

## FRANCE'S VIEW OF TURKEY-EU RELATIONS IN THE PERIOD OF FRANÇOIS HOLLANDE: GO WHERE FAST

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### ABSTRACT

Turkey and France, which have very deeply rooted relations, are two important partners in political, economic and cultural fields. Relations between these two important states have been badly wounded when Nicolas Sarkozy served as President. Sarkozy, who tried to influence the public to win the presidential elections, used foreign policy for this. Sarkozy, who is in promises of Turkey and Turkey-EU relations, has seriously damaged the relations between the two sides. On May 6, 2012, the presidential elections were lost and Sarkozy was left to the candidate of the Socialist Party, François Hollande. With Hollande's election as President, Turkey has waited for both Turkey-France relations and Turkey-EU relations to improve and develop. However, Turkey did not reach its own expected result. Even if Hollande became a member of the Socialist Party, he does not want to Turkey's EU membership a lot. It is seen that the intergovernmental act in the EU is effective and influences the decisions.

**Keywords:** François Hollande, Nicolas Sarkozy, France, Turkey, European Union.

## FRANÇOIS HOLLANDE DÖNEMİNDE FRANSA'NIN TÜRKiYE-AB İLiŞKİLERİNE BAKIŞI: BİR ARPA BOYU YOL GITMEK

### ÖZET

Oldukça köklü ilişkileri bulunan Türkiye ve Fransa, siyasi, ekonomik ve kültürel alanlarda iki önemli ortaktır. Bu önemli iki devletin arasındaki ilişkiler Nicolas Sarkozy'nin Cumhurbaşkanı olarak görev yaptığı dönemde büyük yara almıştır. Cumhurbaşkanlığı seçimlerini kazanmak için kamuoyunu etkilemeye çalışan Sarkozy bunun için dış politikayı kullanmıştır. Türkiye ve Türkiye-AB ilişkilerine ilişkin vaatlerde bulunan Sarkozy iki taraf arasındaki ilişkilere ciddi biçimde zarar vermeyi başarmıştır. 6 Mayıs 2012'de yapılan Cumhurbaşkanlığı seçimlerini kaybeden Sarkozy yerini Sosyalist Parti'nin adayı François Hollande'a bırakmıştır. Hollande'ın Cumhurbaşkanı seçilmesiyle birlikte Türkiye, hem Türkiye-Fransa ilişkilerinin hem de Türkiye-AB ilişkilerinin iyileşeceğini ve gelişeceğini beklemişlerdir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Hollande, Sarkozy, Fransa, Türkiye, Avrupa Birliği

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Turkey-France relations have quite a long history. Turkey and one of the first European states established diplomatic relations with France, relations continued in later on. Turkey-France relations took in a good way because of some reasons such as Turkey's being a member of the Council of Europe in 1949, being a member of NATO and applying to the EEC in 1959 (Chenal, 2011: 1-20).

In the process, France has also been differences of opinion about Turkey. Overall, especially if left Greece during the Cold War in France have backed the right-wing support Turkey. While Leftists Turkey is seeing it as a military dictatorship, rightists have focused on the military and Turkey's importance as a strategic partner.

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But there are two exceptions to this view of the right-wingers. The first of these was the 1974 Cyprus Operation. French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing, has supported the United Nations Security Council in Greece and Turkey adopted as invaders. Second, in their attacks against Turkish diplomats in France of the Armenian and the Kurdish movement has been to exhibit an attitude against Turkey (Ormeci, 2018). While these developments had a negative impact on Turkish-French relations, relations with investment and tourism exploded in 1984 and onwards, and relations began to develop again. Indeed, in 1987 by Turkey's application for full membership of the Community Francois Mitterrand, moreover, although Turkey's full EU membership and openly support the Kurdish issue for reasons such as human rights violations, was welcomed (Dedeoğlu, 2018).

After the end of the Cold War, tourism has revived and this has further improved relations. In addition, in 1992, Mitterrand visited Turkey. (Pope, 2018). In the mid-1990s, the political structure in France changed and relations became tense again. The reason for this was that in 1998 the right wingers defined the Armenian Genocide. Thereupon Turkey, France all economic, military, political and diplomatic bonds cut has threatened to withdraw its ambassador to France. Although President Chirac tries to correct relations, this development has caused the relations to be damaged for a while. In 2000, that Turkey's EU full membership in the EU and wishing de France Jacques Chirac has supported full membership in both 2004 and 2002 (Pope, 2018).

