



# IKV MONTHLY

ISSUE: 30 MAY-JUNE 2017

www.ikv.org.tr / contact: ikv@ikv.org.tr

## POLITICAL DIRECTORS' MEETING WAS HELD IN BRUSSELS

EU-Turkey High Level Political Dialogue at the Level of Directors was held on 13 June with the participation of Ministry for EU Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Commission and European External Action Service.

In the context of Turkey's EU accession process, both parties have already engaged in closer cooperation by organising annual meetings in topics of critical importance. Looking back, at the occasion of the EU General Affairs Council which was convened on 16 December 2014, it had been specified to establish high level dialogue in terms of economic affairs. At this current time, these high level dialogues have been developed in three key areas: energy, political affairs and economic affairs. Following the meeting of EU Heads of State or Government with Turkey on 29 November 2015, the parties highlighted that a new momentum has been achieved in relations with a pledge to re-energise Turkey's EU accession process.

The first Turkey-EU High Level Political Dialogue was held on 25 January 2016 in Ankara. During the Turkey-EU High Level Political Dialogue on 13 June in Brussels, parties discussed Turkey's accession talks with the EU, joint management on irregular migration, fight against terrorism, visa liberalisation dialogue, the modernisation of the Custom Union as well as other regional and global issues.

This meeting came at a critical juncture for Turkey-EU

relations as regards the fight against terrorism as well as other concerns in the aftermath of the referendum in Turkey in April and the meeting between President Erdoğan and EU Officials on the sidelines of NATO Summit in May in Brussels. In general, the parties recognised the critical importance of strengthening their cooperation towards common challenges such as the fight against terrorism and the refugee crisis.

### Accession Talks Constitute the Cornerstone of the Relations

In the meeting on 13 June, Ankara demanded the opening of the opening of negotiating Chapters 23 and 24, related to the rule of law and fundamental rights, whilst Brussels clearly underlined the state of fundamental rights in Turkey. Regarding the visa liberalisation dialogue, Brussels still demands that Turkey needs to fulfill the requirements of five of the

remaining benchmarks even though the majority of the criteria have been met.

Their cooperation in the fight against terrorism and in tackling the ongoing refugee crisis seems to have more predictable way of solutions between Turkey and the EU. However, the parties have reaffirmed that the accession negotiations constitute the cornerstone of Turkey-EU relations. As might be recalled, at Malta Summit in April, leaders from the EU side decided

to maintain dialogue with Turkey even though some Member States tried to block the accession talks.

### In the Aftermath of the Meeting on 25 May

Indeed, the coup attempt on 15 July led to a rift in relations between Turkey and the EU. However, high level political dialogues between Turkey and the EU have provided an important platform for the parties to assess the latest developments with respect to the implementation of EU *Acquis* as well as Copenhagen criteria. So far, they provided a significant opportunity to discuss issues of mutual interest. Furthermore, as of today, Turkey is recognised as an active regional foreign policy player by the EU.

In the aftermath of the meeting on 25 May, where President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and President of the European Council Donald Tusk came together, parties agreed to work on a positive agenda.

The most important thing for Turkey is to keep accession talks with the EU strong by returning to democratisation agenda, strengthening the rule of law, justice and ensuring respect for fundamental rights in Turkey. This is not only because there is an ongoing negotiation process with the EU but also Turkey should remain state of law.



## IKV DELEGATION HELD VARIOUS MEETINGS IN BRUSSELS

IKV Vice-Chairman Prof. Halûk Kabaaloğlu, IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas and their accompanying delegation were in Brussels for various meetings on 10-11 May. At the occasion of the visit, a variety of meetings with various officials from the European Commission

were held with respect to Turkey-EU relations following the 16 April 2017 constitutional referendum.

IKV Delegation had a closed working meeting with Head of Turkey Unit at Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) Myriam Ferran and both

parties had an opportunity to share their views. During the meeting, Head of Turkey Unit Ferran underscored the importance of communication between the parties and of enhancing consensus in that respect and further reminded the need for Turkey to take the necessary steps

to advance in the technical aspects of the accession negotiations. As for IKV Vice-Chairman Prof. Kabaaloğlu, he shared his wish that relations between the parties would be strengthened in the upcoming period.

Furthermore, IKV Delegation also had an opportunity to

assess the latest developments regarding the negotiations on the modernisation of the Customs Union with the Directorate-General Trade (DG TRADE) Director Ignacio Bercero. In that respect, both parties shared views regarding the upcoming negotiations which are scheduled to start in 2017.



