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**CONCEPTUALIZING TURKEY'S POSITION IN THE  
SHIFTING INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM**

Bachelor Thesis

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I declare that I have compiled the paper independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously been presented for grading. The document length is 8367 words from the introduction to the end of summary.

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## **ABSTRACT**

It is crucial for today's international security arena that both state- and international actors cooperate efficiently. While historically the traditionalists have placed their emphasis largely on using military capacity in order to remove security threats, then non-traditionalists stress the importance of addressing new threats using non-military means. The present thesis seeks, firstly, to define and explore the extent of integration between the hard and soft security issues, also to seek in which ways these reinforce each other. A particular focus, in the context of securitization, will be on the degree of integration between NATO and the EU, both actors being on different ends of the securitization. The fact that Turkey shares borders with the Middle East and the South Caucasus, makes the country an interesting case-study in the context of this research. By positioning Turkey in the context of Europe, this paper also considers whether the EU and Turkey are compatible by comparing their security perspectives. It is necessary to note that since NATO and the EU share a significant number of member states, both are clearly strongly influenced by each other. In the context of securitization, the EU is and will certainly be relying heavily on NATO.

This study is ultimately an attempt to define Turkey's position in the context of international security system and it aims to portray mutual goals for both Turkey and the West *en route* to achieving stability in international security environment. This paper claims that due to its strategic geographical location, Turkey is, and will remain, an important regional power, and therefore has crucial importance in achieving stability in global security. The author's thesis proposes to conceptualize Turkey as a vital regional power which cannot be ignored by other states in order to achieve stability in global security. Public opinion surveys conducted by Eurobarometer and Pew Research Centre contribute to this paper's observational methodological nature.

**Keywords:** Turkey, the European Union, NATO, International Security, Traditional security, Non-traditional security

## **INTRODUCTION**

For much of our present-day history, the concept of international security has been associated with the development and direct use of armed forces in the process of interaction between nation-states, whereas a precise focus has been on the role of great powers (Freedman, 1998). In general terms, international security as a conceptual framework, has historically been mainly involving discussions on the territorial integrity of nations and the greatest threat to such integrity has historically been posed as well as moderated by wars between states. Since the start of XX century, however, new conceptions of international security have risen. That is why it is crucial to study the changing nature of global security system and distinguish the root causes of such transformation. More than two decades ago, these changes were evidently linked to the collapse of the Soviet Union and to the end of Cold War, due which the primary cause of the security concern for Western countries was eliminated. However, since then the global security system has had to deal with not only different state actors or global powers but also different forms of international threats, such as international migration, terrorism, environmental threats. Turkey, geographically located between, and for some - within, the Middle East and Europe, is today forced and also pushing itself to experience many of these new security threats in the hard way. That is one of the reasons why the country makes a unique case-study in the context of this research.

The operational challenge today is that, since the aforementioned security threats arise from different sources, it is essentially impossible for a single state to deal with those alone. In the case of Turkey, one of the examples is the threat from separatist groups. For decades, the country has been in violent conflict with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and has suffered from terrorist attacks. However, if in the 1990s the origins of such attacks were known, then today, due to the existence of multiple extremist groups (both domestic and international), the situation is much different. Thus, there is a need for further cooperation between states and international organizations, largely because of new security threats imposed by new actors. Due to this reason, this research paper will, additionally to Turkey, study some of the most notable international organisations crucial for the Western security atmosphere – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union (EU). The perspective is to determine a certain degree of and a possible as well as comfortable framework for integration between NATO, EU and a new Turkey

in the context of global security concepts. Prior to seeking this, however, notions of global security system must be defined, contextualising this paper with a broader debate in the field.

The argument amid modern security theorists is that security should cover more than just the state as the analytical object (Hyde-Price 2001). In political science, traditional security is exclusively nation-state oriented, in the sense that it examines issues entirely between countries. Non-traditional security, or modern security, involves analysis of issues such as those of refugees, poverty, and terrorism. Furthermore, issues such as unpolluted environment, access to water and food, also economic welfare have increasingly developed into points of concern for international security studies. In the context of securitization, migration flows are argued to carry diverse risks, for instance facilitating the movements and activities of terrorist groups. Turkey, sharing borders with the EU and the Middle-East, is exposed and also actively exposing itself to many of those challenges, for instance, being on the frontline for the substantial refugee-influx from Syria. This paper is arguing that today, 'hard' and 'soft' security issues have become increasingly integrated, and in many ways, they reinforce each other, especially when it comes to a large regional actor with a history of being the core geostrategic element of a humongous imperial entity. In this context, the degree of integration between NATO's hard power and the EU's soft power affecting Turkey as a regional power in the global security arena will be examined. Clearly, there are numerous other international and transnational organizations contributing to international security and cooperation, such as BRICS, the United Nations (UN), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) *et cetera*, however, due to the nature of the paper and its space limitations, the present paper will particularly focus on NATO and the EU.

The ultimate goal of this paper is **to define Turkey's position in the context of international security system, as well as it is aiming to portray mutual goals for both Turkey and the West en route to achieve stability in international security environment.** To facilitate this study, the following three research questions are posed: **Firstly**, how and to which extent has the international security system changed over the past century, and how has NATO's hard power and the EU's soft power affected Turkey as a regional power in the global security arena? **Secondly**, how do Turks view NATO and the EU? **Thirdly**, if and how will the EU and NATO adjust to the new international security concept without discriminating non-EU members, such as Turkey? The following paragraphs introduce study methods used to address each of these research questions.

The first chapter of this paper aims to define the extent to which the global security system has transformed over the past century. The theoretical framework of this research work is solidified by an ongoing academic debate. There are different notions of international security system, thus the author, in this section, examines the concepts of traditional security (hard power) and non-traditional security (soft power). Particular attention will be given to finding how both notions have evolved over the past decades and to what degree those concepts today have integrated. Given the changing tendencies in the international system (in general) and the international security system (in particular), the first chapter will then consider and analyse the root causes for such transformations through three phases: first, the period from 1949 until 1980s; second, the post-Cold War period until 2001; third, post-9/11 period.

The second part of the paper studies public opinion surveys conducted by the *Eurobarometer* and *Pew Research Centre*. The objective of using these surveys is to complement the author's thesis by providing an insight to the public opinion of Turkish people in the context of this research. Furthermore, this chapter will contribute to this study as a methodological part using the quantitative method. Quantitative research method is effective in determining how many people have a specific opinion on a certain subject, and due to large number of respondents, the surveys used successfully meet the requirements of the complex nature of this paper. One of the explicit advantages of this research method is that the results of those survey researches can be projected to the entire population due to carefully chosen respondents. Each region and area of the country, in addition to different age groups, is represented. Thus, when used properly, public opinion surveys can describe the population or predict behaviour highly accurately. Counter-argument for this method is that it is less useful for uncovering how people think and why they think the way they do, hence such method does not meet the requirements for qualitative research.

