



University of Crete
School of Social Sciences
Department of Political Science

**European Union – Turkey Relations: The accession of Turkey to
the European Union.
History, Progress, Potential.**

Undergraduate Dissertation

Kourgiantaki Argyro (Student No: 2968)

Supervisor: Dr. Xenakis Dimitrios, Assistant Professor of International Politics

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Abstract

Ever since its creation the European Union has evolved from a cluster of countries based on economic relations to a political union of states that have established deep-rooted cooperation no longer limited solely to the area of economics. Turkey first expressed its interest in becoming a member of the EU in 1959 and official accession negotiations began in 2002, but fifty-nine years down the road it has not yet achieved full membership due to political, social, and economic instabilities and irregularities within the country. With Turkey's membership potential hanging in the balance and the nature of the European Union changing day by day, in this dissertation we will examine the history of the European Union, the relations between Turkey and the EU diachronically, as well as the potential future scenarios and alternatives.

Key words: European Union, enlargements, European enlargement, enlargement policy, European history, Turkey, EU-Turkey Relations.

Περίληψη

Ήδη από τη δημιουργία της, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση έχει εξελιχθεί από ένα σύμπλεγμα χωρών βασισμένο σε οικονομικές σχέσεις σε μία πολιτική ένωση κρατών με εδραιωμένη συνεργασία που δε περιορίζεται πλέον αποκλειστικά στον τομέα της οικονομίας. Η Τουρκία εκδήλωσε για πρώτη φορά ενδιαφέρον ένταξης στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση το 1959 και επίσημες ενταξιακές διαπραγματεύσεις ξεκίνησαν το 2002, αλλά πενήντα εννέα χρόνια αργότερα δεν έχει κατορθώσει ακόμη να αποκτήσει πλήρη ένταξη λόγω των πολιτικών, κοινωνικών, και οικονομικών ασταθειών και παρατυπιών της χώρας. Με τη δυνατότητα συμμετοχής της Τουρκίας να είναι αβέβαιη και τη φύση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης να αλλάζει μέρα με τη μέρα, σε αυτή την πτυχιακή εργασία θα εξετάσουμε την ιστορία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, τις Ευρωτουρκικές σχέσεις σε διαχρονική βάση, καθώς και τα πιθανά μελλοντικά σενάρια και εναλλακτικές.

Λέξεις κλειδιά: Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, διευρύνσεις, Ευρωπαϊκή διεύρυνση, πολιτική διεύρυνσης, Ευρωπαϊκή ιστορία, Τουρκία, Ευρωτουρκικές Σχέσεις.

List of Abbreviations

AKP	Justice and Development Party
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CCT	Common Customs Tariff
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
EC	European Community
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defence Community
EEA	European Economic Area
EEC	European Economic Community
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EMU	European Monetary Union
EPC	European Political Cooperation
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NPAA	National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Cooperation
SEA	Single European Act
TEU	Treaty on European Union
WEU	Western European Union

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Introduction

Ever since its establishment in 1923 Turkey embarked on a mission to become a part of the western world and an influential factor in the world scene. Through its constitutionally established westernisation process the country has come a long way from the pro-Islam, politically and economically underdeveloped entity of the Ottoman era, and has achieved to transform itself into a democratic state with a free market economy committed to promoting and safeguarding the fundamental rights and freedoms, and the rule of law. The above happened under the assistance and guidance of the European Union, during Turkey's endeavours to position itself within the European sphere of influence and become a member state of the EU.

Relations between Turkey and the European Union date back fifty-five years when the Ankara Agreement was signed between the two parties. Turkey's interest in becoming a part of the European sphere, however, dates back even further since the country first expressed interest in becoming a member of the, back then, European Economic Community in 1959. Turkey acquired candidacy status in 1999 and accession negotiations were formally initiated in 2005 although, to this day, it has not managed to complete the accession process and become a full member of the European Union. The aforementioned constitutes Turkey as the longest standing candidate member in the European Union's entire enlargement history and, at present, the end point of the relationship still remains unclear. Since the beginning of accession negotiations in 2005 only sixteen out of the thirty-five chapters of the *acquis* have been opened and just one of them has been provisionally closed, while most of the remaining chapters have been blocked by member states or the Council. Moreover, for the past decade negotiations have been moving at a snail's pace, reforms have slowed down significantly, and the future of the EU-Turkey relations remains rather uncertain, due to the country's domestic political developments as well as the EU's growing scepticism over a potential accession.

In this dissertation we will first assess the evolution of the European Union through the course of history, by examining both the historical development of the EU from the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community to the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty as well as the enlargement process, which increased the Union's member count from the founding six to today's twenty-eight. Then there will be an analysis of the relations between the European Union and Turkey diachronically, from the time when Turkey first expressed its interest in becoming a part of the European world to today's impasse, with a very different Turkey and an equally as different European Union having reached a standstill. In the end we

will go through the opinions that exist both in favour and against the accession of Turkey into the EU, followed by a description of the public opinion surrounding the matter, and eventually conclude with the potential scenarios that could ensue in the future.

Chapter I: The European Union

The European Union (EU), established in 1951, is a unique partnership comprising of twenty-eight countries across the European continent. Initially, the EU was created in order to promote peace, prosperity, and the European values in the aftermath of the two World Wars, a purpose that still continues to be relevant today (European Commission, 2015). At first, the union was established as a regional economic agreement, with the idea that countries who maintain economic relations through trade become economically interdependent and are less likely to be involved in future conflict (European Commission, 2016). The European Union is unique, often described as a hybrid political entity, as it is neither a federation nor a simple cooperation between nations, but rather a combination of both (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018). In fact, the countries that comprise the EU have agreed to give up part of their sovereignty in certain areas and combine it, which makes them stronger in terms of power and influence, but they still maintain their independence.

In the pages following below, there will be a description of the historical evolution of the European Union from the immediate post-war period to the most recent Treaty of Lisbon, with special attention the political changes that accompanied each treaty and progressively changed the nature of the European Union. In addition to the deepening process which, as a result, led to a much broader spectrum in terms of cooperation among the member states, the widening process will be described, which led to a progressively broader expansion of the Union in geographical terms. Through the enlargement process the European Union of the six founding members has expanded to include twenty-eight member states and is set to further increase its size in the following years.

The history of European Integration

Tentative Steps

The vision of a united Europe is not a recent phenomenon. On the contrary, philosophers have talked about the unification of the continent over the years, but it was not until the aftermath of the Second World War that solid steps began to be taken, several years prior to the official inception of the European Community.

The first signs of cooperation between the western countries of Europe can be traced back to the 1940's when France and Britain signed the Treaty of Dunkirk in 1947 and formed

an alliance. A year later, in March of 1948, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg joined forces with France and Britain and concluded the Brussels Treaty, pledging to cooperate and defend one another in case of an attack (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.241). However, the unification of Europe was not strictly a matter among European countries. In 1947, amid the rise of communism, the refusal of the Soviet Union to cooperate, and the repercussions of the war, the United States put forward the Marshall Plan. The European Recovery Plan, as it was formally known, involved financial and material aid to Europe with the condition that European countries would have to collaborate in order to allocate the assistance. Due to that requirement, in April of 1948, sixteen European nations congregated in Paris and established the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), an institution responsible for the management of the reconstruction program, as well as a channel for free trade negotiations among members. The establishment of OEEC demonstrates the continent's inclination towards joint action and the desire for a free market economy, albeit that was later limited to the countries of Western Europe.

Although these were important first steps to the unification of the continent they fell short of the ambitions of those who longed for a United States of Europe, namely the federalists. In 1947 they urged for the creation of an assembly independent of the national governments with the goal of uniting the European people (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p. 242). Two years later, a ten-power conference took place in London in order to debate the federalists' proposal. However, the conference did not go according to plan. Quickly, it became evident that not all countries shared the same vision as there was a division between those who favoured the idea of closer cooperation and those who preferred a union in the form of an agreement between independent states. It was not entirely futile, however. The conference led to the creation of the Council of Europe, an organisation responsible for the promotion of the rule of law and human rights, based in Strasburg. Notwithstanding an important organisation, it fell short of the federal institution they aspired it to be, since certain governments were reluctant to partly concede their sovereignty to a supranational organisation and were, instead, in support of intergovernmental agreements (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p. 242). Ever since then, the debate of supranationalism versus intergovernmentalism has been a permanent feature of the European integration process.

The contribution of the United States to the initial stages of the European cooperation was not limited to the European Recovery Plan. In 1949 The United States, Canada, and a number of Western European countries signed the North Atlantic Treaty and founded the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), pledging to come to each other's assistance should an

external attack occur. Although through the course of history the United States did not wish to form a military alliance with western European countries due to the fact that it went against their position of not entangling alliances, the increasing influence of the Soviet Union combined with the difficulties that post-war Europe faced rendered it inevitable (Van Oudenaren, 1999). Overall, the United States contributed to the revival of Europe and the unification process, since they allowed the continent to focus on economic cooperation without being concerned about its defence policy and capacity.

In general, there were tentative steps that showed the inclination of the continent towards joint action and economic cooperation. Overall, during the 1940's and 1950's most European countries were willing to collaborate and join intergovernmental organisations that did not require great commitment, which is why the establishment of OEEC and the Council of Europe was a fairly straightforward process (Nugent, 2012, p.55). However, the notion of a closer cooperation that moved beyond intergovernmentalism and towards a supranational integration was not as easily accepted and, therefore, the collaboration that began shortly after was limited to the countries of Western Europe alone.

The Founding Treaties

The achievements and setbacks of the previous decade initiated a process that resulted in the creation of three sister institutions, known as the European Communities, namely the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC), and the European Atomic Energy Agency (Euratom). The above formed the foundation of what is known today as the European Union. In order for each of these communities to be founded a treaty was signed which set their objectives and functions. They are known as the Founding Treaties, since they constitute the basis the European Community. Specifically, the treaties were the Treaty of Paris, which was signed in 1951 and founded the European Coal and Steel Community, and the Treaties of Rome, both signed in 1957 and established the European Atomic Energy Community and the European Economic Community. In the pages following below the three institutions will be discussed, as well as the treaty that accompanied each, in an effort to study the historical aspects of the emergence of the European Community.

The landmark for the establishment of the ECSC was a speech by Jean Monnet, a businessman from France who lived in the United States during the years of the war and was in support of a European Union. Monnet, in line with the federalists, believed that integration should not be limited to intergovernmental agreements but rather the establishment of

European institutions where member states would concede part of their sovereignty and work together in order to prosper economically and politically (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p. 243). However, he also realised that what the federalists proposed was too radical for the time, as nations were not receptive to an assembly that directly challenged their powers and, therefore, any agreements needed to be established on a different rationale (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p. 243). He believed that the key to the revival of the European continent was the improvement of Franco-German relations and, for that reason, the involvement of Britain and Scandinavia was not important to him at the time. Furthermore, Monnet was in favour of process in small increments and believed that it was imperative to try and obtain results in specific sectors instead of making broad commitments that were not implementable, yet down the line integration still needed to be extensive and irrevocable, with a bona fide transfer of national powers to supranational organisations (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p. 243). He eventually managed to persuade the French and West German governments to support his proposal.

On May 9, 1950, Robert Schuman, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, made a speech suggesting a plan based on Jean Monnet's notions, where France and the Federal Republic of Germany would cooperate and pool their resources of steel and coal under a common authority (European Commission, 2018). These two resources were not only the sector mainly responsible for Europe's economic development, but also the cause of war between European countries in the past. Therefore, bringing them under control would not only aid the economic development of the continent, but limit the potential of a future conflict as well, since coal and steel were the very sinews of modern military weaponry. The Schuman Declaration, as it was named, called France and Germany, as well as any other European country that was interested, to take part in the reconstruction of Europe by participating in a common market, initially for coal and steel, that would later be expanded to include all products (Papadopoulou & Hasanagas, 2011, p.103). The above was supposed to lay the basis for the economic development of its members, which would lead to the establishment of an economic and political union, and eventually a European Federation (Papadopoulou & Hasanagas, 2011, p.104). Consequently, on 18 April 1951, the Treaty of Paris was signed by France, West Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Luxembourg, and Belgium, and the European Coal and Steel Community was founded. Great Britain chose not to be a part of it, fearing a potential loss of power when handling its national interests, especially where the Commonwealth was concerned (Pliakos, 2012, p.5). The ECSC entered into force on 23 July 1952 for a period of 50 years, it expired on July of 2002, and its functions were implemented into the European Community (Nugent, 2012, p. 60).

The European Coal and Steel Community was innovative in a couple of ways. It was a combination between an international organisation and an industrial cartel in control of economic sectors that deemed war impossible, while its political objectives were vastly buoyant, aspiring for the eventual creation of a common market for an array of raw materials (Nugent, 2012, p.61; Pliakos, 2012, p.4). What the founders aimed to achieve was a steady supply of these materials for every member state, the modernisation of production and a further expansion of the industry, better life conditions and non-discriminatory freedom of movement for the workers in the specific sectors, and also the free movement of residents and capital between the founding countries (Moussis, 2008, p.20; Nugent, 2012, p.61). Furthermore, the Paris treaty entailed certain responsibilities, such as the establishment of legislation concerning the abolition of tariff barriers and restrictive practices, the harmonisation of trade policies, the enforcement of taxes, as well as regulations regarding investments, financial aid, prices, and competition (Moussis, 2008, p.20; Nugent, 2012, p.61). In order for the above to be effectively implemented, four institutions were created, specifically the High Authority, the Council of Ministers, the Common Assembly, and the European Court of Justice. The above was significant, since these institutions were the first supranational bodies in the continent, with authority exceeding that of the national governments, which indicated a transfer of sovereignty, albeit limited (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p. 245).

More specifically, the High Authority was an independent body with executive powers, comprised of nine commissioners, two each from Germany, France, and Italy, and one each from the Benelux countries. The commissioners were completely independent, required to act in the favour of the Community and not as representatives of their country. The High Authority had responsibilities regarding the prevention of mergers and acquisitions, decisions over business agreements, measures concerning restrictive practices, and could even interfere in the regulation of prices, subject to limitations (Nugent, 2012, p.61; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.244). Jean Monnet was appointed as the first head of the institution. As far as the Council of Ministers is concerned, it was created as a counterweight to the powers of the High Authority, since the Council occasionally had to endorse the decisions made by the Commissioners and exercise typical checks (Nugent, 2012, p.61; Van Oudenaren, 1999, pp. 244-245). The body consisted of one minister from each member state with rotating chairmanship, and it was responsible for the harmonious cooperation between the High Authority and the national governments. The decision-making process differed depending on the matter at hand, sometimes unanimity was required while occasionally majority voting sufficed, which meant that individual countries could not exercise veto powers as they did in regular international organisations like NATO,

an aspect that shows the supranational characteristics of the ECSC (Nugent, 2012, p.61; Van Oudenaren, 1999, pp. 244-245). The Common Assembly was an institution which roughly correlated with the legislative branch of government. The Assembly's members were not directly elected but selected by the national governments while its powers were limited to consultation rather than the passing or legislation, although it maintained the right to vote for a motion censuring the High Authority (Nugent, 2012, p.61; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.245). Regardless, the importance of the Common Assembly lies in the fact that it paved the way to the establishment of parliamentary representation and participation, which down the road led to the creation of the European Parliament (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p. 245). Last but not least, since many decisions in the ECSC had legal standing, the establishment of a court was deemed necessary, and thus the European Court of Justice was set up. Its scope was to resolve disputes among the organisations, among the member states, as well as between the organisations and the member states and its decisions were binding for the members and enforceable on their territory (Nugent, 2012, p.61; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.245). The Court consisted of six members, one from each country.