## LAUNCH OF BREXIT NEGOTIATIONS

**B**rexit negotiations start almost a year after the UK voted to leave the EU in a referendum. However, major challenges lay ahead to meet the deadline of March 2019 for the UK to officially leave the bloc.

Talks for the UK's withdrawal from the EU began on 19 June between EU Chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier and UK Brexit Secretary David Davis. At their first meeting in Brussels, the British and EU Brexit negotiators agreed on an initial calendar and a structure for the negotiations. The Brexit talks will largely follow the EU's conditions and will centre on the two sides' new relationship only once sufficient progress has been made on the withdrawal issues such as a deal for citizens living in each other's territory, border arrangements between Ireland and the UK and the amount that Britain will pay to get out of previous EU commitments.

Both EU negotiator Michel Barnier and his British counterpart David Davis said after the first negotiating session they were confident of quick progress but said major challenges lay ahead to meet the deadline of March 2019 for the UK to officially leave the bloc. Talks are expected to take place once a month in Brussels while the issues to be resolved are talked through. Unless an extension is agreed by all 27 Member States, the UK will be leaving the EU on 29 March 2019. This means that negotiations will need to be concluded by Autumn 2018 so that enough time is allowed for the deal to be ratified.

## IKV ATTENDED THE WORKSHOP ORGANISED BY TAGEM

**T**he opening speech of the workshop, which was held on 3 May in Ankara, was made by Deputy Director-General of General-Directorate of Agricultural Research and Policies (TAGEM) by Dr. Necati Tulgar. In his speech, Dr. Tulgar informed the participants about agricultural AR-GE investments in Turkey. Following his speech, an agricultural engineer at Agricultural Economic and Policy Development Institute Dr. Berrin Taşkaya Top said that the aim of the workshop is to find out the opinions and expectations of the sector's stakeholders on effects of liberalisation process of foreign trade. The next workshop will be held on October.

## IKV ORGANISED "EUROPE WEEK" EVENTS

IKV EU Information Centre in cooperation with Marmara University EU Institute organised events within the framework of the "Europe Week", which was held from 8 to 10 May. On 9 May Europe Day, an Italian musical group FLO performed traditional Neapolitan songs.



**T**he opening speech of the event was realised by Marmara University Dean of Faculty of Political Science Prof. Recep Bozlağan. In his speech, Prof. Bozlağan underlined the fact that the EU constitutes a project based on unity and solidarity and which has had a tremendous contribution in enhancing peace and stability across the continent. Furthermore, he indicated that Turkey has been in communication and forged relations with the EU since 1959 with the perspective of integration in one of the world's largest economic and political bloc.

Highlighting the importance of these relations, Prof. Bozlağan also explained that the issue of the Europeanness of Turkey goes back to the 1800s, further reminding that Turkey was a party to the 1855 Paris Conference and had thus become part of the map of political Europe. As such, he argued that the rejection of Turkey's Europeanness would thus be deemed baseless.

The Europe Week events were pursued by a conference entitled "Nature-Mankind Relations in

Socio-Economic Development" with the participation of former actor and lecturer Ediz Hun. In that respect, Ediz Hun noted that the nature factor and environmental awareness is of significant importance regarding sustainable development and reminded that one should assess carefully the growing population of Turkey. He said "Istanbul constitutes a megalopolis with a population of nearly 20 million people and growing. In this great city, approximately 120 million litres of waste is being produced and the current waste and recycling centres are insufficient in order to meet this challenge. I do believe it is necessary to take a closer look at the best practices and to foster cooperation with Member States such as Sweden and Germany. Indeed, environmental awareness is of paramount importance and can contribute positively in further enhancing Turkey-EU friendship which is deeply rooted in history".

In the second part of the programme, Turkey-EU relations were discussed from an economic perspective in light of the upcoming negotiations with respect to the modernisation of

the Customs Union and possible solutions within that context. The chairmanship of the panel was provided by IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas. Realising the opening speech of the seminar, Assoc. Prof. Nas underscored that regardless of the difficulties and discrepancies, Turkey's EU perspective remains a success story and highlighted the necessity to further strengthen efforts in making the much needed reforms in order for Turkey to achieve the objective of EU membership.

IKV Vice-Chairman Prof. Kabaaloğlu alluded to the history of Turkey's EU perspective and stressed the strong economic ties which have been developed within the framework of the Customs Union. In that respect, he underlined the need to further enhance these relations in order to see renewed economic benefits for both sides, which would also have a positive impetus for Turkey-EU relations as a whole. As for IKV Strategy and Business Development Director M. Gökhan Kilit, he realised a presentation regarding the upcoming

negotiations on the modernisation of the Customs Union and underscored that further reforms are needed in agriculture in order for Turkey to be more efficient in the EU and global markets.