Finally, taking into consideration the findings from the first two chapters, the third part of this paper is a discussion on the strategic relationship between Turkey and the West, in the context of securitization. The aim of this chapter is to contribute to this thesis as a part of qualitative research methodology. It will seek answers to the question: How and to what extent Turkey is important for preservation of global security? In order to find answers, this chapter will examine and compare contemporary security threats for NATO, the EU and Turkey. Additionally, the last chapter also pursues to examine the role of Turkey, who is in a complex position of being one of the non-EU NATO members, by seeking how the EU and NATO are able to adjust to the new international

security concept without discriminating non-EU members. To answer this, the author has studied Madeleine Albright's "three D's": avoiding decoupling, duplication, and discrimination against NATO's non-EU members. The EU has 22 members of NATO's total 29 member states, that is, 75% of all NATO members can be found in the EU. Having such a share of membership, one could expect quite considerable EU influence in NATO's general mission and operational missions. Ironically, both the EU and NATO identify similar security threats, such as international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, states failure, and regional conflicts, hence in the rational sense both organizations would need similar capabilities to address these threats. For decades, most of the EU member-states have been members of NATO, which proves the fact that in terms of military capability, the Union has previously been and still relies on NATO, in which Turkey contributes immensely with its second largest armed forces in the alliance. Thus, in the context of securitization, it is ironical that there seems to be no allowance for Turkey to enter into the formal structure of the EU.

Finally, in order to prove the crucial importance of Turkey in the security environment, the author proposes three supporting arguments: Turkey and its Western allies are fronting same security threats; Turkey has crucial geostrategic location; and finally, Turkey's military contributions to NATO operations has historically been, and because it has a second largest military in the alliance, will remain significant.

This thesis follows the author's preceding research paper, which examined the factors that have shaped the transformation of Turkey's and NATO's strategic relationship over the past century, more precisely throughout three critical phases: firstly, the period from 1949 until 1980s; second, the post-Cold War period until 2001; thirdly, post-9/11 period ('Descriptive analysis of the strategic relationship between Turkey and NATO').



# 1. THE CONCEPT OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Global security threats are being increasingly discussed today, which clearly reflects the significance of these issues in the contemporary world. One of the most important features for the transformation of the international security landscape is, unquestionably, globalization. In addition to facilitated movement of people, globalization has undermined the capability of states to address security and military challenges on their own and has changed the balance between the state and non-state actors. Today, emerging security threats are neither entirely domestic nor totally interstate and thus the transforming nature of international security environment should be thoroughly examined by analysing the root causes of such security risks. In global security field domestic conflicts have gained significant importance. They have mainly risen to the security agenda for two reasons: with the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the occurrence of internal conflicts increased, thus forcing the international community to become more involved in intrastate conflicts. Examples include the interference in Somalia in the 1990s, which was a U.S.-led military operation, and NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999 (Freedman 1998, 23).

Prior to defining the concept of international security, it must be noted that notions of security differ from nation to nation. In the context of this research, one can take a further look at the EU and Turkey. For instance for the EU, in some cases, Turkey could be perceived as a security risk. In addition to the country's cultural and social incompatibility, the public of the EU is understandably concerned with several other factors. With the inclusion of Turkey, the EU would obtain common borders with South Caucasus and the Middle East, namely Syria, Iraq and Iran, and its predominant Christian citizens would include a substantial share of Muslim minority. Another point of concern is the current internal political situation and Turkey's rapprochement with its Islamic roots. The current government has shown a clear impulse to act independently from the Western political alliance, especially regarding major regional and international conflicts, causing significant concern within the Western countries. Moreover, some of the security risks and threats are not necessarily of military nature. For instance, issues such as clean environment, access to water and food, and economic welfare increasingly developed into points of concern for

international security studies. These threats can possibly intensify existing tensions and therefore cause conflict.

The concept of security has widened in recent years into a common concern and responsibility for both states and non-state actors. Since the definition of security as such has broadened, so should the approach in dealing with these threats. Prior to seeking further, how the global security system has evolved throughout the past decades, the meaning of traditional security and modern security must be defined. Thus, the following chapters will define and examine the definitions of traditional security and modern security. In addition to the defining those, the following sections will examine how those definitions have evolved throughout the last decades, in the context of Turkey's strategic relationship within NATO and the EU.

### **1.1. Definition of traditional security**

In political science, traditional security is exclusively nation-state oriented, meaning that it examines issues entirely between countries. For traditionalists, the security of territorial integrity and sovereignty reigns supreme, and thus threats are primarily recognized as existential ones posed by the militarization of other countries. Power is the central concept that informs realist thought, which proves the fact that the referent object of security is the state. In this context, Hyde-Price (2001, 40) notes that

[s]ecurity involves preventing war through military preparations to deter armed aggression from within and without and, more positively, fostering conditions conducive to building a legitimate and enduring peace order.

Supporters of the traditional security approach argue that international stability relies on the premise that if state security is preserved, then the security of citizens will necessarily follow (Tadjbaksh 2013, 4). Traditional security depends on the anarchistic balance of power realm and on the absolute sovereignty of the nation state. Hard power is often aggressive in its nature, and the means generally go through military power consisting of coercive diplomacy or war by using threats and force with the aim of deterrence, coercion and protection. Nevertheless, the problem with traditional security approaches is that military-political sectors are generally not enough to clarify non-traditional threats, making it problematic to develop appropriate solutions. Therefore, such notions of security were more relevant during the World War I, World War II, and the Cold

War. It is essential that the security concept today includes environmental, economic, and societal sectors.

## **1.2. Definition of non-traditional security**

The core focus of security for the modern security theory is on human security. Supporters of the modern security theory argue that threats to the international security agenda are non-military in nature and transnational in scope (Tadjbakhsh 2013, 6). Evolving threats are neither totally domestic nor entirely inter-state and are spread rapidly due to increasing notions of both globalization and communication. It is also argued that these threats cannot be prevented entirely, however, these can be mitigated through different coping mechanisms. In addition, non-traditional security theory promotes a human centred, Universalist and non-military focus which considers threats to human life and welfare, for instance, poverty, deprivation and underdevelopment. In the context of securitization, large-scale migration flows are claimed to carry diverse risks, for instance, by facilitating the movements and activities of terrorist groups. Broadened notions of security are important in interpretation of international security because they are relevant to structural violence, which in turn, can affect a country's internal stability. Human security as a distinct concept involves the security of people and communities instead of solely that of states and institutions. Separatist threats, general threats to society's ethnic and religious composition, and its capacity for tolerating ethnic and religious diversity undermine the security of the state. Additionally, pandemic diseases, corruption, terrorism, trans-national crimes, environmental changes are classified as soft security threats. (Ibid.)

