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**TURKEY AND SLOVAKIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EU
ACCESSION PROCESS**

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ABSTRACT

Master's Thesis

Turkey and Slovakia: A Comparative Study of EU Accession Process

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Slovakia, a former communist country, became a member of the European Union in May 2004. This process is characterized by the change of political regime, more particularly, replacement of an 'authoritarian' regime ruled by the Prime Minister Mečiar with a pro-EU regime ruled by his successor Mikuláš Dzurinda as a result of the 1998 parliamentary elections. Turkey, half European, half Asian, Muslim but secular, democratically ruled overpopulated country applied for an associate membership to the European Economic Community in 1959, which is perceived to be Turkey's first official contact with the Club. However, now, in year 2013, Turkey seems to be in 'stalemate' in its accession process.

The aim of this thesis is to compare the two countries' EU accession processes, more accurately, their economic and political environments during the processes. The author of this thesis presupposes certain similarities concerning their progresses during their accession paths. The comparison in this thesis is done on a ground of EU conditionality, as well, more particularly, on its affectivity on Turkey and Slovakia. As a result, the author is willing to understand why Turkey still has not been able to enter the EU, in spite of certain similarities with Slovakia's political and economic environment during the accession process. It is proposed that the EU's approach to Turkey and its potential membership has been different than that of the EU's approach to Slovakia's or any other Central and Eastern European countries' membership.

Keywords: EU, Slovakia - EU relations, Turkey – EU relations, Comparative research on accession process of EU enlargement, EU candidate countries, EU conditionality.

ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Türkiye ve Slovakya: AB Katılım Sürecinin Karşılaştırılması

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Daha önce komünist bir ülke olan Slovakya, 2004 yılının Mayıs ayı itibariyle Avrupa Birliği'nin bir üyesi olmuştur. Bu süreci şekillendirense, genel anlamda siyasal rejimin değişmesi olarak adlandırabileceğimiz bir gelişme olan, 1998 seçimleri sonucunda Başbakan Meciar'in 'otoriter' yönetiminin yerini Avrupa Birliği yanlısı Mikulas Dzurinda yönetiminin alması olmuştur. Her ne kadar, yarı Avrupalı yarı Asyalı, aynı zamanda Müslüman ve seküler olan ve demokrasiyle yönetilen kalabalık ülke Türkiye için bu 'Klüple' ilk resmi temas 1959 yılında Avrupa Ekonomik Topluluğu'na üyelik başvurusunda bulunmasıyla gerçekleşmiş olsa da 2013 yılı itibariyle Türkiye için üyelik süreci bir çıkmaza girmiş gibi görünmektedir.

Bu yüksek lisans tezinin amacı, bu iki ülkenin Avrupa Birliği'ne giriş süreçlerini, daha doğrusu bu iki ülkenin üyelik süreçleri boyunca içinde buldukları ekonomik ve siyasi ortamları karşılaştırmaktır. Bu tezin yazarı, bu iki ülkenin üyelik süreçleriyle ilgili belli başlı benzerlikleri olduğu savını ileri sürmektedir. Bu karşılaştırma AB koşulluluk ve onun Türkiye ve Slovakya üzerindeki etkileri temel alınarak yapılmıştır. Sonuç olarak yazar, üyelik sürecinde sahip oldukları benzer siyasal ve ekonomik özelliklere rağmen Slovakya Birlik üyesi olmayı başarmışken Türkiye'nin hala üye olamamasının nedenlerini anlamaya çalışmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, Avrupa Birliği'nin Türkiye ve onun gelecekteki olası üyeliğine yaklaşımının Slovakya ya da diğer Orta ve Doğu Avrupa ülkelerinin üyeliğine olan yaklaşımından farklı olduğu ileri sürülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: AB, Slovakya - AB ilişkileri, Türkiye – AB ilişkileri, AB genişlemede üyelik süreçlerinin karşılaştırmalı olarak araştırılması, AB aday ülkeleri, AB koşulluluk.

**TURKEY AND SLOVAKIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EU
ACCESSION PROCESS**

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Avrupa Birliđi (European Union)
AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
CEE	Central and Eastern European
CEECs	Central and Eastern European countries
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
CIP	Corruption Perception Index
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
FDI	Federal Direct Investments
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HZDS	Hnutie za Demokratické Slovensko (Movement for a Democratic Slovakia)
JPC	Joint Parliamentary Committee
KDH	Kresťanské Demokratické Hnutie (Christian Democratic Movement)
MEPs	Members of European Parliament
MPs	Members of Parliament
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPAA	National Program for Adoption of Acquis
OECD	Organization for Economic Development and Co-operation
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers Party)
PPS	Purchasing Power Standards
R&D	Research and Development
REER	Real Effective Exchange Rate
SDK	Slovenská Demokratická Koalícia (Slovak Democratic Coalition)
SDL	Strana Demokratickej Ľavice (Party of the Democratic Left)
SMK	Slovenská Maďarská Koalícia (Party of the Hungary Coalition)
SNS	Slovenská Národná Strana (Slovak National Party)
SPP	Slovenský Plynárenský Priemysel (Slovak Gas Company)

SR	Slovak Republic
UN	United Nations
USA	United States Of America
ZRS	Združenie Robotníkov Slovenska (The Association of Slovak Workers)

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INTRODUCTION

Turkey; huge, overpopulated Muslim country set at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Slovakia; post-communist country with less than 6 million citizens situated at the heart of Europe. These are two at the first sight totally different countries. Can they have something in common? Or are they really different in all ways? Why both of them were called as 'awkward' with regard to their EU accession processes? Is there something that makes them similar when considering their difficult paths to the European Union (EU)?

Aim and Importance of the Thesis

The goal of this thesis is to compare the EU accession processes of Slovakia and Turkey. The author of this thesis has decided to choose this topic because she has noticed that despite of obvious differences between the two countries, there are particular similarities, as well. Moreover, the similarities noticed have been observed in the political and economical spheres. The questions here are posed; what is the reason of the fact that Slovakia was able to get into the Club within 11 years, whereas Turkey still has not despite they have been in contact with the EU since the 1959? What are the main features of these countries' domestic politics that made, or are still making the accession process so 'special'? What distinguishes the Turkey's case from the Eastern European countries in the process of accession negotiations? If there are similarities in countries' political and economical indexes, what is the 'real reason' of Turkey's current backlash?

The research project, therefore, was designed to provide a clue on Turkey's and Slovakia's political and economical environment during their EU accession processes. Moreover, these particular environments will be subjects of more detailed comparison which will be instrumental to find out the reason why Turkey still has not entered the European Union.

Methodology

The author of this thesis was not able to find any academic paper or comparative study, written exclusively on these two countries and their EU accession paths. However, there have been studies that are comparing particular CEECs with Turkey, mostly their problems with the consolidation of democracy.

The study is based on comparative approach. The steps in this research include a literature review on comparative studies, than on EU conditionality and its affectivity on the countries, and a brief overview of Slovakia's and Turkey's accession paths from secondary sources. Afterwards a comparative study is made on Turkey and Slovakia from primary sources, based on their political and economic realities. Regarding the primary sources, the author used official EU documents issued in order to evaluate the countries' progress and statistical data from the countries' official statistical websites. Regarding the secondary resources, the author drew from the already written comparative articles that dwell on issues such as EU conditionality, Turkey's accession process or CEECs' accession processes.

In the first part of this thesis, the author is focusing on the studies that have been concerned with comparisons similar to the author's one. Harun Arikan called Turkey in his paper written in 2003 as an 'awkward' candidate.¹ The reason was simple; Turkey is different, difficult and problematic when comparing it to already EU members. It has failed to proceed with necessary reforms and ignore any kind of EU warnings. Arikan is positive that the EU has its own strategy for Turkey, so-called 'strategy of containment', according to which the EU keeps Turkey's policies in compliance with theirs, but the prospect of actual membership is indefinitely delayed. Moreover, Arikan proposes, just like most of the academicians occupied with this topic, that the EU during the accession processes of some Central and Eastern European countries(CEECs), for instance Slovakia, had had overlooked the inadequacies that Commission pointed out during the negotiation talks and the official assessments. Instead, he has proposed that particularly Slovakia was destined from the beginning for the EU membership, in spite of the unsolved problems.

¹ Harun Arikan, **Turkey and the EU: An Awkward candidate for EU Membership?**, Second Edition, Ashgate Publishing Limited, Hampshire, 2006 .

Slovakia was also named as 'awkward'. Is this coincidence? Not really. The 'awkward' states, as Heather Field proposed in her paper, are being called so, because of their similar 'awkward' features when evaluating their domestic political situation. More particularly; their accession process is slower than that of other potential candidates, they often have been criticized for repression of the media, and the most important one; there is need of a 'political change' in order to change this 'awkwardness' into the EU enthusiasm and willingness to fully cooperate.²

Frank Schimmelfennig et al. wrote a comparative study, where he compared the impact of the EU democratic conditionality on countries Turkey, Slovakia and Latvia.³ This study helps to better understand the EU conditionality and its mechanisms, due to which all three countries changed their political environment in certain extent. And according to the author, is it the political environment that is the main index when considering the effectiveness of the EU democratic conditionality. These and other already written articles on the problematic of Turkey's and Slovakia's accession process are discussed in the first part of the thesis to justify that to compare Slovakia and Turkey is not like comparing 'apples and oranges', but that there really is 'something' at the ground of what they are worth of being studied deeper.

The second part of this thesis is devoted to the EU conditionality, moreover, the author explains how and under what particular conditions Slovakia and Turkey was or was not able to reply on the conditionality's mechanisms. The second chapter gives the readers hint that conditionality, whichever mechanism it uses; the domestic political environment is its main variable. Slovakia, with Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar on its head, was hardly able to reply on this EU mechanism. Why? He would have paid high political cost, even loose his dominant, often called authoritarian power over the country's governance, if he agreed upon the reforms EU demanded. However, the results of the 1998 parliamentary elections showed that Slovak citizens

² Heather Field, **Awkward States: EU enlargement and Slovakia, Croatia and Serbia, Perspectives on European Politics and Society, EU Enlargement**, Routledge, Vol.1, No.1, pp.123-147.

³ Frank Schimmelfennig et. al, "Cost, Commitment and Compliance: The Impact of EU Democratic Conditionality on Latvia, Slovakia and Turkey", **Journalism and Media Studies Center**, Vol.41., No.3, 2003.

were influenced by the mechanism of conditionality and were aware of the consequences in a case they would choose Mečiar for Prime Minister again.

In Turkish case, when considering that the only sufficient reward for full compliance with the EU norms is the actual membership, it is obvious why Turkey still has not fulfilled all the requirements they have been supposed to. More particularly, as proposed in most of the academic studies, there are two periods studied when considering the efficiency of the EU conditionality on Turkish political environment; first one is during 1999-2005 and the second one is the period after 2005. The first period, is being evaluated more positively in regard with this issue, considering the positive kick-off in 1999 when Turkey gained the status of the EU candidate country. However, after year 2005, it has been observed that the Turkish membership is being questioned, even 'blurred' and called to be in a stalemate. The main political actors in EU, France and Germany, openly expressed their unwillingness of potential Turkish membership and instead of that, they propose to Turkey 'only' the concept of privileged partnership. The 'membership carrot', therefore, became more and more unreachable, what may be considered as the main reason of Turkish contumacy and the decrease of the reforms enforced. Even though Turkey was considered to fulfil Copenhagen political criteria and the accession negotiations were set up in 2005, the EU seems to always find a reason, either political or technical, why not to proceed further. After all, on the one side, the conditionality that Turkey is subject of is considered not to be as strong and supportive for the reforms needed, and on the other side, even if it was, Turkey after all the years of contact with the Union with current blurred vision of the potential membership may not respond to it in the way the EU would have expected.

In the second part of this thesis the author describes the history of Slovakia's and Turkey's relations with the EU from the very first contacts until, in Slovakia's case the May 2004, when the country officially became the EU member, and in Turkey's case, until present; July 2013. Slovakia's initial steps go back to the 1989 when that time Czechoslovakia signed four-year Trade Agreement with the European Community. The first important milestone of already Slovakia, after the split of Czechoslovakia, was in October 1993, when Slovakia signed the Association Agreement, which came into force early in 1995. The year 1995 was also

characterized by the important event occurred in June, when Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar submitted the application for the membership in the EU. Two years later, in on the summit in Luxemburg, however, Slovakia was kept back by the European Council and could not initiate the negotiation talks. The reason of this disappointing decision for Slovakia was clear. Slovakia, as the only country out of the 10 CEECs, failed to pass the ‘democracy test’. The reason of this failure was the authoritarian style of Prime Minister Mečiar and his cabinet. However, the elections 1998 ended up with the victory of opposition parties; Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), Party of Democratic Left (SDL) and Party of Hungarian Coalition (SMK) created new pro-EU coalition. The EU was also content with the results and as a ‘reward’ for such success, they allowed Slovakia make next step towards the membership and officially launched the accession negotiations in February 2000. After this positive ‘kick’ from the EU side, Slovakia was motivated for the reforms which the EU demanded from her before its actual accession. During the years 2002-2003 Slovakia appointed its representatives for Brussels and close all the *acquis* chapters she had not succeed to close before. The date 1st May 2004 is pronounced to be officially the first day of Slovak EU membership.

The Turkish EU path has not been as ‘straight’, not to mention short, as the Slovakia’s one. The first Turkey’s contact with the Club was in 1959, when Turkey submitted an application to be an associate member of the European Economic Community. The application was approved and subsequently Turkey signed the Association Agreement, the ‘Ankara Protocol’ in 1963. The next significant milestone was in 1987, when on 14th April Turkey submitted the application for full membership. However, the accreditation of this application was rejected and postponed until after the EU completes its internal market and Turkey improve its political, economical and social situation in the country. In order to support Turkey in its EU endeavour, European Commission provided for them a ‘Cooperation Package’. No significant changes, however, was noticed until the year 1995, when Turkey got pass on membership in Customs Union. Just like for Slovakia, the summit in Luxemburg in 1997 did not provide for Turkey pass for the next step in the EU path. However, the Helsinki summit 2 years later, in 1999, opened the gate for Turkey as well, as Turkey officially became an EU candidate. Such results gained

the legitimacy to their potential EU membership and kicked-off series of reform packages adopted in order to comply with the EU norms. The reforms, otherwise not totally satisfying the EU, were enough to have the EU set off the next phase, the accession negotiations. Year 2005, indeed, characterized firstly as the year of great success because of the initiation of the accession talks, was also a turning point in EU-Turkey relations. Despite the EU gave green to Turkey, it was noticed that Turkish government slowed down with its reform process. Moreover, the European leaders pushed on Turkey for the quick solution of Cyprus problem. The political issues that have been cumbering Turkey for ages, but in spite of which Turkey have got to this phase, are blocking the negotiation process nowadays. Many of the academicians and even European politicians are positive that Turkey has found itself in a stalemate and that it is not sure whether there is a way out of there.

The last part of this thesis involves a comparative analysis of the two countries' EU accession processes. This chapter is providing the hard comparison of economic indexes and political realities of these two countries. In order to make justified comparison, the author is not evaluating the values of the same years in these cases, but evaluates the years of their accession process; Slovakia's one started in 2000, while Turkey's one started in 2005. The author proposes that there might be particular resemblance due to the fact that Slovakia has always been considered as laggard country regarding its economical situation in compare with other, either Member States or candidates. Moreover, concerning the political situation, Slovakia was the only candidate country out of 10 CEECs that got red on the ground of insufficient political progress and democracy. At the same time, it is generally known that Turkey has always been criticized for inadequate democratic practices. The author decided to make this deeper and more accurate comparison to find out what is the real reason of Turkey's backlash.

The second part of the third chapter of the thesis is devoted to the differences between Slovakia and Turkey. More accurately, author is pointing out on the issues that Turkey has been criticized for the most. She is getting deeper into the topics such as; overcrowded Turkish population, always questioned Turkish religion and identity, whether they really are 'European' and topic about insufficient protection of human rights together with the Kurdish question. Even though, the Cyprus issue is

considered also as one of the main reasons of frustrating Turkish case, this topic would require whole new and deeper investigation, what would exceed the range of this thesis.

CHAPTER ONE

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND ON COMPARATIVE STUDIES: TURKEY AND SLOVAKIA

In order to be sure that in the author of this thesis is not attempting to compare “apples and oranges”, she looked for academic articles and books related to Turkey and tried to find out whether she can find any comparative study on Turkey with CEECs, or even more particular, directly with Slovakia. In this part, it will be shown that the initial appraisal was correct and that there have already been some articles comparing Turkey and some of the Central and Eastern European countries, and even directly with Slovakia. Most of the articles that were found correspond with the argument that both countries had, or even have had, problems with the consolidation of democracy. However, Slovakia, a country that “seemed to spring out of nowhere”⁴ despite of its communistic past was able to deal with this and all other problems within relatively short period of time, when considering that in 1993 the Slovak Republic was created and in 11 years Slovakia became an EU member. In this part, the focus will be on already written comparative articles in order to learn what can be added to make full comparison of these two countries’ EU accession processes.

1.1. OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Turkey, an “awkward” candidate, as Harun Arikan called it in his book ‘Turkey and the EU: An Awkward Candidate for EU membership’, has been suffering for over 50 years since its application for associate membership to the European Economic Community. Arikan is studying the EU’s approach to Turkey’s progresses made towards its membership and at the same time he is arguing that the EU does not have the same approach towards other applicants, particularly towards the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe. His argument about unequal EU’s approach is based on the fact that Turkey and the countries of Central and Eastern

⁴ Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, **The Political Criteria: Fair or Strict Conditionality?**, Sabanci University, Oxford, 2003, p.6.

Europe faced or are still facing similar problems, more accurately, insufficient human rights and minority protection system and lacking democracy. Moreover, he is arguing that since the EU has been always considering Turkey as an awkward candidate for the membership, the EU intends to keep Turkey under its influence in the areas of economy, politics and security and at the same time try to delay its membership indefinitely under the strategy of containment.

Arikan in his book, in order to support his proposition of EU's containment strategy compares Turkey to Slovakia, among other CEECs countries. More specifically, he contended that even though Slovakia did not modify its policies regarding minorities, human rights and the political situation there was not sufficient, the EU guaranteed its accession to the EU and in spite of the inadequacies started its accession talks.⁵ He is later arguing that his proposition of containment strategy for Turkey was correct, by noticing the fact that the EU has an eye on Slovakia's political developments from the year after the actual establishment of the country and supported it on its way towards merger with accession carrot and with definite promise of membership.⁶

Arikan was neither the first nor only one that compared Turkey to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and saw particular similarities regarding politics in them. Frank Schimmelfennig, Stefan Engert and Heiko Knobel wrote in 2003 an article called "Costs, Commitment and Compliance: The Impact of the EU Democratic Conditionality on Latvia, Slovakia and Turkey". In their comparative study they are focusing on the EU's strategy of democratic conditionality that is, according to them, used on the candidate countries in order to comply with EU's policy about democracy standards and human rights. The authors are comparing the progresses and situations of democracy in Slovakia, Turkey and Latvia. In the case study part, the author of this thesis focused on Slovakia and Turkey. According to the authors, the EU, while applying the conditionality, uses the mechanism of 'reinforcement by reward'. This mechanism is defined as kind of "social control by which pro-social behaviour is rewarded and anti-social behaviour is punished"⁷. The

⁵Arikan, p.146.

⁶Arikan, p.150.

⁷ Schimmelfennig et al., p.496.

authors are mentioning two kinds of reward; assistance and institutional ties.⁸ The most common support mechanism for the CEECs is known as ‘Phare’. Considering the institutional ties; trade, cooperation and association agreements that may lead towards full membership. Moreover, the authors of the article are pointing out the fact that the EU does not withhold already given rewards or coercively support the candidates that are not able to comply with the EU policy.⁹

As mentioned in this study, the countries are calculating the domestic political costs of compliance and compare it to the reward they have been offered by the international organization. There are two kinds of rewards that organization is proposing to the country in return for compliance; *material bargaining* such as financial aid or technical expertise and *social influence* such as gain of recognition and legitimacy.¹⁰ Just like there are two kinds of rewards, there are two kinds of channels of reinforcement, as well, as the authors implied; the *intergovernmental channel*, the direct contact with the candidate’s government, is efficient only in case if the costs of compliance are lower than the benefits and at the same time it depends on particular government’s commitment to ‘Europe’. The second reinforcement channel is *transnational channel*, and this channel is, according to the authors, more efficient than the intergovernmental channel. It includes the societal actors, indeed, only those who have the strength to make the government make needed changes. However, in former Soviet republics, as authors emphasized, the situation may be different. The truth is that in these countries the society’s power has not evolved to such strength and its influence is only considered to be limited. Another instrument of conditionality mentioned by the authors is elections. However, as proposed, this is only a random factor that may or may not positively influenced the conditionality and depends on the status of the electorate, whether they identify themselves with the Europe and are aware of the opportunity costs of non-compliance or on the other side whether their preferences are made by their own welfare and security. That is why the authors named the electoral instrument as a ‘random factor’ which may or may not eventuate in successful compliance.¹¹

⁸ Schimmelfening et al., p.496.

⁹ Schimmelfening et al., p.497.

¹⁰ Schimmelfening et al., pp.497-498.

¹¹ Schimmelfening et al., p.499.

The authors' test hypotheses are based only on the intergovernmental channel, since they consider "international factors as constant and societal conditions as irrelevant"¹². They are testing as proposing the ways under what conditions the conditionality is effective. The first test hypotheses mentioned in the article is hypotheses built upon the *intergovernmental bargaining* mechanism upon which may be induced that "the lower the domestic political costs of compliance for the target government, the more likely the conditionality will be effective"¹³. The second test hypotheses based upon the mechanism of *intergovernmental social influence* is proposing that "the stronger the identification of the target government with the EU international community, the more likely conditionality will be effective"¹⁴. The writers are also mentioning the alternative hypotheses that include the legitimacy of the EU conditions, the influence of societal salience and the power of economic interdependence.

The topic in this article written in 2003 was one year later deepened by Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier with their article "Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe". In this article authors are again concerned with the effectiveness of the EU conditionality, but this time more particularly; the focus is on CEECs only. They are proposing that the CEECs during their accession processes underwent process of external governance; however, this was effective only to certain extent. More accurately, the countries which did not suffer with insufficient democratic rule, for instance Czech Republic, Poland or Hungary, were able to respond to external governance with higher effectiveness. On the contrary, countries with the need of political regime change, such as Slovakia under Mečiar, Croatia under Tudjman or Romania at the beginning of 1990s, were not adequate for 'rule transfer', therefore were not able to successfully respond to the EU democratic conditionality.¹⁵

In the comparison part of the article, Schimmelfening et al. are comparing firstly the main norm conflicts, secondly the EU's and other international

¹² Schimmelfening et al., p.499.

¹³ Schimmelfening et al., p.499.

¹⁴ Schimmelfening et al., p.500.

¹⁵ Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, "Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe", **Journal of European Public Policy**, Vol.11, No.4, 2004, pp.677-678.

organizations' instruments of conditionality used on these countries. Thirdly, the authors compare the "conditions that serve as independent variables in the test and alternative hypotheses"¹⁶, fourthly the determination of conditionality's effectiveness in the countries is mentioned and lastly, the authors analyze the results.

Considering Slovakia, the authors are pointing at the authoritarian government formed after 1994 elections from the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), the Slovak National Party (SNS) and the Association of the Workers of Slovakia (ZRS) in the first part. This coalition was accused of concentration of enormous power in the hand of Prime Minister Mečiar, intent to depose President Michal Kovac, control of media and the press, assaulting on the Hungarian minority and many other undemocratic political behaviour.¹⁷ Considering the EU conditionality and its instrument mechanism 'reinforcement by reward' Slovakia was always given the chances that after changes in the government, particularly the change of Prime Minister and his cabinet, Slovakia will become an EU member eventually. As the 'reward' here, the authors are pointing out on the fact that the EU was in favour of opening the accession negotiation process with Slovakia if the compliance would be successful. In the third part, the test hypotheses and the alternative variables are applied and evaluated for the situation in Slovakia during Mečiar's governance. The authors are arguing that the first test hypotheses about the low political costs are not applicable here, because the political cost of compliance would be high due to Mečiar's authoritarian tendencies and policies and at the same time the commitment to European values are low, as well. However, the 'electoral volatility' and the fact that Mečiar did not win the elections 1998 shows us that people in Slovakia were somehow effected and persuaded not to vote Mečiar again. Therefore, the authors induced that without the EU conditionality, the results of the elections may have been different.¹⁸

Turkey's situation, considering the political status, was not evaluated any more positively. In spite of the Kemalism, the doctrine Turkey was found on, the doctrine that is partially based on western values, the authors are emphasizing on the conflicts occurred between Turkish and European norms regarding human rights and

¹⁶ Schimmelfening et al., p.502.

¹⁷ Schimmelfening et al., pp.502-503.