In the other seminars which were realised within the framework of the Europe Week events, the role of civil society organisations in Germany was tackled by social scientist and Bremen Migrants and Intercultural Studies Centre Director Gudrun Münchmeyer-Eliş; the issue of migration, nationality and identity in the context of European integration were examined by social pedagogue and Bremen Migrants and Intercultural Studies Chairman Ali Eliş; the example of the Erasmus Programme and student exchange between Turkish and German universities was explained by Marmara University EU Institute Director Prof. Muzaffer Dartan and EU programmes and project opportunities was analysed by IKV Junior Researcher Deniz Servantie. Furthermore, an Italian group known as FLO realised a show with Neapolitan songs, entertaining the participants.

## STATEMENT BY IKV REGARDING TERRORIST ATTACKS IN THE UK

**T**he terrorist attacks that took place in two different spots in London on 3 June and in the British city of Manchester on 22 May, before the elections on 8 June, emphasis the importance of international cooperation in counter-terrorism one more time.

One of the fundamental goals of these terrorists in the

attacks is to destroy themselves with nihilist impulses while destroying and damaging the lifestyles, cultural heritage and societies that they were raised in. This situation puts forward that counter-terrorism should not only be analysed from security perspective but also from psychosociological perspective and it is required to create a comprehensive

strategy including education systems, social and migrant policies.

Terror is one of the most serious issues of our time. No matter where terrorism comes from or where it emerges, it is imperative that all governments take a strong stance in confronting this scourge. As in the every

kind of terrorist attack, we strongly condemn these terror attacks and state that we are in solidarity with victims, their relatives, people and countries who suffer from terror. We invite the EU as well as organisations such as the UN to take swift measures against terrorism and form a common front.

# IKV VICE-PRESIDENT HAS BEEN AWARDED AN HONORARY DOCTORATE BY THE ITU



IKV Vice-President and Kale Group President and CEO Zeynep Bodur Okyay has been awarded an honorary doctorate by Istanbul Technical University (ITU). In the university's statement, it is indicated that Zeynep Bodur Okyay, who is graduated from the Business

Engineering at ITU in 1989, is deemed worthy of an honorary doctorate title by the Senate of ITU because of her contribution to technologic progress in Turkey, to the opening of local technologies, to its international efficiency, her successful representation

of the university and Turkey on the international level and finally providing economic and social life oriented services. IKV Vice-President Zeynep Bodur Okyay received the honorary doctorate title during a ceremony held on 25 May at ITU Süleyman Demirel Culture Center.

## IKV'S SEMINARS REGARDING THE CUSTOMS UNION



In the context of the "Tour d'Horizon in Turkey-EU Relations: Dimensions, New Objectives" Project which has been pursued since 2015, IKV organised seminars entitled "Turkey's EU Agenda: Effects Upon the Business World of a Modernised Customs Union" in May and June.

IKV organised seminars regarding the modernisation of the Customs Union at Antalya

Chamber of Commerce and Industry on 4 May, Zonguldak Chamber of Commerce and Industry on 18 May and Giresun Chamber of Commerce and Industry on 23 May. IKV delegation also visited to Aegean Region Chamber of Industry on 1 June within the framework of the same project.

In the seminars, IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas revealed detailed

information with respect to the modernisation process of the Customs Union whereas IKV Strategy and Business Development Director M. Gökhan Kilit gave a presentation regarding the effects upon the business world of the modernisation process of the Customs Union. IKV Research Director Çisel İleri also revealed information on EU funds that the business world can benefit.

