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## **The EU-Turkey Accession Negotiations from the Polish Perspective: Allies or Competitors?**

### **Abstract**

*The main purpose of this paper is to examine possible areas of cooperation or conflict between Turkey and Poland within the scope of the EU-Turkish accession negotiations. The negotiation process, which was initiated on 3 October 2005 creates a new situation for Poland – once an applicant country, now a new member. Therefore it is important to clarify whether Turkey's EU membership would constitute a threat to the Polish position and interests or rather a chance for mutual cooperation within the Community. The authors intend to analyse official stances of consecutive Polish governments on various negotiation areas with Turkey as well as relevant reports and speeches by influential politicians from both countries. On this basis they will attempt to determine whether Polish and Turkish interests are convergent or divergent, especially as far as the future shape and speed of European integration are concerned.*

### **The Legal Basis of the Polish – Turkish Relations After 1989**

Social as well as political changes which were initiated in Poland in 1989 resulted in intensification of Polish – Turkish relations. This process could be observed at various levels including contacts between high level state officials representing Poland and Turkey as well as private enterprises and individuals. It resulted with a growing need for a new legal framework meeting expectations and requirements of both sides.

The most important document related to the bilateral relations between Poland and Turkey was signed in Warsaw on 3 November 1993. 'The Agreement on Friendship and Cooperation Between the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Turkey' was

concluded for 10 years with an option of automatic prolongation every five years. Termination of the agreement requires prior written notification.

As far as Turkey's application for EU membership is concerned, Article 3 of the Agreement provides that "Both sides will act with the aim of removing differences in development in Europe and in transforming the European continent into an area of common welfare and cooperation"<sup>1</sup>. It should be emphasized that when the Agreement was concluded the EU and NATO membership of Poland was still a distant prospect. The Polish side counted on Turkish support within the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance and in its relations with the European institutions. Turkey, as a NATO member since 1952 and a country associated with the European Economic Community since 1963, was seen as one of the most important partners for Poland. Undoubtedly, the Turkish government fulfilled its obligation when Poland was accepted as a new NATO member in 1999. At present, following Poland's accession to the EU in May 2004, Article 3 must now be interpreted as obliging it to support Turkey's bid for EU membership.

Polish – Turkish relations have been very intense especially since 2003 when Poland was preparing to join the Union. Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Abdullah Gül, visited Poland in February 2004. Four months later, on 1 June 2004, President Ahmet Necdet Sezer came to Warsaw in order to sign another agreement concerning further bilateral cooperation on political, economic, social, security and cultural issues. Furthermore, a special agreement related to closer scientific cooperation was concluded<sup>2</sup>.

The Polish political scene changed following the parliamentary elections in 2005. As a consequence, a new government dominated by right-wing parties was formed. Although they had not been in favour of Turkish membership of the EU before the elections, the coalition parties changed their attitude and decided to continue the policy of the previous cabinet. The new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stefan Meller, visited Turkey from 13-14 April 2006 and met with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Ankara. The official purpose of the meeting was "to secure dynamism in the bilateral relations which both sides described as having been the best for 15 years"<sup>3</sup>. In this context the Turkish side expressed its gratitude to the Polish authorities for their

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<sup>1</sup> "Układ o przyjaźni i współpracy między Rzeczpospolitą Polską a Republiką Turecką z 3 listopada 1993 r." in Z. Leszczyński, A. Koseski (eds.), *Stosunki międzynarodowe. Dokumenty i materiały 1989-2000* (Pułtusk: Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna, 2001), p. 278-279.

<sup>2</sup> D. Pszczołkowska, 'Polska chce Turcji w Unii Europejskiej', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2 June 2004.

<sup>3</sup> P. Dobrowolski, *Wizyta Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych RP Stefana Mellera w Turcji w dniach 13-14 kwietnia 2006 r.*. Source: [www.msz.gov.pl](http://www.msz.gov.pl).

long-standing support of its EU aspirations. As regards the technical talks, the representatives drew attention to increasing activity in economic relations as well as broad new prospects for future cooperation in the area of energy security. Later Foreign Minister Meller flew to Istanbul where he participated in the opening ceremony of the Chopin Association in Turkey and met with the director of the Topkapi Museum. The visit to the museum was organised in order to investigate possibilities of potential cooperation between Turkish and Polish historians.