Ayoob (1991, 35-47) argues that traditionalists have placed the emphasis largely on using military capacity to reduce vulnerability, whereas the new formulations of security focus on non-military responses instead. According to him, new security definitions also often promote a cooperative response to threats, instead of the opposite. Nevertheless, it must be noted that notions of security differ from nation to nation. What constitutes a threat for a third world country might not be a threat for developed nations. For instance, during the Cold War, most of the so-called third world nations were unaffected since they were non-aligned, hence the threat was mainly for nations of the developed countries.

### **1.3. The transformation of international security perspectives**

The First World War was disastrous for Turkey, resulting in the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. With the fall of the Empire, Turkey's position in the global security environment fell significantly, and contrary to today, the Republic of Turkey (formed in 1923), was almost completely isolated from any decision-making in the context of global security, even though the Kemalist ideology aimed to create a nation-state that would be far detached from its expansionist Ottoman past. The principal goal of the new republic was to preserve its territorial integrity against domestic (for instance Kurdish secessionist movements and pan-Islamic revisionist doctrines) and external threats.

After the Second World War, European security vision was based on the two sides of iron curtain, with the U.S, France, and UK on one side, and the Soviet Union on the other (Freedman 1998, 18). Throughout the Cold War, NATO mainly made use of hard power by contributing militarily and providing collective defence for the West against external threats. The EU, on the other hand, derived as a powerful economic organization, substantially making use of the newly emerging soft power. It is argued that by establishing and encouraging common values and norms, imposed with economic and political interdependence, the EU founded a special security identity which minimized the need to use military force to solve disputes among the member states. By initiating further developments, the EU also managed to reduce levels of insecurity in the international arena (Desai 2005). Additionally, The EU has created its own security identity which has made the use of military force in order to solve disputes between member states unthinkable. One of the reasons, in the context of securitization, is that Turkey has historically excessively made use of 'hard power' which has not been compatible with EU's 'soft power' security identity.

As the author of this thesis argued in her preceding research paper, the best way to examine the transforming nature of the international security system is through three main phases: firstly, the period from 1949 until the end of 1980s; secondly, the post-Cold War period until 2001; thirdly, post-9/11 period. Considering Turkey's unique but challenging geopolitical position, which means sharing borders with the Middle East and the South Caucasus, the country is an interesting case-study in the context of this research. The following chapters attempt to conceptualize Turkey's position in the context of the transforming nature of international security system. Due to the nature

of this paper and its space limitations, the following sections will focus specifically on NATO and the EU.

### **1.3.1. The period of collective defence**

During the Cold War, the notion of security was focused on combating military threats. For Western countries, the first and foremost threat came from the USSR and its global expansionist agenda. Old power balances had been erased, new ones were emerging, and many new alliances and international organisations were being established. The most notable, NATO, was established in 1949 on the principle of collective defence. Its twelve founding countries (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States) formed a military alliance based on collective security that relied on Western values, to counter the threat of the countries of the Warsaw Pact. (Hartley, Sandler 1999). Throughout this period, traditional security depended on the anarchistic balance of power realm and on the absolute sovereignty of the nation state, and security was seen as protection from an attack which was executed by using technical and military capabilities.

Turkey, together with Greece, joined the alliance in 1952. Its proximity to the Middle East was of great importance at a time when the USSR demonstrated their interest in the area, and thus Turkey was considered a strategic asset in the region by NATO. Naturally, Turkey took on a role of defending the Western countries from the Soviet threat, essentially making use of hard power. Additionally, its territory was used for NATO's air and naval forces, surveillance facilities and operations, as well as for the deployment of battlefield and intermediate range nuclear weapons, making Turkey a functional ally for NATO. Furthermore, the Incirlik airbase, constructed with the U.S assistance in 1955, elevated Turkey's strategic role in the alliance. The airbase was a key section of for the air forces for delivering aid to humanitarian crises regions, such as the Middle East, Central Asia, and Turkey itself (Matlary, Petersson 2013, 22-25). This era is characterized as a time where classical balance of power was replaced by a system of collective security, where the usage of hard power was still very much relevant.

### **1.3.2. The shift from collective defence to collective security**

Since the end of the Cold War, national borders and sovereignty have eroded and state-specific security has become less of a concern. Broadened security agenda gave rise to the necessity to seek

further from the traditionalist views. The traditional state-centric concept of security was challenged by more integrated approaches on security. Stability, welfare, and peace became common objectives for states in the context of securitization. In the process of globalization, the extent to which values and practices such as human rights, became one of the fundamental challenges. It became apparent that issues such as global warming and gendered violence cross borders and place themselves on the agendas of state-actors. With the end of the Cold War, focus started to shift from hard military security to softer power, making the use of armed forces in solving disputes less prominent.

With the end of the Cold War, the number of NATO member states almost doubled. Naturally, it meant that the strategic priorities and standpoints across the alliance developed further. With the main threat to the West erased, the alliance took on a new and different rationale. In the context of Europe, its new role was to build security and stability cooperation among its member states. Furthermore, its new role was to ensure cooperation with countries of the former Soviet area, while, maintaining deterrence against the use of force by an outside power at the same time. During this period, NATO evolved from being purely a military alliance on the collective defence principle into a political organization with a substantial military capability.

With the main threat to NATO erased, it was initially believed that Turkey's strategic position in the alliance will decline, however, as the country was on frontline of the Gulf War in 1991, its geo-strategic value for its Western allies remained. Turkey permitted the United States to use its grounds for attacks against Iraq along with deploying a significant number of military forces to the Iraqi border (Matlary, Petersson 2013, 29). Moreover, by actively engaging in Partnership for Peace training missions, Turkey played the role of a constructive ally. During 1990s, Turkey was one of the most significant contributors to NATO's out-of-area operations. However, regardless of Turkey's contributions, the country was still devalued in terms of the actual decision making within the alliance. According to some scholars, it was mainly due to NATO being unsure about its own role in this changing world with new security threats (Ibid.). As presented by Guéhenno (1998-1999, 15)

[t]his period combines classical balance-of-power calculations with elements of a different world, in which security is built on a balance of dependence and in which the boundaries between communities are blurred and power diluted. The methods used to ensure security in one context are precisely those that undermine it in another.

