

December 2018

## FEUTURE Online Paper No. 27

**Greek-Turkish Relations and  
the Cyprus dispute: impact on  
Turkey-EU scenarios**

*Thanos Dokos*  
*Nathalie Tocci*  
*Anja Palm*  
*Can Kasapoğlu*



This project has received funding  
from the European Union's Horizon 2020  
Research and Innovation Programme  
under Grant Agreement No 692976.

## Abstract

Greek-Turkish relations have come under significant strain in the last couple of years and are likely to remain difficult in the long-run there seems to be little appetite in both sides of the Aegean for a substantive discussion and subsequent negotiation for the full normalization of Greek-Turkish relations as both sides are either faced with pressing domestic priorities or with important external challenges and have no intention of spending precious political and diplomatic capital for the resolution of bilateral problems, at least in the immediate future. A Cyprus settlement has been extremely difficult to achieve over the past (almost) half a century and there is rather limited optimism that the situation will change in the near future. The sad truth is that three of the four parties to the conflict are relatively content with the status quo, or at least insufficiently unhappy with it to make the painful and risky compromises an agreement would warrant. Particularly for a large part of the Greek Cypriot community, the status quo appears to be preferable to a federal peace agreement which is being perceived as problematic, especially regarding security provisions. Therefore, the most probable scenario is 'business as usual/muddling through' akin to the "conflictual cooperation" scenario identified in other workstreams.

## Özet

Türk-Yunan ilişkileri son yıllarda önemli gerilimlere sahne olmuştur. Uzun vadede bu durumun değişmeyeceği düşünülmektedir. Zira Ege denizinin iki yakasında da Türk-Yunan ilişkilerinin kapsamlı normalizasyonu için kaydadeğer müzakerelere başlanmasını sağlayacak bir iştah bulunmamaktadır. İki taraf da acil iç ve dış politika öncelikleri karşısında ikili sorunların çözümü için değerli siyasi ve diplomatik sermaye harcamak istememektedirler, en azından kısa vadede. Kıbrıs sorununda ise geçmiş yarım asırda bir çözüme ulaşılabilmemesinin önünde büyük zorlukların olduğu görülmüştür ve bu durumun yakın gelecekte değişeceğine dair iyimser olmak için bir neden bulunmamaktadır. Acı gerçek, soruna taraf olan dört paydaştan üçünün statükodan memnun olduğu veya en azından yeterince rahatsız olmadığıdır. Kıbrıs Rum toplumunun önemli bir bölümü için statüko, özellikle güvenlikle ilgili hükümleri itibarıyla sorunlu görülen federal düzeydeki bir barış anlaşmasına oranla tercih edilir gözükmektedir. Bu nedenle bu alanlardaki en olası senaryonun "business as usual" veya diğer çalışma kağıtlarında da "çatışmacı işbirliği" olarak adlandırılan senaryonun olduğu değerlendirilmektedir.



## Content

1.	Brief Historical Overview .....	1
2.	The Cyprus Problem.....	3
	Drivers on the Cyprus Problem .....	3
2.1.	Inter-Communities Relations (Clashes vs. Co-existence) .....	3
2.2.	Public Opinion .....	3
2.3.	Resources (potential discovery of additional hydrocarbon deposits in the region) .....	4
2.4.	Greek-Turkish Relations .....	4
2.5.	Third Parties' Role (US, Russia).....	4
2.6.	Middle East Conflicts .....	4
2.7.	Military Balance in Cyprus .....	5
2.8.	Turkey's relations with NATO (the possibility of deterioration) .....	5
3.	The Conflict Scenario .....	5
3.1.	The end of the bizonal, bicomunal federal solution in Cyprus .....	5
3.2.	Creeping annexation .....	7
4.	Cooperation Scenario .....	10
4.1	Divergences and Possible Roadmaps .....	11
4.2	Assessing the Cooperation Scenario .....	12
5.	Convergence Scenario .....	13
6.	Greek-Turkish Relations.....	18
6.1	Drivers .....	18
6.2	The Conflict Scenario.....	19
	Different Understandings and the Limited Prospects for Convergence.....	21
	The Complex Defense Angle .....	22
	Chronic Divergences and Miscommunications .....	22
6.3	The Cooperation Scenario .....	24
6.4	The Convergence Scenario .....	24
6.5	Wildcards and Alternative Drivers.....	27
7.	The Way Forward.....	28
7.1	The Cyprus problem .....	28



7.2 Greek-Turkish relations ..... 31

7.3 Recommendations..... 34

References..... 36

About the Authors..... 39



## 1. Brief Historical Overview

Despite of both Greece and Turkey being members of the Western, Trans-Atlantic alliance in the postwar period, bilateral relations have been conflict prone. Trapped by history (wars between the Ottomans and the Byzantines, Ottoman occupation of Greece, irredentist wars in the 19th and early 20th century) and by more recent disputes in the Aegean Sea and, of course, the Cyprus problem, Greece and Turkey would often find themselves in various international fora undermining one another under a 'zero-sum' game logic. In addition to several periods of high tension, the two countries reached the brink of war twice in the last forty years, namely in 1987 and, especially, in 1996. Reacting to what it perceived as an aggressive behavior by Turkey, Athens had often used throughout the '80s its veto power within the then European Economic Community (EEC) to block funding for Turkey and the latter's EEC association. The 'U' turn in Greek policy with regard to Turkey's EU aspirations that started in the mid-1990s was linked to the Europeanization of Greek foreign policy, the global systemic changes and the opportunities offered by the enlargement policy of the EU –one of historic magnitude. In March 1995, Greece lifted its veto towards the EU-Turkey Customs Union agreement in exchange for agreement on opening accession negotiations between the EU and Cyprus in 1998. Despite of, or perhaps because of, the Imia (1996), S-300 (1997-98) and Ocalan (1999) crises, a period of step by step reconciliation started in the spring of 1999 under the leadership of the then foreign ministers of Greece and Turkey, G. Papandreou and I. Cem respectively.

The catalytic positive effects of systemic changes notwithstanding, more importantly it was domestic changes (liberalization, modernization and Europeanization in domestic politics and the economy) in Greece and Turkey that were the driving forces of the reconciliation (Keridis, 1999), in addition to mutual concerns about the costs of the continuing confrontation. The rapprochement process was greatly facilitated by two unexpected events: the catastrophic earthquakes in Turkey and Greece in August and September 1999, respectively. The swift Greek reaction to the Turkish tragedy spectacularly changed the mood and led to a similar Turkish reaction after the Athens earthquake. Both countries, either through official channels or through private initiative, rallied to the side of each other dispatching medical supplies, equipment and rescue teams to alleviate the plight of earthquake-torn Greeks and Turks.

Greece, was nevertheless, the instigator of the process that brought a breakthrough in Greek-Turkish relations in 1999 (Tsakonas, 2010:1). Greece was expecting that in return for its positive stance on Turkey's EU aspirations, it would gain the decoupling of Cyprus' accession to the EU from the prerequisite of a settlement to the Cyprus problem. Equally important was the strong belief of the political elites in Greece that Turkey's Europeanization would build trust and would result in the peaceful resolution of bilateral problems and the full normalization of Greek-Turkish relations. Indeed, since the 1999 Helsinki Summit Greece became one of the strongest advocates of Turkey's EU membership and this remains its official position, despite the negative developments of the past few years. Consequently, no other model of a 'special relationship' between Turkey and the EU would be -at least officially- supported by Athens.



At the bilateral level, since 1999, and despite frequent incidents and tension caused by what Greece perceived as provocative Turkish military activities in the Aegean air space and waters, both sides proceeded with engaging in various functional sectors within a context of increasing interdependencies, active civil society and common economic interests. However, despite the intensification of bilateral diplomatic contacts and the 'socialization' policy of Greece (Tsakonias, 2010) none of the bilateral problems have been resolved, preserving conditions of 'controlled tension'. Still, in the words of George Papandreou (2006) 'Our position has always been clear and consistent. We say yes to Turkey's European future, yes to full accession, not a special relationship...We say yes to the further improvement of relations between Greece and Turkey within the EU framework, as we agreed in 1999.'

The coming into power of Tayyip Recep Erdogan and the AKP in 2002 and the fading of political power of the military establishment in Turkey raised hopes in Athens that the proclaimed Turkish doctrine of 'zero problems with neighbours' and domestic reforms with regard to human rights and further democratization would bring a positive impact on bilateral relations and would further open up Turkey's European path on the basis of a 'full compliance-full accession' policy. Indicative of the positive climate was the visit - the first official visit of head of government in 50 years - of the then Prime Minister of Greece K. Karamanlis to Ankara. However, it was soon understood that AKP governments would prioritize economic and political links with selected Middle Eastern countries and other emerging powers rather than the EU.

Throughout the period of financial crisis in Greece which brought into power new political parties and elites (namely the left-wing SYRIZA and the strongly nationalistic ANEL) the support of Athens to Ankara's EU membership effort did not diminish. On the contrary, the Europeanization of Turkey is still considered -despite the serious problems and obstacles- by Greek political elites as the most effective path for resolving the persisting security dilemma. The key parameter, however, in the future relations between Greece and Turkey will be Ankara's own determination to go decisively along the EU accession path and turn into a non-authoritative state of liberal European values.

Bilateral relations deteriorated when, following the failed July 2016 coup in Turkey, the Greek Supreme Court rejected the extradition of eight Turkish officers that sought refuge in Greece after the coup, on the basis that a fair trial was not guaranteed if they were returned to Turkey. The court's decision in January 2017, inexplicably interpreted by Turkey as a 'political decision', was followed by Ankara's thinly-veiled threats on the danger for a grave 'accident' in the Aegean and the cancellation of the bilateral readmission agreement with Greece, as well as a series of provocative -as perceived by Athens- actions. The view in Athens is that the controversial statements of President Erdogan during his state visit to Greece in December 2017 about the need to 'modernize' the Lausanne Treaty, and the growing tension in bilateral relations (ramming of Greek Coast Guard vessel by Turkish Coast Guard vessel in February 2018, arrest of



two Greek soldiers in the Greek-Turkish border in Thrace, etc.) constitute causes of concern for all involved sides, including, of course, the EU.

This paper will focus on the impact of a – the Turkey-Greece relationship and b - the Cyprus dispute on the evolution of the Turkey-EU relationship. The first section of the paper identifies the main drivers that have tended to shape the nature of these relationships. The following two sections examine the nature of the three scenarios of convergence, conflict and cooperation from the standpoint of the future of the Cyprus dispute and the Turkey-Greece relationship. Namely, the analysis strives to describe each of these specific scenarios and assess their likelihood in view of the identified drivers. The final section draws conclusions and offers a final overview in terms of how these two areas are likely to affect the future of the Turkey-EU relationship.

## 2. The Cyprus Problem

### Drivers on the Cyprus Problem

The scenarios will be based on the interrelationship of several drivers affecting current and future developments. The drivers below can be divided into primary (the first five) and secondary (the next three):

#### 2.1. Inter-Communities Relations (Clashes vs. Co-existence)

During the past few years, opportunities for contacts between the two communities have increased and inter-personal relations have in many cases improved (also assisted by the good relationship between Anastasiades and Akinci). There seems to be significantly less (open) hostility between the two sides, although the distance between the two communities' respective positions on key issues in the negotiations has not been sufficiently reduced.

#### 2.2. Public Opinion

Public opinion remains an important driver. This is certainly the case for Greek-Cypriots, less so for Greek public opinion for which the Cyprus problem is of great but not necessarily of pivotal importance. In the period before the Annan plan referendum, but also in the recent round of negotiations that took place initially between the two communities and at the final stage in Switzerland with the participation of Greece, Turkey, the UK and the UN, Greek-Cypriot public opinion was strongly opposed to any solution that would allow Turkey to maintain troops and intervention rights in Cyprus. The fact that presidential elections were scheduled to take place only two months later made the role of public opinion on the Greek-Cypriot side even more important. In the case of Greece, public opinion shared the same views as the Greek-Cypriots on security issues, but with much less fervour. Although Nikos Anastasiades, who has recently won the presidential election in Cyprus, will not have to worry about the next election for quite some



time (and he is most likely not going to run for re-election), public opinion will remain an influential driver for the Greek-Cypriot leadership. Furthermore, populism and domestic politics may play a role in Greek-Turkish relations.

