

Emil Engen Granås

## **The European Union's power to Influence and Integrate:**

A qualitative analysis of EU external policies and the  
pending accession of Turkey

Bachelor's project in European Studies

Supervisor: Jan-Henrik Meyer

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## List of Abbreviations

AKP	Justice and Development Party
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistant
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NPE	Normative Power Europe
SEA	Single European Act
US	United States of America
UfM	Union of the Mediterranean

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## Abstract

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The topic of European integration and state sovereignty has been an ever-occurring debate of controversy. In addition, Turkey's accession process to the European Union have shown to be one of the most controversial cases to ever be a part of the EU enlargement policy. The developments that have taken place during the last decade has created new questions regarding the likelihood of Turkish membership to the EU and the limits of the EU's institutional capacity. This paper will attempt to contribute to answering those questions. To do so, it assesses the EU as an international actor and measures its abilities to influence the international environment through the variables of Bretherton and Vogler and the theoretical framework of *Normative Power Europe*. The paper evaluates these variables in relation to Turkey in an analysis which attempts to explain why the option of Turkish membership to the EU is obsolete. A central theme of this paper is the concept of EU enlargement.

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## 1.0 Introduction

The history of the EU has shown qualities that are ambitious and jet ambiguous. The modern-day EU is built on catastrophic crises' and a history of war and conflict. Through a turbulent century, the nationalist ethos that once ruled the principles of European political development has been replaced by a limitation of state sovereignty. A political principal which introduced the modern nation-state and prioritized economic integration, supranational governance and peace. This text aims at explaining the ever-constant EU goal of European integration in relations to the issue of the Turkish accession and the prospects of such an enlargement.

In the early stages of European Integration, peace and prosperity became well embedded with the phenomenon. National leaders and European politicians, many of them sceptical to the concept of transferring sovereignty, did share their sovereignty with supranational associations because it was perceived as favourable to their interests. Turkey has, for many years and as foundational principles to the establishment of the Republic in 1923, been continually moving towards these western values. However, their relations towards the European Union has become the most controversial enlargement case off all. Establishing a close tie as an associated member under the Ankara agreement in 1963, becoming an accepted candidate for membership in 1999 and the construction of negotiation frameworks in 2005, which made Turkey an official acceding state might at first glance, reflect prosperous conditions. However, the pace of the negotiations has been exceptionally slow and over the last decade Turkey has drifted further away from the EU. The troubling accession has illuminated the EU's limitations regarding international influential capabilities. It has particularly defined more clearly questions regarding the geographical and cultural borders of Europe. From 2005 and during the continuing assessment of Turkey's progress in aligning to the accession criteria and the EU *acquis*<sup>1</sup>, there existed firm opposition towards the possible membership of Turkey from political figures within the EU. The debate has been concerned with finding the best approach on the issue of Turkish

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<sup>1</sup> The *acquis communautaire* of the EU is the embodiment of EU law. It must be incorporated into the national legal order by any applicant by the tie of their accession and practiced from then on.

membership. Specifically, it has been divided to questions regarding the cost of Turkey's membership in comparison to the gains of a differentiated form of integration.

However, since 2013 and especially 2016, the dialogue has drastically changed and alternative solutions to membership has never been more realistic than they are now. The European Commission's reports and the European Parliaments reports have been strict in addressing Turkey's political backsliding. They have also been of great value as they functionally describe, directly, the current Turkish situation. The reports also give a greater understanding to the criteria, standards and fundamental values of the EU. This study takes the position of regarding former successful enlargements project, in correlation with the ideological ideals of the EU, as an unprecedented way of changing governments for the better. Taking that into account, Turkey being accused by the EU for backsliding on several issues of governance, in addition to the still existing notion that full Turkish membership is the ultimate goal and eventual outcome, introduces the basis theme for this paper.

## 2.0 Method

The research conducted examines European values and the concept of EU enlargement in relations to the pending accession of Turkey inside the theoretical frameworks and approaches of Normative Power Europe and Bretherton and Vogler's conceptualising of the EU.

The thesis is influenced by Desmond Dinan's '*Europe Recast*'. A book on the history of the European Union, which analyses the phenomenon of European Integration. The use of the book gives an exceptionally well account for historical events that contributes to understanding the conception of European Integration. The analysis of this paper wanted to expand on the topic of Turkey's accession process and analyse it through looking at EU as an International actor. Especially, the external politics of the Union, which this paper assesses to be best perceived whenever enlargement is on the EU's agenda. Thereof, previous enlargements such as the Central and Eastern enlargement process of the 1990's – early 2000's, shall be addressed based on Dinan's narration in order to compare the issue of Turkey and to give an account for the potential international influential power of European integration. In addition, the study wanted to be rooted in theoretical and conceptual accounts of European Integration, which Dinan's book does not fully contribute to. Sabine Saurugger's book '*Theoretical approaches to European Integration*' is chosen for those purposes. Part three, chapter 10 of Sabine's book '*The European Union and the World: International Relations and European Integration*' is about the EU as an international actor and introduces Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler's conceptualization of the EU's actorness. Bretherton and Vogler's perception are highly analytical and based on the three separate variables *Opportunity*, *Presence* and *Capability*. These variables will be used in this analysis, assessing the probability of a Turkey membership deal. Furthermore, this study will argue why the temporary conditions of the Turkish state has made it evident that full membership is an obsolete idea.

As the three variables of Bretherton and Vogler are very analytical in nature, the thesis will also use the more prescriptive approach of *Normative Power Europe* (NPE). The European Commissions 2018 and 2019 report and the European Parliament 2018 report on the progress of the Turkish accession emphatically expresses concerns regarding the governing rule that has begun to establish firm roots under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Justice and Development Party (AKP). While the EU – Turkey relations have been a subject of great controversy and slow-paced accession process, their relations are tied through cooperation within several programs, cooperating agreements, and economic cooperation.

