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MAPPING DYNAMICS AND TESTING SCENARIOS

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EU-Turkey Relations in the Midst of a Global Storm

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Abstract

This paper presents the global movements, trends and actors driving EU-Turkey relations: namely, the global shift of power, the declining liberal international order and the rise of authoritarianism, populism, the new US foreign policy under Trump and Russia's rise under Putin. It analyzes the impact of these drivers on the EU and Turkey respectively, and proposes the most likely scenario on the future of EU-Turkey relations under this constellation of drivers. It argues that the transformations at the global level have diminished the capacity of the EU to act as a "force for good" in international affairs which, coupled with Turkey's will to emerge as a global actor, is likely to increase conflictual dynamics between both actors.

Keywords: European Union; Turkey; EU-Turkey relations; emerging powers; international order; Russia; populism; authoritarianism; foreign policy; H2020

Özet

Bu makale Avrupa Birliği-Türkiye ilişkilerini şekillendiren küresel hareket, akım ve aktörleri, yani küresel güç değişimi, gerileyen uluslararası liberal düzen, yükselen otoriter ve popülist dalga, Trump ve ABD'nin yeni dış politikası ve Putin liderliğinde yükselen Rusya'yı sunmakta; devamında ise bu itici güçlerin AB ve Türkiye üzerindeki etkilerini çözümleyerek AB-Türkiye ilişkilerinin geleceğine dair en olası senaryoyu değerlendirmektedir. Küresel düzeydeki bu dönüşümlerin AB'nin uluslararası ilişkilerde "iyi güç" olarak hareket etme kapasitesini azalttığını ve Türkiye'nin küresel bir aktör olarak yeniden doğuşu da göz önünde bulundurulduğunda bu durumun AB ve Türkiye arasındaki çatışan dinamikleri artıracağını savunmaktadır.

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1. Introduction[1]

The effects of globalization are evident around the globe, and manifest themselves at the individual, societal, national and global levels. In Moises Naím's (2014) words, the very nature of power is changing as it becomes easier to get, harder to use and easier to lose. The shifting balances of power, the rise of the "rest" and the transforming world political order is proof of this phenomenon.

The roots of the global drivers that have a dominant impact on EU-Turkey relations vary from an evident weakening of conventional institutions, the nationalization of foreign policies to shifting power patterns, and a tendency towards transactional relations and zero-sum politics. What does this imply for EU-Turkey relations? The politics of Turkey and the EU have, to different extents, been shaped by events evolving outside the boundaries of this block. Yet today more than ever before, both actors are increasingly exposed to drivers stemming not only from the global, but also supra-national supra-regional levels. More importantly, these drivers now have a first-hand impact on EU-Turkey relations.

This paper aims to (1) identify the global movements, trends or actors driving EU-Turkey relations, (2) analyze the impact of these drivers on the EU (3) and how they affect Turkey, and then (4) make projections on whether these drivers will lead EU-Turkey relations to a scenario of convergence, cooperation or conflict. Taking into account these global drivers, the general assumption is that the transformations at the global level have diminished the capacity of the EU to act as a "force for good" in international affairs which, coupled with Turkey's will to emerge as a global actor, is likely to increase conflictual dynamics between both actors.

2. Global trends and drivers

Having been at the centre of the post-Second World War order, the current transformation of the global political order is severely affecting the EU's position in international relations. The effects of the global political trends for the EU set forth the shift from EU's centrality to accommodation in a transformed global order. The global shift of power from the West to the East, the decline of the liberal international order, the global populist upheaval or the leaderships of Trump and Putin have severe consequences for the EU, not only regarding its position in the international system but also its capacity to project power and to shape international developments.

For Turkey, relations with the EU have always been structured upon very concrete, realpolitik concerns. Despite contrary statements by the mainstream Muslim-conservative (often dubbed erringly as "Ottomanist") discourse in Turkey, Ottoman history itself has been marked by substantial European involvement. A culturally multifaceted and multidirectional identity has long allowed Turkey to steer difficult and diverse set of regional and international challenges. Europe became

directly involved with Ottoman security in the 19th century, initiating a long period of Turco-European alliances against Russia, which still lives on today through NATO. One of the primary global drivers that will affect Turkey and its relations with the EU is therefore the resurgence of Russia. Although China's rise also plays a role, it doesn't have the kind of immediate effect on the relationship that Russia imposes. Nevertheless, the overarching trends of a shift in the global balance of power, populism, authoritarianism, declining liberal international order and the current US foreign policy substantially reinforce one other play a decisive role on Turkey's approach to the EU.

This section will define drivers at the global level, and then analyze how the EU and Turkey have adapted to these global political trends. In turn, this will pave the ground for the projection of these trends into the future of EU-Turkey relations, taking into account the transformations of both actors as discussed below.

2.1.   The global shift of power

The international system is in a perilous but ultimately progressive process from "old geopolitics" to "new geopolitics," according to Richard Falk (2016), in which the old Western-dominated order is incapable of solving global problems. In 2004, *Foreign Affairs* editor James Hoge (2004) wrote about a "global shift in the making", which could lead to a major conflict if not handled well by the West. Kishore Mahbubani (2008), on the other hand, wrote that the West had to prepare itself for the "irresistible" shift of power to the East and a decreasing role in international relations; on the other hand, he claimed that the emerging powers in the global South would supersede the West not because of the failure of Western liberalism, but because of the spread of the "pillars of Western wisdom," namely open polities, free market, and the rule of law towards these emerging countries.

Whether these theories apply to the reality or not, the rise of non-Western powers is not a new debate in international politics and economy, but is becoming increasingly prominent. The gradual rise of Asia, pioneered by China and followed by different areas in the global South such as India, Japan and South Korea, has re-defined the global balance of power. Despite the US remaining the only global superpower and the West still being the world's major economic aggregate, the "rise of the rest", as it was coined by Fareed Zakaria (2008), has shifted the concentration of power from the West to the Eastern hemisphere not only in terms of politics and economy, but also innovation, demography, trade, technology and ideas (Mahbubani, 2008).