### **2.3. Resources (potential discovery of additional hydrocarbon deposits in the region)**

This is a driver of increasing importance both for the Cyprus problems as well as for regional stability in the Eastern Mediterranean, as recent developments (including potential discoveries and Turkish actions/reactions) demonstrate. In the case of additional discoveries, the Eastern Mediterranean may become an important supplier for Europe, thus contributing to European energy security. This driver will be analyzed in greater detail in the context of the scenarios.

### **2.4. Greek-Turkish Relations**

It is difficult to imagine that the Cyprus problem could be resolved independently of the state of Greek-Turkish relations (and vice-versa). And negative developments in either issue will sooner or later affect the other (although there may not be complete/full proportionality in terms of impact). Good relations between Greece and Turkey are a necessary but not sufficient condition for a Cyprus settlement. Over the past several years, relations between Athens and Ankara have been relatively stable, but there is no lack of problems and issues that occasionally cause tension (as it has happened over the past few months). As it will be explained in the next section of this chapter, there are limited expectations that bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey will be fully normalized in the foreseeable future.

### **2.5. Third Parties' Role (US, Russia)**

The role of third parties, and especially the U.S. and Russia, in the Cyprus problem has always been important. Whereas reaching an agreement without the active involvement of the U.S. would be very difficult, active Russian opposition would also make it almost impossible. The current problems in U.S.-Turkish relations and the priorities of the Trump Administration have led to a diminished U.S. role. This doesn't have to be a permanent situation, however. Russia, especially in light of the existing tensions with the West, has no motive to facilitate a Cyprus settlement that would strengthen U.S. and European influence in an EU member-state where Moscow retains a rather significant degree of influence.

### **2.6. Middle East Conflicts**

A secondary driver, as the regional instability in the Eastern Mediterranean in particular and the Middle East in general, is affecting Turkish security and, less directly, EU security, but there is no visible impact on the Cyprus problem. The expected continuation of regional instability may increase the geopolitical importance of Cyprus in the eyes of important players such as the U.S.,



the EU and Russia, and of course, Turkey, but it is not clear how this driver will significantly affect efforts for a Cyprus settlement.

### **2.7. Military Balance in Cyprus**

Any change in the current military balance in Cyprus, which is heavily in favour of Turkey in view of the deployed forces (not to mention the geographical proximity of Cyprus to mainland Turkey and the much longer distances involved in the case of Greece) as a result of Greek or Greek-Cypriot actions is quite unlikely. Unless Turkey decides to unilaterally reduce its forces on the island (because of economic or domestic political reasons), it will continue to enjoy military superiority in Cyprus. There is also, of course, the scenario of the withdrawal of the Turkish army from Cyprus as a result of a negotiated settlement, but this would be a completely different ball game.

### **2.8. Turkey's relations with NATO (the possibility of deterioration)**

This is another secondary driver. Obviously, Turkey's relations with NATO also reflect upon U.S.-Turkey and EU-Turkey relations, and any substantial deterioration will negatively affect the ability of these countries/organizations to facilitate a Cyprus settlement, as well as the attractiveness in Turkish eyes of a NATO force to guarantee the implementation of a settlement. Currently Turkey's relations with NATO are probably at an all-time low level. Both sides would rather avoid any further deterioration, but short-term prospects are not especially promising.

## **3. The Conflict Scenario**

### **3.1. The end of the bizonal, bicomunal federal solution in Cyprus**

On 7 July 2017, when United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres declared with a low voice that the talks between Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, the three guarantor powers – Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom – and European Union observers had ended in failure in Crans Montana, the end of a very long road was reached in Cyprus.

The conflict in Cyprus is amongst the oldest of the post-colonial age, and the only one within the EU. The delicate constitutional compromise reached in 1960 that enshrined political equality between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots and foresaw security guarantees and military presence (with a strong colonial taste) by Greece, Turkey and the UK, lasted a mere three years. By 1963 the Greek Cypriot numerical majority violated the 'consociational' articles of the constitution, giving rise to a season of bloody intercommunal violence. In 1974, following a Greek military coup on the island, Turkey intervened militarily, occupying 37% of the island's north. That occupation lasts to this day. Since Greece's membership in the European Community in 1981,



followed by the Republic of Cyprus' EU accession in 2004, the unresolved Cyprus conflict has been the single major irritant to Turkey's cooperation and convergence with the Union.

By the late 1970s, the parameters of a Cyprus settlement were thought to be known. In the 1977-1979 high-level accords, the two communities agreed on the principles of a bizonal and bicomunal federal solution. Since then, each and every UN Secretary General has invested in peace on the island, defining in ever greater detail the contours of an agreement in successive peace plans. In 2004, the rough details of a deal were outlined in the Annan Plan, which was approved by the Turkish Cypriot community but overwhelmingly rejected by the Greek Cypriots in separate referendums that year. The last round of negotiations, kicked off after Mustafa Akinci's election as Turkish Cypriot leader in 2014, revolved around a revision and fine-tuning of those details. It was widely considered as the best chance for peace Cyprus has ever had largely due to the unique constellation of favourable stars with two leaders unquestionably committed to a solution. With the failure at Crans Montana, we now know there will never be a bizonal and bicomunal federal agreement on the island.

Yet at first sight, the Cyprus conflict appears to be so eminently solvable. Since 1974, with the exception of sporadic incidents of minor significance, there has been no violence on the island. Since 2003 the green line separating north from south has been open. Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots can freely cross the unrecognized border, visiting, shopping and, in the case of many Turkish Cypriots who have obtained citizenship in the Republic, working in the south and in the rest of the Union. It would be too much to say that there is no animosity between the communities. But compared to other conflicts just a few miles from the island's shores, from the Balkans to Libya, from the Caucasus to Syria, from Yemen to Palestine, Cyprus is an island of tranquility. The regional dimension of the conflict – relations between Turkey and Greece – while not tension-free, are characterized as much by geostrategic rivalry as by political and economic cooperation, at least since the earthquake diplomacy in 1999 opened the way to a historic rapprochement between the two countries. Since then, Greece has been one of the most steadfast supporters of Turkey's European integration.

On a deeper level, however, it is precisely this relative calm on the island and satisfaction with the status quo that has led to a dead end. Any peace agreement inevitably requires painful compromises for each party to the conflict. A federal solution in Cyprus would require the Greek Cypriots to cede power and co-govern the island with their Turkish Cypriot compatriots, recognizing their political equality notwithstanding the latter's numerical minority on the island. The Turkish Cypriots would be called upon to renounce part of the territory currently controlled by them in the north and give back some of the Greek Cypriot properties in their federated state. Turkey – as well as Greece and the UK – would have to revise its role as security guarantor and significantly scale back its military presence on the island.



What is missing is the political will to walk the extra mile and make the necessary step into the unknown, a step in the dark that is intrinsic to any successful peace process. When the status quo is tolerable, if not satisfactory, to at least one party to the conflict, making that step – however small it may seem to outside observers – becomes difficult or even impossible, hollowing out the political preconditions for successful mediation. This is what happened in 2004, when the Greek Cypriot community turned down the Annan Plan only to enter the EU one week later.

In 2017, the responsibility for the failure is not so clear-cut. Whereas the Turkish Cypriots – who live in an unrecognized state with all the downsides that implies – have a clear interest in reaching a federal compromise, Greek Cypriots, Turks and Greeks are far more lukewarm.

Turkey, under its President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, is not ideologically opposed to a federal solution. Unlike its old school Kemalist predecessors, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) accepted the Annan Plan in 2004 and appeared to be open to a deal in 2017. But today Erdoğan's first (and second and third) priority appears to be the consolidation of his domestic power. And to the extent that this rests on wooing nationalist voters, his incentive to go the extra mile in Cyprus is constrained.

Greece is in principle well disposed towards a deal. But partly by coincidence, partly by design, Greece – and in particular (former) Foreign Minister Kotzias who was in charge of the process – did not play a particularly helpful role. Finally, the Greek Cypriots, nearing the finishing line of the negotiation, raised the bar concerning the withdrawal of Turkey's guarantee rights and military presence in Cyprus, leading to a collapse of the talks. Whereas Turkey had reportedly accepted a scaling back of its military presence to the agreed 1960 levels, the Greek Cypriot President Anastasiades, probably aware of the difficulties he would have faced in winning a referendum at home, pulled the plug, leading to the collapse of the talks.

Fifty-five years have passed since the outbreak of conflict on Aphrodite's island. It is now clear that there will be no federal compromise on the island. The sad truth is that three of the four parties to the conflict are relatively content with the status quo, or at least insufficiently unhappy with it to make the painful and risky compromises an agreement would warrant. Particularly for the Greek Cypriot community, the status quo is preferable to a federal peace agreement.

### 3.2. Creeping annexation

This would not necessarily mean the end of the road towards a peace settlement in and of itself. If the Greek Cypriots candidly admitted to themselves and to the international community that circumstances have changed and they no longer wish to live in political equality with the Turkish Cypriot community in a federal state, new parameters could be sought, featuring for instance the recognition of two states, the re-distribution of territory, and a compromise on property, security and freedoms. Over time the two states, living side by side, could progressively converge. But there are no seeds in the Republic awaiting to blossom in this respect. Likelihood is



that that the Greek Cypriot community will continue to talk the talk of a bi-zonal and bi-communal federation, while walking the walk within the EU of its separate existence from the beleaguered Turkish Cypriots. Alas, those who will end up with the short straw – as always – are the weaker party to the conflict: the Turkish Cypriot community. Northern Cyprus is already being progressively absorbed against its will into Turkey itself. This trend will likely accelerate moving forward.

Aware of the dynamics above, the international community is likely to lose interest in Cyprus, leading to a progressive scaling down of UN peacekeeping forces as a cash-strapped UN would redirect its energies towards far worthier causes.

Turkey, while having repeatedly hinted at the possibility of annexing Northern Cyprus as the 82<sup>nd</sup> province of the Republic, would likely see little value in formally announcing this move. But it would accelerate the progressive encompassing of the “TRNC” into its territory. Already Turkish Cypriot state revenues emanate predominantly from Ankara, hundreds of thousands of Turkish citizens live in the north, water is supplied by Turkey, electricity will soon be, ports and airports are controlled by Turkey, a Turkish office coordinates youth and sports issues, while Turkish universities proliferate in the north. On many occasions, Turkish political leaders have provocatively referred to the north as an “overseas province of Turkey”,<sup>1</sup> or made references to the France-Monaco, or UK-Gibraltar models to highlight the possible future of Turkey-TRNC relations.<sup>2</sup> With the acknowledged end of the peace road in Cyprus (in all but name), these trends would accelerate further, possibly seeing the political appointment of Turkish citizens in TRNC institutions, and massive new Turkish infrastructure investments in the north.

Both Turkish and Greek Cypriots have long been refusing the idea of Turkish annexation of the island’s north, reacting indignantly to recent allegations of the TRNC being Turkey’s overseas province.<sup>3</sup> Notwithstanding the large majority of Turkish Cypriots being in favour of the presence of Turkish troops on their ground,<sup>4</sup> Akıncı has repeatedly voiced the vital importance of the TRNC’s independent role, although with strong and healthy ties with Turkey.<sup>5</sup> Greek Cypriots,

---

<sup>1</sup> Yiğit Bulut statement as reported in the Cyprus Mail on 26 April 2017, available at: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/04/26/erdogan-adviser-wants-annex-north-cyprus/>.

<sup>2</sup> Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu statement as reported in My Net on 04 July 2017, available at: <http://www.mynet.com/haber/dunya/cavusoglundan-kritik-kibris-aciklamasi-3127144-1>.

<sup>3</sup> Barış Burcu statement as reported in the Cyprus Mail (cit. 1).

<sup>4</sup> 89% according to the survey conducted by Insights Market Research-University of Nicosia as reported in Cyprus Mail on 28 December 2016, available at <http://cyprus-mail.com/2016/12/28/polls-highlight-extent-opposite-views-guarantees-settlers-troops/>.

