the national and EU levels is essential but not a sufficient condition for alterations at the national level. The examination of endogenous and exogenous mediating/intervening factors for domestic Europeanisation and de-Europeanisation is, therefore, essential. The reforms undertaken by associated states to meet the EU acquis throughout the reducing incompatibilities between the EU's and domestic levels democratize and liberalize autocratic political regimes and produce an adaptation to the EU customs and standards. Democratization of the political regimes and the increase in adaptation to the EU standards weaken the power of the traditional actors and institutions and empowered the new actors in the associated state's system. This process empowers pro-EU actors in the policy-making process at national levels. This results in an increasing national adaptation to the EU calls and norms.

While giving Turkey a candidate status in 1999, the EU required the Turkish government to make alterations in Turkey's traditional security-oriented external policy, especially in its Greece and Cyprus policies, in addition to the changes in its domestic polity and politics (Aydın-Düzgüt, 2016; Bilgin and Bilgiç, 2011; Kalkan 2015; 2016; Oğuzlu, 2004; Rumelili, 2003; 2007; Tocci, 2005). In parallel with the EU's expectations, Turkey realigned its domestic landscape with the EU norms and rules as a consequence of the "different empowerment of domestic actors" in the post-Helsinki period (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, 2005; see also Aydın and Acıkmeşe, 2007; Bilgin and Bilgiç, 2011; Rumelili, 2007; Tocci, 2005). These new institutions and actors namely the civil society and AK Party government-aspire to challenge the approaches of the military-bureaucratic elites regarding the national security and Turkey's traditional policy toward Greece (for details, see Bilgin, 2005; Önis, 2002; Kalkan, 2015; 2020; Tocci, 2005). Nevertheless, the blocking of 14 chapters by the EU council and Cyprus Greek Administration, the objection of some EU members to Turkey's full EU membership, and their calls for privileged partnership have diminished the interest of the Turkish government and people in the EU accession (Cebeci, 2016;

Hergüner, 2020; Kalkan, 2020). These exogenous developments have negatively influenced Turkey's cost/benefit calculation of alignment to the EU calls and brought about the loss of interest in EU membership and the increasing counter-conduct discourse and policy of Turkey toward the EU and its calls, including Turkey's Greece policy. In analyzing how endogenous and exogenous mediating/intervening factors have influenced the changes in Turkey's Greece policy, specific attention is, therefore, given to the calculation of costs and benefits of alignment, the degree of certainty and/or uncertainty of prospect EU admission, and the discourse and policy of the EU and Greece toward Turkey and vice versa. The impact of the increasing pace and quality of Turkey-EU relations during the beginning of the 2000s and the EU's reluctance to Turkey's full EU membership in the post-2007 age on Turkey's costs/benefits calculation of alignment to the EU calls in its foreign policy toward Greece is analyzed.

In this regard, a three-step Europeanization framework can be employed to understand and explain Turkey's keenness for adaptation to the EU calls throughout the first years of the 2000s. In the post-2007 epoch, however, there is a change in the worth and speed of Turkey-EU relations and Turkey's policy toward Greece. The three-step Europeanization framework can, therefore, explain only a part of changes in Turkey and its Greece policy, generated by its relations with the EU. It does not deliver required explicatory tools to investigate how the increasing problems in EU-Turkey affairs and the reluctance of the EU to the Turkey's full EU membership in the post-2007 have reproduced the traditional security-oriented unfriendly discourse and policy of Turkey toward them. To overcome this shortcoming of the three-step Europeanization framework in analysing the state of affairs in Turkey's Greece policy in the post-2007 period and the role of EU-Turkey relations in that we embed it with the counter conduct and de-Europeanisation concepts.