### **1.3.3. The shift from collective defence to cooperative security**

Today, risk and threat perceptions have been undergoing a major transformation due to becoming less evident where risks and threats commence. The notion of collective security has shifted onto cooperative security, where both states and non-state actors, such as international organizations, must contribute. It is inevitable that the importance of soft power has increased marginally. Even though it cannot substitute for military force, then according to modern security supporters, soft power serves complementary purposes and has wider appeal (Tadjbakhsh 2013, 4-6). Additionally, the September 2001 terror attack in the United States marked a new era of global religious polarization – Christianity versus Islam. This event also marks the first and only time that NATO has invoked its collective defence, Article 5, clause. (Koops, Varwick 2009). This, however, caused considerable frustration in Turkey, as the country had previously experienced lack of support from its NATO Allies when Turkey itself was under terrorist attacks.

The new security environment today is characterised by a range of threats posed by a variety of actors at different levels. Security in the twenty-first century must take into account diverse concepts such as law, ethics, human rights and environment in addition to the options of using military power and armed forces. Among the approaches that seek to address and acknowledge basic threats to human safety are paradigms that include comprehensive, cooperative and collective measures, which are aimed to guarantee security for the individual and, accordingly, for the state itself. Additionally, the possibility of non-state actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear weapons, is now a serious threat.

As regards to the future of Turkey-NATO cooperation - despite both sides seemingly pursuing a working relationship in terms of regional management, Turkey's and NATO's positions may actually diverge. While strategically NATO's priorities are deterrence and evolving partnerships on a global level, then on a regional level it is engaged more as functional, reforming the security-sector and focusing on training and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. For Turkey, this new phase is characterized for turning to a soft power in the region. The country went through a remarkable transformation from being a functional ally for NATO while being reliant on its hard power until early post-Cold War era to a strategic partner that is more reliant on its soft power. Additionally, since 2013, Turkey has changed its primarily armed struggle-based strategy against the PKK terrorist organization to a negotiation-based strategy ('Global Relations Forum Task Report' 2015).

## **2. PUBLIC OPINION AS A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

The objective of this section of the research is to supplement the author's thesis by providing an insight into the public opinion of Turkish people in the context of this research. Accordingly, the intention is to find connections and offer possible reasons for the inconsistency on Turks' perception within this framework. Due to the limitation of space and nature of this paper, the author is using data from public opinion survey questions specifically focused on NATO and EU.

### **2.1. Overview of the surveys used**

The data used for this analysis is based on public opinion surveys conducted by Pew Research Centre and the European Commission. Only a small number of studies is focusing on the public opinion of the Turkish people on international organisations such as EU and NATO. Established in 1974, the Standard Eurobarometer consists of public opinion surveys conducted regularly on behalf of European Commission. Although these surveys address a wide variety of topical issues relating to the EU through its member states, then some of the non-member states, such as Turkey, are also included. Each survey consists of approximately 1000 interviews per country and reports are published twice a year. In the context of this paper, and due to its space limitations, the author in her analysis has used the fall edition reports to summarize yearly results. The second public opinion survey used in the context of this research is the Global Attitudes Survey. Founded in 2004, the Pew Research Centre is a policy research organization that specializes in conducting extensive and timely public opinion polls surveying the prevailing political and social trends among the participating countries. Due to the nature of this research, the data from the Global Indicators Database has been used with the focal point being on Turkey and its public's opinion on NATO and the U.S.A. Both surveys were conducted via face-to-face interviews.



## 2.2. Turks' view on NATO, EU and the U.S

Total of six survey questions were used in order to examine and analyse Turkish people's perceptions within the context of this research (complete questions are presented in *Appendix 1*). Due to several reasons, such as unavailability of data and space limitations of this paper, only the period starting from 2002 will be studied. Unfortunately, the data on Turkish peoples' opinion towards NATO, conducted by Pew Research Centre, is not available prior 2011, hence only the results from 2011 to 2017 are analysed in this section.

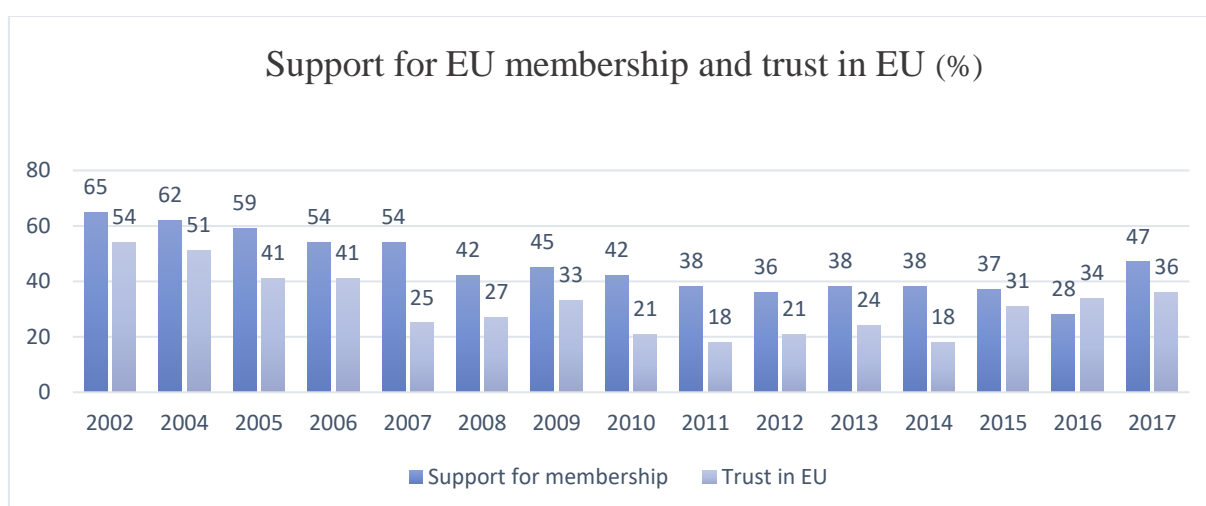


Figure 1. Support among Turks for the EU membership and trust in the EU (2002-2017)

Source: Eurobarometer

Turkish people hold fairly low level of trust in the EU. As can be seen in *Figure 1*, more than half of the Turks tended to have more trust in the EU in 2002, and around the same percentage of respondents considered the EU trustworthy two years later, in 2004. One of the possible reasons is that it was during the same years that Turkey saw significant breakthrough for freedom and democratization, besides the improvements in the EU integration process. Quite a significant drop in trust came in 2007, where the support for the EU fell under fifteen percent. It is also interesting to see the degree of integration between the trust in the EU and support for the EU. As can be seen in the chart above, the Turks' support for the EU membership has always remained at least ten percent higher than their trust in the institution itself. This indicates that even though the Turks

might not trust the EU that much, they still consider the organisation to be beneficial for the country and membership is supported. Such phenomenon however might also possibly indicate that the level of information about the EU itself is quite low, creating more distrust among the people.