The NPE approach is useful because of the explanatory perspective it gives when assessing EU enlargement policy and the EU's justifications for setting criteria and demands to third party states. NPE is in other words practical, because this paper wanted to dig deeper into the fundamental values which are embedded in the policies of the EU and that has shaped its power and goals in influencing the international environment. In this context, Turkey.

## 3.0 Normative Power Europe and Ideological Integration

### 3.1 Normative Power Europe

The NPE approach is linked with the concept of constructivist approaches. Specifically, research on social representation at the international level which focuses on the cognitive frameworks and action repertoires that actors use when justifying their actions (Saurugger: 219). The concept introduces an opportunity to understand the normative aspects of European integration. Particularly relevant to this thesis, it also attempts to explain the effect of European norms on EU partners and which tools that are used to induce European norms. The approach is based on formulated forms of power other than those of economic or military, such as civilian power, soft power and a power concept which concerns the ideational.

In *Normative Power Europe*, the 'power' is a concept measured in viewing the effects of European norms through the external ability of the EU. In other words, it tries to examine the effects of European norms on member states and associated partners of the EU. The power lies in the normative justification capabilities in contrast to any physical or material means of inducement. Thus, it derives from the ideational.

However, the approach is also based on the concepts of civilian power and soft power. Joseph Nye, Jr.'s defined the concept of soft power as "the ability of a country to persuade others to do what it wants without force or coercion" (2004: 192). The concept of civilian power concerns qualities much like those of soft power. It is the strengthening of cooperation between actors that has the objective to civilize the international environment (Saurugger: 222). Both concepts can be applied when assessing the EU's push for closer integration. However, civilian power is arguably a better fit when it comes to enlargement. Because, the EU is not recorded in pressuring third-party states into applying for membership. It is rather the applicant states that have, historically, put pressure on the EU (Dinan: 253). The concept of soft power is more applicable when assessing the EU's capabilities in keeping already member states in line with the EU *acquis*.

To better understand the NPE approach it is important to go back to the 1970's as this was when research on the influence of integration outside the borders of the European Community emerged (Saurugger: 220).

François Duchêne contributed to this research by introducing the mentioned concept of Civilian Power. He meant that European integration was unique as it was means of an unprecedented level of international influence where military capabilities was absent. The concept of integration was defined as a level of political cooperation created by the European Community which in turn influenced other regions by safely guarding the rule of law. Thus, he emphasized that this level of influence should be understood as a civilian form of power (Saurugger: 220).

Similarly, Ian Manners deepened the assessment of the EU as a normative power by drawing on the principles of democratic and human right norms. According to Manners, the



EU became a normative power whose influence was fundamentally of a high moral and positive value. Therein, EU policy and ideologies was permitted to be promoted and spread through the European continent. Because they were legitimized by their values. In comparison to other organizations, Manners emphasised that the EU was more coherent and that it was this quality that enabled the Union to promote universal norms and principles in its relations with non-members in a more effective way (Saurugger: 220). Furthermore, the nature of the EU is conditioned by its commitment to a consistent set of values and norms, which can be identified by its treaties and declarations. This is a central point in Manners's depiction of the EU through NPE.

These set of values and norms will be identified throughout this thesis by examining the conception of the EU's social policy, past enlargements and how they come into effect in relations to the accession of Turkey. They are key attributes to the conclusion of this thesis in answering why Turkey's separation from the EU these recent years have contributed to making the possibilities for full membership obsolete. The approach of a normative power Europe tries to illuminate the establishment of, and the effects of European norms on members as well as on associated partners. Thereof, an analysis on the Turkish accession progress through looking at events from 2013 – 2020 and reports published by the institutions of the EU in accordance with the NPE approach gives an optional explanation to the relationship.

### 3.2 More than economic prospects: Ideological integration

To further be able to understand the ideological ideals of the EU and how these play a major role in the policies of enlargement it is important to examine the conception the EU's social dimension.

Desmond Dinan argues that it was during the 1980's and through the introduction of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986. The act revitalized the European Community by introducing cohesion and social policy to the community (Dinan: 363). A vital part of SEA was the implementation of qualified majority voting (QMV) for the "health and safety of workers" (Dinan: 215). This became the most major expression of social policy legislation and has been referred to as the high point of social policy in European Union history (Ibid: 215). In 1988 the European Council commented on the legislation and stated that it was crucial to how the internal market was to be perceived. It was furthermore stated that it should indeed be perceived in such a manner as "to benefit all our people" (Ibid: 216), and to do so it was important to view the implementation of social policy as a crucial necessity to enable the improvement of working conditions; living standards; protection of health and safety; access to vocational training and dialogue between the two sides of industry (Ibid: 216).

In addition, the commission developed a social dimension to go along with the single market. The EC Bulletin no.2 1985, a bulletin of the European Communities emphasised the importance of introducing social policy. The SEA, in short, set the date of the finalisation of the single market to be by 1992; it introduced a stronger cohesion policy as it created a more legit cooperation on foreign policy through the European Political Cooperation; it also paved the way towards the Maastricht treaty and the final form of a closer European Union. The Maastricht treaty and the finalised European Union further developed and advanced the policy of cohesion so that it clearly resembled the EU's ideological ideals. These ratifications are identified by the establishment of Common foreign and security policies, formerly known as the European Political Cooperation and the implementation of

the Justice and Home Affairs Council (JHA), which develops cooperation and common policies on various cross-border issues (European Council 2020).