Overall, the European Coal and Steel Community was deemed a success. Economically, it aided in the regeneration of the participating countries' economies, as custom duties and quotas were removed and non-tariff barriers were reduced, which resulted in better cooperation between member states and an increase in production and transnational transactions (Nugent, 2012, p.61). Politically, Franco-German relations were ameliorated considerably, and it became apparent that the six countries were willing to collaborate more closely (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.245). Consequently, the establishment, progress, and outcomes of the ECSC brought about unity and a better partnership among member states while also providing the prerequisites for further integration.

Even though the European Coal and Steel community was a productive accomplishment that resulted in a closer cooperation between European countries and the restoration of peace, its scope was rather limited, since it was restricted to a single economic sector without an international outlook. Generally, under the overall enthusiasm over the success of the ECSC, the countries of the continent were in favour of expanding the scope of integration and, as a first step, they turned to defence. In the beginning of the 1950's the Cold War as well as the Korean War were happening concurrently, and the above, along with the menace of the Soviet Union, caused the United States to push for the rearmament of West Germany and its subsequent admittance into the North Atlantic Alliance (Nugent, 2012, p.62; Pliakos, 2012, p.5). Although several European countries agreed with the need of a closer

cooperation in the area of defence, they were not comfortable with the potential rearmament of Germany. For that reason, France proposed the establishment of an organisation that would work in a similar manner to the ECSC and would allow for a collective control of Germany's acquirement of weapons. Thus, in October of 1950 René Pleven, the prime minister of France at the time, proposed a plan in the National Assembly for the creation of a European Army under the control of a supranational organisation which would also make decisions on matters of European defence (Nugent, 2012, p.62; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.245).

A treaty that established the European Defence Community (EDC) was signed in May 27, 1952, by the six founding members of the ECSC, although it was never ratified. The EDC would have a structure similar to that of the European Coal and Steel Community, with a Common Defence Assembly, a Council of Ministers, a Consultative Committee, and a Court of Justice (Nugent, 2012, p.62). If the treaty was to be enforced there would be a pan-European army, yet no plans for a European defence policy, military strategy, or foreign policy were made, something that was considerably criticised (Pliakos, 2012, p.5). In 1954, the French National Assembly rejected the Treaty establishing the European Defence Community as there were concerns over the rearmament of West Germany, participation in the EDC would equal a loss of control over the national army they were not willing to surrender, Great Britain, being the most powerful European military power, refused to participate and, lastly, as the Korean War was over, and the threat of the USSR was diminished, the need for a common European army did not feel as immediate (Nugent, 2012, p.62-63). Therefore, France happened to be both the country that initiated the process of further European integration in the area of defence, but also the country that put a stop to it, even though the remaining five were in favour of it, causing a temporary setback to the process. As an alternative to the EDC, the Brussels Treaty of 1948 was amended, in order to allow West Germany to be armed again and participate in the continent's defence. Thus, in the autumn of 1954, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy ascended to the Brussels Treaty which was then implemented into a new organisation and military alliance, the Western European Union (WEU). The WEU came into force in May of 1955 and was an organisation focused primarily on defence with a loose structure and predominantly consultative authority that allowed the rearmament of Germany and its participation in the NATO (Nugent, 2012, p.63). However, the Western European Union was never granted an equal role to that of the North Atlantic Alliance.

The failure of the European Defence Community resulted in several lessons learned for the European integration process. The move for a common defence policy was impetuous, since integration in the scope of defence would equal a certain loss of sovereignty that the

countries were not willing to accept at the time. Even though there was a readiness to surrender sovereignty in economic areas, defence was too closely linked to national identity and the continent was not ready for such a leap of faith (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.245-246). Therefore, integration was to proceed under Schuman's recommendations and focus primarily on the economy, at least initially. As a result, the focus shifted back to economics.

Succeeding the unfortunate development of the European Defence Community, the leaders of the six founding countries of the ECSC met in Messina, Italy, on the 1st and 2nd of June 1955 in order to discuss the potential developments of the integration process. The discussion focused on two routes of action: either further sectoral integration in line with the successful ECSC that would, this time, focus on atomic energy, or market integration through trade barrier elimination and the creation of a common market. Those who believed integration needed to be about shared institutions and policies, predominantly France, stressed the importance of an atomic energy community (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.246). On the contrary, there were those, primarily West Germany, who emphasised the importance of limiting integration to the economic sector, through the abolition of barriers and the creation of a common market (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.246). The above two courses of action came to be known as "positive" and "negative" integration respectively, each with its own role in the process (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.246). An intergovernmental committee was then established in order to study the above possibilities and form proposals for future action.

The Spaak Committee, as it was named after its chairman Paul-Henri Spaak, the Foreign Minister of Belgium, concluded its deliberations and filed its proposals on April 21st, 1956. The United Kingdom was also asked to take part in the committee, and it did so until November of 1955, when it became clear that the rest of the countries did not agree with Britain's vision of a simple free trade zone (Nugent, 2012, p.64). Spaak embarked on a different strategy than that of Schuman, knowing that recommending simply the establishment of supranational institutions and their scope of action without any further details was a recipe for failure (Pliakos, 2012, p.6). He opted instead to describe the particular issues of a common market and how to solve them, as well as how atomic energy can be used peacefully (Pliakos, 2012, p.6-7). In particular, trying to maintain a balance between the two forms of integration, Spaak proposed the establishment of both a European Atomic Energy Agency (Euratom), and a European Economic Community (EEC). The goal was the creation of an area with a common economic policy and a strengthened production that would lead to steady growth, increased stability, and harmonious relations between the member states (Pliakos, 2012, p.7). In order for that to be achieved, the Spaak Committee urged for the mergence of the participating

countries' economies and the creation of a customs union, where an abolition of quantitative restrictions, a free movement of services, and a common agricultural policy would take place (Pliakos, 2012, p.7). In addition to the above, policies would have to be put in place so as to support and manage the common market (Pliakos, 2012, p.7). In an institutional level, the Committee recommended a composition similar to that of the ECSC, with a European Commission, a Parliamentary Assembly, a Council of Ministers, and a Court.

In Rome, on March 25, 1957, two founding treaties were signed by West Germany, Italy, France, and the Benelux countries, which established the European Atomic Energy Community and the European Economic Community. The Treaties of Rome, as they came to be known, came into effect on the 1st of January 1958. Euratom, similarly to the ECSC, concerned a particular sector of the economy, namely atomic energy. It aimed for the creation of a common market for nuclear materials and the development of nuclear power, the establishment of a shared reserve of radioactive fuels and nuclear reactors, the formation of common legislation and standards, and the promotion of the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy (Moussis, 2008, p.20; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.246). The treaty also called for the exchange of information and the promotion of research among member states through a joint research programme for the development of technology and production in the nuclear sector (Moussis, 2008, p.20; Nugent, 2012, p.66). In practice, the above proved to be more difficult than anticipated. The member states disagreed in several core issues which led to exceptions and avoidances, while the economic disappointments for the nuclear energy's potential along with the desire of some countries to develop their own nuclear industry made matters even more challenging (Moussis, 2008, p.20; Nugent, 2012, p.66). Nevertheless, the treaty for the European Atomic Energy Community is still in force today and manages the European Union's nuclear energy sector.

The Treaty of Rome also established the European Economic Community, an organisation that was regarded as markedly more important. The purpose of the EEC was the establishment of a common market with an emphasis on the progressive development of the economic policy of its members, in order to improve the economic activity, the stability, and the quality of life of the Community (Nugent, 2012, p.65). Moreover, an integral part of the internal market would be the expansion of the free movement in order to include goods, services, people, and capital, the termination of all tariffs and qualitative restrictions within its borders, as well as the development of common external tariff and commercial policies (Van Oudenaren, 1999, pp.246-247). The treaty also included some guidelines in order for the aforementioned to be successful. These guidelines involved the abolition of all tariffs and

quantitative restrictions for the creation of a free trade zone, the prohibition of practices that impeded competition between member countries, measures for the establishment of free movement across the four sectors, and the development of the Common Customs Tariff (CCT) for all imported goods (Nugent, 2012, p.65). The CCT made it unfeasible for any member country to obtain a competitive advantage since all imported goods would be handled the same way regardless of their entry point, so the decisions on external tariffs was no longer in the discretion of each country (Nugent, 2012, p.65). This would, eventually, lead to the creation of a customs union and a Common Commercial Policy. Long term, the treaty did not set any specific goals, however further economic integration was expected and the coordination of the economic and monetary policies of member states was vaguely mentioned (Nugent, 2012, p.65).

In institutional terms, the institutional base of the European Economic Community was the same as the European Coal and Steel Community and in accordance with the Spaak Committee's recommendations. More specifically, four institutions were included, namely the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, the Common Assembly, and the Court of Justice. The European Commission was the equivalent of the High Authority for the EEC. It was the executive branch of government, also primarily responsible for the initiation of community legislation, equipped with certain decision-making powers and responsibilities regarding policy enforcement (Nugent, 2012, p.66; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.247). The Commissioners were selected by the member states and served for four years until 1979, when it was extended to five, while the President was also chosen by the member states. The Council was the primary decision-making body of the European Economic Community and it was endowed with more powers than the equivalent institution of the ECSC. It consisted of representatives from the member states whose responsibility was to vote on suggestions proposed by the Commission, either by unanimity, majority voting, or the newly introduced qualified majority (Nugent, 2012, pp.66-67; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.247). In qualified majority, votes were assigned in accordance with the population of each country and a certain quota needed to be reached in order for the voting to be valid (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.247). Thus, France, West Germany, and Italy had four votes each, the Netherlands and Belgium had two votes, whereas Luxembourg had one and, in addition, a total of twelve votes were needed in order for a qualified majority to be reached (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.247). The aforesaid was not positively received by every member state, as some political leaders, and especially France, considered it to be too supranational, and therefore it was not widely used until a little over two decades later (Nugent, 2012, p.67; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.247). The Council's

chairmanship was served by each member state for a six-month period on a rotating basis, as it did in the ECSC. Furthermore, the member states had concurred that the Common Assembly and the Court of Justice would be shared between the ECSC, Euratom, and the EEC. The Assembly had primarily consultative powers and was comprised of national parliament representatives that would, eventually, be replaced by members directly elected by the citizens of the member states, a change that took place in 1979 (Nugent, 2012, p.67). The Court was responsible for the conformity with law during the interpretation and enforcement of the Treaty (Nugent, 2012, p.67).

All in all, the Treaty of Rome was deemed an overall success. The above was especially true about the European Economic Community, since it led to the successful creation of the common market. However, that was limited mostly to goods, as the free movement of services, people, and capital were mostly in theory rather than in practice (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.248). In general, the intentions behind the creation of the EEC, and economic cooperation in general, was as much political as it was economic, since the federalists believed that an increasingly closer economic cooperation would create a spill-over effect that would eventually lead to closer political collaboration (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.247). However, as the community developed further, it faced difficulties that mostly stemmed from France's reluctance to deepen the Community's partnership. Specifically, every time a decision was to be made under qualified majority or the European Community's powers were to become more politically independent, France reacted strongly (Pliakos, 2012, p.8). The above took place when Charles de Gaulle, a former general, became the president of France. De Gaulle disagreed with his European partners in two issues: institutional powers and Britain's bid to join the European Community. He was against increasing the powers and duties of the institutions since he wanted to strengthen France's influence in order to be more competitive with Germany, therefore partially transferring national sovereignty over to supranational institutions went against his viewpoints (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.250). That disagreement reached its peak in 1965 when the French leader fell out with the rest of the European Community leaders over the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) financing. The CAP was a common policy established in 1962 under the Treaty of Rome in order to regulate the farming sector across the community. Walter Hallstein, then president of the European Commission, proposed three amendments: that separate financial resources should be developed for agricultural policy purposes, instead of a budget contribution by member states, along with increased powers for the Commission and the Parliament, and the introduction of qualified majority voting instead of unanimity on decisions regarding the particular sector (Pliakos, 2012, p.8; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.250).

France was profoundly opposed to the aforementioned recommendations. Considering the proposals as a power grab and a threat to France's sovereignty, De Gaulle announced the "empty chair policy", where France did not participate in any Council of Ministers conferences for the second half of 1965, a boycott that lasted for seven months (Pliakos, 2012, p.8; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.250). As a result, Community business came to a standstill. The predicament ceased in January of 1966, when the Community countries agreed on the Luxemburg Compromise, an agreement where decisions regarding vital national interests could be reached on unanimity instead of majority voting (Pliakos, 2012, p.8; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.250). The above essentially gave France the right to exercise veto powers over matters it deemed as significant. However, the crisis was resolved, and the Community returned to business as usual.

Despite the difficulties the European Community faced during the initial stages of the integration process, by the end of the 1960's the European leaders were pleased with the headway that had been made. The common market had been completed with positive economic results for the member states through cooperation in specialised economic areas, Franco-German relations had been restored, transnational relations had been improved in the post-war era, and supranational elements in decision-making processes had been established (Nugent, 2012, p.67; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.251). Overall, the founding treaties, despite the complications, complexities, and setbacks, accomplished the initial goals of bringing Europe together and establishing a firm position on the international scene for the continent, while avoiding conflict. Thus, the road to further integration had been paved, with a focus both on political cooperation as well as further geographical expansion of the European Community.

The creation of the European Union

The following decade was characterised by a plethora of landmarks in regard to the integration process with an emphasis on political cooperation. The process took place in two ways: the deepening and the widening of the European Community. The concept of deepening concerns the development of vertical integration, the notion of an ever closer union and a more intense nature of integration (Nugent, 2012, p. 68). Widening, on the other hand, refers to horizontal integration, and specifically the geographical expansion of the Community in order to include more members states (Nugent, 2012, p.68). Below, there will be a brief discussion of the widening of the European Community through the treaties that were established from the 1970's all the way to the 2000's and led to what we know today as the European Union,

followed by a chapter on the widening concept, a process that expanded both the EU's borders as well as its influence.

Although the founding treaties effectively created the foundations for the cooperation between the country members, they were limited to economics and had institutional and political gaps. In order to rectify these faults, the Single European Act (SEA) was signed in 1986 as a supplementation to the Treaty of Rome. The SEA extended the Community's areas of responsibility in terms of policy and amended its decision-making processes (Nugent, 2012, p.69; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.260). When the Treaty of Rome was signed it did not include a date by which the internal market had to be completed. The above was included in the Single European Act though, since it added a new article to the treaty that rendered the completion of the single market by the December of 1992 legally binding for the signatories.