<sup>5</sup> Mustafa Akıncı statement as reported in Greek Reporter on 15 September 2017, available at: <http://greece.greekreporter.com/2017/09/15/mustafa-akinci-being-a-province-of-turkey-is-not-an-option-for-turkish-cypriots/>.



already lamenting the status quo and Turkey's interference, have called for Turkey not to stick to "obsolete fixations to failed practices".<sup>6</sup>

As a consequence of a further embodiment of the TRNC by Turkey, any shimmer of hope that the Republic of Cyprus would eventually take the Greek route to recognition that Turkey's European future is in its best interest, would be forever lost. Greece would follow, reverting to its 1980s and 1990s myopic opposition to all things Turkish within the Union. Cyprus and Greece would not be strong enough to prevent transactional cooperation between Turkey and the EU on a wide range of questions, from migration to energy to counterterrorism, but they would represent a major obstacle to reinvigorating convergent or cooperative roles-based frameworks underpinning the relationship.

In conclusion, with the collapse of the negotiations in Crans Montana in July 2017, the fate of the island seems to be effectively sealed as the concerned parties – namely, Turkish Cypriots, Greek Cypriots, Turkish and Greek governments – will likely not agree on a workable solution to the island's division. This does nevertheless not lead to the likelihood of violent conflict either, as the *status quo* lends itself to a relatively comfortable *modus vivendi* for three out of the four sides. After his victory in the June 24, 2018 (early) elections, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is bent on retaining the nationalists' support, and keeping Cyprus divided is a "small price to pay," if it is going to burnish its nationalist credentials in the eyes of its support-base and quiet its potential challengers; Athens is motivated by similar considerations; and Greek Cypriots, since their membership in the European Union in 2004, have become more and more apathetic towards a union with the Turkish north. The issue is also not high up on the agenda of the United Nations, who is already scaling back its peacekeeping forces. Only the Turkish Cypriots are willing to walk the extra mile to work out a solution – since they are the only ones that resent the *status quo*, as they are being absorbed into the Turkish Republic. The "absorption" will not necessarily take the form of a military occupation, but with a higher number of political appointments to Cypriot institutions and enhanced financial investments, Northern Cyprus will progressively come under Ankara's *de facto* control. This intensified Turkish presence in the north of the island is likely not only infringe upon – or in fact, effectively erode – the independence of Northern Cyprus, but also trigger a louder voice of opposition from the Greek Cypriots to "anything Turkish" across Europe. While Greece and Cyprus alone would not be able to end the bloc's transactional cooperation with Turkey entirely, their open antagonism towards any mode of close collaboration with Turkey is likely to prevent the EU-Turkey relationship from realizing its full potential.

---

<sup>6</sup> Nicos Anastasiades at the UNGA on Cyprus' readiness to take up talks again and condemning Turkey's position during the talks on 21 September 2017, available at: <http://www.cyprusun.org/?p=7960>.



## 4. Cooperation Scenario

Up until recently, federal unification trends have managed to irrevocably shape the Turkish Cypriot political landscape of the island two times. The first one took place more than a decade ago, when the Annan Plan referendum's inspiring euphoria made the Turkish Cypriot voters believe that a common future within the European Union framework was indeed very imminent and very plausible. Ankara supported the process, Turkey's –at the time– security apparatus did not put any obstacles, and the confidence was sky-high among the Turkish Cypriot youth for, finally, finding a permanent solution to the decades-long problem. The second social mobilization for a federal future came into the picture with the election of Mr. Mustafa Akinci as the new leader of the Turkish Cypriots in 2015.

In both cases, the voters opted for replacing old-guard nationalist veterans –Rauf Denktas and Dervis Eroglu–, with left-wing candidates, –Mehmet Ali Talat in 2005 and Mustafa Akinci in 2015– who confidently promised a harmonious unification and the EU accession in a foreseeable future. Neither of these attempts paid off tangibly. More importantly, each idealist left-wing breakthrough in the Turkish Cypriot politics has ended up with a right-wing bounce back.

Recent Turkish Cypriot election results (Jan 2018), by which the right-wing *UBP (Ulusal Birlik Partisi – National Union Party)* ranked first securing more than 35% of the votes, (at first glance) suggested that the majority of the Turkish Cypriots lost their trust in a viable federal solution and as well as in the traditional left-wing champions of such a –once shining but now uncertain– roadmap. Furthermore, the January 2018 elections revealed that despite the general loss of confidence in traditional political institutions, Turkish Cypriot domestic politics are still subject to the Levant conducts of local identities, nepotism, the practice of clientelism, and more importantly, distribution of wealth through political power-brokering. Nevertheless, given the political atmosphere in the Eastern Mediterranean region, one could still depict the Turkish Cypriot electoral processes as being transparent and enjoying freedom of expression.

Notably, the developments following the elections were even more spectacular. The left-wing actors of Republican People's Party (CTP) and Communal Democracy Party agreed with the center-right Democrat Party (DP) and the reformist People's Party (HP) to form a coalition and leave the UBP out in the cold. It remains to be seen how the Turkish Cypriot political landscape would react to a four-party coalition from all the spectrums of the society. Nevertheless, the chances are still slim for a reformist movement, following the French President Emmanuel Macron's path for an 'unconventional glory', to score a victory against the well-established elite of the system.

Furthermore, since the re-election of Mr. Nikos Anastasiades in the presidential elections in February 2018, now the international community focuses on the prospects of renewed reunification talks. It should be noted that if the talks are indeed to resume, it will have to be done under the tense Eastern Mediterranean geopolitical showdown.



## 4.1 Divergences and Possible Roadmaps

The main problem with the Cyprus dispute is the fact that it has erupted under the Cold War conditions and is still being defined with the Cold War understanding. The Greek Cypriot leadership's concerns about Turkey's growing influence over the north revolve around the troop presence and the population that has immigrated to Cyprus from Turkey after 1974. In fact, this is a highly conventional assessment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century strategic balance in the island.

At present, the ties between the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey go well beyond these traditional pillars. For Northern Cyprus, tourism and higher education sectors are vital and constitute the bulk of the economy. Entrepreneurs from Turkey are very active in these businesses, giving a genuine boost to the sustainability of the current *status quo*. Furthermore, these two strategic sectors function much more efficiently than the Turkish Foreign Office in promoting the 'internationalization' of the Turkish Cypriot administration.

Having the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission since 1964, specific facts are now crystal clear as to how the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots perceive the dispute and draw their red lines. Simply put, on the one hand, the Greek Cypriots do not want to see the Treaty of Guarantee be maintained since they believe such an international legal framework could bring about another 1974 military intervention. On the other hand, for the Turkish Cypriots, such a regime remains a *sine qua non* as they believe the absence of a treaty of guarantee could bring about the systematic violence that took place in the 1960s and culminated in the early 1970s. Furthermore, despite Ankara and the Turkish Cypriots may accept a comprehensive troop reduction – under favorable conditions, even a withdrawal to the 1960 levels with a symbolic Turkish regiment – to reach a permanent solution, the Greek Cypriot leadership's position during the recent talks was reported to reflect a 'zero troops' principle. Since both parties have a substantial red line on the troop presence, this sharp difference of opinion constitutes an impediment to any convergence scenario. On a separate note, it should be underlined that the UK Sovereign Base Areas (Akrotiri and Dhekelia) will remain on the island in any foreseeable way – forward, be it convergence, cooperation, or conflict.

Secondly, the power sharing issue keeps being a significant disagreement between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots. In this regard, adopting and stably running a bi-communally rotating-presidency seems the major difference of opinion between the two parties. In fact, given the present socio-political trends among the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, reaching such a consensus is really hard. For one, bilateral internalization of a rotating presidency has to depend on hearts and minds first, rather than UN-backed diplomatic processes. Navigating through diplomacy in the absence of political psychological assurances paved the groundwork for the collapse of the 1960 *status quo* within only a few years. In this respect, prior to the Cyprus talks, the Turkish Cypriot leader Mr. Mustafa Akinci underlined that himself and his counterpart Mr. Nicos Anastasiades represent the last generation that experienced living in a mixed country as compatriots.



Following the failed talks, Mr. Akinci ironically wished ‘good luck’ for the next generations in solving the problem<sup>7</sup>. In fact, Mr. Akinci’s comments reflect the abovementioned political psychological aspect of the decades–long divisions in the island. These divisions go well beyond diplomatic considerations, or international law, or territorial arrangement. They are based on divergences of identities of the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots. These discrepancies in identity internalization have been consolidated by a straightforward fact: time. Indeed, Cyprus enjoys one of the highest life expectancies in Europe by more than 81 years average<sup>8</sup>. Nevertheless, for at least two generations on the island, a mixed political order sounds alien.

## 4.2 Assessing the Cooperation Scenario

So far, this paper touched upon the factors that hinder any viable convergence and related unification scenarios in the foreseeable future. However, fortunately, recurrence of the conflict in Cyprus is equally unlikely due to particular reasons. For example, although a mixed, federal political order in the island sounds alien to the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots, the crossings between Turkish and Greek populated parts are open for more than a decade. At present, seeing Greek Cypriot families in the northern beaches along the Karpass Peninsula while paying their visits to the Apostolos Andreas Monastery, or young Turkish Cypriots enjoying the stunning nightlife in Larnaca, has, by all means, become normal in the daily life in Cyprus. Except for some radical groups and sporadic minor incidents, since the opening of the crossings, Cyprus has not witnessed mass hostilities or systematic hate crimes. (Nevertheless, both communities of the island should be vigilant about fighting radicalization to sustain the current peaceful situation.)

Furthermore, none of the parties in the Cyprus equation –Turkish Cypriots, Greek Cypriots, Greece, Turkey, and the UK – would benefit from further conflict. Thus, in the absence of necessary sociological and political grounds for convergence, cooperation remains the only way forward. Notably, Greek and Turkish Cypriots could boost their cooperation with a lower–profile agenda, such as environmental issues or cultural activities.

Under the viable cooperation –yet not convergence– scenario, no radical drifts from the traditional trajectory should be expected. In this framework, EU would not encourage an institutionalized and permanent division in Cyprus. However, it could opt for establishing closer relations with Turkish Cypriots without encouraging further divergence in the island. In return, Ankara would not change its stance regarding the EU – NATO cooperation under the present circumstances.

In the cooperation scenario, Turkey and EU are expected to develop a highly compartmentalized diplomacy model as reflected in contemporary Turkish – French bilateral ties. In this respect,

---

<sup>7</sup> <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/07/07/akinci-i-wish-next-generation-good-luck/>, Accessed on: Jan. 22, 2018.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.cna.org.cy/webnews-en.aspx?a=8b697a8bddd4c5d840683f51c1e62ea>, Accessed on : Jan. 22, 2018.



while issues like security and intelligence cooperation in countering terrorism, fighting human trafficking, and international trade are kept intact from the worsening political landscape, each party tacitly accepts that there is no tangible hope, nor will, for Ankara's full membership, at least in the short term.

In fact, the abovementioned factors constitute the very essence of the cooperation scenario. Simply put, EU needs Turkey in combating foreign terrorist fighters and mass refugee/migrant waves from the Syrian civil war, while the Turkish economy needs its European partners to sustain stability. Therefore, no party would risk its strategic interests by dragging the tensions to a no-return point. Yet, unlike the times of Annan Plan, the EU membership objective is no more a feasible reward to motivate Ankara.

All in all, this paper assesses that neither further convergence nor extreme divergence could promote the best interest of involving parties in the Cyprus problem.

Last but not least, there remains a wildcard driver that could seriously risk the cooperation potential. From a political-military standpoint, the delicate balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean due to the territorial disputes and newly discovered hydrocarbon resources should be monitored closely. Especially, the militarization of the energy geopolitics competition comes into the picture as the biggest risk to peace and stability in the island.

## 5. Convergence Scenario

In the Cyprus conflict, as in almost every conflict around the world, each side has its own narrative and grievances, which may differ considerably from those of the other side(s). It is rare to find a conflict situation where one side is completely right and the other is completely wrong. Greece has made its own mistakes, with the 1974 coup d'etat being by far the most serious one. The Greek Cypriots were extremely reluctant to accept the Turkish Cypriots as equal partners in the new created Republic of Cyprus. It is widely believed, however, by Greek Cypriots and Greeks that the Turkish-Cypriot leadership never really tried to make the bi-communal system work. It can also be rather convincingly argued that the results of the 1974 Turkish invasion were much more catastrophic than anything that happened in the pre-1974 period. Furthermore, among the victims of Turkey's invasion one should also include the Turkish Cypriots themselves who, as a result of the large number of settlers from Anatolia and Turkey's occasionally asphyxiating control, began feeling like strangers in their own land, with large numbers migrating over the years to the UK and other destinations. Finally, the former colonial side, the UK, can hardly be said of having played a constructive role in the Cyprus problem. All said, there is sufficient blame to go around but the fact remains that 37% of the island are still occupied by the Turkish Army. At the same time, the Republic of Cyprus is a member of the EU, whereas progress in the negotiations for Turkish accession to the Union has been extremely slow.