De-Europeanisation is a process of dismantling EU policies and calls<sup>1</sup> and thus not complying with them and reversing the Europeanisation process at the domestic level because of the loss or diminishing of the EU's influence. (For details see, Aydın-Düzgüt, 2016; Cebeci, 2016; Copeland 2016; Raagmaa, 2014). As mentioned above and noted by Copeland (2016, p. 1126), a noteworthy investigative toolkit of the de-Europeanisation is to prevent future down-loading of the EU rules,

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<sup>1</sup> As it is put by Jordan (2003, p. 276) dismantling of EU polices and calls refer to "the cutting, diminution or removal of existing policy".

policies, and calls into the national level and to reverse the process of Europeanisation with a specific aim. In this article, de-Europeanisation refers to Turkey's reluctance to adapt to the EU's calls for change regarding Turkey's Greek policy. After 2007, de-Europeanisation at the Turkish level manifested itself as a diminishing and slowing process of Europeanisation in Turkey's politics, polity, and Greece policy. In the post-2014 period, it has gradually turned into a state of deliberate failure to comply with and reverse the EU calls and demands regarding Turkey's Greek policy. Thus, de-Europeanisation is a fruitful concept to explain Turkey's reluctance to align with EU requests in its Greece policy in the post-2007 era and reverse them in the post-2014 period. However, "the de-Europeanisation approach does not focus on how such a move away from Europe takes place whilst the EU accession rhetoric is still pursued" (Cebeci, 2016, p. 122). To overcome this shortcoming, Europeanisation/de-Europeanisation scholars (Cebeci 2016; Malmving, 2014; Waever, 2000) embed it with the concept of 'counter conduct'.

The concept of counter conduct means "wanting to be conducted differently, by other leaders (*conducteurs*) and other shepherds, towards other objectives and forms of salvation, and through other procedures and methods" (Foucault, 2007, p. 194–195). As it is put by Foucault (2007, p. 196), "there is an immediate and founding correlation between conduct and counter-conduct". The policies and discourse of the EU and Greece toward Turkey have, therefore, determined and regulated the conducts of Turkey toward them. Turkey wants to be conducted differently by the EU and Greece; hence, it adapted a counter-conduct discourse and policy toward them (for details, see FEUTURE Online Paper 12 and 26). Put it differently, the reluctance of EU to Turkey's full membership in the EU and the unfriendly discourse of the EU and Greece toward Turkey in the post-2007 era have also diminished Turkey's compliance with the conditionality and calls of the EU, including its policy toward Greece. In this regard, counter conduct is another fruitful concept to explain why and how Turkey is reluctant to meet the EU demands regarding Turkey's Greece policy in the post-2007 period and why and how it has resisted them in recent years.

### **The Functions of the EU in Turkey's Greece policy**

EU's and Greece's "negative conditionality policy" toward Turkey's admission to the Union caused an increasingly hard-line policy of Turkey toward Greece during the 1990s (Aras, 2004; Aydın and

Acıkmeşe, 2007; Bilge, 2000; Bilgin, 2005; Önis, 2002) and the post-2007 period. For Greece, the elimination of the Turkish threat and this hard-line policy depended on bringing Turkey onto the EU platforms. “Greece is afraid that Turkey won’t want to solve the Aegean issue if it falls off the EU wagon”. (Europe Briefing N°64Istanbul/Athens/Brussels, 19 July 2011, p.13). As such, at the end of the 1990s, Greece withdrew its veto on Turkey’s application to the Union, and the EU gave Turkey a candidate status in 1999. As detailed above, there was an alteration in traditional Turkey’s Greece policy throughout the first years of the 2000s. The EU required Turkey to solve the Aegean and other issues with Greece in a peaceful manner in accordance with the UN Charter. If this failed, then Turkey should bring the issue (Aegean) to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) until the end of 2004 (see the Helsinki Summit Presidency Conclusion, 10–11 December 1999, paragraph 4). When the EU started the accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3, 2005, EU-Turkey relations expanded and gained a new dimension. Therefore, starting from 1999, the transformative effect of the Union on Turkey and Turkey-Greece relations has increased, and the normalization of relations with Greece has gained more significance for Turkey (Bilgin and Bilgiç, 2011; Tocci, 2005; Tsarouhas and Yazgan, 2018).

