

-RESEARCH ARTICLE-

**FUTURE OF TÜRKİYE-EU RELATIONS: COOPERATION,
COMPETITION AND COOPETITION***

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Abstract

Türkiye's relationship with the European Union (EU) has a long history, dating back to the Ankara Agreement signed in 1963. Despite the decades-long relationship, the full membership envisioned by the Ankara Agreement has yet to materialize. Political and technical obstacles, including frozen negotiation chapters and shifts in foreign policy priorities, have recently strained relations. While Türkiye has been drifting away from the EU, the transformative impact of the EU on Turkish politics and society has declined for the last decade. Thus, recent research on Türkiye-EU relations has focused on de-Europeanization process in Turkish politics, rising contestation, and political divergence between Türkiye and the EU. Borrowed from the discipline of business administration, the concept of coopetition offers a different perspective on how cooperation and competition can co-exist together between Türkiye and the EU. By focusing on progressive cooperation rather than a stagnant partnership and on constructive competition rather than destructive rivalry, both parties can sustain a more balanced and productive relationship. This study re-evaluates Türkiye-EU relations in light of global transformations, technological advancements, and regional conflicts, proposing the concept of coopetition as a framework for the management of simultaneous cooperation and competition between the two. Focusing on the green economy, digital transformation, and geopolitical/geo-economic areas and in line with the perspective of the coopetition model, the study argues that Türkiye-EU relations can be revitalized if only both sides acknowledge that cooperation for research and development and maintaining peace in their vicinity will provide mutual gains while contestation for normative order and competition for geo-economic benefits will persist.

Keywords: *Coopetition, digital transformation, European Union, green economy, Türkiye*

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TÜRKİYE-AB İLİŞKİLERİNİN GELECEĞİ: İŞ BİRLİĞİ, REKABET VE REKABERLİK²

Öz

Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği (AB) ile ilişkisi, 1963 yılında imzalanan Ankara Anlaşması'na kadar uzanan uzun bir geçmişe sahiptir. On yıllardır süren bu ilişkiye rağmen, Ankara Anlaşması'nda öngörülen tam üyelik gerçekleşmemiştir. Dondurulmuş müzakere fasılları ve dış politika önceliklerindeki değişimler gibi siyasi ve teknik engeller son dönemde ilişkileri germiştir. Son on yıldır, Türkiye, AB'den uzaklaşırken, AB'nin Türk siyaseti ve toplumu üzerindeki dönüştürücü etkileri de azalmıştır. Bu nedenle, Türkiye-AB ilişkileri üzerine yapılan son araştırmalar, Türk siyasetindeki Avrupadışlaşma sürecine, artan çekişmelere ve Türkiye ile AB arasındaki siyasi ayrışmaya odaklanmıştır. İşletme disiplininin ödünç alınan rekaberlik kavramı, Türkiye ve AB arasında işbirliği ve rekabetin nasıl bir arada var olabileceğine dair farklı bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır. Durağan bir ortaklık yerine ilerici bir iş birliğine ve yıkıcı bir rekabet yerine yapıcı bir rekabete odaklanarak her iki tarafın da daha dengeli ve verimli bir ilişki sürdürebileceği iddia edilmektedir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye-AB ilişkilerini küresel değişimler, teknolojik ilerlemeler ve bölgesel çatışmalar ışığında yeniden değerlendirmekte ve iki taraf arasındaki iş birliği ve rekabetin aynı anda yönetilmesi için bir çerçeve olarak rekaberlik³ kavramını önermektedir. Yeşil ekonomi, dijital dönüşüm ve jeopolitik/jeoekonomik alanlara odaklanan bu çalışma, rekaberlik modeline uygun olarak, Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinin ancak her iki tarafın da araştırma ve geliştirme için iş birliği yapmalarının, çevrelerinde barışı korumanın karşılıklı kazanımlar sağlayacağını, ancak normatif düzen için çekişmenin ve jeoekonomik faydalar için rekabetin devam edeceğini kabul etmeleri halinde yeniden canlandırılabilirliğini savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Avrupa Birliği, Dijital Dönüşüm, Rekaberlik, Türkiye, Yeşil Ekonomi*

Jel Kodları: *F13, F15, F53*

“Bu çalışma araştırma ve yayın etiğine uygun olarak hazırlanmıştır.”

² An extended Turkish abstract is attached at the end of the article.

³ There is no widely accepted Turkish translation of cooptition. However, “rekaberlik” is preferred as it is used in peer-reviewed journals published in Turkish, e.g. Bayramoğlu, G. (2022). Rekabetin Değişen Doğası: Paradoksal Bir İlişki Olarak Rekaberlik. *Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 24(1), 87-110. <https://doi.org/10.26468/trakyasobed.1016009>

1.INTRODUCTION

Türkiye has a long history of relations with the European Union (EU), anchored by a relatively institutionalized and robust cooperation framework established with the signing of the Ankara Agreement on September 12, 1963. Despite the start of accession negotiations in October 2005, progress has been hindered by the freezing of certain chapters for both political and technical reasons, mainly due to the vetoes of some EU member states. This stagnation of relations has pushed Türkiye to further distance itself from the EU. During the accession process, the EU's expectation from Türkiye is that there will be more cooperation and less competition – almost no competition at all. According to the EU, candidates must fully accept the EU *acquis*, policies and values and act in harmony with the EU. From this perspective, a candidate state cannot have its own approach and pursue policies that contradict the EU. However, it is not meaningful to expect a regionally active country like Türkiye – a candidate state whose negotiation process is full of uncertainties – to act in line with the EU's interests and policies for a long time. Such an expectation inevitably generated problems in Türkiye-EU relations.

The Turkish government's foreign policy orientation towards geographies such as the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa, coupled with the economic, social and health-related crises across Europe and its environs, has all generated political tensions between Türkiye and the EU for the last decade. The latest tension is over the drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. Consequently, Türkiye has drifted away from the EU, and the mechanisms for mutual understanding and cooperation have significantly diminished.