The shift from the West to the East and increased levels of interdependence has been changing the balance of power for decades now. However, the end of the bipolar and unipolar periods has not yet been reflected in a new system of multipolar governance, and existing systems and institutions for governing global affairs lag behind the current depth of linkages between global powers and the new threats and challenges of a globalised world. Arguably, global governance is faltering at the time when it is most needed, the main reason for which is the failure of global powers

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to reach consensus on a new system of global governance that supersedes the structures of the post-World War II order (Vaquer et al., 2013: 6).

In a time when the dominance of liberalism in Western political and economic models are facing a decline – its pace particularly increasing after the 2008 crisis – these emerging countries provide an economic alternative to the West. For many states, the emerging models are not a threat; on the contrary, they are seen as an opportunity to diversify partnerships and decrease the dependency on North Atlantic countries or on regional powers (Vaquer et al., 2013: 10). On the other hand, the established liberal institutions of the US or the EU have not been able to renew their framework for global governance amid the rise of these models. As such, this new order of the emerging countries that offer economic opportunities that the EU lacks and without the checks and balances that the EU enforces is bereaving the Union from the leverage it has on Turkey vis-à-vis its liberalization, and turns Turkey towards the East to look for more transactional cooperation.

The EU's position in the global shift of power

The end of Western predominance is best understood with specific data showing that power is increasingly located far away from the traditional center of world politics, the western hemisphere, and particularly EU countries. Between 2013 and 2050, according to World Bank (2013) estimates, emerging economies will have consolidated as the new centres of power. While in 2013 the leading economies were located in the West (with the US in the first position, Germany in the 4th, France 5th, the UK 6th and Italy 8th), in 2050 the centre of gravity of world economies will have shifted to today's emerging powers, including China and India. Other economies of the "rest" will also consolidate their position vis-à-vis the traditional Western powers. Other countries such as Mexico, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and, most importantly, Turkey, are listed as most prominent in a list of top-20 economies today (PWC, 2015).

In terms of trade, the global economy will also shift towards the East, taking into account that while in 1990 the economies of the "rest" accounted for 3.6% of the global trade share, the figure raised to 15% in 2010 (BRICS Report, 2012). In terms of GDP, Europe has reduced its share from 24,3% in the mid-1990s to 16,8% in 2016, while the US was at 20,2% and is today at 15,6%. On the contrary, emerging and developing Asia has increased its GDP share from 15,8% to 31,8% (IMF, 2016). The conjunction of multipolarity -deriving from the rise of the rest- and interdependence -owing to the connected economies of global powers, old and new-, has led to the emergence of an "interpolar" world, to which the EU is now confronted (Grevi, 2009).

The global shift of power embodies a growing sense of loss of centrality of European countries and the EU as a whole. Global power is not only shifting because other countries have come to replace the West in terms of global share of economic relations but also because the world is not dominated by a Western mindset anymore. Since the new centre of global power in Asia is challenging the West in terms of demography, technology and ideas (Mahbubani, 2008), the US and the EU

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are also less capable to dictate what is "normal" in international relations. This is particularly relevant if the post-Cold War mindset is taken into account. Following Fukuyama's "end of history" (Fukuyama, 1992), the leading position of political and economic liberalism is more nuanced today, so a fair amount of the thinking in international relations has also been de-westernized.

However, this has not translated into a transformation of the system of global governance, coined by the West after the Second World War. Hale, Held and Young (2013) have analyzed why the global shift of power has led to a state of gridlock in terms of reforming the global governance structure. Key among these reasons are the EU's (and the US') veto power over major reforms of the systems of global governance, including the UN, the IMF or the World Bank. Also, institutional inertia prevents filling the gap between the loss of relevance of the West and the need for a more inclusive system of global governance.

All in all, a void in multilateral governance has emerged, which is simultaneously characterized by the lack of influence of the EU and of a durable replacement. While the US remains a superpower due to its military strength and quick recovery after the financial crisis of 2008, the EU remains stuck in structural reforms following the Eurozone crisis since 2010. Even if growth is back, the capacity of the EU to provide leadership in global affairs has been severely damaged due to the accumulation of crisis, from the Euro to Brexit and the refugee crises. EU's foreign policy has severely suffered from the EU's loss of credibility (Youngs, 2014), in turn reducing the acceptance by other powers of the post-Cold War order favoured by the West and Europe in particular (Ikenberry, 2011).

Turkey's place in a changing global scene

Today, changing global geopolitics is not limited to the rise of Russia or China, even if these two have been the most prominent and consistent, if not the pioneering powers behind it. Turkey itself has been on the winning side of the global shift of power, regarded as one of the "new powers" and "major political and security players with increasing political clout" (Ashton, 2010) in the international arena. An emerging economy enjoying substantial relations with the BRICS, Turkey has taken the example of the soft power policies of other emerging countries to build fluid and co-existing coalitions.

Turkey's rise is, on the other hand, different to the countries of the global East and South: from the Cold War onwards, Turkey has been an ally of the US and the West; and even though at times there has been a conflict of interest between these allies, Turkey still is an institutional partner in many Western organizations, which constitutes a significant limit to Turkey's challenge against the liberal international order (Oğuzlu & Parlar Dal, 2013: 4). Yet a political and economic interdependence between emerging powers and countries that also have favorable economic prospects sustains mutual cooperation. Where one enjoys economic or military benefits, some benefit from the geostrategic value of the partner country. In the case of Turkey, disputes with the Western allies, such as the Kurdish issue, pushes Turkey to form a tactical alliance with Russia, resulting in

Turkey feeling more confident and less dependent on the West; on the other side, the immediate benefits of these new and non-established alliances leave Turkey dependent, to their benefit, on the new allies[2]. In addition, the failed expectations of emerging countries, especially those economically and to some extent, politically similar to Turkey, e.g. Brazil, have curbed Turkey's projection of becoming a global actor. Nevertheless, the aspiration to be a regional power is still present.