As far as institutional changes are concerned, the SEA included modifications in processes concerning the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament, and the Court of Justice. Firstly, the Council could now vote by qualified majority in certain areas, such as social policy, Community research and development, decisions regarding regional funds, and procedures relating to the development and performance of the internal market (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.260). That would deem the process of creating the new legislation needed for the completion of the goals that were set by the SEA significantly less challenging. Secondly, in order to rectify the democratic deficit the Community was faced with, the European Parliament's influence was strengthened with the creation of two procedures regarding specific proposed legislations: the cooperation procedure and the assent procedure (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.260; Nugent, 2012, p.69). The cooperation procedure, created in order to improve the decision-making process of the Council of Ministers, essentially allowed for a second reading of bills, since once a proposal was rejected the Parliament had the right to request an explanation (Nugent, 2012, pp.102-103; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.260). In regard to the assent procedure, The European Parliament now had to approve by majority voting particular legislative actions such as the Community budget, the accession of new members, or agreements with third parties (Nugent, 2012, p.103; Van Oudenaren, 1999, pp.259-260). The above significantly strengthened the Parliament's influence and made it more challenging for the Council to overlook its propositions, and thus shifted the balance of power and transformed the Parliament from a primarily consultative to a genuinely legislative body (Nugent, 2012, p.103; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.261). Finally, as the European Community developed and expanded, the Court of Justice had to deal with increasingly more cases but without a change in regard to resources. Therefore, it became apparent that a new court needed to be established

with the purpose of dealing with lesser cases and, thus, the Court of First Instance was created. In political level, amendments involved the internal market, cooperation between the country members regarding policymaking, and the establishment of a legal basis for certain policy areas (Pliakos, 2012, p.9). More specifically, it set a particular timeframe by which the internal market should be concluded which was incorporated into the Rome Treaty and thus deemed the completion a legal obligation for the Community, instead of an ambition. Also, the SEA finally provided the internal market with a foreign policy dimension, albeit limited. Particularly, the European Political Cooperation (EPC) was introduced, an act that obliged the signatories to consult and collaborate with one another on matters regarding foreign policy (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.261). Unlike other amendments, the EPC was not included in the Treaty of Rome and therefore there was not a Community foreign policy, the Community institutions could not exercise influence over the EPC, and foreign policy would be a matter of intergovernmental collaboration rather than supranational coordination (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.261). However, that did not diminish the European Political Cooperation's importance, since it was a step forward towards a political unification, an attempt that kept being unsuccessful in the past. Last but not least, a legal basis was established for the protection of the environment, technology, and cohesion (Pliakos, 2012, p.9).

All in all, the Single European Act was an important development in the history of European integration, as it not only rectified the inconsistencies of the Founding Treaties, but also laid the foundations for further integration that would no longer be restricted to economics alone. The SEA was the cornerstone of the future political unification of the Community, it improved its legal basis and allowed for an increase in the velocity of the integration process, which had come close to a standstill.

The momentum the Single European Act had created, along with several changes that had taken place, led to the desire for a more comprehensive integration. First and foremost, the European Community had undergone three enlargements with the accession of Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom in 1973, Greece in 1981, and Spain and Portugal in 1986, taking the member count from the founding six to twelve member states. The above indicated a need for a more thorough institutional and political structure in order to deal with the additional workload. Furthermore, central and eastern Europe had gone through extensive changes as Communism had fallen, the Soviet Union had been dissolved, and Germany had been reunified, thus creating a sense of uncertainty over the nature and stability of the European Community (Nugent, 2012, p.105). All of the above gave a significant external push to reform which, in conjunction with the internal desires for further integration in additional areas, led to

the establishment of the Maastricht Treaty. The Treaty of Maastricht is regarded as one of the most ground-breaking treaties since it created the European Union, a new organisation based on three pillars, and it promoted additional political integration with the creation of a monetary union as well as institutional integration with alterations in the decision-making processes and, therefore, the establishment of more powerful institutions (Nugent, 2012, pp.69-70). The Treaty brought about substantial elements of a political union to the European Community, an organisation that up until then remained sectoral and primarily focused on economics.

The creation of the treaty was not an easy feat. Two intergovernmental conferences took place in 1991, one for a political union and the other for the economic and monetary union, resulting in an eventful summit in Maastricht characterised by exasperation since the United Kingdom was unwilling to partake in the common currency and the social protection objectives (Nugent, 2012, p.104). Eventually, the Treaty of Maastricht was signed in February 2nd, 1992, but the predicaments were not over since the ratification process did not proceed efficiently, which demonstrated an unawareness for the nature and mission of the Union (Pliakos, 2012, p.12). More specifically, the referendum that took place in Denmark yielded a negative result, only to be repeated after a few concessions by the Commission with a positive outcome (Nugent, 2012, pp.104-105; Pliakos, 2012, p.12). In France the referendum was only borderline positive, with 51 percent of voters being in favour of the ratification (Pliakos, 2012, p. 12). In the U.K, France, and Germany, extensive discussions and analyses occurred, with the latter resorting to the Federal Constitutional Court over a possibility of the Treaty violating the country's constitution, a case that was overturned in October of 1993 (Nugent, 2012, p.105; Pliakos, 2012, p.12). After that, the Treaty came into force in November of 1993, ten months after it was intended to.

Structurally, the Maastricht Treaty, officially known as the Treaty on European Union (TEU), founded the European Union on the basis of three pillars primarily differentiated by the decision-making process of each, since the first pillar was mostly supranational while the second and the third were mainly intergovernmental. The three pillars were the European Community, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and the cooperation in the fields of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA). The first pillar consisted of the existing three communities, the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Economic Community, and the European Atomic Energy Community. It was regarded as the most important pillar out of the three since it encompassed most of the political responsibilities of the Union (Nugent, 2012, p.105). The changes that this pillar brought about regarded the incorporation of the principle of subsidiarity and a European citizenship into the treaty, as well as institutional and

political reforms. From the Maastricht treaty onwards, any citizen of a country member of the union is also a citizen of the European Union, with all the benefits that accompanied the above, such as the freedom to reside and work in any country within the EU, as well as the right to vote and to stand as a candidate (Nugent, 2012, p.106). As far as the institutional changes are concerned, the goal of the amendments was to ameliorate the efficiency and democratic character of the Union's institutions and decision-making processes, hence both the Council of Ministers as well as the European Parliament underwent adjustments. The former could now make more decisions by qualified majority, a move that strengthened the EU's efficiency since decisions could be reached more promptly. The latter was provided with greater authority and influence, especially regarding law-making, with the establishment of a new process, the co-decision procedure (Nugent, 2012, p.106). The above was important because it essentially provided the Parliament with a veto right, since if after the second reading an agreement was not reached a Conciliation Committee would be convened and a third reading would take place, thus the Parliament's proposals were no longer just consultative (Nugent, 2012, p. 106). In the political sphere, the most important advancement the Maastricht Treaty made was the establishment of a strategy for the development of the European Monetary Union (EMU), where every member state of the Union would share a common currency (Nugent, 2012, p.107). The main reason why the EMU became necessary was because the fluctuations between currencies complicated the advancement of the common market while the free movement of capital was also restricted, since national governments imposed controls at the flow of capital in order to maintain the value of their own currency (Pliakos, 2012, p.10; Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.263). Therefore, a common currency would allow for the simplification of the free movement of capital as well as the improvement of trade relations among member countries as well as with third parties. The establishment of the EMU was an important step towards the federalisation of the Union, however that was obstructed by the United Kingdom and Denmark who did not wish to participate in the EMU and were allowed to opt out. The second pillar was the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). As mentioned above, the Single European Act created a basis for the cooperation between the country members in regard to foreign policy, however that was not incorporated into the treaty and therefore it was not binding. The Maastricht Treaty altered that and rendered the establishment of a common foreign and security policy a necessity which would cover all areas of the Union's foreign policy and security policy and could eventually lead to the creation of a common defence (Nugent, 2012, p.107). In order to achieve that the members would need to ensure that their national policies concerning these policy areas would be aligned with the common positions of the Commission on the same

matters while the Commission would have the discretion to make certain decisions with qualified majority (Nugent, 2012, p.108). The third pillar involved the cooperation in the fields of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) which included a number of sectors that were of common interest to the member states. These sectors included asylum policy, control of external policy and immigration from third countries, addiction to drugs, international crime, judicial cooperation in civil and criminal cases, customs cooperation, the combat of terrorism, and illegal drug trafficking as well as other serious criminal activities (Nugent, 2012, p.109; Van Oudenaren, 1999, pp.266-267). These would be combatted through a European Police Agency known as EUROPOL and all the measures taken would need to be compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights (Nugent, 2012, p.109). This was important because a legal basis was established that allowed for the cooperation in areas that prior to this were under the control of national governments alone (Nugent, 2012, p.109).

All in all, the treaty of Maastricht was very important for the integration process, since not only it did it create the European Union but also paved the road for a closer cooperation between the member states which would no longer be limited to economics. The EU from that point onwards entered a new critical phase, where the member states would have to perform as a common political power under a common European currency and aim for ever closer cooperation.

The Treaty on European Union remained into force for six and a half years until the Treaty of Amsterdam was signed in 1997, which amended it. Prior to the Treaty of Amsterdam another enlargement had taken place in 1995 with the accession of Austria, Finland, and Sweden, increasing the Union's member count to fifteen. At the time the EU was dealing with two major concerns: the development of the EMU and the upcoming enlargement of the Union to include the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Van Oudenaren, 1999, p.271). The Treaty of Maastricht included a clause in Article N for an intergovernmental conference to take place in 1996 in order to review the functioning of the treaty (Nugent, 2012, p.109). Although the Treaty of Amsterdam did bring about certain institutional and political changes, it was not as radical as the Single European Act or the Treaty of Maastricht had been, and it did not fulfil its initial goal of preparing the EU for the upcoming enlargement (Nugent, 2012, p.70). Although during the intergovernmental conference the enlargement was a focal part of the discussions, it was decided to leave it out of the treaty since it would take place in the 2000's, several years later, and pledge instead to hold a new conference a year before the enlargement in order to sort out the details (Nugent, 2012, p.111).

However, some changes did take place, albeit modest. Firstly, institutional changes included the official abolition of the cooperation procedure and its replacement by the co-decision procedure, the increase in clauses that would require a qualified majority in the Council, and the right of the European Parliament to approve the President of the European Commission that the Council of Ministers proposed (Nugent, 2012, p.112). Secondly, there were several amendments in the political sphere as well. Certain policy areas that were connected to the Justice and Home Affairs pillar were transferred to the European Community pillar, specifically the areas of illegal immigration, visas, asylum, and judicial co-operation, which provided the EU institutions with more power when deciding on policies regarding the above (European Parliament, n.d.; Nugent, 2012, p.112). That happened in order to gradually create an “area of freedom, security, and justice”, where free movement of people would take place within the member countries’ external borders (Nugent, 2012, p.112). The United Kingdom and Ireland opted out from the clauses concerning the freedom of movement while Denmark does not enforce them in their entirety (Nugent, 2012, p.112). Also, the Treaty of Amsterdam integrated Schengen into EU law, which was essential for the functioning of the free movement of persons, since it stipulated the abolition of passport checks and any form of border controls within the mutual borders of the participating countries (European Parliament, n.d.; Nugent, 2012, p.112). The U.K. and Ireland were once more allowed to opt out from the Schengen Agreement. Furthermore, the Justice and Home Affairs pillar of the Maastricht Treaty was reviewed and renamed Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters, and the European Social Charter officially became part of the European Community when before it was just an agreement due to the opt out clause the United Kingdom had negotiated during the Maastricht Treaty conference (Nugent, 2012, p.112). Lastly, where the Union’s foreign relations were concerned, qualified majority was established as the default process for the approval and implementation of common positions and actions, with few exceptions (Nugent, 2012, p.112). Additionally, the principle of constructive abstention was established. Certain decisions required unanimity, under constructive abstention when a member country did not wish to take part in a particular action but also did not intend to block it, they could choose to abstain from the voting process and thus not be obliged to enforce the decision but still recognise that it was binding for the EU (Nugent, 2012, p. 112). The position of High Representative of the Common Foreign and Security Policy was introduced, and the Petersberg Tasks were incorporated in the Treaty on European Union, where military missions regarding humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping, and crisis management would be under the jurisdiction of the EU (European Parliament, n.d.; Nugent, 2012, p.113).

Overall, even though the Treaty of Amsterdam was not as radical or transformative as the SEA or the Treaty of Maastricht were, despite the fact that the intergovernmental conference had plenty of time to discuss and establish it, it did play a part in the integration process by promoting the further political and institutional deepening of the Union. It remained in force for three and a half years, when a new treaty was signed in order to prepare the European institutions for the accession of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The Treaty of Nice did not perform extensive changes to the Treaty of Amsterdam but mainly dealt with matters the former treaty had put on hold. Therefore, its goals were mainly to amend the composition of the European Institutions, the weighing of votes, and the expansion of qualified majority in more decision-making processes, in order to allow the EU to enlarge without compromising its efficiency (Moussis, 2008, p.23; Nugent, 2012, p.70). The intergovernmental conference for the preparation of the Treaty of Nice began in February of 2000 and was concluded in December of the same year while the treaty itself was formally signed in the 26th of February 2001 (Pliakos, 2012, p.14). The ratification process did stumble upon certain hurdles when the referendum that took place in Ireland failed to yield a positive outcome, thus putting the enforcement of the treaty on hold until in a second referendum, over a year later, the Irish people gave their approval (Nugent, 2012, p.114). The Treaty of Nice formally came into force in February of 2003.

As far as the modifications are concerned, the treaty carried out a number of changes vis-à-vis the European institutions, the decision-making processes, and politics. To begin with, in terms of institutional changes, it was agreed that each member state would have one Commissioner until the member count reached twenty-seven, where an exact number of Commissioners would be decided (Moussis, 2008, p.24; Nugent, 2012, p.115). Also, the process for the selection of the Commissioners was amended and the President was given additional powers (Nugent, 2012, p.115). In the Council of Ministers decision-making by qualified majority was expanded to more policy areas, and the weighing of votes of each member state was redefined with the addition of a population element, where decisions made by qualified majority should gather at least 72% of the total votes corresponding to no less than 62% of the Union's population (Moussis, 2008, p.24; Nugent, 2012, pp.114-115). The European Parliament's member count was gradually increased to 732, thus abolishing the cap of 700 that was imposed by the Treaty of Amsterdam (Nugent, 2012, p.115). In regard to the European Courts, the number of members for the Court of First Instance was set to at least one per member state, whereas before it was not stated, and the scope of cases that were adjudicated there were increased, in order to lessen the workload of the European Court of Justice (Nugent,

2012, p.117). Moreover, insofar as decision making is concerned, there were a few changes in regard to the type and enforcement of the process. The flexible cooperation procedure was retitled enhanced cooperation procedure and allowed a minimum of eight member-states to proceed with advanced integration or cooperation within the EU without the need for the remaining member states to participate, thus allowing for progression at different speeds within the Union (EUR-Lex, n.d.; Nugent, 2012, p.116). In the first and third pillar the member states' veto power was abolished and, instead, they could resort to the European Council which would then decide by qualified majority (Nugent, 2012, p.116). The co-decision procedure as well as the assent procedure were extended to more areas. Lastly, in regard to policy, the treaty of Nice outlined new forms of cooperation between member states in the fight against organised crime as well as an expansion of the objectives of social policy (Nugent, 2012, p.117). During the intergovernmental conference there was also a discussion over the creation of a Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU for the protection of rights regarding dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity, citizens' rights, and justice (Nugent, 2012, pp.117-118). However, the Charter was not incorporated into the Nice Treaty due to the negation of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands and thus it never became legally binding (Nugent, 2012, p.119; Pliakos, 2012, p.15).

On the whole, the Treaty of Nice had a more limited scope that mostly encompassed the Union's institutions rather than spherical changes such as those promoted by the preceding treaties. However, it did contribute to the widening process since it achieved its goal of amending the institutions of the Union in order to best prepare them for the imminent integration. A new intergovernmental conference was scheduled to occur in 2004, where matters not resolved in the Treaty of Nice would be discussed.

During the intergovernmental conference for the creation of the Nice Treaty there was a consensus that the amendments were overly modest and thus plans for a new conference that would occur in 2004 were put in place. Prior to the prearranged intergovernmental conference, the EU leaders would engage in discussions over the future of the Union in order to best prepare for the conference. During a Summit in Laeken in December of 2001 the Union's leaders issued the Laeken Declaration on the future of Europe which made provisions for the convocation of a Convention on the Future of Europe (Nugent, 2012, p.120). The convention, which began in 2002 and was completed in 2003, concluded with the creation of a plan for a new treaty that would be called the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (Moussis, 2008, p.24; Nugent, 2012, pp.120-123). The convention's proposal was adopted in whole by the Intergovernmental Conference that took place in October of 2004 and thus the Constitutional

Treaty was signed by the heads of State or Government. Between the enforcement of the Treaty of Nice and the signing of the Constitutional Treaty the EU had widened further with a large enlargement that took place in 2004 and increased the member count of the Union to twenty-five with the accession of ten new member states, the largest enlargement the EU had undergone so far. Another two countries were in line to become members in 2007, which would increase the country count to twenty-seven. Therefore, it became apparent that the European Union's structure and functions needed to be amended in order such a large number of member states to be able to work together efficiently and productively.