The main purpose of this study is to revisit Türkiye-EU relations within the framework of technological developments, digital transformation and geostrategic concerns, and to open up for discussion the possibilities of Türkiye-EU cooperation in different fields by analysing them through the concept of *coopetition*. Borrowed from the discipline of business administration, the concept of *coopetition* offers a different perspective on how cooperation and competition can co-exist together between Türkiye and the EU. By focusing on progressive cooperation rather than a stagnant partnership, and on constructive competition rather than fierce rivalry, both parties can sustain a more balanced and productive relationship. The main argument of this study is that progressive cooperation and constructive competition in the fields of green economy, digital transformation and geopolitical/geoeconomic areas can add a new dynamism to Türkiye-EU relations alongside the existing accession negotiations framework. In this study, firstly, the theoretical discussions on the recent developments in Türkiye-EU relations will be briefly summarized. The next section will elucidate the concept of *coopetition* and explore its applications from the corporate level to the state level. In the last section, the areas of *coopetition* in Türkiye-EU relations will be identified, and a brief discussion on how to deepen relations in these areas will be offered.

2.STATE OF THE ART IN THE LITERATURE ON TÜRKİYE-EU RELATIONS

Türkiye was granted candidate status at the 1999 Helsinki Summit and accession negotiations officially started on October 3, 2005. Negotiations have been ongoing since then, and the most recent chapter on Fiscal and Budgetary provisions was opened in 2016. Türkiye has announced two national action plans for the 2016-2019 and 2021-2023 periods, and legislative and administrative measures have been taken in line with these plans. However, 14 chapters remain blocked due to politically motivated obstacles by the Council of the EU and the Greek Cypriot Administration, and chapter 20 on Enterprise and Industrial Policy and chapter 21 on Trans-European Networks could not be closed (Directorate for EU Affairs, 2024). The impasse in accession negotiations has turned Türkiye's full membership into a topic that no one in Brussels wants to talk about. During this period, migrants, visa liberalization, modernization of the Customs Union (CU), disputes over the exclusive economic zone in the Eastern Mediterranean, and the different political positions taken by Türkiye and the EU during the Ukraine-Russia War and the Israel-Hamas conflict have been problematic issues in Türkiye-EU relations. In general, Türkiye's policies are considered incompatible with the EU. The Commission's annual country report also mentioned Türkiye's contradictions with the EU's foreign policy discourse and practices (European Commission, 2023b: 7).

Despite these problems, after the earthquakes in Türkiye on February 6, 2023, the EU's solidarity with Türkiye and its humanitarian aid, the revival of Turkish-Greek relations, and Türkiye's approval of the NATO memberships of Finland and Sweden, which are also EU members, all contributed to a positive atmosphere in relations. Furthermore, Türkiye and Greece signed a memorandum of understanding in Athens when the Turkish President paid an official visit to Greece in December 2023 (Gençtürk, 2023). In addition to political overtures to solve problems in Türkiye-EU relations, a recent survey has revealed that more than 60 percent of the Turkish public continues to support full membership while they believe that it would not be realized (IKV, 2023).

Against this backdrop of political tensions, scholars have employed different concepts and theoretical frameworks to explain Türkiye's unstable relationship with the EU in an environment where new chapters have not been opened, sanctions have been imposed on Türkiye for its activities in the Eastern Mediterranean, and Türkiye has been politically moving away from EU values. In these new political circumstances, research on the Europeanization of Turkish politics and society has been contested by new concepts and models. These are i) differentiated integration, ii) transactional relations, iii) de-Europeanization, iv) normative and strategic contestation. The burgeoning literature on explaining ups and downs of Türkiye's relations with the EU can be categorized into two groups along the lines of divergence and convergence. The idea of differentiated integration recommends gradual convergence in selected policy areas. Transactionalism, on the other hand,

focuses on explaining existing nature of relations through pragmatic objectives and material gains. De-europeanization, on the other hand, pay more attention to divergence similar to arguments put forth by authors who analyse normative and strategic contestation. In the remainder of this section, these four strands of research will be explained in detail.

The model of differentiated integration was primarily developed to explain the attitudes of EU member states towards the deepening of the EU. The internal dynamics of the EU and the problems created by the veto power of member states in decision-making mechanisms have differentiated member states' views and contributions to European integration (de Neve, 2007; Schimmelfennig et al., 2015; Stubb, 1996). Especially, among the former Eastern Bloc countries, there are member states that oppose further deepening of the EU. For this reason, in the literature on European integration, discussions on different stages of deepening through further cooperation of the willing members are based on the framework of differentiated integration.

The concept of differentiated integration is also used for countries outside the EU (Schimmelfennig, 2014). The inclusion of non-EU countries Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein in the Schengen system and the accession of Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein to the European internal market through the European Economic Area are the best examples of the differentiated integration of third countries with the EU (The Group of Twelve, 2023: 33; Ülgen, 2012:6).

The concept of differentiated integration also has been used to explain the current shape of Türkiye-EU relations and to determine the future direction. This concept emphasizes Türkiye's gradual integration into the EU over time, whose result is believed to be full membership (Cihangir-Tetik and Müftüler-Baç, 2018; Cinaciara and Szymański, 2022; Müftüler-Baç, 2017; Turhan, 2018). Even though full membership is envisaged by these scholars, the membership will be a flexible one, which indicates that while Türkiye will be integrated with the EU in some policy areas, in some others it will be excluded from EU policies and institutions and will not be able to take part in decision-making mechanisms for a long period of time. The goal of modernizing the Customs Union is a typical example of differentiated integration. Türkiye has sought to integrate with the EU in policy areas concerning commerce, industry, competition and property rights without becoming a full member since the CU was established in 1996. Türkiye argues that the CU is incompatible with current demands of global trade, and that the content of free trade agreements signed by the EU with third countries is more comprehensive than the CU, and therefore the content and mechanisms of the CU should be modernized. Steps towards the modernization of the CU would further integrate Türkiye economically with the EU.