¹⁸ Schimmelfening et al., p.506.

democracy. More particularly, they are stressing the enormous power of military; once again it needs to be reminded that this article was written in 2003, year of the excessive violation of general human rights and rule of law.¹⁹ The EU used, just like it was in the case of Slovakia, the membership carrot in order to make Turkey ‘want to’ make reforms regarding all the critical issues and to satisfy the EU and fulfil Copenhagen criteria. In Turkish case, however, the EU put pressure on the particular topics that were not mentioned in the official criteria, such as abolition of death penalty to PKK leader Öcalan, as well. The EU, thought, stressed the importance of Turkish progress as a priority in order to start the accession negotiations.

The authors are considering the material bargaining and social influence as critical mechanisms of the EU conditionality that have prevailed in Turkey. Kemalist elites, with the view of power, were not willing to lose the state integrity for minorities, like Kurds, neither leave the power in the hand of Islamic parties. These were the reasons why they insisted for a long time on military watch at the expense of limited political rights and freedoms.²⁰ Regarding the social influence, the Kemalist elites have always been dwelling on European values, and on the importance of being part of European organizations. Regarding the alternative tests; legitimacy of the EU conditions and economic interdependence, the authors consider them as favourable. The social salience is according to their evaluation characterized as mixed.²¹

The effects of the EU conditionality occurred after Turkey was officially pronounced as candidate country on Helsinki Summit in 1999.²² In summer 2002, parliament accepted reform package that included changes regarding the abolition of death penalty and provision of cultural rights for the citizens of Kurdish ethnicity.²³ Even though this may be considered as considerable progress, the authors argue that for Turkey “the domestic power costs are comparatively small”²⁴, because the talks about abolition of death penalty has been discussed since 1984. However,

¹⁹ Schimmelfening et al., p.506.

²⁰ Schimmelfening et al., p.507.

²¹ Schimmelfening et al., p.508.

²² Schimmelfening et al., p.508.

²³ Schimmelfening et al., p.508.

²⁴ Schimmelfening et al., p.508.

Commission acknowledged the progress that Turkey had made; but still stressed the need of decreasing of military power and strengthening the right for expression.

The authors are concluding the ‘Turkey part’ by expressing the success of intergovernmental bargaining. The ‘reward’ that Turkey gained in 1999 - the candidacy status, was the critical point that made Turkey want to make even more progress to reach the goal and made following political reforms which led to partial compliance. Even though Turkey planned following reforms in comply with the EU demands to be able to start the accession talks eventually and have positive evaluation in upcoming Regular Reports, there had not been made any significant changes that would “directly affect the core of state power”²⁵. Moreover, the authors argued that “the compliance was both driven and limited by political cost- benefit calculations”²⁶ and in this case, no alternative tests have had any significant weight.

The authors are arguing that the efficacy of the EU conditionality is highly dependent on domestic condition of candidate country and that mechanisms such as societal influence, transnational channel and the alternative variables such as economical interdependence and societal salience are irrelevant. The significant similarity between Slovakia and Turkey, as suggested in the article, is the failure “to respond to social influence to the extent that compliance implies significant domestic power costs”²⁷. As a result, the authors are arguing that the impact of conditionality on candidate states in regard with the reforms made by their governments is relevant. Moreover, they estimated the calculation of governmental costs-benefits as the main factor for compliance. However, as the authors assume that the reinforcement by reward is not essential, it had to a certain extent influence on all studied countries.

Another demonstration, that the intent to compare Slovakia and Turkey and their EU accession processes is not like comparing apples and oranges, is an article written by Ziya Öniş, where he looks at Turkey’s and Poland’s path to the EU membership from comparative perspective.²⁸ Since Slovakia and Poland are both Central European, former communists states, even neighbours, the author suggests that there are not extensive differences between them; neither politically nor

²⁵ Schimmelfening et al., p.509.

²⁶ Schimmelfening et al., p.509.

²⁷ Schimmelfening et al., p.515.

²⁸ Ziya Öniş, “Diverse but Converting Paths to EU Membership: Poland and Turkey in Comparative Perspective”, **East European Politics and Societies**, Vol.18, No.3, p.481.

economically. Ziya Öniş in his article written in 2004 studied the divergence that occurred between Poland's and Turkey's path towards the EU membership. He is arguing that the main reason of this convergence is the unity and commitment of these countries' societies to achieving the common goal; the EU membership. Poland's elite was able to mobilize all its powers and make reforms that satisfied the Commission and therefore attain the goal, presented by full membership, together with Slovakia and other 8 countries in the May 2004.²⁹ Unlike Turkey, that was not able of such unification. The author's aim is to offer an explanation of the diversity between these 2 countries on their path to the EU membership, especially regarding their economical and political issues. The author is arguing that the main reason of the divergence is neither politics nor economics, but cultural and geographical reasons. In spite of the author's conviction that there are many similar features between Turkey and Poland, differences are apparent as well.

Regarding the commonalities that Öniş mentioned in his article; countries were anxious to reach the satisfactory level of 'Europeanization', they both have comparatively large population, the agricultural sector of both countries is insufficient and ineffective and what is more, they both may be characterized, according to the author as 'transitional societies' in terms of achieving 'substantive' democracy.³⁰

The differences, however as the author proposed, are more obvious. First of all, the economic progress of Poland since mid-1990s has been more rapid and the transition to democracy under the influence of Polish elites has been stronger, as well.³¹ Such differences, according to the writer, come from distinct domestic political sphere and the uneven external environment of these two countries. The author argues that the EU elites gave more credibility to the reforms that occurred in Poland, whilst there have been doubts about the credibility of reforms in Turkey. The EU considered Poland as "natural candidate for EU membership"³² due to its geographical position, Western European core, Christian population and historical background. Öniş is proposing comparative analysis according to which

²⁹ Öniş, p.481.

³⁰ Öniş, pp.482-483.

³¹ Öniş, p.483.

³² Öniş, p.484.

“democratization reforms are able to take root provided that certain favourable conditions exist within the domestic sphere of the country concerned”³³, moreover, he is suggesting that “external pressure alone cannot result in fully consolidated democracy”³⁴. The author is therefore proposing that both Turkey and Poland are suitable to this proposal.

Ziya Öniş is evaluating the accession processes of Turkey and Poland on the basis of analytical framework developed by Robert Putnam, also known as ‘the logic of two-level games’³⁵. This framework is built on theory that there is an interlinkage between domestic political environment and foreign policy decisions, and that mentioned interlinkage must be considered when evaluating bilateral relations.³⁶ Moreover, Öniş stressed that the results of such interaction may cause either virtuous cycles or vicious cycles. The domestic political environment is characterized by candidate’s ability to fulfil the membership criteria, the speed of reformation and compliance with the EU norms and the stimuli from the EU to the candidate country in various forms.³⁷ The Putnam’s framework’s interlinkage is consequently giving us an explanation why Poland found itself in virtuous cycle; homogenous society, no ethnic and religious disputes, flourishing and pro-reform domestic environment and firm commitment to pro-EU coalition in combination with German support for the EU membership were the reasons of Poland’s success. Moreover, EU’s external support of Poland and its obvious ‘easy and unproblematic accession’, as the author argues, let the reforms happen smoothly and uninterruptedly.³⁸

On contrary, Turkey’s inefficient progress got Turkey into the vicious cycle.³⁹ Another reasons for this, as Öniş argues, are various; cultural and historical issues gives Turkey status more of an ‘important outsider’ rather than potential member, the questions of identity whether or not Turkey belongs to ‘Europe’, lurking conflict with Greece, disability of gaining the candidate status for long time, insufficient financial help from the EU funds,... all these factors lead to the conclusion that it was

³³ Öniş, p.484.

³⁴ Öniş, p.484.

³⁵ Robert D.Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games”, **International Organization**, Vol. 42, No. 3,1988, pp. 433-434.

³⁶ Öniş, p.493.

³⁷ Öniş, p.494.

³⁸ Öniş, p.495.

³⁹ Öniş, p.494.

hard to justify Turkey's membership in the Union.⁴⁰ However, as the author emphasized, that Turkey has significantly went forward after the summit in Helsinki and with an official status of candidate and followed reforms Turkey will eventually find itself in the virtuous circle, as well as Poland did.⁴¹

The author is concluding that even though there are few similarities noticed Poland as first among CEECs was able to establish democratic civil society and lead successfully towards full EU membership. There are four attributes, as proposed by the author, of Poland's smooth transition: "historical legacy of an ethnically homogeneous state, absence of threats to the secular nature of the state, strong and broad-based civil society movement and high degree of unity and commitment of reformist elite to the project of EU membership"⁴². Moreover, the supportive external environment presented mostly by Germany, led Poland into the virtuous cycle. On the contrary, Turkey's inherited suspicion that pro-Western reforms would violate Turkish integrity caused lacked commitment to the membership in the Union.⁴³ Furthermore, the strength of newly formed civil society in 1990s in Turkey was insufficient and incompatible with the one in Poland. Öniş, at the end of his article, pointed out that considering the latest events in global environment, such as 9/11 or Iraq war, Turkey with its Muslim population and transforming democracy would be a moderating element and therefore the EU attends to create more favourable and supportive environment for Turkey, as it did for Poland.

Another comparative study was written by Paul Kubicek in May 2004, namely 'Turkish Accession to the EU in Comparative Perspective'. The author studied the EU accession process of Turkey and compared it to, as he argues, another two states with similar difficulties; Slovakia and Romania. All of these three states, as he proposed are 'reluctant democratizers'.⁴⁴ In this paper, Kubicek is focusing on the political issues, particularly on inadequate democracy and problems with human rights protection. In spite he pointed out the similarities of these three countries, he is

⁴⁰ Öniş, pp.495-497.

⁴¹ Öniş, p.497.

⁴² Öniş, p.497.

⁴³ Öniş, p.511.

⁴⁴ Paul Kubicek, "Turkish Accession to the EU in Comparative Perspective", No.1, South East European Studies Programme, European Studies Centre, **Oxford Occasional Paper**, 2004, p.3.

aware of certain issues that are characteristic only for Turkey such as large population, different understanding of modernization process under Kemalist ideology and high cultural and financial costs of compliance due to Muslim population.⁴⁵ The main Kubicek's argument is built upon the fact that not only Turkey has had problem with democratization among the states which either already joined the EU, like Slovakia, or will join the EU eventually, like Romania⁴⁶. Kubicek's article is positive about Turkey's compliance and fulfilment of EU's criteria for membership and by this comparison he is willing to gain the relevance for Turkish membership by seeking for apparent similarities.

Kubicek is looking at the issue of democratization of Turkey and CEECs from two different points of view. On the one hand, post-communists countries and their path to democracy seems to be definite and conclusive considering the decay of communist regime, while the democracy in Turkey has been still questioned regarding the Kemalism and its practices that emphasize "republicanism over democracy, homogeneity over difference, the military over civilian, and the state over society"⁴⁷. On the other hand, Kubicek acknowledged that Turkey may have advantages over post-communist countries regarding Turkey's membership in NATO since 1952, associate membership in European Community since 1964, and the democracy experience has been prevailing for longer time.⁴⁸

In the next part of Kubicek's article, he is evaluating Slovakia's and Romania's fulfilment of Copenhagen Criteria and comparing it to the Turkey's deficient democracy, more particularly "human rights abuses, role of military in politics, and restrictions on speech and political participation"⁴⁹, the main issues why Turkey's bid for membership was rejected in 1997. The author is describing the 'nationalist-authoritarian' governance of Vladimír Mečiar, former Slovak Prime Minister during 1992-94 and 1994-98.⁵⁰ He pointed out the Mečiar's criticism that includes; disrespect of powers appointed by the Constitution, insufficient level of minority rights regarding Hungarians and Roma in Slovakia, excessive control over

⁴⁵ Kubicek, p.4.

⁴⁶ Author's note: Romania joined the EU in 2007, while this article by Kubicek was written in 2004.

⁴⁷ Kubicek, p.6.

⁴⁸ Kubicek, p.6.

⁴⁹ Kubicek, p.6.

⁵⁰ Kubicek, p.7.

media and undemocratic practices regarding elections and parliament operations.⁵¹ Kubicek is also characterising the ‘incomplete democratization’ of Romania under the power of first president after the breakdown of Soviet Union, Ion Iliescu, who was in power until the 1996 elections. Romania was, according to the author, a ‘quasi-democratic system’ with problems such as brutal “violence against student demonstrators and against the Hungarian minority in Tirgu Mures”⁵². However, the presidential elections 1996 open Romania’s path to democracy with new president Emil Constantinescu, with pro-Western policy. In spite of the results of the 2000 elections and comeback of Iliescu, Romania did not drop back, but reaffirm its intention to continue in pro-EU reforms. Despite of certain problems with economic progress in Romania, the issue of democracy was considered, as the author argues, as solidly established.

In order to compare these three countries upon their status of democracy Kubicek is willing to find out whether Turkey would attain same success in this area if the pressure from the EU was as high as it was in Slovakia or Romania. He is therefore examining how the “external pressure and the spread of international norms might contribute to democratization in a reluctant democratizer”⁵³, when knowing that all of these three countries were characterized as reluctant democratizer back in 1990s. The author is focusing on the questions what the EU does to promote the democracy and whether particular domestic environment enables or on contrary block the EU efforts to apply their norms and standards in order to promote democracy. There are few mechanisms of international influence mentioned in the article; “contagion, diffusion, adaptation, complex interdependence, convergence, *Zeitgeist*, socialization, learning and conditionality”⁵⁴. The author is focusing on active and purposeful mechanisms. Kubicek, however acknowledged that conditionality is perceived as the most effective mean, he is pointing at its defects. He assumes that conditionality would have positive influence only on those countries which have already made sufficient progress and their membership is within grasp. Secondly, he argues that if countries’ elites feel that reforms would endanger their

⁵¹ Kubicek, p.7.

⁵² Kubicek, p.8.

⁵³ Kubicek, p.10.

⁵⁴ Kubicek, p.10.

power they, just like in Mečiar's case, they would be resistive against conditionality. Third Kubicek's doubt about conditionality is built on the 'logic of consequentiality'; "do X in order to get Y"⁵⁵. Despite the fact that countries would make all the reforms required, they do so only because of the vision of eventual membership, not because they really want to comply with international reforms. Therefore, after they gain what they want there is a potential that they may fail in actual implementation of the new norms. Moreover, the author points out, that if a particular country is assured that some other powerful state stands behind its back, for example the USA or Russia, the effect of the EU conditionality may be weaker. Moreover, Kubicek is focusing on the domestic environment as well and maintains that "if international norm enjoys domestic salience and legitimacy, it may be adopted more out of the 'logic of appropriateness' rather than the 'logic of consequentiality'"⁵⁶, which means that political elites would do so, because they consider it appropriate, not because it would earn them membership in the organization.

This Kubicek's proposition was recapitulated in his article "The European Union and Democratization 'From Below' in Turkey" from 2004, where he again argues that the reforms in Turkey were forced mainly by the exogenous factors; the EU pressure rather than by the endogenous factors; political elites. He is even comparing the situation between Turkey and the EU to a situation where teacher gives to his student homework and the student does so simply because he is told so. However, not to completely exclude the endogenous factors from the process, he is positive that "external and internal actors have formed an alliance to put pressure on the Turkish government to make liberal and democratic reforms"⁵⁷.

In the next part of this paper author focused on the political change in Slovakia and Romania in regard with promotion of democratization and tried to propose similar progress for Turkey. He is arguing that the domestic elites in cooperation with international actors by creating transnational networks are influenced by these foreign allies, therefore the conditionality in these reluctant democratizers is more effective. Kubicek brought Slovakia as an example of this

⁵⁵ Kubicek, p.12.

⁵⁶ Kubicek, p.13.

⁵⁷ Paul Kubicek, "The European Union and Democratization 'From Below' in Turkey", Austin TX, 30.04.2005, aei.pitt.edu/3018/1/kubicek-austin_paper.txt, (17.06.2013), p.26.

proposition. Before 1998 elections many Slovak political parties presumed from their connections with European political parties in order to strengthen their power. These European parties made Slovakia and particularly the importance of 1998 elections visible throughout the Europe thus put pressure on Slovak politics.⁵⁸ The intent of the EU was clear; to change the government, particularly, to change the Prime Minister Mečiar. After election in 1998, Slovak government with new Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda successfully begin the new era of reforms and path towards the EU accession.

Kubicek points out the similarities between Slovak and Romanian democratization process. He emphasizes that even though officially Romania was a democratic country “the practice fell short”⁵⁹. Moreover, just like Slovakia, in 1993 they signed Association Agreement and submitted application for joining the EU in 1995.⁶⁰ Thirdly, the author is confident that, the obvious the membership-wise EU carrot was, the more Romanian voters and elites, as well, were conscious that the current regime must be overcome. The same situation was noticed in Slovakia, as well.

The last part of Kubicek’s paper is dedicated to ‘the Turkish case in comparative perspective’ where the author is comparing the Slovak and Romanian accession processes progresses with Turkish case and learning what have these three countries in common with regard to the EU accession process. He is confident that Turkey’s leader political parties before year 1999, just like Slovakia’s in early 1990s, were not motivated enough to pursue reforms that would satisfy EU. The reason of lack of motivation was inrooted in the fact that “the carrot of membership had not been on the table”⁶¹ yet. However, both countries, Slovakia and Turkey, made visible progress after they were pronounced as official EU candidate. The reforms made in Turkey, particularly reforms made by Justice and Development Party (AKP) in post-2002, met with very positive feedback from the EU politicians who were convicted about Turkey’s strong EU commitment.⁶² In spite of the numerous constitutional amendments the 2003 progress report stressed that “reforms have produced limited

⁵⁸ Kubicek, p.15.

⁵⁹ Kubicek, p.15.

⁶⁰ Kubicek, p.16.

⁶¹ Kubicek, p.18.

⁶² Kubicek, p.20.

practical effects... implementation has been slow and uneven”⁶³. The criticism includes Kurdish cultural issues, difficulties with courts and media, lack of human rights protection and insufficiencies in freedom of expression.⁶⁴ Moreover, the author suggested that even though the reforms would be successful it would not have brought extensive contributions to the daily lives of Turkish citizens, just like it was noticed in the Romanian case.⁶⁵

In spite of positive author’s prognosis for future Turkish membership in the EU, he is pointing out on the differences between Turkey, Slovakia and Romania and therefore stressing the problems that Turkey should focused on if they want to enter the Union eventually. He is emphasizing the fact that in both, Slovakia and Romania, the support for the EU was obvious not just from the political elites, but from the citizens, as well. On the other side, people in Turkey showed to be distrustful of the EU. Kubicek sees the size of Turkey and Islam religion more important indexes than the meeting political criteria when considering Turkish membership. If looking at the cultural division problem from two very extreme positions; Turkish elite consider the EU as ‘Christian Club’ and there have been statements from the EU politicians that if Turkey would be accept to the EU it would mean an end to Europe.⁶⁶ These extreme points of view are unfortunately real and present and they might ruin the EU-Turkey relation. Because of this the conditionality is not as effective as it was in Slovakia or in Romania, since most Turkish elites already accepted the argument that “they will never take us”⁶⁷. However, the author is positive that just like it happened in Romania and Slovakia, former ‘reluctant democratizers’, the conditionality will bring needed political reforms in Turkey, as well, and that the EU will create favourable conditions for compliance with the EU democratic reforms.

Another academic paper that dwells on the problematic of EU-Turkey relation and appraises Turkey’s potential future according to the previous eastern enlargement is a paper written in 2003 by Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, ‘The Political Criteria: Fair or Strict Conditionality’. Kalaycıoğlu is positive that EU’s attitude towards

⁶³ European Commission. **Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Slovakia’s Preparation for Membership**, 2003, p.15.

⁶⁴ Kubicek, pp.21-22.

⁶⁵ Kubicek, p.22.

⁶⁶ Kubicek, p.26.

⁶⁷ Kubicek, p.26.

Eastern European countries has been more moderate than the attitude towards Turkey. The reason why he proposes so is because Eastern European countries and the EU states have their political and economic interests in common. On contrary, Turkey, as Kalaycıoğlu argues, is different from these 'European' countries in many ways; young, crowded and uneducated population, Islam religion, strong nationalistic even chauvinistic feelings, unsolved conflicts over Cyprus. Moreover, the author is confident that "Turkey is neither powerful, nor rich enough to impress the EU members with its prospective accession to full membership"⁶⁸. Author of this paper is evaluating the candidates only in regard with the political standards of Copenhagen Criteria, since, as he argues, "economic reforms have been relatively easy, though sometimes painful, in the candidate countries and most economic issues have been relatively easy to deal with, in comparison with political criteria that the candidates were to fulfil"⁶⁹.

The middle part of this paper is devoted to the detailed description of Turkish accession process since the late 1950s, especially intended on political progress. The author emphasizes the importance of Customs Union for Turkey, and considers this Turkish commitment as indicator of its seriousness in completing obligations towards the EU. However, as he argues, the EU did not appreciate it as much as Turkey expected and in 1997 Summit in Luxembourg, Turkey did not get on the EU candidate lists. The interesting point is mentioned here about Slovakia's membership, as well. The author argues, that Slovakia with its authoritative Prime Minister Mečiar, a country which "seemed to spring out of nowhere"⁷⁰ and which "showed no distaste for Soviet rule"⁷¹ when compared to Turkey, country which made "efforts to defend Europe against the Soviet encroachments during the Cold War"⁷² got onto the candidate list unjustly and that it was 'blatant racism' against Turkey. Kalaycıoğlu later describes Constitutional amendments regarding political criteria made by the Turkish Grand National Assembly that followed up the December 1999 Helsinki summit, where Turkey officially gained the candidacy status.

⁶⁸ Kalaycıoğlu, pp.3-4.

⁶⁹ Kalaycıoğlu, p.5.

⁷⁰ Kalaycıoğlu, p.6.

⁷¹ Kalaycıoğlu, p.6.

⁷² Kalaycıoğlu, p.6. .

As a conclusion, the author is positive that Turkey is not existentially depended on the EU membership. However, the benefits, either economical or political, that may come out of the membership are obvious and unalienable; improvement of Turkey-EU market relations, stabilization of the Turkish economy, reducing of poverty, improvement of education level of young Turkish people and the most important, consolidation of Turkish democracy.⁷³

As the author of the thesis proposed at the beginning of this part, there are already comparative articles written on Turkey and CEECs, even comparative studies that directly compare Turkey and Slovakia. However, she also noticed that these comparative studies are not complete, that is why she has decided to soak deeper in this comparison and make more complete evaluation. Most of the comparison studies that she has studied were built on the EU conditionality, more accurately, how particular country answer on the conditionality and whether the changes done within the accession process were subject to the EU conditionality. In order to get better view on this topic, the next part of this thesis is devoted to the study of the EU conditionality and its influence on candidate countries and their domestic environments.

1.2. EU CONDITIONALITY

The EU is “a stable democratic regime obeying the rule of law and supporting well-functioning market economy, capable of implementing the rules of the club, that is, the *acquis communautaire*”⁷⁴. By this definition the EU provides justification for their requirement of reforms from the EU candidates. According to Steunberg and Dimitrova, the EU enlargement conditionality is kind of exchange, where the EU offers a possibility to the candidate country to become its member, under the condition of implementation of required reforms. This mechanism whose character has been changed during the time from “minor policy tool to the main pillar of EU enlargement governance”⁷⁵ includes political and economic conditions. The main reason of such increase of demands was eastward enlargement, more particularly the

⁷³ Kalaycıoğlu, pp.18-19.

⁷⁴ Bernard Steunenberg and Antoaneta Dimitrova, “Compliance in the EU Enlargement Process: The Limits of Conditionality”, **European Intergration Online Papers**, Vol.11, 2007, p.2.

⁷⁵ Steunenberg and Dimitrova, p.2.

commitment made in 1993 to the CEECs to consider them as candidates and member states eventually.⁷⁶ In 1993 the European Council declared Copenhagen criteria, criteria for new accessing candidate countries, which were much more complex than the criteria that previous candidates had to fulfil⁷⁷. Such comprehensive conditions were required in order to prevent entrance of politically and economically unstable country into the Union and as guidance for the candidate countries to outgrow the former communistic regime and built up democracy.⁷⁸

After compliance with the EU norms, is the candidate country admitted as an official member? What if the political conditionality does not work as it is supposed to? On the case of Slovakia and its difficult path to democratization the author wants to demonstrate that in case of particular Central and European countries it was 'enough' to be on geographically 'right' place. Moreover, she will try to prove that in the case of Slovakia, it may be concluded, that from the beginning, in spite of its problems, the EU was persuaded about Slovakia's European commitment. However, in the Turkish case, the ideological differences are obvious by constructing the non-European identity of Turkey and its 'dead-end' accession path.

1.2.1. Democratic Conditionality Applied to Slovakia

Slovakia is defined by Geoffrey Pridham as pariah regime in his article from 1999.⁷⁹ It is a kind of hybrid regimes but with weaker character. In the countries with hybrid regimes, most frequently former communist countries, the elites from previous regime may stay in the power in spite of regime change. Consequently, the democratization process therefore takes longer time and proceeds with certain obstacles. However, country with pariah regime for certain extent can be influenced

⁷⁶ Heather Grabbe, **A Partnership for Accession? The Implications of EU Conditionality for the Central and East European Applicants**, Robert Schuman Centre Working Paper, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI): European University Institute, 1999, p.4.

