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A Renewed (2015) European Neighbourhood Policy and Turkey: Scenarios for security dimension

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Abstract

In a contemporary World where national cultures, economies and borders are blurred, political polarizations are disappeared, liberal tendencies get stronger, technology is developed incomprehensibly, and the route of social life is mainly determined by the global processes, the effort of setting up regional integration is still alive. The initial goal of the European Neighbourhood Policy launched in 2004 was helping the European Union to support and foster stability, security and prosperity in the countries closest to its borders. Since then, this document has been revised twice: in 2011 and 2015. Due to the inefficiency of its former versions and increased tensions in the neighbouring countries and the European Union itself, the most recent Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy puts a clear emphasis on the security dimension. This article aims to outline possible scenarios of the European Union and Turkey collaboration in maintenance of security in the European Union's neighbourhood.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *European Union, European enlargement, Turkey, European Neighbourhood Policy, security*

Yenilenmiş (2015) Avrupa Komşuluk Politikası ve Türkiye: Güvenlik Boyutuyla İlgili Senaryolar

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Öz

Ulusal kültürlerin, ekonomilerin ve sınırların bulanık olduğu çağdaş bir dünyada, politik kutuplaşmalar ortadan kalkmakta, liberal eğilimler daha da güçlenmektedir, teknoloji anlaşılmaz bir şekilde geliştirilmektedir ve sosyal yaşam rotası esas olarak küresel süreçler tarafından belirlenmektedir. 2004 yılında başlatılan Avrupa Komşuluk Politikası'nın ilk hedefi, Avrupa Birliği'ne sınırlarına en yakın ülkelerde istikrar, güvenlik ve refahı destekleme ve teşvik etme konusunda yardım etmekti. O zamandan bu yana, 2011 ve 2015'te bu belge iki kez gözden geçirilmişti:. Önceki versiyonlarının etkisiz olması ve komşu ülkelerdeki ve Avrupa Birliği'nin kendisindeki artan gerilimler nedeniyle, Avrupa Komşuluk Politikası'nın en yeni Gözden Geçirmesi, güvenlik boyutu eklenerek yenilenmiştir. Bu makalede, Avrupa Birliği'nin komşuluk bölgesindeki güvenliğin sağlanmasında Avrupa Birliği ve Türkiye işbirliğinin olası senaryoları özetlenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Avrupa Birliği, Avrupa Genişlemesi, Tuürkiye, Avrupa Komşuluk Politikası, Güvenlik*

Introduction

In a contemporary World where national cultures, economies and borders are blurred, political polarizations are disappeared, liberal tendencies get stronger, technology is developed incomprehensibly, and the route of social life is mainly determined by global processes, the effort of setting up regional integration is still alive. In this context the integration of the European Union (hereinafter – EU) might be considered as an exceptional phenomenon, based on economy and targeted political goals. Moreover, this integration creates its own law and rules as well as sets up separate legislative, executive and judicial organs that could have a priority on respective laws and organs of its Member States.

In fact, the EU is a child of political elite of Western Europe. In all cases the primary goal of the creation of the EU was the political one, which is being implemented mainly through economic means (Castells, 2006, p. 326). In 1951 six European countries – Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Italy, France, and West Germany – signed the Treaty establishing European Coal and Steel Community and in 1957 the Treaties establishing the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community. Since then, the new supranational entity – the EU – which emergence is based on the mentioned treaties, is still moving towards two interrelated directions: enlargement and integration. Currently the EU unites 28 Member States and has signed a number of association agreements with a few countries. Some of those countries aim to become the Member States of this supranational entity in the future (Bieliauskaitė et al., 2016, p. 379). Turkey is one of them.

Turkey firstly applied to membership process in 1959 and still has been waiting for membership. In 1963, European Economic Community (former structure and name of the EU) and Turkey signed *Association Agreement*. After that, *Additional Protocol* signed in 1970 formed the road map of *Customs Union Agreement* and after this agreement signed in December 31, 1995; Customs Union has been carried out. In 1999, Turkey gained the status of candidate state and started the negotiations in 2005, which are still in progress. During this period political changes occurred both in Turkey and the EU produce new problem areas to be solved.

The EU was born and developed during the period of peace, which

has been the longest in Europe. Permanent efforts of peaceful activities, avoidance of conflicts and inner transformative power become the innate features of the EU (Bieliauskaitė et al., 2016, p. 378). However, in addition to the most recent economic and financial crisis, the low controllability of current geopolitical and migratory challenges has cast doubt on the prospect of the successful development of the EU as a social community (Bieliauskaitė & Šlapkauskas, 2016, p. 42). In order to manage constantly emerging internal and external tensions, *inter alia* the sustainable and effective neighbourhood policy is highly important.