Some studies see the continuation of relations between Türkiye and the EU in a more pragmatic way despite the existing problems and relations is seen as a result of transactionalism (Bashirov and Yilmaz, 2020). The main argument is that as long as

both the EU and Türkiye need each other, this relationship will persist and both parties will try to maximize their economic and strategic gains. These studies underline the importance of economic relations between Türkiye and the EU, the EU's need for Türkiye in terms of controlling migrants, security of energy supply and geostrategic issues, and the fact that both sides have recently been satisfied with such a transactional relationship since both parties are reluctant to deepen relations further. While such a relationship seems to benefit the EU, apparently EU's transformative power over Türkiye, has been diminished, because the transactional perspective have reduced Turkish-EU relations into a narrow focus on one or two important issues such as migration and energy security. Therefore, from the perspective of transactionalism, it would not be wrong to say that the EU's relations with Türkiye have taken the form of relations with third countries plus the CU.

Alongside the recent literature on differentiated integration and perspectives highlighting transactionalism, there is a burgeoning literature that has contended that Türkiye has recently moved away from European policies and values since the de-Europeanization of Turkish politics became much more visible (Aydın-Düzgüt, 2016; Aydın-Düzgüt and Kaliber, 2016; Bodur-Ün and Arıkan, 2022; Kaliber, 2013; Saatçioğlu, 2016; Yılmaz, 2016). De-Europeanization can be defined as Türkiye's political and social divergence from Europe on issues and areas where it had converged and aligned with Europe earlier. For instance, studies on the rule of law and women's rights highlighted that Türkiye drifted away from Europe despite the fact that Europeanization had occurred in these policy domains in the initial years of accession negotiation (Bodur-Ün and Arıkan, 2022; Saatçioğlu, 2016). Hence, de-Europeanization indicates the reversal of the Europeanization process through the adoption of new policies in contradiction with the European ones (Copeland, 2016:1126). Studies on Türkiye's de-Europeanization have also stressed that the EU's influence on Türkiye weakened significantly as a result of which the EU has turned into an ordinary international institution without any political impact on either Turkish politics or Turkish society (Aydın-Düzgüt and Kaliber, 2016:5). Works on de-Europeanization focus on the social, economic and legal impacts of the widening political gap between Türkiye and the EU. These studies generally conclude that the EU has not only lost its transformative power over Türkiye, but has also become a negative reference point whose practices and rhetoric are "resist[ed], reverse[d], and counter[ed]" by Turkish politicians (Cebeci, 2016:125), and an "Other", that is used by Turkish politicians to justify their own policy preferences before the Turkish public (Kaliber and Kaliber 2019).

In addition to studies on de-Europeanization, some other research has evaluated Türkiye's both normative and strategic contestation with the EU and claims that this state of confrontation and conflict has distanced Türkiye from the EU (Aydın-Düzgüt and Noutcheva, 2022; Dandashly and Noutcheva, 2022). While the EU primarily expects candidate states to enhance harmonization with EU policies, Türkiye's attitude of criticizing and even opposing EU policies is considered incompatible with accession negotiations. Aydın-Düzgüt and Noutcheva (2022:1816) distinguish normative contestation from utilitarian/pragmatic concerns as the former is based on

ethical/political and moral concerns. The authors further assert that Türkiye contests EU's normative power and international actorness in a manner akin to Russia's efforts to undermine and contest the EU's normative order (Aydın-Düzgüt and Noutcheva, 2022:1829). For instance, European politicians have stated that Türkiye's non-participation in the sanctions imposed by the EU on Russia in the wake of the Ukraine-Russia war and its position as a mediator is unacceptable to the EU due to Türkiye's status as both a NATO member and a candidate state (European Commission, 2023b:126). However, some recent studies stress that Türkiye's non-participation in EU sanctions and criticism of EU policies would not necessarily result in a political divergence. In a recent study on Türkiye's proactive contestation, it has been argued that Türkiye's criticism of EU policies would be supportive for the EU to establish a widely accepted normative order as long as both sides are open to learning from each other and accommodating their concerns (Renda et al., 2023). Similarly, Thomas Diez also underlines that the EU should "find common ground" to cooperate with other countries instead of imposing its own rules and values (Diez, 2021:13).

The literature on Europeanization has shed light on the tensions and contradictions between the EU's normative and geopolitical interests in its relations with Türkiye and their implications for the EU's aspiration to become a global actor. While the Europeanization framework provides a useful lens through which to understand the EU's complex and multifaceted impact on domestic politics in Türkiye, it is important to acknowledge that relations are also shaped by conjectural factors such as external shocks and the changing nature of the international system. Because of these reasons, current relations are naturally imbued with the competition and cooperation at the same time. The next section will answer the question of how to manage the coexisting competing and cooperative aspects of Türkiye-EU relations through the lens of coopetition.

3.ON COOPETITION

In this section, the concept of coopetition, which is defined as both competition and cooperation at the same time, will be explained, and how it can be adapted to Türkiye-EU relations will be discussed. Coopetition is a concept used in the discipline of business administration to explain the cooperative approach of companies while being in competition with each other. Companies compete with each other to maximize their profits. However, in order to do so, they need to research and develop technological innovations and invest in infrastructure. Developing a new product that is not yet on the market requires not only research and development activities but also the creation of demand and new markets for that particular product. On the other hand, some companies may also consider reducing their costs by making joint infrastructure investments together. In such cases, companies should prioritize cooperation. They need to act together before they compete.

In their book on the concept of cooptation, Nalebuff and Bradenburger (1996) use the concept to explain situations where cooperation and competition coexist in different business models. The concept of cooptation is defined as “a paradoxical relationship between two or more actors in which there is simultaneous cooperative and competitive interaction” (Bengtsson and Kock, 2014:182). The main objective of inter-firm cooperation is to create and expand new markets. While cooperation is motivated by these common goals, competition comes to the fore to obtain more share from the expanding or newly emerging market (Ritala, 2012:308-309). Ritala (2012:308) also highlights that cooptation works properly in “knowledge-intensive sectors” rather than the manufacturing sector. Companies in cooptation can work together in research and development and infrastructure investments in order to improve productivity, expand the market size, create new markets, access raw materials, use resources more efficiently, and reduce risks (Walley, 2007:12). During their cooperation, companies may compete to increase their market share, have the largest share of the newly established market, and reduce their future risks and costs. Bengtsson and Kock (2000) emphasize that both the existence of conflicting interests and the openness of both parties to cooperation are important elements of cooptation.