These policies have undergone reforms and been further developed since, but the last major treaty change important to mention in relations to the EU's consistent set of values and norms, ideological ideals and EU cohesion is the treaty of Amsterdam, 1997. Apart from introducing reforms to the already implemented policies, the treaty of Amsterdam proclaimed the EU's commitment to the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (Dinan: 364). Qualities which are essential when defining European values.

## 4.0 Norm Providing Actor Through Enlargement

### 4.1 Enlargement Criteria

Despite that the introduction and implementations of these set of values set a normative and modern standard throughout the Community within the EU, or previously EC. The power to influence internationally as a powerful international actor is most apparent when the concept of enlargement is introduced. Thus, enlargement is the EU's most effective instrument to vector change and evolve integration. This will be further discussed in this section of the paper. Previous enlargement projects will be explained to fully exemplify why enlargement is a powerful concept. It may be helpful to keep the issue of Turkey in mind as to understand what an enlargement would mean.

Enlargement is a way for the EU to influence and introduce its evolved values, such as democracy, fundamental rights and human rights, through a reformation of third-party sovereign states. Important to make this possible is of course the willingness of states to join the Union. However, enlargement has proven to be a unique way of spreading principals of government and ideological beliefs. What better way to spread such principals than by expanding the borders where said principals and values are statutory? By practising the concepts of civil power and (sometimes) soft power through a legitimized normative power, in addition to prioritizing trade and economic prosperity, the EU has been successful in creating high enticements for membership. These enticements have created a precedent for sovereign states to transfer part of their sovereignty and reform, peacefully and willingly, many of their traditional policies in order to be welcomed as a member of the community.

The enlargement policy of the EU was transformed because of the Cold War ending. This was because the prospects of EU enlargement had escalated to an unprecedented level (Dinan: 253). Either countries were no longer constrained by the war effort<sup>2</sup>, or it resulted in the creation of newly independent countries of Central and Eastern Europe<sup>3</sup>. Additionally, the end of the Cold war caused alteration in the international circumstances which altered the outlook of many states<sup>4</sup>.

Most of the applications that resulted from these events were deferred at first. Especially put on hold was the application of Turkey, which first applied in 1987. Not to be an accepted candidate until over a decade later, 1999. The European Community prioritized other issues at the time. They were occupied by the reunification of Germany, the process of completing

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<sup>2</sup> E.g., Finland, Austria and Sweden

<sup>3</sup> Czechoslovakia (the Czech Republic and Slovakia), Poland, Hungary, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia and Bulgaria

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Turkey, Cyprus and Norway

the economic and monetary union as well as the single market (Dinan: 253). An additional variable was the evidential fact that each applicant was afflicted by a different set of circumstances. For instance, Turkey's application was highly controversial already considering that they had occupied the northern part of Cyprus. An issue which became emphatically more complicated with the accession of Cyprus in 2004.

Furthermore, after the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, the EU turned its attention towards prioritizing and overcoming the challenges of Central and Eastern enlargement. Thus, the intense pressure of enlargement that now faced the European Community meant that its enlargement policy needed reform. It was in June 1993, in Copenhagen that the European Council officially declared that "the associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe that so desire shall become members of the European Union." (European Council 1993: 13). In addition, the document declared, in the subject of enlargement, its support for the initiated reform process of the associated countries and stated that the "peace and security in Europe depended on the success of those efforts" (Ibid 1993: 12). The same document further stated that the treaty of Maastricht was to represent a turning point that would end the long-lasting period of uncertainty regarding the direction of the Community.

These declarations reflect the former central qualities highlighted by Ian Manners in the NPE approach. To recap, they strengthen the NPE approach by directly reflecting the EU's commitment to a consistent set of values and norms as they have now been identified by treaties and declarations.

## 4.2 The power of Enlargement

The power of enlargement and the power of the EU as a normative provider is intrinsically drawn on the conditions of the European Commission for the accession of new member states. The 1993 meeting in Copenhagen established the Copenhagen criteria. These criteria alongside the process of enlargement, represents the high point of EU influence:

- Stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities.
- The necessity for an existing and functional market economy, which in turn is able to manage the competitive pressure and market forces of the EU.
- The ability to take on the obligations of membership and the implementation of the EU *acquis* and the adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

(European Council, 1993: 13)

The concept of enlargement through these set of criteria becomes especially significant when they are in the process of being implemented by applicant states which' starting point is further away from the EU *acquis* than of those who already fulfil most of the requirements beforehand. For instance, the Scandinavian countries and Austria, which were/are politically stable, had strong and an advanced economies and already practising the fundamental political principals of the EU would not be cases where the EU changed the governing of states in a major way. However, considering Turkey, which are culturally, religiously and fundamentally separated from the norms of Western-Europe would entail a much more major change.

However, Dinan points out that Eastern Europe might also have been on another planet during most of the history of the European Community (: 257). Thus, enlargement could and did, during the central and eastern enlargement include major international social

welfare reforms, environmental improvements, modernization of industry and agriculture, revolutionary changes to public administration and a renewal of the educational system (Dinan: 259). In other words, the prospect of EU membership, particularly the economic benefits that came with it, transformed the communist states into capitalistic and dictatorships into democracies (Ibid: 259).

The EU stepped up its endeavour in influencing the European continent in 1994. A structural dialogue was launched, and the process of economical integration was started to prepare the acceding states for membership. The commission has the role of conducting analysis and presenting reports on the candidates' progress in fulfilling the criteria, as it also does with Turkey, and the conclusion in 1997 read:

- Democratic rule of law: All had adequate constitutional and institutional arrangements and practices, except Slovakia, which seemed to be sliding back toward authoritarian rule.
- Functioning market economy: All had made good progress, but structural reforms were still necessary, especially in the financial sector and in social security.
- EU rules and regulations: All were in the process of absorbing EU rules and regulations, but all had a long way yet to go.

