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## TURKEY AND THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS

### Introduction

The possibility for enlargement of the European Union (EU, the Union) through the accession of a country as specific as Turkey has incited numerous academic discussions and debates<sup>1</sup> whose main concern is the change of the Union's character

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1 Yilmaz, Bahri. "Turkey's membership in the EU: Realistic or Merely Wishful?" *International Harvard Political Review*. January 6, 2011.

<http://hir.harvard.edu/turkey-s-membership-in-the-eu-realistic-or-merely-wishful> (available on December 12, 2013); Shakman Hurd, Elizabet. "What is driving the European Debate about Turkey?" *Insight Turkey*. Vol.12, 2010. ctp. 185-203 [http://www.academia.edu/898024/What\\_is\\_driving\\_the\\_European\\_debate\\_about\\_Turkey\\_](http://www.academia.edu/898024/What_is_driving_the_European_debate_about_Turkey_) (available on December 10, 2013)

Aksit, Sait and Cigdem Ustun. "In Search of an EU Wide Debate on Turkey". *Turkey watch: EU member states Perceptions on Turkey's Accession to the EU*. November 2009. ctp. 11-19

[http://sinan.ces.metu.edu.tr/dosya/turkey\\_watch\\_en.pdf](http://sinan.ces.metu.edu.tr/dosya/turkey_watch_en.pdf) (available on December 10, 2013)

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itself, which would occur if Turkey joins the EU. Another question to be answered is whether Turkey is part of Europe geographically and whether it would be possible to integrate the specific cultural values and beliefs of this country within those of Europe.

It is of great importance to examine the question of Turkey's accession to EU as its prospective EU membership would be mutually beneficial. On one hand, Europe needs Turkey because Turkey is the stabilization factor in the region and the connection between Europe and the Middle East whereas on the other hand, the EU accession of Turkey would expand the market where the rapidly growing Turkish economy could place its products and services. Moreover, it is important to examine this possibility because it might provide answer to the question whether the creation of a unique and integrated market and the respect of democratic principles is really the only basis of the Union enlargement or whether the EU is exclusively Christian club of countries closed to different values and beliefs.

The argument in favor of the prolongation of Turkey's Euro-integration process is that the country still has not met the EU criteria in certain areas. This paper aims to demonstrate that the accession of Turkey to the European Union does not depend solely on meeting the fundamental political, economic and legal criteria for EU membership (Copenhagen criteria) but also on additional reasons i.e. the religious, cultural and social factors that are crucial enough to postpone the integration process. The hypothesis proposed in this paper will be supported with arguments that take Samuel Huntington's concept of the "clash of civilizations" as a starting point.

The first chapter provides both the theoretical framework and the definition of the notion Euro-integration as well as a short review of the Copenhagen criteria. Also presented are the findings obtained by processing the existing data related to the efforts made by Turkey in various areas towards meeting these criteria, using the analytical method. The second chapter focuses on the remaining additional factors and reasons that prolong the Euro-integration process of Turkey. In order to consider different opinions and attitudes in favor of or against Turkey's prospective EU membership, the polemic method will be used; also presented and processed will be the statements given by official representatives of Turkey and the EU so as to examine this question by taking a multi-sided approach. The third chapter offers insight into the existing empirical data and the Eurobarometer results concerning the general public opinion among the European citizens on the prospective accession of Turkey to the European Union.

## 1. Theoretical framework for examining Turkey's Euro-integration process

This chapter presents the theoretical framework for examining the Euro-integration process of Turkey. Firstly, it examines the relevant theories related to the European integration and clarifies the concept of European integration as used for the purposes of this paper. Furthermore, it provides a short review of the Copenhagen criteria and Turkey's progress toward meeting them.

### 1.1. *Theoretical basis of European integration*

One country's European integration is predominantly considered as an economic integration which presupposes the existence of a unique market where the exchange of goods, services and products among member states is exempted from custom rights and other nontariff restrictions. Depending on the crucial actors involved in the integration process, there are several theories of European enlargement. The ongoing processes of European integration are in the focus of the theories of neo-functionalism, intergovernmentalism and of constructivism as opposed to the contemporary theories of liberal intergovernmentalism and of rational choice institutionalism.<sup>2</sup>

The theory of neo-functionalism was launched in the late 1950s and early 1960s by Ernst Haas and Leon Lindberg as a reaction to the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Economic Community.<sup>3</sup> One of its founders and one of the most influential theoreticians of neo-functionalism was Ernst Haas who defined integration as a "*process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new center, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states.*"<sup>4</sup> This broad definition implies a social process (loyalty leads to the creation of new institutions) and a political process (creation of new political institutions that will be directly and

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2 Klimovski, Savo, Tanja Karakamisheva and Renata Deskoska. "The Political System". Skopje, Prosvetno delo, 2009.