The main difference between cooptation and other types of cooperation, such as alliances and partnerships, is that both cooperation and competition occur at the same time. Yet, the specific areas of cooperation and competition may vary depending on the needs. For instance, a competitive relationship arises when two rival companies collaborate on the production of certain products, yet continue to compete in other areas. Similarly, they may cooperate on resource access, yet compete in resource utilization, or collaborate on infrastructure investments and research and development activities. After the introduction of a new product, both companies will possibly compete in the marketing of the product and obtaining a bigger market share than the other company.

Chin, Chan and Lam (2008:439), in their research, propose a typology of cooptation models based on the level of competition and cooperation. Table 1 illustrates four modes of competition along high- and low-competition as well as high- and low-cooperation. If there is neither competition nor cooperation between two countries, both parties are defined as monopolers in their own domains. In cases where both cooperation and competition are low, there is either no interaction between the two parties or one actor dominates the other. When cooperation is high and competition is low, both parties can form a partnership or even an alliance. Because partnership emphasizes enhancing cooperation while reducing competition it differs from cooptative relationship. Conversely, cooptation stresses the simultaneous management of competition and cooperation. Cooptation emerges if both cooperation and competition are high among different actors. In the mode of cooptative relationship both parties learn from each other. While learning is limited in a purely competitive relationship because mutual interaction is constrained and usually hostile, opportunities for learning and self-improvement are much more widespread in a cooptative relationship.

Table 1. Different Modes of Coopetition

	High Cooperation	Low Cooperation
High Competition	Coopetitor (Adapter)	Rival (Contender)
Low Competition	Strategic Partner (Ally)	Hegemon (Monoplayer)

Source: Adapted from Chin et al., 2008:439.

Several factors may impact the successful implementation of coopetition. These factors are management leadership, long-term commitment, organizational learning, mutual trust, knowledge and risk-sharing, functioning communication channels, and mechanisms of conflict management (Chin et al., 2008:441-445). According to Chin, Chan and Lam’s research on coopetition among Hong Kong-based industries, management leadership, development of trust, resource allocation, vision and mission, common goals, and policy and strategy are the most important factors for a successful coopetition (2008:448).

Coopetition can occur at three different levels, namely macro, meso and micro (Tidström and Rajala, 2016:36). At the macro level, coopetition exists within a network of relationships with several other companies in the market. Coopetition at this level is mainly affected by market characteristics and behaviours of other companies. At the meso level, coopetition between two companies arises from their organizational similarities and differences. At the micro level, coopetition emerges among individuals such as managers, middle managers and other employees.

Both external and internal factors shape competition at different levels. External factors consist of business relations with other companies, access to resources, good relations with the public sector, and access to accurate information about the market. On the other hand, the company’s structure, organizational culture, internal leadership, efficient use of company resources, and adaptation to technological innovations are considered internal factors, which determine the need for coopetition (Osarenkhoe, 2010:204).

Coopetition among states at the macro level can manifest in two different ways: First, states work together within international organizations while competing to have their preferred international norms adopted. Alternatively, states may form alternative international organizations while advocating for similar international norms. Coopetition at the meso level refers to collaboration in specific policy areas between certain institutions of states, while there might be competition in different policy domains between other institutions. Lastly, at the micro level, coopetition implies maintaining cooperation at the societal level despite competition among leaders’ political ambitions, or vice versa. Similar to managing coopetition among companies, coopetition among states also depends on external factors such as the characteristics of the international system and relations with third countries since coopetition does not occur in isolation. Besides, internal factors such as leadership, political culture, resource allocation and conflict settlement mechanisms influence the competition-cooperation dynamic between states in international politics.

Drawing on the literature on coopeitition, the next section will shed light on the areas of competition and cooperation between Türkiye and the EU, and the ways of implementing a coopeititive relationship between the two will be discussed.

4.POTENTIAL COOPETITION AREAS IN TÜRKİYE-EU RELATIONS

In the reports published by EU institutions on Türkiye, improving the relationship between Türkiye and the EU, expanding cooperation to different areas and increasing dialogue are emphasized. Nacho Sánchez Amor, a member of the European Parliament, prepared a report on Türkiye in July 2023, stating that Türkiye is an important NATO ally and that it is an important partner strategically in both energy security and regional security issues. Therefore, it was emphasized that existing relations with Türkiye should be based on the principles of dialogue, mutual respect and trust, and have a long-term vision (European Parliament, 2023:16). In the rest of the report, Sanchez talks about a parallel strategic partnership perspective that will not constitute an alternative to Türkiye’s full membership. In this way, he claims that Türkiye-EU relations will become more dynamic, collaborative, and strategic (European Parliament, 2023:16). In the first decade of the 2000s, during Angela Merkel’s Chancellorship and Nicolas Sarkozy’s Presidency, concepts such as privileged partnership or strategic partnership were uttered to express a similar approach. Sanchez’s report, on the other hand, maintained the goal of full membership, but requested the establishment of a parallel relation. This relationship was not described as an alternative, but it was emphasized that it should be given priority.

Following the Sanchez report, the report of EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell also emphasized the importance of Türkiye-EU relations and stressed the use of dialogue and cooperation opportunities to foster relations. According to the report, “The EU clearly has a strategic interest to develop such a relationship with Türkiye in all possible areas, based on trust and a culture of consensus” (European Commission, 2023d:14). Borrell asserted that the relationship has a high potential to be realized (European Commission, 2023d:15-16). The report also recommends reviving the cooperation in the fields of economy, energy and transportation, which was suspended in 2019. In order to increase the dialogue, convening of the High-Level Political Dialogue is recommended, too. The Commission also urges the member states to review the mandate given to the Commission to begin talks for the modernization of the Customs Union. In addition to updating the CU, Borrell’s report highlighted the contributions of European investments to Turkish economic development. Immigration and visa liberalization are also key issues highlighted in the report. Notably, the report underscores the importance of maintaining EU-Turkish cooperation on immigration.

