



New Political Challenges for Germany, Turkey and the EU in 2022

Zeitenwende: A historical turn?

7th Joint Conference of the
Turkish German University (TGU/TDU/TAÜ)
and the
University of Cologne (UoC)
Istanbul, 27 May 2022



ABSTRACT

The relations between Turkey and the EU and Germany have been of interest for many decades, though one can ask if the major global incidents of the past two years created new dynamics or shifts in those relations.

To answer those questions the University of Cologne (UoC) and Turkish-German University (TGU) organized its seventh edition of a joint conference after missing out two years due to the pandemic. For the conference scholars from all over Europe came together to discuss the current status and potential consequences of the Turkish relations with the European Union and Germany while taking into account the results of the pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and other major incidents of the last years.

Additionally, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkey, Faruk Kaymakçı, gave an input on the Turkish perspective of the current status quo between the EU and Turkey.

Highlights of the Conference

- **Keynote speech by Faruk Kaymakçı** (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkey)
- **Panel I: New institutional dynamics in EU-Turkey Relations**
- **Panel II: The West and Turkey after the war in Ukraine - A game changer? – Turkish, European and global perspectives**
- **World Politics and Reflections on EU – Turkey Relations**

Program

Friday, 27 May 2022	
Venue: Turkish-German University (TGU), Beykoz / Istanbul	
09.00 h – 09.15 h	Registration
09.15 h – 09.30 h	Welcome Turkish-German University Conference Organizers
09.30 h – 10.00 h	Introduction and overview
10.00 h – 12.00 h	Panel I: New institutional dynamics in EU-Turkey Relations <u>Chair:</u> Dr. Wulf Reiners (German Development Institute) <u>Speakers:</u> Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ebru Turhan (TGU) Prof. Dr. Bahar Rumelili (Koç University) Dr. Funda Tekin (Institut für Europäische Politik, Berlin) Assoc. Prof. Dr. Basak Zeynep Alpan (Middle East Technical University)
12.00 h – 14.00 h	Open Buffet Lunch
14.00 h – 14.45 h	Keynote Speech Faruk Kaymakçı, Deputy Foreign Minister
14.45 h – 15.15	Coffee Break

15.15 h – 17.15 h	<p>Panel II: The West and Turkey after the war in Ukraine - A game changer? – Turkish, European, and global perspectives</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Prof. Dr. Atila Eralp (Istanbul Policy Center)</p> <p><u>Speakers:</u> Prof. Dr. Fuat Keyman (Istanbul Policy Center, Sabancı University) Prof. Dr. Birgül Demirtas (TGU) Prof. Dr. Julie Smith (Cambridge University) Dr. Günter Seufert (German Institute for International and Security Studies (SWP, Berlin) - CATS¹) Prof. Dr. Thomas Christiansen (Luiss Università Guido Carli, Rome)</p>
17.15 h – 17.45 h	<p>Conference findings</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Prof. Dr. Atila Eralp (Istanbul Policy Center) Dr. Wulf Reiners (German Development Institute) Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Wessels (CETEUS² – University of Cologne/TGU)</p>
18.45 h – 21.45 h	Dinner (upon invitation)

¹ Centre for Applied Turkey Studies

² Centre for Turkey and EU-Studies



Introductory Panel: New institutional dynamics in EU-Turkey Relations

Chair:

Dr. Wulf Reiners (German Development Institute)

Speakers:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ebru Turhan (TGU)

Prof. Dr. Bahar Rumelili (Koç University)

Dr. Funda Tekin (Institut für Europäische Politik, Berlin)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Basak Zeynep Alpan (Middle East Technical University)

Rapporteur:

Valentin Althoff (CETEUS, University of Cologne)

The first panel of the joint conference dealt with the question whether there are new forms or trends of institutional dynamics in the relations between Turkey and the EU and Germany.

They started by discussing a broad introductory question on whether there are in fact new institutional dynamics. After pointing out that institutions cannot adapt themselves to the external changes as rapidly as there are happening currently, the term “transactional conditionality” was introduced. Thereby one could observe a shift from “normative conditionality” towards “transactional

conditionality” in the relations between Turkey and the EU which is shown through an interest-driven political approach compared to one based on normative standards.