(European Commission, 1997)

These progress reports, which is the basis for the assessment which will be made on Turkey, are valuable in perceiving an understanding of what the EU hopes to achieve through integration. But something that differentiates this enlargement with the issue of Turkey is the willingness of states.

The willingness to join was highly influential in the motivation states had to reform their governments. During these enlargements none of the candidates<sup>5</sup> wanted to perform poorly. Doing so could mean that they were relegated of the process and then becoming part of a second division which was planned to become full members at a later stage (Dinan: 261). Each candidate had a different pace of development, as mentioned previously, conditioned by each state's individual starting point.

The EU has also been consistent in holding back on announcing any official date of enlargement, which for some, would result in frustration of the EU. Turkey has several times criticized the EU for falling short in its commitment regarding their pending membership. However, the Central and Eastern enlargements did become a success in that Austria, Finland and Sweden became members in 1995, but most significantly the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Estonia, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Cyprus and Malta marked an expansion of ten new members of the EU in 2004. Almost doubling the number of member states. These enlargements represent a major success in European integration as it transformed the whole eastern and central region of Europe in implementing much needed economic and political reforms. Therein, the EU's potential reflects an awesome power in strengthening democracy and fundamental rights.

As for the issue of Turkey, the 2004 enlargement proved that the EU had the ability to reach not only the regions of Western Europe but beyond. For this thesis ability to be specific the debate concerning whether the EU is in fact capable of obtaining some form of authority within these regions are left out. The focal point of this text is regarding the

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<sup>5</sup> 5th Enlargement 2004: Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Estonia, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Cyprus and Malta.

influential powers of the EU in relations to enlargement projects. A condition in which sovereign states, by applying for membership, already has agreed to give up parts of their sovereignty and align their policies with the EU's criteria. Thereof, the nature of this condition should include the same form of agreement from Turkey, especially since neither the EU nor Turkey has officially announced that the option of membership is no longer to be pursued. That begs the question as to how motivated the EU is towards further enlargement.

### 4.3 EU Enlargement Scepticism and Alternative Routes

From the origins of European cooperation through an established cooperation there has been political figures who have been sceptical to the idea of enlargement. The political aspects of the criteria's help prevent enlargement weakening the cohesiveness of the evolving European identity and the European values. However, there is an important aspect which includes the EU's capability (which will be further analysed through Bretherton and Vogler). In this context, it is the capability to absorb new members. The 5<sup>th</sup> enlargement in 2004 exhausted the concept to some extent and has been defined as introducing a notion of enlargement fatigue. This is applicable to the new approaches suggested considering Turkey's pending accession.

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is, to some extent, an initiated program which reflects this fatigue. The policy was launched in 2004 and functions as a framework for close political association and economic integration with other countries without seeking the outcome of membership (EU External Action, 2016). It could be argued that, even though the ENP and the policy of enlargement are two distinct and separate policies, they have become more overlapping as bilateral cooperation might be more attractive to accession. For instance, the Union of the Mediterranean (UfM) can be assessed as an example where the EU furthers integration through the Neighbourhood policies without resolving to enlargement. UfM is a multilateral partnership aimed at increasing the potential regional integration and the cohesion among Euro-Mediterranean countries (Union of the Mediterranean n.d.). Putting together the notion of enlargement fatigue and considering enlargements, such as the Turkish one, which would include an expansion of borders to stretch beyond the European continent gives us an idea of why the direction towards differentiated ways on integration has become more favourable. It is interesting considering the issue of Turkey, where there have been several suggestions for an alternative solution to full membership. From the start of the negotiations in 2005, privileged partnership was a term frequently used as it was argued over that such an option would leave the EU better off (Türkeş-Kılıç 2019). The concept concerned the gains of a privileged partnership versus the costs of full Turkish membership.

While accession and the responsibility to perform and to comprehend the adoption of the EU *acquis* depends on candidate countries, it does indeed concern the capabilities and willingness of the EU. For instance, the EU had had a series of programmes that has provided financial aid to candidate countries. Phare was such a program. It came during the end of the Cold War as the Commission took initiative in assisting the Central and Eastern regions of Europe. The program was capable in humanitarian aid but also developed social-market economies and democratic institutions in the region. Which in turn effectively accelerated the process of states advancing in the political, social and economic standards of the European Community (Dinan: 257). Since 2007, the Phare program and others like it were replaced by the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). Turkey is an example where the EU has denied such assistance. In October 2018, €70 million in pre-

accession funds that were earmarked for Turkey was cancelled by the European Parliament based on Turkey not meeting its requirements in improving the rule of law (Perchoc 2018).

Previous cases of Enlargements have shown us how they can be effective and to some extent what makes them successful. By analysing them there has also been clarified what consequences such enlargements have had on the EU. One of them being enlargement fatigue. The issue of Turkey in comparison grants an understanding of some of the complications. However, to be specific and to explain the thesis underlying question of why the option of Turkish membership is now only an illusion, we have to specifically examine the recent years developments of EU – Turkey relations. By adopting the principles of NPE and the historical studies on enlargement as a concept, this next part of the paper will conduct an analysis using Bretherton and Vogler’s approach.

First their variables will be introduced and explained and then EU – Turkey relations shall be analysed according to the framework of those variables.

## 5.0 Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler’s Conceptualization of the EU

The three variables of Bretherton and Vogler offer a conceptualization of the EU’s role as an international actor. As an approach, it concerns the international actorness of the EU and the variables; *opportunity*; *presence*; *capability*, reflect necessary variables for the EU to be successful in integrating a community with their values and norms. Thus, while NPE offer a prescriptive stance, Bretherton and Vogler offer an analytic one. It is important to consider NPE in correlation with the analysis because, as mentioned, it is related to the justification and legitimization of the EU’s influence. The three variables are more concerned with the conditions necessary for the EU’s ability to influence. They also become useful tools when they are applied to the assessment of current case studies and affairs which occupies political figures and institutions within the EU.