In line with the guidance of the 2021 European Council, the Commission held high-level dialogues with Türkiye on various issues: climate (September 2021 and April 2022), health (November 2021), migration and security (October 2021 and November 2023), agriculture (May 2022) and science, research, technology and

innovation (November 2022). Additionally, the counter-terrorism dialogue was held in November 2021, and the EU-Türkiye Political Dialogue at the level of senior officials was held on May 31, 2022. The report highlights the importance of holding high-level dialogues on economic, energy, and transportation issues (European Commission, 2023d: 8). Among its recommendations is granting Türkiye access to EU databases on technical legislation, provided that Türkiye meets the necessary conditions (European Commission, 2023d:15).

The main criticism of Borrell's report is its omission of any reference to Türkiye's full EU membership. Two primary reasons must be highlighted: First, Türkiye's declining democracy score, particularly in the areas of fundamental rights and the rule of law; and second, the veto imposed by the Republic of Cyprus, which blocks the opening of certain chapters. Despite these challenges, Borrell took a stance in favour of deepening relations with Türkiye.

The common point of the reports prepared by Sanchez and Borrell is to revitalize and deepen relations despite the stagnant course of full membership negotiations. While Sánchez proposed establishing a relationship parallel to full membership, Borrell emphasized the strategic dimension of EU-Türkiye relations and outlined a plan to foster cooperation in this context. According to the European Commission's enlargement strategy document Türkiye, as a candidate state, remains a key partner for the EU in areas of mutual interest, including trade, migration, counterterrorism, public health, climate change, energy, transportation, and regional security (European Commission, 2023a:7). Ultimately, all these reports have underscored Türkiye's role as an indispensable neighbour and partner for the EU in critical domains such as trade, immigration, transportation, energy supply, and regional security.

Trade is one of the primary areas of cooperation between Türkiye and the EU. With the entry into force of the Customs Union in 1996, Türkiye has aligned itself with the EU's *acquis* concerning customs, trade, industrial policy, and competition policy. Almost 30 years have passed since the agreement regarding Türkiye's involvement in the CU. Today's circumstances necessitate the updating of the CU for several reasons. Firstly, its scope should be expanded and agricultural products, public tenders, and service sectors should be included in the CU. Secondly, modern free trade agreements signed by the EU with third countries are much more comprehensive than the CU with Türkiye. Lastly, one of the most important problems of the CU is that its decision-making and dispute-settlement mechanisms have become dysfunctional (Nas, 2018:50-51). Türkiye should be consulted and allowed to raise its concerns in these areas, as has been stressed many times. For some, the modernized CU would result in a privileged partnership between Türkiye and the EU (Altay, 2018). With the modernization of the CU, cooperation opportunities between Türkiye and Europe will expand and the competitiveness of Turkish companies will be supported.

In addition to the Customs Union, Türkiye has also participated in educational and scientific research programs such as Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020. Many students and researchers have benefited from these programs. The revival of student exchange, which decreased with the COVID-19 pandemic, is important for the new generations on both sides to get to know each other. Additionally, Türkiye participates in the activities of the European Environment Agency and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction. Türkiye has shown interest in continuing to participate in these programs within the scope of the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework and has recently requested to participate in the Creative Europe program (European Commission, 2024a). Thus, Türkiye has close relations with the EU in the fields of education, youth, culture, science and environment, and the fight against drugs. Another area of cooperation has emerged in the field of civil protection. Türkiye has been participating in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism since 2016. In case of fires and earthquakes in Türkiye, this mechanism was activated upon Türkiye's request, and aid teams from the EU took part in rescue operations in Türkiye. In addition to civil initiatives, Türkiye has also expressed its request to be included in the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) and the European Defence Fund, which are EU defence initiatives.

Participation in Union programs and agencies is an important element where Türkiye's integration into EU policies and instruments aligns with mutual interest. However, Türkiye's real demand is to participate in decision-making mechanisms and thus have more say and influence. What makes us think that meeting Türkiye's demand may be possible for some programs is that the Commissioner responsible for enlargement, Olivér Várhelyi, emphasized that there should be new mechanisms to facilitate the participation of Western Balkan countries at the ministerial level in all areas they are involved in. It was particularly underlined that countries in the Western Balkans should, for example, participate in discussions on Horizon 2020 (Stanicek, 2020:3). A similar approach can be implemented in relations with Türkiye.

Recently, with the announcement of the Green Deal by Ursula von der Leyen in 2019, green transformation, critical minerals and advanced technological developments have come to the fore in the areas of cooperation and competition between Türkiye and Europe. The Green Deal includes what the EU should do within the scope of its goal of neutralizing carbon emissions by 2050. Achieving the targets set by the Green Deal is a long-term objective of the EU. The EU, thus, aims to lead research and development activities in green technologies, allocate resources for green transformation and encourage investments. The main goal of the Green Deal is to ensure green transformation in Europe. The Commission's priorities include "clean hydrogen, fuel cells and other alternative fuels, energy storage, and carbon capture, storage and utilisation" (European Commission, 2019:8). In order to achieve these, the EU aims to "develop the first commercial applications of breakthrough technologies in key sectors by 2030" (European Commission, 2019:8). In addition, the EU needs to cooperate with other countries to reduce carbon emissions. Türkiye has also shown its interest and political will to benefit from the

EU's Green Deal by ratifying the Paris Climate Agreement in 2021. On the other hand, green transformation includes opportunities for Turkish industrialists to find funds from the EU to invest in green technologies. However, Türkiye's cooperation in this field can transform its industry and energy consumption and make its industry more competitive. The adoption of green technologies may create an opportunity for Turkish industrialists to compete with European counterparts in terms of acquiring a larger share in the green economy.

Critical minerals and rare elements are of great importance for the digital and green transformations. These are materials that the European Union considers essential for economic development. Without these materials, it would not be possible to disseminate green energy, reduce carbon emissions, and achieve digital transformation through the use of artificial intelligence. The Commission underlined the need to disseminate ground-breaking technologies in the use of critical raw materials. For this, it was emphasized that research and development activities should be given priority and large-scale collaborations should be made with reliable partners (European Commission, 2023c). In this field, Türkiye stands out as an important partner due to its proximity to Europe and its ownership of critical mineral reserves such as antimony, boron, and feldspar (European Commission, 2024b). While both parties must collaborate to extract and process minerals, the potential for competition in the areas and products that utilize them must be highlighted, too.