3 Niemann, Arne and Philippe C. Schmitter. "Neo-functionalism" in Wiener, Antje and Thomas Diez (eds) "Theories of European Integration". New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. p. 45-66

4 Haas B., Ernst. "The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social and Economic Forces 1950-1957". Notre-Dame University Press, July 2004. p.140

partly involved in member states' affairs).<sup>5</sup> In opposition to this definition, the theoreticians of intergovernmentalism hold view on the other side of the spectrum. They rather focus on the creation of political institutions that the member states will join, as well as on the intergovernmental cooperation.

While the theory of neo-functionalism pays particular attention to the importance of the supranational actors in the Euro-integration process, the theory of intergovernmentalism (Hoffman, Moravcsik)<sup>6</sup> assumes that the integration is predominantly led by the interests and shares of the European national states. However, both theories agree that the integration is a process. Both neo-functionalists and intergovernmentalists are more focused on the process of integration itself than on the established political system that the integration leads to.

Both constructivism (March and Olsen)<sup>7</sup> and social institutionalism emphasize the role of the common social norms and values as central factors in explaining intra-national cooperation but do fear, on the other side, of excessive loss of sovereignty. The theory of liberal intergovernmentalism (Moravcsik) distinguishes two levels in the EU decision-making process: "request for European integration on the part of domestic economic and social actors on one hand, and assuring the European integration through intergovernmental negotiations on the other hand."<sup>8</sup>

The theories of European integration are often connected to the practical decision-making process or to certain happenings within the EU. Moreover, they throw light on actual developments and decisions that are due to one country's Euro-integration process.

### ***1.2. Copenhagen criteria as a basis for EU accession and Turkey's past efforts toward their fulfillment***

The admission of a new member state in the European Union requires meeting certain prerequisites set by the Union. Namely, at the Copenhagen Summit in June 1993, the leaders of the EU member states have determined the three fundamental criteria also known as the Copenhagen crite-

5 Wiener, Anthe and Thomas Diez. "Theories of European Integration". New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. p.2

6 Moravcsik, Andrew and Frank Schimmelfenning. "Liberal Intergovernmentalism". <http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/intergovernmentalism.pdf> and Hoffman, Stanley. "The European Sisyphus, Essays on Europe 1964-1994". Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

7 March, James G., and Johan P. Olsen. "Institutional Perspectives on Political Institutions". Governance. Vol. 9, Issue 3. July 2006. p. 247-264

8 Ibid

ria that must be accepted and met by the candidate countries before their accession to the EU.<sup>9</sup> The Copenhagen criteria require that the candidate country has achieved the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for and protection of minorities; the existence of a functioning market economy; and the implementation of *acquis communautaire* (accumulated legislation, legal acts and court decisions which constitute the body of European Union law).<sup>10</sup> The EU accession process for any new member state is subject to a decision taken by the European Council regarding the (non)fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria. Once the applicant country satisfies these criteria, accession negotiations are ready to begin.

Turkey made the first step toward cooperation with the EU on September 12, 1963 when the leaders of both the European Economic Community (EEC) and Turkey<sup>11</sup> signed the association agreement, better known as the Ankara Agreement. This Agreement envisioned the creation of a Customs Union so as to strengthen both trade and economic relations between the two sides. Turkey was granted candidate status<sup>12</sup> at the Helsinki Committee held in December 1999. In the following years, from 1999 to 2004, Turkey has made great efforts to meet the Copenhagen criteria, particularly regarding the institutional stability, the rule of law and the respect for both human and minority rights.<sup>13</sup> As a result, upon the recommendation of the European Commission, the European Council has decided to open the accession negotiations with Turkey which have symbolically commenced on October 3, 2005.<sup>14</sup> Regarding the opening of the negotiation process with Turkey, the European Council report underlines that:

*“The European Council agrees with the previous conclusions on Turkey adopted at the Helsinki Committee when the country was granted candidate status. As a candidate country, Turkey is subject to the same acces-*

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9 European Commission Official Website: Enlargement, Conditions for Membership. [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/index_en.htm) (available on December 13, 2013)