Then, Nicolas Sarkozy as the elected President opposed to Turkey's relations with the EU. Especially considering that cannot be provided merely for the immigrants in France live according to the French culture and values in case of integration of Turkey to become a full EU member cannot be achieved within the EU and the end of the EU will end the future. Sarkozy these reasons to Turkey a negative against Turks and Muslims attitude. France Sarkozy's negative view of Turkey to the EU has been seen as one of the most significant barriers to becoming a full member (Akçay, 2016: 25).

Francois Hollande, the candidate of the Socialist Party, was elected as the new President of France by taking 51.6% of the votes in the second round, which was 28.63% of the votes in the first round on 22 April 2012 in the presidential elections in France (Thomasine, 2018). After becoming President Hollande, it is expected that France will develop its relations with Turkey has been pleased with his election as President Hollande (Cicioğlu, 2014: 308-309). Hollande visited to Turkey 27-28 January 2014 and it is thought that it might entered a new era of relations between the two sides under Hollande. Because France has paid a visit to Turkey for the first time in the Presidential level 22 years later (Pineau, 2018).

On the other hand, along with that of President Francois Hollande, it was expected to heal relations between Turkey and the EU again. (Öner, 2017). Because, after Hollande came to the task, he has provided the opening of five chapters in 2015 which is Economic and Monetary Policy 17 and 22 chapters. Within these developments to occur in both Turkey-France relations has led to rise to the forefront of the opinion that there will be improvements in both Turkey-EU relations (Clése, 2004:

55). But, despite a number of positive developments in relations, neither side has achieved the desired result.

In this sense, this study why Hollande era in the relations of Turkey-EU relations will provide complete development process by considering the assessment that could not reach the desired result. For this, during his tenure as President Hollande in the study also experienced referring to Turkey-France relations will focus on positive developments in bilateral relations and issues causing congestion. However Hollande in the period in question by utilizing the rhetoric on Turkey-EU relations will attempt to perform a valued within the framework of the approach developed by Stanley Hoffmann intergovernmentalism. In this context, newspaper and internet resources such as primary sources and secondary sources such as books and articles will be used in the study.

## **2. TURKEY-FRANCE RELATIONS UNDER FRANÇOIS HOLLANDE**

The Socialist Party because of their positive attitudes and behavior related to Turkey and Turkey-EU relations, Francois Hollande, President of France is delighted to be (Paul, 2012: 1-9). At least Turkey hoped that the problems experienced during the Sarkozy era can be disappeared within President Hollande. (Örmeci, 2016: 154).

After Holande became French President in 2012, Turkish President Abdullah Gul and Hollande have come together and meeting in the NATO Summit in Chicago. Gul asked to Hollande why the relationship was asking him to this point although not an issue between Turkey and France and emphasized on the need to launch a new era. Gul said that unlike Sarkozy, Hollande knows Turkey better than Sarkozy and Turkey closely followed the economy therefore Hollande has expressed begun to take important steps to give more positive decisions. (Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2018). In the period June 21, 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Hollande met with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, they agreed on the need to open a new page between the two sides and Erdogan have been invited to Hollande to Turkey.

However, on July 5, 2012, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu went to France where he met with French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı, 2017). During the meeting, Fabius indicates that Turkey's EU full membership is required reliable in unstable regions of Turkey, it has stated that it is a crucial and indispensable partners. Davutoglu voiced that diplomatic relations with France are very important, but emphasized the need to focus on common concerns over domestic political concerns, despite differences between the two sides. For this reason, he believes that a new era should begin between the two sides (İktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı, 2017a). After such favorable comments from France, Recep Tayyip Erdogan explained that the measures applied for the denial of the Armenian Genocide against France were virtually abolished in the meeting following the meeting with French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius. (İktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı, 2017b: 42-48).

Besides, Turkey has opened in the fourth consulate in Bordeaux in France, it has decided to open the fifth Consulate in Nantes (IPFS, 2018). In December 2013, French and Turkish MPs held a meeting which was established by the Turkey-based

entrepreneurs France-Turkey Business Association (FEDIF- Fédération des Entrepreneurs Franco-turcs) and Paris Intercultural Dialogue Platform (PDP - Plateforme de polar Paris la Dialogue interculturel) participated intensively. This situation has been seen as a positive step for the two sides to begin to regain their relations (IFRI, 2018).