It should be emphasized that all these meetings between Polish and Turkish officials were very successful and were conducted in a very good atmosphere which strengthened bilateral relations between Turkey and Poland. All the agreements which were concluded created favourable conditions for further cooperation and determined its future development.

### **The Official Position of the Polish Authorities Concerning Turkey's Candidacy**

Polish policy towards Turkey is determined by the Polish government. As far as Turkish accession to the EU is concerned, no referendum on this issue will be held in Poland. It is clear that the role of the Polish authorities will be decisive in the future, hence declarations and opinions of consecutive presidents, prime ministers as well as ministers of foreign affairs need to be analysed in detail.

During his visit to Poland in 2004, Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Gül, stated that he was sure of Polish support for Turkey's EU membership:

I would like to remind you that when the whole of Europe forgot about Poland, the Ottoman sultans remembered it. Of course in Poland, like in every other democratic country, there are different political views with regard to our membership of the EU. Undoubtedly, we respect all of them; however, the most important are the official positions of Polish political leaders and the mainstream of public debate. We are certain that Polish leaders attach particular importance to Polish – Turkish relations. When Poland applied for membership of NATO, Turkey supported it<sup>4</sup>.

The above statement is proved right if one analyses recent speeches of and interviews with various representatives of the Polish authorities. The former President of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, clearly declared that he was in favour of EU

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<sup>4</sup> D. Warszawski, 'Turcja jest atutem Europy – uważa szef tureckiej dyplomacji Abdullah Gul', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3 March 2004.

membership for Turkey with full rights<sup>5</sup>. On 1 June 2004, during the official visit of Ahmet Necdet Sezer in Warsaw, President Kwaśniewski stated: "We also talked about the European Union and the President of Turkey congratulated me on the accession of Poland to the Community. We are ready to share our experience. Moreover, we will also support the Turkish accession negotiations which still require a great deal of work and commitment"<sup>6</sup>. This statement not only proves Polish support for Turkey's EU accession in political terms, but is also tantamount to a declaration of technical support on which the Turkish side relies.

The pro-European policy of the Turkish government has also been supported by all Polish cabinets since 2001. Prime Minister Leszek Miller, a member of the Social Democratic Party (SLD) who was in office between 2001-2004, visited Ankara on 7 April 2003. During his short stay in the Turkish capital the Polish Prime Minister met with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in order to discuss the then situation in Iraq. Furthermore, Leszek Miller seized an opportunity to assure the Turkish Prime Minister of Polish support for Turkey on its way to the EU. Although Poland had only just signed the Accession Treaty and was not in fact an EU member state at that time, such a declaration was very important for Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Unfortunately, it did not have any measurable effect. The situation changed when a new cabinet, headed by Marek Belka, was formed in May 2004.

As Marczuk points out:

"The fall of Miller's government resulted in extensive changes in the Polish foreign policy. The cabinet of Marek Belka paid attention to a strategic but neglected partner, namely Turkey. As regards the Turkish accession to the Community, the Polish Prime Minister supported the idea. Moreover, he even described Poland as an ambassador of Turkey within the EU"<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Some EU politicians propose a "privileged partnership" for Turkey as a substitute for full EU membership. Among them are German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Austrian Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel. Privileged partnership is usually defined as deepened cooperation in the fields of defence, security and social contacts. In case of Turkey the main argument in favour of privileged partnership concerns an insufficient level of preparation on the part of the European Union for further enlargement. A. Rubinowicz-Gründler, 'W Niemczech toczy się gorąca debata na temat ewentualnego przyjęcia Turcji do UE', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2 March 2004.

<sup>6</sup> *Statement by Mr. Aleksander Kwaśniewski, President of the Republic of Poland delivered during the visit to Poland of Mr. Ahmet Necdet Sezer President of the Republic of Turkey. Warsaw, 1st June 2004.* Source: [www.msz.gov.pl](http://www.msz.gov.pl).

<sup>7</sup> K. Marczuk, '(Nie)nowy partner?', *Życie*, 16 July 2004.