The Constitutional Treaty was a cohesive body of text that would replace the founding treaties and their subsequent amendments. It comprised of four parts, specifically the general principles of the EU, the Charter of Fundamental Rights which would be an integral part of the treaty, a part about the politics and functions of the Union, and, lastly, a reference on the Treaty's final provisions and potential amendment procedures (Nugent, 2012, p.124). However, even though the Constitutional Treaty was created as a substitute for the previous treaties it did not redraft them but rather incorporated them into the third part, thus reinforcing the status quo (Nugent, 2012, p.125). The most significant changes the treaty endorsed included the abolition of the three pillar structure of the Union, the addition of the Charter of Fundamental Rights into the treaty which would deem it legally binding, the amendment of the Union's institutions and the creation of new ones, the rendering of the co-decision procedure as the default decision-making process, the ability for a member state to voluntarily leave the EU, as well as the replacement of the European Community by the European Union (Pliakos, 2012, p.17). The Constitutional Treaty also formalised an array of symbolisms, such as the Union's flag, a circle of twelve yellow stars on a blue background, and the Anthem of Europe, Ode to Joy by Beethoven, which were both largely used at the time (Nugent, 2012, p.126). The above signified a symbolic advancement in the integration process which gave the EU characteristics that resembled a state. The above was one of the reasons why the ratification of the treaty was not a straightforward process. The Constitutional Treaty could not be enforced without first being ratified by the twenty-five member states. Due to the symbolic significance of the treaty and the inclusion of the word "constitution" in the title many of the countries chose to conduct referendums instead of ratifying the treaty through parliamentary voting. Although eighteen countries did ratify the treaty, referendums in France and the Netherlands yielded a negative result and as a consequence the treaty was never enforced (Pliakos, 2012, p.17).

Following the stillborn Constitutional Treaty a new intergovernmental conference took place in 2007 with the purpose of establishing a new treaty that would be less symbolic and

would not refer to a constitution and could, therefore, be ratified more easily. Thus, the Treaty of Lisbon was signed in December of 2007.

The Lisbon Treaty preserved most of the contents of the Constitutional Treaty, however it differed in certain aspects since it did not abolish or merge the previous treaties, it did not refer to a constitution or symbols, it did not include the Charter of Fundamental rights into the treaty, nor did it establish any laws (Nugent, 2012, p.134). Nevertheless, the treaty brought about a series of amendments. First and foremost, in terms of structure, The European Community was brought to an end and replaced by the European Union and the three pillar system was also abolished (Nugent, 2012, p.136). As for the nature and scope of the EU, the values upon which the Union would be based, its purpose, as well as its responsibilities were listed, and the European Union was thenceforth considered a legal entity (Nugent, 2012, p.136). Moreover, in regard to the decision-making process, the co-decision process was renamed ordinary legislative procedure and became the default voting process in more policy areas, whilst the assent procedure was retitled consent procedure and its scope was also extended (Nugent, 2012, p.136-137). The budgetary procedure was simplified, and the European Parliament and the Council became equals as lawmakers in several areas (European Parliament, n.d.; Nugent, 2012, p.137). Finally, the European citizen's initiative was introduced, a process through which EU citizens could request from the Commission to submit a legislative proposal, should a million signatures be gathered from a certain number of member states (European Parliament, n.d.; Nugent, 2012). There was also a number of institutional changes. The Commission's president would now be selected by the European Parliament after taking into consideration the results of the European Parliamentary elections (Nugent, 2012, p.137). A new institution was established, namely the European Council, with a permanent president who would be elected for two and a half years with qualified majority voting (Nugent, 2012, p.137). Within the Council of Ministers, qualified majority voting was extended to more policy areas thus granting the Council more power, however unanimity still remained a requirement in certain areas such as the CFSP, the amendment of treaties, taxation, and social policy (Nugent, 2012, p.138). Finally, the European Parliament's size was set to 751 members including the president, the seats would be distributed based on the country's population and would be no less than six and no more than ninety-six per member state, while its powers were increased with the extension of the ordinary legislative procedure and the consent procedure's scope (Nugent, 2012, p.138). Also, the position of High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy was created who would also be the Commission's Vice President (European Parliament, n.d.; Nugent, 2012, p.138). Finally, the national parliament's role was enhanced,

the treaty amendment process was simplified, and thenceforth member states had the right to voluntarily leave the Union, should they wish to (Nugent, 2012, p.138-139).

The changes that the Lisbon Treaty underwent occurred predominantly in order to render the treaty more acceptable by the union's population and thus facilitate the ratification process. Since it was presented as an amending treaty, rather than a new one, the number of referendums was greatly reduced, with only Ireland holding a referendum since it was a constitutional prerequisite (Pliakos, 2012, p.18). The referendum took place in July of 2008, the result was negative, and after a few concessions by the Commission the referendum was repeated in October of next year with a positive outcome (Pliakos, 2012, p.18). The treaty finally came into force in December 1st, 2009.

On the whole, the Treaty of Lisbon is not regarded as a carrier of ground-breaking changes nor did it bring about fundamental amendments such as those put forward by the Single European Act or the Maastricht treaty. However, it did play a part in the integration process since it amended the Union's scope and duties, rendering it more efficient and productive.

The Enlargement Policy

As discussed above, the EU's integration process is divided into two subcategories, each with distinct processes and objectives, namely the deepening and the widening process. During the deepening process countries that are already members of the Union aim to establish closer relations and further cooperation in order to create an ever closer union and increase their collective power and influence. The widening process, on the other hand, involves the geographical expansion of the EU with the accession of more member states, which is known as the enlargement of the European Union. Through the enlargement policy, the EU is able to promote its values to more countries, increase its safety and stability, and thus take on a role as a great power in the world stage (European Commission, 2015b).

From the six founding members of the ECSC the European Union presently recites twenty-eight member states and is set to further increase its size in the following years. Any democratic European country that wishes to join the Union is welcome to apply for membership, but negotiations will begin only if the country meets the democratic, political, and economic criteria required (European Commission, 2018). Article 2 of the Lisbon Treaty outlines the values the Union is founded upon, namely respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. According to Article 49 of the Lisbon Treaty, a European state may become an EU member provided that they respect the

aforementioned values and are committed to promoting them. Once a country submits an application to join the Union and the Commission submits an opinion on it, the member states need to unanimously approve the accession (European Commission, 2015a). In order for a country to be eligible to join the Union they need to fulfil a set of criteria. The above, known as the Copenhagen Criteria, adopted during a summit in Copenhagen in 1993, are three: the political criterion where the country needs to have stable institutions that guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and protection of minorities, the economic criterion which calls for a functioning market economy and the ability to cope in the EU market, and a criterion which refers to the ability of the candidate country to fulfil the obligations of membership (European Commission, 2015b). In the case of the Western Balkans, along with the Copenhagen criteria the countries must also commit to regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations in order to ensure the stability of the region, which is known as the “Stabilization and association process conditionality” (European Commission, 2015b). At the same time, the EU itself must also have the capacity to accept new members without disrupting its function. Once the member states approve the application accession negotiations formally begin, where the candidate country is required to adopt the EU’s laws and rules and perform any reforms necessary during the process in order to harmonise its national legislation with that of the European Union. Negotiations pertain to how and when the rules and procedures will be implemented and not the substance of the rules themselves, since they are non-negotiable, so a country cannot pick and choose to implement certain parts and not others (European Commission, 2015a; European Commission, 2015b).

The aforementioned laws are part of a body of text known as the *acquis communautaire* or simply *acquis* which comprises of over 100.000 pages and includes an accumulation of the legislation, legal acts, and court decisions of the EU (European Commission, 2015b). The *acquis* perpetually advances and is composed of the substance, values, and political intentions of the Treaties, the legislation regarding the treaties and the Court’s case law, the declarations and resolutions adopted by the Union, the instruments under the CFSP, as well as international agreements either concluded by the Union as a whole or individual member states within the Union’s sphere of action (European Commission, 2016a). The *acquis* is divided into thirty-six chapters and each chapter covers a particular policy area as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The chapters of the *acquis communautaire*.

1. Free movement of goods
2. Freedom of movement for workers
3. Right of establishment and freedom to provide services
4. Free movement of capital
5. Public procurement
6. Company law
7. Intellectual property law
8. Competition policy
9. Financial services
10. Information society and media
11. Agriculture and rural development
12. Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy
13. Fisheries
14. Transport policy
15. Energy
16. Taxation
17. Economic and monetary policy
18. Statistics
19. Social policy and employment
20. Enterprise and industrial policy
21. Trans-European networks
22. Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments
23. Judiciary and fundamental rights
24. Justice, freedom and security
25. Science and research
26. Education and culture
27. Environment
28. Consumer and health protection
29. Customs union
30. External relations
31. Foreign, security and defence policy

32. Financial control
33. Financial and budgetary provisions
34. Institutions
35. Other issues

(Source: European Commission. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/chapters->

During the negotiations each chapter is discussed separately. A screening process takes place by the Commission where opening and closing benchmarks for each chapter are decided (European Commission, 2015a). Once the closing benchmarks for a chapter are met it is provisionally closed, since the EU operates under the principle that “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed”, and thus definite closure of a chapter only takes place once the entire negotiation process is concluded (European Commission, 2015b). Once every chapter of the acquis is closed the results are integrated into an Accession Treaty, which needs to be formally approved by all EU member states and ratified in the candidate country either by parliamentary voting or a referendum (European Commission, 2015a). Between the signing of the treaty and the formal approval the future member is entitled to a number of rights. It acquires “active observer status” in most EU bodies where the country can participate in the organisation’s procedures and is able to talk but does not have voting rights (European Commission, 2015a). The future member is also able to comment on draft EU proposals or initiatives since they will affect its citizens once they are implemented (European Commission, 2015a). As soon as the ratification process is concluded the accession treaty comes into effect and the country formally becomes a full member of the European Union.

During the negotiation process the potential member may be required to undergo a plethora of reforms while adopting the acquis which requires a substantial financial investment. The EU, in order to aid the country throughout that process, provides the candidate countries and potential candidates with financial and technical support through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) programme. Projects supported by the IPA endeavour, among others, to consolidate democratic institutions and the rule of law, to improve public administration, to aid reforms, to promote respect for human rights and protect minorities, as well as to encourage the development of civil society and regional cooperation (European Commission, 2015b). The areas in which the funds will be allocated are decided by the EU and the national authorities (European Commission, 2015b). Between 2007 and 2013 the total funding for IPA projects was €11 billion while the estimated funding for the 2014-2020 period is estimated to be increased to €11.7 billion (European Commission, 2015a).

The enlargements that the EU has undergone so far have occurred in various rounds that took place at different times, since each country moves at a different pace. In any case, the process has been constructive for both the European Union and the acceding countries. There are several reasons why a country might want to be a part of the EU and why the Union itself may wish to expand geographically. First and foremost, being a member of the European Union leads to increased prosperity since it entails economic and social benefits (European Commission, 2015b). Furthermore, it increases the stability and security of the countries while promoting the rule of law, especially in the case of former communist countries which, since joining the EU from 2004 onwards, have been transformed into functioning market economies with democratic institutions (European Commission, 2015b). Also, being a part of such a large cluster of cooperating countries increases the new country's political influence (Nugent, 2012, p.93). However, joining the European Union is sometimes associated with disadvantages such as loss of sovereignty or a negative impact of certain EU policies on national level (Nugent, 2012, p.93). Overall, the twenty-eight current members of the Union, as well as any countries that wish to join the EU in the near future, acknowledge that the advantages of participation outweigh the disadvantages. The European Union itself also shares that belief. Firstly, there are economic advantages for the Union since the larger the internal market gets the more chances there are for businesses and the market itself due to the population increase (Nugent, 2012, p.600). Additionally, there are political and security advantages since the EU benefits from neighbouring countries having stable liberal democratic political systems, which is why it zealously promotes the values of democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law (Nugent, 2012, p.600). In any case, a more expanded European Union has more political power and influence and, thus, is more important when it comes to external relations (Nugent, 2012, p.600).

Past enlargements

When the European Union was initially created it recited six members and, in the present day, the number of member states has increased to twenty-eight. That change did not occur overnight but through a series of enlargements where countries with common characteristics applied for memberships and became members of the EU either simultaneously or close together (Nugent, 2012, p.76). There have been five enlargements so far. The first enlargement took place in 1973 and resulted in the accession of the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Finland. The second enlargement, known as the Mediterranean enlargement, occurred in

two phases: in 1981 with the accession of Greece and in 1986 with the accession of Portugal and Spain. Another enlargement followed in 1995 which is known as the EFTA enlargement since the countries who joined, namely Finland, Austria, and Sweden, were all members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Nugent, 2012, p.76). The largest EU enlargement followed in two rounds in 2004 and 2007, where twelve new countries joined the Union. Specifically, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic joined in 2004 and Bulgaria and Romania in 2007. The aforementioned round is known as the 10+2 round, both because ten of the countries were part of Central and Eastern Europe and two were small Mediterranean islands and because ten countries joined in 2004 and two in 2007 (Nugent, 2012, p.76). Last but not least, the most recent enlargement took place in 2013 with the accession of Croatia to the European Union.

The first enlargement caused the European Community to expand beyond its founding base and to include three new member states which could change its nature and the way it operates. As far as the United Kingdom is concerned, prior to the 1960's the U.K. was not willing to be a part of the EC because it considered the empire and the Commonwealth, its relations with the United States, and the Atlantic Alliance superior to its relations with Western Europe and a potential participation in the Community (Nugent, 2012, pp.78-79). Furthermore, Britain was not keen on accepting the loss of sovereignty that accompanied the integration process, especially since the U.K. was a superpower (Nugent, 2012, p.79). Besides, none of the four Community organisations appealed to Britain at the time. Britain was a country with a coal and steel sector superior to that of any other country that was a member of the European Coal and Steel Community and, therefore, participation in that was unattractive (Nugent, 2012, p.79). The U.K. was also a significant nuclear power and thus joining Euratom would mean exchanging information with less developed countries in that sector, which was also not in the best interests of the country (Nugent, 2012, p.79). The European Economic Community was more attractive but that was overshadowed by its proposed supranational nature, which Britain did not agree with (Nugent, 2012, p.79). What Britain wanted was merely a free trade zone in Western Europe but failed to convince the founding countries' leaders to head towards that direction. As a result, in January of 1960 the United Kingdom, along with Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland founded the European Free Trade Association. The objective of the EFTA was to initially create a free trade zone between the member states regarding industrial goods which would ultimately lead to include the entire Western Europe (Nugent, 2012, p.84). However, in the 1960's the United Kingdom's stance shifted, and the country applied to become a member of the European Community in July of 1961. That shift

happened due to both political and economic reasons. Politically, Britain was no longer a superpower, its relations with the United States were deteriorating, and the Empire was declining (Nugent, 2012, p.81). Economically, trade relations with the Commonwealth were deteriorating while the European Community's economy was performing substantially better than that of the U.K. (Nugent, 2012, p.81). However, the application was vetoed by the French president Charles de Gaulle who was adamantly against the potential of the U.K. joining the Community. He believed that if Britain became a member it would hinder France's influence on the Community, it would exacerbate Franco-German relations, and it would allow the United States to indirectly influence European politics through their privileged relationship with the United Kingdom (Nugent, 2012, p.79). Britain applied for membership again in 1967, which was once more vetoed by De Gaulle. At last, the country was able to join once De Gaulle was succeeded by Georges Pompidou in 1969 who believed that Britain could counterbalance Germany's ever-increasing power, that it would support France's opposition to further supranationalism, and that France would benefit from access to Britain's market (Nugent, 2012, pp.79-80). At last, Britain formally became a member of the European Community in 1973.