The European Neighbourhood Policy (hereafter – ENP) was launched in 2004, to help the EU support and foster stability, security and prosperity in the countries closest to its borders (Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy, 2015, p. 2). Since then ENP has been revised twice: in 2011 and 2015. Due to the inefficiency of the former ENP versions and increased tensions in the neighbouring countries and the EU itself, the most recent *Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy* (European Commission, High Representative 2015) puts a clear emphasis on the security dimension.

Taking into account position of the president of the United States in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (hereinafter – NATO) annual summit towards defence policy (e.g. Diamond, 2018) as well as his most recent ambiguous approach towards predatory foreign policy of Russia (e.g. Holibov & Bilyk, 2018) and other issues (e.g. Collinson, 2018), the role of Turkey in the maintenance of security of the EU might become of crucial importance.

The object of this research is the EU and Turkey relationship in the context of the security dimension of the revised ENP. The goal of this paper is to outline possible scenarios of the EU and Turkey collaboration in maintenance of security in the EU's (Southern) neighbourhood.

Although there are numerous researches that explore the EU and Turkey relationship and Turkey's possible impact on the implementation of ENP as well as the European Common Security and Defense Policy, this paper focuses on the interpretation of the most recent events (since 2015) and proposes possible scenarios of their further development in the context of the revised ENP security dimension.

1. European Neighbourhood Policy 2015: Focus on security

In 2004 ten countries – Northern Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Slovenia – become the EU Member States. This was the most numerous enlargement in the history of the development of this supranational entity which changed its borders and prompted the EU to search for a new policy in order to maintain its security and help to create positive relationship with its neighbouring countries.

In this context, in March 2003, European Commission prepared a document named *Wider Europe — Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*. By this report, it was aimed at constructing *Wider Europe Mission Power*. In May 12, 2004, *European Neighbourhood Policy* as the basic document for the current policy has been released. Designed for the EU's neighbours with no perspective of full membership, the ENP, according to Eriş (2007) can be summarized as a strategy formulated by the EU to promote a generous integration scheme motivating the participants to embark upon reforms with long-term consequences for the EU's own security and stability, and at the same time stave off new accessions (p. 203).

ENP governs the EU's relations with 16 of the EU's closest Eastern (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and Southern (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia) neighbours. (European Commission, 2016).

Since 2004 ENP has been revised twice. The first revision happened in 2011 as a reaction to substantial changes near the EU's borders (a series of state coups in North Africa and the Middle East, the Russo-Georgian conflict, protracted transformations in Ukraine and Moldova, tense relations with Belarus). External threats to the EU once again have become major stimuli for reforming the ENP: by the beginning of 2015, it was clear that instead of democratisation, the Arab Spring, which had been met with such enthusiasm in the previous communication of 2011, generated more instability, armed conflicts, and an uncontrolled flow of migrants into the European countries; Russia began counteracting the integration of the post-Soviet states with the EU in an increasingly aggressive manner and turned into a source of threats (including a military

one) instead of being a strategic partner (Melyantsou, 2015; Cianciara, 2017, p. 58).

Therefore, although the typically perceived objectives of the ENP are stability, security and democracy (Cianciara, 2017, p. 49), the ENP 2015 is especially focused on the security dimension (see more Cianciara, 2017, p. 53-55) which includes work with the partners on security sector reform, conflict prevention, counter-terrorism and anti-radicalisation policies, in full compliance with international human rights law. Safe and legal mobility and tackling irregular migration, human trafficking and smuggling are also priorities (European Commission, High Representative 2015, p. 3).

2. Turkey's membership in process: *Status quo* and possible scenarios

Turkey differs in terms of political and economic structures, cultural affairs and geostrategic position from members of the EU and the candidate countries. These aspects make Turkey a unique country that makes efforts to become a full member of the EU. Uniqueness of Turkey seems to play an important role in its integration process and to shape the future level of its integration to the EU.

Turkey's part in European integration started with its application for associate membership in the European Economic Community (EEC) in September 1959. After challenging period, Turkey became a candidate country for the EU membership following the Helsinki European Council of December 1999. At the December 2004 summit in Brussels, the European Union agreed to open access negotiations with Turkey. On October 3, 2005, the European Union formally initiated accession negotiations with Turkey (Demir, 2012, p. 4). The progress is assessed inter alia according to Copenhagen Criteria (1993) which define whether a country is eligible to join the EU. These criteria require that a state has the institutions to preserve democratic governance, rule of law and human rights, respect and protect minorities (political criteria), has a functioning market economy (economic criteria), and accepts the obligations and intent of the EU (legislative criteria).