Prime Minister Marek Belka described the plan to embed Turkey in the process of European integration as “a fascinating project for Europe”<sup>8</sup>. Consequently, during the summit of EU leaders in December 2004 Poland supported the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey without any special preconditions. This policy of Marek Belka’s cabinet remained unchanged. In July 2005 the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jan Truszczyński, commented on the Austrian proposal with regard to a privileged partnership as a substitute for full Turkish membership of the European Union: “We have never taken into consideration any privileged partnership between Turkey and the EU. No solution other than membership with full rights will be accepted by Poland”<sup>9</sup>. It should be emphasized that the Polish government stood by its promise on 3 October 2005 when the negotiations officially began.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adam Rotfeld, in an interview with the daily “Rzeczpospolita” of 4 October 2005, declared that Poland still supported Turkish aspirations to join the EU. Furthermore, he criticized the Union for a lack of an unambiguous position on the issue:

“If the Union wants to be treated seriously, it has to tell Turkey whether its participation in European integration is possible or not. We treat Turkey seriously and have our answer to the question. In our opinion Turkish membership in 10, 15 or 20 years will hasten further modernization of this country. It will be a good example for the whole Islamic world. That is the same logic which was adopted by the Allied Forces in the case of Germany or Japan after World War II. Well, it worked then, so it will also work this time in Turkey”<sup>10</sup>.

Undoubtedly, Adam Rotfeld’s statement has been one of the most pro-Turkish opinions presented by the Polish authorities since they became interested in Turkish accession.

After the parliamentary elections of 2005 the new right-wing cabinet decided to continue the policy of its predecessors towards Turkey. The cabinet is formed by three parties, namely *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* (PiS), *Samoobrona* and *Liga Polskich Rodzin* (LPR). Although the LPR represents a rather Eurosceptic point of view and does not support Turkish accession, it has no influence over the current Polish position as far as membership for Turkey is concerned. What is more, the main coalition party, *Prawo i*

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<sup>8</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>9</sup> J. Bielecki, ‘Polska wierna kandydatom’, *Rzeczpospolita*, 25 July 2005.

<sup>10</sup> J. Bielecki, ‘Traktujmy Turków poważnie. Wywiad z Adamem Danielem Rotfeldem’, *Rzeczpospolita*, 4 October 2005.

*Sprawiedliwość*, changed its stance on Turkey following the elections. Like the German CDU/CSU, PiS once opted for a privileged partnership for Turkey, currently however, it continues the policy introduced by its predecessors. Such a change proves that national interests became more important than party interests for members of PiS after their party had come into power. The new Minister of Foreign Affairs Anna Fotyga, at the opening the first chapter of EU – Turkey negotiations in June 2006, declared on behalf of Poland that she was against the so-called ‘EU’s absorption capacity’ being a new condition for candidate states. Although she primarily meant future membership for Ukraine, the declaration also applied to Turkey<sup>11</sup>. Also, the Speaker of the Lower Chamber of the Polish Parliament, Marek Jurek, during his visit to Ankara in July 2006 assured the Turkish Prime Minister as well as the Turkish chief negotiator, Ali Babacan, that Poland would “still support Turkey on its way to the EU”. He drew attention of the Turkish authorities to the fact that both countries could cooperate in order to ensure European energy security<sup>12</sup>. Marek Jurek is also a member of the ruling *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* party.

All the above statements and opinions create a very positive picture of Polish – Turkish relations. They also prove that Poland’s support for Turkey has not changed and is not determined by any political changes at home. Although this support cannot be associated with any specific convergent interests and is based rather on political visions, especially of the future role of the EU, it constitutes the most important component of Polish-Turkish bilateral relations. The question is whether public opinion in Poland shares the views of political elites. Once Turkish membership of the European Union becomes an important part of political debate in Poland, political parties will tend to meet their voters’ expectations.

### **Polish Public Opinion: 2003-2006**

According to a survey conducted by Eurobarometer in the autumn of 2004, Poles were the biggest supporters of further EU enlargement. More than 78 percent supported the idea<sup>13</sup>. Interestingly, among the first ten countries where pro-enlargement opinion was the strongest were eight new member states.