⁷⁷ Grabbe, p.4.

⁷⁸ Grabbe, p.4.

⁷⁹ Geoffrey Pridham, "Complying with the EU's Democratic Conditionality: Transnational Party Linkages and regime Change in Slovakia 1993-1998", **Europe-Asia Studies**, Taylor&Francis Group, Vol.51, No.7, 1999, p.1226.

by the EU; more particularly it depends on the readiness and preferences of the internal actors and on the ability of transnational party linkages.⁸⁰

Even though Geoffrey Pridham emphasized that it is quite difficult process to apply the notion of democratic conditionality, only Slovakia out of 10 CEE accessing countries had failed to response to it. The failure of this “democratic test”, theoretically, may be induced from the lack of commitment of the applicant country to the EU values and consequently it may invoke problems regarding the accession. However, in the case of Slovakia, the democratic failure, which ended in Slovak missing invitation to the accession talks in 1997, did not put the EU away from the thought of Slovak adequate EU commitment.⁸¹ According to the EU method described by Schimmelfening and his colleagues, ‘the reinforcement by reward’, the EU “did not downgrade the institutional ties with Slovakia”⁸², in spite of its insufficient level of democracy, only made it clear that the next step of Slovakia’s path to the EU membership would depend on its compliance.

The reason why Slovakia was considered insufficiently democratic was laid in the authoritarian governance of Prime Minister Mečiar and his cabinet. Even though the formal requirements and components for parliamentary democracy were established, the criticism was rooted in the actual democratic practice.⁸³ The Opinions of the European Commission on the Applications for Accession from 1997 from the Report on Slovakia stated that “the government does not sufficiently respect the powers developed by Constitution to other bodies”⁸⁴, moreover, the report points out on the serious conflicts that persist between the government and the president. Report, at the same time, deprecates the approach towards national minorities, particularly towards Roma and Hungarian minority that are not able to fully exercise their rights. Criticism also includes the instability of institutions, harassing of PMs, governmental control over media and press and “political use of the security service”⁸⁵, which all concludes into dysfunctional democratic regime.

⁸⁰ Pridham, pp.1222-1224.

⁸¹ Schimmelfenning et al., p.503.

⁸² Schimmelfenning et al., p.503.

⁸³ Pridham, p.1227.

⁸⁴ Pridham, p.1223.

⁸⁵ Pridham, p.1227.

Schimmelfenning et al. in their paper studied the reasons of failed democratic conditionality in Slovakia. They are positive that “the lower the domestic political costs of compliance for the target government, the more likely conditionality will be effective”⁸⁶. Considering the Mečiar’s autocratic style of governance, more particularly the fact that he intended to keep the power over the parliament in his hands, there is a conflict with the first mentioned Schimmelfenning et al.’s hypothesis, because Mečiar’s political costs of compliance with the EU democratic norms were considerably high.⁸⁷ According to the second Schimmelfenning et al.’s hypothesis, the country would be open for intergovernmental social influence, another mechanism of the EU conditionality, if there is a considerable ‘commitment to Europe’.⁸⁸ Slovakia’s EU commitment, however, was perceived to be questionable. The reason of this conflict rests in so-called ‘dualistic policy’.⁸⁹ On the one hand, Mečiar and his foreign ministers strained after Slovakia’s fulfilment of all requirements regarding its EU membership, more concretely giving promises about figuring out the issues regarding privatization of the economy and the Hungarian minority issues. However, such statements were only “last-minute rhetorical moves“, as Schimmelfenning et al. called them, in order to get the pass ticket for the accession negotiations in 1997, although unsuccessfully. On the other hand, Mečiar’s coalition partners were group of cardinal anti-westerns, so that Mečiar in regard with keeping his authoritative power over them never fulfilled the promises given to the EU about the compliance with its democratic norms. On the ground of this cleavage, the question about Mečiar’s EU commitment stays unanswered.

Schimmelfenning et al. are considering the election as only “random factor which sometimes happens to provide an opening for improved compliance”⁹⁰. The conditions for this mechanism, moreover, are electorates’ strong Europe salience and the acknowledgement of negative implications from the non-compliance. However, Schimmelfenning et al. suppose that electorates are, for the most part, more concerned about their personal welfare and security more than about the EU norms

⁸⁶ Schimmelfenning et al., p.499.

⁸⁷ Schimmelfenning et al., p.503.

⁸⁸ Schimmelfenning et al., p.500.

⁸⁹ Schimmelfenning et al., p.505.

⁹⁰ Schimmelfenning et al., p.499.

compliance.⁹¹ In the case of Slovakia, though, Schimmelfenning et al. proposes that this mechanism of ‘electoral volatility’ was effective enough to prevail Mečiar’s dominance and choose the coalition, which lead Slovakia successfully towards the EU membership. Under this proposition, they argue that Slovak community was aware of the failure from 1997 and in order not to repeat it again, the majority of the electorate decided to support the pro-western democratic opposition.⁹² In spite of this presumption about effective ‘electoral volatility’, Schimmelfenning et al.’s argument that “there are no grounds for arguing that the election outcome would have been different in the absence of conditionality”⁹³.

Was there something else that made Slovakia took the right step towards democracy? Was it the external European influence that affected the Slovaks? Was it the European commitment of Slovak society that moved Slovakia forward on the EU path? Or was Slovak government open for changes after receiving strong criticism and disapproval? According to Pridham and his proposition, Slovakia is weaker form of hybrid regime; pariah regime, as it was mentioned before. While hybrid regime countries’ response to European conditionality may be considered rather limited, he assumes that countries with pariah regime may be influenced to certain extent by external pressures depending on particular domestic environment.

Influence of domestic political elites, as Pridham proposes, is led on the basis of Europe agreements, where ‘established democracies’ and the ‘new democracies’ involve together in political discourse in the EU business during the letters pre-accession period.⁹⁴ Thanks to this close cooperation Commission is able to monitor accession countries and propose adequate “support mechanism for democracy building”⁹⁵. Such support, however, as it was noticed in the case of Slovakia, is subject to further compliance and fulfilment of Copenhagen Criteria. This kind of cooperation, so-called ‘transnational linkages’, as Pridham propose, often used by CEECs as a mean for eventual pass for the EU membership, may be ‘side-road’ to

⁹¹ Schimmelfenning et al., p.499.

⁹² Schimmelfenning et al., p.506.

⁹³ Schimmelfenning et al., p.506.

⁹⁴ Pridham, p.1224.

⁹⁵ Pridham, p.1224.

Brussels.⁹⁶ However, the new democracies must be interested and persistent in surmounting the possible cultural barriers and former political traditions.

The Slovakia's relative openness therefore gives a hint about being a pariah regime. The country with this kind of regime is open for change after the international disapproval. The international disapproval regarding Slovakia was directly personalized with its Prime Minister. This so-called 'Mečiar phenomenon' and its negative reputation halted not only the democratization process in the country but also Slovakia's progress on the path to the EU.⁹⁷ It was the 'creeping authoritarianism'⁹⁸ that put Brussels away from letting Slovakia into the first group of countries which starts the accession talks for the insufficient democracy.

Meanwhile Mečiar and his cabinet was 'obsessed' with gaining more and more power, the opposition parties were preoccupied with making connections; the transnational party linkages with the political parties from western Europe.⁹⁹ This move of opposition elites was perceived positively, especially after the elections '98, when Mečiar with his coalition partners were deposed. Pridham in his case study 'Transnational party linkages and democratization in Slovakia' from 1999, studied this cooperation from different angles; its development "its extensity, gained advantages of involved parties, its effect on Slovakia-EU relations and domestic consequences"¹⁰⁰. The author here focuses on the part about the effect on the SR-EU relations and its consequences.

The international party linkages present convenient and informal space for cooperation between applicant country and the institutional bodies of the EU. One may suppose that in a time when Slovakia was put down as a 'problem' in the EU and when Slovakia's democracy was questioned, such networking between opposition parties and the EU parties may be irrelevant, even may be criticized. However, the opposite was the truth, and the discrimination or the disadvantaging was not happening.¹⁰¹ Since the official contacts were not satisfiable enough, these

⁹⁶ Pridham, p.1226.

⁹⁷ Pridham, p.1228.

⁹⁸ Pridham, p.1226.

⁹⁹ Pridham, p.1229.

¹⁰⁰ Pridham, p.1229.

¹⁰¹ Pridham, p.1234.

unofficial transnational linkages were able to influence Slovak environment to certain extent in order to promote the EU entry.¹⁰²

The first example of political discourse between MEPs and Slovak politicians were meetings of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), which was set up with the signature of Association Agreement with Slovakia.¹⁰³ The meetings of 15 Slovak MPs from different political parties and 15 MEPs were discussing issues considering the Slovak-EU agenda, “EU internal market, security questions, Phare programme, and energy and social policy”¹⁰⁴. Even though these JPC meetings were positively regarded for deepening transnational linkages, their value was often underrated. One member of Slovak delegation declared about this political discourse as a “dialogue between the deaf”¹⁰⁵. The second mean, more institutionalized one, for the Slovak integration into the European environment is “participation in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe”¹⁰⁶. Slovak deputies from various political parties¹⁰⁷ were grouped with their ‘analogues’ from EP.¹⁰⁸ Even though participation in the Assembly was perceived by certain politics less relevant; particularly speaking, Pál Czáky, leader of SMK, the value of such transnational party-political channels was higher than the JPC meetings when considering the success of the discussions over improvement of democracy level in Slovakia and influence over its EU relations.¹⁰⁹ Thirdly, Pridham is evaluating the opinions of Slovak leaders concerning these linkages. For instance, the chairman of Democratic Union, Eduard Kukan, expressed his positive opinion about the importance of such cooperation and he is positive that these linkages would help Slovakia to reach its destination. Even though Pridham noticed that it is mainly opposition that behave more initiative regarding transnational linkages in general, in this particular case of Slovakia it was a need that especially Slovak opposition was engaged, considering the “unproductive

¹⁰² Pridham, p.1234.

¹⁰³ Pridham, p.1234.

¹⁰⁴ Pridham, p.1234.

¹⁰⁵ Pridham, p.1235.

¹⁰⁶ Pridham, p.1235.

¹⁰⁷ Four from HZDS, one from SNS, one from KDH, one from DU, one from SMK and one from SDL.

¹⁰⁸ Pridham, p.1235.

¹⁰⁹ Pridham, p.1236.

line of the Mečiar government and its risk of isolating the country from mainstream EU politics”¹¹⁰.

The failure of Slovakia from 1997 may be perceived as an incentive that made Slovak elite and, what is more important, Slovak society to realize that it was time for bigger changes. The 1998 elections was perfect opportunity for Slovakia to prove to the EU its commitment. With the assistance of international partners, who were monitoring the fair and free running of the elections and assisted with pre-election material and financial support, the broadly observed Slovak elections of 1998 ended the authoritarian Mečiar’s governance.¹¹¹ Even though we shall not definitely conclude that it was only the international influence that assured such results, the importance of transnational party linkages may be considered as more than beneficial.

The Slovak case showed the limitations of democratic conditionality, whereas Slovakia, the ‘recalcitrant country’, was not able to respond to it, until the change of domestic political environment. The willingness and readiness of applicant country, therefore, are considered as variables when evaluating the effectiveness of democratic conditionality. In spite of harsh EU criticism of Slovakia, the EU had never set forth to Slovakia that it is an inappropriate candidate and that eventually Slovakia would not enter the EU. Slovakia’s commitment to the EU values was, in spite of Mečiar’s authoritarian governance and failure to response to democratic conditionality, unquestionable.

1.2.2. Democratic Conditionality Applied to Turkey

Turkey is subject of the same conditionality as all CEECs. Even though the possibility of Turkish membership in the EU has gained the relevancy back in 1964 by signing the Association Agreement, this reality acquired greater probability only in 1999, when Turkey has obtained the ‘candidacy statute’. Just like any other candidate country, Turkey was promised to start its negotiation talks after the fulfilment of Copenhagen Criteria. The political criteria for Turkey included, besides

¹¹⁰ Pridham, p.1236.

¹¹¹ Pridham, p.1237.

others, the requirement of improvement of human rights condition and decreasing of the military influence in the country. Just like it was in the Slovak case, the next step in Turkish accession path was conditioned by country's progress, therefore compliance.¹¹²

In accord with Schimmelfenning et al.'s hypothesis about material bargaining, which proposes the effective conditionality in case of low domestic political costs, the effectiveness of this mechanism in Turkey is perceived by them as varying. When we consider the Kemalists' perception of the EU requirements; threats to Turkish integrity and internal security, though, the hypothesis about the conditionality mechanism of material bargaining would fail, because of the high political costs. Kemalists' fears about the integrity and security arise out of possible provision of autonomy rights for Kurds and from the Islamic political parties and their potential power. Therefore, Kemalist elites have supported the military power in order not to let the Islamists to take over the country's governance completely and unconditionally. However, such approach is perceived by the EU as limiting of political rights and freedoms.¹¹³

The second Schimmelfenning et al.'s hypothesis presumes the effective mechanism of social influence under the condition of candidate's strong identification with the EU community.¹¹⁴ The presence of possible effectiveness of this mechanism of the EU conditionality is possible to be observed on European vocation of Kemalist elites and their willingness of participation in every European organization.¹¹⁵ The European commitment was felt even back in the 19th century by the acts of Ottoman modernization movement and their strategy or westernization.¹¹⁶ "In fact, the EU is the only major European organization of which Turkey is not a full member"¹¹⁷, yet. Despite of all of the commitment, the rejection from 1997 undermined Turkey's

¹¹² Schimmelfenning et al., p.507.

¹¹³ Schimmelfenning et al., p.507.

¹¹⁴ Schimmelfenning et al., p.500.

¹¹⁵ Schimmelfenning et al., p.508.

¹¹⁶ Sinem Akgül Açıkmeşe, "Cycles of Europeanization in Turkey: The Domestic Impact of EU Political Conditionality", **UNISCI Discussion Papers**, No.:23, TOBB-University of Economics and Technology, Ankara, 2010, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ord516=OrgaGrp&ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=117269>, (11.04.2013), p.138.

¹¹⁷ Schimmelfenning et al., p.508.

confidence and as a response, the Turkish deputies refused to take part in the Association Council meetings.¹¹⁸

The effectiveness of conditionality had its turning point in 1999, when, as it was mentioned before, Turkey gained the official status of the EU candidate and Turkey's certain doubts were replaced with the new hopes. Positively 'kicked' Turkey launched series of changes and reforms which included, besides others, the improvement of Kurdish minority cultural rights and the abolition of death penalty. However, Schimmelfenning et al. are arguing that the domestic power costs these reforms connote are considerably low. Their argument is preceded by the facts that the "moratorium on the death penalty Turkey has had since 1984"¹¹⁹ and it was only a question of time when this reform passes. Moreover, Açıkmeye expressed her doubts about the relevance of the improvement of Kurdish rights as a direct result of the EU conditionality with the comment that "PKK had renounced armed combat after the prosecution of its leader"¹²⁰, who was arrested in 1999.

The reform package including numerous reforms, however, did not satisfy enough the EU's demand about the decrease of military influence. Despite the "increase of the number of civilians in the National Security Council (NSC) from five to nine does not diminish the military's informal influence"¹²¹. On the grounds of these facts, the European Commission expressed in its report from 2002 that the EU is aware of the progresses Turkey has made, but the political criteria have not been fully met.¹²² The EU intended to monitor Turkey and its progress in implementation of these changes in practice. Turkey's progress to certain extent was 'rewarded' not only by the financial assistance, but also by setting the date of opening the negotiations talks. Therefore, the success of intergovernmental bargaining mechanism may be induced, which is obvious from the fact that Turkey was disposed to paying the domestic political cost to certain extent and comply with specific EU norms in order to make next step towards the EU full membership. That means, that Turkey, in a measure, successfully replied on the EU political

¹¹⁸ Schimmelfenning et al., p.508.

¹¹⁹ Schimmelfenning et al., p.508.

¹²⁰ A.Açıkmeye, p.144.

¹²¹ Schimmelfenning et al., p.509.

¹²² European Commission. **2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Brussels, 2002.p.47.

conditionality, however, the real high political costs which would the decreased military power present were not paid.

Many academicians who work on the topic of the EU conditionality and Turkey study the effectiveness of this external pressure with regard to two periods. The first period, whose beginning was subjected to the ‘candidacy status’ lasted until the end of year 2004 / beginning of year 2005. It is characterized by great volumes of reforms and constitutional changes.¹²³ Such reforms were considered as a result of successful ‘conditionality-compliance principle’¹²⁴ and eventuated in progressive democratization of the domestic policy. Years 2002-2005 were even named by Ziya Öniş as the ‘Golden age of Europeanization’¹²⁵, since the most significant constitutional amendments and 8 reform packages were adopted during this period.¹²⁶ Except of those reforms that were mentioned before the harmonization packages, moreover, included reforms for “gender equality in marriage, revision of laws on violence against women and children, amendments of freedom of press and freedom of expression, possibility for radio and TV broadcasting on other languages than Turkish and elimination of all forms of racial discrimination”¹²⁷. The improvement of political environment is considered to be the direct result of political conditionality with the external and internal incentives.¹²⁸ Regarding the external factors, Açıkmеше is confident that in this first period there were no doubts that the EU was committed to the idea of eventual Turkish membership. None of the European leaders that time expressed his or hers negative opinions about this earnest, moreover, Turkey did not receive any signals that the EU would apply double standards when evaluating Turkish progress of fulfilment of the Copenhagen Criteria.¹²⁹

¹²³ Çoşkun, Murat. “Testing the Theories on Conditionality Strategy of the EU: Turkish Political Reforms as a Case Study”, http://www.shef.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.178612!/file/Colloquium_Paper_Murat_Coskun.pdf, (19.07.2013).

¹²⁴ A.Açıkmеше, p.139.

¹²⁵ A.Açıkmеше, p.140.

¹²⁶ A.Açıkmеше, p.140.

¹²⁷ European Commission, **2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Brussels, 2002, pp.15-47.

¹²⁸ A.Açıkmеше, p.141.

¹²⁹ A.Açıkmеше, p.141.

Regarding the support of the European leaders, the external incentive, from the ‘Presidency Conclusions’ made in 1999 in Helsinki we may induce that Turkey as a potential candidate was not impugned and she was predestinated for the accession path that is consistent with the accession path of any other candidate country.¹³⁰ During the late 1990s Turkey enjoyed great support for its potential membership from the leaders from Germany, Greece and France, as well. Especially former Chancellor of Germany, Gerhard Schröder, was the pushing power that led Turkey towards next step in accession path. Moreover, the government in Germany that come into the power after the 1998 elections”emphasized that significance of political and economic criteria, rather than the religious and cultural factors”¹³¹. The equal treatment, as a next sign of EU’s commitment to Turkey’s membership, could be noticed in ‘Presidency Conclusion’ which was positively perceived and created “favourable environment for responding to the demands of the EU for democratic reforms”¹³².

However, as Ziya Öniş argues, not only external support, but also “strong political movement at home”¹³³ is needed for the efficient acceptance of conditionality. With regard to domestic factors, Açıkmеше noted that this convenient environment was present during whole first period and it was observable “through governmental commitments, public support, calculations of benefits and the non-presence of veto-players”¹³⁴. The AKP, back in that time, was trying to obtain the “legitimacy by shedding its Islamist past vis-a-vis the international community”¹³⁵ by commitment to the demands of EU. In their pre-election manifesto 2002 in order to prove their commitment to the EU they prepared National programmes, one in 2001 and one in 2003, as plans for fulfilling the demands accruing from the accession documents. For gaining even stronger support and legitimacy AKP started up monitoring about the implementation of democratic procedures in the country. Moreover, the Turkish political and social elite provided great support for the

¹³⁰ A.Açıkmеше, p.142.

¹³¹ A.Açıkmеше, p.142.

¹³² A.Açıkmеше, p.143.

¹³³ A.Açıkmеше, p.141.

¹³⁴ A.Açıkmеше, p.142.

¹³⁵ A.Açıkmеше, p.143.

reforms enacted in this first period. However, this positive approach, whether external, or internal, lasted only until the end of the year 2004.

The second period which started at the beginning of the 2005 its characterized by decrease of reforms, decrease of the EU pressure and decrease of Turkey's commitment to the EU. There were few critical factors for these decreases. In order to understand the reason, three main conditions for successful conditionality according to the theories on conditionality described by Murat Coşkun in his research paper will be explained.

The first condition for successful conditionality is "sizeable rewards". These rewards are provided as an exchange for reforms with high political costs. Therefore, the only ultimate reward offered for these high costs is the membership prospective, as Coşkun argues. After the opening of the negotiation talks with Turkey this prospect, however, has become more 'blurred' and the accession process has become more as a dead-end path. Moreover, the countries which pushed Turkey to the gates of the EU before, like Germany, France or Austria, were more seemed to be adversaries and openly stated that privileged partnership would be better solution in Turkish case. These facts, therefore, undermined the credibility of well-functioning conditionality since the eventual full membership for Turkey was questioned by important European leaders. This is the first reason why Turkey stopped to answer on the EU conditionality. The second presumption of successful conditionality is its credibility, which depends on three factors; "clear link between membership and conditions, fulfilment of conditions judged according to objective criteria and clearly defined EU demands"¹³⁶. Coşkun argues, however, that none of these 3 provisions for credibility were adhered. He emphasized especially the broadness and unclarity of Copenhagen Criteria which, as he proposed, "make membership a moving target for candidate countries"¹³⁷. He is also positive about the fact that these conditions for membership include demands that are out of particular candidate country's control. Third condition for flourishing conditionality, as Murat Coşkun presented, is 'favourable domestic conditions'. The reason of why even this third condition was not successfully promoted, was the prejudices about both Turkey, of

¹³⁶ Coşkun.

¹³⁷ Coşkun.

not being European enough and about EU, of not being unfair while evaluating Turkey's progresses. The 'other' feeling made by the EU and felt by Turkey has been the greatest gap and reason of decreasing the effectiveness of democratic conditionality.

On the both cases, Slovakia and Turkey, it is obvious that it is mostly the domestic political environment that influences the extent to which conditionality is effective. Both countries have in common, though, as Schimmelfenning et al.'s noted, that mechanism of social influence, however the EU committed the country is, is not a relevant element when evaluating its impact on countries' responses on conditionality here.¹³⁸ The reasons for the failure of social influence in both countries are the high political costs of compliance. In other words, both leaders of Slovakia and Turkey were not willing to make any radical changes which could jeopardize their dominance. It cannot be, though, definitely refused that the EU conditionality did not play any role in these countries, when evaluating Slovakia's pre-accession period and Turkey's post-1999 period. Instead, it may conclude that while the 2002 reform packages of AKP was initialized, more or less, by the 'reward' of candidacy status for Turkey, the Slovak electorate was aware of the costs they may pay; postponing or even halting of the EU membership, in case Mečiar's governance would have continued. If both countries, as it was shown in this part, were answering on the EU conditionality to certain extent and both of them were considered to fulfil the Copenhagen Criteria after all, the only difference which makes Turkey still holding in is ideological; the non-European image of Turkey constructed by European population and high-level politicians seems to be stronger than the image that Turkish elite has been trying to create since the constitution of the republic – modern European country.

¹³⁸ Schimmelfenning et al., p.514.

CHAPTER TWO

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF SLOVAKIA'S AND TURKEY'S ACCESSION PATH TO THE EU

2.1. SLOVAKIA'S ACCESSION PATH TO THE EU

Slovakia, since the end of the communism, had been trying for political and economic stability and maintenance of European culture. The membership in EU, which is subject to such stability, would therefore mean that this objective was completed and also that Slovakia finally takes its “rightful place in European community”¹³⁹. In this part the Slovakia's difficult path to the EU in historical order will be described. Indeed, even the most stable countries of Western Europe have their EU accession process characterized as difficult, but Slovakia's challenging fight was harder when considering that its “political climate had oscillated somewhat unpredictably between promoting strong, western European democratic principles and more nationalist, isolationist policy”¹⁴⁰.

2.1.1. From 1989-until 2000

Slovakia's began its initial steps towards the membership while the existence of Czechoslovakia in 1989, when as a part of this federation arranged contacts with the European Communities (EC – former EU) by signing the four-year contract – Trade Agreement on industrial products.¹⁴¹ The diplomatic ties have proceeded, mainly through the economic cooperation and the trade agreements with the Community, and even the disintegration of the Federation of Czechoslovakia did not stop Slovakia in approaching its ‘dream’ of EU membership. After Slovakia gained its independence in January 1993, she continued to pursue this goal. On 4th October

¹³⁹ Megan M.Metzger, “Slovakia and European Union: Complexities and Contradictions”, Honors Projects, Paper 1, International Studies Department, Macalester College, 30.04.2007, http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=intlstudies_honors, (12.04.2013), p.34.