Even if in respect of principles of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, respect to fundamental freedoms, etc. Turkey could be a model

country for the region, its efforts are still not enough for becoming a part of the EU. According to the Reports of European Commission in 2016 and in 2018 (hereinafter – Report), after the attempted coup of 15 July 2016 and the state of emergency declared in the wake of it, the democracy, civil society as well as preservation of fundamental human rights and freedoms came under increasing pressure in Turkey.

Turkey has fulfilled important reforms required for the implementation of the Copenhagen economic criteria during the process Customs Union (since 1996) and improved its commercial and economic ties with the EU countries. With the advent of the Union of Customs, Turkey issued about 50% of its foreign trade volume with the EU countries. Moreover, the number of the European companies investing in Turkey has considerably increased. Still, as a country identified among "low middle-income group", Turkey has low Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) (65) in compare to EU countries (EU-28 = 100) (Eurostat, 1 June 2018). As a direct result of the recent tensions in the Middle East, Turkey is also faced by increased inflows of refuges from Syria and other surrounding counters, putting pressure on its economy.

Turkey continues aligning with the EU *acquis* and is well advanced in the areas of company law, trans-European networks and science and research. It has achieved a good level of preparation in the areas of free movement of goods, intellectual property law, financial services, enterprise and industrial policy, consumer and health protection, customs union and financial control. However, Turkey is only moderately prepared on public procurement, statistics and transport policy. It has only reached some level of preparation on environment and climate change. Also, there have been instances of backsliding regarding several key aspects in the areas of information society, social policy and employment and external relations. Thus, according to the Report (2018) in all areas, more attention needs to be given to enforce legislation whilst many areas require further significant progress to achieve legislative alignment with the EU *acquis*.

Based on the current EU policies and its doctrine, main issues for years to come could be identified:

- Due to the compound effect posed by its cultural and religious characteristics, population, multitude, geographical location, security and military potential, Turkey's inclusion in the EU is different from the previous ones and accordingly this challenges its integration. However, when Turkey's political and economic relationships with the neighbourhood countries are considered, expectations related with the policies of the EU targeting this region are supposed to increase accordingly.

- Turkey is going through a process of radical change including the swiftly transforming mentality. The sustenance of the current process of transformation is of the public's interest. Turkey tries to consolidate secular character, democracy, homage to human rights and basic liberty as well as the rule of law in addition to most of the Muslim population.

- The economic impact of the country's integration to the EU can be positive but relatively slight due to both the magnitude of its economy and the degree of economic integration already available before the its inclusion. Most of the expectations are dependent on Turkey's economic progresses soon. However, as a low or mediocre income country, like the last enlargement, Turkey's inclusion in the EU may increase the regional and economic differences and cause a great challenge for accommodation policy.

- With their population over three million, the Turkish make up the third largest national group residing legally in the EU. There are various studies with different projections of expected additional migration rates after the inclusion of Turkey. To prevent serious fluctuations in the labor market of the EU, affordable temporary adjudications and a permanent protective measure could be foreseen. Accordingly, demographical dynamics in Turkey could contribute to the problem of aging people in the EU.

- Agriculture is one of the most economically and socially important sectors in Turkey and so it may demand special care. In order that the country can establish the favourable conditions required for the successful integration to the common agricultural policy, Turkey can be expected to boost its diligence on constant rural development and improve the administrative capacity.

However, Turkey's integration to this policy requires quite a long time.

Even though current situation of Turkey in EU becomes blurred and the adventure of Turkey to become an EU member gets in a difficult position, some legislative and procedural steps taken since 1959 show that Turkey is progressing towards the target (see more: Key findings of the 2018 Report on Turkey, 2018). Even though the process is prolonged as has never been for the other members and Turkey is subjected to some extra conditions by a new diplomatic language, these developments and difficulties automatically accept the fact that Turkey is a European country.

Conclusion

Within the scope of this article, it is basically proposed to develop three main scenarios about further the EU and Turkey relationship and possible impact of Turkey on the implementation of ENP security dimension:

Scenario-I: Pursuing the membership process in current position;

Scenario-II: Completing negotiation process and receiving Turkey to the EU;

Scenario-III: Termination of negotiations.

Impact of Turkey on the implementation of ENP security dimension: Current situation and perspectives

According to D. Melyantsou (2015), the latest ENP revision has been inspired by three key fundamental problems including the attempt to establish vertical relationship which contradicts the very idea of partnership and to apply the same principles of cooperation to different countries as well as the lack of clear understanding of "mutually shared" values and "joint ownership".