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<sup>11</sup> K. Niklewicz, ‘UE przełamała impas w sprawie negocjacji z Turcją’, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 13 June 2006.

<sup>12</sup> A. Majda, ‘O gazie i Unii’, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 10 July 2006.

<sup>13</sup> R. Sołtyk, ‘Polacy chcą większej UE’, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 10 December 2004.

The Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) conducted a survey entitled 'Opinions about further EU enlargement' in November 2004<sup>14</sup>. Respondents were asked questions concerning the enlargement process. Furthermore, they had to grade particular potential candidate states, for example, Turkey, Morocco or Ukraine (see Figure 2). The survey was conducted a month before the European Council decided to begin accession negotiations with Turkey<sup>15</sup>.

Firstly, respondents had to specify the criteria which should be taken into account while accepting particular countries. More than 68 percent pointed to the free-market economy as one of the most important criteria while 57 percent marked defence of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Only 30 percent chose a true democratic system as an important factor. From the Turkish point of view, the most interesting questions concerned the Christian roots of candidate states. The outcome of the survey revealed that only 11 percent of Poles paid attention to the cultural background of potential new EU members<sup>16</sup>.

Taking into account the above results, a high level of support for the Turkish candidacy in Polish society is not surprising. Sixty-eight percent is a very good result especially in comparison with the relatively low levels of support in France, the Netherlands or Germany<sup>17</sup>. It should be emphasized that in a similar survey conducted by CBOS in February 2003 this level was only 51 percent<sup>18</sup>. During the same period the number of people who were against Turkish accession decreased from 32 to 21 percent.

The tendency was proved by another survey conducted on 16 May 2006 by PBS DGA. Sixty-two percent of respondents answered in favour of Turkish accession, only 15 percent were against and 23 percent could not make any decision. Even though the level of support was lower than in 2004, it remained very high. By the way, the average

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<sup>14</sup> The full text of CBOS Report BS/187/2004 *Opinie o dalszym rozszerzeniu Unii Europejskiej* (Opinions About Further EU Enlargement) is available only in Polish on the following website: [www.cbos.pl/spiskom.pol/2004/k\\_187\\_04.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/spiskom.pol/2004/k_187_04.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> As mentioned above, the survey had been carried out between 5 – 8 November 2004, namely a month before the European Council decided to enter accession negotiations with Turkey in October 2005. In Poland, like in other new member states except for the Republic of Cyprus, possible consequences of such decision had been discussed publicly short before the summit in Brussels. As a matter of fact, the debate aroused neither much controversy nor interest as in Germany or France, however, Poles were informed about then political and social situation in Turkey.

<sup>16</sup> See: *Opinie o dalszym rozszerzeniu Unii Europejskiej*, CBOS Report BS/187/2004, op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> For example, in March 2003 only 21 percent of Dutch respondents accepted the plan concerning Turkish accession to the EU. See: *Postawy Polaków, Holendrów i Duńczyków wobec rozszerzenia Unii Europejskiej*, Raport CBOS BS/56/2003 z marca 2003 r. (Positions of Danes, the Dutch and Poles Concerning EU Enlargement - CBOS Report of March 2003), [www.cbos.pl/spiskom.pol/2003/k\\_056\\_03.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/spiskom.pol/2003/k_056_03.pdf). The above report is available only in Polish.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*.

level of support for Turkey was 48 percent in the new member states and 32 percent in the so-called 'old' EU members<sup>19</sup>. According to one of the latest EU surveys, "Turkey's accession would be opposed by 81 percent of Austrians, 69 percent of Germans and 68 percent of Greek Cypriots"<sup>20</sup>.

Such positive outcomes of surveys in Poland draw our attention to possible explanations. Historical background seems to be one of the most important factors. The Ottoman Empire's almost legendary support for the non-recognition of the partition of Poland in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century is well known to most Poles as it is taught in schools. The scale of Polish emigration to the Empire has been described in various books and articles<sup>21</sup>. Furthermore, many Poles travelled to Istanbul in order to trade with Turks during the economic crisis in Poland in the 1980s.