### 5.1 Opportunity

The first variable of *opportunity* is related to the external environment of the EU. It concerns itself with elements that either constraints or enables the actorness of the Union. It has, as exemplified by the Central and Eastern enlargement process, the potential to intervene or direct the international debate and environment. Bretherton and Vogler highlights that an important part of this aspect is that there has to exist underlying expectations from associated members or candidates in order for the EU to fully act. In other words, the EU’s activity needs to be perceived by third-party states as necessary and relevant (Saurugger: 218).

During the previous chapters in relation to sovereign states applying for membership, concepts of enticements and inducement where mentioned. Those concepts are similar to Bretherton and Vogler’s introduction of ‘expectations. Thereof, the expectations existed during the Central and Eastern enlargement procedures. The applying countries, including Turkey, expected prosperity in relations to a possible membership. In addition, they also expected that the EU would be open for expansion to applicants. These ‘expectations’ creates the *opportunity* as it they lay the foundations for the establishment of an international dialogue that enabled the enlargements of the early 2000’s.

To expand on this principle, it is useful to include some of the most important principles of Hans Morgenthau. He firmly critiqued the idea that cooperation, order and peace would follow if legal norms were to be imposed on societies. He furthermore stated that any

proper analysis of international politics could not begin with norms and bright wishes, it had to begin by assessing the interests and the capabilities of states (Knutson: 303). By adopting Morgenthau's perspective, we can assess those interests and capabilities to Bretherton and Vogler's expectations of applicant states, and the capabilities to represent the member states ability to agree on – and to aid in accomplishing projects of enlargement.

This contributes to the interpretation of the opportunities which needs to be present for the EU to fully utilise its potential in influencing international relations.

Other than expectations, structural context is also a central part to the opportunity variable. As we have seen during this paper, the EU was resourceful enough and had the necessary will to absorb new members. Sabine Saurugger contributes to this debate. She introduces a counterfactual reasoning in form of a thought experiment. She poses the question of whether it would be possible to succeed in an enlargement towards the East if the structural context were different. For instance, if the EU were already burdened by major financial or economic turmoil. Saurugger's makes an interesting point when she comments on the structural context as it is indeed relevant in the issue of Turkey.

## 5.2 Presence

Presence is the second variable and it refers to the ability to exert external influence. The ability is based on the temporary characterization and the identity of the EU and the external consequences of its internal policies (Saurugger: 218). In other words, the *presence* variable is related to the external public policies of the Union. The Eurozone is a perfect example of EU external presence as the Euro is the second largest currency, second to the US Dollar. Events that has considerable impacts on the Eurozone also has substantial impacts on the global stock exchange. Thereof, it forcefully influences the macroeconomic conditions of the world economy (Saurugger: 218). There are other examples that shares these qualities such as the Common Security and Defence Policy, the Single Market, EMU or CAP.

But, since this thesis depend the perspective of Normative Power Europe, the variable of presence is best analysed through the field of the EU's JHA policies. JHA is a special case where the EU's external public policy is present. That is because, even though JHA represents internal policies there are external characteristics tied to it (Saurugger: 218). It can be linked with the external affairs of the EU, such as the fight against corruption, human rights or the already mentioned Mediterranean Union. This is particular to the variable. When regarding the JHA in correlation with external affairs it becomes an issue where the EU is a coherent external actor with presence (Ibid: 218).

There are, as mentioned, several fields where the EU is externally present, but the last we shall consider is a subfield of JHA. Namely asylum policy. It is important in context with Turkey as the migration crisis of 2015 created new challenges and new areas of cooperation between Turkey and the EU. In this field, the EU is also a highly influential actor with presence. There are several complications to the asylum policy, particularly since it has traditionally been left as an aspect of state sovereignty (Saurugger: 219). Nevertheless, it has gradually become an integrated part EU policy. It is also particular to the EU – Turkey relations considering the EU – Turkey statement of 2016.

## 5.3 Capability

The final variable probably the more self-explanatory variable is *capability*. Bretherton and Vogler describes this variable as specifically concerned with the context found internally in

the EU, as it could explain its actions or inaction (Saurugger: 219). In other words, it is based on the assessment of the financial and/or the legal ability to act and the willingness of European actors to politically engage in an activity, e.g., enlargement. The perspective demands a certain level of cohesion from the EU because it requires a possibility to be consistent in its priorities and to be consistent in the identification of those priorities. Additionally, it also demands the ability to formulate policies that are coherent.

These characteristics can be recognized in Ian Manners, previously mentioned, emphasis on the influential power of the EU's normative ideals. As the previous chapters of this thesis has explained, Manners highlighted that it is the coherent quality of the EU which enables it to promote universal norms and principles.

## 6.0 Analysis: Turkey and EU enlargement

### 6.1 The *Opportunity* to Influence Turkey

There have indeed existed expectations from Turkey when it comes to the European Union. By granting Turkey with the status of candidacy in 1999, the European Council acknowledged Turkey as a European state and by starting negotiations for accession there already had been envisioned and accepted an idea of expanding the EU borders to Syria, Iran, Iraq etc. Evidentially true is that the establishment of an international dialogue had been completed and thus: the opportunity to make Turkey fully anchored to the EU as a member state existed completely.

Since the accession process of Turkey has been of a slow pace and surrounded by controversy, the history of the Turkish state is an important aspect which contributes to understanding how the opportunity of membership ever arose.