¹⁴⁰ Metzger, pp.34.

¹⁴¹ Euractive, “Slovensko a Európska Únia” (“Slovakia and EU”), 01.02.2010, http://www.euractiv.sk/rozsirovanie/zoznam_liniek/slovensko-a-europska-unia, (19.06.2013), p.1.

1993 in Luxemburg the Association Agreement, which established the association between Slovakia and Member States of EC was signed.¹⁴² The Association Agreement has been an initiative agreement between EU and all its members, either the old ones or the new potential ones. It is an important document that has served to all CEECs as a tool for consolidation of law.¹⁴³ The Association Agreement came into force on 1st February 1995.¹⁴⁴ The next step that European Communities had prepared for Slovakia was sending the European Commission delegation to Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. The European Commission's task was to monitor every Slovakia's step and progress that may be EC concerned with and preparing regular reports on Slovakia's progress in accession process. In the European Council meeting in Cannes on 27th June 1995 Slovak Prime Minister, that time, Vladimír Mečiar, officially submitted the Slovak application for the EU. This application is supplemented with the Memorandum of the Slovak government according to which Slovakia intends to fulfil all the membership criteria and gain the title of EU member approximately in the year 2000.¹⁴⁵

In the year 1997 European Commission's expertise on CEE candidates leave Slovakia out of the group of countries which fulfilled all accession criteria and may start with the accession talks. In the 1997 Summit in Luxembourg, European Council decided about the start of negotiation talks of 6 countries, which however did not include Slovakia. Continuously, in 1998 European Council made a decision; the annual reports on each CEE candidate and all other following candidate countries will be made by the European Commission. In this annual progress reports each candidate will be evaluated in accord with its progress in fulfilment of Copenhagen Criteria and offered advices for improvement in the problematic areas. The reason of Slovakia's setback in 1997 was the disability to comply with the political criteria, as a direct result of that times 'Mečiarism' – an authoritarian style of governance of

¹⁴² Vlasta Kunová, "Od Pridruzenia ku Vstupu Slovenskej Republiky do Európskej Únie"(Slovakia from the Association to the Entrance into the European Union), http://www.kbdesign.sk/cla/eu_pravo_na_slovensku/original/4%20Od%20pridruz%20k%20clenstvuPJK.htm , (28.01.2013).

¹⁴³ Kunová.

¹⁴⁴ Euractive, "Slovensko a Európska Únia" ("Slovakia and EU"), 01.02.2010, http://www.euractiv.sk/rozsirovanie/zoznam_liniek/slovensko-a-europska-unia, (19.06.2013),p.1.

¹⁴⁵ Euractive, "Slovensko a Európska Únia" ("Slovakia and EU"), 01.02.2010, http://www.euractiv.sk/rozsirovanie/zoznam_liniek/slovensko-a-europska-unia, (19.06.2013),p.1.

Prime Minister Mečiar. The elections of 1998, however, brought change in political environment and was positively perceived and acknowledged by EU, which in her enouncement from October 1998 expressed her satisfaction with the elections' agenda and the results as such.¹⁴⁶ New Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda and his coalition brought changes that finally allowed Slovakia positive progress on the path to the EU accession. Prime Minister, in spite of some inconveniences and different opinions within the members of coalition over some reforms, was able to start up the cooperation with the EU that was expected. One year later, in October 1999 European Commission advised that Slovakia and other 5 candidate countries¹⁴⁷ shall begin with the accession talks. Two months later on the Member States' summit in Helsinki, the EU took the European Commission advice and decided that the negotiation talks shall start with all 6 candidate countries, including Slovakia.

2.1.2. From 2000-until 2004

On 15th February 2000, as proposed at the Helsinki summit, the accession negotiations officially started. The Commission report made in 2000 evaluated the overall situation of Slovakia's progress as positive and acknowledged all the reforms done. For the first time, Slovakia was commended for its progress in market economy, one of the main Copenhagen criteria for the accession.¹⁴⁸ The year 2001, however, was characterized by the contretemps concerning the EU financial funds and their misusing. The Deputy Minister of the Slovak Republic for the European Integration, Pavol Hamžík, was connected to this affair and due to this inconvenience Rudolf Schuster, the President of Slovak Republic, dismissed him from the function. The negative circumstances in 2001, however, outdid the positive ones; the EU opened accession talks with Slovakia on 13 chapters, out of which 12 was preliminary closed. Slovakia, with this success, fulfilled the principle of 'catch-up',

¹⁴⁶ SITA, "Slovensko Oslavuje 5 rokov v Unii: Aka Bola Nasa Cesta do EU?" ("Slovakia Celebrates 5 years in Union: How was our path to the EU?"), 01.05.2009, <http://www.cas.sk/clanok/115127/slovensko-oslavuje-5-rokov-v-unii-aka-bola-nasa-cesta-do-eu.html>, (12.06.2013).

¹⁴⁷ Malta, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Bulgaria

¹⁴⁸ European Commission, **Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Brussels, 2000, p.23.

and get to the level of negotiations of countries which started their EU talks two years before Slovakia did.¹⁴⁹ The overall report from 2001 again positively evaluates the progressive situation in Slovakia, but also criticizes few areas about which Slovakia must find solution before its actual accession. The criticism mentioned in 2001 regular report concerns mostly deepening of the practice of democratic institutions and further implementation of the minority language legislation.¹⁵⁰

At the beginning of the 2002 Slovakia had one main goal; to close all 31 *acquis* chapters. Another important matter that was at the Slovak agenda of 2002 was the parliamentary elections that took place in September. The elections, however, ended up even better as expected and Slovak population confirmed the EU's presumption about their EU commitment. Four centre-right pro-European political parties gained the majority of the votes and therefore the majority of the seats in the parliament; 78 out of 150 seats.¹⁵¹ Even Pat Cox, the European Parliament president made a statement in which he openly expressed his contentment with the results and said that it was obvious, Slovak citizens were ready for the EU membership and that they wanted to get into the Club as soon as possible.¹⁵² By the end of the year 2002 Slovakia successfully achieved aforementioned goal and closed all 31 *acquis* chapters. Slovakia fully used the 'catch-up' principle and therefore confirmed the main pre-condition for the 1st May 2004-EU membership entrance. On 13th December on the Copenhagen summit of the EU Slovakia's last 2 chapters, Agriculture and Finances and budget, were closed and it was decided that Slovakia will enter the Club on 1st May 2004.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Ján Figel and Miroslav Adamiš, **Slovensko na Ceste do Európskej Únie, Kapitoly a Súvislosti** (Slovakia on its way to the EU, Chapters and Contexts), Robert Vico, Úrad Vlády SR, Slovenská Spoločnosť pre zahraničnú Politiku, Centrum pre Európsku Politiku, Bratislava, 2003, p.23.

¹⁵⁰ European Commission, **Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Brussels, 2001, pp.24-25.

¹⁵¹ Karen Henderson, **Europe and the Slovak Parliamentary Elections of September 2002**, RIIA/OERN Election Briefing No.7, Department of Politics, University of Leicester, 2002, p.1.

¹⁵² SITA, "Slovensko Oslavuje 5 rokov v Unii: Aka Bola Nasa Cesta do EU?" ("Slovakia Celebrates 5 years in Union: How was our path to the EU?"), 01.05.2009, <http://www.cas.sk/clanok/115127/slovensko-oslavuje-5-rokov-v-unii-aka-bola-nasa-cesta-do-eu.html>,(12.06.2013).

¹⁵³ Figel and Adamiš, p.28.

The European Parliament authorized Slovakia as a member of the EU on 9th April 2003¹⁵⁴ and consequently, few days later, on 16th April in Athens, Slovakia signed the Accession Treaty with all 24 already Member states.¹⁵⁵ In order to ratify Agreement, President Rudolf Schuster pronounced the referendum with start on 16th May 2003 about Slovak entrance to the EU with the question: "Do you agree the Slovak Republic will become a member country of the EU?"¹⁵⁶ With the majority of 'yes' votes, more particularly, 93,71% of valid votes, voters approved Slovakia's membership in the EU.¹⁵⁷ On 1st July 2003 The National Council of Slovak Republic ratified the Treaty of Accession between the EU and Slovakia. At the begging of the 2004 the Nation Council of Slovakia nominated the Slovak deputy for European Commission, Ján Figel' from Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), who was the "Chief Negotiator of the SR for the negotiations on the accession of Slovakia to the EU"¹⁵⁸ during 1998-2003. On 1st May 2004 Slovakia together with Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovenia became an official full member of the EU structure.

When considered that Slovakia was initially excluded from the first group of accessing countries due to such important reason as the insufficient democracy level is, it may be proposed that Slovakia was able to achieve pretty big success when she 'caught-up' with the first group and was able to enter the EU at the same time. The second part of this 'chronology' chapter consists of the timeline of Turkey's still continuing EU accession path.

¹⁵⁴ 521 of MEPs votes for Slovakia, 21 MEPs were against Slovakia and 25 MEPs refrained from voting, Figel' and Adamiš, p.28.

¹⁵⁵ SITA, "Slovensko Oslavuje 5 rokov v Unii: Aka Bola Nasa Cesta do EU?" ("Slovakia Celebrates 5 years in Union: How was our path to the EU?"), 01.05.2009, <http://www.cas.sk/clanok/115127/slovensko-oslavuje-5-rokov-v-unii-aka-bola-nasa-cesta-do-eu.html>, (12.06.2013) and Figel' and Adamiš, pp.28-29.

¹⁵⁶ Electionguide, "Slovakia Referendum Overview", Last update:01.04.2006, <http://www.electionguide.org/election.php?ID=347>, (20.06.2013).

¹⁵⁷ Electionguide, "Slovakia Referendum Results", Last update:01.04.2006 <http://www.electionguide.org/results.php?ID=347>, (20.06.2013).

¹⁵⁸ "Mr.Figel's Curriculum Vitae", http://www.europarl.europa.eu/press/audicom2004/cv/cv_figel.pdf, (22.06.2013).

2.2. TURKEY'S ACCESSION PATH TO THE EU

Turkey has always had close relation with the Western European countries since 1923, its foundation. Turkey's initial steps in order to be a part of the European unification political project started in September 1959, when Turkey applied for the first time to be an associate member of European Economic Community (EEC).¹⁵⁹

2.2.1. From 1963-until 2005

On 12th September 1963 Turkey was, in accordance with the previous application, accept as an associate member of EEC by signing the Association Agreement, in this case called 'The Ankara Agreement'.¹⁶⁰ By signing this agreement, Turkey promised to create convenient and sufficient environment in order to get into the Customs Union imprimis, and eventually to the EU, as well. For the purpose of fulfilment the Ankara Agreement, "three Financial Protocols allocating funds for the economic development of Turkey were signed in 1964, 1973 and 1977 respectively"¹⁶¹. In 1970 the 'Additional Protocol' was signed. This protocol, also called as 'Katma Protocol' was made and signed on account of Turkey's preparation for accession to the Customs Union. After the military coup took place in 1980, it took to Turkey 7 years to recover from the regime and get back on the democracy line.

On 14th April 1987 Turkey submitted its first application for the full membership in the European Community. However, European Community in 1989 had to reject Turkey on the ground of two reasons; firstly, EC will not accept any member until it completes its internal market, and secondly, in European Commission's 'Opinion' on Turkey's progress it was pointed out that Turkey's economical, political and social situation must be improved in accordance with the

¹⁵⁹ "Turkey and the EU", A Curriculum Unit on Turkish-EU relations for Secondary Education, **The EU Center at the University of Illinois**, 2007, http://www.euc.illinois.edu/_includes/docs/Turkey-EU-curriculum.pdf, (14.01.2013).

¹⁶⁰ Annabelle Littoz-Monnet and Beatriz Villanueva Penas, "Turkey and the EU - The Implications of a Specific Enlargement" ,2005, <http://aei.pitt.edu/9307/1/050404Turquie-ALM-BVP.pdf>, (14.05.2013), p.2.

¹⁶¹ Littoz-Monnet and Villanueva Penas, p.2.

criteria for the EU accession.¹⁶² One year later, in summer 1990 Commission provided support for Turkey; a ‘Cooperation Package’. The aim of this package was to cooperate with and to back Turkey in all areas proposed for reform. Up until the 1995 there was no significant change in the EU-Turkey relations. However, at the end on 1995 the agreement creating the customs Union between the EC and Turkey was signed and came into force on 1.1.1996.¹⁶³

At the Summit in Luxembourg in December 1997, Turkey was left-out of the list of countries obtaining the candidacy status, however considered to be an eligible country for the EU membership.

The disappointing results from Luxembourg Summit in 1997 was replaced with the positive outcome from the Helsinki summit in 1999, where the Council put Turkey on the level of other applicants by giving Turkey officially the status of candidate.¹⁶⁴ This status was supposed to ensure equal treatment of Turkey and other candidates when considering their fulfilment of accession political criteria, the most critical criteria that a country must fulfil in order to start the negotiation talks with the EU. Even though Turkey was given this status, the EU did not forget to remind to Turkey that there are still insufficiencies that Turkey must catch-up on before the beginning of opening the accession negotiations.

The Accession Partnership between the EU and Turkey was adopted in February 2001 which provided for Turkey an outline upon which Turkey shall continue to implement EU norms and standards into its legislation. As an outcome of this ‘support’, Turkey has started to introduce reform packages concerning the improvement of political situation, the human rights situation and the decrease of military influence.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, Turkish government presents its National Program for the Adoption of Acquis (NPAA), reflecting the Accession Partnership. After all these changes that Turkey was able to accomplish within considerably short period of time, European Council made a decision on the ground of which Turkey will begin its negotiation talks if the Council in December 2004 approves that Turkey

¹⁶² “Chronology of Turkey-EU Relations (1959-2009)”, Last update:17.06. 2011, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/?p=112&l=2>, (22.07.2013).

¹⁶³ Vincent Morelli, **EU Enlargement: A Status Report on Turkey’s Accession Negotiations**, Congressional research Service, 7-5700, 2013, p.2.

¹⁶⁴ Littoz-Monnet and Villanueva Penas, p.3.

¹⁶⁵ Moreli,2013, p.2.

fulfilled Copenhagen political criteria, and the Commission would recommend so, as well.¹⁶⁶

Another critical point in EU-Turkey relations occurred on 6th October; “‘Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey’s Progress towards accession’, along with its paper ‘Issues Arising from Turkey’s Membership Perspective’”¹⁶⁷ was issued. The recommendation includes acknowledgement of all progress and reforms that Turkey had made by then. That involves; “two major constitutional reforms, eight legislative packages, civil-military relations evolving towards European standards, changes to judicial system, recognition of primacy of international and European law, complete abolition of death penalty, the release of people sentenced for expressing non-violent opinions, recognition of cultural rights for the Kurds, contribution of the Turkish foreign policy to the stability in the region”¹⁶⁸. The most critical sentence in the report that allowed Turkey make next step towards the EU membership, i.e. have the negotiation talks open was: “...Commission considers that Turkey sufficiently fulfils the political criteria and recommends that accession negotiations be opened.”¹⁶⁹

2.2.2. From 2005-until Present

The beginning of year 2005 was led in the terms of preparation for the start of the negotiation talks; the Chief negotiator with the EU was appointed¹⁷⁰, Negotiation Framework document was published and ‘Additional Protocol’ was signed in order to include the 10 new member States acceded in 2004 into the EU-Turkey

¹⁶⁶ “Turkey and the EU”, A Curriculum Unit on Turkish-EU relations for Secondary Education, **The EU Center at the University of Illinois**, 2007, http://www.euc.illinois.edu/_includes/docs/Turkey-EU-curriculum.pdf, (14.01.2013).

¹⁶⁷ “Turkey and the EU”, A Curriculum Unit on Turkish-EU relations for Secondary Education, **The EU Center at the University of Illinois**, 2007, http://www.euc.illinois.edu/_includes/docs/Turkey-EU-curriculum.pdf, (14.01.2013).

¹⁶⁸ Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, **Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey’s progress towards accession**, Brussels, 2004, p.3.

¹⁶⁹ Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, **Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey’s progress towards accession**, Brussels, 2004, p.3.

¹⁷⁰ Ali Babacan – State Minister.

relations.¹⁷¹ In October 3rd the negotiations has officially started by adopting the Negotiation Framework. Consequently, the ‘Screening Process’ initiated with the screening meeting on the chapter ‘Science and Research’, chapter that was opened and temporarily closed on the same meeting on 12th July 2006. The Screening Process; screening meetings of all chapters one by one, had continued until the 13th October 2006. The problem, however occurred, when Turkey did not want to recognize Cyprus as one of the 10 acceded EU countries when signing the ‘Additional Protocol’. The year 2006 was therefore so-called turning point in the EU-Turkey relations. Turkey felt that the support for the reforms from the EU side was not as strong as Turkey expect it to be, and EU, on the opposite side, noticed the obvious downturn in Turkish reform process. Even European Parliament stepped into this situation and warned Turkey that if they want to successfully proceed in their accession process, they must follow their obligations and responsibilities that came with the signature of the Association Agreement and the Additional Protocol, as well.¹⁷² However, due to the fact that Turkey, in spite of all warnings, refused to open its airports and harbours to Greek Cypriot administration of Southern Cyprus, Council made a decision; eight chapters of the *acquis* were frozen.¹⁷³ Moreover, the French candidate for president in the campaign 2007, Nicolas Sarkozy, one of the strongest European leaders nowadays, openly proposed that Turkey should never obtain a status of the EU Member State.¹⁷⁴

In year 2007 five more *acquis* chapters were open; Enterprise and industrial policy, Statistics, Financial control, Consumer and health protection, Trans-European networks.¹⁷⁵ Four chapters were open in year 2008, two in 2009, one in 2010, one by now in 2013, however, none of the chapters except of the ‘Science and research’ chapter have not been closed yet. Moreover, 18 chapters have been frozen by now and only one of them unfrozen. Years 2007-2011 were not anyhow significant when

¹⁷¹ “Chronology of Turkey-EU Relations (1959-2009)”, Last update:17.06. 2011, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/?p=112&l=2>, (22.07.2013).

¹⁷² Morelli, 2013, p.4.

¹⁷³ “Turkey – Enlargement”, Interactive timeline, Last update:27.06.2013, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/turkey/index_en.htm, (23.07.2013).

¹⁷⁴ Morelli, 2013, p.5.

¹⁷⁵ “Turkey – state of play : 30 June 2010”, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/enlargement_process/accesion_process/how_does_a_country_join_the_eu/negotiations_croatia_turkey/overview_negotiations_tr_en.pdf, (23.07.2013).

considering the Turkish progress in accession process. There were, of course few political reforms that may be considered as important; but the snags in the issues such as “freedom of expression, the fight against corruption, cultural rights, and civilian oversight of the security forces”¹⁷⁶ have had much more negative significance than the positive changes. One of the positive ones was, for instance, the announcement of the full-time EU negotiator for the first time; State Minister Egemen Bağış has got the opportunity to present himself on this distinguished position at the beginning of year 2009. However, later in 2009, European Parliament, again, warned Turkey to fulfil its obligations towards EU; more particularly, European Parliament emphasized the need of the solution of the Cyprus issue, therefore a withdrawal of military force from the area.

The overall assessment of 2009, a progress report issued in 2010, was according to Egemen Bağış “the most positive and encouraging one of the 13 reports issued so far”¹⁷⁷. This positive attitude, however, did not last long. When the assessment of the year 2010 started, the results seemed to be very different, and not as supportive and motivating as the previous ones. According to Kader Sevinç, a representative of Republican People’s Party (CHP) officiating in Brussels, the evaluation of Commission was the “toughest-worded document drafted since Turkey and the EU began formal accession negotiations in 2005”¹⁷⁸. The next year 2011 continued with only little progress; no chapter was opened that year. Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu, was convinced that such situation did not occur because of any technical problem, but due to political reasons; mainly the Cyprus issue and the fact that France and Germany expressed their strong opposition against Turkish membership.¹⁷⁹ The progress report issued in 2011 did not meet government’s expectations again. Despite it was acknowledged that Turkey is an important partner of the EU, considering the foreign trade and investments, the

¹⁷⁶ Morelli, 2013, p.5.

¹⁷⁷ “Bağış Evaluates 2010 Progress Report”, 10.11.2010, <http://egemenbagis.com/en/1749>, (25.07.2013).

¹⁷⁸ Fülya Özerkan, “European Parliament Adopts Critical Report on Turkey” , 03.09.2011, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=toughest-report-ever-says-chps-brussels-chief-2011-03-09>, (27.07.2013).

¹⁷⁹ “Turkey's EU membership talks deadlocked, FM Davutoğlu says”, 20.04.2011, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=turkey8217s-eu-bid-is-at-bottleneck-die-to-the-political-blockages-turkish-fm-says-2011-04-20>, (27.07.2013).

criticism was decisive. Turkey did not make any further progress in the areas that have been discussed for many times.¹⁸⁰ On the one hand, the highest Turkish leaders expressed their disapproval with such assessment; Erdoğan even called the EU as ‘crumbling’ and added that its currency is in ‘disarray’.¹⁸¹ On the other hand, however, representatives of CHP emphasized that the government stepped out of the EU track back in 2006, and has not done any pro-EU reform since. Moreover, they sent a message via media to government that it should finally take the Commission reports into consideration and proceed with the democratization process.¹⁸²

Year 2012 in Turkey was an obvious example of a failed EU accession process. Turkey found itself in a political and technical stalemate and was not able to proceed with the negotiations in any way, or open, not to mention close, any of the *acquis* chapters.¹⁸³ The Cyprus EU presidency was drawing near and that would mean that Turkey, just like Erdoğan proposed “would freeze its relation with the EU because it could not work with a presidency that it does not recognize”¹⁸⁴, until the elections that will take part at the beginning of 2013. It was the ‘Positive agenda with Turkey’ that ‘saved’ the almost shattered EU-Turkey relations, published on 12th October 2011 and launched on 17th May 2012.¹⁸⁵ The agenda, was on the one side understood as a trick made in order to circumvent the Cyprus issue, and on the other side, as a “repackaging of the old ‘privileged partnership’ concept suggested by French and the others”¹⁸⁶, in order to have Turkey forget about the ultimate goal; accession negotiations and the full membership.

Nevertheless, Turkish accession negotiations continue, slowly, but certainly. As prove that Turkey has made progress fully acknowledged by the EU is the opened chapter on 25th June 2013; chapter 22, regulating the regional policies in Turkey. This success after 2 years of no chapter opening announced Ahmet Davutoğlu, who

¹⁸⁰ Freedom of expression, media and religion and women’s rights.

¹⁸¹ “Prime Minister Erdoğan Lashes Out at EU over Latest progress Report”, 16.10.2011, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=pm-warns-to-cut-talks-with-eu-greek-cyprus-2011-10-16>, (28.07.2013).

¹⁸² “Turkey’s Main Opposition says gov’t needs EU Report’s Advices”, 14.10.2011, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=turkeys-main-opposition-says-gov8217t-needs-eu-report8217s-advices-2011-10-14>, (28.07.2013).

¹⁸³ Morelli, 2013, p.10.

¹⁸⁴ Morelli, 2013, p.8.

¹⁸⁵ Vincent Morelli, **EU Enlargement: A Status Report on Turkey’s Accession Negotiations**, Congressional research Service, 7-5700, 2012, p.18.

¹⁸⁶ Morelli, 2013, p.11.

added that during year 2013 Turkey is willing to open 2 more chapters important for supporting the situation of human rights and freedoms; chapters 23 and 24.¹⁸⁷ The stabilized EU-Turkey relations, however, were disrupted by the ‘Gezi Parkı’ protests and circumstances, at the sake of which the European Parliament in his resolution from 13th June 2013 expressed its discrepancy with the way Turkish Prime Minister and police force handled the situation and asked for immediate peaceful solution.¹⁸⁸ For now, it would be proposed that the question ‘when’ Turkey will become an EU member shall be replaced with the ‘if’.

¹⁸⁷ “Davutoğlu on EU: “Chapters Opened, Obstacles Removed””, 25.06.2013, <http://english.sabah.com.tr/national/2013/06/25/davutoglu-on-eu-chapter-opened-obstacles-removed>, (27.07.2013).

¹⁸⁸ “European Parliament Resolution of 13 June 2013 on the Situation in Turkey”, (2013/2664(RSP)), P7_TA-PROV(2013)0277, 17.06.2013, <http://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/resource/news-archiv/news-single-view/article/european-parliament-resolution-of-13-june-2013-on-the-situation-in-turkey-20132664rspp.html> (29.07.2013).

CHAPTER THREE

SLOVAKIA AND TURKEY IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Slovak Republic and Turkey what do they have in common? Are they really so different? Is it possible that their economies and politics have been coming through similar changes and processes? In this chapter the author is willing to explore whether Slovakia and Turkey have some similarities as well as differences in spheres of their economic progress and political advancements.