A pro-Turkish orientation in Poland is also visible in the Polish press. Most articles concerning Turkish membership support Ankara and the present convergent interests of Turkey and Poland rather than potential threats or sources of conflict within the EU. Such articles appear in popular nationwide newspapers such as 'Gazeta Wyborcza' and 'Rzeczpospolita' or weekly magazines such as 'Newsweek Polska', 'Polityka' or 'Forum'. For example, 22 articles about Turkey and matters related to that country appeared in 'Gazeta Wyborcza' and 8 in 'Rzeczpospolita' between April and October 2004. The majority contained very positive opinions on Turkey's candidacy and its presumed influence on the international position of Poland.

Another argument concerns the lack of a Turkish minority in Poland. Turks who live and work in Poland are predominantly businessmen or specialists. Therefore they do not fit the Turkish minority stereotype which prevails in Germany, France or the Netherlands due to the significant number of Turks in these countries. For the time being Poles do not perceive Turks as potential competitors on the domestic labour market. Obviously this may change in the near future if Turks begin emigrating to and seeking employment in Poland, however, there is nothing to indicate such a scenario at the moment. The Polish labour market is still less attractive for Turkish citizens than those of Western Europe. Interestingly, although Poles support Turkish aspirations in

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<sup>19</sup> A. Jabłońska, 'Półksiężyc w pełni', *Wprost*, 9 October 2005.

<sup>20</sup> 'Schuessel believes Turkey won't be EU member', *Turkish Daily News*, 3 August 2006.

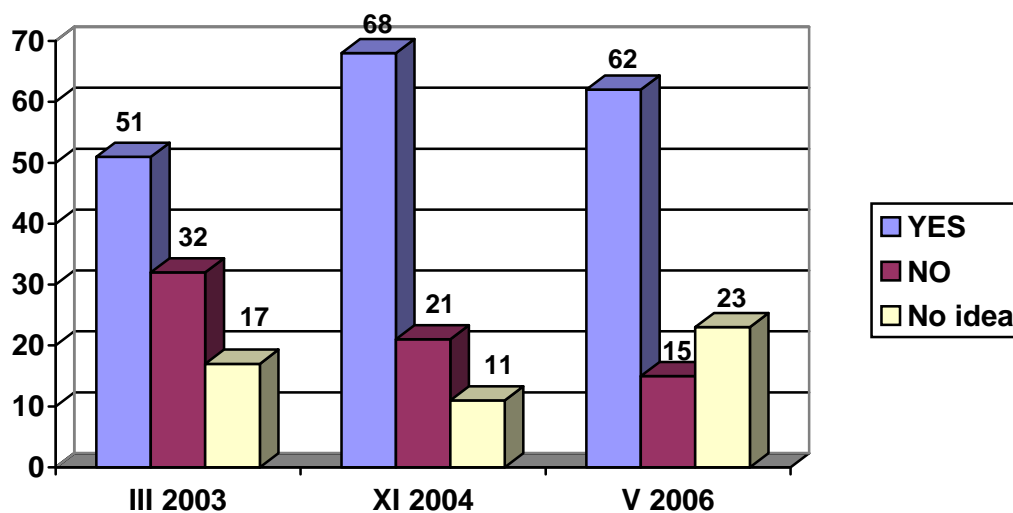
<sup>21</sup> So far a lot of books relating to the rich history of Polish – Turkish relations have been published in Polish. Here are a few examples: D. Chmielowska, *Polsko – tureckie stosunki dyplomatyczne w okresie międzywojennym* (Warszawa: Dialog, 2006); J. S. Łątka, *Słownik Polaków w Imperium Osmańskim i Republice Turcji* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Akademickie, 2005); J. S. Łątka, *Adampol – Polonezköy: 1842-1992* (Kraków: Universitas, 1997); J. S. Łątka, *Odaliski, poturzeńcy i uchodźcy. Z dziejów Polaków w Turcji* (Kraków: Universitas, 2001).

relation to further EU enlargement, many of them will not accept the presence of Turkish emigrants in Poland. This phenomenon is presented in detail in the part of this paper concerning the divergent interests of Turkey and Poland.

Additionally, the Catholic Church in Poland is not opposed to Turkish membership. Its current stance could be described as neutral. In fact, the Polish episcopate has not as yet adopted any clear attitude in this case. Although some clergymen criticize the accession of an Islamic country to the EU, their voice is not strong enough to change the impression that the Church accepts this new political project<sup>22</sup>. Its attitude could be described as a ‘soft yes’ for Turkey.