Modern Turkey started off as a dictatorship under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk<sup>6</sup>. Atatürk was the first president of the first Turkish republic. He conceded dictatorial powers similar to those now possessed by Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Atatürk utilized his position in order to modernise and create a secular Turkey in which liberal foreign policies were adopted. These policies established strong relations with the West. An example of such relations being formed is the Turkish NATO membership in 1952. Atatürk might have been a dictator, but he was a benevolent dictator that, in contrast to Erdogan, formed Turkey through a liberal turn. While not dictator, President Erdogan has reversed this was of structuring Turkey's politics. Thus, the *opportunity* and external environment has gradually changed, and not for the better. The controversial illiberal turn of Turkey is perceived to have occurred during this last decade. To be sufficiently able to expand on why, and how much the opportunity have been eroded into non existent this next paragraph is dedicated to explaining the events which have made Turkish accession an impossible option.

The evolving illiberal turn is perceivable in different areas but especially noticeable are the adopted changes to the government of Turkey made since 2013 in relations to the Gezi Park protest<sup>7</sup>. In an article published in the Guardian in 2013, Richard Seymour described the event as a possible basis for a Turkish spring. While the demonstration was peaceful at first, it drastically escalated when protesters were met by a violent police intervention. The demonstrations spread across the Turkish nation and became the biggest and longest protest in the history of the modern Turkish republic (Eralp, Göksel and Lindgaard: 9).

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<sup>6</sup> Atatürk is Mustafa Kemal's given name and means "the father of all Turks".

<sup>7</sup> The Gezi Park protest was originally environmentalist occupying the park in protest of Erdogan's plans to replace it with a shopping centre (Bellaigue, 2013).



Seymour further defined it as becoming a “lightning conductor for all the grievances accumulated against the government”. The extent of the measures taken to shut down the protests and the political changes made in the aftermath shows that the Turkish government have become consequently more authoritarian. This is where Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the AKP party become core actors. As previously mentioned, Erdogan has conducted an illiberal turn to Turkish policies. An example of such changes are the measures taken by the AKP to tighten the control over the state apparatus. The AKP party and Erdogan moved further towards a hard Islamist nationalist stance in order to unify their voter base and used that base in order to implement fundamental changes to the political system such as transferring power at an unchecked and unbalanced lever to the presidency (Özbudun: 157 – 160). Thereof, the events of 2013 started a trajectory that shows the variable of *opportunity* to gradually fade.

However, the variable is now completely gone and the EU – Turkey relationship has indeed reached a new low. The EU has instructed Turkey to readdress its illiberal turn since 2013. To compare we shall repeat the previous cases of enlargements highlighted previously in this study. Remember, the Commission reported in 1997 on the conclusion of Slovakia, that it had failed in establishing an adequate democratic rule of law and were falling back to authoritarian rule. However, unlike Turkey, Slovakia were able, because of an enabling presence of *opportunity* and an adequate structural context, to reform and did so with great success seen through its membership in 2004. The issue of Turkey on the other hand, is not falling into that pattern. The Turkish government has reiterated its commitment to EU accession on several occasions. However, the European Commission has stated that due to the evident fact that Turkey has been moving away from the EU, such statements have not reflected, nor have they been matched by corresponding measures and reforms (European Commission 2018).

The attempted coup in 2016 and the events that followed has shown that Turkey is not interested in fulfilling the criteria of accession and further built on the trajectory from 2013. President Erdogan implications of returning the death penalty, as a response to the coup, are further examples of Turkey's lacking interest in implementing the EU *acquis* and conforming to the Copenhagen Criteria.

The attempted coup marks a major turning point. Although the EU repeatedly condemned the coup attempt and expressed support of Turkey's immediate right to act, it has strongly opposed and criticised the extent of the action taken under the implemented state of emergency, especially the widespread dismissals, arrests and detentions. The European Commission and the European Parliament has been firm and consistent in their reports ever since 2016, stating that the state of emergency should be lifted without delay (European Commission, 2018).

Without going to deep into the issue of the coup attempt it is important to mention why it is so important and why it has led to the possibility of Turkish membership becoming essentially non-existent. The failure of the coup created favourable political and social conditions for Erdogan and the AKP to fully obtain total control over the state power. The immediate implementation of the state of emergency granted the government a legal right to rule the country with the decrees having force of law (Eralp, Göksel and Lindgaard: 16). It further enabled the already started quest of the AKP to monopolise power by side-lining political forces who could restrict them as the state of emergency made it even easier for them to circumvent legal and institutional obstacles (Ibid: 16). The state of emergency eventually ended when its last extension expired on 18 July 2018 and its end was welcomed

by the EU. However, the expiration was immediately followed up by the Turkish parliament's adoption of a law that keeps many of the elements of the governing rule under the state of emergency still functioning. The Commission addressed concerns regarding the adoption because it has created a new presidential system that diminishes principles of democracy. The new presidential system of Turkey has removed several checks and balances that previously existed, and it has weakened the Turkish parliament. In addition, it has led to further politicisations of the public administration and the judiciary, giving Erdogan the power to nominate heads of the public regulatory authorities (European Commission 2019: 3 – 10). These reforms are the opposite of those necessary to move closer towards accession and they are the reasons for Erdogan being referred to as more of a dictator than a president. Even though the official reasons for the state of emergency being introduced claim to be to guard the established government and to fight terrorism it is hard to contest the fact that Erdogan has utilised the failed coup attempt to centralise the power towards the presidency and the AKP. He has even uttered that the coup was a "gift from god" because it would allow him to reconstruct the nation (Gotev 2016).

Thus, the existence of expectations and structural context in the opportunity of the EU to influence Turkey and integrate them with the policies and the fundamental values which define the Union is, at this temporary time in history, non-existent. The important principles of former established dialogue between the two do not speak favourably towards a new enlargement and elements of their relationship are defined as constrains, not enablers for Turkish membership.