3.1. SIMILARITIES: ARE THERE ANY?

The author proposes the presumption of eventual similarities of Turkey and Slovakia due to the fact that Slovakia is generally known as stagnant country in compare with EU-15, even with EU-25¹⁸⁹. Will there be really similarities in their progresses during their EU accession processes? Or will be find out that economic and political progress of Turkey is even on better way that Slovakia had had before it entered the EU? If the author would be able to find such similarities, what are the differences that do not allow Turkey enter the EU?

To make such comparison of two countries and their processes of accession to the EU the author uses statistical data from official web pages, Progress Reports for Turkey and Slovakia of European Commission, the academic studies and official EU papers of each country's accession process such as work of Katinka Barysch, "The Economics of Turkish Accession"¹⁹⁰, an essay that helps better understand and overcome misleading prejudices about Turkey's economy. A similar paper;

¹⁸⁹ **EU-12** (1 November 1993 - 31 December 1994): Belgium (BE), Greece (EL), Luxembourg (LU), Denmark (DK), Spain (ES), Netherlands (NL), Germany (DE), France (FR), Portugal (PT), Ireland (IE), Italy (IT), United Kingdom (UK)

EU-15 (1 January 1995 - 30 April 2004): EU-12 + Austria (AT), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE)

EU-25 (1 May 2004 - 31 December 2006): EU-15 + Poland (PL), Czech Republic (CZ), Cyprus (CY), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Slovenia (SI), Estonia (EE), Slovakia (SK), Hungary (HU), Malta (MT)

"Glossary:EU enlargements", http://eppp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Glossary:EU-27, (15.01.2013).

¹⁹⁰ Katinka Barysch, "The Economics of Turkish Accession", Centre for European Reform, London, 2005,

<http://home.aubg.bg/faculty/didar/ECON%20402/economics%20of%20turkish%20accession.pdf>, (20.04.2013), pp.2-9.

“Economic and Social Context of Slovakia’s Accession to the EU” written by Slovak academician Milan Šikula in 2002, gives us useful overview, as well. This work, as the author wrote, is supposed to help to “overcome the low and insufficient availability of information and the consequential unrealistically optimistic and overly pessimistic expectations”¹⁹¹. In this comparison the author focuses on years before these two countries started their negotiation talks, and she is also interested in comparison of the indexes from after 2004 about Slovakia and current Turkish indexes. The author of this thesis will evaluate at the same time the progress reports on both countries presented by the Commission since 1998, when the European Council decided that “From the end of 1998, the Commission will make regular reports to the Council, together with any necessary recommendations for opening bilateral intergovernmental conferences...”¹⁹². Such recommendations and reports are, or were made on CEECs and on each candidate country.

3.1.1. Economy

There are many techniques and methods how to compare and evaluate functioning of two economies on the basis of various indexes and indicators. In order to stay within the framework of the EU author will use the Copenhagen criteria as basis. Copenhagen criteria were decided on and signed before the enlargement in 2004 in June 1993 by European Council in Copenhagen¹⁹³. Candidate countries must fulfil conditions concerning political criteria, economic criteria and acquis criterion in order to become official member of EU. Economic criterion comprises of two commitments; to create functioning market economy and at the same time to be able of competitiveness on European market.¹⁹⁴

So how can be functioning market economy recognizes? Most of the economists are defining market economy more or less the same. For this research the

¹⁹¹ Milan Šikula, **Economic and Social Context of Slovakia’s Accession to the EU**, Institute of Slovak and World Economy, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, 2002, p.1.

¹⁹² European Commission, **Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, 1998, p.4.

¹⁹³ Tanja Marktler, “The Power of the Copenhagen Criteria”, **Croatian Yearbook of European Law and Policy**, Vol.2, 2006, p.344.

¹⁹⁴ Marktler, p.344.

author will use the definition of market economy with the help of Harper College's 5Es. According to the study, the market system is characterized by economic growth, allocative efficiency, productive efficiency, equity and full employment¹⁹⁵. The author will center primarily on the indexes that show us the similarities of economical progress such as economic growth and the employment. Afterwards she will compare other economic indexes that are evaluated in the progress reports from Commission. The economic growth of countries of EU, Slovakia and Turkey is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Real GDP Growth Rate – Volume (percentage change on previous year)

GEO/TIME	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
EU (27 countries)	2,9	3	3,9	2,1	1,3	1,5	2,5	2,1	3,3	3,2	0,3	-4,3	2,1	1,5	-0,3
Euro area (changing composition)	2,7	2,9	3,8	2	0,9	0,7	2,2	1,7	3,2	2,9	0,4	-4,4	2	1,4	-0,4
Euro area (17 countries)	2,8	2,9	3,8	2	0,9	0,7	2,2	1,7	3,2	3	0,4	-4,4	2	1,4	-0,4
Euro area (16 countries)	2,8	2,9	3,8	2	0,9	0,7	2,2	1,7	3,2	3	0,4	-4,4	2	1,4	-0,4
Slovakia	4,4	0	1,4	3,5	4,6	4,8	5,1	6,7	8,3	10,5	5,8	-4,9	4,4	3,2	2,6
Turkey	4,6	-3,4	6,8	-5,7	6,2	5,3	9,4	8,4	6,9	4,7	0,7	-4,8	9	8,5	(f) 3

Source: “Real Real GDP Growth Rate – Volume, percentage change on previous year” <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tec00115>, (03.01.2013).

In order to compare economic growth of Slovakia and Turkey author used the index Real GDP growth rate, as shown and explained in the Table 1 since Slovakia started its negotiation process in year 2000 and Turkey in 2005, the author compares the values of the years before their accession talks. The fact that Slovakia's GDP growth rate was 4.4 in 1998 and even decreased to 0 in 1999 shows its economic slowdown. As the 1999 Annual Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession states “the slowdown results from the efforts of government to decelerate investments and consumption, in order to lower imports and reduce the trade and current account deficit”¹⁹⁶. Even though the Table 1 shows that the real GDP growth rate was 0 in 1999, the 2001 Annual Report evaluating previous progresses is positive about Slovakia's progress in macroeconomics and concludes

¹⁹⁵ Harper College, “Pure Capitalism and the Market System: The Market and the 5 Es”, <http://www.harpercollege.edu/mhealy/eco211/lectures/captism/ch4.htm>, (03.01.2013).

¹⁹⁶ European Commission, **1999 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Slovakia, 1999, p.20.

that the “real GDP growth has been accelerating over the reporting period”¹⁹⁷. Therefore Slovakia successfully opened its accession in 2000.

Considering Turkey, country that was able to start its accession negotiations in 2005, and its GDP growth, we can see much better results. In 2003 the GDP growth was 5.3 and it even increased in 2004 by getting on the value of 9.4. The Annual Report of Commission from 2004 is evaluating and giving overview on past few years, especially after the economic crisis in 2001. Even from the Table 1 it can be noticed that in 2001 the GDP growth rate was negative and decreased to the level of -5.7. However, the general evaluation of the Turkey’s economy from the 2004 progress report concludes that “Turkey has made further considerable progress towards being a functioning market economy, in particular by reducing its macroeconomic imbalances”, moreover, “economic stability and predictability have been substantially improved since the 2001 economic crisis”¹⁹⁸.

In order to compare the economic growth of these two countries, we can also look at the values from the years after Slovakia’s accession, 2004-2005, years when Slovakia was able to start to enjoy its membership and fully benefit from its advantages, when the values increased up to 9.4. On the other, side Turkey’s economy flourished after the world crisis in 2009 like no other European economy and was able to reach the value of real GDP growth rate up to 9.

The labour market development is one of the main subjects of the EU accession process of accessing countries. To keep the unemployment rate low or at least stable is each candidate’s and member’s priority. In Table 2 it is seen how the rate of unemployment had been increasing and decreasing throughout the years 2000-2011 in the EU countries, Turkey and Slovakia.

¹⁹⁷ European Commission, **2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 2001, pp.26.

¹⁹⁸ European Commission, **2004 Annual Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession**, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 2004, pp.70.

Table 2: Unemployment¹⁹⁹

GEO/TIME	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
EU (25 countries)	8,6	8,4	8,9	9,1	9,3	9,1	8,3	7,3	7,1	9,1	9,8	9,8
EU (15 countries)	7,6	7,2	7,7	8,1	8,3	8,2	7,8	7,1	7,2	9,2	9,6	9,7
Slovakia	18,7	19,4	18,7	17,2	18,6	16,3	13,4	11,2	9,5	12,1	14,4	13,6
Turkey	6,5	8,3	10,3	10,5	10,3	N/A	8,9	9,1	9,9	12,8	10,9	9,0

AGE : From 15 to 64 years
(02.01.2013)

Source: “Unemployment”, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/>, (15.02.2013).

The unemployment rate of Slovakia has been assuredly one of the most acute issues in its accession process. Incredibly high values that have been often more than twice as high as the values of EU25 were subject of Commission criticism and annual reports. In 1999 Report the Commission concluded that however the Slovak labour market has its advantages, such as well-qualified workers and relatively low wages, “the lack of regional mobility, partly due to housing problems, is creating labour scarcity in some regions, while unemployment is very high in other regions”. The problem of unemployment is mentioned in every Regular Report on Slovakia’s progress, even in Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Slovakia’s Preparation for Membership issued in 2003, year before its accession to EU. According to the comprehensive monitoring “the Slovak government has been moving more decisively to tackle the deep-seated structural unemployment problem”²⁰⁰, moreover “measures have been taken to reduce the structural deficiencies in the working of the Slovak labour market, in particular by a revision of the labour legislation”²⁰¹. As the Slovak government proposed, the new Labour Code was signed and in June 2003 came into force.²⁰² The amended Labour Code, as we can recall from the Table 2., has obviously helped to revitalize Slovak labour market by creating new jobs and

¹⁹⁹ 2000-2005 values for Slovakia’s and Turkey’s unemployment rate’s source: **Hayriye Atik, Beşinci Genişlemenin Avrupa Birliği’nde Yol Açtığı Ekonomik Dönüşümler ve Türkiye**, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi Sayı:21, Erciyes Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler fakultesi, Kayseri, 2006, p.184.

²⁰⁰ European Commission, **Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Slovakia’s Preparation for Membership**, 2003, p.8.

²⁰¹ European Commission, **Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Slovakia’s Preparation for Membership**, 2003, p.6.

²⁰² Peter Golias and Robert Kicina, **Experience of the 2003-2004 Labour Market Reform in Slovakia**, INEKO Project “Creating Reform Coalitin from Business, NGO and Media Leaders in Serbia”, supported by SlovakAid, 2007, p.3.

providing employers as well as employees new advantageous environment.²⁰³ However, the values show us that the unemployment rate still hasn't reached the EU25 average.

Turkey's population can be characterized as young population. According to the reports, there were 67,4% of people between the age of 15 to 64²⁰⁴. However on one side is it big advantage in terms of labour force in production, on the other side, as the Annual Report from 2003 stated, "employment growth could not absorb the increase in the labour force, leading to a continued rise in unemployment"²⁰⁵. So we can conclude that even though Turkish GDP growth rate shows that the production has been increasing, due to the constantly crescent number of young working force the market still remains insufficient to create adequate working positions, therefore the unemployment rate increases, as well.

From the Table 2 and from this study it may be inferred that neither Slovakia, nor Turkey have reached the EU average in unemployment rate and they both still fight against the high unemployment. However, it may be noticed that Turkey's results are again better than Slovakia's results in this sphere.

Current account balance in % of GDP is another index that provides evaluation on the existence of market economy. In the Table 3 the author is comparing the current account balance of Turkey and Slovakia. She will focus again on the years from before the start of accession talks of these two countries.

Table 3: Current Account Balance in % of GDP - annual data

GEO/TIME	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Slovakia	2	-9,9	-9,1	-9,5	-5,7	-3,5	-8,3	-7,9	-5,9	-7,8	-8,5	-7,8	-5,3	-6,2	-2,6	-3,7	0,1
Turkey	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-5	2,4	-0,8	-3,3	-5,2	-5,7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: "Current Account Balance in % of GDP – annual data", <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tipsbp20>, (08.01.2013).

²⁰³ Peter Golias and Robert Kicina, pp.3.

²⁰⁴ Trend AZ, "Turkey's Population Increased to Almost 75 Million in 2011", 28.01.2012, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/130662/turkey%E2%80%99s-population-increased-to-almost-75-million-in-2011.html>, (16.01.2013).

²⁰⁵ European Commission, **2003 Annual Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession**, Brussels, 2003, pp.48.

The index of current account provides us information on the economic relation of the particular country with the world. It is an index that shows us the difference between imported and exported goods. From the Table 3 it may be seen that Slovakia was able to decrease its current account deficit from 9.5 in 1998 to 3.5 in 2000. According to the progress report in 2001, Slovakia achieved such result due to the “good development in the transport services balance resulting from higher oil and gas transit fees”²⁰⁶. It is also mentioned that such progress is partially caused by the flow Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and connected to the privatisation of the SPP, Slovak Gas Company²⁰⁷. To narrow current account deficit was included in the Commission’s recommendations, as stated in the Comprehensive monitoring report on Slovakia’s preparation for membership from 2003.²⁰⁸ Market interventions, strong export growth, new government’s strict fiscal policy, advance in administered prices; all of these changes have been conducive to the increase of Slovakia’s current account deficit.²⁰⁹

Regarding the current account balance of Turkey, it may be observed that similar progress occurred in 2001 and last until 2003, when it reached surplus of 2,4 in 2001 and decrease only up to the deficit of 3,3 in 2003. According to the Regular report from 2003, Turkey was able to achieve such effect by “continued restocking, the strengthening of Turkish currency and the higher oil bill during the Iraq war”²¹⁰ on the import side. The export of commodities and high income from tourism helped to balance the current account and brought such pleasant results.

From the general evaluation of Commission from 2000 on Slovakia and from 2005 on Turkey, the commissioners concluded that both Slovakia and Turkey were able to manage their economy well and therefore become functioning market economies. Macroeconomics of both countries has been kept in balance, moreover the Turkish economic growth has been characterised as robust. In both cases the

²⁰⁶ European Commission, **2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Brussels, 2001, p.30.

²⁰⁷ European Commission, **2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Brussels, 2001, p.30.

²⁰⁸ European Commission, **Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Slovakia’s Preparation for Membership**,2003, p.7.

²⁰⁹ European Commission, **Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Slovakia’s Preparation for Membership**,2003, p.7.

²¹⁰ European Commission, **2003 Annual Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession**, Brussels, 2003, p.48.

commissioners pointed out further structural reforms that need to continue in the spheres of legislation, public finances, banking, and privatization and specially emphasized the reducing of informal economy in Turkish case. Therefore, we may conclude that the first part of the economic criteria, to create market economy has been fulfilled by Slovakia as well as by Turkey in the period before their accession talks had started.

The second economic criterion of Copenhagen criteria, as it was mentioned above, is to be able to cope with the competitive pressure and market forces within the countries of EU. The competitiveness of our two countries, Slovakia and Turkey, may be induced from the indexes of official European statistic website EUROSTAT under the file name of European sustainable indicators, more particularly “innovation, competitiveness and eco-efficiency”. Under this file we can find statistics regarding the value of total research & development expenditure, labour productivity per hour, public expenditure on education, real effective exchange rate and turnover from innovation. The capacity of Turkey to compete within the EU may be induced from the index of foreign direct investments inflows, share of manufacturing and service sector, development of infrastructure, state interference to economy or commodity structure of exports as the annual reports on progress evaluate. Again, the author will focus on the indexes that shows are similarities of progresses in Turkey’s and Slovakia’s fight for competitiveness.

GDP per capita in PPS is a macroeconomic index that induces the net value of produced goods and services per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS). “The volume index of GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) is expressed in relation to the EU (EU-27) average set to equal 100.”²¹¹ Indexes of Slovakia’s and Turkey’s GDP per capita, the power of country to produce in comparison with the EU average, are shown in Table 4.

²¹¹EUROSTAT, “GDP per capita in PPS”, <http://eppp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tec00114>, (05.01.2013).

Table 4: GDP Per Capita in PPS, Index (EU-27 = 100)

geo(time)	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
EU (27 countries)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Slovakia	47	50	51	52	50	50	52	54	55	57	60	63	68	73	73	73	73
Turkey	30	31	32	43	40	42	37	36	36	40	42	44	45	47	46	50	52

Source: “GDP Per Capita in PPS”, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tec00114>, (05.01.2013).

From the table above we may notice that both Slovakia and Turkey haven't reached the European standards during the years of their accession talks. But, it may be also noticed that GDP per capita index of Turkey, except of the years 2001-2003 when Turkish economy was negatively influenced by economical crisis, has more or less same progress as Slovakia's.

Another index from which the ability of compete within the countries of the EU may be induced, is the index of Total Research & Development (R&D) expenditures in % of GDP. From this index it can be see how much money, in terms of % from GDP particular country invested in research and development, therefore how innovative is country's production.

Table 5: Total R&D expenditure % of GDP

geo(time)	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
EU (27 countries)	1,8	1,78	1,78	1,78	1,84	1,86	1,87	1,88	1,87	1,83	1,82	1,85	1,85	1,92	2,02	2,01	2,03
Slovakia	0,92	0,91	1,08	0,78	0,66	0,65	0,63	0,57	0,57	0,51	0,51	0,49	0,46	0,47	0,48	0,63	0,68
Turkey	0,38	0,45	0,49	0,37	0,47	0,48	0,54	0,53	0,48	0,52	0,59	0,58	0,72	0,73	0,85	0,84	:

Source: “Total R&D expenditure % of GDP”, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tsdec320> (10.01.2013).

From the Table 5 it can be included that the neither Slovakia nor Turkey is reaching the EU level of R&D expenditures. However, the total value of R&D expenditures of Slovakia approximate to those of Turkey. What is more interesting is that Slovakia's expenditures had had more downgrading trend until the year 2010, comparing to Turkey's progress line that have been more increasing. Nevertheless, both countries had invested in research and development during the years 1995-2011 similar percentage of their GDP.

The expenditures of Turkey, however increasing they might be, have not been still enough for the re-opening of 25.chapter of acquis: Science and Research. This one chapter has been provisionally closed for next negotiation that took place in 2006, but still nothing has changed and this chapter remains closed.²¹² According to this chapter the candidate country must pursue “existence of the necessary conditions for the efficient participation of Turkish Research Area to Community Programmes (Framework Programme)”²¹³ moreover it is “expected to make progress in terms of integration to European Research Area and in terms of EU's science and research objectives”²¹⁴. The Screening report on Turkey`s Science and Research from February 2006 is evaluating the progress and readiness of Turkey in order to re-open the negotiation on 25.chapter and at the same time pointing out on the inadequacies that Turkey needs to figure out and work on if they wish to pursue the progress and continue in negotiations. More particularly, Turkey`s weaknesses have been characterized by shortage of well educated researchers, insufficient research infrastructure, low participation of private sector and limited researchers` mobilization.²¹⁵ Moreover, Turkey, as future potential Member State is also obligated to the association with EUROATOM and European Research Fund for Coal and Steel, as well²¹⁶.

Another index that comes under the file of “innovation, competitiveness and eco-efficiency” in EUROSTAT is the index real effective exchange rate (REER). This index, as proposed under the Table 6. in short description “The specific REER for the Sustainable Development Indicators is deflated by nominal unit labour costs (total economy) against a panel of 36 countries”²¹⁷. A rise in the index means a loss of competitiveness. ²¹⁸

²¹² ABGS, “(Chapter 25) Science and Research”, Last update:17.01.2013, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=90&l=2>, (20.01.2013).

²¹³ ABGS, “(Chapter 25) Science and Research”, Last update:17.01.2013, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=90&l=2>, (20.01.2013).

²¹⁴ ABGS, “(Chapter 25) Science and Research”, Last update:17.01.2013, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=90&l=2>, (20.01.2013).

²¹⁵ Screening Report Turkey, Chapter 25 – Science and Research, 2006, p.6.

²¹⁶ Screening Report Turkey, Chapter 25 – Science and Research, 2006, pp.6-7.

²¹⁷ EU27 + 9 other industrial countries: Australia, Canada, United States, Japan, Norway, New Zealand, Mexico, Switzerland, and Turkey

²¹⁸ EUROSTAT, “Real effective exchange rate – 36 Trading Partners”, <http://eppp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tsd ec330>, (15.01.2013).

Table 6: Real Effective Exchange Rate, Index (2005 = 100)

geo\time	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
EU (27 countries)	93,74	96,79	91,69	93,09	86,81	77,48	79,18	84,03	94,47	101	100	101,44	107,33	108,99	104,99	97,15	97,82
Slovakia	70,2	72,4	79,83	79,46	72,86	81,11	79,37	82,1	88,56	94,69	100	104,88	114,22	124,2	136	131,7	129,7
Turkey	95,2	101,1	110,6	111,6	130,3	125,9	100,4	97,09	100,7	95,61	100	97,18	103,1	103,4	97,63	107,7	86,12

Source: “Real Effective Exchange Rate”, Index (2005 = 100), <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tsdec330> (15.01.2013)

Table 6 informs us about the ability of EU27, Slovakia and Turkey to compete worldwide and at the home markets, as well. From the values we may notice that Turkey has been stabilizing its real effective exchange rate since 2001 without any extensive changes and was able to improve its ability to compete on export markets in 2011. On the other side, Slovakia reached its best results as the EU candidate during the negotiation period, but aggravated its position to the level of Turkey from before Turkey`s negotiation talks after Slovakia`s accession to the Club.

Table 7: Turnover from Innovation % of Total Turnover

geo\time	2004	2006	2008
EU (27 countries)	13,7	13,4	13,3
Slovakia	19,2	16,7	15,8
Turkey	:	15,8	:

Source: “Turnover from Innovation % of Total Turnover“, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tsdec340>, (15.01.2013).

Turnover from innovation, as mentioned before, is another indicator of competitiveness. Even though the author could not reach values from other years than 2004, 2006 and 2008, the similarities in these founded data may be seen. This index informs about the ratio of turnover from new or innovated products of companies which have at least 10 employees of total turnover of the particular country.²¹⁹ From these results it may be therefore induced that both countries, Turkey and Slovakia, not just reached similar values, but their turnover from innovation was higher than the average turnover from innovation of EU27. However, the index of turnover from innovation does not tell us that the innovative activity is high in

²¹⁹ EUROSTAT, “Turnover from innovation - % of total turnover” <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/web/table/description.jsp>, (10.01.2013).

particular country. The Europe Competitiveness Report 2020, report that evaluates progress of “goals set in “Europe 2020” Strategy to achieve “smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”²²⁰ appraises each EU country and the EU candidate and its progress in this sphere. Regarding the competitiveness of Slovakia and Turkey, particular similarities may be found. Both countries, according to the report, need to support and invest more in their innovative activity, in order to improve the productivity and implement digital agenda.²²¹ Moreover, it has been pointed out that both countries’ education level needs to be raised, because it has not reached the EU standards.

Table 8: Minimum Wages, EUR/month

geo/time	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Belgium	1074,4	1095,9	1117,9	1140,2	1163	1186,3	1210	1234	1259	1309,6	1387,5	1387,5	1415,2	1443,5
France	1036	1049,5	1083,3	1127,2	1154,3	1215,1	1286,1	1217,9	1254,3	1280,1	1321	1343,8	1365	1398,4
Luxembourg	1162,1	1191,1	1258,8	1290,2	1368,7	1403	1466,8	1503,4	1570,3	1570,3	1641,7	1682,8	1757,6	1801,5
Netherlands	1064,2	1092	1154,5	1206,6	1249,2	1264,8	1264,8	1272,6	1300,8	1335	1381,2	1407,6	1424,4	1446,6
Slovakia	69,43	94,34	100,15	115,01	134,21	147,68	167,76	182,15	220,71	241,11	295,5	307,7	317	327
Turkey	213,48	201,62	224,17	174,87	176,06	238,77	266,15	333,46	301,77	354,34	309,94	338,33	384,89	362,84

Source: “Minimum Wages”, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tps00155>, (10.01.2013).

Turkey has often being criticized by European politicians, who do not want Turkey to be full member of the club, for being big, poor and unstable country with decelerated development.²²² However, they do not realize that most of the countries which entered the EU in May 2004, CEECs had had and some of them still have the same development problems and are economically even on worst position that Turkey. Indeed, Turkey’s rapidly growing population and huge geographical area cannot be compared to none of the EU countries, economical conditions are really not that different.²²³ Such similarity can be seen in the indicator showing minimum

²²⁰ World Economic Forum, “**The Europe 2020 Competitiveness Report: Building a More Competitive Europe**”, Inside Report, 2012 Edition, Geneva, 2012, p.2.

²²¹ World Economic Forum, “**The Europe 2020 Competitiveness Report: Building a More Competitive Europe**”, Inside Report, 2012 Edition, Geneva, 2012, pp.26-28.

²²² Barysch, p.2.

²²³ Barysch, p.2.

wages. In table 8 author added except of the minimum wages values of Slovakia and Turkey also the minimum wages of some strong European economies; Belgium, France, Luxemburg, Netherlands, in order to show how both Slovakia and Turkey are far behind them, but still their data are approximate.