Last but not least, more and more Poles choose Turkey as their holiday destination. It is estimated that more than 60,000 Polish citizens visit the country each summer. Moreover, many people travel to Turkey on their own either for tourist or business purposes<sup>23</sup>. No doubt their impressions determine the way they present Turkey to relatives or friends.

**Figure 1. Are you in favour of the Accession of Turkey to the EU?**

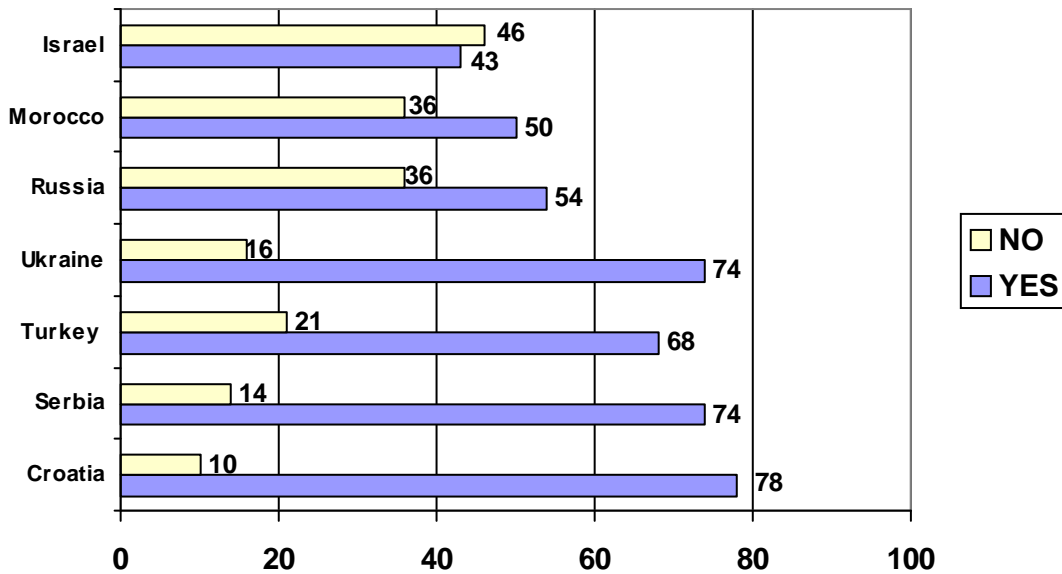


The above figure is based on the findings of CBOS surveys of March 2003 (BS/56/2003) and November 2004 (BS/187/2004) as well as a survey conducted by PBS DGA in May 2006.

<sup>22</sup> For example, the Primate of Poland, Józef Glemp, commented on the planned Turkish accession to the EU: “We do not want in Europe those people who once threatened us and were defeated in the Battle of Vienna of 1683 by King Jan III Sobieski. We do not want a culture which differs from ours”. See: D. Warszawski, ‘Turcja jest atutem Europy...’, op. cit. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that such radical opinions are very rare.

<sup>23</sup> J. Przybylski, ‘Kurdowie grożą obcokrajowcom’, *Rzeczpospolita*, 28 czerwca 2006 r.

**Figure 2. Should the following countries join the EU in the future?**



The above figure is based on the findings of CBOS survey BS/187/2004 of November 2004.

### **Convergent Interests**

There are many areas in which Poland and Turkey have convergent interests. First of all, both countries share the same vision of future EU development as they represent the group of bigger member states in terms of territory and population. As their demographic structure is similar, Poland and Turkey will have similar expectations concerning future EU budgets as well as the shape of various EU policies. Moreover, Turkey will join the group of cohesion states.