At the present, the relative decline of the EU against Turkey's rise –or in Erdogan's words, "Turkey […] getting stronger as time goes by, and the situation of many European states […] quite obvious" (*Time*, 2011) - has multiple implications on the relations. Like many other countries, Turkey has turned its eyes to the East and away from the EU, once the backbone of the AKP government's foreign policy. Considering this, Erdogan's November 2016 statement on not limiting the country to the EU negotiations, but to consider joining the Shanghai Five, which would "enable [Turkey] to act with much greater ease" (*Reuters*, 2016) does not drop out of the blue. Confident with the new style of flexible diplomacy, the Turkish government has become increasingly indifferent to the course of the EU negotiations.

Declining liberal international order and the rise of authoritarianism

The rise of new powers set off a shift towards a post-American era (Zakaria, 2008), that of a multipolar global order. Ikenberry (2011: 18) defines the "liberal international order" as an "order that is open and loosely rule-based", contrasting with "closed and non-rule-based relations—whether geopolitical blocs, exclusive regional spheres, or closed imperial systems". The concept is generally employed to refer to the international rules and organisations (the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) established after the Second World War.

Around twenty years of global economic growth and integration following the end of the Cold War has favoured cooperation at the international level, which changed with the economic crisis beginning in 2008. Today's international system is better understood through the lenses of competition and zero-sum logic. The political order championed by emerging powers such as Russia and China is not a multilateral system based on the consensus between largely sovereign, equal states; on the contrary, it envisions a hierarchical order dominated by a few major states.

Walt (2016) explains the demise of the liberal order from a broad perspective: liberalism's defenders oversold the product by making people believe that a liberal order would create of a "zone of peace," forgetting that successful liberal societies require more than the formal institutions of democracy, and underestimating the role of nationalism and other forms of local identity, including sectarianism, ethnicity or tribal bonds. As a result, backlash became inevitable, and liberalism faced predictable opposition from leaders and groups directly threatened by it. This endangered the liberal order as it was vulnerable to being hijacked by those who take advantage of the very

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[2] One recent example is the S-400 air defence missile deal between Turkey and Russia. See: "Turkey signs deal to get Russian S-400 air defence missiles" (September 2017), *BBC*, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41237812

freedoms upon which liberal societies are based. According to Diamond (2016), from 2000 to 2015, democracy broke down in 27 countries and many emerging democracies have failed to meet their citizens' demands for freedom, security or economic growth, just as stablished democracies growing increasingly dysfunctional. In emerging countries and particularly China, meanwhile, decades of economic growth has proved a state need not liberalize to generate prosperity.

The mounting disagreement on the "Washington Consensus" as a guarantee of economic growth means that opposing views are gaining support. The alternative economic models most frequently bring along illiberal democratic, if not autocratic models of governance, creating the illusion that nationalization and centralization of governance are the safest alternatives in the new multipolar order, undermining the influence of a European liberal democracy and reducing consensus politics to an obstacle against state power (Öniş & Kutlay, 2016: 11). On the other hand, this has severe repercussions on multilateral institutions; the impasse on the vote of a Syrian resolution is an example of how the clash between China and Russia on one side, and the United States, France, and the United Kingdom on the other, stonewalls the work of the UN Security Council.

According to Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1988), the relationship of nondemocratic regimes with each other and democracy is often imperfect and unclear. Building up on this argument, the rise of autocratic models changes individual states' perceptions of potential allies and rivals as well as how they forge alliances. The increasing shift towards the Russia-China axis, be it by states, or as is the case in Europe, by right-wing populist movements or parties today is leading to the diffusion of not only illiberal governance, but also autocratic leaderships. Turkey is not only affected by this shift, but also plays an active role in the emergence of these new alliances. This, in turn, draws it away from the EU.

More European realism to face the decline of the liberal international order

As a main promoter of the liberal international order, the EU is also suffering to adapt to current global changes. Having been at the forefront of the post-WWII multilateral system, the EU is now faced with a challenge to either accommodating or entrenching to the changes in this system (Barbé et al., 2016). The unraveling of the global order based on liberalism, multilateral institutions and global governance leaves the EU with a choice regarding the adaptation or preservation of the current order. Either the EU adapts to global changes and makes concessions to emerging powers (accommodation) or defends the system and institutions that have benefited the leadership of the West for decades (entrenching) (Barbé et al., 2016:4).

These discussions find relevant parallels in the leitmotiv of EU foreign policy, based for a long time on the promotion of international law, multilateral organizations and a rules-based international order. Ian Manner's concept of "normative power Europe" (2002) links the contribution of the EU in global affairs to the promotion of shared values such as peace, freedom, democracy, human rights and supranational rule of law. These values embody what the EU considers as "normal" in its international relations and are enshrined in the EU's internal acquis communautaire. The EU

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also promotes these values by example, rather than in a coercive manner. The promotion of such values internally is best understood via the Copenhagen criteria guiding the EU's enlargement policy and the rationale of the European Neighbourhood Policy as a "force for good" (Barbé & Johansson-Nogués, 2008).

Key among the EU understanding of and contribution to the global order is the concept of "effective multilateralism", included in the European Security Strategy (European Council, 2003) and based on the promotion of international law and multilateral organizations. The belief in the multilateral and rules-based order emanates from the transfer of the EU's domestic order into foreign affairs. According to Cooper (2000) the creation of a post-modern EU, where supranational cooperation trumps national sovereignty, has led the EU to seek post-modernity beyond its borders, emphasizing on the objective of rule promotion and multilateral agreements at the global level.

The capacity of the EU to shape the world in its own image suffered a major blow as a consequence of the internal crises in the West (Niblett, 2017). On the EU's side, several phenomena have exacerbated the incorporation of the EU to global dynamics, distancing itself from the projection of normative power and the spread of effective multilateralism. First, the stagnation of European economies has led to the rise of protectionism and nativism as opposed to the appeal of globalization and open societies. Second, discourses in favour of protecting the sovereignty of European states (and against further integration) have gained traction in places like the UK, Hungary or France, despite Macron's victory over Le Pen. And third, the model of promotion of regional integration in the EU's image has not turned MERCOSUR, ASEAN, the African Union or the Gulf Cooperation Council into replicas of the EU.