## 6.2 The *Presence* of EU policy in Turkey

The EU and Turkey has been cooperating on several issues for a long time. The Ankara Agreement in 1963 established Turkey as an associated member, the Customs Union agreement which came into force in 1995, Turkey's application in 1987 and the candidacy in 1999 have set the stage for the EU to create external consequences of its internal policies.

Turkey is the EU's fifth largest trading partner and the EU is by far Turkey's largest. Two out of every five goods traded by Turkey go to or comes from the EU (Commission 2018). In addition, 70% of foreign direct investment in Turkey stem from the EU (Ibid 2018). The external public policies of the EU are being actively pressed to be more present through Turkey's continuing participation in multilateral economic dialogue with both the Commission and the Member States (Ibid 2018). Regarding the Customs Union, it has been adopted recommendations for it to be modernised which probably would advance Turkey's integrational prospects. The Commission reported in 2018 that Turkey has maintained a good level of preparation in the area of the Customs Union. Despite this, there has also been, as exemplified when we addressed the variable of *opportunity*, reported that several areas are still not in line with the EU *acquis*.

Asylum policy also reflects a degree of EU presence in influencing Turkey. The implementation of the EU -Turkey statement in March 2016 is evidence for that influence. The has repeatedly expressed that Turkey's effort in providing massive and extraordinary humanitarian aid to several million refugees has been noting but outstanding. The external influence of the EU is thus present in Turkey and has shaped the European response to the refugee crisis.

However, the migration crisis has also led to a populist movement in Europe. The large number of refugees entering Europe has become a top billing for nationalism. The politics of EU member states have become fuelled by anti-immigration political mobilization based

on the assumed projection that migrants have a negative or damaging effect of any native culture (Swain 2019). This affects the EU's *presence* when we regard the emphasized importance of the EU being a coherent external actor. Erdogan has taken advantage of the division that has arisen and functionally damaged the coherence of the EU. In 2019 he threatened to open Turkey's borders for any refugee seeking sanctuary in Europe if the EU and the US did not help create a safe zone in the northeast of Syria (Deutsche Welle 2019):

*"This either happens or otherwise we will have to open the gates [...], either you will provide support, or excuse us, but we are not going to carry this weight alone. We have not been able to get help from the international community, namely the European Union"*

(Deutsche Welle 2019).

By using the migration crisis as leverage in addition to the great divide between normative values, it is obvious that the power the EU have in influencing Turkey is limited. It also shows that Turkey and Erdogan have leverage to influence third party-states policies. The presence of the EU's abilities to influence Turkey on the main concerns of JHA policies also proves to be limited at best. Both the Commission's reports from 2018 and 2019, and the Parliament's 2019 resolution highly stress the lack of Turkish standards in terms of human rights, fundamental freedoms, functioning democracy, and a satisfactory rule of law. These issues concern themselves into a vast amount of political issues which includes judiciary rights, justice, freedom and security etc. Among other things, the 2019 Commission report addresses the fact that many human rights defenders, civil society activists, media, academics, politicians, doctors, lawyers, judges and lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender and intersex people are still being detained, many of whom without indictment, and are victims of smear campaigns by both senior politicians and the media (European Commission 2019: 21 - 40). It also included the 2018 findings of the European Court of Human Rights, which included violations in 142 cases out of 146: 41 cases relating to right to fair trial; 40 to freedom of expression; 29 to the right to liberty and security; 11 to freedom of assembly and association; 11 to inhumane or degrading treatment; 10 to the prohibition of torture (European Commission 2019: 28).

The EU is still putting pressure on Turkey in addressing these issues which will require serious reforms and a substantial legal rearrangement. However, Turkey seems indifferent and the trajectory still shows the state moving further and further away from the principles of the EU. This shows that, while there is external action from the EU as an actor present in Turkey, it is not sufficient nor effective enough in drawing Turkey towards the ideological ideals and political principals which are required for a membership to be possible.

### 6.3 EU Capabilities in Turkey

The inaction or action of the EU when it comes to Turkey is a twofold analysis. On the one hand, there are financial and legal capabilities. On the other there is the question regarding the willingness of the European actors to politically engage in pushing for Turkish membership.

The results of the state of emergency have created – or forced through – a more or less coherent willingness with the heads of states of the EU. A shared will to not engage in the enlargement but to seek other options to keep Turkey tied to Europe. Therefore, the question of financial or legal capabilities are not that relevant. Because Turkey has been backsliding on EU requirements and to the substantial degree of how much they have done so, the Turkish pre-accession funding has been cancelled. The events that have occurred

during the last 4 – 5 years have brought EU – Turkey relations towards a breaking point and suggestions to continue accession negotiations on the hopes of actually making Turkey a member seems only like an illusion at this point. Several political figures of the Union have addressed their opinions regarding membership of Turkey and put forward optional solutions. Thus, it is possible to analyse these opinions to project a form of willingness and to define optional solutions to further assess the variable of *capability*.

In March 2019, the EP called on the Council and the Commission to suspend EU accession talks with Turkey. Following the lifted state of emergency, the concerns pointed towards the continuation of the state of emergency's governing form. Rapporteur Kati PIRI of the S&D, NL<sup>8</sup> was quoted saying:

*"If the EU takes its own values seriously, no other conclusion is possible than to formally suspend the talks on EU integration. Our repeated calls to respect fundamental rights have fallen on deaf ears in Ankara [...], the fact that Turkey holds the world record for the number of journalists in jail, the recently amended constitution consolidates Erdogan's authoritarianism".* (European Parliament Press Release, Plenary Session 2019).