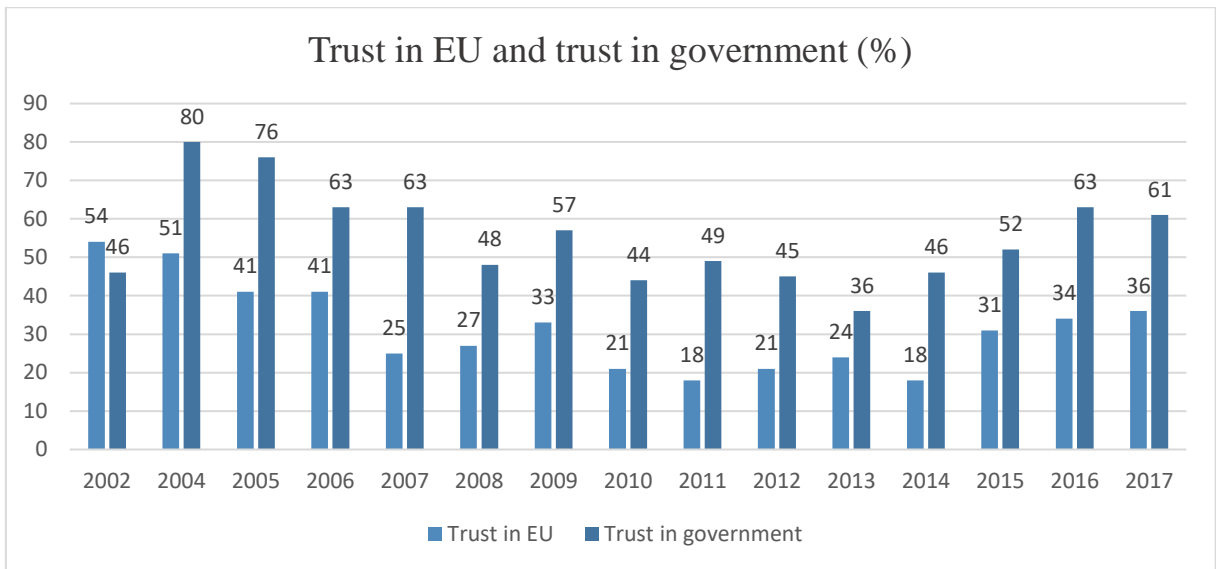


Figure 2. Comparison of trust in the EU and trust in the government among the Turks (2002-2017)

Source: Eurobarometer

*Figure 2* compares the level of trust in the EU among Turkish people to the trust in their government. The main reason for studying these results was to find out whether Turkish people’s trust in the EU is interlinked with the country’s domestic situation. The results were somewhat surprising. The first finding showed that the trust in the Turkish government has always been considerably higher than trust in the EU. 2004 saw the highest support towards the government and moreover, the same year showed the highest level of trust in the EU. However, the difference in numbers was quite significant – almost thirty percent. Another finding proved that the years from 2008 until 2014 saw the lowest level of trust in the government which is comparable to the lowest level of trust in the EU during the same period.

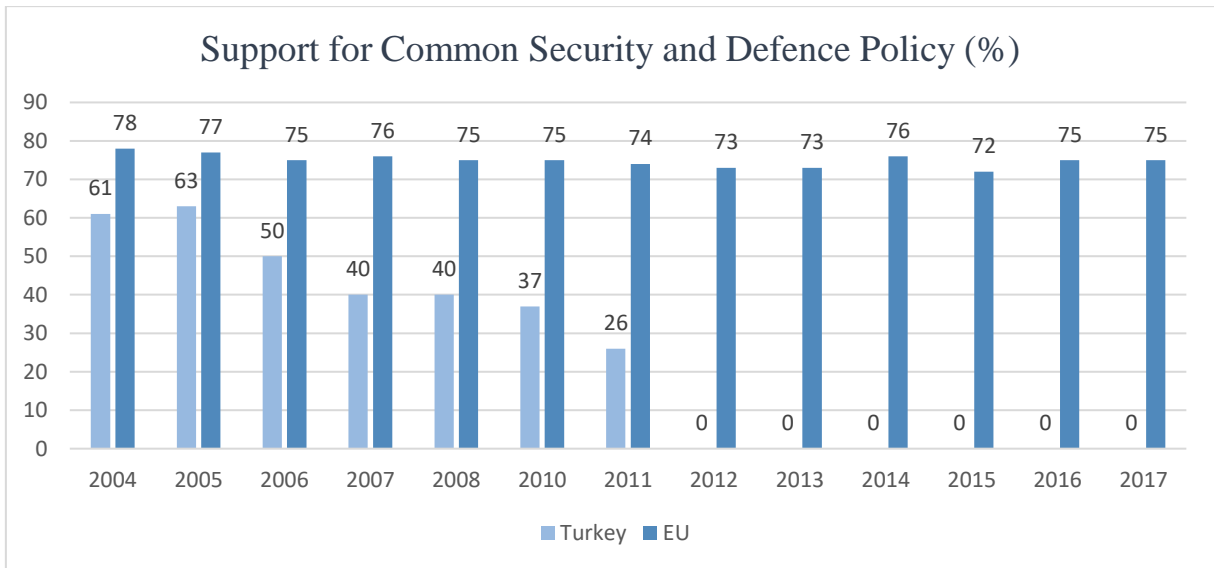


Figure 3. Support for Common Security and Defence Policy among the Turks (2004-2011) and among the EU member states (2004-2017)

Source: Eurobarometer

When it comes to the perception of Common Security and Defence Policy, the support of Turkish population declined significantly between the years 2004 and 2011. Findings of this poll are similar to *Figure 1*, where we could see considerable decline in the Turks' support for the EU membership during the same period. Public support in 2011 more than halved when compared to 2004. Unfortunately, starting from 2012, Eurobarometer surveys have not included the perception of Turks' support towards the Common Security and Defence Policy. Additionally, no data is available for the year 2009, as the question about the common security and defence policy was not included with this year's survey. While looking further into the survey results, it becomes apparent that from 2010 onwards the objective of the survey shifted from defence sector to economy. Questions about security were replaced with questions about financial wellbeing and people's economic situation. This paper suggests that one of the main reasons for such change was caused by the worldwide economic crisis during this period. Interestingly, the support for common security and defence policy among the EU member states has remained high at all times, constantly standing above seventy percent. Thus, based on the survey results, it can be said that common security policy for the EU member states continues to be extremely important, and it can be predicted that the member states will continue developing mutual security and defence policies.