As a consequence of the decline of the liberal order and Europe's retreat, the EU has also adapted its narrative in foreign affairs. The EU Global Strategy (EUGS) of 2016, which replaces the European Security Strategy, provides a more realistic picture of the world and the role that the EU can play therein. The EUGS replaces the promotion of effective multilateralism with a more realistic picture of the global environment, preferring instead to foster cooperative regional orders and to promote a principled pragmatism (EEAS, 2016). Also, the EUGS puts the EU's interests and values on an equal footing, conscious that the multiple crisis affecting the Union require a stronger focus on the security of "its citizens and territory" (EEAS, 2016:14). To that end, the focus on resilience, and not anymore on being a force for good, is one of the leitmotivs of the new strategy.

Declining liberal order and Turkey's authoritarian learning

The main overarching challenge posed by the key global drivers on Turkey is the global rise of the anti-cosmopolitan movements and their emphasis on identity puritanism, rather than pluralism. To that end, the growing unattractiveness of the elite-led European liberal order renders Turkey's partnership with the EU weak, simultaneously leaving Turkey and Europe isolated in addressing a number of security challenges particularly imposed by a resurgent Russia. The increasingly nationalist language of the Turkish government and foreign policy discourses only adds fuel to these

challenges. At a time when the United States administration is largely ambivalent to these challenges, new and improved mechanisms between Turkey and the EU must be established to improve political communication and bring back the partnership to a new, mutually acceptable equilibrium.

According to Stephen Walt (2016), the optimism of the 1990s has given way to a growing sense of pessimism about the existing liberal order, where one sees either resurgent authoritarianism or the attractiveness of a "strong leader" model, expected to sweep away present discontents. Not only is Turkey part of this pattern of authoritarian leadership has become a "normal", but is a model that is part of a wider network of authoritarian regimes where one learns from the other. Given the relative political and economic decline of the West, the liberal international order led by the West is not capable of isolating authoritarian models in its core or periphery.

Turkey's liberal political turn in early 2000s owed largely to an accommodating political environment in the EU and a careful (albeit sometimes too direct) US diplomatic maneuvering. To that end, Turkey's rebuttal in the 1997 Luxembourg Summit was quickly reversed in the 1999 Helsinki European Council decision, leading to a domino effect in Turkey, allowing it to make substantial progress in domestic reforms. However, the accommodating climate in the EU changed with the election of Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel into power in France and Germany respectively, and the unresolved status of the Cyprus issue. Along with an ambivalent George W. Bush administration in the US, Turkey's 'European wind' died down eventually, also bringing reform process to a halt. Today, global drivers impose an even heavier burden on EU-Turkey relations. Rise of the far-right in Europe, an apathetic Washington and worsening democratic conditions in Turkey all lead to mutual frustration in Ankara and Brussels.

2.2   Russia's return to the global arena and Putin's presidency

In his article from 2011, Ivan Krastev talks about the "paradox of Russian authoritarianism today," referring to Russia as the leading example of new authoritarianism. He claims that, even though both its supporters and opponents "consider it a flop," it is still unmoved and enjoys wide popular support (Krastev, 2011), thanks to how the Putin-style leadership is presented both inside and outside the country, as a paternalist strongman unifying the society through its uncontested dominance. This paradox is key to better understand why authoritarianism survives in the age of democratization.

The proactive policies of Russia in the neighbourhood aim for a "strategic, economic and normative leadership in a post-Soviet space, with the goal of countering Western interests and influence in the region" (Lo, 2015: 101). Russia's geopolitical and ideological motives in its neighbourhood are closely linked to its domestic politics; while it wants to restore its status as a great power, it uses this goal in the international arena as a rationale for legitimizing its domestic political and economic system offered by Putin (Vendil Pallin, 2016).

While Russia's return to the international scene started out with ambitious policies to reinstate its position as a global power, lately it has increasingly limited its focus on its immediate neighbourhood, particularly since its involvement in the war in Syria. As it becomes more authoritarian and assertive, the prospects of an alliance with Russia move Turkey away from its conventional alliances in the West, especially Europe. On the other hand, Russia's influence on some actors, namely anti-establishment populist parties within the EU states, be it as a role model or a source of material support and information, pose an additional threat to EU-Turkey relations by reducing Turkey to propaganda material in the hands of such movements.

Russia's threat to the European security order

Key among the reasons of Europe's changing narrative is Russia's threat to the European security order, following its intervention in Crimea and Ukraine. Vladimir Putin's pressure on Europe's Eastern front is perceived by some as the clearest indication of a revenge of revisionist powers vis-à-vis the Western-led global order (Russell Mead, 2014). For Russia, there is an understanding of a loss of power since the demise of the USSR, which has been confronted to the expansion of the EU towards former satellites of the Soviet Union and of NATO to the borders of Russia's sphere of influence. The expansion of the West and the retreat of Russia have led President Putin to seek the revival of Russia's influence in former Soviet territory, dismembering Georgia, bringing Armenia into his orbit, tightening his hold on Crimea and humiliating the West in Ukraine (Mead, 2014).

For others, Russia's recent behaviour shows its uneasiness with a world that escapes its influence and the Kremlin's incapacity to act as a true stakeholder in the international system. In a sense, Russia and also China, act as "established great powers" trying to enhance their position in the system and not necessarily aiming to replace it (Ikenberry, 2014). In any case, Russia's assertiveness and increased geopolitical role has confronted the EU with harsh realities in its borders, particularly in Ukraine, and a return of geopolitical rivalries. On the one hand, the annexation of Crimea and the military intervention in Eastern Ukraine have reduced the hopes of those who believed that Russia would easily accommodate itself to the European and Euro-Atlantic order that characterized the unipolar moment at the end of the Cold War (Mankoff, 2016). Instead, Russia is confronting the rules and order emerged from the end of bipolarity and, in so doing, is strengthening a sense of competition with Europe and the West.