Although the Cyprus problem continues to dominate both the political discourse and the everyday life of both communities on the island, and despite the considerable loss of life from the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus till 1974, violence has been very limited during the last 44 years. Also because of the overwhelming superiority of the Turkish forces on the island, the Cyprus problem has acquired many of the characteristics of a frozen conflict. For many years, contacts between the two communities were limited and the two ‘mother’ countries incorporated the Cyprus problem into their list of bilateral disputes and learned how to manage the occasional turbulence. The Cyprus problem was also used by Greece, but also by a number of EU member states, as a factor obstructing Turkish accession to the EU. This proved to be quite infuriating for Turkey, although it never directly generated very high tensions with Greece.

Overall, the reluctance of Greek Cypriots to take the risk of cohabitation with Turkish Cypriots and Turkey’s refusal to relax its strategic grip over Cyprus can largely explain the failure to resolve the division of the island after more than forty years of negotiations. After 2013, and following decades of failed negotiations, it appeared as if ‘the stars had aligned’ for a solution as far as the leaders of the two communities were concerned. Significant progress had been declared during the intercommunal negotiations. Although important disagreements remained on issues like governance and territory, the real stumbling block was security, and this is one of the issues where decisions are made almost exclusively in Ankara.

It is crucial to address the concerns and fears of both communities in order to convince undecided citizens on both sides that the status quo is not the best option; that the other side is serious about solving the problem; and that an acceptable solution is within grasp, with obvious and tangible benefits for all sides involved. Otherwise, the proposed solution will be once more rejected in a referendum. The key in this context is to reach an agreement that would unavoidably involve the element of rather painful compromise but make absolutely clear that there would be tangible benefits for both communities.

As far as the Greek-Cypriots are concerned, territorial and economic benefits have been emphasized, but, as already mentioned, the most important element remains a substantial reduction of the level of threat through the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the removal of any unilateral military intervention rights. The security concerns of Turkish-Cypriots should, of course, also be addressed through a system of implementation guarantees and a multinational police force. Finally, for the benefit of both sides, the decision-making procedures should not be overly complicated to ensure that possible disagreements will not lead to frequent deadlocks. The objective should be to prevent Cyprus from becoming a fragile and hardly governable state such as Bosnia-Herzegovina (it should be noted here that there were strong concerns among Greek-Cypriots that the Annan plan was indeed extremely complicated and probably dysfunctional).

Therefore, the only viable option for a settlement remains a bizonal, bicomunal state, perhaps with a light dose of international supervision to smooth some rough edges, especially in the ear-



ly stages of the implementation of the agreement. The territory that would be held by the Turkish-Cypriots should not exceed 27-28%, as agreed in the past. Regarding security, it would be extremely problematic if a non-EU country will have the right of unilateral military intervention in an EU member-state. Some analysts have been using the analogy of Russia being given a legal justification to intervene in the Baltic states. The right of unilateral intervention by any third country should be replaced by a system of reliable international guarantees. Foreign troops on the island, with the exception of the British Sovereign Territories, should be completely removed. If this optimal solution is not achievable, two contingents along the lines of the London-Zurich agreements might be acceptable. Ideally, those contingents should be under the command of a NATO-led multinational force that would supervise the implementation of the agreement.

In addition to diverging views on security and other issues between the two sides, current and future obstacles for a settlement in Cyprus include the lack of concrete EU-related incentives for Turkey, as any serious consideration of EU membership for Turkey is rather unlikely, at least in the medium-term, as well as the increasingly difficult relations between Turkey and a number of EU member-states, including Greece. Generational change among Greek Cypriots also works against a solution, as the new generation which already constitutes a majority of the population is less willing to accept the 'uncertainties' associated with re-unification, whereas the status quo is relatively acceptable to all sides involved except perhaps for the Turkish Cypriots (many of the settlers not necessarily included). Domestic politics in all sides involved are always an important factor. Currently, the deepening polarization and increasingly nationalist discourse inside Turkey constitute causes for concern. Finally, hydrocarbons exploration in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Cyprus continues to be a source of friction.

If bi-communal negotiations do not re-start within a reasonably short time (and are then successfully concluded), it is quite possible that the island may gradually slide towards permanent de facto division, a highly undesirable development, indeed, for both Cypriot communities and the international community. It is possible that the further so-called 'Taiwanization' of the island might not be avoidable anymore (perhaps through a process of "creeping recognition"). The next steps might include either the annexation of Northern Cyprus/occupied territories by Turkey (which would be an extremely unwelcome scenario for Turkish Cypriots as well) or a consensual divorce (in a territory for recognition swap) between the two communities. The latter, although categorically rejected by the Greek Cypriots (despite the very recent, but very vague, statement by President Anastasiades), might have certain advantages for both sides. Its major disadvantage from a Turkish Cypriot perspective would be the almost certain end of their European dream.

Despite the problems and obstacles, before giving up on the optimal solution, all parties involved and concerned should make a last serious effort. In this yet another critical point at the history of the Cyprus conflict, what is urgently needed is the full realization that in the 21<sup>st</sup> cen-



ture new ideas about conflict resolution should be actively sought. All sides need to move away from a zero-sum game mentality, --which unfortunately still characterizes decision makers in Turkey, the two communities in Cyprus and to a certain extent Greece as well -- to a “win-win” situation. Some creative diplomacy will be necessary in order to reach a viable compromise solution, and an active European and U.S. role can be of crucial importance.

What are the drivers that might positively affect the Cyprus negotiations and facilitate (or prevent) a successful outcome along the lines described above? As already mentioned, EU-Turkey relations are at a very low point. The problem certainly goes beyond Cyprus (and Greece) and involves issues of values and the state of democracy in Turkey, as well as Turkey’s policies in Syria and its relationship with Russia (although the latter affects NATO more than the EU). However, business and geopolitical interests (including the management of refugee/migration flows) require the EU to try to improve its relationship with Turkey. Should the two sides –and especially President Erdogan- avoid any inflammatory statements for a period of time and allow diplomats to start repairing the damage to the relationship, it is possible that the EU might regain some of its influence in Ankara and this might allow the Union to be accepted as a constructive player in the Cyprus negotiations. The same is true for the U.S., a long-standing key player in the Cyprus problem. A substantial improvement in the bilateral U.S.-Turkey relations may currently appear difficult but it is far from impossible.

The state of Greek-Turkish relations always influences the situation in Cyprus. Despite current tensions, it is possible that a period of relative tranquillity may follow, especially after Tayyip Erdogan’s victory in the June 2018 presidential elections in Turkey. Hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation have so far proved to be factors of divergence rather than convergence between Greek Cypriots and the Turkish side. Additional discoveries may further increase tension or constitute an incentive for all sides involved to seek more cooperation rather than confrontation.<sup>9</sup> Finally, it is a necessary but not sufficient condition that the two leaders in Cyprus manage to rein over their hardliners, adopt a win-win approach and manage to take advantage of the ‘last opportunity’ to reach a historic agreement. Relieved of the pressure of re-election and thinking more about their legacy and their responsibility to their respective communities, Anastasiades and Akinci may be able to just pull it through.

---

<sup>9</sup> The view in Nicosia and Athens is that Turkey is currently being faced with a major dilemma regarding Eastern Mediterranean hydrocarbons. Unless extraordinary developments take place, in a few years from now natural gas will be produced in Block 12 and quite possibly in additional fields in the EEZ of Cyprus by companies such as Exxon Mobil, Total and ENI. In this case, Turkish claims regarding the delimitation of maritime zones around Cyprus but also its efforts to participate in the exploitation of hydrocarbon deposits will have been dealt a severe blow. Ankara therefore believes that it needs to act now to prevent such a development, hence the various statements and actions in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is also quite likely that Turkey will send its own platform to conduct exploratory drills in the EEZ of Cyprus. As a result of such Turkish actions, the Republic of Cyprus is not expected to soften its position vis-à-vis Turkey in the context of the EU.



A number of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) could help in paving the way to a new, successful negotiation, or at least make co-existence and cooperation easier in a divided island. After all, Cyprus is situated in one of the most unstable regions of the world and a minimum of cooperation between the two communities is necessary to manage external security challenges.

A possible “package” would consist of three concessions from each side: the Greek Cypriots would agree to direct trade (initially through a UN-controlled Ammochostos/Famagusta, as suggested by then President Christophias) of the Turkish-Cypriots with EU countries; they would allow flights to the Turkish Cypriot Ercan airport; and they would not block additional chapters in the EU-Turkey negotiations. In return, Varosha would be returned to the Greek Cypriots, Turkey would remove 50% of its troops [from the current level of approximately 40,000] -a move with virtually no military consequences for the Turkish side, but of huge psychological value for the whole island- in a period of weeks, under UN supervision, and Ankara would open its ports and airports to Cypriot ships and planes. To prevent implementation of this “package” from having adverse effects (i.e. pushing towards partition rather than settlement), the opening of direct trade and/or the Ercan airport would be on a conditional basis for a one-year period, to be renewed. The proposed ‘package’ may sound very ambitious under the current circumstances, but efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem have reached a critical stage and one would be justified to start thinking ‘outside the box’.

But a significant prerequisite for an agreement on CBMs, and indeed for a Cyprus settlement, is a fast-track informal dialogue (following the logic of ‘Track one and a half’ diplomacy) between Turkey and the Greek Cypriots. The substantial lack of understanding about the other side’s interests and concerns contributes to the preservation of misperceptions and to very limited empathy. The problem is even more intense for the weak side, the Greek Cypriots, who have demonized Turkey, for understandable reasons. Lack of official recognition on the Turkish side should not be used as an excuse for the absence of such a dialogue, as informal channels of communication could be used.

Efforts should be made to increase contacts between youth in the two communities and education can also be a very important tool for reconciliation and rapprochement. It should be mentioned that the Greek-Turkish Forum is currently working on a list of twelve CBMs to be submitted to the leaders of the two communities and the United Nations.

Regarding hydrocarbons exploration and exploitation, the Turkish legal position is –in Greek-Cypriot eyes- rather weak and gunboat diplomacy and bullying tactics have certainly not helped the building of confidence between parties involved in the Cyprus problem. Such practices should certainly be discontinued. At the same time, the Republic of Cyprus could make an important contribution in efforts to defuse tension by making good on the pledges of former President Christofias and current President Anastasiades that both communities in Cyprus will benefit proportionally from hydrocarbon exploitation. A fund could therefore be created where future



profits from hydrocarbon exploitation will be deposited waiting resolution of the Cyprus problem.

Finally, in the convergence scenario, a Cyprus solution would greatly improve EU-Turkey relations. Whether it would suffice for opening the road for full EU membership for Turkey, however, is highly uncertain at this stage.

## 6. Greek-Turkish Relations

### 6.1 Drivers

The drivers which have tended to shape the relationship between Turkey and Greece and that have been identified by the research team can be summarized as follows:

1. **Nature of domestic politics and political leadership.** Given that Turkey and Greece have been unable to settle their disputes including disagreements over territorial waters, the continental shelf, ownership of some islands in the Aegean, and rights of minorities, the relationship remains vulnerable to political weaponization. Nationalist governments and leaders on both sides have in the past taken advantage of this situation for domestic aims.
2. **The Cyprus dispute.** Although this analysis will focus separately on the Cyprus issue, it is necessary to identify this problem as a driver of the Turkey-Greece relationship as well. The overall influence of the disagreements over Cyprus on the Turkey-Greece relationship has been reduced since the EU membership of Cyprus in 2004, but the Cyprus problem continues to hold a potential to affect both negatively and positively the direction of the Turkey-Greece relationship.
3. **Turkey-EU relations.** The dynamics of the Turkey-EU relationship is affecting the nature of the Turkey-Greece relationship. The credibility of EU membership has been a facilitating factor for containing the negative spillovers from the outstanding Turkey-Greece disagreements. The hope remains that the revitalisation of the Turkey-EU membership track will also help Ankara and Athens to reach a settlement on their outstanding differences.
4. **Defence economics.** The economic performance of both countries has also been a factor essentially militating for a non-conflictual future. Greece has been more affected by the need to constrain its military expenditures as part of the economic austerity package. Turkey may find itself under similar circumstances in the near future with an expected economic slowdown.