Another observation is the continuing nature of “conflictual cooperation” in the relations between Turkey and the EU, meaning that the relations do not break completely but there are no incentives neither to increase integration. Though it was also noted that 2021 almost became a tipping point towards plain conflict before a shift towards a “positive agenda” re-balanced relations. Finally, there is a need for work on both sides to create new dynamics while stating that



there are still high-level talks happening between the two parties.

Now the approach of “Europeanization” was introduced and the differences between the resilience of institutions compared to the perspectives especially of young people were stressed. What could be observed is an “Europeanization” of politics, policy, and polity in the younger generation that opens perspectives for those people that are not represented in the institutions.

On the question of consequences of the last federal election in Germany and the presidential election in France, it is stated that those were of key interest for Turkish actors. Especially the end of Merkel’s era is viewed as a shift in relations. While her last years were marked by a transactional but smooth environment it is an open question if Scholz continues with the transactional approach or if there will be a new shift towards a norm-driven approach. Besides the environment between the states politicizes where topics that were used to be dealt with technically become concerns of the wider public. Lastly it is questioned if Scholz can take up Merkel’s role of the leading

actor in the European Council, especially in regard towards Turkey or if Macron can claim this leading role.

Afterwards the panel discussed how the current crises, especially in Ukraine, connect to the concept of “differentiated integration”. Turkey is seen as the “elephant in the room” through missing in the current enlargement discussions in the EU even though it has a long history as a potential member. As a potential solution the concept of “staged accession” is discussed where a state might gain some voting rights but i.e., no right to veto.

Lastly the topic of security was discussed. Here the panel states that with the current crises European security became less EU-centered. This again opens the question of individual relations between Turkey and other European states including Russia. Potentially the creation of a broader European forum for security concerns might result out of this new environment. A last point was made that a new antagonistic perspective on Russia by the EU (“political other”) could create a shift towards a more positive identity of Turkey in the EU.



Source: CETEUS, University of Cologne.



Keynote Speech

Speaker: Faruk Kaymakci (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Director for EU Affairs, Ambassador)

Rapporteur: Jonas Nagel (CETEUS)

Faruk Kaymakçı, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Director for EU Affairs and Ambassador, held the keynote speech online via zoom due to short-term commitments. Regarding the overall theme “Zeitenwende: A historical turn?” he addressed five important present-day issues which are all – more or less- connected to the long-standing EU-Turkey accession ship negotiation:

1) Security and Defense

Turkey would fully support NATO enlargement if new candidates respected the security concerns of Turkey. Also, the Deputy Minister mentioned that there is a lack of proper cooperation between the NATO and the EU and this leads to unstable zones especially in the eastern parts of Europe. Mr. Kaymakçı pointed out that if Turkey were a member of the European Union, Russia would not have started the war with Ukraine.

- 2) Energy Transformation and
- 3) Digitalization

To tie with the security and defense aspect, the dependence of energy supply from Russia in the EU is too high and thus needs to be closed down drastically. The Deputy Minister continued his speech with a plea towards the European Union: the EU must diversify its energy supply. He said the Turkish government could provide gas easily to the EU through a newish Southern Gas Corridor – the infrastructure has already been established. Regarding its own country energy management, Mr. Kaymakçı could proudly present the latest figures: nearly 50% percent of the Turkish energy demand is backed by renewable resources, e.g. solar and wind power.



4) Migration

Over the course of his speech, Mr. Kaymakçı referred to the current migration issues as another big challenge. Allegedly more than four million people are seeking refuge in Turkey, especially from neighboring state Syria. In the light of increasing management problems due to the ever-expanding flow of refugees, the Deputy Minister sought help of Germany and the EU and proposed to disassemble the border control and to install a so-called safe zone in Northern Syria.

5) Economy

According to Mr. Kaymakçı the disastrous economic situation are aftermaths of the corona pandemic and the ongoing war between Russia and the Ukraine. Since the Ukraine is a major supplier of basic food products, such as wheat und sunflower oil, the prices for basic needs in Turkey have raised to an all-time high. To overcome the fragile economic situation, the Deputy Minister mentioned that the custom union agreement between Turkey and the EU should be modernized. This would

be beneficial for both, the EU and Turkey.