On the other, Putin's policy choices have fostered divisions within the EU, traditionally split over the accommodation or opposition to Russia's influence in the Eastern neighbourhood. This division has exacerbated after the big enlargement of the EU to central and eastern European countries in 2004, which brought to the core of the EU territories under former Soviet influence. As a consequence, countries such as Poland understand that Russia poses an existential threat to their security, preferring a relation with Moscow based on deterrence. The Baltic countries and Sweden, for instance, are also increasingly aware of Russia's confrontational attitude, while Spain and

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Italy have usually preferred a more cautious approach towards Moscow. France also prefers engagement with Russia on certain issues and Germany tries to avoid escalation in bilateral relations at any cost.

The different positions towards Russia have been at the source of heated debates in the EU on the use of sanctions. Simultaneously, the Kremlin has exacerbated divisions in Europe siding by political forces that abhor the European integration project. This was the case during the French presidential campaign of 2017, in which Russia showed support for Le Pen or during the Brexit referendum, which was seen as an opportunity for Russia to weaken the EU. In Hungary, Orbán's narrative on "illiberal democracies" has echoed Putin's anti-European stance and has been used by the Kremlin as evidence that the EU project might eventually collapse.

Russia: Friend or foe to Turkey?

Rise of Russia exerts significant negative impact on Turkey and Ankara's ability to partner with the EU in three main issue areas: continuation of the Syrian Civil War (hence the refugee crisis), the Black Sea and cyber threat, which exacerbates domestic tensions in target countries, including Turkey.

Russia's presence in Syria contributes to far more outcomes and processes than the mere survival of the Assad regime itself. Establishing its presence in Syria as a pivot, Russia is now able to project power across Syria's immediate neighbourhood, challenging NATO operations, as well as imposing itself into existing regional political processes. This in turn, supports Moscow's new security identity as a resurgent power, challenging NATO capabilities in a wider range of area. Furthermore, Russian presence in Syria has significantly emboldened Iran and its proxy Shiite militias across a wide spectrum of operational areas, within Iraq and also in Syria. This Shiite armed resurgence is substantially destabilizing in both Iraq and Syria, given the extent of counter-mobilization it generates on the Sunni end of the spectrum. At a time when the West seeks out ways to discourage the region's Sunnis from joining the Islamic State as a defense mechanism against Shiite resurgence, an emboldened Shiite armed momentum, supported in part by the Russian military presence in Syria, significantly contributes to instability across Turkey's southern borders. Such instability translates itself as continued mass refugee influx into Turkey's borders, incurring significant political stress on Ankara's relations with the EU.

Russia's dominance in the Black Sea on the other hand, is an equally important, but rarely prioritized factor affecting Turkey and the wider region. With the annexation of Crimea, Russia also acquired control of the Ukrainian naval facilities in and around Sevastopol, significantly disrupting the existing naval balance of power between littoral states in the Black Sea. This balance of power was maintained by the Black Sea Naval Force (BlackSeaFor) with the inclusion of the Turkish naval forces since 2001. The Russo-Ukrainian war in Donbass and Turkey's downing of the Russian jet in Syria led to a de facto collapse of BlackSeaFor, ending naval cooperation, as well as the balance of

power in the Black Sea. The implications of this shift on Turkey have been substantial. Currently, Russian navy exercises full control in the Black Sea.

Finally, Russia's resurgence in the cyber domain poses significant challenges on Turkey. When Turkey shot down the Russian jet in November 2015, a large scale Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack took place against Turkish banks, government sites and ATM infrastructure. The Turkish government was on the receiving end of such attacks in the past, too. For example in December 7, 2016 Wikileaks released over 57,000 emails of Turkey's Minister of Energy and Natural resources, or in July 2016 when a large number of AKP email database was also leaked online. Although these leaks didn't go beyond creating minor, short-lived rifts in Turkish politics, they demonstrate the extent of Russian cyber reach into Turkey's sensitive data network.

Overall, when it comes to relations with Russia, Turkey stands between two approaches: Russia as a resurgent power and a security threat as part of the collective identity of NATO and the EU, which Turkey is part of, and Russia as an important trade partner and potential, though not stable, strategic partner from the viewpoint of the Turkish government. There is a constant change between the Turkish government's discourses of neighbor/partner/ally/enemy Russia, at times contradicting one another, or leading to conflict and cooperation to coexist in bilateral relations, as the example of the Syria crisis shows.

The difference between the approaches of Turkey and the EU member states towards Russia has been evident at the level of domestic politics, too. While the issue of when and how to respond to Russia's defiance –particularly in the case of cyber-attacks- has been part of the latest electoral debates in EU states, this has not the case for Turkey, even though the country has been directly affected by it. Turkey is playing to both the transactional, non-normative nature of its relations with Russia and its established ties with the West through NATO and the EU to gain maximum benefit. Aside from not having solid gains from this balance, Turkey faces the risk of limiting its own foreign policy maneuvers.

2.2   Populist learning

Starting from the 1980s-90s, one of the trends that has characterised politics in the West has been the rise of far right political parties, whose success is not associated with the traditional neo-fascist, but a populist platform (Taggart, 1995). The debate among scholars on what constitutes "populism" is, however, still ongoing. The difficulty in defining this term stems from the fact that it has been used with reference to political movements and leaders across different geographical, historical, and ideological contexts, as it is often employed as a way to delegitimise political adversaries. An influential definition of populism characterises it as a "thin-centred ideology" based on the antagonism between "the pure people" and "the corrupt elite," and on the idea that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* of the people (Mudde, 2007).

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Since the 1960's populist parties have more than doubled their average share of the vote in national and European parliamentary elections[3], growing mainly at the expense of centre parties. Two main theories have been advanced to try and explain this upsurge. Although often presented in isolation, they are better understood as complementary, rather than mutually exclusive.

According to the losers of globalisation tradition of studies, populist anti-establishment movements grows by feeding on the concerns of those voters who increasingly see globalisation as the root cause of rising inequality and economic insecurity. The profound changes in the workforce and society brought about by the emergence of a globalised and post-industrial economy, combined with the convergence of mainstream parties on a liberal consensus has opened up space for new actors in politics. On the other hand, the cultural backlash thesis emphasises the cultural and ethnic attitudes that motivates voters who choose populist parties. The shift is thus seen as a reaction against Western societies' multiculturalism and identity inclusivity by social conservative voters[4], especially among the older generation, white men, and less educated sectors, who see the rise of liberal values as an erosion of their privilege and status.