5. **Minority rights.** The mutual public perception has been largely shaped by how the two governments have treated their own minorities namely the Muslim minority in Greece and the Greek minority in Turkey. Practical measures taken by both governments to address the problems and grievances of these communities have had a positive impact on the bilateral relationship. But the reverse is also true. A perceived mistreatment of these national minorities can easily undermine bilateral ties.
6. **A backdrop of unresolved disputes.** Turkey and Greece have been singularly unsuccessful in resolving their set of unresolved disputes, despite several rounds of diplomatic talks extended over several decades. At most, they have been able to contain the negative fallout from this undesired state of affairs. But such a backlog of disagreements creates a difficult environment for the future of the relationship.

## 6.2 The Conflict Scenario

The historical grievances between Greece and Turkey reached a new level in early 2018, raising concerns about a possible escalation and demonstrating that the Cyprus issue represents merely one of the many areas of major disagreement. Over the decades, these elements of conflict have multiplied, overlapped and added fire to other critical dimensions of this complex relationship. Controversy over the continental shelf, the territorial waters, and airspace in the Aegean has been a constant elephant in the room, re-emerging over time, taking up different shapes and varying in intensity. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which defined the modern borders in the region, has repeatedly been questioned throughout the last years by the Erdoğan-led AKP, which has been arguing that there are 'grey zone'-territories and raising concerns regarding the alleged insufficient protection of Turkish minority groups on Greek soil.

Over the years, rapprochements such as the one following the 1999 earthquake in Turkey have been followed by provocations in a constant rollercoaster ride. To overcome differences, Greece and Turkey have increasingly engaged in promoting an interest-based relation, focusing on cooperation on energy infrastructure and more specifically on planned or on-going projects such as the Trans Adriatic Pipeline. In the last decade, bilateral trade has been skyrocketing, evidencing the two-sided interest in collaboration for both countries.<sup>10</sup>

A first recent low in the already intricate relations followed the clampdown after the attempted coup in July 2016, when Greece allowed eight soldiers that had escaped Turkey to lodge asylum requests on its territory. The ongoing refusal to extradite them, as well as nine militants accused of an attempt to assassinate Erdoğan in Athens, has presented, according to Turkey, one of the main reasons for the recent deterioration of the relationship.

---

<sup>10</sup> For further detail see: N. Ketenci, *The role of Greece and Turkey as energy hubs in the region*, MPRA Paper No. 83862, 11 January 2018, available at: <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/83862/>.



The issue of disputed territory again emerged predominantly when in his December 2017 visit to Greece Erdoğan once again questioned the Lausanne Treaty, leading to a crescendo of provocations. On January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 the Turkish Coastguard blocked Greece's Defence Minister Kammegos from approaching islets in Turkish territory and on January 31<sup>st</sup>, Turkish and Greek fighter jets engaged in dogfights over the Aegean Sea. In early February, Turkish military further obstructed the *Saipem 12000*, the gas exploration ship owned by the Italian gas company ENI which was underway to explore the presence of hydrocarbon deposits upon Cypriot mandate. Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu argued that Turkey would need to authorize any gas explorations in its 'continental shelf', pointing out that it represented a 'unilateral move by Greek Cypriots that violated the sovereign rights of Turkish Cypriots'.<sup>11</sup> Lastly, tensions escalated in mid-February following the collusion between a Turkish patrol boat and an EU-financed Greek Coastguard boat off the long-contended islet of Imia, which had led the two countries to the brink of armed conflict already in 1996.

This set off a spiral of escalation, with the senior advisor to Erdoğan Bulut ravaging that 'we will break the arms and legs of any officers, of the prime minister or of any minister who dares to step onto Imia in the Aegean', and even threatening violent actions by saying that if Greece would fail to respect the warning it would 'feel the anger of Turkey, worse than that in Afrin'.<sup>12</sup> Greece on the other side, argued that Turkey was systematically violating international law and Foreign Minister Kotzias threatened that they would not react peacefully in case of another incident similar to the one off Imia in which Turkey had crossed a red line.<sup>13</sup>

This disarray of provocations has not been followed up at the prime ministers' level, who have been agreeing on easing tensions and keeping communication lines open, with Yıldırım stating that the Aegean should represent a 'sea of friendship'.<sup>14</sup> This leads to the conclusion that much of the bold talk is mainly motivated by domestic political considerations. Erdogan, the AKP, and their ally Nationalist Action Party (MHP) have pushing forward a nationalistic agenda in view of the municipal, national, and presidential elections initially scheduled for 2019 but eventually held in June 2018, and Greece is not willing to back down in the eyes of its public in response to Turkey's mounting escalation.

While both countries are moving on thin ice, it is rather unlikely -but not entirely impossible- that these confrontations will lead to a violent outbreak. This is further evidenced by the lack of

---

<sup>11</sup> M. Kambas, *Standoff in high seas as Cyprus says Turkey blocks gas drill ship*, Reuters, 11 February 2018, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cyprus-natgas-turkey-ship/standoff-in-high-seas-as-cyprus-says-turkey-blocks-gas-drill-ship-idUSKBN1FVOX5>.

<sup>12</sup> Neos Kosmos, *Turkish President's adviser threatens Greece over Imia islets*, 20 February 2018, available at: <http://neoskosmos.com/news/en/Turkish-presidents-adviser-threatens-Greece-over-Imia-islets>.

<sup>13</sup> Keep Talking Greece, *Turkey claims it worries about Greek FM Kotzias' "non peaceful behavior"*, 17 February 2018, available at: <http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2018/02/17/imia-turkey-greece-kotzias/>.

<sup>14</sup> T. Kokkinidis, *Aegean Should be 'Sea of Friendship' Turkey Now Says*, Greek Reporter, 14 February 2018, available at: <http://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/02/14/aegean-should-be-sea-of-friendship-turkey-now-says/>.



significant reactions by important players such as NATO, the United States or even the European Union (EU). While Greek Prime Minister Tsipras tried to involve the latter by stating that ‘challenges and aggressive rhetoric against the sovereign rights of an EU member state are against the EU in its entirety’,<sup>15</sup> the EU has not sided with any of the two parties and merely encouraged a de-escalation.<sup>16</sup> The EU’s aim clearly is to prevent exacerbating relations with an already difficult partner which repeatedly resorts to bold statements and threats including the ‘cancellation of th[e] readmission agreement’.<sup>17</sup> The EU-Turkey refugee deal, which puts Greece more than other EUMS in a dependency position concerning Turkey’s continued control of irregular migration and containment of refugees, has nevertheless appeared to be more resilient than many expected, mostly due to the (economic) gain it presents also to the Turkish party.

### Different Understandings and the Limited Prospects for Convergence

Good news is, in Cyprus and off the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey and Greece managed to scale down the tensions by mutually cancelling the annual Toros and Nikiforos exercises. However, they are still launching large-scale drills in the Aegean. During these activities, both nations accuse each other with conducts of provocations and violations, showing the continuation of the political disputes with changing intensity depending on the political agenda.

In fact, Greece and Turkey have very different understandings of the Aegean situation. This gap between the two countries’ strategic communities brings about further alienation to any feasible and long-term convergence scenario. On the one hand, Ankara’s primary concern emanating from the Greek defense policy is the militarization of the Eastern Aegean islands. Turkish foreign policy makers traditionally put a strong emphasis on the demilitarization issue, referring to the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) and the Treaty of Paris (1947).

Athens, on the other hand, has a different assessment of the situation. Notably, the Greek foreign policy makers insist that since Turkey is not a signatory state to the Treaty of Paris, “res inter alios acta”, namely the international law doctrine explaining that a regulation cannot bring about obligations or rights to the third countries, comes into the picture.

---

<sup>15</sup> R. Maltezou and G. Georgiopoulos, *Greece says won't tolerate border challenges after Turkish collision*, Reuters, 15 February 2018, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-greece-turkey-tsipras/greece-says-wont-tolerate-border-challenges-after-turkish-collision-idUSKCN1FZ18B>.

<sup>16</sup> Although in some cases it has expressed its support for Greece and Turkey (see for example, <https://www.amna.gr/en/article/242805/Juncker-to-Erdogan-after-summit-Turkey-must-release-detained-Greek-servicemen>)

<sup>17</sup> EurActive, *Turkey says may cancel migrant readmission deal after Greece ruling*, 17 January 2017, available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/turkey-says-may-cancel-migrant-readmission-deal-after-greece-ruling/>.



## The Complex Defense Angle

From a purely defense planning standpoint, and of course, firmly hoping for an eternal peace between the two neighbor nations who are also NATO allies, the military balance in the eastern Aegean islands is of utmost importance for certain geostrategic issues. For one, the Thracian land border between Turkey and Greece does not allow for a swift and decisive incursion by any of the parties. For Turkey, Greece's main population centers and the capital Athens would be too far away to sustain the supply lines and lines of communications through the Greek territory. From the Greek military planners' standpoint, although the mega city of Istanbul, Turkey's geo-political core, would not be far away from the Thracian land border, the Turkish 1st Field Army's formidable concentration, as well as the highly urbanized landscape, make any decisive blitz almost impossible. All in all, neither Turkey nor Greece could fight a large-scale battle along their shared land borders.

When it comes to the Aegean, a heavy militarization of the eastern islands could theoretically change important parameters. Making a long story short, the eastern Aegean islands give a very critical edge to Athens for projecting power on the Turkish mainland. A careful review of the Turkish literature on the issue reveals that Turkey's strategic circles have developed their threat perceptions based on two key assumptions: Firstly, international community, especially NATO and the European Union, would not allow the prolongation of any armed conflict between Greece and Turkey. And secondly, Greece's Air Force and Navy could well secure a fait accompli – depending on their geostrategic advantages – that Athens would be able to diplomatically capitalize on. In other words, traditionally, Turkish political-military elite's primary concern is that, in case of a conflict, the Greek forces might swiftly secure key advantages, and translate the initial success on the battleground into a political bargaining margin. Because, as mentioned earlier, Ankara well knows that any direct military confrontation with Athens would be a very brief one as long as both nations keep their NATO identity.

## Chronic Divergences and Miscommunications

Above all, there is a mutual mistrust and chronic divergences of paradigm between the two parties. On the one hand, when defending its stance regarding the Aegean islands, the Greek Foreign Office refers to the Turkish military intervention in Cyprus in 1974, as well as the Turkish military formations in the western part of the country (the Aegean Army). On the other hand, the Turkish Foreign Office states that Athens' considerations and political objectives regarding the territorial waters in the Aegean would cage Turkey to its coastlines. These threat perceptions feed one another.

In this volatile equation, in which both parties perceive direct threats from each other – regardless of how real they are– any improvement in capabilities or a shift in rhetoric could make the situation even more complicated. For example, during the historic visit of President



Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Greece – the first presidential visit after 65 years– the Turkish president hinted at Ankara’s considerations to modernize the Lausanne Treaty to better mark the cultural and economic situation of the ethnic Turk minority in Greece. Having heard these remarks, the Greek President, Prokopis Pavlopoulos, stated that the Treaty of Lausanne defines Greece’s sovereignty and territory, and thereby, remains non–negotiable to Athens. Likewise, when the Turkish Chief of Staff stated that the Turkish Armed Forces were capable of launching a cross–border campaign into Syria (known as Operation Olive Branch) and, at the same time, controlling the Aegean to secure the nation’s rights emanating from international law, the Greek press sources perceived it as a direct threat coming from Ankara.

In practice, EU-Turkey relations indeed carry on in being informed by pragmatism, aiming at favouring mutual interest-based policies and calming the waters by sweeping disagreement under the carpet. A similar approach also applies to the Greek-Turkish bilateral relationship which is therefore most likely to remain as it always has: a show of force based on a mutual blame-game and mounting provocations, but in the end unlikely to tip over to violent conflict. Still, one should remember that brinkmanship is a risky policy where falling off the verge is always a possibility for both sides.