Meanwhile Turkey's foreign policy is often described as a policy of "zero problems with neighbors", seeks to ensure the region's stability, prosperity and security, for the benefit of all (Füle, 2011, p. 19-20). E.g. among Turkey's major successes have been Bosnia, Syria, and Iraq (See more: Tocci, 2012). In addition, as former Commissioner responsible for

Enlargement and ENP Š. Füle has observed, as a country negotiating its accession to the EU, Turkey shares EU's policy goals and values. Being a close partner of the EU and an important regional player, Turkey can develop important synergies with the EU and thus to create mutual benefits through their interactions with the neighbourhood they have in common (Füle, 2011, p. 18).

The EU has recognized that its own security is highly dependent on the stability and security of its near neighbourhood. Being at the crossroads of the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East as well as at the door of Central Asia, Turkey holds a strategic position which gives it a role of major importance: on the one hand, as a pole of stability in this particularly troubled region, and on the other, as a moderating element in the many regional conflicts at its doorstep (Desai, 2005: 379 in Demir, 2012, p. 10). Turkey has been a member of the Organization of Islamic Conference since 1960. The EU has acknowledged that "Dealing with problems that are more distant and more foreign requires better understanding and communication." Turkey could provide the vital link between the EU and the Muslim world (Desai, 2005: 383 in Demir, 2012, p. 10). On the other hand, even though Turkey's central geopolitical position in Eurasian continent brings Turkey in a crucial position, this position also directs EU members to re-consider security problems, which are possibly originated from Turkey.

Further, Turkey's current and possible role in the implementation of ENP is explored within security dimension and following above mentioned scenarios.

Scenario I: Current situation and ENP security dimension

As it was mentioned above, Turkey's ambition to be a part of the European family has a long history and includes both security and political aspects that stem from the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923. Turkey thought its security could be best maintained by being with the Western side as the new European security architecture was designed after World War II. Alarmed by Soviet demands for territory and control over the Turkish Straits in June 1945, Turkey saw that its security interests would be best served by being firmly anchored in the West. It joined

NATO in 1952 in order to protect its territorial integrity and national sovereignty within a collective security organization. Turkey took on a major role to achieve security and stability in NATO's Southern European border (Demir, 2012, p. 3).

As a candidate country Turkey is not subjected to the *ENP* but to the *Barcelona Process* (1995) which also address *Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED)*. However, this policy is important for Turkey and its relationship with the EU as well, because some of the targeted countries of ENP are Turkey's neighbouring countries. In this respect, it is important to catch a consistency among "candidate Turkey's policies with its neighbours" and "*ENP*'s targets". Even though Turkey today does not have to burden the *ENP*'s policies because of not being a full member, it is possible to say that there will be some consequences of the relationships between EU and the countries mentioned above in terms of Turkey's position. In case of Turkey's membership, the external borders of the EU would extend towards such countries and regions as Southern Caucasians, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. Therefore, Turkey's relationships with these countries will become crucial.

Turkey's strategic location, membership in NATO, and economic relationships with Russia, increases its importance as a rising regional power, especially in the light of recent developments characterized by deteriorating relationships between the EU and Russia, where Turkey could play a constructive role. Turkey and the EU could gain through mutual cooperation based on sound economic and political interests. At the same time, Turkey should capitalize on its relationship with Russia, considering its extensive trade relationships with Russia. Turkey is in position to act as a constructive partner and bridge between the West and the East, bringing stability and prosperity in the region. It is important to strike the right balance between different interests and policies.

Another subject within the context of three scenarios is migration and its possible consequences. There is an old tradition about the migration of Turkish workers towards Europe. By their over three million population in Europe, Turks keep the third most crowded nationality that legally resides in European continent. In a long term, it is anticipated that free circulation of Turkish workers will bring an additional migration wave. At this point, it is not easy to compute the structure and level of possible

Turkish migration to Europe. Such a migration, on the other hand, would most likely to alleviate the problem of "aging Europe" by mobilizing young workforce in Europe. However, a wide-ranged and uncontrolled migration would also pose a danger in terms of labour markets in the EU region.

On 29 November 2015, Turkey and the EU agree on the activation of a Joint Action Plan aiming at ending the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU. On 7 March 2016, Turkey furthermore agreed to accept the rapid return of all migrants not in need of international protection crossing from Turkey into Greece and to take back all irregular migrants intercepted in Turkish waters. Turkey and the EU also agreed to continue stepping up measures against migrant smugglers and welcomed the establishment of the NATO activity on the Aegean Sea (see more: EU-Turkey Statement, 2016).