10 Ibid

11 Ministry for EU Affairs Turkey - Official Website: History of EU-Turkey Relations <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=111&l=2> (available on December 3, 2013)

12 Ministry of foreign Affairs Turkey - Official Website: Turkey and EU <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/reasons-between-turkey-and-the-european-union.en.mfa> (available on December 1, 2013)

13 European Union Information Website: EU-Turkey Relations, <http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/eu-turkey-relations/article-129678> (available on December 1, 2013)

14 Presidency Conclusions of the European Council No.4. February 1, 2005, Brussels.

*sion criteria applied to any other candidate country. As a result, given the recommendation and the report of the European Commission regarding the fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria by Turkey, the accession negotiations between EU and Turkey will commence without delay.*"<sup>15</sup>

The negotiations are divided into 35 chapters and cover 35 different areas. However, certain chapters are closed and are not subject to negotiations due to external factors. Namely, five chapters have been blocked by France (e.g. economic and monetary policy), eight cannot be opened due to non-ratification of the additional Protocol (e.g. free transit of goods), six other chapters are not subject to negotiations due to the blockade imposed by the Greek Cypriot administration; the negotiations on three other chapters will start once certain technical criteria<sup>16</sup> are met.

Despite the progress made with respect to certain chapters, the EU accession process of Turkey develops in a slow and complicated manner. The EU official attitude regarding the dynamics of Turkey's Euro-integration process is that the country has unsolved issues concerning the trade relations with Cyprus, the freedom of speech and the rights of the Kurdish minority<sup>17</sup>. However, the analysis of the political relations and public discourse and of other factors shows that apart from the fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria - to which the European Union officially refers to - there are other additional factors that might considerably influence the integration of any candidate country. The reasons behind the long-lasting Euro-integration process of Turkey are presented in the following chapter.

## **2. Additional reasons that prolong the EU accession of Turkey**

The lengthy, slow and complicated Euro-integration process in the case of Turkey leads us to the position that Turkey's admission to the EU represents the clash of values i.e. "the clash of civilizations", as defined by Huntington, which is obviously hard to overcome. Moreover, there is an argument that the economic integration of Turkey in the Western system is impossible due to the extremely divergent social and political structures

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15 Ibid, p.4

16 Ministry of foreign Affairs Turkey: Turkey and EU <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-the-european-union.en.mfa> (available on December 1, 2013)

17 European Union Centre of North Carolina. "Turkey's Quest for EU Membership". EU Briefings. March 2008  
<http://europe.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Brief4-0803-turkeys-quest.pdf> (available on December 10, 2013)

as well as to the different past experiences of both Turkey and the West.<sup>18</sup> Hereinafter the author presents the influence that the “clash of civilizations” has on the integration process of Turkey; the author considers this approach the most appropriate to explain both the value differences and the relations between Turkey and the EU from a theoretical standing point. Also presented will be the relevant attitudes of the official representatives of the key member states of the EU, France and Germany. Taking into consideration the financial supremacy and their considerable influence on the decision and policy-making process within the Union, the attitude of France and Germany is of vital importance to the prospective EU accession of the candidate countries.

The main hypothesis of Huntington is that: *the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic... The principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations.*<sup>19</sup> The central notion in Huntington’s hypothesis is the civilization defined as the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have.<sup>20</sup> The main differentiating characteristic among civilizations is the religion.<sup>21</sup> In this context, the question to be answered is whether a country whose leading religion is Islam, such as Turkey, can integrate in the predominantly Christian European Union. Although Turkey is a secular state, the issue of different religions has always been at the core of the debates about the country’s admission to EU. In addition, Huntington himself quotes the Turkish president Özal: *“Turkey will not become member of the European Community simply because we are Muslims and they are Christians, although they do not say it.”*<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand, Turkey is a member state of NATO and is considered European country.<sup>23</sup> But while the Turkish elite consider that the country can integrate in the Western system, the Western elite find that idea unacceptable. The two countries that oppose Turkey’s EU membership the

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18 Husamettin, Inac. “Identity problems of Turkey during the European Union Integration Process”.