To sum up, Greek-Turkish relations have come under significant strain in the last couple of years and are likely to remain difficult in the long-run. Greece’s refusal to extradite the Turkish soldiers, who fled to Greece after the failed coup attempt against the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in July 2016 and whom Erdoğan accuses of playing a role in orchestrating the coup attempt, has infuriated the Turkish leadership. Also, several “issues of disputed territory” have flared up again and escalated tensions, setting off vitriolic exchanges between the two sides. Yet, this current state of affairs does not set the stage for a violent conflict. First, much of the bold rhetoric is influenced by domestic calculations and does not necessarily refer to a longer-term, more aggressive strategy: Erdoğan was determined to lock down the nationalist vote ahead of the municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections and the Greek leadership cannot afford to remain silent and look “feeble” in the eyes of its electorate, either. Second, prime ministers on both sides have been able to maintain a relatively peaceful line of communication, hinting at a deeper interest in promoting a working relationship. Third, the traditional, “big” players – namely, the EU, the U.S. and NATO – have been absent from the scene, and the EU has even encouraged de-escalation in several instances. Given these three drivers, the Greek-Turkish relationship is most likely to remain as it is – involving occasional shows of force to curry favor with the nationalist voters, but unlikely to tip over into an armed confrontation.



### 6.3 The Cooperation Scenario

Despite the prevalence of indicators laying the scene for a conflictual future, this paper will argue that the imperative of cooperation remains stronger. Firstly, keeping the tensions high is a burden for both sides. The Aegean escalation would be tantamount to additional burdens on Turkey's defence economics which is already overstretched by the problematic situation emanating from the Syrian Civil War. Likewise, keeping the parity with Turkey, who has a bigger economy, means additional burdens to bear for the Greek taxpayers too.

The underlying drivers for the cooperation scenario largely result from the very fact that neither Athens nor Ankara would benefit from a dangerously escalating trajectory that could end up with an all-out-war between the two NATO allies. Firstly, the topography and military geo-strategic characteristics of the Aegean and Thrace make it extremely hard for each side to gain a decisive victory in a prolonged conflict. Especially new trends in defense technologies make military stalemates very costly, and both Greece and Turkey are acquiring such capabilities.

Secondly, since such a conflict would mark a catastrophic split for the NATO Alliance, most probably, the transatlantic community would push very hard to stop any kind of dangerous escalation between the two Aegean neighbors before it gets really serious.

Thirdly, compared to the 1990s, there are many more complicating factors now in the Aegean. The most important of these factors remains the very need for fighting human trafficking and the mounting migrant crisis. Furthermore, the NATO – EU cooperation in this regard brings about more international attention to the region.

### 6.4 The Convergence Scenario

The burden of history and the ghosts of the past are among the causes of the lack of trust between Greece and Turkey. Indeed, historical animosities do play a significant role.<sup>9</sup> Greeks and Turks perceive each other as classic examples of 'rivals'; however, it is important to realize that countries and people should not be prisoners of the past; history should become their guide, not their prison. But there are also more recent reasons for this difficult relationship as geopolitical developments, the pursuit of national interests but also domestic political considerations play a major role in the evolution of Greek-Turkish relations. Over the past six decades there have been three major crises in Cyprus (1963/4, 1967, 1974), another three in the Aegean (1976, 1987, 1996), one 'pogrom' against the Greeks of Istanbul (September 1955) and a number of 'hot' incidents: for example the 1995 *casus belli* over the possibility of the extension of the Greek territorial waters to 12 miles according to the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention, the aborted plan to deploy S-300 surface-to-surface missiles in Cyprus, the arrest of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in the Greek Embassy in Kenya, in addition to a number of smaller scale incidents. Those events have reinforced mutual distrust and suspicion.



The rapprochement process which started in mid-1999 has been a major development. Bilateral trade has increased, and so have tourism and people-to-people contacts. Migration management, as explained in other parts of this study, has been characterised by limited cooperation but has mostly been an issue of concern or even friction, especially after 2015.

Energy issues have also been affecting relations between Greece and Turkey during the past few years. In some cases, energy connections, such as the Turkey-Greece Interconnector (TGI) and the Southern Energy Corridor (Trans Adriatic Pipeline/TAP) and the so-called Greek Stream (if and when constructed) have (directly or indirectly) contributed to greater interdependence and to (almost) normal relations between Greece and Turkey. The potential for hydrocarbon discoveries in the Aegean has been the main cause of the 1987 crisis but as remained in the sidelines in recent times. On the other hand, hydrocarbons exploration and exploitation issues in the Eastern Mediterranean have caused considerable tension over the past few years, especially between Turkey and Cyprus.

Overall, the two countries are better off today in terms of bilateral relations (including trade and people-to-people contacts) than they were before 1999. Having said that, neither country has moved away from their firm positions regarding 'high politics' issues and Greece and Turkey continue to perceive each other through a Hobbesian prism. Despite lingering distrust, relations between Greece and Turkey during the AKP's stay in power in Turkey can be described as 'business as usual'. Erdogan did not try to take advantage of Greece's increased weakness in the early years of the Greek economic crisis and there have been four meetings of the High Level Cooperation Council (May 2010, March 2013, December 2014, March 2016).

Bilateral relations began to deteriorate however, when, following the failed July 2016 coup in Turkey, the Greek Supreme Court rejected the extradition of eight Turkish officers that sought refuge in Greece after the coup, on the basis that a fair trial was not guaranteed if they were returned to Turkey. The court's decision in January 2017 was rather inexplicably interpreted by Turkey as a 'political decision'. The controversial statements about the need to modernize the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 made by President Erdogan during his state visit to Greece in December 2017, and the growing tension in bilateral relations (ramming of Greek Coast Guard vessel by Turkish CG vessel in February 2018, arrest and detention of two Greek soldiers in the Greek-Turkish land border, etc.) constituted causes of concern for all involved sides, including, of course, the EU, where Greece (and Cyprus) are member-states and Turkey is a candidate for accession.

For Greece, relations with Turkey and the perceived threat remain the central issue at the foreign policy agenda. In addition to long-standing disagreements regarding the Aegean continental shelf, territorial waters and the airspace, Turkey presented for the first time in 1996 (73 years after the signing of the Lausanne Treaty) the concept of the so-called 'Grey zones' in order to challenge Greek sovereignty over an unspecified number of small islands and islets in the Aege-



an. This has been perceived in Greece as a major escalation by Turkey. Also, regarding threat perceptions, and reading the cooperation scenario written by EDAM, there seems to be a mirror image situation as Greece is seriously concerned about a *fait accompli* by Turkey as the latter enjoys a geographic advantage due to the large number of Greek islands in the Aegean which would be difficult to protect against a large-scale Turkish military action. Because of those threat perceptions, Greece felt obliged to spend huge amounts of money for its defence for the past 40 years. The prospect of a negative change in the relative balance of military power (as a result of the acquisition by Turkey of advanced weapon systems such as F-35 fighter planes and S-400 air-defence systems, the growth of the Turkish defence industry and constantly bigger defence budgets) is a source of serious concern for Greece, which would like to avoid an arms race at almost all cost.

Despite the significant current difficulties, the full normalization of Greek-Turkish relations is not a completely unrealistic scenario in the medium- to long term. The exploratory talks taking place during the past 15 years at the level of senior diplomats have allegedly made interesting progress in outlining a possible agreement that would open the way for submission of the Continental Shelf dispute to the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

Some of the key drivers involved are the same as in the Cyprus conflict, i.e. the state of EU-Turkey and U.S.-Turkey relations, the existence or absence of a domestic political environment dominated by nationalism, as well as serious domestic problems (such as economic crises or the Kurdish question). Additionally, the existence of stable governments in both countries would be quite helpful. Finally, regional instability might work both ways, as it could convince the leaderships that closing one foreign policy front might be helpful for each country's national security. Alternatively, it could complicate foreign policy calculations and obstruct conflict resolution efforts.

Currently, however, there seems to be little appetite in both sides of the Aegean for a substantive discussion and subsequent negotiation for the full normalization of Greek-Turkish relations as both sides are either faced with pressing domestic priorities or with important external challenges and have no intention of spending precious political and diplomatic capital for the resolution of bilateral problems, at least in the immediate future. Therefore, the most probable scenario is 'business as usual/muddling through' akin to the "conflictual cooperation" scenario identified in other workstreams.



## 6.5 Wildcards and Alternative Drivers

However, just like the scenarios assessing Cyprus, the possible trajectory of the Turkish – Greek relations are prone to potential wildcards too. These wildcard scenarios would bring about related impacts on the EU – Turkey agenda as well.

Of these conflictual drivers, the first one would definitely revolve around the hydrocarbon resources and energy geopolitics competition in the Mediterranean. Notably, the European Council head, Donald Tusk, criticized Turkey's approach in the Mediterranean, and stated that Ankara should avoid any actions or threats against an EU member<sup>18</sup>. The incident came after the Turkish Navy blockaded the Italian energy firm ENI's operations since Turkey sees these drills as being conducted on its continental shelf and bypassing the Turkish Cypriots' interests on the natural resources belonging to the entire island<sup>19</sup>.

Secondly, both in Greece and Turkey, the domestic political landscape strongly favors scoring points at home by promoting a heavy-handed foreign and defense policy abroad. The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Greek Defense Minister Panos Kammenos are not the type of politicians who would back down during an escalatory political–military crisis.

Thirdly and finally, tactical mistakes in a bigger, strategic conundrum might sometimes lead to catastrophic results. In early 2018, a dangerous escalation took place between the Turkish Coast Guard and a Greek warship carrying Defense Minister Panos Kammenos around the Kardak/Imia islets that nearly brought two nations to the very edge of war in 1996. Even the Greek and Turkish sources gave conflicting explanations if the Turkish Navy's vessels were indeed able to stop the Greek Navy frigate carrying the defense minister who was there to throw a commemorating wreath to the place where Greek servicemen lost their lives in a helicopter crash in 1996<sup>20</sup>. Following the incident, the U.S. Ambassador to Athens, Geoffrey Pyatt, warned that Washington is extremely worried about an "accident" in these kinds of encounters, stating that *"as long as you have these lethal complex military systems operating close to each other, there is always a terrible risk of an accident, which of course will cause great complications in your relationship"*<sup>21</sup>.

Notably, the American ambassador's words mark the most serious wildcard in the cooperation scenario.

<sup>18</sup> Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-soros-law/hungary-submits-anti-immigration-stop-soros-bill-to-parliament-idUSKCN1FY1JE>, Accessed on: February 14, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Daily Sabah, <https://www.dailysabah.com/energy/2018/02/14/turkey-exercises-rights-legally-derived-from-intl-marine-law-in-eastern-mediterranean>, Accessed on: February 14, 2018.

<sup>20</sup> The National Herald, <https://www.thenationalherald.com/188946/turkish-warships-try-block-kammenos-imia-wreath-toss/>, Accessed on: February 14, 2018.

<sup>21</sup> Greek Reporter, <http://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/01/30/us-fears-greece-turkey-accident-in-aegean/>, Accessed on: February 14, 2018.



## 7. The Way Forward

There is a general failure of governance as the Eastern Mediterranean and its adjoining regions remain an extremely turbulent and unstable neighborhood and the security environment continues to be 'Hobbesian'. The list of, frequently interacting, problems is very long indeed: civil conflicts; the emergence of fragile, unstable, dysfunctional or even failed states; the possibility of de facto (or even de jure) border change in various parts of the region; sectarian tensions; Jihadist terrorism; extreme inequality in the distribution of income; democratic deficit; population flows; the proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as small arms and light weapons; existing regional conflicts; the ambitious agendas of regional powers (including Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia); competition for energy resources; the lack of a regional security architecture; a relative decline in U.S. interest and presence in the region; and a deep, structural European crisis also affecting the EU's global and regional influence and policies. All the aforementioned factors combined over the past few years to cause an almost perfect storm in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Due to the complexity of these issues and the strong interaction between many of them, there are no easy, quick or one-dimensional solutions to regional problems.

Using the conceptual tool of "regional security complexes", the Eastern Mediterranean can be viewed as a distinct region and as an autonomous geopolitical entity with specific needs, characteristics and interests. In this context, the triangular relationship between Greece, Turkey and Cyprus can be defined as a sub-regional security complex. The implication is that in addition to their bilateral differences, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus have to operate in this difficult regional security environment. The Eastern Mediterranean's geographic proximity and the impact of some of the aforementioned security challenges on European security constitute additional important reasons for the EU to try to facilitate efforts for a better relationship between those three countries, two of which are member-states of the Union.