Another area where cooperation and competition can occur simultaneously is the defence industry and defence policies. According to the Strategic Compass of the European Union, which was announced to the public in 2022, innovation in defence technology must be increased so that the EU can enhance its strategic autonomy. Committing to more and better investments in technological innovation for defence and creating a new Defence Innovation Centre within the European Defence Agency are some of the goals set out in the document (Council of the European Union, 2022:4). Strategic Compass also includes eliminating critical capability deficiencies and utilizing new technologies with naval unmanned platforms, future air combat and air defence systems, space-based ground observation, communication and navigation platforms, large land platforms, especially main battle tanks, and related logistics systems (Council of the European Union, 2022:12). It also aims to develop certain strategic capabilities such as cyber platforms (Council of the European Union, 2022:34-35). The Strategic Compass emphasized the importance of partnerships and collaborations to achieve these goals. In this context, three main areas of cooperation were highlighted: dialogue and cooperation on security and defence issues; participation of third countries in military and civilian EU missions and operations, and supporting the capacity building of partners (Council of the European Union, 2022:54-60). As for the partnership with Türkiye, Strategic Compass indicates that Türkiye is "a contributor to CSDP missions and operations" (Council of the European Union, 2022:56). Yet, for the development of a mutually beneficial partnership, according to the EU, Türkiye should be more willing to address EU concerns and seek cooperation rather than conflict. This one-sided approach toward cooperation does not correspond to the geopolitical realities. The

EU must also contribute to the building of trust, the establishment of a new institutional setting for knowledge and risk-sharing with Türkiye in the field of security, defence and military technology.

The potential for cooperation with Türkiye is high within the scope of these goals and cooperation areas. The EU upholds technological sovereignty and therefore underlines that developments in the defence industry should be specific to Europe (Council of the European Union, 2022:43). Despite this, Türkiye's development of its own defence industry in this field and cooperation with the EU in the case of research and development will benefit both parties. Naturally, the success of this cooperation depends on mutual trust, the protection of information confidentiality in research and development activities, and the non-use of co-produced military products against one another. However, it should not be ignored that the knowledge gained as a result of this cooperation will enable Türkiye to develop different weapon technologies and sell them to different countries, and that it is possible to compete with EU countries in this respect. When acting within the framework of co-competition both cooperation and competition in the field of defence industry have the potential to benefit both parties. Ultimately, co-competition in the development and use of military technologies is inevitable. Cooperation in research and manufacturing is necessary to achieve economies of scale and reduce research and development costs in the arms industry. At the same time, competition is unavoidable due to geostrategic realities and geopolitical aspirations of both parties.

CONCLUSION

Not only factors such as the re-emergence of great power politics, the decline in faith in the rules-based international system, but also the ascent of non-Western international institutions like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS have enabled Türkiye to realign its focus on non-Western countries. Türkiye's move away from EU standards, rising Islamophobia and Turcophobia across Europe have also led to a myriad of political tensions between Türkiye and the EU. Given the current situation, this study has focused on opportunities of cooperation while ways of managing competition. In this study, it has been argued that relations for both parties should be reconstructed around the idea of co-competition in the fields of trade, green transformation, defence industry, and the development of technologies.

As support for Türkiye's membership in the EU has diminished and the reform process has stalled, more pragmatic preferences have taken precedence over democratic issues. Thus, more pragmatic concerns have prevailed over long-term concerns, which resulted in the replacement of conditionality-based relationship with a transactional approach. For Türkiye, digital and green transformations and trade-related issues have become more prevalent while for the EU migration problem and protecting EU's economic interests have dominated EU's approach towards Türkiye. As a result, bilateral issues have either become more technical or more pragmatic. Diversification of agendas is deemed necessary to keep Türkiye-EU

relations on track, to receive funds from the EU, and to modernize economic relations between the two parties, especially as the EU transitions to a greener and smarter economy. Diversification is also preferred because it creates a positive agenda for both parties to work on collaboratively bypassing more controversial issues. These issues are of vital importance for the Turkish economy and industry, as Turkish industrialists need to adapt to digital and green transformations.

Deepening relations and exploring cooperation opportunities in different fields are of great importance for the future of Türkiye-EU relations. In this way, it will be possible to go beyond a transactional and pragmatic relationship. However, expecting Türkiye to act in harmony with the EU while the prospect of full membership remains distant seems unrealistic. Therefore, while cooperation in many areas is essential, both parties should accept that competition in some other policy domains is natural. This study's application of the concept of coopetition enables the management of relations within a framework that recognizes the coexistence of cooperation and competition. This framework encourages both parties to be open to learning from each other, thereby maximizing mutual benefits.

What distinguishes the coopetition model from differentiated integration and transactional relations, then? Three of them share a pragmatic approach. The transactional approach is the most pragmatic one that solely emphasizes sustenance of relations for transactional purposes. In contrast, the differentiated integration model stresses the importance of deepening relations in selected policy areas within the current EU structures. Furthermore, the transactional approach offers a stance that may not generate integrative cooperation. Cooperation arises from pragmatic needs rather than strategic concerns. Contrary to the transactional approach, differentiated integration provides a more profound level of cooperation, albeit limited to preferred areas. Additionally, differentiated integration is constrained by the legal and institutional framework prevalent within the EU. Unless the legal and institutional frameworks are transformed, deepening relations even in selected policy areas is hard to achieve. The coopetition model argues that the cooperative relationship acknowledges both cooperation and competition. The coopetition model contrasts with a transactional approach and differentiated integration since the latter two emphasize cooperation only. The coopetition model, on the other hand, requires a more complex and comprehensive institutional framework in which not only cooperation but also competition should be managed simultaneously so that competition does not devolve into destructive rivalry. Lastly, the coopetition model shares similarities with strategic and normative contestation, as both recognize the competitive and cooperative aspects of the relationship. Nonetheless, the coopetition model rests upon the premise that contestation and competition do not naturally lead to divergence and de-Europeanization.