The rise of populism strengthens political parties and movements in the EU that strongly oppose closer ties between Turkey and the EU, let alone the possibility of Turkey's accession (Dennison & Pardijs, 2016). This will have long term repercussions on EU-Turkey relations by hardening the stance of both parties towards each other.

The relative shock of populism in Europe

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The emergence of strong leaderships against the perils of supranationalism and the EU is one of the common features of the populist movements across Europe. 2016 and 2017 were supposed to be the years of the populists in Europe, with expected victories of Norbert Hofer in Austria, Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, and Marine Le Pen in France. Also, Brexit was perceived as the ultimate expression of "taking back control" in favour of UK's sovereignty. All these political forces, together with many other populist parties in coalition governments and national parliaments across Europe, share a discourse that puts national sovereignty at the core of the political discourse, pictures them as anti-establishment forces in the benefit of ordinary citizens and despises the EU with a clearly euro-sceptic programme.

However, the victory of the "populist international" in Europe simply did not happen. After the Brexit referendum, the UK remains divided on the way forward in the Brexit negotiations and the future relation with the EU. Brussels, on its part, has managed to keep national capitals behind its

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[3] According to estimates from Inglehart and Norris (2016), the average share of vote for populist parties rose from around 5.1% in the 1960s to 13.2% to 2016.

[4] Concerning the Brexit referendum, data shows that people who considered multiculturalism, feminism, the Green movement, globalization and immigration as forces for "good" voted by large majorities to remain in the EU; those who saw them as a force for "ill" voted by even larger majorities to leave (http://lordash-croftpolls.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/How-the-UK-voted-Full-tables-1.pdf).

leadership, strengthening the position of the EU in the negotiations foreseen in Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union. The projected domino effect is also unlikely to happen in the near future, since Brexit has raised support for remaining in the EU, being now at 62% across Europe (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016).

Particularly remarkable is the victory of Emmanuel Macron in the French presidential contest, clearly carrying a pro-EU discourse. His election opens the door to reforming the EU with a re-newed German leadership and with the inclusion of other pro-European leaders in Spain or Italy, among others. Although the national electoral cycle in Europe will be over by 2018, the EU will still be confronted to the effects of the populist rise, with many of its root causes unsolved (Lehne & Valásek, 2017). These range from the effects of austerity to the disfunctionalities of the EU and its democratic deficit. The voters of Le Pen (which amount to almost twice the number his father got in 2002) still suffer from the grievances that conditioned their vote. In Hungary and Poland, national populist parties are likely to dominate national governments for a while.

A possible way forward for the EU is to become "stronger in defending its core project and more flexible in adjusting to new ways of doing politics", as Grabbe and Lehne have put it (2016). The debates on the "flexible Union" open a window of opportunity to that end (Morillas, 2016), alt-hough member states and EU institutions remain divided on the shape of EU reform.

Turkey in the face of populism

Trump's presidency is part of larger trends, such as the failure of democracies since the turn of the millennium –including some in Europe and Turkey- and increased pressure on the West's mid-dle classes as a result of globalization, which leads to a growing tendency towards nationalism and populist revolts (Luce, 2017). This tendency, coupled with the politicization and securitization of migration from the Middle East to Europe, revitalizes xenophobia and Islamophobia ranging to the radical end. Turkey becomes an easy target for populists when addressing such issues. In Britain, traditionally one of the most supportive countries of Turkey's EU bid, the prospect of Turks flock-ing to Europe as a result of its potential EU membership was used as one of the main campaign materials for the Brexit vote. In the Netherlands, known for its neutral stance vis-à-vis Turkey's EU membership bid, some party leaders used a diplomatic standoff –which coincided with the na-tional elections in the Netherlands- with the Turkish government into a publicity event.

Taking Cas Mudde's (2013: 1) definition of populism –"an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite'"- as a point of reference, one can easily spot the abundance of "us" versus "them" narratives in Turkey's recent political history, particularly conspicuous in Erdogan's speeches, but not isolated to Erdogan and his party (Öney & Erdogan 2015). At the same time, the Turkish gov-ernment does not miss the opportunity to blame European countries for their populist discourses regarding Turkey, e.g. as seen in the words of an advisor of Erdogan stating that "obviously popu-list banter in which candidates vie with each other over who can bash Turkey more effectively sells

better in German politics than the real issues concerning the EU, like Brexit" (Hacaoglu & Donahue, 2017). Populist discourses feed each other, always with a degrading effect on international relations. Therefore it does not come as a surprise that populist and authoritarian movements tend to be directly or indirectly supportive of one another. As such populist parties in Europe do not perceive Turkey as a rival; on the contrary, relations on the basis of pure transaction, yet outside of the framework of the EU could turn out to make way for alternative alliances between Turkey and populist groups in Europe.

2.3   Trump and the new course of US foreign policy

The sense of cultural alienation felt by some segments of the U.S. society has been identified as one of the factors behind Trump's success at the 2016 Presidential Election. By making some feeling marginalized and under attack, the embrace of identity politics by the elites has concurred to the surge of so-called "Jacksonian populist nationalism", an U.S.-specific strain of populism that characteristically rejects the idea of an American universal mission and thus opposes a policy of global engagement and liberal order (Mead, 2017). Trump's "America First" campaign and declarations such as "Americanism, not globalism, will be our credo" played precisely into this sentiment, openly disavowing the global role hold by the U.S. since World War II, and calling instead for a more transactional bargain with its allies.

There is broad agreement between scholars and analysts that Trump's foreign policy will entail a disruption with past administrations. Although it is always a challenge to follow through on electoral promises, Trump's foreign policy will certainly have a big impact on UE-Turkey relations, if only because, as Trump stated in an April 2016 speech (New York Times), it will be built on unpredictability. This will increase a sense of uncertainty at the global level, and likely result in the two parties hedging their alignment between the U.S. and other rising powers, namely Russia and China.