### 7.1 The Cyprus problem

A Cyprus settlement has been extremely difficult to achieve over the past (almost) half a century and there is rather limited optimism that the situation will change in the near future. As mentioned in the scenarios' analysis, 'the sad truth is that three of the four parties to the conflict are relatively content with the status quo, or at least insufficiently unhappy with it to make the painful and risky compromises an agreement would warrant.' Particularly for a large part of the Greek Cypriot community, the status quo appears to be preferable to a federal peace agreement which is being perceived as problematic, especially regarding security provisions.

Regarding security, Greek-Cypriots feel it would be extremely problematic if a non-EU country will have the right of unilateral military intervention in an EU member-state. Some analysts have been using the analogy of Russia being given a legal justification to intervene in the Baltic states. The right of unilateral intervention by any third country should be replaced by a system of inter-



national guarantees. Foreign troops on the island, with the -temporary? - exception of the British Sovereign Territories, should be completely removed. If this optimal solution is not achievable, two contingents along the lines of the London-Zurich agreements might be acceptable. Ideally, those contingents would be under the command of a NATO-led multinational force (if the EU is not perceived by the Turkish side as an acceptable security provider) that would supervise the implementation of the agreement.

If bi-communal negotiations do not re-start within a reasonably short time (and then successfully concluded), the international community is likely to lose interest in Cyprus, leading to a progressive scaling down of UN peacekeeping forces as a cash-strapped UN would redirect its energies towards far worthier causes. Also, the island may gradually slide towards permanent de facto division, a highly undesirable development, indeed, for both Cypriot communities and the international community. It is indeed possible that the further so-called 'Taiwanization' of the island might not be avoidable anymore (perhaps through a process of "creeping recognition"). The next steps might include either the annexation of Northern Cyprus/occupied territories by Turkey (which would be a highly unwelcome scenario for Turkish Cypriots as well) or a consensual divorce (in a territory for recognition swap) between the two communities.

Regarding the former scenario, Turkey, while having repeatedly hinted at the possibility of annexing Northern Cyprus as the 82<sup>nd</sup> province of the Republic, would likely see little value in formally announcing this move. But it would accelerate the progressive encompassing of the "TRNC" into its territory.

If the Greek Cypriots candidly admitted to themselves and to the international community that circumstances have changed, and they no longer wish to live in political equality with the Turkish Cypriot community in a federal state, new parameters could be sought, featuring for instance the recognition of two states, the re-distribution of territory, and a compromise on property, security and freedoms. The consensual divorce solution might have certain advantages for both sides. Its major disadvantage from a Turkish Cypriots perspective would be the almost certain end of their European dream.

In both the 'business as usual' and 'limited cooperation' scenario, none of the parties in the Cyprus equation –Turkish Cypriots, Greek Cypriots, Greece, Turkey, and the UK – would benefit from further conflict. Thus, in the absence of the necessary sociological and political grounds for convergence, cooperation and convergence remain the only way forward. Notably, Greek and Turkish Cypriots could boost their cooperation with a lower-profile agenda, such as environmental issues or cultural activities, although regional security challenges such as terrorism, organized crime –or even population movements- will require joint management efforts by all sides involved, and especially the two communities in Cyprus.



Under the viable cooperation –yet not convergence– scenario, no radical drifts from the traditional trajectory should be expected. In this framework, EU would not encourage an institutionalized and permanent division in Cyprus. However, it could opt for establishing closer relations with Turkish Cypriots without encouraging further divergence in the island. In return, Ankara would not change its stance regarding the EU – NATO cooperation under the present circumstances.

In the convergence scenario, all parties involved should make a last sincere and serious effort. In this yet another critical point at the history of the Cyprus conflict, what is urgently needed is the full realization that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century new ideas about conflict resolution should be actively sought. All sides involved need to move away from a zero-sum game mentality, --which unfortunately still characterizes decision makers in Turkey, the two communities in Cyprus and to a certain extent Greece as well -- to a “win-win” situation. Some creative diplomacy will be necessary to reach a viable compromise solution, and an active European and U.S. role can be of crucial importance.

Regarding the drivers that might positively affect the Cyprus negotiations and facilitate (or prevent) a successful outcome, EU-Turkey relations are at a very low point. The problem certainly goes beyond Cyprus (and Greece) and involves issues of values and the state of democracy in Turkey, as well as Turkey’s policies in Syria and its relationship with Russia (although the latter affects NATO more than the EU). However, business, trade and geopolitical interests (including the management of refugee flows) require the EU to try to improve its relationship with Turkey. Should the two sides –and especially President Erdogan- avoid any inflammatory statements for a period of time and allow diplomats to start repairing the relationship, it is possible that the EU might regain some of its influence in Ankara and allow the Union to be accepted as a constructive player in the Cyprus negotiations. The same is true for the U.S., a long-standing key player in the Cyprus problem. A substantial improvement in the bilateral U.S.-Turkey relationship may currently appear difficult but it is far from impossible. At the same time, should this relationship be allowed to remain in its current poor shape for a longish period of time, the possibility of strategic re-alignments in the Eastern Mediterranean cannot be excluded.

The state of Greek-Turkish relations always influences the situation in Cyprus. Hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation have so far proved to be factors of divergence rather than convergence between Greek Cypriots and the Turkish side. Additional discoveries may further increase tension or constitute an incentive for all sides involved to seek more cooperation rather than confrontation. Finally, it is a necessary but not sufficient condition that the two leaders in Cyprus manage to rein over their hardliners, adopt a win-win approach and manage to take advantage of the ‘last opportunity’ to reach a historic agreement.

Specific Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) could help in paving the way to a new, successful negotiation, or at least make co-existence and cooperation easier in a divided island. After all,



Cyprus is situated in one of the most unstable regions of the world and a minimum of cooperation between the two communities is necessary to manage external security challenges.

But a significant prerequisite for an agreement on CBMs, and indeed for a Cyprus settlement, is a fast-track informal dialogue (following the logic of ‘Track one and a half’ diplomacy) between Turkey and the Greek Cypriots. The substantial lack of understanding about the other side’s interests and concerns contributes to the preservation of misperceptions and to limited empathy. The problem is even more intense for the weak side, the Greek Cypriots, who have demonized Turkey, for rather understandable reasons. Lack of official recognition on the Turkish side should not be used as an excuse for the absence of such a dialogue, as informal channels of communication could be used. Efforts should also be made to increase contacts between youth in the two communities and education can also be a very important tool for reconciliation and rapprochement.

A final reference should be made to the hydrocarbons’ exploration and exploitation as an issue of rising importance for the sides involved, but also for EU energy security. Gunboat diplomacy and bullying tactics have certainly not helped the building of confidence between parties involved in the Cyprus problem and such practices should be discontinued. At the same time, the Republic of Cyprus could make an important contribution in efforts to defuse tension by making good on the pledges of both former President Christofias and current President Anastasiades that both communities in Cyprus will benefit proportionally from hydrocarbon exploitation. A fund could therefore be created where future profits from hydrocarbon exploitation will be deposited waiting resolution of the Cyprus problem.

However, it is also quite likely that Turkey will continue its current policies on the hydrocarbons issue and may even send its own vessels (Fatih the Conqueror and Deep Metro II) to conduct exploratory drills in the EEZ of Cyprus. As a result, the Republic of Cyprus should not be expected to soften its position vis-à-vis Turkey in the context of the EU and this will complicate even more efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem.

Finally, whether a solution in Cyprus would suffice for opening the road for full EU membership for Turkey is highly uncertain.

## 7.2 Greek-Turkish relations

Despite of both Greece and Turkey being members of the Western, Trans-Atlantic alliance in the post-war period, bilateral relations have been conflict-prone. Overall, the two countries are better off today in terms of bilateral relations (including trade and people-to-people contacts) than they were before 1999. Having said that, neither country has moved away from their firm positions regarding ‘high politics’ issues and Greece and Turkey continue to perceive each other through a Hobbesian prism. Relations have deteriorated during the last few months for reasons explained in previous sections. While both countries are moving on thin ice, it is unrealistic that



these confrontations will lead to a violent outbreak. However, there is concern about an ‘accident’, might lead to uncontrolled escalation.

In fact, Greece and Turkey have very different understandings of the Aegean situation. This gap between the two countries’ strategic communities brings about further alienation to any feasible and long-term convergence scenario. Above all, there are chronic divergences of paradigm and a mutual mistrust between the two parties. On the one hand, when defending its stance regarding the Aegean islands, the Greek Foreign Office refers to the Turkish military intervention in Cyprus in 1974, as well as the Turkish military formations in the western part of the country (the Aegean Army). On the other hand, the Turkish Foreign Office states that Athens’ considerations and political objectives regarding the territorial waters in the Aegean would cage Turkey to its coastlines. These threat perceptions feed one another. In this volatile equation, in which both parties perceive direct threats from each other –regardless of how real they are– any improvement in capabilities or a shift in rhetoric could make the situation even more complicated.

Both NATO and the EU have a role to play in the management of Greek-Turkish relations. The EU’s aim clearly is to prevent exacerbating relations with an already difficult partner which repeatedly resorts to bold statements and threats including the ‘cancellation of th[e] readmission agreement’.<sup>22</sup> The EU-Turkey refugee deal, which puts Greece more than other EU member-states in a dependency position concerning Turkey’s continued control of irregular migration and containment of refugees, has nevertheless appeared to be more resilient than many expected, mostly due to the (economic) gain it presents also to the Turkish party.

Some of the key drivers involved are the same as in the Cyprus conflict, i.e. the state of EU-Turkey and U.S.-Turkey relations, the absence of a domestic political environment dominated by nationalism, as well as serious domestic problems (such as economic crises or the Kurdish question). Additionally, the existence of stable governments in both countries would be quite helpful. Finally, regional instability might work both ways, as it could convince the leaderships that closing one foreign policy front might be helpful for each country’s national security. Alternatively, it could complicate foreign policy calculations and obstruct conflict resolution efforts.

It would also be very difficult to de-couple the Aegean and Cyprus. The situation in the Aegean has a direct impact on the situation in Cyprus, and vice-versa and it is rather unlikely that fundamental progress towards a comprehensive Greek-Turkish settlement (i.e., the establishment of a comprehensive security regime) will be achieved without a mutually acceptable and viable solution of the Cyprus problem.

---

<sup>22</sup> EurActive, *Turkey says may cancel migrant readmission deal after Greece ruling*, 17 January 2017, available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/turkey-says-may-cancel-migrant-readmission-deal-after-greece-ruling/>.



Currently there seems to be little appetite in both sides of the Aegean for a substantive discussion and subsequent negotiation for the full normalization of Greek-Turkish relations as both sides are either faced with pressing domestic priorities or with important external challenges and have no intention to spend precious political and diplomatic capital for the resolution of bilateral problems, at least in the immediate future. Therefore, the most probable scenario is ‘business as usual/muddling through’.

Although it can be argued that the majority of Greek policy-makers have moved away from “zero-sum game” perceptions regarding Greek-Turkish relations, scepticism and distrust continue to linger. Both sides should focus on improving economic relations and managing political relations as best as they can. They could also explore ideas for confidence-building measures regarding overflights, violations and dogfights in the Aegean. Such agreements would greatly help in keeping tensions low, thus preparing the ground for an eventual full normalization of bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey.

In practice, EU-Turkey relations indeed carry on in being informed by pragmatism, aiming at favouring mutual interest-based policies and calming the waters by sweeping disagreement under the carpet. A similar approach also applies to the Greek-Turkish bilateral relationship which is therefore most likely to remain as it always has: a show of force based on a mutual blame-game and mounting provocations, but in the end unlikely to tip over to violent conflict. Still, one should remember that brinkmanship is a risky policy where falling off the verge is always a possibility for both sides.

Indeed, there is also concern in Athens and other capitals about an incident also because of the purges in the Turkish Armed Forces after the failed July 2016 coup, which led to the forced retirement of a substantial number of experienced Air Force pilots and staff officers. In conjunction with the limited influence of the usual ‘firefighters/mediators’ (U.S., NATO, European institutions, major European countries) in Ankara, and the increasingly nationalistic rhetoric in the Turkish domestic political scene, the concern is growing about an accident which existing crisis management mechanisms may not be able to cope with. The creation of new and the strengthening of existing bilateral channels of communication should be a priority for both sides and the dialogue at various levels needs to intensify.