If Türkiye and the EU aim to produce economic and political added value, develop and disseminate new technologies, and compete effectively with third countries, then they need to cooperate in strategic areas, infrastructure investments, and the production of new high-tech products. However, the reality of competition between

the two parties cannot be ignored. As long as both parties are willing to listen and learn from each other, both cooperation and competition may remain manageable.

FUTURE OF TÜRKİYE-EU RELATIONS: COOPERATION, COMPETITION AND COOPETITION

1.GİRİŞ

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı Türkiye-AB ilişkilerini yeni dünya düzeni, teknolojik gelişmeler ve bölgesel çatışmalar çerçevesinde tekrardan gözden geçirmek ve rekaberlik (coopetition) kavramı üzerinden analiz ederek farklı alanlarda Türkiye ile AB'nin iş birliği olasılıklarını tartışmaya açmaktır. Bu çalışmanın temel argümanı Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinde rekaberlik unsurunun ön plana çıkmasıyla yeşil ekonomi, dijital dönüşüm ve jeopolitik/jeoekonomik alanlarda ilerici iş birliği ve yapıcı rekabetin ilişkilere dinamizm katabileceğidir.

2.TÜRKİYE-AB İLİŞKİLERİ ÜZERİNE LİTERATÜREDE SON DURUM

Katılım müzakerelerin durağan hali, Türkiye'nin tam üyeliğini Brüksel'de kimsenin konuşmak istemediği bir konu haline dönüştürmüştür. Bu dönemde Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinde müzakerelerin yerini göçmenler, vize serbestisi, gümrük birliğinin modernleşmesi, Doğu Akdeniz'deki münhasır ekonomik bölge üzerinden çıkan problemlerle, Ukrayna-Rusya Savaşı ve İsrail-Hamas çatışmasında Türkiye ve AB'nin almış olduğu farklı siyasi pozisyonlar ve bunların yarattığı ikili gerilimler öne çıkan konulardır. Bu tarihsel çerçevede Türkiye-AB ilişkileri üzerine yapılan çalışmalar değerlendirilmiştir. Türkiye'nin Avrupalılaşması üzerine olan yazın üç ayrı kategoride ele alınmıştır. Bunların ilki Avrupalılaşmanın sonuçları ve bunu etkileyen faktörleri ele alan çalışmaları içermektedir. Daha sonraki süreçte Avrupalılaşma yerine transaksiyonel ilişkiler, Avrupalılaşma ve farklılaştırılmış bütünleşme kavramları üzerine yapılan çalışmalar yazına hakim hale gelmiştir. Bu çalışmaların farkları incelenmiştir ve Türkiye-AB ilişkileri üzerine söyledikleri tartışılmıştır.

3.REKABERLİK ÜZERİNE

Bu bölümde rekaberlik kavramı işletme disiplinindeki kullanımı üzerinden ele alınmış ve Türkiye-AB ilişkilerine adapte edilmiştir. Rekaberlik kavramı birbirleriyle rekabet halinde olan şirketlerin iş birliğine yaklaşımlarını açıklamak için ortaya atılmış işletme disiplinince kullanılan bir kavramdır. Şirketler kârlarını en üst düzeye çıkarmak için birbirleriyle rekabet halindedir. Ancak bunu yapabilmek için teknolojik yenilikleri araştırıp geliştirmeleri ve altyapı yatırımları yapmaları gerekmektedir. Henüz piyasada olmayan yeni bir ürünün geliştirilmesi sadece araştırma geliştirme faaliyetlerini değil bu ürün için talep ve yeni pazarlar

yaratılmasını da gerektirmektedir. Rekaberliğin diğer iş birliği türlerinden temel farkı iş birliğinin de rekabetin de aynı anda gerçekleşmesidir. İş birliği ve rekabet içinde olunan alanlar farklılaşabilmektedir. İki rakip firmanın başka güçlü firmaya karşı iş birliği yapması, bazı ürünlerin üretilmesinde iş birliği yapılması ancak diğer bazı ürünlerde rekabetin devam etmesi, kaynaklara erişimde iş birliği yapılması ancak kaynakların kullanımında rekabet içinde olunması veya altyapı yatırımları ve araştırma-geliştirme faaliyetlerinde iş birliği içinde olunurken ortaya çıkan ürünün pazarlanması konusunda rekabet halinde olunması mümkündür. Uluslararası ilişkilerde şirketler yerine devletler arasında rekabet mevcuttur. Devletler, temelde askeri alanda rekabet ederler. Amaçları daha fazla askeri güç elde etmektir. Ancak günümüz dünyasında devletlerin de ekonomik çıkarlar, kültürel kaygılar ve statü talebiyle hareket ettiğini söylemek yanlış olmayacaktır. Bu açıdan devletler arası ilişkiler çok daha karmaşık bir hal almıştır. Bu yüzden devletler de şirketler gibi hem rekabet hem iş birliği içinde olabilmektedirler.

4. TÜRKİYE-AB İLİŞKİLERİNDE OLASI REKABERLİK ALANLARI

Bu kısımda rekaberlik kavramsal çerçevesi üzerinden Türkiye-AB ilişkilerindeki potansiyel iş birliği ve çatışma alanları değerlendirilmiştir. Türkiye ile AB arasında iş birliğinin olduğu alanların başında gümrükler ve ticaret gelmektedir. Gümrük Birliği'nin 1996 tarihinde yürürlüğe girmesiyle Türkiye, AB'nin gümrükler, ticaret, sanayi politikası ve rekabet politikasını ilgilendiren müktesebatına uyum sağlamıştır. Günümüz şartlarında Gümrük Birliği'nin modernleştirilmesi gerekmektedir. Gümrük Birliği'nin modernleştirilmesi adına kapsamının genişletilmesi, tarımsal ürünler, kamu ihaleleri, hizmetler sektörünün de Gümrük Birliği'ne dahil edilmesi gerektiği düşünülmektedir. Ayrıca Gümrük Birliği'nin en önemli sorunlarından biri de karar alma ve sorun çözme mekanizmalarının işlevsizleşmiş olmasıdır. Bu mekanizmaların iyileştirilmesi gerekmektedir. Türkiye'nin bu alanlarda sadece danışılan değil söz hakkı da olan bir ülke olması gerektiği bir çok kez vurgulanmıştır. Gümrük Birliği modernleşmesi sayesinde iş birliği olanakları artacak ve Türk şirketlerin rekabet gücüne de katkı sağlanmış olacaktır.