Journal of Economic and Social Research. no.6. p. 34-35

19 Huntington, Samuel P. “The clash of civilizations and the Remaking of World Order”. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996. p.22

20 Husamettin, Inac. “Identity problems of Turkey” ... p. 37

21 Ibid

22 Huntington, Samuel P. 1996 “The clash of civilizations” ... p. 42

23 Ibid

most are Germany and France. They both have in common the considerable number of Turkish (Muslim) immigrants in their territory. The fear of the immigrant flow following Turkey's accession to the EU, which would result from the free movement of workers in the Union, is one of the reasons for the German and French opposition to Turkey's EU membership.<sup>24</sup> The Turkish president Abdullah Gül has tried to explain that these fears are unfounded: "...it's not a priority for the Turkish people to go to work in the EU. But I believe that if integration happens, the Turks in the heart of Europe, in Germany, in France, many of them would come back. Maybe you will try to stop them, because you need them."<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, the opposition of Germany and France to Turkey's EU membership resonated through the statements given by the leaders of these Western European countries. The Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel has declared that *the accession to EU is not a one-way street, all criteria must be met.*<sup>26</sup> The former President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, has had even firmer negative attitude toward Turkey's EU accession: *Europe lies within its borders. Turkey is not in Europe, it is in Asia Minor.*<sup>27</sup> Sarkozy has even proposed the idea of terminating the accession negotiations with Turkey. In lieu of full EU membership, France and Germany have suggested "privileged partnership"<sup>28</sup> between the EU and Turkey which the latter found insulting.<sup>29</sup> Thus, the external observers fear that due to the multi-dimensional regional diplomacy of Turkey and the slow-paced alignment with the EU legislation as well as to the German and French antagonism toward Turkey's EU accession, Turkey is shifting away from the West.<sup>30</sup>

24 Cavanaugh, Chase. "Turkey's Difficult Entry into the European Union". The Washington Review on Turkish and Eurasian Affairs. February 2011.

<http://www.thewashingtonreview.org/articles/turkeys-difficult-entry-into-the-european-union.html> (available on December 12, 2013)

25 European Union Information Website. "Turkish President: We don't want anything other than EU membership". 18.06.2010 <http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/turkish-president-we-don-t-want-anything-else-membership-interview-495367> (available on December 10, 2013)

26 Ibid

27 Ibid

28 BBC News: "EU seeks to unblock Turkey membership talks". 14.12.2013

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-12185904>, (available on December 18, 2012)

29 European Union Information Website. "Turkey's Chief Negotiator: Privileged Partnership is an Insult". 2009

<http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/turkey-chief-negotiator-privileged-partnership-insult/article-186179> (available on December 15, 2013)

30 Tokyay, Menekşe. "Turkey's EU accession gets a boost" SETimes.com, June 15, 2011.

<http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/mk/features/setimes/features/2011/06/15/feature-01> (available on December 13, 2013)



Despite statements of this sort indicating that Turkey is not welcomed in the EU, the official attitude of the European Union itself is far more moderated and even supportive of Turkey's integration process. This is certainly a motivating factor for Turkey to continue making efforts toward more intensive negotiations with the EU. In June 2011, the Turkish government under Erdoğan has established the Ministry for EU Affairs which assumed the coordination of the Euro-integration process of Turkey and strived to fully align the Turkish legislation with the European law by the end of 2013.<sup>31</sup> The Report of the Ministry for EU Affairs issued on January 7, 2014 summarizes the results of the EU-related performance and activities undertaken by Turkey:

*“The year of 2013 which was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ankara Agreement has been a period in which Turkey's reformist character became more prominent and during which important developments have taken place in Turkey-EU relations. First of all, the European Commission's 2013 Progress Report on Turkey, prepared with an objective and constructive spirit in comparison to the previous reports, ensured a more favorable atmosphere in Turkey-EU relations. The 2013 Report of the Commission acknowledged not only the political reforms but also Turkey's economic success despite the global crisis, together with our progress in the alignment with the EU acquis. Besides, the opening of the Chapter on “Regional Policy and the Coordination of Structural Instruments” on November 5, 2013 was a critical milestone in ending the 3.5-year-long stalemate in the accession negotiations.”*<sup>32</sup>

Apart from the attitudes of political leaders of member states and of the Union itself as well as of the leaders of Turkey, the public opinion of the member states is also immensely important for the possible positive outcome of the Euro-integration process of Turkey. Hence, this will be the focus of the following chapter.