The statement continues. But this first part of it is important to mention because it criticises Turkey on political values. There have been several arguments previously concerning geographical or cultural differences. For instance, former MEP Andrea Mölzer, stated in a Debate on the Presentation of the programme of the Spanish Presidency in 2010, saying:

*"Turkey is not part of Europe, either geographically or from a spiritual point or cultural point of view."* (Türkeş-Kılıç 2019).

Similarly, former MEP Frank Vanhecke stated during the debate on the European Neighbourhood policy in 2006 the following:

*"Turkey is not a European country, not in a geographical, historical, religious or in any other way"* (Ibid 2019).

These arguments are separate from PIRI's as they are indifferent to any progress made by Turkey because they are made on the basic principles of topics that Turkey cannot change. Therefore, they are also still relevant even though Turkey has fundamentally changed since they were made. They are also contradicting as the EU already has acknowledged Turkey as a European state when they were accepted as a candidate. Kati PIRI on the other hand, continued further after she stated why the talks of Turkish accession should be suspended. In the second part of her statement the influential power of the EU, in both capabilities and especially willingness is better represented.

*"Stopping accession talks is not a step which will help Turkey's democrats. [...] the EU leaders must use all possible tools to exert more pressure on the Turkish government. The parliament, therefore, calls for dedicated funds to be made available to support civil society, journalists, and human rights defenders in Turkey [...]"*.

(European Parliament Press Release, Plenary Session 2019).

This is a call to act and it also, indirectly, represents a way of viewing the situation in Turkey as impermanent. The capabilities of the EU to pressure the Turkish government towards reform is yet to be seen. Nevertheless, they seem limited, or at least ineffective

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<sup>8</sup> Progressive Alliance of Socialist and Democrats in the European Parliament, Vice-Chair (European Parliament n.d.,)

so far. The willingness and financial and legal ability of the EU to influence Turkey as a coherent actor will most likely, due to the trajectory of the Turkish government, be seen through already established bilateral agreements, trade agreements and other forms of influential partnerships, not full membership.

This is by no means a new way of addressing the Turkish accession. The negotiation frameworks established in 2005 specifically defines the negotiations as an open-ended process where there is no guarantee of full Turkish membership (EU 2005).

Optional approaches to membership have in the early stages been referred to as privileged partnership, differentiated integration or, in context with Brexit, Turkey and the United Kingdom have been referred to as a possible 'new orbit' by former Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker (Pop 2016). The negotiation frameworks laid the premise for such alternatives as it states that if Turkey is not able to obtain all the obligations of membership it must be ensured that Turkey is anchored in European Structures through the "strongest possible bond" (EU 2005). Such alternatives could possibly be used by the EU to advance common goals and secure close cooperation targeted at third party states. Privileged partnership was rejected by the Turkish government and fell into disuse in the EP discussion in 2012 (Türkeş-Kılıç 2019). The phenomenon of a new orbit is difficult to address as the future relationship between the UK and the EU is still rather uncertain (Perchoc: 7). Differentiated integration on the other hand, as a concept refers to a different approach to integration rather than full membership. A likely route it seems, for the future of the EU – Turkey relationship. Thus, the capability of the EU in relations to influencing Turkey is also rather uncertain, or not yet fully developed. It has proven to be a difficult process in aligning Turkey with the EU *acquis*.

## 7.0 Conclusion

This paper has attempted to give an optional view towards the likelihood of Turkish accession and attempted to explain why the nature of EU – Turkey relations are so complex and controversial.

By adopting the concept of *normative power Europe*, we have seen the justifications to why the policies of the EU are inherently perceived as values of positive and good. Therefore, they have also been put in context to enlargement to best exemplify cases where these values best can influence other regions and nation states for the better. The tool assessed to be most effective in such influence has been argued to be the concept of EU enlargement. A concept of limitations that depend on several variables in order to produce successful result. This analysis has shown and argued for the variables that enabled the most controversial enlargement in EU history, the Central and Eastern enlargement. In comparison it has argued why the issue of Turkey is inherently different to other projects of enlargement. By analysing the issue of the likelihood of Turkish accession through the framework of Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, the paper has been able to identify what variables were present in enabling former enlargements and how these are insufficiently present in relation to Turkey.

The illiberal turn the Turkish government has undergone through the AKP and Recep Tayyip Erdogan has exhausted the *opportunity* of enlargement which was more present during the former government's that were more similar to the fundamental principles established by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Despite the existing *presence* of EU policies in Turkey, established through several cooperation programs such their cooperation on asylum policies and the fact that Turkey has been an acceding state the last 15 years, this thesis

has argued that the presence of EU external policies has been limited and insufficient in adequately influencing Turkey. The Turkish government and Erdogan seem indifferent to EU's repeated calls for reform and still drifts further away from the EU. The EU's capabilities are rather difficult to assess. The enlargement fatigue that occurred after the 2004 – 2007 enlargements contribute to the assessment of the EU's willingness to act. Additionally, new concepts of differentiated ways of integration has become more frequent during the last decades which especially is relatable to Turkey. Other than means of the willingness to act are seen through EU conditional Pre-Accession Assistant program, which have now been denied to Turkey. The fact that there is so much uncertainty regarding what should be done with Turkey and how it should be done goes to prove that their *capabilities* remain limited at best.

To conclude, the actorness of the EU, in relations to promoting fundamental values and norms, is dependent on its ability to provide sufficient incentives for third-party actors so that there exists a willingness to give up state sovereignty in order to access the prospects of membership. It is important to state that this analysis has not regarded the ability of the EU to sustain fundamental values with already member states. That would be another topic of debate. As for the issue of Turkey, this paper functions as an optional view on EU – Turkey relations and as a guiding argument for there not being any likelihood to the theory of Turkey becoming a member anytime soon.

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