As the regular report on Turkey's progress towards EU accession from 2004 pointed out, such low minimum wage can be considered as an effect of high population, particularly working-age population that had increased 4.6 million persons during past 5 years. However the Turkish market big is, the weak domestic demand and weak Turkish currency are not able to keep the wage on such high European level in order to maintain the international competitiveness and therefore regulating the production price by low workers' wages.²²⁴

Same economical level, in terms of minimum wages, may be observed in Slovakia. As the progress report from 2000 declares, Slovakia reoriented its export towards European countries. Within the frame of being competitive on this market, Slovakia's minimum wage should remain on stable or even declining position in order to provide price competitive production.

For the determination of the ability of Slovakia and Turkey to compete on European market the author was studying the general evaluation passages of these countries' regular reports made by EU commissioners from 2005, considering Slovakia and from 2000, considering Turkey. In both cases, Commission deduced that these two countries "should be able to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union in the medium term"²²⁵. The "medium term" expression is based on the fact that both countries need to maintain and strengthen the structural reform agendas and stabilization policy in order to be fully able to compete with the EU members and therefore fulfil Copenhagen criteria.

3.1.2. Politics and Democracy

Democracy, rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities are main components and therefore requirements from the EU towards its

²²⁴ European Commission. **2004 Annual Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession**, Brussels, 2004, p.61.

²²⁵ European Commission, **2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession**, pp.32. and Turkey 2005 Progress Report, p.54.

candidates in order to fulfil Copenhagen political criteria and become full member of EU. Can we find any similar political problems of Slovakia, former communist country and Turkey, country in which the issue of insufficient level of democracy, human rights and protection of minorities and ethnic groups are still being discussed even today? Did Slovakia simply become democratic republic on the day of its constitution on 1st January 1993? Or was its path to democracy after years of communistic regime intricate or even seemed to be dead-end? In this part the author will focus on the similar features of Slovakia and Turkey regarding political issues, starting with democracy and later on discussing the problem of minorities and ethnic groups in these two countries.

Slovakia's way to democracy started with the split of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the so-called "velvet-split", after the Velvet revolution in 1989.²²⁶ The reason why Czechoslovakia split was simple; the two countries did not have any reason why to stay together any more. Slovaks and Czechs shared one state from 1918 until 1993, except of Slovak war-time state within years 1939-1945, by following the pattern of "Czech crisis-Slovak opportunity".²²⁷ However, after the break-up of Soviet Union in 1991 and the fact that there was no longer any other external factor that made these two states to pull the forces together, such as revisionist Germany and Hungary, governments of these two states made an agreement about finalization of this political cooperation.²²⁸ The 1992 elections in Czechoslovakia, and forthcoming leaders Vaclav Klaus and Vladimír Mečiar, therefore indirectly caused the division of Czechoslovakia, because these two leaders agreed on the dissolution without any public referendum.²²⁹ Although, it may seem as very radical decision that can be possibly met with negative reactions, the opposite was true. Both Slovak and Czech public received this news positively; there were no ethnic tensions, no border disagreements. Even the international community was content about such

²²⁶ Pavol Demeš, "Slovakia's Bumpy Road to Democracy and the European Family", <http://www.diplomaatia.ee/en/article/slovakias-bumpy-road-to-democracy-and-the-european-family/>, (20.01.2013).

²²⁷ John W.Mason, "Slovakia's Long Road to Democracy", *History Today*, Vol.48, Issue:9, 1998, <http://www.historytoday.com/john-w-mason/slovakia%E2%80%99s-long-road-democracy>, (20.01.2013).

²²⁸ Demeš.

²²⁹ Demeš.

peaceful division and both countries gained recognition from all countries within short period of time.²³⁰

Is it enough to have declared in the Constitution that “Slovak Republic is a sovereign, democratic state governed by the rule of law”²³¹ for being truly democratic? Even though, today is Slovakia considered as new democracy, was it easy to become one? We must be aware of the fact that Slovak Republic at the time did not have any positive forecast on its democratic future. It was a country with no statehood experience, no political elite or civil control over the security service.²³² Even if the division was a definite step towards the democracy, one thing, more accurately one man with his political party kept Slovakia lagging behind other Central European countries in the democratic progress; Vladimír Mečiar, the leader of HZDS (Movement for a Democratic Slovakia). Due to Mečiar’s neo-authoritarian regime with nationalist and populist political agenda, Slovakia is the only one state out of 10 Central-European states that’s EU accession negotiation had to be postponed due to non-democratic practices in the country.²³³ The 1994 elections in Slovak Republic did not bring any other positive changes. HZDS won the elections again and together with SNS (Slovak National Party) and ZRS (the Association of Slovak Workers) created the coalition.²³⁴ This great success of Vladimír Mečiar was unfortunately followed by series of acts and practices that hardly may be characterized as democratic. His authoritarian tendencies were present in his way of governing, such as “occupation of parliamentary functions by government MPs without respect for proportional representation of the opposition”²³⁵, domination over privatization process by giving profitable assets in the hands of government members under properties’ real value, changing the Election Act before the 1998 elections in order to limit participation of opposition in the elections, and prevention a Member of Parliament from exercising his or her mandate. What is more, in order to get even

²³⁰ Demeš.

²³¹ “Constitution of the Slovak Republic, Part One, Basic Provisions”, Article 1. http://aceproject.org/ero-en/regions/europe/SK/Constitution_slovakia.pdf, (20.01.2013).

²³² Sona Szomolanyi, **Slovakia: From the Difficult Case of Transition to a Consolidated Central European Democracy**, 2003, p.150.

²³³ Demeš.

²³⁴ Tom Nicholson, “Slovakia’s Road to Democracy”, http://travel.spectator.sme.sk/articles/1466/slovakias_road_to_democracy, (20.01.2013).

²³⁵ Nicholson.

more power, Mečiar and his government, except of changing other ‘rules of game’ intended, though unsuccessfully, to replace that time parliamentary system with the presidential system.²³⁶ All these practices and many other caused that Slovakia did not start the EU talks in 1997 and did not become a part of integration process of NATO. Basically said, euro-transatlantic leaders were decided not to accept Slovakia into their clubs as long as Prime Minister Mečiar is in the power. As if it was not enough criticism from the West, Mečiar, as a response to the postponed integration said: “If they don’t want us in the West, then we’ll return to the East!”²³⁷ Providentially, after the elections 1998, HZDS, with the highest vote percentage of 27%, was not able to find any political party that would create coalition with them. Therefore Mikuláš Dzurinda, leader of Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), party that was created from five former opposition parties, together with Party of Democratic Left (SDL) and Party of Hungarian Coalition (SMK)²³⁸ formed a government that was that stepped in the right, pro-Western direction²³⁹.

Turkey’s path to democracy is even more complicated; the history of two military coups in 1960 and in 1980, and so-called ‘coup by memorandum’ in 1971 and 1997 and many other military efforts to overthrow the political regime.²⁴⁰ Election 2002 brought into power AKP (Justice and Development Party) with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as a Prime Minister. This party and more particularly its leader and his governing practices have brought on one side hope, on the other side doubts. However it is true that during his first years of governance Turkey has made few critical steps forward; the integration into the EU by opening negotiation talks in 2005, decreasing the power of military.²⁴¹ Specially the latter is controversial, because notwithstanding the military’s influence on governing processes has been obviously terminated, the method and way to this achievement bring up questions

²³⁶ Szomolanyi, p.164.

²³⁷ Edmond Ademi, *Opposing Europe: Euroscepticism in Macedonia, a real Threat or a Bluff?*, **Slovak Experience**, The Slovak Balkan Publicity Fund, Pontis Foundation, Liberta Institute, Skopje, 2012, p.10.

²³⁸ Nicholson.

²³⁹ Chad Nagle, “The Slow Strangulation of Democracy in Slovakia”, 03.02.2004, <http://www.antiwar.com/orig/nagle.php?articleid=1850>, (10.02.2013).

²⁴⁰ Dolunay Bulut, “Turkey’s Long Path to Democracy”, 16.10.2012, <http://thejerusalemreview.com/2012/10/16/turkeys-long-path-to-democracy/>, (05.02.2013).

²⁴¹ Ehud Toledano, “The AKP’s New Turkey”, 22.04.2012, <http://www.currenttrends.org/research/detail/the-akps-new-turkey>, (04.10.2013).

and doubts about Erdoğan's democratic approach.²⁴² "A number of high-ranking retired commanders and later some high- and middle-ranking officers on active duty were arrested and jailed."²⁴³

In previous years when the discussion over the Constitution 1982 started, another rumours of Erdoğan's avidity for power started. The cause of such rumour was the fact that Erdoğan, just like Mečiar, is attempting to change parliamentary system to presidential system and of course, the head of state he has in his mind, would be him, indeed.²⁴⁴ Are these really only innocent gossips, or is Mr. Erdoğan willing to gain absolute power?

About the democracy in Turkey has been written so many reports and articles. Some of them say that Prime Minister is authoritarian leader and that Turkey is not a democratic country. The others, however, accept that Turkey seems to have all elements of democracy, only that the level is not sufficient yet. In order to evaluate the level of Turkish democracy the author will stick with the Regular Report on Turkey from 2012, report that was met in Turkey with dishonesty and was even thrown to the waste by the head of the parliament's Constitution Committee. The Regular Report 2012 is referring that there is "growing authoritarianism on the part of the government"²⁴⁵ and that Turkish government is "unfair and partial"²⁴⁶. As if there was not enough criticism for Turkey, Mr. Erdoğan even worsen this situation on 25th January 2013 by stating that Turkey would give up on EU if they could enter the Shanghai Five.²⁴⁷ Any resemblance observed with Slovak former Prime Minister Mečiar?

²⁴² Ergin Sedat, "Turkey's Democratic Struggle under AKP Government: 2002-2010", 22.04.2013, <http://researchturkey.org/wp/wordpress/?p=3076>, (04.10.2013).

²⁴³ Ilter Turan, Turkey's Diminutive Democracy, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Analysis on Turkey, 2012, p.2.

²⁴⁴ Yigal Schleifer, "Turkey: Erdoğan Redefining Turkish Democracy?", 20.12.2012, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66329>, (22.2.2013).

²⁴⁵ Turan, p.3.

²⁴⁶ Turan, p.3.

²⁴⁷ "Erdoğan: If we could Enter Shanghai Five, we would Say Goodbye to EU", 26.1.2013, <http://english.sabah.com.tr/National/2013/01/26/erdogan-if-we-could-enter-shanghai-five-we-would-say-goodbye-to-eu>, (25.02.2013).

3.1.3. Politics and Corruption

Corruption was also one of the main points of criticism of Mečiar’s government. Corruption has undoubtedly negative effects on the country and what is more it is an attack on political level on the democracy of the country.²⁴⁸ During Mečiar’s governance the greatest scandal in the sphere of corruption in Slovak Republic history has occurred, particularly in year 1996. Jan Ducky, ex-minister of economy was offered a job as a director of SPP (Slovak Gas Industry), where he was signing fake bills of exchange in the name of SPP for ‘services of business and financial character’. In real such ‘services’ never actually happened. Even today, the representatives of the SPP do not exactly know what the total sum of the bills was. In August 1996 he was dismissed from the ministerial function²⁴⁹ and in 1999 he was mysteriously murdered in his own house by still unknown murderer.²⁵⁰

Table 9: Corruption Perception Index (CPI)

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Slovakia				3,9	3,7	3,5	3,7	3,7	3,7	4,0	4,3	4,7	4,9	5,0	4,5	4,3
Turkey	4,1	3,5	3,2	3,4	3,6	3,8	3,6	3,2	3,1	3,2	3,5	3,8		4,6	4,4	4,4

Source: “Corruption Perception Index “, www.transparency.org, (25.02.2013)

Official reports on the level of corruption perception do not give us any more positive data about Turkey. Moreover, it has been pointed out in the article in Transparency International²⁵¹ that corruption is “one of the most serious obstacles to Turkey’s accession”²⁵². However Turkey made some visible progress regarding politic progress, the fight against corruption has been persisting in spite of signing various agreements and ratifying laws. More accurately, in year 2000 “OECD’s Convention on Bribery of Foreign Officials in International Business Transactions”²⁵³ came into force, in 2006 UN Convention against Corruption was

²⁴⁸ Eline De Ridder, “EU Aid for Fighting Corruption in the Czech Republic and Slovakia: Where it did go wrong?”, *JCER*, Vol.5, No.1, 2009, p.62.

²⁴⁹ De Ridder, p.64.

²⁵⁰ “Jan Ducky”, <http://osobnost.aktuality.sk/jan-ducky/>, (25.02.2013).

²⁵¹ Transparency International, “Global Coalition against Corruption”, www.transparency.org, (25.02.2013).

²⁵² Bryane Michael, “Anti-Corruption in the Turkey’s EU Accession”, *Turkish Policy Quarterly* No.3, Vol.4, 2004.

²⁵³ Michael.

ratified²⁵⁴ and in 2010 strategic Action Plan was designed in order to reduce corruption practices²⁵⁵. Turkey's limited success against political corruption originates from the fact that Turkish political immunity is very strong and there is no legislation for monitoring finances of neither politicians or the finances of political parties. What is more, before mentioned Action Plan 2010, in spite of its wide scale of reforms, was "designed with no consultation of non-governmental actors, and civil society had only limited oversight over its implementation"²⁵⁶. Political corruption is not present only in the financing of political parties, but in the election procedures, as well. Despite reports on Turkish elections being fair and free, there have been evidences of the contrariety. To be specific, there was a case in 2008 in which close friend of Prime Minister Erdoğan, businessman that sponsored studies of his children abroad, was accused and found guilty of bribery.²⁵⁷ Due to the records, this man offered "bribes to an opposition MP in return to his vote in the 2007 presidential election"²⁵⁸.

These and many other scandals concerning corruption are devastating both countries. Yes, Turkey has problems with bribery, but the question is whether the level of corruption is comparable with other EU countries that has joined the EU either recently or are at the candidacy list. When we look at the problem from this point of view, we may notice that the data are comparable and Turkey is comparable to Central-European countries' level of corruption. Due to this fact, Turkey should not be left out from the integration by the reason on "rule of law grounds alone"²⁵⁹.

Table 10: Most Corrupted Countries in Europe, 2009

	Country	World Ranking	Corruption Perceptions Index Rating
1	Ukraine	28	2,20
1	Russia	28	2,20
3	Azerbaijan	36	2,30

²⁵⁴ Güne Okuyucu-Ergün, "Anti-Corruption Legislation in Turkish Law", **Germal Law Journal**, Vol.8, No.9, 2007,p.909.

²⁵⁵ Marie Chene, **Overview of Corruption and Anti-Corruption in Turkey**, Transparency International, Chr.Michelsen Institute, 2012, p.1.

²⁵⁶ Chene, p.1.

²⁵⁷ Chene, p.3.

²⁵⁸ Chene, p.3.

²⁵⁹ Michael.

4	Belarus	39	2,40
5	Kazakhstan	56	2,70
5	Armenia	56	2,70
7	Bosnia & Herzegovina	76	3,20
8	Albania	85	3,30
9	Moldova	87	3,50
10	Serbia	98	3,80
11	Romania	107	3,80
11	Greece	107	3,80
11	Macedonia	107	3,80
11	Bulgaria	107	3,80
15	Montenegro	111	3,90
16	Georgia	113	4,10
16	Croatia	113	4,10
18	Italy	117	4,30
19	Turkey	119	4,40
20	Slovakia	121	4,50
20	Latvia	121	4,50
22	Lithuania	128	4,90
22	Czech Republic	128	4,90
24	Poland	130	5,00
25	Hungary	133	5,10
26	Malta	136	5,20
27	Portugal	145	5,80
28	Spain	148	6,10
29	Slovenia	152	6,60
29	Estonia	152	6,60
29	Cyprus, Republic of	152	6,60
32	France	157	6,90
33	Belgium	160	7,10
34	United Kingdom	163	7,70
35	Austria	165	7,90
36	Ireland, Republic of	166	8,00
36	Germany	166	8,00
38	Luxembourg	168	8,20
39	Norway	170	8,60
40	Iceland	171	8,70
41	Netherlands	174	8,90
41	Finland	174	8,90
43	Switzerland	176	9,00
44	Sweden	177	9,20
45	Denmark	179	9,30

Source: “Most Corrupted Countries in Europe”, Released by Transparency International, 17.11.2009, http://www.blatantworld.com/feature/europe/most_corrupt_countries.html, (26.02.2013).

In none of the progress reports on Turkey and on Slovakia corruption haven't been left out from the criticism. Even nowadays, the statistics of Transparency International show that Slovakia is one of the most corrupted countries in Europe. Table 10 is a list of the countries from European continent and their CPI in 2009. Even few years ago, 5 years after Slovakia's accession to the EU the level of its perception corruption was still very high when we look at the Table 10 and compare the Slovakia's CPI with other European countries' CPI. In comparison with Turkey; only one rank difference in the European continent, two rank difference in world ranking and only 0,10 difference in CPI. We can also notice that Turkey obtained better position than 4 EU countries²⁶⁰ and Croatia, the EU candidate.

3.1.4. Politics and Minorities and Ethnic Groups

After the end of totalitarian system newly discovered freedoms, such as freedom of religion, freedom of speech or press, granted space for establishment of various national or ethnic groups and national minorities. When talking about Slovakia's problem with minorities and ethnic groups, Hungarian national minority and Roma are the biggest issues. In table 11 there are results of census 1991, 2001 and 2011. Hungarian national minority has been the largest majority on the Slovak territory. Roma, currently second largest minority, have been declared as 'national minority' in 1991 according to the Slovak government's resolution no.153.²⁶¹

Table 11: Slovak Republic Population by Nationalities - Census 2011, 2001, 1991

Living population together (according to the permanent residency)	Slovak Republic					
	2011		2001		1991	
	total	in %	total	in %	total	in %
	5.397.036	100	5.379.455	100	5.274.335	100
Nationality						

²⁶⁰ Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, Italy

²⁶¹ Viera Koganová and Peter Kopecný, **Rómska Problematika na Pozadí Vybraných Faktorov zo Slovenskej a Rumunskej Reality** (The Romas's problem in Romanian and Slovak conditions), Central European Political Studies Review, Vol.VI, No.2-3, 2005, p.326.

Slovak	4.352.775	80,7	4.614.854	85,8	4.519.328	85,7
Hungarian	458.467	8,5	520.528	9,7	567.296	10,8
Roma	105.738	2,0	89.920	1,7	75.802	1,4
Czech	30.367	0,6	44.620	0,8	52.884	1,0
Ruthenian	33.482	0,6	24.201	0,4	17.197	0,3
Ukrainian	7.430	0,1	10.814	0,2	13.281	0,3
German	4.690	0,1	5.405	0,1	5.414	0,1
Polish	3.084	0,1	2.602	0,0	2.659	0,1
Croatian	1.022	0,0	890	0,0	x	x
Serbian	698	0,0	434	0,0	x	x
Russian	1.997	0,0	1.590	0,0	1.389	0,0
Jewish	631	0,0	218	0,0	134	0,0
Moravian	3.286	0,1	2.348	0,0	6.037	0,1
Bulgarian	1.051	0,0	1.179	0,0	1.400	0,0
other	9.825	0,2	5.350	0,1	2.732	0,1
undetected	382.493	7,0	54.502	1,0	8.782	0,2

Source: "Slovak Republic Population by Nationalities - Census 2011, 2001, 1991", <http://portal.statistics.sk/files/table-10.pdf>, (13.04.2013).

Considering Hungarian minority; years of tension between Slovak government and Hungarian activists were terminated by the elections 1998. New government with SDK on its head included SMK party into the coalition.²⁶² Mikuláš Dzurinda, the leader of SDK, therefore proved to the EU and to the international community that Slovakia was ready to join the EU club. After such political change "the West was openly supportive of reconsidering Slovakia for EU membership"²⁶³. Even though the initial tautness does not persist as it was back at 1993, there is still obvious gap between the economic and educational level of Slovak people and Hungarians living in Slovakia, therefore consequential discrimination and categorization is still felt.

The second largest national minority, as mentioned before, is Roma. Roma minority has been a problematic topic not only for Slovakia but for Central Europe in general due to its nomadic nature in company with low education level and poor economic background. The Roma issue gained greater EU's attention in 1990s together with stronger voice of Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs).²⁶⁴ Therefore, we may induce that the membership of one candidate for the EU

²⁶² Peter Vermeersch, "Ethnic Mobilisation and the Political Conditionality of EU Accession: the case of Roma in Slovakia", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol.28, No.1, 2002,p.92.

²⁶³ Vermeersch, p.92.

²⁶⁴ Vermeersch, p.86.

membership is more or less dependent on the minority policy in the country and on the particular Roma situation, there.²⁶⁵ In 1997 Agenda 2000 was published by the European Commission, a document that evaluated EU countries' and candidate countries' current and perspective positions in different issues including the integration of minorities.²⁶⁶ 'The Opinions' part of Agenda 2000 included the opinions on candidate countries about their ability of fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria. It was remarked that the Roma minorities in Slovakia²⁶⁷ "suffer from discrimination and social hardship"²⁶⁸ and what is more that the Roma are often "target of violence from skinheads against which they receive only inadequate protection from the police"²⁶⁹. The Commission also pointed out their lagged social position, high unemployment rate and troubled housing.²⁷⁰

Regular Reports on Slovakia prepared by the Commission from 1998 until the year before the actual entrance to the Union also criticize the Roma situation. In 1998 Regular Report only very small progress is recorded considering Roma. In 1997, The Plan for Solving Romany Problem was approved by Slovak government, in order to improve their education level, housing situation and raise the employment rate.²⁷¹ However, Roma activists found this Plan confusing, misleading and insufficient.²⁷² Criticism is based on lurking discrimination not only from the public side but from the officials, as well as the "lack of protection by the police"²⁷³. In the 1999 Progress Report, the view on this issue is not giving us any better provisions. Moreover, the discrimination continues and creates segregations even in the schools; Roma children are located in schools for retarded children²⁷⁴. 2000 Regular Report;

²⁶⁵ Vermeersch, p.84.

²⁶⁶ European Commission, **Support for Roma Communities in Central and Eastern Europe**, Directorate General for Enlargement, Enlargement Information Unit, Brussels, 2003, p.1.

²⁶⁷ And also in Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland.

²⁶⁸ **Support for Roma Communities in Central and Eastern Europe**, European Commission, p.1.

²⁶⁹ Agenda 2000, Commission Opinion on Slovakia's Application for Membership of the EU, Brussels, 1997, p.22.

²⁷⁰ Agenda 2000, Commission Opinion on Slovakia's Application for Membership of the EU, Brussels, 1997, p.22.

²⁷¹ European Commission, **Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession**, 1998, p.12.

²⁷² European Commission, **Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession**, 1998, p.13.

²⁷³ European Commission, **Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession**, 1998, p.12.

²⁷⁴ European Commission, **1999 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Slovakia, 1999, p.17.

however expecting things to be more improved, the opposite is the reality. The Commission is pointing at the fact that the budget, although doubled in comparison with the previous year, which was given for the Government Commissioner of Roma affairs was allocated deficiently and that there is still not clear how to obtain the missing funds.²⁷⁵ The education problem, more particularly the poor representation of Roma in higher education is again stressed here, as well. The commissioners also expressed their discontent about the situation about creation of anti-Roma resentment by non-Roma as a consequence of “imposition of visa requirements”²⁷⁶ by some European countries. These countries²⁷⁷ behaved so due to increased number of Slovaks of Roma origin immigrating into them. The angry Slovak people therefore blamed Roma for such situation and the discrimination and attacks, either verbal or physical, thus continue.²⁷⁸ Only small improves are noticed and pointed out; there was first textbook of Roma history provided to teachers and one Slovak politician who offended Roma verbally with racial statements was stripped of his immunity.²⁷⁹ Regular Report made in 2001 still remains negative about the Roma issue and emphasize that the problem prevails unsolved.²⁸⁰ The 2002 Report gives us more detailed information about the programmes launched in order to improve the Roma situation; “Priority tasks for the Roma community in 2002” is focused on “education, support for housing and technical infrastructure, public opinion, establishment of a social-cultural centre for Roma and sociological research on the Roma community”²⁸¹. However, insufficient budget, continuous discrimination and racial attacks still persist.²⁸² Was Slovakia able to successfully overcome this Roma question and all problematic issues herewith? No. Did Slovakia become an EU

²⁷⁵ European Commission, **2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Slovakia, 2000, p.21.

²⁷⁶ European Commission, **2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Slovakia, 2000, p.21.

²⁷⁷ Belgium, Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom

²⁷⁸ European Commission, **2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Slovakia, 2000, p.21.

²⁷⁹ European Commission, **2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Slovakia, 2000, pp.20-21.

²⁸⁰ European Commission, **2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Brussels, 2001, p.22.

²⁸¹ European Commission, **2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Brussels, 2002, p.30.