Along with Britain, Ireland and Denmark also joined the EC. Similarly to Britain, both Ireland and Denmark were uninterested in joining the Communities that were initially established. Both countries were mainly agricultural, therefore the ECSC would not be beneficial to them. As far as the EEC was concerned, its potential benefits were also questioned since both countries maintained economic relations with nations that were not part of the European Economic Community, namely the Scandinavia and Britain in the case of Denmark, and Britain in the case of Ireland (Nugent, 2012, p.81). Due to that reliance on the United Kingdom, both countries were willing to join the Communities only when Britain expressed an interest in doing so. Consequently, both countries applied at the same time as the U.K. for membership and withdrew their application whenever Britain was obstructed from joining. Eventually, they became members of the European Community in 1973. Norway also applied for membership the three aforementioned times but the accession terms were rejected in a national referendum.

The second enlargement resulted in the extension of the European Communities towards the South with the inclusion of Greece in 1981, and Portugal and Spain in 1986. Greece, like Ireland and Denmark, had an economy that was not compatible with the objectives of the ECSC and the EEC, since it was primarily agricultural. In addition, historically, culturally, and geographically Greece was not a part of Western Europe, an area where

integration at the time was mainly focused (Nugent, 2012, p.81). Greece initially applied to join the EC in 1975 but the application was rejected due to the country's economic difficulties. Instead, an Association Agreement was signed in 1962 which would allow the country to perform any reforms necessary in order prepare its economy for accession. Following a military coup between 1967 and 1974, which brought the agreement to a standstill, and the country's subsequent persistence in joining the Community despite the Commission's disagreement, Greece was finally permitted to begin accession negotiations in 1976 and became the 10th member of the European Community in 1981 (Nugent, 2012, p.82). The Mediterranean round was concluded five years later when Portugal and Spain also became members of the EC. Both countries were initially ineligible to join due to political and economic reasons. Politically both countries had authoritarian regimes until the 1970's, which the EC was not keen on pursuing, while economically they were agriculture-based countries with an underdeveloped and self-sufficient economy, which rendered them an inadequate match for both the ECSC and the EEC (Nugent, 2012, p.82). Therefore, even though both Spain and Portugal applied to become a part of the Community for the first time in 1962, neither country was able to join until their authoritarian regimes were put to an end. Ultimately, the two countries applied for membership for the last time in 1977 and became the 11th and 12th member of the European Community in 1986.

The third enlargement, also known as the EFTA round, has been the most efficient and swift enlargement thus far, since all the countries that joined the Community were developed democracies with stable economies. Negotiations commenced in 1993 with Austria, Sweden, Finland, and Norway and were concluded in 1995 with the accession of all but Norway. In the previous decade these states were not keen on joining the European Communities for two reasons. Firstly, during the Cold War, Austria and Sweden wanted to maintain a neutralist policy while Finland was too close to the Soviet Union geographically (Nugent, 2012, p.84). Secondly, Austria, Finland, Sweden, and Norway were a part of the European Free Trade Association which maintained special relations with the European Community (Nugent, 2012, p.84). As a result, accession to the EC was not an attractive plan both because it would be politically perilous and because the countries were already benefiting economically from the cooperation between the EFTA and the EC and thus did not need to accede to the EEC. The above, however, changed in the 1990's. The Cold War came to an end which meant that the need for neutralism ceased to exist while the Soviet threat was no longer a reality. In addition, the EEC became considerably more powerful than the EFTA (Nugent, 2012, p.83). In an attempt to counteract that imbalance without jeopardising the widening process the EC

suggested the creation of the European Economic Area (EEA) which would essentially extend the functions of the European Economic Community to the members of EFTA without them needing to join the EC (Nugent, 2012, p.84). However, when the EEA agreement came into force the results were underwhelming and Austria, Finland, Sweden, and Norway realised that the only way they could fulfil their expectations would be by joining the European Community. Thus, accession negotiations began in 1993 and were completed fairly quickly with the accession of Austria, Finland, and Sweden, due to the fact that they were wealthy countries with stable democracies which had already adopted most of the Community's body of law (Nugent, 2012, p.86). Norway, once again, was unsuccessful in joining since the ratification of the accession treaty was rejected in the national referendum.

The fourth enlargement took place in two rounds and led to the accession of ten countries of Central and Eastern Europe and two Mediterranean islands into the EU. This enlargement increased the European Union's member count from fifteen to twenty-seven and was the most extensive enlargement to occur so far. Ten Central and Eastern European Countries, namely Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, and the Czech Republic, applied to join the EU between 1994 and 1996. After communism collapsed and these countries regained their independence and began to establish liberal democratic political systems they expressed their interest in becoming members for political, economic, and security reasons (Nugent, 2012, p.86). Politically, these countries wanted to join the Union in order to become a part of the European and the Western world, while, from a security point of view, it would supply them with an additional layer of protection, complementary to that of the NATO which they also wished to join (Nugent, 2012, p.88). Economically, partaking in the European Union's internal market would improve the countries' trade relations and aid their economic development and restructuring (Nugent, 2012, p.88). Even though the EU wanted to help these countries through the reconstructive process they did not consider them becoming EU members a probable scenario in the 1990's. However, as time went by the EU grew progressively more positive and in the European Council in Copenhagen in 1993 the European leaders decided that any Central and Eastern European countries who applied would be allowed to join the EU. During the Council, in order to ensure that the accession of these states would not threaten the stability of the Union, the Copenhagen criteria were established, which laid out a set of political and economic prerequisites a country needed to complete in order to participate in the EU. Over the next three years the ten countries of Central and Eastern Europe applied for membership. However, they were not all prepared to join at once. During the Summit in Copenhagen in 2002 it was decided that Association

Agreements would be signed with all countries that had applied to join but Bulgaria and Romania who still needed to overcome difficulties regarding their administrative and judiciary systems and persisting corruption (Nugent, 2012, p.90).

When Cyprus and Malta expressed their interest in joining the Union they did so because most of their external economic relations were with the EU, they wanted to participate in its programmes and funding, and, in the case of Cyprus, partaking in the EU could help resolve the Cyprus dispute (Nugent, 2012, p.90). Both countries applied to join in 1990 but their applications were not met with enthusiasm since the European Community was not eager to deal with the institutional problems that would arise from the accession of countries that small (Nugent, 2012, p.90). Also, they assessed that the issue of the occupation of Northern Cyprus by Turkey should be resolved prior to the country's accession. Despite these difficulties, in a Summit in Corfu in 1994 the European Council endorsed the accession of Cyprus and Malta following an assessment by the Commission that took place in 1993 and declared that the division of Cyprus should not permanently impede the island's EU prospects (Nugent, 2012, p.91). As a result of the above, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Malta, Cyprus, and the Czech Republic officially became members of the European Union in 2004, followed by Bulgaria and Romania three years later, in 2007, increasing the total amount of member states to twenty-seven.

Finally, the most recent enlargement took place with Croatia's accession into the European Union in 2013, increasing the EU's member count to today's twenty-eight. Croatia applied for membership in 2003 and a year later it was granted candidate status. Accession negotiations began in March 2005, but the process was hindered by Slovenia, since the two countries had ongoing border issues that needed to be resolved prior to the accession. Negotiations were concluded in 2011, eight years after the initial application, and Croatia officially became a member of the European Union in 2013.

The Enlargement Agenda

During a speech, Jean-Claude Juncker, the current president of the European Commission, announced that any pending enlargements would be put on hold until the end of his presidency in 2019, so the European Union could focus on its economic recovery. Currently, there are five candidate countries and two potential candidates for EU accession. The candidate countries that have a recognised European perspective are Albania, the Former

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey, while the potential candidates are Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo.

The candidate countries have all been unanimously confirmed by the current EU member states and have initiated negotiations. More specifically, Albania applied for membership in April of 2009 and was recognised as a candidate country in June of 2014. The country's progress in the process will depend on the reforms it performs in the areas of public and judicial administration, corruption and organised crime, and parliamentary procedures. (European Commission, 2016e; European Commission, 2018). The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia applied for membership in March of 2004 and acquired candidate status in December of 2005. In October of 2009 the Commission suggested the initiation of accession negotiations. However, there is a name dispute with Greece currently in progress which hinders the country's process, although steps are being taken to rectify it. Montenegro gained independence in 2006 and requested to become a member of the European Union in 2008 (European Commission, 2016e). Candidate status was granted to the country in December of 2010 and the negotiations began in June of 2012. As far as Serbia is concerned, the country applied for membership in December of 2009, was granted candidate status in March of 2012, and accession negotiations formally began in January of 2014 (European Commission, 2018). Last but not least, Turkey has an extensive history with the European Union. Turkey applied to join the European Community back in 1987 but was only declared eligible to join the European Union in 1997 (European Commission, 2016e). Accession negotiations began in 2005 when the country started undergoing substantial reforms. To this day, only one out of the thirty-five chapters of the *acquis* has been provisionally closed. It is worth mentioning that Iceland applied for membership in 2009 and accession negotiations began in 2010 (European Commission, 2016e). However, in 2013 Iceland requested for the negotiations to be postponed and in March of 2015 the country formally withdrew its application (European Commission, 2016e).

In regard to the potential candidates, there are two countries that have the capacity to join the European Union but have not yet been granted candidate status. Particularly, the Stabilisation and Association Agreement was signed in June of 2008 between the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina and in February of 2016 the country applied for EU membership (European Commission, 2018). The European institutions are currently working on the matter. Last but not least, a Stabilisation and Association Agreement was signed with Kosovo in 2014 and entered into force in 2016, following the country's declaration of independence in 2008 (European Commission, 2018).

In general, the European Union today is a far cry from the small cluster of six countries that decided to cooperate in order to recover from the repercussions of two catastrophic World Wars. In the present day, the European Union with its twenty-eight member states continues to fulfil its initial goal of promoting democracy, the respect for fundamental rights, and the rule of law, while constituting a source of economic prosperity and political stability. The EU, through the strengthening of the established relations and the geographical expansion of its territory, has accomplished to entrench itself as a significant political and economic power in the world scene.

Chapter II: The Relations

A brief history of Turkey

Turkey, officially known as the Republic of Turkey, is a Middle Eastern country geographically located in Southeast Europe and Southwest Asia. It borders Greece and Bulgaria to the Northwest, Georgia and Armenia to the Northeast, Azerbaijan and Iran to the East, and Iraq and Syria to the South. Its capital is Ankara.

The Republic of Turkey was formally established in October 29th, 1923, following the Ottoman Empire's defeat in World War I and its subsequent dissolution. The country's declaration of independence occurred through the War of Independence under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, who became the first president of the newly formed Turkish state. His political party, the Republican People's Party (CHP), governed Turkey for over two decades. Kemal's influence on the development of the country and the public approval he had acquired were so great that in 1934, with the newly adopted Surname Law, Mustafa Kemal was given the honorary surname Atatürk, which translates into "Father of the Turks". Kemal envisioned the creation of a society with Western standards and values, which he attempted by including six fundamental ideological pillars in the constitution, known as the six arrows of Kemalism, namely Secularism, Nationalism, Republicanism, Reformism, Secularism, and Statism (Metz, 1995, p.xxv). Under the aforementioned values the country adopted a plethora of reforms in order to achieve the modernisation and secularisation of the state (Zürcker, 2004, p.237). These reforms included the abolishment of the caliphate and the sultanate, the disestablishment of polygamy, the prohibition of religious fraternities, the replacement of the Ottoman Canon Law by the Common Law based on the Swiss model, the adoption of the Latin alphabet, and the concession of political rights to women (Zürcker, 2004, pp.237-238; Bozarslan, 2008, pp.50-51). By undertaking these reforms, which were among the most radical in the Muslim world, Turkey moved away from the religiousness that characterised its Muslim past and established turkishness and secularism as the nation's new identities (Metz, 1995, p.39). After Atatürk's death in 1938 there was a peaceful transition of power where Mustafa Ismet İnönü was appointed as the country's new president on the next day, which highlighted the level of stability that the new regime had achieved (Metz, 1995, p.39).

Throughout the governance of the Republican People's party the country had an one-party system, under which only one political party had the constitutional right to form a government. However, in 1946 the government established a multi-party system in which

multiple political parties can participate in an election, assume political offices, and govern either on their own or within a coalition, which was one of the prerequisites in order for Turkey to be able to join NATO (Aydoğan & Slapin, 2013). The multi-party system was first institutionalised in the 1950 elections (Aydoğan & Slapin, 2013). The newly formed Democratic Party (DP) won the first two free and fair elections under the new establishment and remained in power for a decade, until the first coup d'état in 1960.

Governance in Turkey has not always been an effortless or straightforward process. On the contrary, democracy was disrupted by coups whenever the military believed that the political authorities did not govern in an ideal way. Specifically, overthrows took place in 1960, 1971, and 1980, followed by a military memorandum in 1997 when the Islamist political party Welfare Party (RP) formed a coalition government, and the most recent attempted coup d'état that occurred in 2016 by a fraction of the military. The military in Turkey has always been a prevalent figure in the political scene. In fact, it considers itself as responsible for the protection of the constitutional principles and the Kemalist ideals and, based on that, it overthrew the government whenever it felt like these values were being threatened (Metz, 1995, p.42). After the restoration of normality, political power was returned to the civilians.

In July 20th, 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus and occupied 37 percent of its northern territory. Nine years later, in November 15th, 1983, Turkey declared the occupied land as an independent state under the name “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” which only Turkey recognises. The above comprises what is known as the Cyprus dispute. Turkey still occupies Northern Cyprus to this day which is one of the main sticking points between Turkey and Greece. In 1984 a separatist attempt by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) was initiated, as a reaction to the oppression of the Kurdish population in Turkey. The aim of the separatist movement was the creation of an independent Kurdish state. The founder of the party was Abdullah Öcalan. The above is one of the main issues the country faces and led to the loss of over 400.000 lives while now the party is regarded as a terrorist organisation.

Turkey became a member of the United Nations in 1945 and joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in 1952. In 1963 it became an associate member of the European Community and ever since 1999 Turkey is regarded as a candidate member of the European Union, although it has not achieved full membership yet. Turkey's EU membership bid has been the cornerstone of a plethora of reforms which led to a significant economic, social, and political development of the country.

The chronicle

From an Association Agreement to a candidate country

Relations between Turkey and the European Union is not a recent phenomenon. To the contrary, ever since its creation in 1923 Turkey has been an avid supporter of westernisation and, throughout the years, keenly pursued a position among the European realm. Once World War II came to an end, Turkey began seeking entry into Western institutions and became a part of NATO in 1952, due both to the strategic significance of its geographical location as well as the country's staunch opposition to communism (Akçakoca, 2006). Seven years later, in 1959, Turkey applied to become an associate member of the European Economic Community. The application was embraced positively and, as a result, in 1963 the Ankara Agreement was signed between Turkey and the EEC which began a process of establishing a Customs Union.