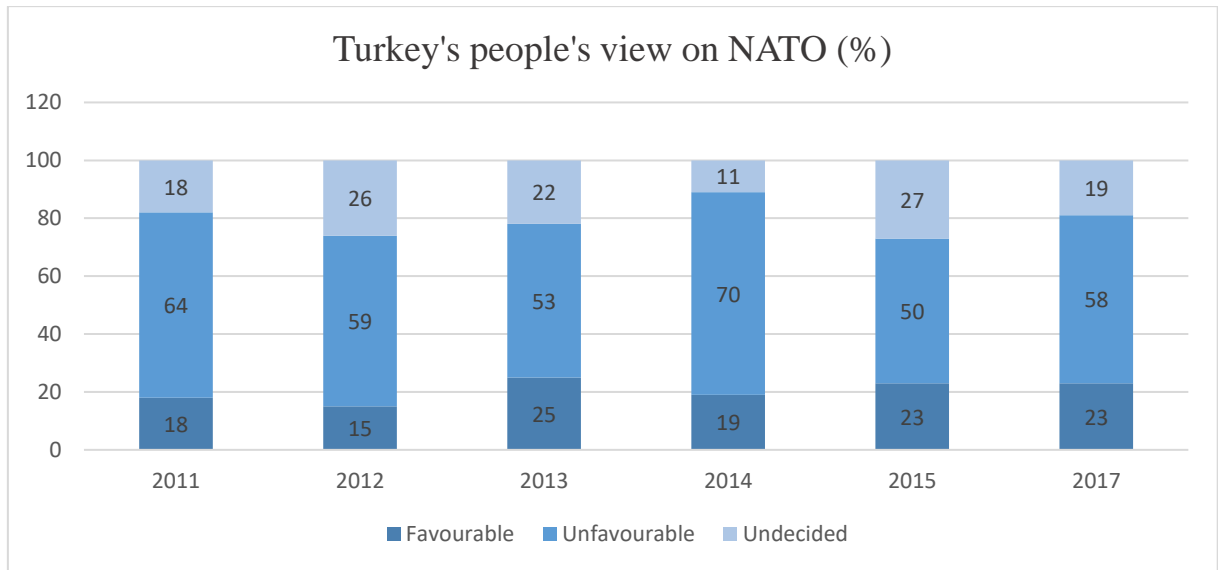


Figure 4. Turkey people’s view on NATO (2011-2017)

Source: Pew Research Centre

*Figure 4* gives the results of Turkey’s national views on NATO. Unfortunately, the data is not available prior 2011, as such surveys were not conducted before that time. Nevertheless, the data available provides us with sufficient details on how Turkish people view NATO. Surprisingly, even though Turkey significantly contributes to the alliance, NATO’s image among the Turks remains largely negative. More than half of the population sees the alliance unfavourably. Favourable combines of ‘very favourable’ and ‘somewhat favourable’ responses. Unfavourable combines ‘very unfavourable’ and ‘somewhat unfavourable’. In 2014, the biggest decline in support for NATO was detected, whilst the next year saw twenty percent increase in support for the alliance.

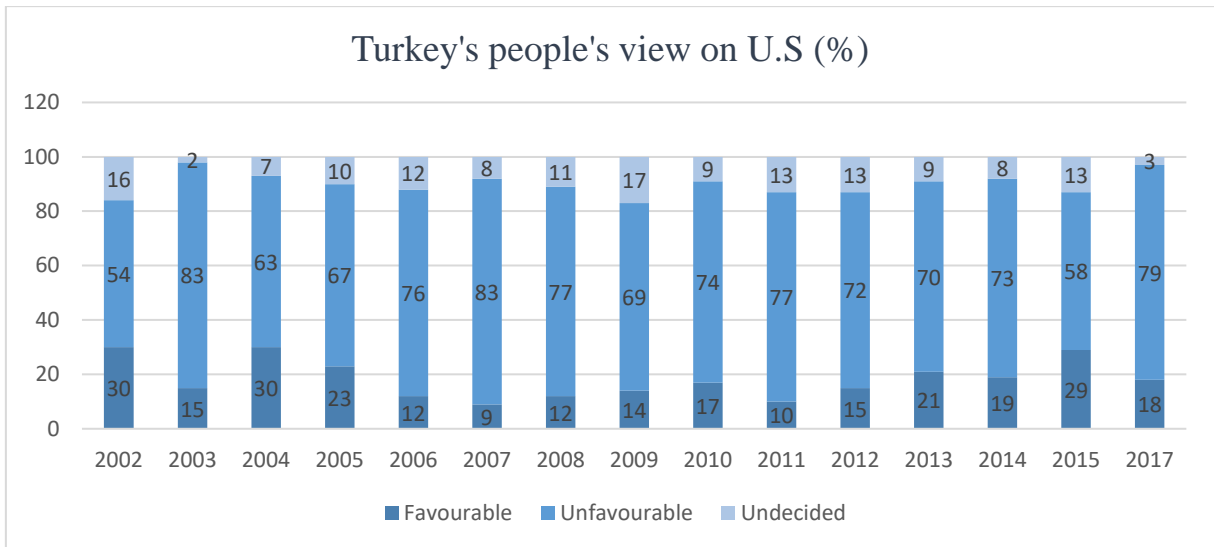


Figure 5. Turkey's people's view on U.S (2002-2017)

Source: Pew Research Centre

It is argued that Turkey's membership in NATO has principally taken the form of a Turkish-U.S. bilateral alliance, hence *Figure 5* seeks to understand how Turks view the United States. U.S saw the biggest opposition by the Turks in 2003, with eighty-three percent of the respondents viewing the U.S unfavourably. It can be argued that this is most likely the result of the United States' activities in the Iraq War in 2003. Nevertheless, interestingly a significant increase in the support for the U.S can be seen in the following year (2004), where it rose twenty percent. The 2017 survey showed strong anti-Americanism, with seventy-nine percent of the Turks having a negative view of the US, and with only eighteen percent having a positive view. The author suggests that the decline in the nations' support to the U.S is caused by the current tensions which are also getting substantial coverage in media – the U.S. arming of the YPG in Syria, the U.S' supposed involvement in the 2016 Turkish coup d'état attempt and growing Turkish-Russian security cooperation.