Trump as an opportunity for the EU?

The reform of the EU has also found in the election of Trump an external federator. Trump's preference in campaign for euro-skeptic expressions such as Brexit, has led the EU's leadership to believe that a split with the former anchor of the Western-led system is possible (Schwarzer, 2017). Trump has indeed challenged many of the assumptions of the Western post-Cold War order, including a return to protectionist practices, a disbelief in multilateral organizations and a self-help international system (Patrick, 2017). He has also insinuated a loss of relevance of NATO and denigrated the importance of the EU as a natural ally. Overall, the pillars of the liberal international order have found in Trump a challenge similar to the rise of populism within the EU.

Against this transatlantic rift, the EU has taken serious steps to reinforce its defence capacities and strategic autonomy. In addition to Trump's warning sign that Europeans need to spend the NATO 2% goal in defence, some progress has been made to decrease the dependence on the US and to

reinforce the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). After the European Council of December 2016, member states endorsed the proposals for an Implementation Plan on Security and Defence (IPSD) based on the EUGS, which included references to three major initiatives, the Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD), the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) and the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). In addition to member states' led initiatives, some progress has been made on the side of the European Commission to promote more efficient spending in joint defence capabilities and to foster investment and an innovative industrial base, under the umbrella of the European Defence Action Plan (EDAP).

The key question remains if EU member states will reach the necessary consensus to enhance the effectiveness and coherence of its joint defence, putting an end to traditional divisions over national prerogatives in this area. Here, Brexit can act simultaneously as a trigger of reinforced EU cooperation (having been the UK a traditional reluctant partner in the development of EU defence) or have a dragging effect (being the UK a nuclear military power and a country with global reach). After the boost given by Trump's election and the developments following the publication of the EUGS, a lot will depend on the political will of member states to face security challenges together, despite the diminished commitment of traditional partners such as the US and the UK but thanks to the renewed impetus by several member states, chiefly France and Germany, and EU institutions.

Turkey and the new US foreign policy

Another critical global driver affecting Turkey and its relationship with the EU has been the election of Donald J. Trump as the President of the United States. Trump's election has already begun exerting impact on Turkey in two key areas: de-securitization of Russia (and subsequent uncertainty over US support for NATO) and the current trend of US scale-back in Syria.

In fact, American ambivalence in Syria began during the final years of the Barack Obama administration. Initially betting on a swift removal of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad from power, the unwritten alliance of the US, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar reached an impasse as Iran and later Russia began to counter-balance successfully. Raising the costs of further US involvement in Syria, the Russo-Iranian partnership in Syria deterred further American escalation there, leaving Turkey to deal with the aftershocks of the initial plan. As the close ties of the Trump administration to Moscow prevent a change in scaled-back US involvement in Syria, this trend will likely continue. This leaves Turkey largely alone in dealing with continued refugee influx from Syria and also without a credible US support in counter-balancing against Russia.

De-securitization of Russia by the Trump administration follows a similarly problematic trajectory. In the past, Turkey managed to contain and minimize Russia's geopolitical ambitions through a strong alliance with the West, most notably with NATO. With President Trump's signaling that it wouldn't allow free-riding in NATO, Turkey's ability to withstand Russia's pressures and partner with the EU are substantially weakened.

3. Conclusion and trend projections

This paper has identified the global movements, trends and actors driving the EU and Turkey's global outlook, namely the emergence of new powers -in particular, Russia under Putin's presidency-, the decline of the liberal international order coupled with increasing authoritarian and populist learning and the new trajectory of US foreign policy under Trump's presidency. It then analyzed the impact of these drivers on the EU and Turkey respectively, and their relations.

EU-Turkey relations have never been black or white. Even though the relations are facing a period of major decline, there still are many grey areas. There is a large amount of mismatch between the two parties in terms of what they fear or perceive as an opportunity. At the present, while Turkey tries to strengthen its position in the international arena in the face of the global shift of power and the declining liberal order, the rise of authoritarianism, the rise of Russia and populism, the EU is on the losing end. On the other side, the Trump factor has been perceived as an opportunity by both parties. This is to say that just like they drive both sides apart, these drivers are also capable of bringing the two together under the right set of conditions.

What this constellation of drivers suggests is that convergence, meaning Turkey proceeding with the membership bid or becoming a member of the EU, is the least likely scenario for EU-Turkey relations in the near future. The shifting balance of power from the West to the East and the weakening Western-led liberal order decreases the weight of the EU's normative power, also towards Turkey. The shift of power has eroded the capacity of the EU to project influence given the consolidation of new centres of power. For actors like Turkey this diminishes their intention to follow the normative framework provided by the EU, while at the same time increases their tendency to look for alliances with alternative sources of power. As a consequence, the EU becomes less able to influence the behavior of Turkey in multilateral fora or convince the Turkish leadership to act following the path set forth by the EU. This is even more remarkable if one takes into consideration the candidate status of Turkey as a prospective EU member.

The EU, being affected by the global rise of populism, has also become object to the influence of leaders who have embraced the populist learning. Despite recent agreements such as the EU-Turkey deal to face the refugee crisis, the EU has been hostage to the attitudes of Erdogan in fulfilling the commitments of the agreement. This has diminished the capacity of the EU to dictate normative behaviour in its relations with Turkey. When the American anchor and Russia's threat to the European security order are added to the mix, the feeling of an expansionist European power projection becomes more limited.

As a consequence, a convergence scenario would require Turkey distancing itself from alternative partnerships with non-western powers and its full commitment to the liberal and democratic values of the West on the condition that the Western liberal order is restored. Although convergence would, in theory, be more imaginable under these circumstances, it would not be sufficient. Two

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wild cards that could drift the scenario into convergence is a full crisis of the emerging economies, or a confrontation between Turkey and Russia.