The Ankara Agreement, also known as the Association Agreement, was signed at Ankara in September 1st, 1963, between the Republic of Turkey and the European Economic Community in order to aid the improvement of living conditions in both parties by strengthening economic and trade relations (Directorate for EU Affairs, 2011). The above would occur through a process consisting of three distinct phases, starting with the preparatory stage, followed by the transitional stage and concluded with the final stage which would, ultimately, lead to the establishment of the Customs Union. The preparatory stage was initiated in 1963 with the intention of fulfilling the obligations required for the subsequent two stages and was supposed to last five years, unless an extension was deemed necessary (Directorate for EU Affairs, 2011; Öniş, 2000). Ten years later, in 1973, the transitional stage began. During that stage the two parties would work towards the establishment of a customs union and align their economic policies in order for the Association to function productively (Directorate for EU Affairs, 2011; Öniş, 2000). The Ankara Agreement underlined that this process would last not more than twelve years and, thus, in 1995 the final stage was attained, thirty-two years after the Association Agreement was first established. The aforementioned delay regarding the timeframe of the process did not happen without a reason but rather it was based around the belief that exposing Turkey to the free European market prematurely would have consequences since it could threaten the industrial development of the country, an argument that Turkey itself also sustained (Öniş, 2000). In order for the Agreement to function properly and for the objectives to be attained a Council of Association was established which was the main decision-making body. It consisted of members of the Governments of the Member States, members of the Council and the Commission, and members of the Turkish government.

Decisions within the Council of Association were to be made by unanimity and the body's president served for a period of six months and was alternating between a representative of the Community and a representative of Turkey (Directorate for EU Affairs, 2011). An important part of the Ankara Agreement was Article 28 which stated that once the agreement had reached a sufficiently advanced level the contracting parties would consider the prospect of Turkey's accession into the European Community. The above encouraged the country to maintain the terms of the agreement and to work towards performing the necessary reforms in order to fulfil its aspirations of becoming a full member of the Community.

Considering the momentum that the Ankara Association Agreement had created, Turkey applied to become a full member of the European Community in 1987. Two and a half years later, in December of 1989, the European Commission delivered its opinion regarding Turkey's request. The full membership application was rejected on the grounds that the economic and political circumstances in the country would cause difficulties since adjustment problems were bound to arise (Eralp, 2004, pp. 69-70). For the European Community democracy was the cornerstone of enlargement, while Turkey viewed democracy more as a gradual process of lesser significance. The above, along with the financial difficulties the country faced and the European Community's focus on the development of a single market by the end of 1992 led the Commission to recommend that no accession negotiations with any country would take place before 1993 (Eralp, 2004, p.69). Much to Turkey's disappointment, the country's focus was shifted back to the pursuit of a Customs Union.

The Customs Union entered into force on the 1st of December 1996. Under this arrangement all customs duties and charges of equivalent effect along with quantitative restrictions regarding industrial trade between Turkey and the European Union were eliminated (Eralp, 2004, p.32). Turkey was also under the obligation of adopting the EU's common external tariff regarding trade relations with third countries. Reception in the Turkish political scene was overly positive since the customs union was considered as a stepping stone to full membership (Öniş, 2000). After all, this was the closest form of cooperation with the EU possible without the country being an actual member of the Union and, thus, Turkey considered itself to be well ahead of other prospective applicants (Öniş, 2000).

For Turkey the most significant advantage was the removal of quota restrictions regarding textile and garment exports while EU exporters benefited from the abolition of import duties and charges (Hale & Avci, 2001, p.32). However, the endeavour had certain limitations. Specifically, there were still restrictions on trade in place, since agricultural products and steel were excluded from the customs union, albeit with the commitment of

reversing that in the future (Hale & Avci, 2001, p.32). Also, the matters of budgetary transfers and the free movement of workers were not addressed and were left, instead, to be dealt with once full membership negotiations commenced (Hale & Avci, 2001, p.32). As far as results were concerned there were those who were pessimistic and believed that the customs union would cause Turkish imports to skyrocket without the equivalent gains in exports, and the optimists who believed that freer access to the EU market coupled with duty free imports and free exports would encourage foreign direct investments in the country (Hale & Avci, 2001, p.33). In reality, Turkey's imports did grow much faster than its exports and its trade with the EU grew faster than its overall trade. Nonetheless, it should not be assumed that the above was a direct result of the customs union since there was also a fast growth of the Turkish economy due to inflationary policies and an absence of government control in regard to the economy, which could have caused the disproportionate rise of imports (Hale & Avci, 2001, p.33).

In terms of domestic politics, critique that arose over the customs union came mostly from Islamist groups that were opposed to the notion of Turkey's integration into the EU from an ideological standpoint (Hale & Avci, 2001, pp.34-35). However, there were also secularists who were in favour of the Europeanisation of Turkey but believed that the particular arrangement was inequitable towards Turkey since it was not accompanied by a guarantee on a potential full membership (Hale & Avci, 2001, p.35). Also, it was pointed out that although the customs union burdened Turkey with an array of economic obligations it did not grant the government with a role in the decision-making processes that decide over these obligations. The EU, in relevance to the above, committed to informally consult Turkish experts when decisions were to be taken regarding the procedures of the customs union, and the experts would also be a part of the workings of technical committees that advise the Commission (Hale & Avci, 2001, p.35).

Turkey's suspended membership application was resuscitated in light of the extensive enlargement process the EU was preparing to undergo in the 1990's. As the Luxembourg European Council of 1997 approached, there were four prevalent scenarios vis-à-vis Turkey's prospective EU membership: either Turkey would be excluded from the process, given a special status without full membership potential, given a special status with membership potential, or be treated as an equal and be given a place in the enlargement process. The first possibility, mainly supported by Greece and Germany, was based on the notion that Turkey had substantial economic and political problems, was too large, and in need of considerable financial contribution by the Union (Eralp, 2004, p.70). It was supported that the customs union would suffice in strengthening relations between the EU and Turkey without the need to for

further commitment. The second possibility, keeping Turkey within the European project without the potential of full membership, was a problematic concept for several reasons. First and foremost, excluding Turkey from the enlargement process would substantially undermine EU-Turkish relations and increase Euroscepticism among the country's population (Eralp, 2004, p.70). Turkey is a country that was established upon the notion of Westernisation, therefore giving up the prospect of assuming a place in the European scene and settling for special status was not a favourable scenario. In fact, the country viewed that exclusion as biased and unfair. At the same time, there was pressure on the EU by the United States to include Turkey in the enlargement process, which deemed a potential exclusion even more challenging (Eralp, 2004, p.71). The third scenario, regarding a special status but this time with the promise of full membership, would result in Turkey being a part of the enlargement process without establishing a pre-accession strategy or formally initiating negotiations. This scenario was deemed as the most beneficial solution, since it would not exceedingly commit the EU regarding financial assistance, as Turkey would not be included in the pre-accession strategy, and it would be a respectable driving force for reforms within the country in order to advance politically and economically and achieve the obligations for membership (Eralp, 2004, p.71). At the same time, however, it would give Turkey the sound impression that full membership was no longer merely an aspiration but an attainable objective in the near future. Finally, the last scenario, which would include Turkey in the enlargement process under membership status, was unlikely to happen. Although Turkish officials wholeheartedly supported it, Germany and Greece were against this notion with the justification that relations between the EU and Turkey have been diachronically nebulous and characterised by ups and downs (Eralp, 2004, p.71). At the same time, other countries were not politically willing to support this possibility.

Ultimately, the third possibility prevailed and in the Luxembourg Summit of 1997 Turkey was exempt from the ongoing enlargement process and given a special status with the potential of full membership down the road. More specifically, the European Council decided that although Turkey did somewhat satisfy the eligibility criteria for EU membership it would not be granted candidate status. According to the presidency conclusions of the European Council summit Turkey did not fulfil the political and economic conditions for membership and instead the country was offered a European strategy in order to prepare for accession and get closer to the EU in every field (European Parliament, 1998). That strategy focused on the further development of the Association Agreement, the strengthening of the customs union, the establishment of financial cooperation, the alternation of laws for the adoption of the *acquis*,

and the participation in certain programs which would be decided on a case by case basis (European Parliament, 1998). Further developments in EU-Turkey relations would depend upon the political and economic reforms that the country was bound to undergo in the areas of human rights, protection of minorities, the improvement of Greco-Turkish relations, the lawful settlement of disputes, and the examination of a solution on the Cyprus dispute (European Parliament, 1998). The European Council also established the European Conference, where EU Member States and states aspiring to accede to the Union would work together. According to the European Council, members of the conference would have to commit to peace, security, and good neighbourly relations, respect for the sovereignty and borders of other countries respect for international law, and also pledge to settle territorial disputes by peaceful means and particularly through the International Court of Justice in the Hague (European Parliament, 1998). Any European country that fulfilled the EU accession criteria was welcome to join. Initially, the EU invited Cyprus, the applicant states of Central and Eastern Europe, and Turkey (European Parliament, 1998).

Turkey reacted robustly to the above since it felt that the Council's decision was discriminatory and biased, since certain former communist countries, some with weaker economic and political backgrounds, were included in the enlargement process while Turkey, a country with closer and multiannual relations with the EU, was not (Akçakoca, 2006). In fact, Turkey supported that the Copenhagen criteria were implemented subjectively when deciding whether a country was eligible for accession or not (Eralp, 2004, p.72). The Turkish state was primarily irritated by the inclusion of Cyprus in the enlargement process, since the country was among the first rank of countries, which made Turkey feel like the EU was taking influenced by Greece and was taking their side on the Cyprus dispute (Eralp, 2004, p.72). Euroscepticism in Turkey was revived and, as a result, Turkey declared that it was no longer interested in pursuing EU membership and suspended the political dialogue with the Union (Akçakoca, 2006; Eralp, 2004, p.72). The European Union however did not share Turkey's opinion. On the contrary, EU officials believed that the summit was an advancement in EU-Turkish relations while clearly highlighting the steps that needed to be taken in order for Turkey to get closer to the European norms (Eralp, 2004, p.74). In either case, Turkey seemed to move away from its European perspective.

Following the controversial European Council in 1997, the first Regular Progress Report on Turkey's progress towards accession was published by the Commission in 1998 and aimed to reverse the problems caused by the previous Summit. Ever since then, progress reports have been published on an annual basis and consist of an evaluation of Turkey's capacity to

fulfil the accession criteria and its progress in adopting the *acquis communautaire*. In essence, they are the Commission's response to the European Councils and they consist of a description of the EU-Turkey relations and recent developments, an analysis of the political and economic conditions within the country, an evaluation of Turkey's capacity to take on the obligations of membership, and a general evaluation of the state's situation and prospects (European Commission, 1998). According to the evaluation, on the topic of politics there were irregularities regarding the functioning of public authorities, continual human rights violations, unequal treatment of minorities and a lack of civilian control of the army (European Commission, 1998). It was acknowledged that Turkey did attempt to combat human rights violations, albeit without significant results, and the state was also requested to resolve disputes with neighbouring countries in conformity with international law (European Commission, 1998). Regarding the economy, Turkey had undergone significant modernisation which resulted in a market economy with developed institutional and legislative frameworks, a reliable private sector, and liberal trade rules (European Commission, 1998). As a result, Turkey was considered able to handle the pressure of competition. In terms of its ability to take on the obligations of membership, Turkey had showed its ability to effectively implement the legislation regarding the Customs Union although it still had a long way to go vis-à-vis the adoption of the *acquis*. It had already begun the process of aligning its national legislation with the Community law in most areas underlined in the European strategy, although there were shortcomings, especially in the fields of agriculture, the internal market, and the environment (European Commission, 1998). All in all, it was recognised by the Commission that Turkey had made significant progress in fulfilling its commitments thus far and the overall climate was fairly optimistic.

A little less than a year later, in October of 1999, just before the European Council in Helsinki, the Commission published its second progress report on Turkey which examined the progress that had been achieved in the past year and assessed whether Turkey had been successful in carrying out the reforms outlined in the previous report (European Commission, 1999). Up until then, the political dialogue between Turkey and the EU which had reached an impasse during the European Council in Luxembourg had not recommenced. While assessing the political criteria and the implementation of the *acquis* the Commission focuses on what legislation has already been adopted and not what is in progress whereas, in terms of the economic aspect, the focus is on a longer-term evaluation of the country's performance (European Commission, 1999). The above occurs so the evaluations can allow for an objective comparison between the different countries. In the political field, Turkey did have a basic

democratic political structure, but it did not meet the Copenhagen criteria. That occurred because there were deficiencies in the areas of human rights and protection of minorities since torture was among the techniques used within the country, albeit not systematically, and there was a restriction in the freedom of expression (European Commission, 1999). At the same time, the military maintained a significant role in political life. However, Turkey had also made some progress regarding the independence of the judiciary and the adoption of laws concerning the justice system, political life, and human rights (European Commission, 1999). However, preceding the report, the arrest and trial of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), had taken place and he was handed the death sentence. That was condemned by the Commission who urged Turkey not to carry out that decision and act, instead, in accordance with the European values. Regarding the economy, since Turkey possessed several characteristics of a market economy it was considered able to cope in the EU market as long as it maintained macroeconomic stability and carried out legal and structural reforms (European Commission, 1999). In terms of membership obligations, Turkey had made substantial progress in regard to the customs union and, to a lesser extent, the areas covered by the European strategy while it had also adopted the European standards to a satisfactory level (European Commission, 1999). Overall, the progress report was rather positive and recognised that Turkey had made substantial progress. The Commission concluded that the country had the administrative capacity to carry out the implementation of the EU acquis.

The Helsinki European Council that took place on December 10th and 11th 1999 constitutes the cornerstone of Turkey's efforts to become a member of the European Union. Finally, after a long wait, Turkey was granted candidate status with the potential to join the European Union under the same criteria as the other candidate countries, a result of the recent positive developments in the country (European Parliament, 1999). Specifically, there were several reasons that led to the reversal of the decision that was taken in Luxembourg. First and foremost, the EU realised that the complaints Turkey had vis-à-vis them receiving unjust treatment were valid and, in particular, Britain and Italy were especially vocal in regard to that matter, albeit possibly out of self-interest (Akçakoca, 2006; Tocci, 2014). Moreover, there was a change of government in Germany, where the Christian Democrats who were diachronically against Turkey's accession into the EU were replaced by the Social Democrats who maintained a more positive outlook on the matter (Akçakoca, 2006; Öniş, 2000). A significant change that had a profound effect on the decision that was taken in Helsinki was the change of Greece's policy towards Turkey. Over the years, Greece used its veto powers to prevent Turkey from joining the European Union and acquiring any sort of financial assistance. Two things

influenced that swift, one with a realistic and the other with an emotional dimension (Öniş, 2000). The realistic dimension consisted of the realisation that it was not in the country's own economic and strategic interests to isolate Turkey and push it away from the European influence (Öniş, 2000). Furthermore, the Greek business elites came to the realisation that the interests of Turkey and Greece were intertwined in terms of prosperity, therefore they should seek economic gains through cooperation in trade, investment, and tourism (Öniş, 2000). The emotional dimension was relevant to the subsequent earthquakes that occurred both in Kocaeli, Turkey, and Athens, Greece, in 1999. The earthquake in Turkey was tragic and resulted in a mass outpouring of sympathy for the country which was one of the main reasons why the attitudes towards Turkey changed so swiftly. In terms of Greco-Turkish relations, in the aftermath of the earthquakes the two countries cooperated closely in order to carry out civil rescue efforts and, as a result, they both ended up questioning their motives and the past conflicts (Öniş, 2000). Thus, Greece seized to be adamantly against Turkey's accession and did not exercise its veto powers in the Helsinki European Council. Last but not least, a final reason for the reversal of the Luxembourg decisions was the influence of the United States (Öniş, 2000). The United States had always been firm advocates of Turkey's potential EU accession and they did not hesitate to apply pressure in that instance as well. The motive behind that position appeared to be that America's interests in the Middle East and Central Asia would be best served if Turkey, their strategic ally, shared the standards and values of the EU (Öniş, 2000).