Turkey is a natural bridge and centre among the EU energy markets and resources in the Middle East and Caspian region. Turkey's development as an energy centre is beneficial for both itself and the EU. That is why they give the importance to maintain partnership in energy markets. As a country that both sustains negotiations with the EU and contributes to energy security of the EU, Turkey progressed on adopting its own regulations to Union's amendments. Eventually, scanning process regarding Turkey's energy regulations have been completed. In this frame, the parties decide to develop an advanced relationship on energy policies, which are core for the relations. Today, Turkey and the EU declare their determination on securing energy resources, diversifying them and creating competitive markets (see more: Joint Press Statement, 28 January 2016).

It is obvious that the full membership of Turkey will bring a new dimension (and enlargement process) to EU in terms of cultural and religious diversity and their linked structure to Turkey's population, geographical position, economic and military potential. Actually, this situation forms an important factor that obstructs the integration. If Turkey's current political and economic ties with its neighbouring countries are re-considered, EU's expectations on these regions will definitely be increased. However, according to some other views, this will form handicap.

Scenario II: Turkey as the EU member

Turkey's membership opportunities for ENP security dimension

Turkey's membership could help tackle new security challenges like illegal migration, terrorism, religious extremism and leaky borders as well as to provide the EU with new mechanisms to deal with these new risks (Baç, 2004: 36 in Demir, 2012, p. 10). At the same time Turkey's entry into the EU will shift the Union's borders to the southeast and increase the Union's range of interests in these complex regions. The main immediate threats to European security come from the Middle East, Afghanistan and Pakistan-areas adjacent to Turkey. The EUÅLs fight against the proliferation of the weapon of mass destruction, terrorism and drug trafficking will have to include Turkey diplomatic ties and experience with those problems (Pinto, 2010: 96-97 in Demir, 2012, p. 7).

According to Stanley, Turkey's contribution to the EU's soft power will be massive. It already possesses strong diplomatic links with adjacent regions and countries and has a shared culture and religion with many of these actors. If Turkey were to be established as a full member of the EU, these linkages would offer the EU new channels of dialogue and allow it to draw upon Turkish insights and understanding. The mere fact of Turkish membership would also allow the EU to portray itself as a more 'balanced' actor in its international dealings and could offer a model of democratic Islam which would serve as a benchmark for other Muslim nations that wished to modernize or reform in a similar manner. (Stanley, 2009: ii in Sertif Demir, 2012, p. 15)

In addition to Turkey's 'soft power', its 'hard power' focused upon the coercive use of military is also significant because In terms of military capacity and political will, the EU has often been accused of lacking the hard power that would allow it to become a global strategic actor (Matlary, 2007: 106-111 in Demir, 2012, p.10) and of failing to match its own commitment to take a more proactive role on the international security scene (Menon, 2009: 228 in Demir, 2012, p.10). Turkey's full membership can support and fill the gap in EU's 'hard power 'capacity. Without a strong military capacity, the EU would not be guaranteed to have a wider security role. As the second largest army in NATO, the Turkish

Army would enhance the EU's military capacity and its pivotal geography would enable the EU to expand its area of interest. Turkey's contribution to the EU's security and defense policy would bring numerous benefits through Turkey's military capabilities and the positive role it could play in its neighboring vicinity: the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Caspian area and the Middle East. Turkey's military capabilities are vital for operations in the expanded European security area (Pinto, 2010: 104 in Demir, 2012, p. 11).

Turkey's membership threats for ENP security dimension

Turkey's probable EU membership might also present some new security challenges. Turkey's location and its neighbourhood with Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Caucasians can be potential sources of instability for the EU, because of illegal immigration that passes through Turkish borders to the Western world. Also, Turkey's uneasy relations with some states in general and its neighbours in particular can be deemed as security risks for the EU. (Baç, 2000: 491 In Demir, 2012, p. 16) Especially, Turkey's geographically closeness to the Middle East, where the physical clashes are observed frequently, poses and sustains some problems for both Turkey and EU. Global EU power, which is targeted by member states, will not only be maintained in European region, but also in Caucasians, Middle-East, and Balkans. Crisis preventing operations leaded by EU, in this respect, will affect Turkey's political, economic, and military interests. Military talents and logistic position of Turkey seems as unique opportunities in terms of regional defence policies and security. Remembering the decreasing effect of member states in the Middle East will definitely carry Turkey and its army in a crucial position.

Scenario III: Termination of negotiations and its possible impact on ENP security dimension

Even if Turkey continues pursuing its membership in the EU, it is free to evaluate other options, including an option to create another union in the region, where Turkey would take a leading role. Its strategic location,

continuous economic growth, and recent developments in the region increase the importance of Turkey as a regional power.

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