## TIMELINE MAY-JUNE 2017

IKV attended the workshop regarding FTAs and Turkey's Foreign Agricultural Trade	1	
	2	
IKV tackled Customs Union talks in Antalya	3	
	4	
	5	
TOBB hosted the General Assembly of EUROCHAMBRES in Brussels	6	
	7	Emmanuel Macron elected new French President
IKV's Europe Week Events were realised (8-10 May)	8	
	9	
IKV delegation's visit to Brussels (10-11 May)	10	Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Ömer Çelik's visit to Brussels (10-11 May)
	11	
	12	
	13	
	14	
	15	President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's visit to the US (15-17 May)
	16	
	17	
IKV's event on Customs Union in Zonguldak	18	
	19	
	20	
	21	
IKV discussed the modernisation of the Customs Union in Giresun	22	Terrorist attack in Manchester
	23	IKV attended 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Friedrich Naumann Foundation
NATO Summit of Heads of State in Brussels (24-25 May)	24	
	25	IKV Vice-President awarded honorary doctorate by the ITU
IKV Secretary-General delivered speech at Turkish-German University	26	
	27	
	28	
	29	
	30	
	31	
IKV discussed Customs Union in İzmir	1	Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu's visit to TRNC
	2	
	3	Terrorist attack in London
	4	General elections in Malta
German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel's visit to Turkey	5	Montenegro joined NATO as its 29 <sup>th</sup> Member
	6	Commissioner Christos Stylianides paid a visit to Turkey
	7	British General Elections
	8	
New Publication: "IKV Report on Turkey-EU Relations: Keeping Together in the Face of Multiple Challenges"	9	
	10	First round of French Legislative Election
	11	
New Publication: "Turkey-EU Refugee Dictionary" (in Turkish)	12	General elections in Kosovo
	13	Turkey-EU High Level Political Dialogue at the Level of Directors in Brussels
	14	
IKV Brief: "The Quota Issue of the Turkish Road Transport Sector in the EU"	15	
	16	
	17	
	18	Second round of French Legislative Election
	19	Launch of Brexit negotiations
	20	
A panel on Brexit, the rise of populism and the EU in cooperation with Istanbul Bilgi University	21	European Council meeting in Brussels (22-23 June)
	22	
	23	IKV-SWP event on Turkey-EU relations and migration crisis in Berlin
	24	
	25	
	26	
	27	
	28	Turkish and Greek Cypriot leaders came together in Crans-Montana
	29	
	30	

## IKV ORGANISED A PANEL ON TURKEY-EU RELATIONS AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

A panel held on 11 May was realised in cooperation with the European Parliament Turkey Forum. MEPs and a variety of representatives from Brussels-centred think tanks attended the event.

The opening remarks of the panel entitled "Re-Energising Turkey-EU Relations after the Constitutional Referendum" were realised by IKV Vice-Chairman Prof. Halûk Kabaaliöglü and Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) MEP Marietje Schaake. In the opening remarks, it was said that the parties should work together in enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation. Furthermore, it was reminded that Turkey-EU relations would be normalised following the election and referendum periods with new opportunities in that respect.

During the panel, distinguished Turkish academicians shared their views from constitutional law, economic and political perspectives regarding the latest developments in Turkey-EU relations and in Turkey following the constitutional referendum.

In his presentation, Dean of Koç University Law School and Prof. of Constitutional Law at Koç University Bertil Emrah Oder assessed the constitutional changes which had been approved following the results of the 16 April referendum from the perspective of EU standards and issued a few recommendations regarding possible shortcomings in the harmonisation period in that respect. Indicating the critical importance of the independence of the judiciary in all cases, Prof. Oder argued the need to further enhance



the capacity of personnel in the judiciary in Turkey and to strengthen cooperation with the EU in that process.

As the second panellist of the event, Managing Director of the Economy Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) and Prof. of Public Economics at Ankara University Güven Sak analysed the referendum results from an economic viewpoint and reminded

that it is of utmost importance to apply sound policies in that respect in the upcoming period in order to keep a good economic and political balance. Reminding that Turkey had successfully passed difficult periods, Prof. Sak underscored that if this period can be managed in a successful manner, new opportunities would arise as such.

The last speaker of the panel was Emeritus Prof. of Political

Science at Istanbul Bilgi University and President of the Executive Committee of International Political Science Association İtler Turan. In his presentation, Prof. Turan reminded of a clear political landscape of which both the EU and Turkey have emerged from the Cold War period till today. Indicating that Turkey and the EU have forged fruitful cooperation in a variety of areas, Prof. Turan also

highlighted the need to advance at a higher level in areas such as the visa liberalisation dialogue.

Following the panel, the Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union and Policy Analyst for the Western Balkans and Turkey André De Munter stressed the importance of mutual goodwill in Turkey-EU relations and summarised the different presentations of the panel.

## IKV ATTENDED THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF FRIEDRICH NAUMANN FOUNDATION

The opening speech of the event held on 24 May was made by Head of Turkey Office Dr. Hans-Georg Fleck. In his speech, Dr. Fleck stated that after 25 years of the foundation in Turkey, it is more important than ever to support the Turkish civil society, academia and liberals in doing their work.