²⁸² European Commission, **2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession**, Regular Report, Brussels, 2002, p.33.

member? Yes. Even in Comprehensive Monitoring Report from 2003 on Slovakia's Preparation for Membership are again mentioned all problems about Roma from previous Regular Reports. The EU with its criticism about this issue "conveyed message that membership of the Union is to a certain extent dependent on a state's ability to protect Roma"²⁸³. Despite of the persisting problems the EU accepted Slovakia as its full Member State.

24 July 1923 Lausanne Peace Treaty was sign²⁸⁴. This Treaty, which Turkey still refers to, is still their "only source of recognition and protection of minority groups"²⁸⁵. Even though the Treaty was part of limited League of Nation system of protection of particular minorities, Lausanne does not harmonize with the international standards; it recognizes only non-Muslim minorities.²⁸⁶What is more, "Turkey has restricted the scope of the Treaty to Armenians, Jews and Rums"²⁸⁷. Such restriction precludes not only other non-Muslim minorities but also Turkey's ethnic, cultural or linguistic minorities, which are therefore not considered and protected as "precedential" non-Muslim minorities. These are, for instance, Kurds, Roma, Caucasians groups, Arabs, Balkan immigrants, Laz or Zaza.²⁸⁸ Only one bilateral treaty has been signed considering the minorities in Turkey; between Turkey and Bulgaria.²⁸⁹ According to this bilateral treaty, the Bulgarians will be treated pursuant to the preferences guaranteed by Lausanne and *vice versa*.²⁹⁰ What is more, neither Turkish Constitution either any legislative framework does not mention protection of minorities. On the contrary, "various laws seek to limit the political, participatory, religious, educational and linguistic rights of minorities"²⁹¹.

Turkey is a country of mixed cultures, languages and traditions with millions of various minorities, ethnic and religious groups. It is unknown how many various minority groups there are in Turkey, since there is no question on ethnic, religious or

²⁸³ Vermeersch, p.84.

²⁸⁴ Nurcan Kaya and Clive Baldwin, "Minorities in Turkey Submission to the EU and the Government of Turkey", **Minority Rights Group International**, 2004, p.1.

²⁸⁵ Kaya and Baldwin, p.1.

²⁸⁶ Kaya and Baldwin, p.1.

²⁸⁷ Minority Rights Group International, **A Quest for Equality: Minorities in Turkey**, 2007, p.10.

²⁸⁸ Nigar Karimova and Edward Deverell, **Minorities in Turkey**, Occasional Paper No.19, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm, 2001, pp.13-16.

²⁸⁹ Kaya and Baldwin, p.1.

²⁹⁰ Kaya and Baldwin, p.1.

²⁹¹ Minority Rights Group International, **A Quest for Equality: Minorities in Turkey**, 2007, p.10.

other origin asked in population census.²⁹² Minorities in Turkey, not just one particular, but in general, are often targets for discrimination, just like in Slovakia. They are disadvantaged part of Turkish society and violence has been part of their lives.²⁹³ Of course, Turkey has been willing to make some progress in this area; in order to fulfil the Copenhagen criteria and make steps forwards the accession. Even though Turkey in 2005 started its negotiations, looking at the Regular Reports, still much need to be done and accomplished considering the protection of minorities in Turkey. One of the most significant progresses conditioned by the EU membership has been the establishment of number of minority organizations speaking on behalf of their rights and freedoms.²⁹⁴

Table 12: EU Commission Regular Reports Coverage by Main Problems Relating to Minority Issues²⁹⁵

	REPORTS							
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
International Treaties	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Identity Cards	x		x		x	x	x	x
Property	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Compulsory Religious Course	x		x	x		x	x	x
General Directorate of Religious Affairs	x		x	x		x	x	x
Difference in Treatment between Various Minority Groups	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Halki Seminary			x	x	x	x	x	x
Language Rights (courses, schools, broadcasting, etc..)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Opening New Places of Worship				x	x	x	x	x
Training and Recruitment of Clergy				x	x	x	x	x
Pejorative Discourse in School Texts				x	x	x	x	x
Law on Settlement				x	x	x	x	x
Minority Schools					x	x	x	x
General Directorate of Foundations					x	x	x	x
Opening New Foundations						x	x	x

²⁹² Minority Rights Group International, **A Quest for Equality: Minorities in Turkey**, 2007, p.11.

²⁹³ **A Quest for Equality: Minorities in Turkey**, Report,p.3.

²⁹⁴ **A Quest for Equality: Minorities in Turkey**, Report,p.3.

²⁹⁵ Sule Tokas, "EU Enlargement Conditions and Minority Protection: A Reflection on Turkey's Non-Muslim Minorities", **East European Quarterly**, XL, No.4, Istanbul, 2006, p.507.

Freedom of Association	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ecumenical Patriarch						x	x	x
Security Problems							x	x
Recruitment to State Offices							x	x

Source: “EU Commission Regular Reports Coverage by Main Problems Relating to Minority Issues”, East European Quarterly, XL, No.4, 2005.

The Table 12 provides complete overlook on minority problems that the European Commission pointed out and find fault in Turkey that are mention in Regular Reports prepared by Commission. Positive progress may be presupposed considering the minority protection in Turkey. However, looking at the Table 12, since 1998 until the year 2005, there is nothing else but gradual falling-off and crescent problems relating to protection of minorities. However, Turkey as well as Slovakia was considered as country that fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria and therefore was able to start the negotiation process anyways. What about the situation now? The Turkey 2012 Progress Report states that Turkey’s attitude towards minorities remains still restrictive.²⁹⁶ Moreover, that there was nothing done, no legal framework addressed against intolerance, racism of xenophobia and alarming is also the fact that the rhetoric against minorities has still remained mentioned in school books.²⁹⁷ In 2012 Report, however, some progress towards amendment of relations with minorities is indicated, as well; minority representatives were invited to the government in order to discuss and express their opinions on proposal for new Constitution.²⁹⁸ There has been also one legislative change enabling the non-Muslim minorities to run their own newspapers.²⁹⁹ However the right to education is still a critical issue, the government allowed opening language courses of living languages, such as Kurdish or Circassian, in primary schools in classes where there are more

²⁹⁶ European Commission, **Turkey 2012 Progress Report**, Commission Staff Working Document Brussels, 2012, p.31.

²⁹⁷ European Commission, **Turkey 2012 Progress Report**, Commission Staff Working Document Brussels, 2012, pp.31-32.

²⁹⁸ European Commission, **Turkey 2012 Progress Report**, Commission Staff Working Document Brussels, 2012, p.8.

²⁹⁹ European Commission, **Turkey 2012 Progress Report**, Commission Staff Working Document Brussels, 2012, p.31.

than 10 pupils who assign for it, and there is also undergraduate elective Kurdish language course in particular universities.³⁰⁰

From this part of the thesis it is obvious that neither Slovakia's nor Turkey's accession process has been without trouble issues. However, just like the EU accepted Slovakia for full membership with particular problems that have been mentioned in this part, these mentioned similarities should not be critical when considering Turkey for the membership. There must be some other issues that are concerns EU that are reasons why Turkey still has not become a member of the Union. In the next part of this thesis author will indicate the "differences" that are presumably the reasons why Turkey still 'suffers' in the accession process.

3.2. DIFFERENCES: REASONS FOR TURKEY'S BACKLASH

Is it possible that Turkey will become an EU member one day? If yes what are the issues that must be solved in order to happen so? What are the real reasons of Turkey's setback? What have been pushing Turkey back and keeping it away from the full EU membership? What are the differences between Slovakia's and Turkey's accession processes then? Will these differences give us answer to the question of Turkey's unsuccessful attempting of becoming an EU member?

In this chapter author is willing to find out the main differences between Slovakia's and Turkey's accession processes, and therefore learn the biggest inadequacies of Turkey that holds her back from the actual accession to the EU. There have been various articles, books and scholar papers written on Turkey's problematic accession. Here, in this part author will focus on the issues that are mentioned the most; the large Turkish population and possible strong influence coming from it after future accession, cultural and religious questions of whether Turkey is or is not part of Europe, therefore adequate candidate for membership, problems concerning the human rights and its violation, Kurdish question and Cyprus issue. The author if this thesis will be leaning on the scholar papers that have been already written on this issue and comparing them again with the results and

³⁰⁰ European Commission, **Turkey 2012 Progress Report**, Commission Staff Working Document Brussels, 2012, p.32.

points concluded in Regular Reports written on Turkey. Author will try to find out whether Slovakia had had similar issues and if yes, how they were solved in order to fulfil the requirements of the EU. She is also attempting to ascertain whether the problems that have been specified as the main reason of Turkey's setback are justified.

3.2.1. Population

The size of Turkey's population has been one of the prior themes when considering Turkey for the EU membership. There are several reasons why to make such consideration; impact on EU's demographic and economic dynamics³⁰¹ and Turkey's possible gained political power joined with the voting power. Turkey's population, according to the Turkish Statistical Institute was estimated at 75 627 384 on December 31, 2012. The enlargement that occurred on 2004, enlargement in which Slovakia joined the EU, the total population of accessed 10 countries was approximately 74 million.³⁰² If Turkey joins the EU, only Germany will have more population than Turkey, therefore the gained political power is the major concern. Therefore, the more populated the country is, the more seats it has in the European Parliament and consequently, the stronger is its voice. With such crowded population, Turkey will have strong political influence rising from system in the European Parliament for number of representatives according to the size of population of particular country and therefore possible conclusive voting weight.³⁰³ As Robert Pahre and Burcu Ucaray noted in their paper, there have been fears that the Turkish membership would "completely change the architecture of the EU"³⁰⁴. Even though such concerns rises from the evident fact; the size of the population, Pahre and Ucaray argues that these fears are unsubstantial. According to these authors, preferences are determining the influence in the Union.³⁰⁵ The differences in

³⁰¹ Harun Ucak, "Turkey's Population Dynamics As A Candidate Country For EU Membership", **International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues**, Vol.1, No.4, 2011, p.195.

³⁰² Ucak, p.180.

³⁰³ Robert Phare and Burcu Ucaray, **The Myths of Turkish Influence in the EU**, Department of **Political Science**, University of Illinois, Illinois, 2006, pp.1-2.

³⁰⁴ Pahre and Ucaray, p.3.

³⁰⁵ Pahre and Ucaray, p.3.

preferences of Turkey with preferences of other EU members are possible; however it does not mean that Turkish preferences or possible extreme proposals will be unconditionally adopted. Why? Because “the EU decision-making is the presence of many veto actors and supramajoritarian procedures”³⁰⁶ therefore Turkey, with her ‘different’ preferences “will have little influence over day-to-day policy-making”³⁰⁷. Hence it may be concluded that such concerns about Turkish political influence on the EU policy-making consequence from the crowded Turkish population are unwarranted.

On the other side Slovakia, with its approximately 5,4 million people³⁰⁸, one of the smallest and economically weakest countries in the EU was hardly feared of its possible political influence when considering for membership. On contrary, in order to get the funds from the EU, Slovakia would not aspire on being influential and policy-changing player. The contrast between the size of Turkish population and Slovak population is thus the first difference that may us lead to the question of Turkish unsuccessful accession process. Although, as noticed by Pahre and Ucaray (2006), the biggest EU fear of Turkish political influence on policy-making is unreasonable.

3.2.2. Identity and Religion

Is Turkey a bridge to the Europe or is it a border to the Europe? The question of European identity comes up as the critical topic with the enlargement of the EU, especially during the last years of the Turkish accession process. The enlargement process basically tells what Europe is, and what is not.³⁰⁹ The opponents of Turkish membership in the EU argue and emphasize the European history, culture and geography as the main indicators of European identity. They consider the EU as the ‘European supranational state’ and are advocates of Turkish privileged partnership

³⁰⁶ Pahre and Ucaray, p.3.

³⁰⁷ Pahre and Ucaray, p.3.

³⁰⁸ “Member Countries of the EU”, <http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries/>, (10.05.2013).

³⁰⁹ Melten M.Bac and Evrim Taskin, “Turkey’s Accession to the EU: Does Culture and Identity play a Role?”, *Ankara Review of European Studies*, Vol.6, No.2, 2007, p.33.

with the EU rather than full EU membership.³¹⁰ On the other side there are those who think of the EU as ‘economic union’ based on liberal values and for them the issue of identity is out of discussion. The latter group supports Turkey for its EU membership.³¹¹

In 2002 the leaders of the EU at the Copenhagen European Council assured that the negotiations with Turkey would be held under one condition; the European Council in December 2004 concluded that “Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria of a functioning democracy”.³¹² In spite of the fact that Turkey fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria and has started the accession negotiation in 2005, there were more criteria assigned to Turkey, which must be accomplished up to its admission to the EU. These ‘peculiar conditions’ consists of; keeping stable relations with neighbour countries, “achieve a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem”³¹³, keep up with the obligations of the Association Agreement and Additional Protocol. According to Kassomeh and his research paper, the Copenhagen criteria and Turkey’s peculiar conditions are the official criteria behind which the unofficial but critical criteria are being hidden; identity and religion. The author is convinced that these “other issues”, which are not included in the Copenhagen Criteria, are the real reasons of Turkey’s setback. Kassomeh is looking at the issue of identity from the social constructivists’ perspective; Turkey intends to construct its European Identity since the foundation of the modern Turkish Republic based on the values acquired by its leader, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Europe, on the other hand, the EU have the intention of the construction of non-European Turkey.³¹⁴ At the same time he is assured that the only way how to reconcile the situation that occurs between ‘the Christian world’ and ‘the Muslim world’ is by EU’s admitting Turkey and cooperate on this issue.³¹⁵

³¹⁰ Nawar Kassomeh, **Turkey and EU: The Doors are Barely Open, The Questions of Identity, Religion, and Culture in Turkey’s Accession Debate**, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, 2012, pp.26-27.

³¹¹ Kassomeh, p.27.

³¹² Kassomeh, p.27.

³¹³ Kassomeh, p.30.

³¹⁴ Kassomeh, p.5.

³¹⁵ Kassomeh, p.7.

In fact, more than 16 million Muslims already live in the EU.³¹⁶ This covers about 3-4% of whole EU.³¹⁷ Can it be considered as positive or negative? The problem of integration of Muslims into the society and resultant conflicts between Muslims and Christians are alarming and frightens European society, mostly the countries where the Muslim population is high such as France, Germany of Holland, of including such a big country with Muslim population to the EU.³¹⁸ By ‘opening the barricades’ there would be even more Muslims in European countries, therefore, according to the social opinion, more conflicts.³¹⁹ The prejudices and negative common repute are thus one of the main indicators that construct ‘non-European’ identity of Turkey within European population. The important factor here which may influence Turkish membership is secularism. Ataturk separated the state and the religion and by doing that he laid the basis for modern and secular country. However, with the raise of AKP the raise of Islam occurred and the EU is suspicious of a real secular system in the country.³²⁰ Ataturk’s intention for modernization is being examined by current Islamist elites. AKP has been blamed of hidden Islamic agenda and that its leader Erdoğan is using Islam as a vehicle for gaining more votes and supporters.³²¹ So while ostensible trying to obtain the full EU membership, Erdoğan’s negative impact on secularism is ruining the vision for this acquisition.³²² So on the initial question, whether Turkey is bridge or border to Europe, the answer would be; both. And not just to Europe, but in the case of Turkey only, is it the bridge and border to Middle East, Mediterranean, Aegean, Caucasia, Central Asia, as well as the bridge and the border between Muslims and Christians.

The second country that we are evaluating here, Slovakia, is in the question of identity; religion, culture and geography, unconditionally European. Such issue of identity has not been raised while Slovakia’s EU accession process. Slovakia is Central European country that has started its negotiations right after its

³¹⁶ Ahmed Ishtiaq, “Muslims in Western Europe”, 29.05.2013, <http://www.confluence.org.uk/2013/05/29/muslims-in-western-europe/>, (06.10.2013).

³¹⁷ Kassomeh, pp.12-13.

³¹⁸ Robert S.Leiken, “Europe’s Angry Muslims”, July/August 2005, <http://www.cfr.org/religion/europes-angry-muslims/p8218>, (06.10.2013).

³¹⁹ “Islam in Germany”, <http://www.euro-islam.info/country-profiles/germany/>, (08.10.2013).

³²⁰ Kassomeh, p.15.

³²¹ Kassomeh, p.20.

³²² Kassomeh, pp.18-21.

establishment, if you like, after dissolution of Czechoslovakia, without any doubt of not being European in spite of its communist past. Considering Slovakia and its religion, about 70% of total population, according to the population census 2011, report to Christianity. More than 13% report to no religion and more than 10% did not specify any religion.³²³ Another difference between Turkey and Slovakia is thus, the identity linked to religion, culture and history.

Is it correct, though, not to accept Turkey into the EU based on its complicated identity? In agreement with Roma Treaty signed in 1957, the document upon which current EU is based; particularly in Article 237 is stated that “Any European State may apply to become a member of the Community”³²⁴. However, neither in the Treaty of Roma nor in any other official document of the EU there is no definition of the ‘European’. But, since Turkey has already been officially pronounced to be the Candidate country and even the accession negotiation has started, the author suggests that the topic concerning having European identity as well as further discourses and doubts are irrelevant. At the same time the issue of “European” religion should not be a critical issue, since the EU is not a ‘religion club’.

3.2.3. Human Rights / Kurdish Question

The EU’s basis for the protection of the human rights has been included into the preamble of the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, the Treaty that transformed the European Communities into the EU. In the preamble it says that; “The Union shall accede to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”³²⁵, moreover “Fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the

³²³ “Population by Religion”, 2011,2001, 1991, <http://portal.statistics.sk/files/table-14.pdf>, (16.05.2013).

³²⁴ “The Treaty of Rome”, 25.03.1957, http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/emu_history/documents/treaties/rometreaty2.pdf, (19.03.2013), p.78.

³²⁵ “Consolidated Version of the Treaty on EU”, **Official Journal of the EU**, 2008, p.19.

Member States, shall constitute general principles of the Union's law”³²⁶. Regarding Turkey, she signed the European Convention for the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in 1950 and consequently ratified in 1954³²⁷. Despite of signing it, Turkey still has not ratified all of the protocols included in the Convention.³²⁸

Turkey, country that has never been considered as hundred percent democratic, has not had massive apparent human rights violations until the 1980s.³²⁹ The military takeover 1980 was a critical point that launched vast human rights violations of not just military soldiers but civilians, as well.³³⁰ The violation of human rights after the coup 1980 is directly connected to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and therefore to the Kurdish issue. After the 1980-'83 coup the activity of PKK increased, even though the PKK has been founded and operated before. With the launch of the war between the PKK terrorists and the state military in 1984 more than 37 thousand people died.³³¹ The reasons of intensified activity of Kurds were their discontent with the undemocratic policies during the coup. Moreover, continuous denial of Kurdish identity and refusal of Kurdish language and culture, government's defection to support the education and economical activity in the southeast region, the region where most of Kurds inhabits, are also the reasons of PKK's increased violent activity.³³²

In 1980s the democratization and the protection of human rights were therefore the main issues that Turkey dealt with. The reason of such shift of priorities from the collective defence to protection of human rights and free markets, besides, was the end of the Cold war. The European Communities, nowadays EU, were pushing Turkey to the improvement in this area. Even though the European Communities at the beginning of the coup 1980 did not respond strictly to the situation in Turkey, only observed the actual situation, in January 1982, after 2 years

³²⁶ “Consolidated Version of the Treaty on EU”, **Official Journal of the EU**, 2008, p.19.

³²⁷ “Ratification of International Human Rights Treaties – Turkey”, Human Rights Library – University of Minnesota, <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/research/ratification-turkey.html>, (05.03.2013).

³²⁸ Protocol 4,7 and 12 - European Commission. **Turkey 2012 Progress Report**, Commission Staff Working Document, Brussels, 2012.

³²⁹ Cenap Çakmak, “Human Rights, The EU and Turkey”, Alternatives, **Turkish Journal of International Relations**, Vol.2, No.3-4, 2003, p.70.

³³⁰ Çakmak, pp.70-71.

³³¹ Çakmak, p.71.

³³² Çakmak, p.72.

of military occupation, decided to suspend Turkey from any relation with the Community and left no financial aid as a warning and motivation for amelioration of the conditions.³³³ Finally, Turkey accepted the new Constitution in 1982 and in 1983 first free elections were held after the military occupation that longed for 3 years.³³⁴

Even though Turkey's relation with the EU is going back to the 1963, when signing the Ankara Agreement, the Kurdish question has been thwarting Turkey's efforts towards accession.³³⁵ The 1989 Opinion denoted the Kurdish issue as the main reason why Turkey will not be able to start the negotiations eventually. The EU has been consistently calling for the political solution, thus human rights status in the country can be improved.³³⁶ In the first Progress report that was made on Turkey in year 1998, the solution of Kurdish problem was marked as the top issue to resolve. Moreover, the Commission pronouncedly called for "a civil and not a military solution"³³⁷. Up until the 1999, the war with the PKK lasted continuously and affected negatively not only the democratization process in Turkey but also the relations with the EU. The year 1999, is not only characterized by the stagnation of the Kurdish-PKK issue, but mostly by the event that stimulated it; the leader of PKK, Abdullah Ocalan was captured and consequently sentenced to death.³³⁸

Considering the EU and their request for the protection of the human rights from the candidate countries, the Copenhagen Criteria were adopted in 1993. Besides other criteria, the candidate country must fulfil the political criteria that consist of protection of human rights, as well as democratic institutions rule of law and protection of minorities. In December 1999 in Helsinki summit, Turkey was officially accepted as the candidate country for the EU membership.³³⁹ This was an extraordinary achievement for Turkey since its previous denial for candidacy in

³³³ Çakmak, pp.73-74.

³³⁴ Çakmak, p.75.

³³⁵ "EU Lajendijk: Turkey can't enter in Europe without solving Kurdish question", 09.12.2011, <http://en.firatnews.com/news/features/eu-lajendijk-turkey-can-t-enter-in-europe-without-solving-kurdish-question.htm>, (02.10.2013).

³³⁶ European Commission. **Turkey 2011 Progress Report**, Commission Staff Working Document, Brussels, 2011, p.25.

³³⁷ European Commission, **Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession**, 1998, p.9.

³³⁸ Firat Cengiz and Lars Hoffman, **Rethinking Conditionality: Turkey's EU Accession and the Kurdish Question**, TILEC Discussion Paper, Tilburg University, 2012, p.12.

³³⁹ Çakmak, p.82.

1997, when Turkey was rejected due to its “poor human rights records”³⁴⁰. Eventually, The EU acknowledged all the efforts, legislation changes that have Turkey made in the area of human rights protection, and considerably express its content about Turkey’s progress in the Regular Report 2001 by stating that; “The recent constitutional amendments are a significant step towards strengthening guarantees in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms and limiting capital punishment”³⁴¹.

Prime Minister of Turkey in 1999, Mesut Yılmaz, made an eloquent statement on current vague situation between Turkey and the EU; “the road to the EU passes through Diyarbakir”³⁴². Since Diyarbakir is a city with population that consists mostly of Kurds, he pointed out at the fact, that the only way how Turkey will be able to get the membership in the Union is to resolve the problems with Kurds and find peaceful solution for this issue. Is it possible to give to Kurds all they expect? – Recognition of separate Kurdish identity, possibility of education and spreading culture in their language and at the same time protect the Turkish integrity? How to make a peace with Kurds when “Turkish military and bureaucratic elite has perceived the Kurdish issue as a significant threat to the invisible integrity of the state”³⁴³ since ever? Even though the EU’s expectation in this issue is high, the Members of European Parliament preferred rather to excuse themselves from voting whether or not to interfere in this subject and are confident that Turkish government should resolve the problem by itself.³⁴⁴

The reforms that Turkish government made up until now still seem not to be enough for the EU. To mention the most critical ones; Öcalan’s death penalty was replaced with lifetime imprisonment, the possibility of broadcasting in other than Turkish languages was conceded, the Kurdish language and other languages other than Turkish, which people use in their daily life were allowed to be teaching of.³⁴⁵ With AKP’s entering into the office even more significant reforms and changes that

³⁴⁰ Çakmak, p.81.

³⁴¹ European Commission, **2001 Regular Report on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession**, Brussel, 2001, p.19.

³⁴² Cengiz and Hoffman, p.14.

³⁴³ Cengiz and Hoffman, p.13.

³⁴⁴ Roni Alasor and Lorin Sarkisian, “EU urges Turkey to Find Political Solution to Kurdish Issue”, 30.03.2012, <http://www.aknews.com/en/aknews/8/298769/?tpl=print.tpl>, (06.03.2013).