### **3. DISCUSSION ON THE STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE WEST**

After examining the transforming nature of international security system and the public opinion surveys, it is important to examine the degree of integration between NATO and the EU's security capabilities. The EU-NATO strategic relationship in the context of securitization provides an interesting empirical case study, hence the first section of the following chapter analyses the evolution and implementation of their security cooperation. According to some scholars, the existing methods of cooperation between NATO and the EU were built on a certain balance, based on three main premises: the development of transparency and cooperation; NATO's support to the progress of ESDP; and a significant degree of involvement on non-EU members in the ESDP activities (Matlary and Petersson 2013). The second section will discuss some of the unresolved issues that might cause controversy, such as the EU's access to NATO assets and capabilities, Turkey's role in deciding European security, and disagreements arising from the enlargement policies of NATO and the EU. Additionally, the last section of this chapter will be the author's attempt to prove Turkey's strategic importance in preserving stability in global security environment.

#### **3.1. The evolution of NATO-EU strategic security partnership**

The evolution of security arrangements between NATO and the EU on the notion of giving the EU a common security dimension goes back half a century. Discussions for establishing a common European Defence Community first took place already in 1950, which was initiated by the Pleven Plan (Furson 1980, 42-45). The formation of a pan-European defence framework, as an alternative to West Germany's proposed accession to NATO, was meant to tackle the German military potential in case of conflict with the Soviet Union. However, further dialogues to form a European Defence Community were refused by the French parliament, and the initial Treaty failed to obtain ratification. Even though the initial concept of a common European security entity was brought up half a century ago, the more specific agreements did not occur until 1993. With the Maastricht

Treaty in 1993, Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was introduced (Ibid.). A breakthrough came in 1999, at the Cologne European Council, where the member states of the EU reaffirmed their willingness to develop capabilities for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces. One of the key developments was the Berlin Plus agreement (2002) that gave the EU, under certain conditions, access to NATO assets and capabilities. In addition, it was agreed that the deployable forces will also be drawn from national or multinational contributions by the EU member states. With the agreement, it was recognized that there is a need to ensure the development of effective cooperation, consultation, and transparency between NATO and the EU. The 2009 Treaty of Lisbon renamed the ESDP to Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) (Ibid.)

According to NATO's homepage, CSDP is "the strategic partnership established between the European Union and NATO in crisis management, founded on (our) shared values, the indivisibility of (our) security and (our) determination to tackle the challenges of the new Century". The responsibilities of the CSDP are military advice and assistance tasks, joint disarmament operations, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation, and rescue tasks. All these tasks also contribute to the fight against terrorism, including the support to the third countries in combating terrorism on their grounds (Matlary and Petersson 2013). It is inevitable that the defence scope of security is an indispensable part of European integration process. With the creation of Common European Security, some scholars argue that the EU is increasingly becoming a new player in the complex field of hard security. Others argue that as it is still far more reliant on its political and economic influence than on its military competence, the EU is best seen as a security community instead of a security actor. (Lake 2005, 133). Despite the advancement for NATO-EU security cooperation over the past decades, a challenge to improve effective institutional links between NATO and the EU still remains.

### **3.2. Controversy on the discrimination of non-EU NATO members**

Long accession talks with the EU have led Turkey to a significant mistrust towards the Union and have understandably caused concerns over the country's status and the degree of influence within the ESDP. Furthermore, it has led Turkey to the conclusion that the ESDP represents determination

to marginalise NATO and exclude non-EU members from significant decisions. The EU consists of 28 states, and combined with NATO, they both have a significant share of membership. The EU has 22 members of NATO's total 29 member states, that is, 75% of all NATO members can be found in the EU. Having such a share of membership, one could expect quite considerable EU influence in NATO's general mission and operational missions. Additionally, the EU and NATO identify similar security threats, such as international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, states failure, and regional conflicts, hence in the rational sense both organizations would need similar capabilities to address these threats (Matlary and Petersson 2013). For decades, most of the EU member-states have been members of NATO as well, which proves the fact that in terms of military capability, the Union has previously been and still is reliable on NATO. Additionally, the strategic documents of NATO and the EU emphasise that the capabilities for their missions should be complementary, rather than duplicative (Ibid.). The latter implies that there have always been mutual understandings about cooperation between the two institutions.

The discrimination issue mainly concerns the position of non-EU NATO members in the EU crisis management operations. Surely, no one could expect the EU to give Turkey, or any other non-member, the same rights that other EU members have, however it might cause conflicts when the EU gets access to NATO assets and capabilities, to which Turkey contributes greatly with its second largest military. In the context of securitization, it is ironical that there seems to be no allowance for Turkey to enter the formal structure of the EU, while it is taking advantage of the country's military assets and capacity. Several scholars associate such division of labour between EU and NATO in terms of Madeleine Albright's "three D's": avoiding decoupling, duplication, and discrimination against NATO's non-EU members (Hartley, Sandler 1999). The first one refers to refraining any decoupling between the EU and NATO's decision-making; the second one warns against unnecessary duplication of defence resources; and the third one raises concerns about possible discrimination against NATO members who are not part of the EU. Albright's warning refers to the decision-making processes of these organisations regarding the management of their resources and the attainment of new capabilities. Albright also brings out that in 1998 only eleven out of fifteen EU member states were also NATO members, which proves that the EU capabilities have relied on military resources from NATO members, to which Turkey contributes significantly with its second largest army in the alliance. (Ibid.) On that premise, the EU gains the advantages of communication, intelligence, logistics facilities of NATO and such approach proves that there is a dilemma between the ESDP and NATO in regard to European security. Naturally, Turkey's



initial reaction to the initiative was distrustful. There was the assumption that the EU was looking to challenge NATO as Europe's hard security actor, as well as the notion that the country might be excluded from a key component of Europe's developing security architecture.

### **3.3. The importance of Turkey in the global security field**

Despite not being a member of the EU, Turkey is an active participant in the EU security operations and deployments, as well as it is a strategic partner for NATO. With its crucial geostrategic location, Turkey is an important regional power, and therefore it has crucial importance in achieving stability in global security. In this chapter, the author attempts to demonstrate the importance of Turkey in the global security field, and will propose three main arguments to support her claim:

#### **3.3.1. Common security threats**

In 2016, a Joint Declaration was signed in which seven key areas for closer cooperation between the EU and NATO were determined (NATO Handbook 2016):

- Countering hybrid threats,
- Broadening and adapting operational cooperation, including maritime issues and migration
- Cyber security and defence,
- Developing coherent, complementary and interoperable defence capabilities,
- Facilitating a stronger defence industry and research,
- Coordinating exercises,
- Enhancing defence and security capacity building.