In the panel on "Free Trade, Open Borders, Multilateral Trade Agreements-Liberal Values in a Period of Change" moderated by Secretary-General of Turkish Enterprise

and Business Confederation Arda Batu, IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas in her speech underlined the effects of globalisation on international trade and informed the audience about the modernisation process of the Customs Union. Other distinguished guests attended the event were Vice-President of the Foundation Prof. Karl-Heinz Paqué, Head of EU Delegation to Turkey Christian Berger and Secretary-General of Turkish Industry and Business Association Bahadır Kaleağası.



# IKV HELD A ROUNDTABLE DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF TURKEY-EU RELATIONS IN BERLIN

IKV, Istanbul Policy Center from Sabancı University and German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) organised a joint panel on Turkey-EU relations on 23 June.

In the meeting, where senior bureaucrats, experts and academicians attended, IKV Chairman Ayhan Zeytinoğlu Director of Research at German Institute for International and Security Affairs (*Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik-SWP*) Barbara Lippert and Director at Istanbul Policy Center Fuat Keyman realised their opening speeches. IKV Chairman indicated that the meeting opened a path in order to restore relations between the parties with new perspectives for further cooperation.

As such, IKV Chairman Zeytinoğlu indicated that the extension of the Customs Union to areas such as agriculture, services and public procurement would contribute in an increase of growth of approximately 25% in terms of exports and 1.9% in terms of GDP. Moreover, he stated that the visa requirement is not only a physical obstacle but also a psychological barrier as it undermines the europeanisation process of Turkish citizens. He said the only thing

which may ensure Turkey's place within the framework of the EU decision-making process is full membership.

Regarding German-Turkish relations and indicating that up to 3 million people of Turkish origin live in Germany, he stressed that this presence represents an important social and cultural bridge between the two countries. He pointed out that there are 96,000 Turkish entrepreneurs in Germany and these entrepreneurs provide employment to 500,000 people and he reminded that it contributes to the German economy with an annual turnover of approximately 50 billion euros. IKV Chairman Zeytinoğlu also pointed out that with a total of 25 billion euros in terms of trade volume between the two countries, Germany represents the first recipient of Turkish exports with a ratio of 9.8 and he also underscored the important role played by German companies in Turkey which number above 6,800.



## IKV SECRETARY-GENERAL MADE A SPEECH AT TURKISH-GERMAN UNIVERSITY

IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas made a speech regarding the modernisation of the Turkey-EU Customs Union at the Turkish-German University's event entitled "New Political Challenges for Germany, Turkey and the EU" on 26 May. During the event organised by the university in cooperation with international partners, INSITER

Jean Monnet Module, relations between Turkey and Germany, international relations, social, economic and political security issues were discussed.

During the session of the event entitled "EU, Turkey and Economy", IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Nas underlined the transformative role of the

Customs Union on Turkish economy and industry. In her speech, IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Nas also stated that modernising the Customs Union would bring substantial economic benefits for Turkey and added that economic transitions cannot be handled without political reforms.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM IKV

### KEEPING TOGETHER IN THE FACE OF MULTIPLE CHALLENGES

We expect that this report entitled "IKV Report on Turkey-EU Relations: Keeping Together in the Face of Multiple Challenges" (No: 288) and prepared by IKV Secretary-General, Directors and Researchers will help readers to gain an insight into the multifarious and complex dynamics of Turkey-EU relations.

### TURKEY-EU REFUGEE DICTIONARY (IN TURKISH)

IKV Junior Researcher Deniz Servantie prepared a publication entitled "Turkey-EU Refugee Dictionary" (No: 290) where he analysed the main

concepts of the refugee jargon, the latest developments in the refugee crisis and its dimensions in Turkey-EU relations along with a more broad perspective.

### THE QUOTA ISSUE OF THE TURKISH ROAD TRANSPORT SECTOR IN THE EU

IKV Brief entitled "The Quota Issue of the Turkish Road Transport Sector in the EU" prepared by IKV Junior Researcher Deniz Servantie intends to provide a thorough assessment of the current state of the Turkish road transport sector and its relationship to the EU, the parameters of the quota issue and ways in which it may be solved through different hypothetical scenarios.



## AGENDA FOR REFUGEE COOPERATION BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE EU

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos Stylianides visited Turkish counterparts regarding the current developments on the migration management agenda on 7 June.



**T**o that extent Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Ömer Çelik met with Christos Stylianides. Irregular migration and humanitarian aid issues and implementation of the EU's Refugee Facility for Syrians in Turkey were the main topics of the meeting which took place at within the premises of the Ministry for EU Affairs. Correlatively, the launch event of the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education project; the EU's largest ever humanitarian programme for education in emergencies, which aims to encourage some 230.000 refugee children to attend school in Turkey by the end of 2017 occurred in Ankara on 8 June. Together with Stylianides, Turkish Family Affairs

and Social Policies Minister Fatma Betül Sayan Kaya and high level representatives from Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency as well as UNICEF attended the launch event.