Although Turkey was given candidate status during the Helsinki Summit, accession negotiations were not opened, unlike the rest of the countries that were part of the particular enlargement process. The above happened because it was established that Turkey did not meet the Copenhagen political criteria for membership, since there were shortcomings in the areas of human rights and protection of minorities, while the Cyprus dispute and conflicts with Greece needed to be resolved as well (European Parliament, 1999; Tocci, 2014). Instead, a pre-accession strategy would be created to specify and support the necessary reforms through enhanced political dialogue with an emphasis on the fulfilment of the political membership criteria and with special regards to the protection of human rights (European Parliament, 1999). The Commission would create an Accession Partnership to specify the necessary reforms and monitor the entire process. The Accession Partnership highlighted the short and medium term priorities where radical reforms needed to take place with the financial and technical support of the European Union (Eralp, 2004, p.78; Öniş, 2003). The Accession Partnership contained both political and economic reforms, the former aimed at the establishment of a more liberal

and pluralistic order and the later at the accomplishment of macroeconomic stability and effective regulation (Eralp, 2004, pp.80-81). In political terms, the Accession Partnership acknowledged that changes needed to be made with respect to the expansion of citizenship rights and the eradication of human rights violations (Öniş, 2003). The reforms that were considered included improvements of the functioning of the judiciary, the removal of provisions that forbid the education of Turkish citizens in their native language and the use of their native language when broadcasting (Öniş, 2003). The resolution of the Cyprus dispute was also a major part of the Accession Partnership. As far as the economy is concerned, prerequisites included disinflation and structural reforms through the control of public expenditure, reforms of the financial and agricultural sectors, and privatisation (Öniş, 2003).

In response to the Association Partnership, Turkey prepared the Turkish National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA), which was submitted to the Commission in March of 2001. The above was Turkey's first comprehensive effort to meet the political and economic criteria set by the Commission, however it fell short of the expectations that were defined in the Association Partnership since Turkey was unwilling to undergo reforms in the most sensitive issues. Although the EU recognised the Turkish authorities' efforts and the significant progress the NPAA proposed, it pointed out that the scale of reforms was inadequate in the sense that they failed to reach the threshold that would allow accession negotiations to commence (Öniş, 2003). As soon as the National Program was approved the Turkish government initiated the implementation process, where the suggestions proposed would be turned into actions. Specifically, the Turkish authorities focused on the political aspects of the NPAA, and, between the end of 2001 and 2002 accomplished to perform thirty-four constitutional amendments, predominantly with regard to the area of human rights and freedom of expression and organisation (Eralp, 2004, p.80). These reforms were succeeded by "Harmonisation Laws" were established to translate the amendments into concrete actions in order to bring the Turkish body of law in line with the acquis (Öniş, 2003). As a result, that period is described as a phase of profound changes in Turkish history, since the changes that occurred were substantial in comparison to previous attempts, especially considering the fact that they were implemented by a weak coalition government consisting of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), the Democratic Left Party (DSP), and the Motherland Party (ANAP) (Eralp, 2004, p.80; Öniş, 2003). During the summer of 2002 it became evident how committed the Turkish authorities were towards implementing the amendments. The harmonisation laws were approved by the parliament in a very short amount of time and the momentum that the above had created allowed for the pursuit of further reforms. Consequently, in August of 2002,

Turkey proceeded to finally abolish the death penalty and to grant minorities the right to learn their native language and broadcast it (Eralp, 2004, p.80; Öniş, 2003). However, some critical areas were still left unaccounted for since issues such as the performance of the economy, the expansion of cultural rights to minorities, the power of the military, and the Cyprus issue were not addressed (Eralp, 2004, p.80; Öniş, 2003).

Turkey accomplished a plethora of reforms between 1999 and 2002 in its quest to satisfy the Copenhagen criteria and achieve the initiation of accession negotiations. In the general elections that took place in November of 2002 the Justice and Development Party (AKP), under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, acquired 34 percent of the of the votes which granted them control of 66 percent of the parliament by winning 363 out of the 550 seats (Yilmaz, 2009, pp.58-59). That election marked the departure from successive coalition governments and the commencement of a single party majority governance in over a decade. The AKP was defined as a pro-EU “democratic, conservative, reformist and modern” political party with a post-Islamist political programme without an Islam-oriented policy, dedicated to the promotion of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law (Eralp, et al., 2017; Patton, 2007). The party was a firm supporter of a market economy and Turkey’s entry into the European Union, willing to perform any necessary reforms in order for the country to become a full member of the EU. During the first years of its administration, the AKP’s primary focus was the obtainment of a date to open accession talks and, as a result, Turkey experienced extensive reforms and constitutional amendments in areas such as human and minority rights, freedom of expression and association, and civil-military relations (Patton, 2007; Yilmaz, 2015).

In the Copenhagen European Council that occurred in December of 2002 the Turkish government’s efforts to meet the prerequisites of the Accession Partnership were recognised and it was encouraged to maintain the momentum (Council of the European Union, 2002). The particular Summit turned out to be a turning point in EU – Turkey relations, since it announced that, if the Commission decides that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria for membership, accession negotiations would begin without delay in the next European Council that would happen in December of 2004 (Council of the European Union, 2002). In the meantime, so as to assist Turkey through the process, the accession strategy would be reinforced, the Customs Union would be strengthened, and financial assistance for Turkey would be substantially increased (Council of the European Union, 2002). In October of 2004 the European Commission published a regular report on Turkey’s progress towards accession which consisted of a comprehensive analysis of the situation regarding the political and economic criteria for accession, the country’s capacity of assuming the obligations for

membership, and whether Turkey satisfactorily fulfils the Copenhagen criteria in order for negotiations to be initiated (Commission of the European Communities, 2004). The Commission concluded that Turkey had made great progress through the performance of two major constitutional reforms and the establishment of eight legislative packages in order to address the issues outlined in the Accession Partnership (Commission of the European Communities, 2004). It was suggested, therefore, that Turkey sufficiently fulfilled the political criteria for membership and could proceed to the next stage of its succession into the EU. As a result, in the Brussels European Council that followed in December of 2004 the Council, acknowledging the Commission's aforementioned recommendation and Turkey's efforts to effectively implement the necessary reforms, concluded that Turkey sufficiently fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria to open accession negotiations in October 3rd, 2005 (Council of the European Union, 2004). In order for the accession negotiations to function effectively a framework for negotiations would be established by the Council after a proposal by the Commission. In terms of the negotiations themselves, they would be broken down into a number of chapters, each concerning a specific policy area with opening and closing benchmarks. The negotiations would be open-ended, which meant that outcomes could not be guaranteed in advance and if during the process a candidate persistently breached the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, negotiations could be suspended by the Council with qualified majority voting (Council of the European Union, 2004).

Nonetheless, 2004 marked a milestone in Turkey's accession process since finally EU membership was no longer a yearning but rather a solid possibility that depended on Turkey's willingness to evolve. Paradoxically, however, the period following the decision to begin negotiations with Turkey was not characterised by further radical reforms or an intense focus on adopting the *acquis*, but rather a loss of momentum and a considerable deceleration of the process.

Europeanisation and De-Europeanisation

During the Copenhagen Summit of December 2002, it was decided that the European Union would begin accession negotiations with Turkey provided that the European Council in December 2004 decided that the country fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria, based on the most recent Commission progress report. Indeed, the Brussels European Council concluded that Turkey had fulfilled the requirements. With EU membership finally becoming a real

possibility successive democratic reform packages were initiated, constituting the “golden age” of Europeanisation in Turkey (Aydin-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016). Incongruously, that “golden age” lasted barely until the beginning of the accession negotiations in October of 2005, when reforms significantly slowed down and, eventually, reached a standstill.

In the present day, only sixteen out of the thirty-five chapters have been opened, of which just one has been provisionally closed. Multiple vetoes have been put in place by France, Cyprus, and the European Council which, as a result, has effectively frozen negotiations in most chapters of the *acquis* while no chapters can be provisionally closed. Specifically, the chapter of science and research is the only one that has been closed, while an additional fourteen chapters have been opened throughout the years but never concluded, as shown in Table 2 below.

*Table 2: Chapters of the *acquis* that have been opened or provisionally closed*

Chapters	Negotiations Opened	Negotiations Closed
Free movement of capital	19 December 2008	-
Company Law	17 June 2008	-
Intellectual property rights	17 June 2008	-
Information society and media	19 December 2008	-
Food safety, vet and phytosanitary policy	30 June 2010	-
Taxation	30 June 2009	-
Economic and monetary policy	14 December 2015	-
Statistics	26 June 2009	-
Enterprise and industrial policy	29 March 2007	-
Trans-European networks	19 December 2007	-
Regional Policy and coordination of structural instruments	5 November 2013	-
Science and research	12 June 2006	12 June 2006
Environment	21 December 2009	-
Consumer and health protection	19 December 2007	-
Financial control	26 June 2007	-
Financial and budgetary positions	30 June 2016	-

(Source: European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/turkey_en)

Scholars have concluded that the post Helsinki era can be chronologically divided into three time periods on the basis of Turkey’s attitude towards Europeanisation. Specifically, the

first time period was the progressive Europeanisation between 1999 and 2004 with the accomplishment of radical reforms in order to meet the accession demands (Yilmaz, 2015). Afterwards, the period of selective Europeanisation followed, ranging from 2005 to 2010 when certain changes did occur, however they were limited and carefully chosen (Yilmaz, 2015). Lastly, from 2011 up until today Turkey is experiencing the de-Europeanisation phase, where progress is essentially reversed, and the country does not act in line with the accession demands, but rather against them (Yilmaz, 2015).

Specifically, in 1999, when Turkey was granted candidacy status, EU conditionality worked as a powerful incentive for extensive reforms in many areas related to democracy and human rights (Yilmaz, 2015). Up until the official initiation of accession negotiations the AKP government was adamantly pro-EU and focused on the sole objective of becoming a member of the European axis. At the time even the Turkish military was in favour of EU membership (Yilmaz, 2015).

However, the above was partly reversed after 2005 when reforms did occur, but they were cherry-picked. A U-turn in EU-Turkey relations occurred in 2005 when, following Cyprus' accession into the Union despite Greek Cypriots turning down the Anan Plan, Turkey issued a declaration that it would not apply the Additional Protocol of the Ankara Agreement to Cyprus (Eralp, et al., 2017; Hauge, et al., 2016). As a result, the Council decided to suspend negotiations on eight chapters and, in addition, no open chapter would be closed unless Turkey recognised Cyprus by applying the Protocol (Hauge, et al., 2016). Also, in 2007 French President Nicolas Sarkozy vetoed the opening of the chapter "economic and monetary policy in accordance with his election promises (Hauge, et al., 2016). In the 2007 Turkish general elections the AKP increased its voting percentage from 34 percent to 46.6 percent, an election victory that substantially increased the party's influence. Actually, between 2007 and 2013 the Justice and Development Party enjoyed subsequent and substantial electoral wins that established it as the sole and most powerful governing party in Turkey (Eralp, et al., 2017). During the 2005-2010 period the Turkish authorities did perform a limited amount of reforms, but they were carefully chosen and did not meet the EU's expectations.

In the post-2011 period Turkey performed minor reforms but the overall atmosphere was characterised by a sense of de-Europeanisation, a progressive shift away from the European values and ideals. In the 2011 general elections the AKP got 49.95 percent of the votes increasing its power and influence even further by acquiring a solid majority. After that, however, followed a period of gradual derailment. In the summer of 2013 Turkey witnessed the most extensive and intense wave of protests in its history. The tempest began when a small

group of demonstrators protested in Istanbul against the government's decision to build a shopping mall in Gezi Park (Eralp, et al., 2017). The protest was shut down by the authorities with the use of brute force which led to massive uprisings in the country's largest cities, including Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir (Eralp, et al., 2017). The protests revolved around concerns over the violations of several rights, including the freedom of press, expression, and assembly, the prosecution and imprisonment of activists and journalists, the use of disproportionate force by the police, and the illegalisation of certain publications and forms of activism, which constituted the reoccurrence of oppressive and authoritarian governance under the AKP (Aydin-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016; Eralp, et al., 2017). The above led to the death of civilians and the subsequent criticism by the EU of Turkey's cruel responses and worsening level of democratic freedom (Aydin-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016; Eralp, et al., 2017). That was fundamentally against the European Union's core values of respect for democracy, fundamental rights, and minorities, which hindered Turkey's membership potential. The situation intensified further in 2015 when the country performed large-scale attacks against civilian activists and the armed conflict between Turkey and the PKK was resurrected (Aydin-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016). The night of July 15th, 2016, marked another turning point in Turkey's democratic downfall. A failed coup attempt by a part of the army resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives in Istanbul and Ankara and an ensuing introduction of a state of emergency across the country. The state of emergency was initially enforced for a duration of three months but it kept being continually extended for two years. The above provided the AKP government with the ability to take full control of the state by acquiring the legal right to govern the country with decrees which had the force of law (Eralp, et al., 2017). Taking advantage of the above, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan proceeded to issue a plethora of arrests of civil servants, journalists, academics, teachers, military officials, and generally individuals who were opposed to his government. Specifically, over 150.000 people were taken into custody, 78.000 were arrested, over 110.000 civil servants were dismissed and around 40.000 were reinstated (European Commission, 2018). The unsuccessful coup d'état worked as a stepping stone for the government to carry out constitutional amendments that would alter the nature of governance in Turkey and would allow the President to act officially as the head of the party, the head of government, and the head of state simultaneously (Eralp, et al., 2017). After amendments were passed in the parliament, a referendum took place in April 16th, 2017, which officially approved the constitutional changes with 51 percent of the votes. These changes, which will be fully adopted and enforced by 2019, essentially change Turkey's political system from a parliamentary democracy to a presidential democracy by limiting the parliament's powers,

abolishing the position of prime minister, and altering the nature of the Presidency from a predominantly honorary position to an influential part of the government.

In the aftermath of the above, Turkey receives substantial criticism that the country is moving away from the democratic norms and values and is entering a state of authoritarian rule and oppression. In fact, recently Turkey is being described as a hybrid regime, rather than a democracy. That goes profoundly against both the European values as well as the Copenhagen criteria for accession. In July of 2017 the European Parliament called for Turkey's accession talks to be formally suspended if the state goes ahead with the implementation of the constitutional reform package (Toksabay, Ece; Karadeniz, Tulay, 2017). However, the Commission has not officially adopted a stance on the matter. In the most recent progress report issued by the European Commission in April of 2018, the Commission condemned the disproportionality of the measures taken by the Turkish government in the aftermath of the failed coup attempt and raised concerns over their impact on the functioning of democracy (European Commission, 2018). Several shortcomings were identified in the thirty-one decrees issued under the state of emergency, namely in regard to lack of parliamentary scrutiny and judicial review and the violation of civil and political rights and freedoms (European Commission, 2018). As far as the referendum is concerned, the report determined that the amendments were lacking sufficient checks and balances and endangered the separation of powers (European Commission, 2018). Despite the above, there was no mention of a potential suspension of negotiations, just the conclusion that Turkey continues to implement the *acquis*, albeit with limitations, and significant further progress needs to be achieved (European Commission, 2018). Nevertheless, if Turkey continues to move away from the European values and adopts more oppressive policies the European Union will have no option but to voice a decisive opinion on the matter, going so far as to officially suspend negotiations with a country that no longer promotes the values and standards it vowed to uphold.