### **3. European public opinion on Turkey's EU accession**

The public support for the EU enlargement process is of great importance as EU enlargement decisions are eventually approved in a referendum organized in the candidate country once the negotiations are successfully closed. This form of direct democracy also enables the EU citizens to express their (dis)satisfaction with the decision on new member's EU

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31 Ibid

32 Ministry for EU Affairs Turkey: 2013 Progress Report. p.3

accession. The results of referendums held in the EU countries regarding the candidate status and the Euro-integration of Turkey have not always been in favor of Turkey. For instance, following the decision of the European Council to start accession negotiations with Turkey, the French and the Dutch have said “No” in the referendum on ratification of the Constitutional Treaty which also comprised the decision on EU negotiations with Turkey.<sup>33</sup> The dominant negative mood among the member states towards Turkey joining the EU at that time was also documented by the Eurobarometer surveys.<sup>34</sup> The core reason for this negative attitude is the *Islamophobia* as well as the created perception of the Turkish population as an inferior one.<sup>35</sup>

This general mood is also due to the fear of radical Islam and the innumerable terrorist attacks in the Western world; hence the aversion toward the Muslim population among the developed democracies.<sup>36</sup> The table below reflects the negative net support of the EU member states toward Turkey’s EU accession.

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33 Beehner, Lionel. “European Union: The French and Dutch Referendums”. Council on Foreign Relations. 2005 <http://www.cfr.org/france/european-union-french-dutch-referendums/p8148> (available on December 20, 2013)

34 European Union Information Website. “Eurobarometer: Over half of EU citizens against Turkey’s accession”. <http://www.euractiv.com/priorities/eurobarometer-half-eu-citizens-turkey-accession/article-142697> (available on December 15, 2013)

35 Husamettin, Inac. “Identity problems of Turkey during the European Union Integration Process”. *Journal of Economic and Social Research*. no.6. p. 40

36 Oner, Selcen. “Turkey’s membership to the EU in terms of Clash of Civilizations”. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary Economics*. Vol. 20, 2009. p. 245-261 <http://libris.bahcesehir.edu.tr/dosyalar/a.erisim/ae0096.pdf> (available on December 15, 2013)

**Table No. 1:** Net support of the prospective EU accession of Turkey among the EU member states

State	FOR	AGAINST	Net Support
Sweden	48	41	7
Poland	42	37	5
Spain	40	33	7
Portugal	40	38	2
Lithuania	27	50	-23
Slovenia	49	55	-6
France	21	68	-47
Germany	21	74	-53
Malta	39	40	-1
Hungary	41	43	-2
Great Britain	38	42	-4
Ireland	33	40	-7
The Netherlands	41	52	-11
Latvia	31	51	-20
Belgium	36	60	-24
Estonia	27	53	-26
Denmark	33	59	-26
The Czech Republic	30	57	-27
Slovakia	28	56	-28
Italy	27	57	-30
Greece	29	79	-50
Austria	11	80	-69
Luxembourg	19	74	-55
Cyprus	16	80	-64

Source: Eurobarometer (2005)<sup>37</sup>

The average net support for Turkey's EU membership is -24, which is the lowest value compared to the support for the other candidate countries. Moreover, Turkey is the only candidate country that does not enjoy support among the newer EU member states which are generally more supportive of the idea of EU enlargement.<sup>38</sup> The declining tendency of support among

37 Превземено од: Ruiz-Jimenez, Antonia and Jose Torreblanca. "European Public Opinion and Turkey's accession". European Policy Institute Network. no.16, 2007. p.8

38 Ibid

the EU citizens toward Turkey's Euro-integration might also be the result of the statements of the most influential political leaders relevant to this issue, the sort of information provided by the media as well as of the existing stereotypes of certain group of people. Furthermore, the public opinion on Turkey's EU membership in the EU countries is closely related to the negative perception of the Turkish immigrants.<sup>39</sup>

Surveys show that supporters of Turkey's EU membership are far better informed on Turkey's Euro-integration process i.e. on both the procedure and the fulfillment of EU accession criteria compared to those citizens who oppose the idea of Turkey joining the EU.<sup>40</sup> One way to foster positive mood when creating public opinion among the EU citizens would be to leave enough room for the citizens to form an opinion themselves excepted from the influence of politicians' statements and to build an attitude different from the official national policy related to this issue. Media could also contribute toward a more objective reporting on the Euro-integration process of Turkey as well as against the spread of prejudices and stereotypes about the Turkish population.