The similar reaction of the two sides to the dictatorial regimes during the Arab Spring period further increased the rapprochement between the two sides (Seibert, 2017). But, failure to achieve expected success in Egypt and Syria, were blocking the front of a strong cooperation between the civil war the emergence of, and after, especially in the emergence of luminosity Turkey Assad rejim as a priority as well as threats to the priority order as a threat perceptions of France hears both sides (Göksel, 2012: 1-13).

Hollande's visit to Turkey was 27 to 28 January 2014, has developed the relations (Göksel, 2012: 1-13). For the first time in 22 years, a visit was made at the Presidential level and 13 agreements were signed, such as energy, transport, customs and agriculture (Çavuşoğlu, 2016: 26). Nevertheless, relations between the two sides have gained a new dimension with the Joint Political Declaration on the Formation of a Strategic Framework for Cooperation signed. With this paper, it is aimed to focus on the possibilities of new business association and partnership by taking into account all aspects of relations between the two countries, political and economic issues. On October 10, 2014, the 2014-2016 Action Plan for the implementation of the Joint Declaration between the two sides was signed (Çapanoğlu and Servantie, 2015: 6). Under this plan, the relations between Turkey and France began in some areas such as economic, political, social and cultural For example, the construction of the Nuclear Power Plant in Sinop was given to the Japanese-French company (France Diplomatie, 2017).

After this visit, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan made a visit to France in October 2014. In the negotiations held here, both parties to the fight against terrorism and the Syrian issue acted in a common attitude. During the talks, Hollande, as saying that the development of Turkey-EU relations, as been noted that there may be new collaborations such as the space, aerospace, defense, security, agriculture, food, and on issues nuclear energy between the two sides (Goksel, 2012b).

However, when examined economic relations between Turkey and France under Hollande is seen that Turkey is France's export market outside the EU. Looking at the 2016 data, France is the sixth largest country among the countries exporting and importing (TUIK, 2017). However, in recent years despite a significant increase in the rate of falling GDP per capita in Turkey sermeye of Turkey in the French market has fallen from 6% to 3%. Besides, the third place in the list of countries investing in Turkey has dropped to seventh place in France. In this hypothetical Sarkozy period, the tensions experienced are quite common (OECD, 2016).

Despite all these, however, there were disputes in some issues One of these disputes relates to the Armenian case. During the Sarkozy period, the Law of Denial of the Armenian Genocide was issued. It was stopped by the French Senate in 2006 with

Turkey's pressure in this law. In 2011, it came to the agenda again and passed both the National Assembly and the Senate of France. However, the Constitutional Council was abolished in 2012 due to the fact that the law violates the freedom of expression contained in Article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 34 of the Constitution, and the relations between the two parties were prevented (Council of Europe, 2010). The French Constitutional Council, aiming to make the Armenian events similar to the Holocaust, rejected the views presented in 2016 for the cancellation of the law, which defines the 1915 Events as a genocide, but pointed out the differences between the Armenian allegations and the Holocaust, the historical event can not be evaluated in the same context. This decision showed that Hollande does not want to spoil relations with Turkey than Sarkozy is seen as the biggest problem related to the Armenian incident between the two sides. Because France in 1915 Events, Turkey was seen as pro-Armenian stance by the public and the authorities to defend Armenians in the events (Goksel, 2012a). So Hollande does not only develop relations between Turkey and France have tried to gain an economic advantage but also not to lose the Armenian lobby in domestic politics, Armenian issue remains one of the major problems between Turkey and France.

The second among the disagreements between the two sides was the Kurdish Question. France has long been a country that supports the separative Kurdish terrorist organizations. This has been criticized by Recep Tayyip Erdogan. However, France wanted to make radical and significant reforms for the Kurds from Turkey also made reforms that Turkey has seen insufficient. Suggesting that the rule of law issues in Turkey's inadequate Hollande, criticized the independent deputy Aysel Tughuk sentenced to 14.5 years in prison and said that Turkey should solve problems in such cases (Paul, 2012:6). France has requested reforming the Kurds from Turkey. Because Hollande, France's important not to lose potential votes, which the Kurds also had been in demand from Turkey and the EU accession process has used it.