Conclusion:

The solution of the world's major issues is and always has been bi- and multilateral relations. Germany and the EU should foster their relations with Turkey for the welfare of all.



Source: CETEUS, University of Cologne.

Panel II: The West and Turkey after the war in Ukraine - A game changer? Turkish, European and global perspectives

Chair: Prof. Dr. Atila Eralp (Istanbul Policy Center)

Speakers: Prof. Dr. Fuat Keyman (IPC, Sabanci University)
Prof. Dr. Birgül Demirtas (TGU)
Prof. Dr. Julie Smith (Cambridge University)
Dr. Günter Seufert (German Institute for International and Security Studies (SWP, Berlin - CATS)
Prof. Dr. Thomas Christiansen (Luiss Università Guido Carli, Rome)

Rapporteur: Jonas Nagel (CETEUS)

The keynote speech by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Director of EU Affairs, Faruk Kaymakçı, was followed by the second panel of the symposium with the title *“The West and Turkey after the war in Ukraine - A game changer? Turkish, European and global perspectives”*. The panel, chaired by Prof. Dr. Atila Eralp from the Istanbul Policy Center gave podium to distinguished academics from all around Europe.

Prof. Dr. Atila Eralp, after having introduced and welcomed the panelists, gave a brief introduction about the historic and –more importantly– the current relevance of intergovernmental policy. Regarding the current

Russian-Ukrainian war, Eralp centred the possibility of a new Cold War.

All panellists agreed that the duration of the war must end immediately or at least a ceasefire must be installed with immediate effect. Everyone highlighted, that the policy of common sanctions worked properly and the EU stands together with one voice. Even Hungary, which is known for its solo efforts and often rejects coworking with the other EU-member states, is backing the common decisions.

In the course of the vibrant yet factual panel, the discussion deals

manly on the different standpoints of Germany, the EU and Turkey.

Both, Germany and Turkey are seen to act too reluctantly. Explanations given by the panellists refer to the yearlong peace policy of Germany due to its history on the one hand and on the other hand Turkey doesn't want to take a firm stand so it can still side with everyone.

Furthermore, the present world is seen to work rather multipolarly than bipolarly – nowadays China must also be considered as a big player within the community of states – as well as other rising nations, e.g. India. It was made clear, that Russia being isolated from the world is nothing but a myth: countries like India and China still maintain ties with Russia.

Therefore, a sincere approach to get Russia back on the negotiation table must be done with joint forces.

Conclusion:

Even though the world is facing many crises simultaneously, it can be seen as a new start within the community of states: there might even be a movement closer together. Turkey must find its way between the NATO, the EU and Russia.



Source: CETEUS, University of Cologne.



Conference findings

Chair Prof. Dr. Atila Eralp (Istanbul Policy Center)
Dr. Wulf Reiners (German Development Institute)
Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Wessels (CETEUS – University of Cologne/TGU)

Rapporteur: Jonas Nagel (CETEUS)

Together with former chairs Prof. Dr. Atila Eralp and Dr. Wulf Reiners, Prof. Dr. Wessels terminates the 7th joint conference with a general conclusion. All three of them couldn't stress enough how vital these get-togethers are. Especially now, where the preliminary decline of people getting tested positive of covid 19 allows us to come together again physically.

Prof. Dr. Wessels pointed out, that the conjointly gathered findings are not only crucial for scholars and academics, but also for decision makers in domestic and international politics.

Combining the two panels and the keynote speech of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Faruk Kaymakci, the framework *Zeitenwende: A historical turn?* posed the question: quo vadis Turkey and quo vadis EU? Indeed, it is very difficult to tell where Turkey stands: is it part of the EU or part of a

pro-Russian alliance? Is it in-between?

The pressure on the Turkish government is growing and according to the speakers Turkey would be better off joining part of groups – either way.

Besides the above-mentioned Turkey-Germany-EU relations, there must be more investigations and analyses of China and other countries as so-called external forces. Additionally, challenges as the climate crisis, covid 19 pandemic/ global health and digital transformation must be taken into account for further research. The questions remain if Russia falls, and China profits, what are the future narratives?



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