³⁴⁵ Cengiz and Hoffman, p.13.

are directly joined with the Kurdish issue and the human rights were made, however, they were acknowledged only as limited progress and pressure from the EU side persisted. From the significant reforms the opening of Kurdish TV channel, courses at particular universities in southeast in Kurdish language or ease on Kurdish culture can be mentioned.³⁴⁶

Is it enough to acknowledge that the area of human rights protection has been improved? Has Turkey reached the EU level of protection of human rights? How is the current situation in the country? The Human Rights Watch reports on Turkey from 2012 and 2013 agree on the matter of fact that Turkey is lacking her activity for promoting the protection of human rights at the expense of promoting the leader position in the region and maintaining the economic growth. Especially in the 2013 report it is stressed that Turkey has not undertaken any steps toward the amendment of the situation since last year. In this report the main topics of criticism are; the continuous usage of terrorism law in order to prosecute and prolong captivity of “thousands of Kurdish political activists, human right defenders, students, journalists, and trade unionist”³⁴⁷, restricted free speech and media and non-resolution of Kurdish issue which was named as the main barrier to Turkish progress in this field.

Moreover, the high dissatisfaction is emphasized when concerning the right to a fair trial. In the Overview 1959-2011 report made by the essential judicial European body, the European Court of Human Rights, Turkey is the “worst violator of human rights among the 47 signatory states of the European Convention on Human Rights”³⁴⁸. In accord with the Overview, the right to fair trial and the right to fair trial within appropriate time period are the main topics of criticism. During the researched period of 1959-2011 only 46 cases out of 2 295 total trials were without any violations of human rights.³⁴⁹ Such enormous number of violated judgements put

³⁴⁶ Djene Rhys Bajalan, “AKP, Terrorists and Earthquakes: Turkey’s Never-ending Kurdish Question”, 31.10.2011, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/djene-rhys-bajalan/akp-terrorists-and-earthquakes-turkey%E2%80%99s-never-ending-kurdish-question>, (02.10.2013).

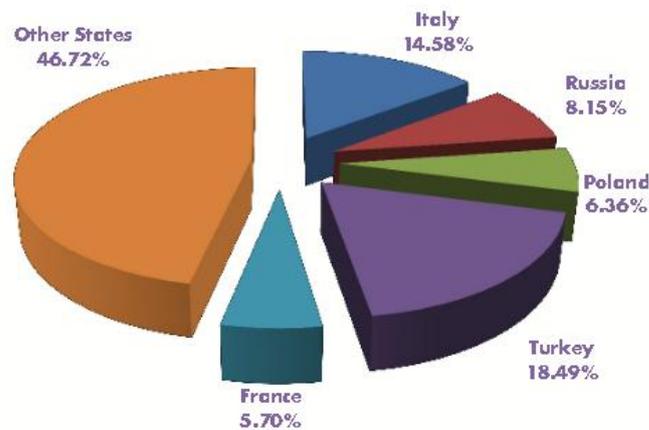
³⁴⁷ “Human Rights Watch World Report 2013”, <http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2013/country-chapters/turkey>, (06.03.2013).

³⁴⁸ ECHR, “Human Rights Violations in Turkey”, European Court on Human Rights, <http://ecohr.blogspot.com/2013/05/human-rights-violations-in-turkey.html>, (07.06.2013).

³⁴⁹ ECHR, “Human Rights Violations in Turkey”, European Court on Human Rights, <http://ecohr.blogspot.com/2013/05/human-rights-violations-in-turkey.html>, (07.06.2013).

Turkey on the first place in the ratings of worst violators of human rights, just before Italy, Russia, France and Poland, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1³⁵⁰
Violation Judgement by States 1959 - 2011



Source : “Overview 1959 – 2011”, European Court of Human Rights, 2012, France, p.3.

Another setbacks mentioned in the Human Rights Watch report 2013 were; frequent prosecution of individuals for non-violent writing and speech, most of them of Kurdish ethnicity, widespread domestic violence committed on women, violence against demonstrators, lack of security protection for victims of ill-treatment by state officials, police and military.³⁵¹ Considering the international community outlook; The EU does not find Turkey’s progress in human rights protection sufficient enough and stresses a need of new constitution and quick solution of Kurdish issue. The United States’ in their annual human rights report expressed their discontent about “the justice system, free speech, inadequate protection of women, children, lesbian, gay, and bisexual and transgender persons”³⁵². The Council of Europe as well as the UN Human Rights Committee also do not consider the level of human rights protection in Turkey at the same level, or any close to any European country and advise introducing of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation.

³⁵¹ “Human Rights Watch World Report 2013”, <http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2013/country-chapters/turkey>, (06.03.2013).

³⁵² “Human Rights Watch World Report 2013”, <http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2013/country-chapters/turkey>, (06.03.2013).

What are the latest highlights on the Kurdish issue? Has Prime Minister Erdoğan and the leaders in the EU changed their approach? Will be the armed conflict that has been continuing since the 1984 finally over? Mr. Erdoğan at the end of year 2012 declared that the discourse with Öcalan has begun. This statement brought positivity and hopes for a start of the peace process. After failure of ‘first peace process’ from 2009, ‘the democratic opening’, and following intensification of armed conflicts between PKK terrorists and Turkish military Prime Minister Erdoğan must pay lot of attention on the course of dialogues and be especially careful not to misfire again. Erdoğan, however, is not alone in this process. He is ‘cooperating’ with Öcalan, the captured PKK leader. This cooperation seems to be profiting for both sides; Öcalan will prove to himself that he still has the authority of PKK members and since he hopes to be released, he intends to be more of solution to the problem than an obstacle.³⁵³ And on the other side, the solution and end of the PKK terrorism would mean tremendous success and gain of popularity for Erdoğan and his government, since he is planning to candidate for the president seat in the 2014 elections.³⁵⁴ In order to proceed in this process carefully, the ‘Four-rung Ladder Strategy’ has been specified.³⁵⁵ Each step of the strategy is a step to democracy, and as Öcalan proposed, the Turkish democracy would mean gain not only for the Turkish people, but for the Kurdish, as well.³⁵⁶ Although Erdoğan assured the Turkish population that there will be no division of the land- no Kurdistan and no democratic autonomy given, he had to make some compromises, coming up with the new constitution, as well. The reforms includes issues that will definitely help Turkey in improvement of its human rights status, though; “neutral definition of citizenship, removal of barriers to mother-tongue education and empowerment of local administrations”³⁵⁷. However, the first step towards the peace is to release the hostages and the cease-fire.³⁵⁸ At the beginning of March 2013 Öcalan made PKK

³⁵³ Mustafa Akyol, “Turkey Consideres New ‘Peace Process’ with PKK”, 03.01.2013, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/01/pkk-peace-turkey.html>, (12.03.2013).

³⁵⁴ “Erdoğan’s Presidential Ambitions”, 27.08.2013, <http://m.aljazeera.com/story/201382795036739875>, (04.10.2013).

³⁵⁵ Eyup Can, “New ‘Imrali Accord’ between Turkey, PKK”, 08.01.2013, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2013/01/new-turkish-kurdish-peace-accord.html>, (12.03.2013).

³⁵⁶ Eyup Can.

³⁵⁷ Eyup Can.

³⁵⁸ Eyup Can.

protagonists to release 8 hostages that had been kept for about 2 years by PKK army.³⁵⁹ Such gesture has been perceived as a gesture of goodwill and brought hope to the peace process. The first indication of better prospects for Turkey's future considering the fight with terrorism and upgrading the level of human rights and the fact that Öcalan truly wants to make the peace process work was his historically important announcement made on 21st March, the day of Kurdish New Years', when he called for ceasefire and the withdrawal of PKK fighters from Turkish territory after 30 years of conflict and 40 thousand victims.³⁶⁰ The withdrawal, as planned by Murat Karayılan, the senior leader of the group, has started on 8th May 2013.³⁶¹ How did it influence the EU decision about Turkey's accession talks? Had the start of the 'peace process' anything to do with EU conditionality? Considering the latest progress report; even though the EU leaders are pleased with such steps and the EU is ready to help Turkey in their democratization process, no exact promises are given in regard with the Turkish membership in the EU.

Slovakia, in comparison with Turkey, considering the protection of human rights has had much better prospects, when analysing the results from regular reports prepared by the Commission. The 1998 report declares that "Slovakia has already acceded to most of the international human rights instruments"³⁶² and that the European Social Charter has been already ratified by Slovakia, as well. Except of few startling cases from the period of election campaign, when "the Government exercised a high degree of control over the public radio and television networks"³⁶³, the civil and political rights are considered and acknowledged by the Commission as respected. Looking at the Human Rights Watch overview from 1998, however, the conditions seem not as positive. The criticism is based on inactions in few areas, such as skinhead violence against Roma, protection of minority language, ongoing police cruelty and more particularly "illegal ousting of a Slovak

³⁵⁹ "PKK Frees Turkish Hostages in Free Bid", 13.03.2013, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/03/20133136151360234.html>, (20.03.2013).

³⁶⁰ Constance Letsch, "Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan Declares ceasefire with Turkey", 21.03.2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/mar/21/pkk-leader-ocalan-declares-ceasefire>, (25.03.2013).

³⁶¹ "Millitants will Start Withdrawing from Turkey on May 8, PKK says", 25.04.2013, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/pkk-to-start-withdrawal-from-turkey-on-may-8.aspx?pageID=238&nID=45632&NewsCatID=338>, (30.04.2013).

³⁶² Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession, 1998, p.11.

³⁶³ Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress towards Accession, 1998, p.11.

parliamentarian”³⁶⁴. Further complaints were expressed over the right to expression, specifically the control over state media. Such inadequacies in this issue of human rights were reasons for the EU and USA and their doubts about Slovakia’s future membership in the EU and NATO, as well. However, new Slovak Government that came to the power in 1998 with Prime Minister Dzurinda from SDK was willing to made progress needed in order to get Slovakia membership in mentioned international organizations. In the 2000 Human Rights Watch Report the remarkable progress that Slovakia has made was mentioned. However, the common topic of criticism towards Slovakia and its protection of human rights from the EU, The United States, The Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was that Slovakia needs to pass the minority language law as soon as possible.³⁶⁵ The international community expressed their anxiety about the rights and freedoms of Roma minority, as well.

The Regular Report on Slovakia from 2002 provides an overview of all initiatives made toward amelioration in human rights field. Regarding the subjects of international protocols that Slovakia signed; abolition of the death penalty, inhibition of discrimination on any grounds, denomination of the Ombudsman and of the Office of the Ombudsman, introducing of the offence of trafficking of human beings, adoption of the New Asylum Act, increase of the number of women in the parliament, becoming a party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, improvement of living and social condition of disabled and socially vulnerable people, trade union involvement in social dialogue, and other improvements in regard with minorities, especially Roma minority were highlighted and pinpointed by the commissioners in the Report 2002.³⁶⁶ Even though, the progress that Slovakia made was quite exquisite, the problems about Roma minorities and the discriminative treatment that they are subject of, is the main concern expressed by the international community in the 2002 Human Rights

³⁶⁴ Human Rights Watch, “Human Rights Watch World Report 1998 – Slovakia”, <http://www.refworld.org/publisher,HRW,,SVK,3ae6a8b024,0.html>, (02.05.2013).

³⁶⁵ Human Rights Watch, “Human Rights Watch World Report 2000 – Slovakia”, <http://www.refworld.org/publisher,HRW,,SVK,3ae6a8cd24,0.html>, (02.05.2013).

³⁶⁶ 2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia’s Progress towards Accession, Regular Report, Brussels, 2002, pp.28-30.

Watch.³⁶⁷ One year before Slovakia's accession to the EU the statement of commissioners about the human rights situation in Comprehensive Monitoring Report 2003 was short but terse; "All the human rights legal instruments, under the justice and home affairs acquis, have been ratified by Slovakia"³⁶⁸. That way, the protection of human rights in Slovakia gained its credibility and was not questioned and inspected in such extensive way as the Turkey's human right protection situation. But what would happen if it was? Would be Slovakia able to pass through? The answer to this question is however irrelevant nowadays.

³⁶⁷ Human Rights Watch, "Human Rights Watch World Report 2002 – Slovakia", <http://www.refworld.org/publisher,HRW,,SVK,3c46e92d10,0.html>, (02.05.2013).

³⁶⁸ Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Slovakia's Preparation for Membership, 2003, p.46.

CONCLUSION

Slovakia and Turkey: on the one side Central European, former communistic, small, ‘laggard’ country and on the other side; huge, overpopulated, half European half Asian, Muslim but secular, democratically ruled country. Can these two, at a glance, totally different countries, have something in common? This thesis was written in order to find out, whether Slovakia’s and Turkey’s EU accession processes are sharing similarities or are rather different. The aim, as the author proposed earlier, is to learn the ‘real reason’ why Turkish protracted EU accession process has often been described as a dead-end. The author of this thesis presupposes certain similarities in political and economical spheres of Slovakia and Turkey. The importance of this thesis lies in the opening of the ‘other problems’ Turkey has faced, seeing that Slovakia has successfully joined the EU within 11 years whilst Turkey has been ‘scrambling’ for the EU membership since 1959, its application for associate member in European Economic Community.

For this purpose, the author did a research on the conceptual background of comparative studies in order to find out whether any academicians have been concerned with such topic. Despite that she could not find any particular comparative study or thesis written only about Slovakia and Turkey, there have been several articles which compares Turkey with other CEECs, mentioning Slovakia as an example. The reason of the background research was to prove that the author will not be comparing ‘apples and oranges’.

“Awkward” Turkey and Slovakia, as proposed by Hakan Arıkan and Heather Field, are sharing particular features regarding their EU accession process. In 1997 both countries were criticised by the EU for their political environments and kept behind the other applicants; Slovakia, because of the failure of ‘democracy test’, and Turkey because of various reasons including primarily undemocratic governance apparent on critic military role in politics, unsolved Cyprus problem and the political tension between Islamists and secularists.³⁶⁹ The slow and problematic accession

³⁶⁹ Bruce Kuniholm, “Turkey’s Accession to the EU: Differences in European and US Attitudes, and Challenges for Turkey”, 2000, <http://www.irex.org/system/files/kuniholm.pdf>, (02.06.2013), p.3.

path, is therefore, as Field emphasized, common feature of ‘awkward’ countries trying to reach the goal of full EU membership.

The EU’s mechanism of democratic conditionality is considered to be the most effective tool of EU, via which the EU makes its potential candidates comply their policies with the EU’s ones. The response, however, often depends on the country itself. Schimmelfening et al. studied EU conditionality and its various mechanisms and affectivities on Turkey, Slovakia and Latvia. They proposed that the ‘compliance by reward’ mechanism is the most effective mechanism of conditionality, but at the same time they are aware of the fact that the domestic political environment strongly affects country’s response on this mechanism. The author of the thesis, when comparing the domestic situations of Slovakia and Turkey, found out that both countries have had in Turkey’s case, and had in Slovakia’s case, difficulties to respond successfully on the EU political conditionality due to their inadmissible political situations.

Slovakia, during 1992-1998, faced the authoritative governance of Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar, who was often blamed for his non-democratic practices. The EU leaders even made statements from which it was clear that Slovakia is not invited in the EU unless Mečiar is replaced. Turkey, likewise, has been accused of insufficient democracy. The corruption scandals, strong military influence, limitations of freedoms and rights for ethnic minorities and groups... all of these contributed to the fact that Turkey would have paid high political costs, just like Slovakia, in the case of compliance with the EU norms. However, Slovakia was at the end able to successfully change its government in parliamentary elections 1998, therefore Schimmelfening et al. proposed that the EU was somehow able to influence the electorates. The electorates, according to Schimmelfening et al., were aware of the scenario in the case of Mečiar coming to the power again and as a consequence, the majority of electorates decided to vote for opposition political groups.

In the case of Turkey, there have been many ups and downs in its accession path considering the influence of the EU conditionality. In order to get deeper into the complicated Turkish domestic political environment and understand better the reasons of such fluctuations, more complex study of Turkish policy is needed, but that would extend the range of this thesis. More generally speaking, Turkey partially

responded to the conditionality's mechanisms and successfully launched the process of reformation after gaining its 'candidate' status in 1999. The explanation of this phenomenon is provided by the concept of 'membership carrot', that tells us that applicant country is made to want to make reforms when it sees that the membership is 'in the bag'. Turkey, affected by the vision of the EU membership, supported by the newly gained 'candidate' status, passed significant constitutional amendments and 8 reform packages. The breakthrough, though, occurred few years later, more particularly at the end of 2004-beggining of 2005, after the opening of the accession negotiation talks. The post-2005 period is characterized by the decrease not only in the Turkish reforms, but also in the EU's support and ambitions to make conditionality effective. Germany and France has been since then proposing to Turkey the concept of 'privileged partnership' instead of full membership with the note that Turkey should never become an EU member. Such statements, indeed, made the prospect of the EU membership less visible and as Murat Coşkun proposed in his article, if there is no presence of sizeable carrot, the conditionality loses its effectiveness.

For the author, however, the already written comparative studies on this topic were not sufficient. The author of this thesis decided to make a comparison of the economic and politic indexes according to official statistics and reports, in order to exclude the possibility that Turkey has had 'technical problems' because of which she has not been let into the Club. The Copenhagen Criteria composes of economic criteria, except of the other ones; with the definition that candidate country must have functioning market economy and be competitive on European market.

The similarities in economic indexes that give us clue about market economy and competitiveness were pointed out. Results of this comparison affirmed author's presumption of similar economy progression. Similarities were observed, for instance, in 'Real GDP growth rate'; both Turkey and Slovakia was able to increase the index after particular 'activators'. In the case of Slovakia, the activator here was the actual entrance to the EU and in the case of Turkey, Real GDP growth rate increased after stabilizing macroeconomic imbalances caused by economic crisis in 2001. During these mentioned years, both countries' Real GDP growth rate reached the values 8-10. Furthermore, both countries have been criticized for high

unemployment rate, implying from the official reports made by the European Commission. From author's study, it may be seen that Slovakia's, as well as Turkey's unemployment rate is circulating about the value of 10, and what is more, Slovakia's unemployment rate was much more higher than Turkey's one, around the value of 17, until the government was able to stabilize it after the country's EU entrance.

One of the indexes that tell about the ability to compete on the market is the index of 'Total Research & Development (R&D) expenditures in % of GDP'. Looking at the values of Slovakia and Turkey, it was observed that none of these two countries are reaching the EU average. However, comparing them to each other, it may be concluded that they both invested similar percentage of their GDP into the research and development during the years 1995-2011. 'Turnover from innovation index' based on the calculation of turnover from products new to the enterprise and to the market of out of total turnover, provides us clue about the country's competitiveness, as well. From the values reached, it is obvious that both Slovakia and Turkey have their values higher than the EU average, furthermore, these two countries reach very similar values. Considering the index of 'minimum wages', both Slovakia and Turkey do not approximate the EU average, moreover, they are far behind most of the EU countries. However, deliberating the similarity, it may be inferred that minimum wages are considerable equal.

The 'similarities' part implies the issues concerning common features of domestic political environment of Slovakia and Turkey, as well. Just like the author presupposed and found particular similarities in the economic indexes, Slovakia and Turkey are alike in particular political issues. When again considering the Copenhagen criteria; democracy, rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities are expected from the candidate country to be fully in compliance with the EU norms. Regarding Slovakia and democracy, it was observed that during years 1992-1998 the governance of Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar and his cabinet was strongly criticized by the EU because of practices that hardly can be characterized as democratic. For instance, he was accused of placing 'his' PMs on the parliamentary functions that were supposed to be realized by the opposition, domination over privatization process, changing the rules for elections in order to

limit participations of opposition parties in the elections, efforts for replacing the parliamentary system with the presidential one and consequently become a president, and many other aspirations. His ‘famous’ statement, “If they don’t want us in the West, then we’ll return to the East!”³⁷⁰ as a reaction on strong Western criticism and rejection on Luxemburg summit in 1997, gives clue about his authoritarian tendencies and desire for power, as well.

Turkey’s democratic system has been questioned for ages and such problems are still on the agenda even nowadays. There have been two actual military coups and many other military efforts to overthrow the undemocratic political regime. The country has been since 2002 led by Prime Minister Erdoğan, who is on the one hand considered as one of the most powerful Turkish leaders since the establishment of Turkish Republic, but on the other hand considered as a leader of political party with hidden Islamic agenda. Last Commission report on Turkey, Progress Report 2012, even pointed out the growing authoritarian tendencies of government. Just like former Slovak Prime Minister Mečiar, Erdoğan has also ‘famous’ statement allusive to the EU strong criticisms, implying that Turkey would not mind giving up on the EU membership, in case of gaining the part in ‘Shanghai Five’³⁷¹. Prime Minister Erdoğan has been accused of similar tendencies that Mečiar had during his governance; the effort of changing the parliamentary system for the presidential system. Any resemblance noticed between these two high politicians?

Furthermore, both Slovakia and Turkey have had scandals regarding the corruption of high representatives. Considering that corruption has negative effects on the democracy and on the country itself, it was one of the greatest obstacles during these accession processes of Slovakia and Turkey. In accord with the official reports of Transparency International from 2009, Slovakia took 20th and Turkey 19th place in the table of the most corrupted countries in Europe.

The issue of protection minority and ethnic groups was mentioned in Progress Reports of both countries. While in Slovakia the most critic groups were Roma and

³⁷⁰ Edmond Ademi, **Opposing Europe: Euroscepticism in Macedonia, a real Threat or a Bluff?**, Slovak Experience, The Slovak Balkan Publicity Fund, Pontis Foundation, Liberta Institute, Skopje, 2012, p.10.

³⁷¹ “Erdoğan: If we could Enter Shanghai Five, we would Say Goodbye to EU”, 26.1.2013, <http://english.sabah.com.tr/National/2013/01/26/erdogan-if-we-could-enter-shanghai-five-we-would-say-goodbye-to-eu>, (25.02.2013).

Hungarian minority, Turkey has been coping with insufficient freedoms and rights of its various cultural and ethnic minorities and groups. It was observed, however, that the last report made on Slovakia, report made in 2003, mentions that the problem of racism had not been solved yet. In spite of this fact, Slovakia entered the Club, although all forms of racism continue even nowadays.

All the similarities noticed by the author give us clue that the ‘technicalities’ regarding the Copenhagen Criteria have been more or less fulfilled at the same level. However, there must be ‘something’ that still bothers EU; the ‘real reason’ of keeping Turkey in the back. The author, in order to find out what is the ‘something’, studied differences between Turkey and Slovakia, more particularly she focused on the issues that Turkey has been criticised for.

The question of overpopulated Turkey has been bothering EU. The reason of this anxiety may be the fact, that Turkey, in case of accession, would be the second country regarding the number of the population, right after Germany. This may be associated with the political power that Turkey may theoretically gain. However, as author emphasized in her thesis, it is the preferences that determines the political power. There is no way that Turkey would reassert a policy without sufficient support of other EU actors, not to mention the veto-players. The ‘population’ issue is not therefore a justified reason of having Turkey out of the EU.

The matter of Turkish ‘non-European’ identity and religion was studied in this thesis, as well. The author points out on the fact that Turkey has been trying to construct its European identity, as a priority, when becoming modern, secular country. However, it has been also observed that particular European leaders have been trying to, on contrary; construct the non-European identity of Turkey with the excuse that Turkey has nothing in common with European history, culture or even geography. But in fact, in any EU document there is no reference about what ‘European’ refers to and it must be accredited that Turkey has already been acknowledged as an EU candidate. Regarding the religion, it may be concluded that the EU is not a religious club, so that the members should not be chosen at the ground of the country’s majority religion. Therefore the author infers that the question of European identity and the religion should not be an issue anymore. Even

though on the question whether Turkey is a border or a bridge to Europe, the author considers ‘both’ as the correct answer.

The last issue of the ‘differences’ part is devoted to the problem of human rights with concrete implication to the Kurdish problem. The official reports made on the level of protection of human rights in Turkey do not provide any positive prospects, regarding the fact that during the researched period of 1959-2011 only 46 cases out of 2 295 total trials were without any violations of human rights.³⁷² The latest report of Human Right Watch processed in 2013 stresses the urgent need of new constitution in which the solution for Kurdish problem need to be included.

The differences observed between Slovakia and Turkey gives us clue about the reasons of why Turkey still has not been accepted to the EU. Those were the problems that most academicians are concerned with when they study the slow-pacing Turkish EU accession process. However, the technical problems, as it was pointed out in the ‘similarities’ part were more or less alike with the Slovak ones. Slovakia, though, was able to cope with her problematic issues to certain extent, and what is more, as it was pointed out by other academicians, the EU was certain that Slovakia will enter the EU, eventually. This provision provided by the EU to Slovakia, was the main ‘driver’ that influenced Slovakia and made her made the efforts to comply with the EU norms. Yet Turkey has on its ‘plate’ issues that even the country itself has no strength to change; the identity, religion and the population issues. The difference rests in the EU promises here, considering Turkey’s decreased efforts and EU’s languishing hopes. After studying the already written articles and books and making the comparison of the Slovakia and Turkey, the author proposes that the EU is applying different approach and policies towards Turkey than Slovakia. However, in order to fully support this proposition further research of the EU policies and Turkish domestic political realities would be needed.

³⁷² ECHR, “Human Rights Violations in Turkey”, European Court on Human Rights, <http://ecohr.blogspot.com/2013/05/human-rights-violations-in-turkey.html>, (07.06.2013).

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