As proposed by Europeanisation, the reforms undertaken to align with the EU *acquis* in the rule of law have empowered the civil actors against the traditional state actors and institutions, namely military-bureaucratic elites, in the Turkey’s administrative structure (For details of reform, see 2003, 2004, 2005, 2010, and 2011 European Commission Progress Reports on Turkey). Turkish government has, therefore, gained power in the foreign policymaking over the military-bureaucratic elites (Çelik and Rumelili, 2006; Keyman and Öniş, 2007; Güney and Karatekillioğlu, 2005). As such, the empowered AK Party government became the main driving force behind the alteration of Turkey’s Greece policy. By accepting the connection between the settlement of issues with Greece and the Turkey-EU- relations and Turkey’s accession to the Union, it challenged the military-bureaucratic elites’ security-oriented policy towards Greece and Cyprus. The AK Party government supported the Annan Plan to solve Cyprus issue. The AK Party government agreed to bring the Aegean issue to the ICJ and initiated negotiations with Greece to solve the problems (Çelik and Rumelili, 2006; Oğuzlu, 2004, p. 108). As such, it acted as a facilitating institution in transforming Turkey’s traditional Greece and Cyprus policy in accordance with the UN’s resolutions and settlement plan



supported by the EU to solve the Cyprus issue and Aegean problem. In the AK Party government's foreign policy towards Greece, the EU played a determinant role not only by conditioning the settlement of the problems with Greece and the Cyprus issue for Turkey's accession into the EU but also by making promises to Turkey regarding the Turkey-EU relations and Aegean and Cyprus issues (Çelik and Rumelili, 2006; Kalkan, 2017). European leaders made several promises to Erdogan in his visits to European capitals during the 2002-2004 period (Oğuzlu, 2004; Kalkan, 2017). For instance, first, if Turkey supports the Annan Plan for the settlement of the Cyprus issue and accepts to bringing the Aegean issue to the ICJ for the settlement of issues with Greece, the EU will give a date to Turkey for starting accession negotiation. Second, the Cyprus and Aegean issue will no longer be an obstacle to EU-Turkey relations. Third, the EU will gradually lift the economic embargo imposed upon Turkish Cypriots since 1974.<sup>2</sup> As such, upon EU's promises and conditionality regarding the Cyprus and Aegean issues, the AK Party government made a radical change in its traditional Cyprus and Greece policies (Oğuzlu, 2004; Kalkan, 2017; 2020). The traditional Turkish Cyprus policy of maintaining a presence on the island created by the 1974 intervention and passive support for inter-communal talks were replaced with the active support for inter-communal talks under the auspices of the UN to find a solution to the Cyprus issue (see also Kalkan, 2020; Suvarierol, 2003, p. 70). Consequently, the long-standing tension between the two counties was minimized, the economic and political relations have expanded significantly during the early years of the 2000s.

In the post-Helsinki process, the EU also funded Turkish civil society and Turkish-Greek civil initiatives. To advance the capacity of Turkish civil society and cooperation of Turkish-Greek organizations, the EU provided 8 million Euros from 2002 to 2004 and 35 million Euros from 2004 to 2006 under the Civil Society Development Programme. These EU funds also empowered the civil society and the Turkish-Greek dialogue (Belge, 2004; Bilgic and Karatzas, 2004; Güney and Karatekelioglu, 2005; Kalkan, 2020; Keyman and Önis, 2007). As such, civil society associations such as TESEV, IKEV, TOBB, TUSIAD, etc., began to actively contribute to the policy-making process, including Turkish foreign policy toward Greece (Güney and Karatekelioglu, 2005; Müftüler-Baç and Gürsoy, 2010; Özel, 2004). They emphasized