Gümrük Birliği'ne ek olarak Türkiye Erasmus+ ve Ufuk 2020 gibi eğitim ve bilimsel araştırma programlarına da katılmıştır. Bu programlardan bir çok öğrenci ve araştırmacı istifade etmişlerdir. COVID-19 pandemisiyle azalan öğrenci değişiminin tekrar canlanması iki taraftaki yeni nesillerin birbirlerini tanımaları açısından önem arz etmektedir. Bunlara ek olarak, Türkiye, Avrupa Çevre Ajansı ve Avrupa Uyuşturucu ve Uyuşturucu Bağımlılığını İzleme Merkezi'nin faaliyetlerinde yer almaktadır. Türkiye, 2021-2027 Çok Yıllı Mali Çerçeve kapsamında bu programlara ve diğer AB program ve Ajanslarına katılmaya devam etmek için ilgi göstermiş ve yakın zamanda Yaratıcı Avrupa (Creative Europe) programına katılmayı talep etmiştir. Türkiye'nin eğitim, gençlik, kültür, bilim ve çevre ile uyuşturucuyla mücadele alanlarında AB ile yakın ilişkiler içinde olduğunu göstermektedir. Sivil koruma konusunda, Türkiye, 2016'dan bu yana Birlik Sivil Koruma Mekanizmasına (EU Civil Protection Mechanism) katılmaktadır. Türkiye'de çıkan yangınlarda ve yaşanan depremlerde Türkiye'nin talebi doğrultusunda bu mekanizma devreye

girmiş ve AB'den yardım ekipleri Türkiye'de görev almıştır. Sivil girişimlerin yanında Türkiye, AB savunma girişimlerinden olan Daimi Yapılandırılmış İş birliği (PESCO) ve Avrupa Savunma Fonu (European Defence Fund)'na dâhil olma talebini de dile getirmiştir.

Birlik programlarına ve ajanslarına katılım, Türkiye'nin AB politikalarına ve araçlarına entegrasyonunun karşılıklı çıkarlara uygun olduğu durumlarda önemli bir unsurdur. İş birliği ve ortaklık alanları içinde yeşil dönüşüm, kritik madenler, teknolojik yenilikler ön plana çıkmaktadır. Özellikle iklim ve yeşil dönüşüm konularında Türkiye ile AB'nin iş birliği alanları olduğu kadar rekabet alanları da mevcuttur. Avrupa Birliği tarafında Türkiye'nin üyeliğine ilişkin destek azaldıkça ve reform süreci durakladıkça, daha pragmatik tercihler demokratik konuların önüne geçmiştir. Türkiye tarafında ise dijital ve yeşil dönüşüm ile ticaretle ilgili konular daha yaygın hale gelmiştir. Sonuç olarak konular daha teknik bir hal almıştır. Konuların çeşitlenmesi, Türkiye-AB ilişkilerini gündemde tutmak, AB'den hibe almak ve özellikle AB daha yeşil ve akıllı bir ekonomiye geçerken iki taraf arasındaki ekonomik ilişkileri modernize etmek için gerekli görülmektedir. Konuların çeşitlendirilmesi, her iki taraf için de üzerinde iş birliği yapılabilecek olumlu bir gündem yarattığı için tercih edilmektedir. Türk sanayicilerinin dijital ve yeşil dönüşüme uyum sağlaması gerektiğinden, bu konular Türk ekonomisi ve sanayisi için de hayati önem taşımaktadır.

SONUÇ

Bu çalışmada genel hatlarıyla açıklanan rekabet kavramı sayesinde literatüre yapılmak istenen katkı hem iş birliği hem de rekabetin bir arada olduğu, bunun her iki tarafça kabullenildiği ve buradan azami ölçüde fayda sağlandığı bir çerçeve içinde ilişkilerin yürütülmesi ve yorumlanması gerektiğidir. Türkiye ve AB, eğer bir değer üretmek istiyorlarsa, yeni bir teknoloji üretmek ve bunu yaygınlaştırmak istiyorlarsa, diğer ülkelerin rekabet gücüyle mücadele etmek istiyorlarsa o zaman stratejik alanlarda, altyapı yatırımlarında ve yeni yüksek teknoloji ürünleri yaratmak konusunda iş birliği yapmaları gerekmektedir. Ancak bunun yanında her iki tarafın da rekabet içinde olduğu alanların varlığı göz ardı edilmemelidir. Her iki taraf da birbirini dinlemeye ve birbirinden öğrenmeye açık olduğu sürece hem iş birliği hem de rekabet sürdürülebilir olacaktır.

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KATKI ORANI / CONTRIBUTION RATE	AÇIKLAMA / EXPLANATION	KATKIDA BULUNANLAR / CONTRIBUTORS
Fikir veya Kavram / <i>Idea or Notion</i>	Araştırma hipotezini veya fikrini oluşturmak / <i>Form the research hypothesis or idea</i>	Kadri Kaan RENDA
Tasarım / <i>Design</i>	Yöntemi, ölçeği ve deseni tasarlamak / <i>Designing method, scale and pattern</i>	Kadri Kaan RENDA
Veri Toplama ve İşleme / <i>Data Collecting and Processing</i>	Verileri toplamak, düzenlenmek ve raporlamak / <i>Collecting, organizing and reporting data</i>	Kadri Kaan RENDA
Tartışma ve Yorum / <i>Discussion and Interpretation</i>	Bulguların değerlendirilmesinde ve sonuçlandırılmasında sorumluluk almak / <i>Taking responsibility in evaluating and finalizing the findings</i>	Kadri Kaan RENDA
Literatür Taraması / <i>Literature Review</i>	Çalışma için gerekli literatürü taramak / <i>Review the literature required for the study</i>	Kadri Kaan RENDA