

MONTEUS Dossier No. 1

BA – Seminar:

Managing Migration? Cooperation between the EU and Turkey in Migration and Asylum Policy

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Description of the Seminar

This seminar will provide a comprehensive insight into the EU's migration and asylum policy, EU-Turkey relations and German/EU-Turkey relations. It will analyse the EU-Turkey Deal and assess in how far migration and asylum policy affects EU-Turkey relations and whether and if so what sort of strategic partner Turkey might be. Additionally, the aim will be to elaborate Turkey's accession perspective to the EU in light of the migration crisis, conflicts in the neighbourhood as well as domestic Turkish circumstances like the coup d'état and the systematic changes in its aftermath.

Background knowledge European Migration

In 2015 more than 1.2 million applied for asylum in the European Union almost doubling the number of asylum seekers in 2014. This so-called 'migration crisis' put the Schengen area and the European migration and asylum policy under severe strain. In the long run, fundamental reforms e.g. of the Dublin System will be required. Short term solutions focus internally on a highly controversial relocation mechanism and externally on the so-called EU-Turkey Deal. Turkey represents a gateway for migrants into the EU via the Greek islands off the Turkish coast. Therefore, Turkey plays a crucial role in the EU migration policy, which dominates overall EU-Turkey relations in times when Turkey undergoes fundamental upheavals and Turkish relations with individual EU member states such as Germany and Austria are more than conflictual. Germany that registered 446.750 asylum seekers in 2015 (about 40% of asylum applications in the EU) was one of the leading actors in framing the EU-Turkey Deal. After a period of intensification in German/EU-Turkey relations also in institutional terms, relations between Germany and Turkey were overshadowed by several incidents in the first half of 2016.

Background knowledge: EU-Turkey relations

Turkey has been a candidate country for EU membership since 1999, along with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2005), Montenegro (2010), Serbia (2012) and Albania (2014). Turkey's aspirations to join the European Community are however much older and stand for long, yet troubled relations with the EU. In a historic perspective, this follows the similarly close but unsteady relations of Turkey and the Ottoman Empire with today's EU member countries in earlier centuries.

The Beginning of EU-Turkey relations Turkey's official application for membership of the European Economic Community marks the beginning of formalized and close relations between Turkey and the Community in 1959. While today, in 2018, recent relations are under close scrutiny due to the latest developments within both the EU and Turkey, the picture of Turkey as a possible member state was far more positive at the early stage of the European Communities.

Recent Developments

Since 1959, EU-Turkey relations have been both moving forward and conflicting. In light of the refugee crisis, the EU and Turkey decided to resume negotiations and deepen their relations in areas of common interests. Document 2 presents the joint statement of Turkey and the EU from 29 November 2015.

The years 2016 and 2017, however, have highlighted changes in EU-Turkey relations including differentiation in the EU, migration, democratic values, the Cyprus conflict and other problems in the neighbourhood. Albeit the progress report by the European Commission in 2016 has become more critical towards recent developments in Turkey (see Document 3), Turkey remains a “key partner for the European Union” (European Commission 2016: 4).

Document 3: European Commission: Turkey Progress Report 2016

**Turkey 2016 Report
Brussels, 9.11.2016**

[...] In the wake of the post-coup measures, the EU called on the authorities to observe the highest standards in the rule of law and fundamental rights. While a relationship of trust and loyalty should exist between civil servants and the state and measures can be taken to ensure that, any allegation of wrongdoing should be established via transparent procedures in all individual cases. Individual criminal liability can only be established with full respect for the separation of powers, the full independence of the judiciary and the right of every individual to a fair trial, including through effective access to a lawyer. Turkey should ensure that any measure is taken only to the extent strictly required to the exigencies of the situation and in all cases stands the test of necessity and proportionality. The measures taken under the state of emergency are undergoing scrutiny by the Council of Europe. Turkey should urgently address the recommendations of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe of October 2016. [...]

Source:

https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhoodenlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2016/20161109_report_turkey.pdf.

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