In retrospect, the deterioration of EU-Turkey relations cannot be blamed entirely on Turkey but rather the reaction of the country on the mixed signals it received from the European Union as soon as the negotiations were initiated. Diachronically, there has been scepticism over Turkey's EU membership both within the country as well as throughout the European Union. The above included anti-Islamic and xenophobic notions within the Union on national level, which was expressed through the belief that Turkey was too Muslim to be a part of the EU, a view that the Turkish side characterised as prejudice (Akçakoca, 2006; Hauge, et al., 2016). As a result, scepticism over the possibility of full membership grew within Turkey as well. In 2004 the Republic of Cyprus was included in the first wave of the 12+2 enlargement,

effectively becoming a part of the European Union and thus achieving the Europeanisation of the Cyprus issue, deeming its resolve a necessity in order for Turkey to proceed with the accession. Ever since then, it has constituted a blocking factor for Turkey, which became apparent when the European Council suspended negotiations on eight chapters as a result of Turkey's reluctance to apply the Additional Protocol to Cyprus (Hauge, et al., 2016). The financial crisis of 2008 and the concurrent rise of far-right political parties in some EU member states also influenced Turkey's turn in policy (Aydin-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016; Hauge, et al., 2016). The aforementioned resulted in a pessimistic climate concerning the enlargement process, which was suspended for five years by the Commission's President Jean-Claude Juncker in 2014, as well as Turkey's membership prospects (Aydin-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016; Hauge, et al., 2016). Moreover, due to the dire consequences that the financial crisis had on the EU, Turkey felt that since its economy was performing substantially better at the time it did not need the EU economically (Hauge, et al., 2016).

However, there was also a positive development in EU-Turkey relations during that period with the revival of negotiations in 2013. Due to the large influx of Syrian refugees in Turkey as a result of the Arab Spring and, particularly, the Syrian Civil War, Europe faced one of the most profound refugee crises since the Second World War (Bal, 2016). With the refugees utilising Turkey as getaway to Europe, the EU came to the realisation that it did not have effective policies in place in order to deal with the issue and, thus, it needed to revive cooperation with Turkey (Bal, 2016). In that climate, the EU and Turkey reached an agreement in November of 2015, known as the refugee deal, where Turkey would restrict the amount of refugees that passed its borders and entered the EU in return for financial assistance, the opening of the chapter on economic and monetary policy, and the prospect of visa liberalisation (Aydin-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016). The above constituted an important step in the revival of the, up until then, strained EU-Turkey relations. To this day, Turkey has provided humanitarian aid to more than 3.5 billion Syrian refugees and close to 365.000 refugees from other countries (European Commission, 2018). Consequently, the EU was spared the burden of dealing with the refugee crisis unaided and Turkey also benefited from closer cooperation and a more positive outlook on its membership prospects. Nonetheless, there is also the argument that through that deal Turkey is placed more in the position of a strategic partner for the cooperation in key strategic issues rather than a potential member of the Union (Aydin-Düzgit & Kaliber, 2016). Despite the positive developments, though, recently Turkey is being harshly criticised vis-à-vis measures that followed the attempted coup, such as the discussion on the death

penalty and the maintenance of the state of emergency which puts additional pressure on the relations (Hauge, et al., 2016).

All in all, even though Turkey experienced a plethora of reforms between the Helsinki Summit of 1999, where it was granted candidate status, and the Brussels European Council in 2004, where accession negotiations formally began, ever since 2005 progress began to diminish substantially until it eventually reached a stalemate. The reason behind that development can be traced in Turkey's changing political objectives and dynamics, the EU's uncertainty over Turkey's membership potential and political and economic turmoil, as well as the growing scepticism on both sides. Negotiations are still ongoing, albeit at a snail's pace, and the future of EU-Turkey relations seems uncertain, especially if Turkey does not take decisive steps in rectifying the downwards spiral it has embarked on.

Chapter III: What the future holds

Current perceptions and scenarios for the future

Discourse over Turkey's European Union candidacy has been extensive and tense, with some being in favour of Turkey's EU membership bid and others being adamantly against it, on the basis that Turkey is too different to be a part of the Union. There are particular arguments each side uses in order to encourage or oppose the country's candidacy, ranging from political and economic advantages to democratic discrepancies and political instabilities.

First of all, Turkey has all the typical traits of a European countries since it is part of every organisation in which participation requires being a part of the European continent (Zepos, 2009). In fact, Turkey is a member of major international organisations, including the United Nations, the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, NATO, the Council of Europe, and the World Trade Organisation. Furthermore, it is a regional power with a significant strategic role. Due to its geographical location, granting Turkey EU membership could also include safety related advantages, since it is located between Europe and the Middle East, as well as Europe and the Islamist World and could, therefore, act as a bridge between the different sides (Nugent, 2012, pp.600-601). It could also aid with West-Islam, Eurasia-West and United States-Europe polarisation by functioning as an intermediary for the alleviation of potential tensions and the maintenance of stability (Eralp, 2004, p.82; Kazakos, 2012, p.409; Öniş, 2000). Also, it is a possible gateway to Russia and the Central Asian Republics and, if it becomes a part of the EU, it could assist in the establishment of more collaborative relations in the vital regions that surround it (Eralp, 2004, p.82). In regard to the economy, those who are in favour of Turkey's accession support that Turkey would be an important contribution to the development of the internal market, since it would add around 80 million people to its size which would, in turn increase investments and aid in the development of trade relations (Kazakos, 2012, p.410; Nugent, 2012, p.600). Some also support that Turkey shares, to a certain degree, a common identity with Europe, since they both partake in European and international organisations (Nugent, 2012, p.603).

However, there are also objections on the matter of a prospective Turkish membership. First and foremost, Turkey's geographical location falls mostly outside of the European continent since it is predominantly a Middle Eastern country with only a small part located in Europe. Furthermore, it is a very large country, both geographically as well as in terms of

population. In fact, Turkey is set to surpass Germany in the following years and become the European country with the second largest population after Russia due to its population growth (Kazakos, 2012, p.411). That would create several issues for the European Union. Potential migration from such a large country would be unpleasant for societies like Germany and Sweden while, in terms of the functioning of the European institutions, the EU would face an issue with the weighting of votes during decision-making since Turkey would acquire the same number of votes as Germany (Kazakos, 2012, p.411; Zepos, 2009, p.69). Therefore, prior to Turkey's accession the EU would have to undergo institutional changes in order to obtain the institutional and financial capacity to absorb the country (Ifantis, 2009, p.121). Specifically, there would need to be regard for issues like the number of votes, parliamentary seats, funding, and subsidies, as well as an overhaul of the EU's budget and mechanisms of redistribution (Ifantis, 2009, p.121). Furthermore, in addition to its size, Turkey's population is almost entirely Muslim which poses an issue for many people who do not wish for a large Muslim state to become a member of the EU due to the difficulties many existing member states face when trying to integrate their Muslim communities (Akçakoca, 2006). Turkey's economy is also underdeveloped compared to that of the EU. The combination of the above three points, namely the country's large size, its predominantly Muslim population and its underdeveloped economy, are often summed up in the phrase "too big, too poor, too Muslim", a phrase often used to describe Turkey's inadequacy for membership. In addition to the above, Turkey is also burdened with a democratic deficit, human rights issues, political instability, and a lack of civilian control over the military which often interferes in the political life as a self-proclaimed guardian of the political values (Kazakos, 2012, p.411; Zepos, 2009, p.64).

All in all, the discourse around the advantages and disadvantages of Turkey's accession into the European Union has been extensive, with some firmly supporting a potential membership and others being adamantly against it. As far as the public is concerned, both in Turkey and the European Union opinions have been as fragmented. In terms of the Turkish public, a research conducted in 2003 revealed that 60 percent of people believed that the European Union applied double standards during its treatment of Turkey, it forced them to accept conditions that no previous candidate country had to fulfil, and it did not regard Turkey as a European State (Yilmaz, 2009). At around the same time the citizens of the European Union seemed to be as unenthusiastic. According to a survey in Germany, 52 percent of the respondents were against Turkey's accession into the EU and a mere 25 percent was supportive of the outcome of the Helsinki European Council in 1999 for the reason that Turkey belonged to a different cultural space and was not a kind of democracy similar to that of the west

(Kazakos, 2012, pp.411-412). On the contrary, a survey conducted in Turkey in 2004 concluded that 73 percent of the participants were in favour of EU membership (Tocci, 2014). That was substantially hindered in 2007, however, when support for EU membership ranged between 34 percent and 48 percent, due to the widespread belief that Turkey faced double-standards during the accession negotiations, the insistence on their open-ended nature, and the EU officials' proposals for a privileged partnership instead of full membership (Tocci, 2014). Meanwhile in the European Union a 2006 Eurobarometer survey showed that 48 percent of the EU public was against Turkey's EU membership (Akçakoca, 2006). The Austrians were the ones who were the most adamantly opposed while the Swedes and the Romanians were strongly in favour of the accession (Akçakoca, 2006). The reasons behind the weak support of Turkey's membership concerned the domestic situation of the country, issues regarding human rights and democracy, and the country's neighbour disputes (Akçakoca, 2006).

In 2018 public opinion in Turkey vis-à-vis the European Union remains relatively similar. Specifically, according to a report by Center for American Progress, the Turkish public is indecisive regarding the European Union since 49 percent of the participants would like Turkey to become an EU member state (Hoffman, 2018). However, 78 percent of the participants said that the government does not want to be a part of the European Union so, even though they are torn in regard to what they want, they are certain that the government has moved away from its European aspirations (Hoffman, 2018). In addition, 65 percent would like to be able to move to another European country either for studies, work, or leisure but only a mere 8 percent believe that EU-Turkey relations are strong and 67 percent think that the EU is to blame for that and not the Turkish government (Hoffman, 2018). As far as the refugee deal is concerned, 62 percent of the participants believe that the deal was not positive for Turkey and, even though Turkey has fulfilled its obligations according to 53 percent, the EU has not held up their end of the bargain, as claimed by 76 percent of the respondents (Hoffman, 2018). A surprising finding is that 57 percent of the respondents believe that Turkey should establish an alliance with Russia, which shows how the Turkish public is wary of western intents (Hoffman, 2018).

In general, Turkey appears to have progressively lost its faith in the European Union as well as its desire for membership. The shift in domestic politics, coupled with an overall disapproval from the European Union's side and a biased treatment of the country has put a strain on EU-Turkey relations and gradually moved the latter away from the European sphere of influence. Within the European Union viewpoints are just as divided. Germany, Austria, and Belgium are against a potential membership (Schuster, 2017). Conversely, Ireland, Italy,

Malta, Spain, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, Greece, and Cyprus are in favour (Schuster, 2017). France, Luxembourg, Denmark, and the United Kingdom remain undecided (Schuster, 2017).

Considering the recent stalemate in EU-Turkey relations and the subsequent difficulty in predicting the potential outcome of the long-lasting negotiation process, scholars often endeavour to estimate the probable future results of the procedure. Nathalie Tocci (2014) foresees three different scenarios as potential outcomes: a scenario for the worse, a vital change for the better, and the maintenance of the same situation but in a slightly more positive manner. Specifically, in the worse scenario, called conflict and competition, the EU would continue to pretend to negotiate with Turkey and, although it would have lost faith in the enlargement process, it would be unable to reach unanimity within the Council in order to suspend the negotiations (Tocci, 2014). The suspension would come from Turkey itself, however, since the AKP party would have a firm grip on power and, thus, it would consider the EU a liability rather than an asset (Tocci, 2014). Besides, at that point accession negotiation would have carried on for too long and Turkey would have lost faith in the process. The country would not go through an economic crisis since it is not depended on the global economy and, in terms of security, it would act on a case by case basis, establishing agreements with countries depending on the current issue at hand (Tocci, 2014). In the migration front, Turks would continue to immigrate into Europe, albeit less, and irregular migration from Turkey to the EU would pose an issue, especially considering Turkey's open visa policy towards its neighbours (Tocci, 2014). Last but not least, there would be a consensus that Turkey is not a European country.

The second scenario, named cooperation, would also lead to the suspension negotiations, though in a consensual manner. The European Union and Turkey would establish a new cooperation framework based on a harmonious relationship and abandon the accession process, under the realisation that the negotiations were inevitably leading to an impasse (Tocci, 2014). The customs union between the EU and Turkey would be maintained and upgraded and deeper collaboration would be established in the areas of security, asylum cooperation, as well as immigration and visa policy (Tocci, 2014). Finally, there most likely would not be a resolution to the Cyprus conflict but Turkey would begin to implement the Additional Protocol in regard to Cyprus (Tocci, 2014).

Lastly, the third scenario, convergence, considers the possibility of Turkey being granted full membership to the European Union. In this scenario the European Union would recover from the economic crisis to a satisfactory level and resume the enlargement process

vis-à-vis the Balkans and Turkey, or even the East (Tocci, 2014). Turkey would become a member of the EU but not the eurozone and, since a solution to the Cyprus dispute is a prerequisite for membership, the long-lasting conflict would be resolved (Tocci, 2014). In terms of identity, Turkey would not be considered entirely European, but its European-ness would be the main aspect of its identity (Tocci, 2014).

Throughout the years there has been one potential scenario that keeps being proposed as an alternative to full membership, namely a “privileged partnership”. A privileged partnership constitutes the middle ground between accession and isolation by establishing collaboration between the EU and Turkey in order to achieve common goals without the prospect or promise of EU membership (Kazakos, 2012, p.421). Such a partnership would establish a productive cooperation between the two parties without having to go through the long process of accession negotiations with an uncertain result. Or it could be a special relationship based on the Union of the Mediterranean, or a similar agreement, where relations would be based on the concept of concentric circles with the countries of the outer circle being able to benefit from the benefits of the cooperation without participating in the decision-making processes (Zepos, 2009, p.71). That would be in favour of Turkey, since, as an energy hub, it would benefit from maintaining its independence (Zepos, 2009).

Conclusion

Ever since its creation in 1923 Turkey embarked on a process of Westernisation, focused on overcoming the hurdles of the past and establishing a position in the world stage as a secular state committed to progress and western values. Turkey is a peculiar case, since it is a predominantly Muslim country located primarily in the Middle East with a clear orientation towards the west, something that could prove very beneficial for the western world considering Turkey's strategic importance.

Turkey first applied to join the European Economic Community in 1959, shortly after the country's creation, and was rejected. Instead, the Ankara Agreement was established in 1963, which initiated a close economic cooperation between Turkey and the European Union with the goal of eventually establishing a customs union. Turkey, however, was after full membership and in 1987 submitted a second application, only to be rejected again in 1997. At that point relations between the EU and Turkey reached a stalemate only to be revived again in 1999 when the European Council of Helsinki granted Turkey candidate status. In 2004 accession negotiations officially began and Turkey's EU membership finally became a possibility, should the country undergo substantial reforms in political areas such as democracy, fundamental rights, the protection of minorities, and the rule of law.

What is paradoxical about the EU-Turkey relations is that, even though up until 2005 Turkey underwent a radical reform programme in order to meet the Copenhagen criteria for accession negotiations to commence, as soon as they did the country embarked on a downwards spiral, known as de-Europeanisation. Reforms progressed at a slow and limited pace, the country's political scene began to shift dramatically from a democracy to authoritarian trends, and relations with the EU progressively deteriorated. However, through the refugee crisis the European Union realised that Turkey has a profound strategic importance for the Union and, therefore, entirely suspending the accession negotiations may not be in its best interest.

Today, relations between the European Union and Turkey have reached an impasse and guessing what the future may hold is substantially challenging. Either relations will continue as is, deteriorate further, progress, or the membership bid will be replaced by a strategic partnership that will include cooperation in key policy areas without the obligations that accompany membership. In any case, Turkey constitutes both an asset and a heavy burden for the European Union since it can offer an array of political and economic advantages should it join the EU, but at the same time it poses a threat to the Union's very core, namely the protection of fundamental rights, the promotion of peace and prosperity, and the rule of law.

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