Projects like the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education and the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), which provides monthly cash transfers through a debit card to the most vulnerable refugees in Turkey constitute the main elements of the EU's funding mechanism, EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey. European Commission report on progress of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey was published on 28 June at the seventh Steering Committee meeting of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey.

According to the report; 2.9 billion euros of the overall 3 billion euros budget for 2016-2017, has been allocated to date to aid the Syrian population in Turkey. Contracts have been signed for 48 projects worth over 1.6 billion euros out of which 811 million euros has already been disbursed. Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn expressed after the Steering Committee meeting that this is the EU's largest humanitarian aid operation ever. Commissioner Hahn underlined that together with partners and the Turkish government, they would continue working hard to provide vulnerable refugees in Turkey with aid, a sense of dignity, and hope.

## IKV HELD A JOINT PANEL AT BILGI UNIVERSITY TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE EU AND BREXIT

IKV in cooperation with European Institute of Istanbul Bilgi University organised a panel entitled "The Future of the EU, Rise of Populism and Brexit" on 21 June. Opening speeches were made by IKV Secretary-General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas and Director of the Institute Prof. Yeşim Atamer.

In the panel which was moderated by Director of the Center for Migration Research of Istanbul Bilgi University Assoc. Prof. Pinar Uyan-Semerci, Prof. Ayhan Kaya from Department of International Relations, Prof. Hakan Yılmaz from Department of Political

Science and International Relations of Bosphorus University and Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas discussed current and critical issues about the EU and Turkey-EU relations.

Starting his speech by emphasising that populism is one of the main movements in the EU, Prof. Yılmaz stated the the only way to get rid of issues stemming from populism is to increase the institutional competency of the EU. In his speech, Prof. Ayhan Kaya discussed the nature of populist movements in Turkey, Italy, Greece, Germany, the Netherlands, and France. Furthermore, he added



that populism is a strategy that can be deployed by any ideological configuration. Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas

also stated that the democratic deficit of the EU engendered a European system of governance

which is distant from the average citizen and which displays limited opportunities for political participation and representation. The perception that the EU is largely a technocratic body which works on the preferences of the elite and which is not sensitive to the needs of the majority has fueled increasing Eurosceptic tendencies that are manipulated by ultra-right wing and populist parties all over the EU. She said that the solution lies in greater transparency and democratic accountability in the institutional structure of the EU.

## THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA FOR FRANCE WITH MACRON

**T**he triumphant of the French Presidency Pro-EU Emmanuel Macron clinched an absolute majority in parliamentary elections in the shadow of a record-low turnout. Emmanuel Macron won 66.1% of the votes on the French presidential election on 7 May, compared with 33.9% for right-wing populist Marine Le Pen. 39-year-old Macron is the youngest head of state in the history of the French Republic.

One week after his resounding victory at the polls, Macron was inaugurated on 14 May, as France's 25th President at the Elysée palace in Paris. The 8<sup>th</sup> President

of France's Fifth Republic, which was created in 1958, said his presidency would "give the French back the confidence to believe in themselves". In his inauguration speech, Macron also vowed he would do everything that is necessary to fight terrorism and authoritarianism and to resolve the world's migration crisis.

### Gender Equal Government with a Mix Political Spectrum

After Macron's appointment on 15 May of a Prime Minister from right wing party, Edouard Philippe, the figures of the new

French President's Government were eagerly anticipated. Finally, he unveiled his first government on 17 May which contains an unprecedented mix of left, right and centre views, including a right-wing economy minister. Besides, Macron carried out his promise to appoint the same number of women as men in his cabinet. The new government of pro-European president stood out for the number of ministers with experience and connections in European affairs. Macron also appointed a series of people who had never been involved in party politics. In this context, Macron

formed a government which reflects his main characteristics: new in French political life, both right and left, European advocate and mostly unknown to the general public.

### "Fragile" Absolute Majority in Legislature

According to the final results of parliamentary elections which took a place on 11-18 June, Macron's party République en Marche! (The Republic on the Move!) got 350 seats in the 577-seat National Assembly together with its centre-right MoDem ally. Despite weak voter turnout at

the parliamentary elections Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said the result gave his party a "clear majority". The mainstream right wing party Les Républicains won 112 seats and come in second in the parliamentary vote. On the other hand, the Socialist Party won only 30 seats in the legislatures which is the lowest score in the history of the Socialists. The record-low turnout, around 48 percent in the first round and 43 percent in the second, dimmed Mr. Macron's victory and revealed the vulnerability of Macron's Presidency and Government.

## GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER SIGMAR GABRIEL'S VISIT TO TURKEY



Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany Sigmar Gabriel paid a visit to Turkey on 5 June. On behalf of Germany, Minister Gabriel asked for a general visiting right rather than a one-time right for German ministers to visit to Incirlik during his meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu.

After the meeting, a joint press conference was organised. Minister Gabriel emphasised that the German Federal Government has not taken any final decision to withdraw from Incirlik yet. On the other hand, both ministers highlighted their willingness

to continue the existing cooperation between Germany and Turkey. Likewise, Çavuşoğlu added that if Germany displays a positive attitude towards Turkey, Turkey will adopt the same manner.

Following the meeting with Minister Çavuşoğlu, Minister Gabriel paid a visit to President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Gabriel also met with one of the lawyers of the arrested German journalist, Deniz Yücel, to get detailed information about his conditions in prison. At the end of his visit, Minister Gabriel visited the Chairperson of Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi-CHP) Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu.

## EU MINISTER ÖMER ÇELİK PAID A VISIT TO BRUSSELS

Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Ömer Çelik paid an official visit to Brussels on 10 May. During his visit, Minister Çelik met with the First Vice-President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans, European Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos and High Representative of the

Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini. Turkey-EU relations, migration, fight against terrorism, the modernisation process of the Customs Union were the main issues discussed on the agenda.

During his meetings in Brussels with EU Officials, Minister Çelik pointed out to Turkey's strength of democratic power and capacity despite heavy counterterrorism measures in the country as well as across the borders and the

adverse effects of military coup attempt that Turkey witnessed last year. Regarding the risk of losing momentum in relations, Minister Çelik underlined that unfavourable developments should not hinder bilateral relations. He reiterated Turkey's request for membership to the EU and called the EU officials to start new chapters of membership negotiations with Turkey. Çelik also addressed his desire to begin "a new era of closer relations" between Turkey and the EU.



## CYPRUS TALKS AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE AS THE CONFERENCE ON CYPRUS RECONVENES IN CRANS-MONTANA

On 28 June Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot leaders came together with the representatives of guarantor states in Crans-Montana, Switzerland for what is largely seen to be a last-ditch effort for reaching a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus.

The Conference on Cyprus officially reconvened in the Swiss resort of Crans-Montana. The UN-sponsored conference on Cyprus is attended by TRNC President Mustafa Akıncı, Greek Cypriot leader Nicos Anastasiades, the three guarantors represented by Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias and the UK's Special Envoy on Cyprus Jonathan Allen as well as the EU, which is present as a special observer, represented by European Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans.

On 4 June, UN Secretary-General António Guterres' met with TRNC President Akıncı and Greek Cypriot leader Anastasiades in New York. In a statement, Guterres announced that the two sides had agreed for the need to reconvene the conference on Cyprus in the course of June.

In a statement dated 27 June, UN Secretary-General Guterres reiterated his strong commitment to supporting the current effort and called on all the participants to the Conference on Cyprus to seize the opportunity for Cyprus and the East Med region.

Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, who is representing Turkey at the Crans-Montana Conference on Cyprus, told the reporters that Ankara sees this as the final conference for reaching a settlement and that there should be a conclusion at this round. Commenting on the Greek and Greek Cypriot demands of 'zero troops and zero guarantees', Minister Çavuşoğlu stated that the Greek Cypriot side should drop such demands and come up with more reasonable proposals. UN Secretary-General Guterres, who joined the Conference on Cyprus on 30 June, reported some progress but underscored that "sensitive and difficult issues remain to be resolved".



### Intense Diplomatic Traffic between Turkey and TRNC

Earlier in June, as the Cyprus talks entered a critical juncture, political and diplomatic exchanges between Turkey and the TRNC intensified. On 1 June, Turkish Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu paid a visit to the TRNC. In the context of his visit, Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu was received by TRNC President

Mustafa Akıncı. During their meeting, Akıncı and Çavuşoğlu exchanged views on the state of play in the UN-sponsored reunification talks and discussed the way forward in the process. Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu also came together with the chairs of the political parties represented at the parliament of the TRNC. Speaking at the joint press conference,

Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu underscored Turkey's readiness to participate in a prospective conference on Cyprus without any preconditions. Later in June as the reunification talks gained pace, TRNC President Akıncı and Foreign Minister Ertuğruloğlu paid separate official visits to Turkey on 24 June and 19-20 June, respectively.