<sup>2</sup> Although Turks in North Cyprus accepted the Annan Plan in a referendum held in 2004, giving a date to Turkey for starting accession negotiations, the EU has thus far not lifted the economic embargoes imposed upon Turkish Cypriots.

the common culture and interests between Turkey and Greece in the media and society. Turkish and Greek journalists established the Turkish-Greek Press Council to contribute to the expansion of a positive atmosphere between Greece and Turkey (Güney and Karatekelioglu, 2005; Kirişci and Carkoglu, 2003). Relations have also improved between the artists and intellectuals throughout the mutual visits, film productions, and joint concerts. All these activities contributed to the development of cooperation and friendly discourse between Turkey and Greece by changing negative representations about Greece in the media and society and thus by preparing public opinion for policy change (Belge, 2004; Kalkan 2020; Keyman and Önis, 2007; Kirişci, and Carkoglu, 2003; Tsarouhas and Yazgan, 2018). This made the antagonistic discourse and policy less possible and less legitimate. As such, the empowerment of the civil institutions and actors against the traditional institutions and elites had emerged as the mediating factors in the alteration of Turkey's Greece policy in the first years of the 2000s. The EU had, hence, directly and/or indirectly become a main driving force behind the alteration of Turkey's Greece policy at the beginning of the 2000s. It had directly become a main driving force behind the alteration of Turkey's Greece policy by granting candidate status to Turkey in 1999 and conditioning the settlement of issues with Greece through dialogue and diplomacy. And it had indirectly become a main driving force behind the alteration of Turkey's Greece policy by restricting the power of traditional institutions and elites and empowering the civil institutions and elites and the Turkish-Greek dialogue.

### **Europeanisation Process of Turkey's Foreign Policy toward Greece**

Turkey's uneasy relations with Greece have been a vital subject in Turkey-EU relations in the foreign policy realm (For detail, see 1998, 1999, and 2000 Progress Reports on Turkey). With the realization of Turkey's EU candidature in 1999, the EU has increased its pressure on both parties, and Turkey-Greece political relations entered a period of rapprochement. Starting from the end of the 1990s, Turkey had adjusted its established foreign policy toward Greece and adapted a dialog and diplomacy-oriented foreign policy to find a solution to its problems with Greece bilateral problems. The two countries have advanced their political and economic relations by starting talks to solve the bilateral problems and increasing reciprocal visits. These resulted in signing many cooperative agreements and the increasing volume of bilateral trade between Turkey and Greece. Turkish and

Greek ministers of foreign affairs met in New York on June 20, 1999, and decided that high-ranking officials of Greece and Turkey would come together in Ankara and Athens to talk about the development of cooperation between the two countries in the areas of drug smuggling, organized crime, terrorism, environment, illegal migration, trade, tourism, culture and regional cooperation (Turkish Foreign Ministry's official Web site; see also Aksu, 2004; Evin, 2005; Kalkan, 2020). These meetings took place in Ankara on July 26, 1999, in Athens in early September 1999, and again in Ankara from September 15–16, 1999. These meetings started a process of dialogue and negotiation between the two countries (Turkish Foreign Ministry's official Web site; Aksu, 2004; Evin, 2005; Kalkan, 2020). After the 1999 earthquakes devastated the Marmara region and Athens, the two countries co-sponsored a Joint Standby Disaster Response Unit which was signed in 2001, which is the first time this has happened in the history of the UN. This rapprochement process between the two countries has evolved into a partnership in the post-Helsinki Summit era, where Greece supported the endorsement of the status of Turkey's candidacy to the Union. This process had occasioned the beginnings of a friendship and mutual visits between Turkey and Greece (Turkish Foreign Ministry's official Web; Aksu, 2004; Bilgin, 2005; Eryilmaz, 2007; Evin, 2005).