This leaves two options open: cooperation and conflict. Cooperation will be possible as long as Turkey remains anchored to Western-led multilateral organizations. On a different note, the realist concerns of the EU and Turkey –shared neighbourhood, terrorism, migration, trade, etc.- will force Turkey and the EU to cooperate at various extents, regardless of conjunctural issues. Yet the current constellation of drivers at the global level narrows down cooperation to the bare minimum, which is a transactional relation based on these realist concerns. As much as cooperation stays on the table, conflict becomes the most dominant, hence the most likely scenario.

One other scenario that could change the course of the relations is the emerging powers in the East, particularly China, depending on whether these powers will merge into the existing international order or try to create a new one. An Eastern-led international order would push Turkey to bandwagon with China, which would also come with less conditionality and more realpolitik. This could bring about an evident break from Turkey's EU membership process. On the other hand, if China merges into the existing order, it will be willing to become a prominent global actor in international fora. In this case, the EU and Turkey could be on the same side once again due to their willingness to increase ties with China and other Eastern powers, in line with the current configuration of the global order. This would decrease Turkey's tendency to free-ride between the Western-led liberal international order and emerging powers, hence decrease conflictual elements in EU-Turkey relations.

For Turkey, the most critical global driver trend is the sustainability of Russia's resurgence. Russian cyber warfare technology, along with its digital propaganda apparatus (such as fake news or automated bots) is sufficiently powerful to influence elections and political processes across NATO countries. Therefore, a resurgent Russia will impact EU-Turkey relations in the short and medium-term. This impact is highly likely to be a negative one, stemming from Turkey's increasing entrenchment in its cooperation with Russia, or less likely but possibly a positive impact, stemming from a full-fledged confrontation between Turkey and Russia.

The expected long-term presence of Russia in Syria and its partnership with Iran on the battlefield will also likely create continued refugee problems for the EU and Turkey. A similar problem is posed by the war against the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. As the group loses territory, the question of how to manage these liberated territories become a renewed source of debate. If transition is mismanaged, it will continue to fuel instability in its wider geographic area, contributing to the flow of refugees. Given current administrative divisions in Washington and within NATO, this mismanagement is the likelier outcome. The crisis of Sunni Arabs in Syria and Iraq will then spill over into Turkey's own domestic political setting. This "blowback effect" is equally valid and important for the EU as EU-origin jihadists fighting under ISIS banner will inevitably return to their home countries, intensifying existing tensions between local Muslim immigrant population and the state. All these three drivers –the refugee problem, transition and terrorism- and the potential

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failure of the international community to manage them will become political instruments for populist parties, thus strengthening their hand in European politics. This vicious cycle will shape EU-Turkey relations at least for the medium-term.

The rise of the far-right in Europe, since it feeds from both a resurgent Russia and the immigration crisis, will also remain a continuing trend. Turkey in the past benefited from European liberal and/or progressive parties, while struggling to find a common tune with the political right. A resurgent far-right in Europe will significantly impair Turkey's ability to work with the EU, but could lead to a cynical cooperation between the Turkish and increasingly authoritarian and/or populist right-wing European governments, purely transactional and outside the EU framework.

Turkey's security anchor to the West – NATO in general and the United States in particular – will also remain on shaky ground at least for the next four years. American security bureaucracy may at certain times make autonomous decisions to back its allies such as Turkey, but Russian dominance around Turkey's neighbourhood significantly deters the US military to do so. Led by an ambivalent president, US military may assume a passive posture on Turkey and may allow Russia to 'run out of steam', either by over-exerting its military spending and capabilities, or by achieving its desired strategic extent. In this type of scenario, Turkey has nothing to do but to bandwagon with Russia on important security issues in Syria, Caucasus and the Black Sea, which essentially implies acting separately from NATO and seeking to protect its own interests alone.

On the other hand, the combination of the said effects above may isolate Turkey in a further negative way and strengthen the prevalent authoritarian entrenchment. Given few reasons to run mutually beneficial military, trade and bilateral ties with US, EU or Russia, Turkey may employ a policy of identity consolidation in which Islam and Turkish nationalism dominates the full spectrum of political and cultural space. In this scenario, Turkey engages in a long-term security engagement within its borders, against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), establishing permanent security presence in its predominantly Kurdish provinces. If coupled with a regime change into executive-presidency, these ongoing military engagements will force Turkey to centralize power even more, minimizing space for dissent, or the functioning of opposition parties as a whole. Given enormous domestic and external political pressures it will generate, this scenario will not be sustainable. This might increase the chances of a renewed coup attempt or an external military intervention to break the status quo. In both cases, the outcome will not yield any positive results.

This above logic asserts that if EU-Turkey relations are left to the mercy of external events, they will eventually freeze completely, or generate conflict. To that end, Turkey and EU must work on a feasible, realistic and mutually agreeable framework to support each other during this systemic reconfiguration period. This support mechanism may have to be established without and regardless of the United States, at least in the next four years, given the predicted self-removal of Washington from EU-Turkey affairs. This offers a degree of opportunity for Ankara and Brussels too. In the past, Washington has been the main invisible driver behind Turkey's EU negotiations. This time a renewed, unique and 'organic' relationship can be established between Turkey and the EU with

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new parameters that reflect the reality of both entities. It is only through the establishment of these more realistic parameters can Turkey and EU steer through the global storm.

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ABOUT FEUTURE

FEUTURE sets out to explore fully different options for further EU-Turkey cooperation in the next decade, including analysis of the challenges and opportunities connected with further integration of Turkey with the EU.

To do so, FEUTURE applies a comprehensive research approach with the following three main objectives:

1. Mapping the dynamics of the EU-Turkey relationship in terms of their under-lying historical narratives and thematic key drivers.
2. Testing and substantiating the most likely scenario(s) for the future and as-sessing the implications (challenges and opportunities) these may have on the EU and Turkey, as well as the neighbourhood and the global scene.
3. Drawing policy recommendations for the EU and Turkey on the basis of a strong evidence-based foundation in the future trajectory of EU-Turkey rela-tions.

FEUTURE is coordinated by Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Wessels, Director of the Centre for Tur-key and European Union Studies at the University of Cologne and Dr. Nathalie Tocci, Director of Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome.

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