



MONTEUS International Conference Panel

Current Trends in World Politics and
Reflections on EU – Turkey Relations

**New Political Challenges for Germany, Turkey and
the EU 2019**

**Joint Conference by
Turkish German University
University of Cologne
Istanbul 3rd of May 2019**



SİYASET BİLİMİ VE ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER

POLITIKWISSENSCHAFT UND INTERNATIONALE BEZIEHUNGEN

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



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ABSTRACT

Due to their long-standing history, Germany and Turkey are not only connected by economic and political but also societal and cultural ties to this day. Recently, the relationship between Germany, EU and Turkey appeared at crossroads. Global trends, diverging policies, populism in election campaigns, but also common responses towards joint challenges evoked the emergence of a “conflictual partnership” classified by the simultaneous experience of disputes and high-level cooperation.

The 2019 conference “New Political Challenges for Germany, Turkey and the EU – VI” was designed to approach this triangle of actors. Academics junior researchers, professors, students, civil society members and practitioners from Germany and Turkey joined the event that took place in Istanbul on 3th May 2019, jointly organized by the University of Cologne (UoC) and the Turkish-German University (TAU) for the sixth time.



Program

- 09h30-10h00** **Reception and Registration**
- 10h00-10h15** **Welcome**
- 10h15-11h15** **Keynote Speech: “A World in Disarray: What Can Be Done to Fix It? A German View“**
- Speaker:** Martin Erdmann (Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Turkey)
- Rapporteur:** Moritz Rau (CETEUS, University of Cologne)
- 11h15-11h30* *Coffe Break*
- 11h30-12h45** **Introductory Panel: Past, current and future trends in EU-Germany-Turkey Relations** (in cooperation with the Project TRIANGLE)
- Chair:** Prof Dr Atila Eralp (Istanbul Policy Center)
- Speaker:** Dr Günter Seufert (SWP)
Assoc Prof Dr Beken Saatcioğlu (MEF University)
Alina Thieme (CETEUS, University of Cologne)
Asst Prof Dr Ebru Turhan (Turkish German University)
- Rapporteur:** Helena Weise (CETEUS, University of Cologne)
- 12h45-13h45* *Open Buffet Lunch*



10h15-11h15 Keynote Speech: “A World in Disarray: What Can Be Done to Fix It? A German View“

Speaker: Faruk Kaymakcı (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey)

Rapporteur: Dschihan Zamani (CETEUS, University of Cologne)

11h30-12h45 Migration and Diaspora Policy in EU-Turkey Relations: Latest Trends and Impact

Chair: Prof Dr Michael Kaeding (University of Duisburg-Essen/ TEPSA)

Speaker: Prof Dr M. Murat Erdoğan (Turkish-German University)
Prof Dr Ahmet İçduygu (Koç University)
Assoc Prof Dr Ayselin Gözde Yıldız (Yasar University Izmir)

Rapporteur: Zeynep Dilara Taştekin (University of Cologne)

16h00-16h30 Coffe Break

16h30-17h45 Panel III: Current Trends in World Politics and Reflections on EU-Turkey Relations (in cooperation with the project MONTEUS)

Chair: Prof Dr Matthias Jopp (IEP)

Speakers: Prof Dr Birgül Demirtaş (TOBB ETÜ)
Asst Prof Dr Deniz Kuru (Turkish-German University)
Prof Dr Bernhard Stahl (Passau University)

Rapporteur: Ebru Ece Özbey (University of Cologne/ Max Planck Institute Cologne)

17.45 h – 18.00 h Conference Findings



Panel III: Current Trends in World Politics and Reflections on EU-Turkey Relations *(in cooperation with the project MONTEUS)*

Chair: Prof Dr Matthias Jopp (IEP)

Speakers: Prof Dr Birgül Demirtaş (TOBB ETÜ)
Asst Prof Dr Deniz Kuru (Turkish-German University)
Prof Dr Bernhard Stahl (Passau University)

Rapporteur: Ebru Ece Özbey (University of Cologne)

The panel, organised in the framework of the Jean Monnet Chair MONTEUS, consisted of Prof Dr Birgül Demirtaş (TOBB-ETÜ), Asst. Prof. Dr. Deniz Kuru (Turkish-German University), and Prof Dr Bernhard Stahl (Passau University).