# TURKEY-EU RELATIONS IN LIGHT OF THE NATO SUMMIT

The Erdoğan-Juncker-Tusk meeting, which took place during the NATO Summit, created a prudent optimism for the future of Turkey-EU relations with its message of keeping the doors open for Turkey.

**Çisem İLERİ,**  
IKV Research Director

The most important breaking point in Turkey-EU relations in 2017 was undoubtedly the referendum process. Apart from the deadlock in the negotiation process, backsliding in political criteria as it was highlighted in the last Progress Report, the tension in the relations with the Netherlands, the death penalty, which is expressed in the referendum process and accepted as a redline by the EU, and finally the cautious approach of the EU institutions and Member States towards the results of the referendum has led to perhaps the most tense days since the beginning of accession negotiations.

In short, the first official move after the referendum came from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) on 25 April, and it was decided to reopen a political monitoring process against Turkey. Taking into consideration the fact that Turkey has passed this monitoring process in 2004, this decision is a sign of backsliding in the Copenhagen political criteria. It was just the luck of draw that Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, who condemned this decision, was the Chairman of PACE in 2010-2012.

The first softening signal regarding this high tension between Turkey and the EU was given by the invitation of Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, on 28-29 April 2017 to the informal meeting of EU foreign ministers in Malta's capital Valletta known as the Gymnich meeting. After the meeting, the statement made by High Representative of the EU Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission Federica Mogherini, that the EU was keeping the door ajar for Turkey to become a member, however it depended on Ankara' willingness to provide clearer signals on whether it intends to meet the entrance criteria in such areas as human rights and rule of law.

Another important development after the Gymnich meeting was the visit of EU Minister and Chief Negotiator Ömer Çelik to



Brussels on 10 May. Çelik met with Johannes Hahn, the Commissioner Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Dimitris Avramopoulos, the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship and Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission during his visit to Brussels. Minister Çelik's meeting with high level EU officials was significant to make the necessary preparations and to get the sniff of the NATO Summit on 25 May where Turkey was represented by President Erdoğan.

The NATO Summit, held on 25 May, which had an important agenda such as combating terrorism, transatlantic relations and burden-sharing, was in the centre of attention since it will be the first summit that US President Trump, who criticised NATO during his election campaign and the newly elected leader of France Macron would meet many of their counterparts. Undoubtedly, another important aspect of the summit was the meeting of President Erdoğan

with EU Council President Donald Tusk and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. It was announced that during the meeting both parties agreed that the refugee agreement signed between Turkey and the EU in March 2016 should be realised. On the other hand, while emphasising the importance of revitalising Turkey-EU relations, the necessity of strengthening the cooperation in fighting terrorism was also stressed. Of course, the Cyprus issue, which is one of the crucial issues for bilateral relations and the Turkey's accession negotiations, was also on the table.

The concrete result of the 25th May meeting between President Erdoğan and top EU officials, is that both parties have adopted a positive and constructive attitude towards maintaining relations and cooperating with each other. Speaking about the issue in a week after the meeting, Commission Speaker Schinas recalled that a new era has begun between Turkey and the EU, reminding both sides that they have common interests and

emphasised that it is a necessity for them to act together.

The critical turning point for Turkey-EU relations in the coming days will be the political dialogue meeting expected to be held on 13 June. What is on the table to discuss is also well known for both sides. First of all, Turkey will insist on the necessity of realising the refugee agreement and the transfer of the remaining financial assistance promised by the EU. The visa liberalisation process, which seems far more distant from one year ago, will be also on the agenda. Regarding the visa liberalisation process, the EU's stance is that the ball is on Turkey's side and that the remaining items in the visa liberalisation roadmap should be met as soon as possible. However, in the current conjuncture, there is still a big question mark whether visa liberalisation will be granted considering the negative political atmosphere and public perception in the EU.

Another item in the agenda of both sides is the process of upgrading the Customs Union.

It is known that both the Commission and Turkey want to start negotiations by the end of this year. Although according to the impact analyses conducted by the European Commission and also Turkey, the upgrading of the Customs Union is in the economic interest of both parties, certain Member States signalling to include political criteria for starting negotiations. This political criteria probably will be directly linked to the issues, such as freedom of the press, fundamental rights, rule of law, independence of the judiciary, and the abolition of state emergency.

What we learned from recent developments in Turkey-EU relations is that creating or maintaining political tension between two parties causes disruption in relations that are not so easily restored. 12 years have been passed since the start of accession negotiations between Turkey and EU but the need to understand each other better and create a productive dialogue has never been that essential.