As for the public opinion in Turkey, from 2004 up to present day, the Turkish support of EU accession is in decline. A 2009 Eurobarometer survey showed that only nearly 48% of the Turkish population finds EU integration to be an advantage<sup>41</sup> compared to 66% in the spring of 2005.<sup>42</sup> The survey undertaken by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, published in June 2011, confirms the same negative tendency.<sup>43</sup> Such survey results are not unexpected as the Turkish population is already tired of the lengthy negotiation process and the never-ending new prerequisites and obstacles imposed to the country as EU accession criteria.

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39 Saz, Gokhan, . "The Political Implications of the European Integration of Turkey: Political Scenarios and Major Stumbling Blocks". *European Journal of Social Sciences*. no.1, 2011. p.54

40 Husamettin, Inac. "Identity problems of Turkey..." p.42

41 European Commission Official Website. Eurobarometer 71: Public Opinion in the European Union, 2009.

42 European Commission Official Website. Eurobarometer 63: Public Opinion in the European Union, 2005. [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb63/eb63\\_exec\\_tr.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb63/eb63_exec_tr.pdf) (available on December 14, 2013)

43 German Marshall Fund of the US. Key findings report on Transatlantic Trends. 2011. p.37

## Conclusion

It was important to examine the question of Turkey's Euro-integration process as it is a specific example of a country that has been on the road of European integration for five decades. The interest for Turkey's EU membership is mutual. Namely, the facts that this country is the crucial stabilization factor in the region and a connection between Europe and the Middle East as well as a country with a fast-growing economy make Turkey a serious candidate for EU membership. On the other hand, the accession to the EU would also be beneficial for Turkey as it will open the possibility for placement of Turkish products on the vast European market.

This paper has provided the theoretical framework for Turkey's Euro-integration process and for its assessment. The arguments presented in this paper alongside with a theoretical debate and examples of public discourse have demonstrated that despite the criteria fulfillment and the successful implementation of reforms, the negotiations between Turkey and the EU happen at a slow pace and are often blocked. Although the official EU representatives acknowledge the fulfillment of accession criteria and encourage Turkey to continue working in that direction, the statements of influential politicians and the results of numerous Eurobarometer surveys have shown that the member states themselves do not support Turkey's accession to the European Union.

Hence the question whether the EU membership of Turkey is solely conditioned upon the fulfillment of political, legal or economic criteria. Equally or maybe even more important are the social factors such as culture and religion – the value differences which are at the core of the “clash of civilizations”.

Tanja PANEVA

## TURKEY AND THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS

### Abstract

This paper examines the process of European integration of Turkey as well as the reasons for its prolongation and complexity. The first chapter provides insight into the fundamental political, economic and legal (Copenhagen) criteria defined for each candidate country for EU accession. Furthermore, the paper reviews the specific political and economic accession criteria that Turkey has to meet. Also listed are the areas in which Turkey achieved progress through reforms as a step toward building a developed democracy. Why it is that the European integration process is prolonged despite the progress made and what are the additional reasons for it – that is the focus of the second chapter of the paper.

Finally, the third chapter analyses the public support on the part of the EU citizens as well as the general public opinion among the Turkish population regarding the country's EU membership. The main objective is to establish, by answering these three questions, the connection between meeting the EU standards on one hand, as criteria that propel the integration process, and the additional reasons and factors on the other hand, that prolong the accession of Turkey to the European Union.

### Резиме

Во овој труд претставен е процесот на интеграција на Турција во Европската Унија, како и причините поради кои тој има карактер на долготраен и сложен процес. Првото поглавје ги објаснува основните политички, економски и правни (Копенхашки) критериуми кои се поставени пред секоја земја кандидат за членство во ЕУ. Притоа, направен е преглед на конкретните политички и економски услови кои е потребно да ги исполни Турција за влез во Унијата. Наведени се и областите во кои, преку воведување реформи, Турција направи чекор повеќе кон градење развиено демократско општество. Зошто и покрај забележаниот напредок процесот на ЕУ интеграциите на Турција се одолговлекува и кои се дополнителните причини кои стојат зад тоа – тоа е прашањето на кое се концентрира второто поглавје на овој труд. Конечно, во третото поглавје анализирано е и прашањето на јавната поддршка од страна на граѓаните на ЕУ, како и ставот на граѓаните на Турција во врска со приемот на државата во Унијата. Објаснувањето на овие три прашања има за цел да ја утврди врската помеѓу исполнувањето на ЕУ стандардите од една страна како критериум кој го придвижува интегративниот процес и дополнителните причини и фактори од друга страна, кои го одложуваат процесот за прием на Турција во Унијата.

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