The third issue that caused the dispute between the two parties for the lack of democracy blames in Turkey. These shortcoming blames are also coming from other EU states. Since 2001, after the reforms carried out in Turkey in 2013 after living in the Gezi Park incidents decreased although the criticisms made in these areas has taken place on the agenda once again. The negative developments in particular freedom of the press in Turkey leads to controversy and criticism on democracy in Turkey (Talbot, 2015). Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey has stated that all activities performed by them biased views. According to him, this is the product of prejudice to the events of the Gezipark. However, Erdogan stated that MIT trucks had been restricted and that the freedom of the press was restricted due to the security of the state. Despite all this, Erdoğan said you would do if you have a problem is that it works in Turkey's parliamentary system and the people want elections.

### **3. FRANCE'S PERSPECTIVE TO TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP UNDER FRANÇOIS HOLLANDE**

Socialist Party in France, gives support to Turkey's EU full membership process (Monceau, 2009: 24). According to the Socialist party if Turkey fulfill the Copenhagen Criteria, Turkey will become a full member of the EU (Lagro, 2008: 60). Those who

oppose Turkey's EU membership is usually the difficulty of the reform process, since the end of the negotiations open, its proximity to Turkey's conflict zones, economic and political developments, even if it has not yet supporting Turkey's full membership talking about is not ready for full membership by being a member of the Turkey-EU ' think that they will take a strong step towards becoming a global power by showing themselves more in the Near East (Dalar, 2009: 90).

Francois Hollande hasn't leaned towards to Turkey's full EU membership like Sarkozy (Darnis, 2012: 8) Hollande over the political life, has been reluctant to Turkey's accession to the EU (Berlemont, 2017). However, he has a more moderate attitude than his predecessors (Miş, Ensaroğlu and Ulutaş, 2014: 162). During his visit to Turkey in 2014, he indicated that EU helped to Turkey to improve, thanks to reforms made by Turkey. Moreover, Hollande has said France would not take any action to stop the negotiations with Turkey (Balcer, Sadowski and Paczynski, 2007).

After Hollande became a President, France has removed the blockade for five intervals in the Turkey-EU negotiation process. In addition, chapters 17 (Economic and Monetary Policy) and 22 (Coordination of Regional Policy and Structural Instruments) were opened. blocked at intervals of five it has been removed (Uslu, 2017). In addition, chapters 17 (Economic and Monetary Policy) and 22 (Coordination of Regional Policy and Structural Instruments) were opened. These moves by France as an indicator of moderate attitude towards Turkey is contemplated, Hollande opening of Turkey's EU that this title does not mean that automatically considered for full membership has stated. According to him Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide is to be an EU member, to solve the Cyprus problem, the separation of powers, the rule of law, impartiality of the judiciary and must make progress on human rights and minority rights (Göksele, 2012: 2).

Despite all this, the opening of the blocked chapters has been hailed as a positive step in terms of the continuation of negotiations between the EU and Turkey. (Ulutaş, Acun, Akkaya, et all, 2013: 25). Hollande stressed that negotiation process between Turkey and EU should continue in good faith. On the other hand, Hollande said the public's attitude could be negative because of Turkey's EU full member and has hinted that there could be something to make the case. This leads to Hollande by Turkey's EU membership process, Turkey has perceived to be ineffective and reluctant support (Vinocur, 2017). So Turkey's EU membership process open end for Hollande, but the result is certain. Because the surveys carried out in France, 83% of the French public is opposed to Turkey's EU membership. Therefore, Turkey expects the French government's support to Turkey. (Knaus and Altfuldisch, 2013: 55-56).

In this sense a change in Turkey's EU membership is seen not experienced in France. Hollande, Sarkozy is in a far away as Turkey's perspective of EU membership and emphasizes that the final decision will be given by the people (Chassany, 2017). Unlike Sarkozy, even if Hollande supported to the continuation of negotiations between the EU and Turkey, it does not seem to change an insight into the integration process in France.

It is possible to make sense by looking at the developments in the near future. It is known that signed on as of 16 December 2013, the scope of the Readmission Agreement and the Syrian crisis, The European Union has promised to provide additional support to Turkey that continues to remain the case in Turkey of Syrian refugees in Turkey. It has also promised Turkey if it meets the criteria of 72 Turkish citizens will be able to transition to EU countries without visas. However, President Hollande has stressed that the EU in exchange for stopping the flow of refugees to Turkish citizens in EU member states should not make any concessions to Turkey regarding the lifting of the visa. (Ulgen, 2016: 1). According to him, these concessions should take place after the completion of 72 criteria set by Turkey (Archick, 2017).