Finally, the prospect of ‘losing Turkey’ is causing concern in various Western capitals, including Athens, which would not welcome the further drifting away of Turkey from Euro-Atlantic institutions as this would make Turkey a more difficult neighbour. Turkey is an important security partner for the EU and every reasonable effort should be made to maintain the best possible institutional and working relationship with Ankara. However, as always, it ‘takes two to tango’, and the EU needs to safeguard its values as well as the security interests of its member states.



### 7.3 Recommendations

As it can be concluded from the three scenarios discussed, there is low probability of substantial deterioration in Cyprus, but unfortunately there is also rather low probability of a solution for several reasons connected with some of the drivers. More specifically:

(a) The role of third parties: the difficult relations between the EU and Turkey, which limit the EU's influence and remove any 'carrots' from the negotiating table; the limited U.S. influence over Turkey and involvement of the Trump Administration in efforts to solve the Cyprus problem; Turkey's rather strained relationship with NATO; and the current bad shape of transatlantic relations diminishes the role and influence of the U.S. and the EU in a broad range of issues, including Cyprus;

(b) The relatively high tension in Greek-Turkish relations, in combination with Turkey's preoccupation with domestic and external challenges (including the shape of the Turkish economy and the conflict in Syria); Neither Turkey appears in the mood for compromise in the Cyprus negotiations, nor do the current Greek and Greek-Cypriot governments appear particularly willing to move away from their insistence on zero troops and the complete abolition of guarantees;

(c) Relations between the two communities remain good at the level of general publics, but there has been a hardening or lack of visible commitment at the level of leaderships. Akinci's position has been relatively weakened and there have been no clear signals so far from Anastasiades (although this is his second and last term and, being a believer in a solution, he should start thinking soon about his place in history books), Greek-Cypriot public opinion has not been very supportive of a compromise in the security aspects of the negotiations and generational change in the Greek-Cypriot community has a negative impact on the prospects for a solution;

(d) Hydrocarbons exploration has been a factor for conflict rather than cooperation/convergence. The tension is expected to rise as companies continue with their exploration activities and Turkey is considering its next moves.

Looking at the broader picture of EU-Turkey relations, one can assume that EU-Turkey cooperation on the management of refugee/migration flows will probably continue with additional funding for Turkey but no visa waiver or progress in the accession negotiations. Erdogan's statements and actions, as well as increasing authoritarianism inside Turkey and the rapprochement with Russia are not earning him much sympathy and support in EU capitals. Therefore, the best one can hope for in the immediate future is to keep the accession talks open, without any realistic expectation of progress. Regarding Cyprus, the minimum objective should be the resumption of the bi-communal dialogue to at least keep the process alive. Furthermore, an effort should be undertaken to positively affect some of the key drivers influencing developments in the Cyprus problem.



To achieve the former, the EU, in cooperation with the U.S. and the UN Secretary-General would need to apply coordinated pressure on both communities, as well as Turkey and Greece, to preserve whatever progress had been achieved in Crans Montana to prepare the ground for eventual resumption of multiparty negotiations. To achieve the latter and increase the chances of a successive outcome, there are two specific policy recommendations for the active players in the Cyprus problem, but also for the EU (whose important facilitating role is unfortunately being negatively affected by the Union's limited acceptance by Turkey as a constructive player):

- (a) Launch an urgent and intensive confidence-building measures (CBMs) project between Greek-Cypriots, Turkish-Cypriots, Turks and Greeks. The special focus, however, should be on contacts between Turkey and Greek-Cypriots (see reference on CBMs in the previous section);
- (b) On the hydrocarbons front, Greek-Cypriots should establish a hydrocarbon fund (for the sharing of future revenues) as soon as possible and Turkey should refrain from gunboat diplomacy tactics (including drilling in the EEZ of Cyprus).

Given that the current state of transatlantic alliance [but also U.S.-Turkey relations] and various other pressing priorities complicate effective cooperation between the EU and the U.S. on issues like the Cyprus problem and Greek-Turkish relations, the EU should consider working with the UN Secretary-General to keep the process alive.

Finally, in the broader context of EU-Turkey relations, the question should also be asked on whether Greek-Turkish tensions and, especially, the Cyprus problem are among the key causes for the troubled relationship between the EU and Turkey, and, therefore, whether the resolution of those problems would open the door for full Turkish membership to the EU. There is little doubt that it would remove a painful thorn, but would it be enough for major progress to be achieved in the accession talks? In mathematical parlance, therefore, it can be defined as a necessary but not sufficient condition.



## References

Athinaiko – Makedoniko Praktoreio Eidiseon (Athens – Macedonian News Agency) (2018) ‘Juncker to Erdogan after Varna summit: Turkey must release detained Greek servicemen’ *Athinaiko – Makedoniko Praktoreio Eidiseon*, 26 March 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://www.amna.gr/en/article/242805/Juncker-to-Erdogan-after-summit-Turkey-must-release-detained-Greek-servicemen> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Cyprus Mail (2017) ‘Erdogan adviser wants to annex the north (Update 2)’ *Cyprus Mail Online*, 26 April 2017, p.1. Available at: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/04/26/erdogan-adviser-wants-annex-north-cyprus/> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Daily Sabah (2018) ‘Turkey exercises rights legally derived from int'l marine law in Eastern Mediterranean’ *Daily Sabah*, 13 February 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://www.dailysabah.com/energy/2018/02/14/turkey-exercises-rights-legally-derived-from-intl-marine-law-in-eastern-mediterranean> (Accessed 14 February 2018).

Dimitris Keridis, *Political Culture and Foreign Policy: Greek-Turkish Relations in the Era of European Integration and Globalization*, A NATO Fellowship Final Report, Brussels, 1999 (<http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/97-99/keridis.pdf>).

Euractiv (2017) ‘Turkey says may cancel migrant readmission deal after Greece ruling’ *Euractiv*, 27 January 2017, p.1. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/turkey-says-may-cancel-migrant-readmission-deal-after-greece-ruling/> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Euractiv (2017) ‘Turkey says may cancel migrant readmission deal after Greece ruling’ *Euractiv*, 27 January 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/turkey-says-may-cancel-migrant-readmission-deal-after-greece-ruling/> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Evie Andreou (2016) ‘Polls highlight extent of opposite views on guarantees, settlers and troops’ *Cyprus Mail Online*, 28 December 2016, p.1. Available at: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2016/12/28/polls-highlight-extent-opposite-views-guarantees-settlers-troops/> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

George Georgiopoulos and Renee Maltezou (2018) ‘Greece says won't tolerate border challenges after Turkish collision’ *Reuters*, 15 February 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-greece-turkey-tsipras/greece-says-wont-tolerate-border-challenges-after-turkish-collision-idUSKCN1FZ18B> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Irene Karanasopoulou (2014) ‘Life expectancy in Cyprus amongst the highest in the EU’ *CNA*, 03 December 2014, p.1. Available at: <http://www.cna.org.cy/webnews-en.aspx?a=8b697a8bddd4c5d840683f51c1e62ea> (Accessed 22 January 2018).



Jean Christou (2017) 'Akinci: I wish the next generation good luck on this' *Cyprus Mail Online*, 7 July 2017, p.1. Available at: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/07/07/akinci-i-wish-next-generation-good-luck/> (Accessed 22 January 2018).

Keep Talking Greece (2018) 'Turkey claims it worries about FM Kotzias' "Non peaceful Behavior"' *Keep Talking Greece*, 17 February 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2018/02/17/imia-turkey-greece-kotzias/> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Krisztina Than (2018) 'Hungary submits anti-immigration 'Stop Soros' bill to parliament' *Reuters*, 14 February 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-soros-law/hungary-submits-anti-immigration-stop-soros-bill-to-parliament-idUSKCN1FY1JE> (Accessed 14 February 2018).

Michele Kambas (2018) 'Standoff in high seas as Cyprus says Turkey blocks gas drill ship' *Reuters*, 11 February 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cyprus-natgas-turkey-ship/standoff-in-high-seas-as-cyprus-says-turkey-blocks-gas-drill-ship-idUSKBN1FV0X5> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Mynet (2017) 'Çavuşoğlu'ndan kritik Kıbrıs açıklaması' *mynet*, 04 November 2017, p.1. Available at: <https://www.mynet.com/cavusoglundan-kritik-kibris-aciklamasi-110103127144> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Natalya Ketenci (2017) "The role of Greece and Turkey as energy hubs in the region", in G. Bayındır Goularas and H.S. Erkan (Eds.), London: Lexington Books, pp. 81-92. *Rethinking Greek-Turkish Relations Since 1999*. [Online]. Available at: <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/83862/> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Neos Kosmos (2018) 'Turkish President's adviser threatens Greece over Imia islets' *Neos Kosmos*, 20 February 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://neoskosmos.com/en/111576/turkish-presidents-adviser-threatens-greece-over-imia-islets/> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Panagiotis Tsakonas, *The Incomplete Breakthrough in Greek-Turkish Relations. Grasping Greece's Socialization Strategy* (Palgrave-Macmillan, Basingstoke and New York, 2010).

Permanent Mission of Cyprus to the UN (2017) *Statement by President Anastasiades – 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly*. New York: Permanent Mission of Cyprus to the UN. Available at: [www.cyprusun.org/?p=7960](http://www.cyprusun.org/?p=7960) (Accessed 05 December 2018).



---

Philip Chrysopoulos (2018) 'US Fears Greece, Turkey 'Accident' in Aegean' *Greek Reporter Greece*, 30 January 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/01/30/us-fears-greece-turkey-accident-in-aegean/> (Accessed 14 February 2018).

Tasos Kokkinidis (2017) 'Mustafa Akinci: Being a Province of Turkey is not an Option for Turkish Cypriots' *Greek Reporter Greece*, 15 September 2017, p.1. Available at: <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2017/09/15/mustafa-akinci-being-a-province-of-turkey-is-not-an-option-for-turkish-cypriots/> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Tasos Kokkinidis (2018) 'Aegean Should be 'Sea of Friendship' Turkey Now Says' *Greek Reporter Greece*, 14 February 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/02/14/aegean-should-be-sea-of-friendship-turkey-now-says/> (Accessed 05 December 2018).

Thanos Dokos & Panagiotis Tsakonas, Promoting Collective Security Schemes in the Eastern Mediterranean, in *"The Eastern Mediterranean: New Dynamics And Potential For Cooperation"* in EU-ROMESCO Joint Policy Study, March 2018.

The National Herald (2018) 'Turkish Warships Try to Block Kammenos from Imia Wreath Toss (Video)' *The National Herald*, 29 January 2018, p.1. Available at: <https://www.thenationalherald.com/188946/turkish-warships-try-block-kammenos-imia-wreath-toss/> (Accessed 14 February 2018).



## About the Authors



**Thanos Dakos**

*Director- General, ELIAMEP*

Thanos Dakos has been working on issues of European and regional security in the Mediterranean/Middle East, as well as parts of the former Soviet space, for more than 20 years. His current work focuses on global and regional trends and the policy challenges for international organizations and regional stakeholders in the Mediterranean.



**Nathalie Tocci**

*Director, IAI*

Nathalie Tocci is Director of the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), Honorary Professor at the University of Tübingen, and Special Adviser to EU HRVP Federica Mogherini. In FEUTURE, she is Scientific Coordinator and work package leader of WP 1 and 8.



**Anja Palm**

*Junior Researcher, IAI*

Anja Palm is Junior Researcher at the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI).



**Can Kasapoğlu**

*Defense Analyst, EDAM*

Can Kasapoglu is a defense analyst at the Center for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM). Kasapoglu specializes in War Studies, defense modernization trends and military strategy/operations & concepts. In FEUTURE, his work mainly focused on contemporary security trends revolving around Greek - Turkish relations and Cyprus.



*Disclaimer: This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*



# 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 underlying historical narratives and thematic key drivers.
2. Testing and substantiating the most likely scenario(s) for the future and assessing 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 relations.

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

The FEUTURE consortium consists of 15 renowned universities and think tanks from the EU, Turkey and the neighbourhood.

*Coordination Office at University of Cologne:*

Project Director: Dr. Funda Tekin  
Project and Financial Manager: Hanna-Lisa Hauge  
Email: wessels@uni-koeln.de

Website: [www.feuture.eu](http://www.feuture.eu)

 [facebook.com/feuture.eu](https://facebook.com/feuture.eu)

 [@FEUTURE\\_EU](https://twitter.com/FEUTURE_EU)