Following the endorsement of the status of Turkey's candidacy to the Union by the European Council in 1999 with the support of Greece, mutual visits and the talks on economic and political cooperation have increased between Turkey and Greece. After 40 years, The Turkish Foreign Minister, Ismail Cem, officially visited Greece on February 8, 2000, and after 16 years, Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited Greece on May 6–8, 2004. Kostas Karamanlis, the Greece Prime Minister, also visited Turkey on January 23–25, 2008 after 49 years. When the Greek Prime Minister Papandreou assigned office in October 2009, he paid a formal trip to Turkey, his first official visit abroad. On May 14–15, 2010, Turkey's Prime Minister Erdogan again paid an official visit to Greece with ten ministers. During this visit, the Greek-Turkish High-Level Cooperation Council held its first meeting. Furthermore, in 2003, 2007, and 2010 the Turkish Foreign Minister visited Greece, and in 2005, 2006, and 2010, the Greek Foreign Minister visited Turkey. They also met many times at various international meetings (see the Turkish Foreign Ministry's Official Web site).

During these visits, cooperation mechanisms in organized crime, terrorism, environment, illegal migration, trade, tourism, culture,

and regional cooperation were established to develop a partnership between the two countries. As a consequence of these initiatives, more than 65 treaties (involving the memoranda of understanding and protocols) have been validated, and 29 Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) have been adopted between the two countries. In line with the calls and expectations of the EU, Turkey agreed to go to ICJ to settle the Aegean issue if it could not be solved through bilateral negotiations (Eryilmaz, 2007; Kalkan, 2020). Greece also agreed to participate in bilateral negotiations to settle the Aegean issue before going to the ICJ. As such, over 50 rounds of the exploratory talks started in 2002 to settle the Aegean issue, and other issues such as minority, endowments, and Patriarchate issues have been held and have “paved the way for the first time after so many years” (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The EU has asked both Greece and Turkey to advance minority rights. Although this issue has not yet been solved, as detailed below and noted by 2004, 2005, 2010, and 2011 Progression Reports on Turkey, both sides have made reforms to adapt to the EU calls and norms in this realm (See 2004, 2005, 2010, and 2011 Progression Reports on Turkey). As mentioned above, other important issues are Patriarchate and endowments disputes. In parallel with the Patriarchate’s and EU’s requests, Turkey has acted to solve these issues (see 2010, 2011 Progression Reports on Turkey). To end the issue of choosing the new leader of the Fener Greek Patriarchate of İstanbul, Turkey’s government gave citizenship to the foreign archbishops. In this way, the issue of selecting the new leader of the Patriarchate has been solved. Finally, in parallel with the EU call, on 27 August 2011 with the amendment to the Foundations Act, religious minority foundations could get compensation for property confiscated in the late 1930s.

### **De-Europeanization and Counter Conduct in Turkey’s Greece Policy**

After 2007, especially in the post-2014 period, with the reduction of the speed and quality of EU-Turkey relations, the EU increasingly lost its impact on Turkey and Turkish foreign policy toward Greece. EU’s exclusionist and reluctance policy and discourse toward Turkey and its membership in the Union by referring to its democratic development and foreign policy implementations, especially its problematic relations with Greece, have been perceived by the Turkish side as an indication of the reluctance of EU to its full membership to the Union (Aydın-Düzgüt, 2016 and Bilgin and Bilgiç, 2011; Hergüner, 2020; see also Alpan, 2016; MacMillan, 2013 and Rumelili and Todd, 2017). In 2004, the Greek Cypriot Administration became an EU member with

the “Republic of Cyprus” qualification. This emerged as “the port issue” between Turkey and the Greek Cypriot Administration, which harms the implementation of the Customs Union Treaty between the EU and Turkey. Turkey did/does not want to open its ports to the ships that wear the Greek Cyprus Administration flag. Thus, 14 chapters are blocked due to the political obstacles of the Greek Administration of Southern Cyprus and the EU Council (Turkish Foreign Ministry’s official Web site; Aydın-Düzgit, 2016 and Bilgin and Bilgiç, 2011).