However, the death penalty in Turkey after the coup attempt occurred in Turkey on July 15, 2016 the case came up again and pass through the parliament of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan made statements about whether the death penalty was confirmed (Cagaptay and Jeffrey, 2016). The EU stated that the competent institutions and member states of the EU membership negotiation process, if it occurs again on the agenda of the death penalty in Turkey would suffer serious harm. For example, French President Hollande said that any referendum on the removal of the death penalty is contrary to EU values and commitments (Masters and Fox, 2017). According to him, no compromise on human rights will be made and a state that wants to become a full member of the EU can not put the death penalty into domestic law at all (Human Right Watch, 2016).

It has established 51.4% “Yes” vote on April 16, 2017 in Turkey, a result of the plebiscite held for the constitutional change. German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated that Turkey should be expected with the results of the referendum on the continuation of relations between the European Union and Turkey. French President Francois Hollande said in a statement after the referendum, the results showed that the division and instability in Turkey and said that the Turkish government should be seeking in a respectful dialogue with all political and social groups (Gotev, 2017). However, with Turkey after the referendum disrupted relations between the EU and Turkey began to experience problems with the leaders of the EU member states. For example, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan considered the German Chancellor Angela Merkel's call as a psychological guilt after the referendum. Erdogan was not allowed to make a speech to the citizens of Turkey origin in Germany and Fetullah Gulen Terrorist Organization in Germany has also criticized Merkel for their failure to deliver. François Hollande is there upon laws of the countries concerned of activities related to Turkey's referendum on the German side has determined that the parties to be bound by highlighting can be done as long as (House of Common Library, 2018).

## **CONCLUSION**

Regarding Turkey-EU relations in attitude by the governments draw a path in domestic politics. In this context, according to its internal policy and public opinion in France is developing a policy towards Turkey's relations with the EU. Socialist leader Francois Hollande have exhibited a more moderate approach on Turkey's EU membership process, according to Sarkozy, though, presents a policy outside of the usual policy of the Socialist Party for their stance on domestic politics.

Turkey's EU full membership in the EU is opposed by some groups, they have power in this state become a troubled EU accession process has brought to Turkey. For example, Nicolas Sarkozy, in his presidential campaign and in his election campaigns, indicated that negative opinions regarding Turkey's EU membership process to get the support and win elections stated the Armenian lobby, the most organized lobby in France, has been the most popular in the European Union since the early 2000s. In this case, period was adversely affected both Turkey-France relations and Turkey-EU relations. In the elections in May 2012, within Francois Hollande, Socialist Party candidate, became President of France Turkey hoped that would change the relationship both sides and Turkey-EU relations. Therefore, Turkey was thought that Hollande found significant support in order to obtain a result that accelerate the EU accession talks with becoming the president. But when referred this point, Turkey could not get the results it wants from Turkey process. As an elected president from Socialist Party Hollande has supported the event for providing the necessary criteria to be members of Turkey's EU membership. In a sense Hollande has act respecting the EU's institutional logic and stated that this situation does not mean that France will be the defender of Turkey's EU membership.

Besides Hollande has developed a policy on Turkey both in domestic politics and in foreign policy to avoid losing votes. For example, Hollande supported to Armenian lobby in the presidential election campaign process to get the if Turkey should recognize the Armenian Genocide and recognize the damage has argued that the EU accession process.

About 80% of French opinion also exhibits a negative attitude towards the Muslims and Turkey's EU membership. This is the case with the right-wing parties, which have been influential since the early 2000s. Because these anti-immigrant policies are supported by the public and are increased to affects day by day. Hollande did not ignore the politics of extreme right-wing parties, even if they were not in harsh discourses like Sarkozy to lose the influence of domestic politics and vote.

Compared to other leaders in France Hollande has followed a more moderate path in its relations with Turkey. Hollande wanted to improve its relations with Turkey and trying to take steps to do so. For example, the Declaration of Inquisition, which was issued during the Sarkozy period, was canceled. It also cancelled the blockade of the five topics relating to EU accession process of Turkey. Moreover, Hollande who said the completion of the negotiation process fully automatically registered member, said he would make the final decision on this issue would give the French public deficit Turkey's EU membership process, but the end result has become a process. However, the completion of the negotiation process, providing full member but automatically, said French public opinion would give the final decision on this issue clear, but the end result of Turkey's EU membership process has become a process. In this sense, the period Although Hollande developments both in Turkey-France in France, Turkey-EU relations were also changed perception towards Turkey and barley could go a long way in this process.



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