To kick off the panel, Prof. Dr. Matthias Jopp started by listing some of the current challenges in and around Turkey and Europe, which had been frequently discussed over the past few years as well as at the previous sessions of the conference. Among these challenges, he underlined the changing roles of the key actors in the region, i. e. China being on the rise, the U.S. being on retreat, Russia being more assertive, and the NATO getting weakened. In terms of economy, Prof. Marhold addressed

the trade wars (between the U.S. and the EU, between the U.S. and China), the sanction regimes (by the U.S. on Iran, by the U.S. and the EU on Russia), and the growing Chinese investment in Europe and involvement in European politics as the most pressing issues. In terms of security, he drew attention to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, turbulence in the Middle East (especially in Syria), failed states in the neighbourhood (i. e. Libya), and the refugee crisis, which is yet to be solved. He then raised the question to the panellists and the audience, “Can we still speak of *the West*, or, *the Euro-Atlantic community*, as we know it?”

The first speaker presented an outlook on the current global af-



fairs and outlined six main challenges that are particularly relevant to the EU-Turkey relations: The decline of the U.S. hegemony and possible end of the multipolar international system, rise of economic protectionism, deterioration of welfare state, rise of populism and far-right, decline of the soft power of international organisations, and inability to improve “the negative peace” in the countries in the region, i. e. Bosnia, Moldova, Kosovo, Serbia, and Nagorno-Karabakh. Given the situation, it has been questioned whether Turkey and the EU are capable of cooperating and facing the said challenges together. In this framework it has been asserted that both Turkey and the EU are preoccupied with multiple domestic crises alongside the rapidly shifting global order. On the one hand, Turkey is struggling to determine the basic orientation of its foreign policy; whether it will turn its gaze to the Mediterranean, the Balkans, Asia or Europe. On the other hand, the EU’s transformative capacity is being subjected to a test by several member states such as Poland and Hungary, which have been moving towards an increasingly illiberal direction and away from the well-es-

tablished European norms and values. Despite their differences and idiosyncratic identity crises, it has been argued that Turkey and the EU still share a common interest in maintaining the liberal order. If the parties can show the necessary political will, they could bring together the EU’s economic power and Turkey’s historical and cultural linkages to induce positive change in the region, i. e. in the Balkans and Syria, as well as to take a joint position in international organisations.

Another presentation tackled the concept of “double standards” in world politics, which, in the broadest sense of the word, referred to a set of principles that applies differently and usually more rigorously to one group of people or circumstances than to another. This concept has been distinguished from hypocrisy, or, the act of feigning to be what one is not or to believe what one does not, and touched upon different conceptualisations in literatures. The concept of double standards, which has received scant attention in the International Relations literature so far, holds great potential for shedding light on the dynamics of the contemporary global affairs. By focusing



on the discourses employed by national political elites, foreign policy actors, the media, and the textbooks, and looking into the double standards in their policy repercussions, the panel argued that we could expand our knowledge, especially on the states and societies that question the liberal international order, resentment as a key factor in international politics, and prediction and prevention of conflict.

The final presentation emphasised that his arguments would resemble the English School of international relations in many aspects and continued by identifying five trends in world politics and their possible implications for the EU-Turkey relations. First, we are witnessing a value-shift in the sense that the liberal order, which is based on the Western idea that the values are universal, is passing away. The rising nationalism in the United States under the Trump administration and the decrease in support for universal values in and of the EU indicate that the liberal order prevailed only for the period between 1990 and 2001 – with another day to remember from the European perspective: the Brexit

referendum in 2016. Second, international organisations such as the UN and the WTO are weakening. Although the support of the transnational elite and NGOs is still there, these organisations are no longer supported by powerful states, except, maybe, for China as the last defender. Third, the attention was drawn to the violations of international law (i. e. in Yemen and Syria) which is shifting towards great-power management and leaves smaller states vulnerable and excluded from decision-making mechanisms. As for the fourth trend, emphasis was put on the rise of the youth in various areas of the world. Fast-growing populations and protest movements by young people with renewed perspectives, needs, and demands, are challenging the regimes and gradually leading to domestic and regional conflicts. In concluding remarks, the panel expressed concerns over contemporary politics' growing resemblance to the pre-World War I era with strong countries and weak international organisations but ended the discussion on a positive note, emphasising potentials for cooperation between Turkey and the EU, especially in the area of regional security.