Turkey today is exposed to most of the challenges the alliance and the EU are facing today – that is the external threat by state actors and threats by non-state actors such as international terrorism, extremism and large-scale migration. As both hard and soft security provider, Turkey has significant relevance to the EU in security matters. These new security risks and threats are more dangerous today because there is no longer a single identifiable enemy. Thus, there is a need for effective cooperation. Additionally, current situation in Syria and Iraq, specifically in the Kurdish Northern parts, proves to be a large security concern for Turkey. The present status-quo in the area

is not only a security concern for Turkey, but also to the West, as in case of possible emergence of an independent Kurdish state Turkey most probably will intervene militarily. Due to its proximity to the area, the future events will be crucial in defining the country's influence and power in the region, and any aggression will most likely compromise Turkey's relations with its Western allies. Furthermore, some scholars have argued that the EU's interests would be better attended by preserving Turkey's role as Europe's security insulator from the issues of the Middle East (Buzan and Diez 1999,47).

### **3.3.2. Crucial geostrategic location**

Turkey provides a foothold to the Middle-East for the Western countries. It is strategically located in a very prominent location, with access both to the Middle East and Europe, giving the country a very unique position in the world. Turkey, sharing borders with Iran, Iraq and Syria, gives the West a powerful and crucial ally in the region. Additionally, access to warm waters (the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea, and the Mediterranean) provides Turkey with a great advantage in terms of trade and transport. Nevertheless, Turkey's position at the periphery of a prosperous region also makes it a source, destination and transit route for transnational crime. Many third country nationals from the Middle East, Africa and Asia try to travel through Turkey to reach Europe. Desaj (2005, 50) claims that Turkey in the EU could act as the frontline against these ever-growing soft threats through beneficial cooperation. This proves that Turkey's geographical position is not mainly a threat to the European countries, but it provides those states great protection as well.

### **3.3.3. Military capacity and contributions to EU-NATO operations**

It is inevitable that with the second largest army in NATO (following the U.S), Turkey has an immense role to play in the global security arena. Although the country is not a member of the EU, Turkey has participated in multiple European Union-led security operations. The country already has the experience of working together with many armed forces in Europe, and thus has the practise of sharing the same training procedures and defence doctrines. One of those operations was the 2004 Operation Althea, where Turkey engaged with the EU in support of its security operations in Bosnia (Global Relations Forum Task Force Report 2015). This operation utilized already in-place NATO assets in accordance with the Berlin Plus Agreement. Furthermore, Turkey has historically proven its determination to westernise and modernise its domestic and foreign policies by

affiliating several democratic organisations that share Western values and ideologies. Prior to entering NATO, Turkey joined the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development in 1948, and the Council of Europe in 1949. Additionally, in 1963 it became an associate member of the European Economic Community before applying for the full membership of the EU in 1987. Official accession talks between Turkey and the EU commenced in 2004 (Jung, Raudvere 2008).

Turkey's continued military strength contrasts with Europe's reliance on soft power at the expense of coercive capabilities. Thus, the EU could considerably benefit from Turkey's military power. The country has an extensive role in preservation of stability of security both in the global and regional arena making the country a crucial player in the European security equation.

## CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to conceptualize Turkey's position in the global shifting security system and to understand whether the country has crucial importance in preserving security in the global arena. The findings were rather interesting. The study found that the security today has a wider meaning than the traditional military focus with special emphasis on human security, an aspect never considered a century ago. The second conclusion is that the security in the twenty-first century must consider diverse concepts such as law, ethics, human rights and environment, in addition to notions of hard power such as military and armed forces. Neither military nor non-military threats, such as international migration and terrorism, are unimportant, thus one cannot be forgotten at the expense of the other. Additionally, unlike traditional notions, non-traditional concepts of security are relevant for all nations because to tackle these in a globalized world today, and thus collective affirmative actions are required. Moreover, the study found that international security has moved beyond interstate events, hence global security today includes the protection of states from threats originating within their own.

Furthermore, the study found that Turkey today is exposed to most of the challenges both NATO and EU are facing today – that is the external threat by state actors and threats by non-state actors such as international terrorism, extremism and large-scale migration. Thus, there is a need for effective cooperation. Moreover, while Turkey's NATO membership has largely had hard security considerations at its heart, Turkey's compatibility to the EU has constantly been questioned. However, as the EU today is best seen as a security community instead of a security actor, the study found that Turkish membership to the EU could potentially enhance the Union's military capabilities. Thus, despite the seemingly divergent security cultures of Turkey and the EU, the country proves to remain a crucial player in the European security equation.

Having considered several aspects, the author is confident that Turkey should be an active participant in the EU security operations and deployments and should preserve its position as a strategic partner for NATO. Full membership to the EU is not necessarily needed, to be an active participant in the EU security matters, however in the context of securitization, emphasis should

be on finding new ways to integrate Turkey. It is evident that the defence of the EU has always been integrated with the future of NATO, and as it is seen with CSDP, steps to enhance cooperation between those two organisations have already been taken. Additionally, having inspected the Turks' opinions on several matters, such as their trust in their government, their trust in EU, views on NATO and the U.S, it is clear that security matters to everyone.

Predicting the future of Turkish security strategy is extremely challenging. The country's geopolitical location will continue to ensure its vulnerability to developments around its borders. The future Turkey-Europe-NATO security cooperation will hinge considerably on Turkey's national security development, essentially in regards to the Kurdish question. Thus, Turkey's position in global security environment should be observed and examined further. In addition to the attempts to conceptualize Turkey's role in the Western security environment, its role in specific regions and in the whole world should continuously be observed, as it is important to look at the broader security perspective. Due to ongoing domestic and international tensions, Turkey undoubtedly remains an interesting case-study in several academic fields.

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## **APPENDIX 1.**

### Question 1.

Generally speaking, do you think that Turkey's membership of the EU would be...?

- A good thing
- A bad thing
- No opinion/No answer

### Question 2.

I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain media and institutions. For each of the following media and institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust: The European Union

- Tend to trust
- Tend not to trust
- No opinion/No answer

### Question 3.

I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain media and institutions. For each of the following media and institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust: The government

- Tend to trust
- Tend not to trust
- No opinion/No answer

### Question 4.

What is your opinion of the following statement? Please tell me whether you are for it or against it: A common defence and security policy among EU member states



- For
- Against
- No opinion/No answer

Question 5.

Please tell me if you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable opinion of NATO.

Question 6.

Please tell me if you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable opinion of the United States.