Furthermore, in 2004 “strategic partnership” has been proposed by Angela Merkel to Turkey, and France also blocked the opening of new negotiation chapters with Turkey After Sarkozy came to power. On the other hand, economic assistance should be given to Turkey by the EU within the scope of the Turkey-EU negotiation process, and the EU-Turkey Migration Deal was not fully provided by the EU (Turkish Foreign Ministry’s official Web site; Rumelili and Todd, 2017). As a result, on 27 February 2020, Turkey opened the Greek-Turkish border for irregular crossing by announced that “It would no longer enforce a deal reached with the EU in 2016 to block irregular migration routes into Greece” (Turkish Foreign Ministry’s official Web site). These have adversely impacted EU-Turkey negotiations and Turkey’s cost/benefit calculation in adapting the EU acquire (Turkish Foreign Ministry’s official Website; Tsarouhas and Yazgan, 2018). In this process, the debates over immigrants, the restriction of the territorial waters, exclusive economic zones and continental shelf and, disarmament of the Greek islands in the eastern Aegean Sea have further increased, which have increased the hostility and distrust between Turkey and Greece (Turkish Foreign Ministry’s official Web site; Aydın-Düzgit, 2016). Turkey’s perceptions of threat rising from Greece have, therefore, increased, and Turkey adapted a realist security approach. Turkey’s reluctance to adapt to the EU’s *acquis* and calls for change regarding Turkey’s Greek policy has, hence, increased in the post-2007 era. The process of Europeanisation in Turkey’s Greece policy has weakened and slowed down in this period. Turkey has increasingly begun to take a hard-line policy toward the EU and Greece, which has gradually turned into a state of deliberate failure of Turkey to comply with the EU calls and demands regarding Turkey’s Greek policy in the post-2014 period. This is a significant display of the De-Europeanisation of Turkey’s foreign policy toward Greece.

The discourse of Turkish and Greek elites and politicians displays the increasing use of unfriendly declarations and antagonistic discourse

versus dialog, diplomatic and economic oriented instruments. The speeches of the President of Turkey and Minister of Foreign Affairs at different international meetings and the 2014 and 2019 election campaigns<sup>3</sup> are significant displays of Turkey's desire to be conducted friendly by the EU and Greece. Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Greece made "degrading" and "hostile" declarations on migrant and the Aegean issue concerning the territorial waters, continental shelf, and exclusive economic zones (Turkish Foreign Ministry's official Web site; Greek Foreign Ministry's official Web site). These cause the increasing distrust and suspicion in both societies toward each other, facilitate the use of security and antagonistic discourse, and destroy the development of dialogue and cooperation between sides. The involvement of non-governmental actors (NGA) in the preparation and operation of Turkey's foreign policy toward Greece have considerably decreased in the post-2007 period, which is another vital display of de-Europeanization of the foreign policymaking process at the Turkish level toward Greece. These display that, first, Turkey wants to be conducted friendly and as an equal partner by the EU and Greece. Second, Turkey's foreign policy toward Greece has been progressively de-Europeanizing in the post-2007 period, which gained further momentum after the 2014 period.

Consequently, as proposed by the concept of counter-conduct, there is a correlation between the policies and discourse of the EU and Greece toward Turkey and the policies and discourse of Turkey toward them. After 1999, when the EU's reluctance to Turkey's full membership in Union and the unfriendly discourse of the EU and Greece toward Turkey have increased, Turkey maintained a hard-line policy against Greece and did not hesitate to escalate the tension in the Aegean Sea as well as terminate the settlement process in Cyprus<sup>4</sup>. Meanwhile, when the speed and quality of EU-Turkey relations improved, as happened during the 1996 Custom Union, in 1999 in Helsinki, and in 2004, it made changes in its traditional Greece policy approach in accordance with the EU/CSDP *acquis* and the EU calls. It increased its efforts to advance the political relations with Greece and supported inter-communal talks to solve the Cyprus issue. The radical transformation of Turkey's Greece and Cyprus policies took place during 2002-2007 when the EU-Turkey relations culminated at its peak. To sum up, the policies and discourse

<sup>3</sup> The speeches are available at the Justice and Development Party's archives. See <http://www.akparti.org.tr/site/haberler/arsiv/basin-odasi>

<sup>4</sup> As seen in the post-Luxemburg period and after the 2007, when the EU Council blocked the opening of negotiations with Turkey.

of the EU and Greece toward Turkey have regulated the conducts of Turkey toward them.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined the Europeanisation and De-Europeanisation process of the Turkish foreign policy toward Greece by benefiting from Börzel and Risse's three-step Europeanisation framework and the de-Europeanisation and counter conduct concepts. It, first, briefly introduced Börzel and Risse's three-step Europeanisation framework and then the de-Europeanisation and counter conduct concepts. Third, it examined the changes in Turkey's Greece policy during the first years of the 2000s. By doing so, it analyzes whether there was an alteration in Turkey's Greece policy in this period. Fourth, it investigated how the EU requests in the fields of foreign policy regarding the solution of problems with Greece in a peaceful manner and the increasing speed and quality of Turkey-EU relations at the beginning of the 2000s affected Turkey's Greece policy. Finally, it examined Turkey's Greece policy in the post-2007 era. The finding of the study reveals that, first, there was an alteration in traditional Turkey's Greece policy in the early 2000s.

Second, the EU's decisions related to Turkey's EU candidature have severely affected the alterations in Turkey's Greece policy. As suggested by the three-step theoretical framework of Europeanisation, the incompatibility between the Turkish and EU levels in different fields, including the foreign policy, caused the EU adaptation pressure over Turkey. By conditioning the peaceful settlement of the problems with Greece, the EU directly enforced Turkey to make alterations in its traditional Greece policy in parallel with the EU norms and requests. The examination of endogenous and exogenous intervening factors for Europeanisation and de-Europeanisation of Turkey's Greece policy also reveals that, first, the democratization of the authoritarian political regime and the increasing adaptation to the EU requests and norms have weakened the supremacy of the traditional actors and institutions and empowered the new actors in Turkish political system. This brought about changes in the capacity and ability of the traditional and pro-EU actors at the Turkish level and the emergence of multiple actors in the policy-making process in general and the policymaking toward Greece in specific. The increasing EU funding and legitimization have also helped civil society in developing their agenda and activities to improve the Turkish-Greek cooperation and rapprochement during

the first years of 2000. These provided a new basis for alternative approaches and discourses in Turkish foreign policy toward Greece. This contributed to the development of dialog and cooperation between Turkey and Greece, and thus the Europeanisation of Turkey's Greece policy. In this regard, as an endogenous intervening factor, the empowerment of pro-EU actors at the Turkish level in the early 2000s has influenced the variations in Turkey's Greece policy. Third, with the decreasing quality and pace of Turkey-EU relations in the post-2007 era, however, the EU has increasingly lost its impact on Turkey and Turkish foreign policy toward Greece. The unfriendly policies and discourse of Greece and the EU toward Turkey have directed Turkey's unfriendly policy and discourse toward them and diminished the Europeanisation process in Turkey and Turkey's foreign policy toward Greece. Turkish has increasingly adapted a security-oriented foreign policy approach and hard-line policy toward the EU and Greece. This has resulted in the De-Europeanization of the Turkey's foreign policymaking process and discourse toward Greece. Turkey escalated the tension in the Aegean Sea and the unfriendly discourse and terminated the settlement process in Cyprus. In terms of the exogenous intervening factor, consequently, taming and credibility of EU conditionality and Turkish foreign policy-makers' cost/benefit calculation of alignment with the EU calls has also enormous impact on both the Europeanization of Turkey's Greece policy in the early 2000s and De-Europeanisation of Turkey's Greece policy in the post-2007 period.

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