Both Polish and Turkish authorities conceive of the Russian Federation as a regional competitor. This rivalry can be observed as far as energy security is concerned<sup>24</sup>. Close cooperation with Turkey would enable Poland to become

<sup>24</sup> There are a lot of definitions of energy security or security of energy supply. According to Evelyne Bertel, of the Nuclear Energy Agency within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), “the notion of security of energy supply seems clear enough and may be defined in a broad sense as the lack of vulnerability of national economies to volatility in volume and price of imported energy. However, a precise definition of the concept specifying its boundaries is not easy to

independent of Russian supplies. For example, Polish companies could buy oil transferred from the Caspian oil fields via Turkish territory. As a matter of fact, nowadays Polish authorities insist on the introduction of a common European strategy for the security of energy supply in which Turkey could play the primary role. The new approach stresses the need for diversification of supplies. Undoubtedly, Turkey is very interested in such a scenario, because it could as a result become a key player both in the Eastern Mediterranean and within the European Union. Furthermore, it would be able to compete effectively with Russia in Central Asia and provide countries situated there with alternative ways of transferring their gas and oil to Europe. Meanwhile, Turkey has already become the main transit country in the Mediterranean. The Baku – Tbilisi – Ceyhan oil pipeline, the second longest in the world, was officially opened in July 2006<sup>25</sup>. Another major engineering project is currently under construction, namely a gas pipeline called “Nabucco” in which Poland is very interested. In the future Kazakh and Iranian gas will be transferred this way through Turkish territory to Southeast and Central Europe<sup>26</sup>. The project could bring not only economic benefits but also political stability to the Balkans and the Caucasus. Last but not least, Poland and Turkey as EU members could have a significant influence on a common European strategy for the security of energy supply.

As regards regional cooperation with Turkey, the Polish authorities are very interested in activities and cooperation with GUAM<sup>27</sup>. Turkey is also in favour of closer cooperation with GUAM members as in this way it can secure its interests in the Caucasus as well as in the Black Sea region. Furthermore, good relations with Azerbaijan open the gate to Central Asia, not only for Turkey, but also for Poland. It is vital as far as security of energy supplies is concerned.

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obtain. Security of energy supply has economic, social and political dimensions at the same time. Energy system analysts and economists can define the economic aspects, but the social and political dimensions are more difficult to capture. In addition, the analysis of energy system evolution shows that national policies aiming at security of energy supply have different objectives depending on the country context and global situation, and therefore follow different approaches”. Source: E. Bertel, ‘Nuclear Energy and Security of Energy Supply’, *NEA News*, 2005, No. 23.2, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> S. Arsu, *Baku – Ceyhan pipeline a great accomplishment*, “Cyprus Observer”, 14-20 July 2006.

<sup>26</sup> P. Wolski, *Gaz z Kazachstanu dla Unii*, “Dziennik”, 18 May 2006; J. Strzelczyk, *Alternatywa Nabucco*, “Rzeczpospolita”, 14 September 2005.

<sup>27</sup> GUAM is a regional organisation which groups four CIS states, namely Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova. “The group was created as a way of countering the influence of Russia in the area, and it has received backing and encouragement from the United States”. Between 1999 and 2005 Uzbekistan belonged to the organisation and then it was known as GUUAM. Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GUUAM>.

According to former Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adam Rotfeld, if both Turkey and Ukraine become EU member states, Poland would be more secure. Therefore the Polish government is in favour of their simultaneous accession and tries to associate both cases. However, this is unlikely due to the complicated political situation in Ukraine at the moment<sup>28</sup>. Besides, Adam Rotfeld stated that as an EU member Turkey would contribute to stabilization in the Balkans and provide a guarantee that it would be impossible to attack Europe from that direction<sup>29</sup>.

Close relations with Ankara will also strengthen the Poland's position in the Middle East. In that regard, Poland has always maintained friendly relations with countries in the region, however, its current political as well as economic activity could be greater and not only limited to its military presence in Iraq or as part of a peace-keeping mission in Lebanon. Even though the Turkish state model is not attractive to Arab countries, Turkey still remains a regional power with a significant influence on the political situation and could therefore represent various Polish interests in the Middle East<sup>30</sup>. The same argument concerns former Soviet republics in Central Asia.

Turkish accession will also result in an increase in economic activity between Poland and Turkey as European integration creates new possibilities for business cooperation and removes trade barriers. It should be emphasized that Poland as an EU member state has already become a more attractive trade partner for Turkey. According to official statistics, the value of Polish exports to Turkey increased three-fold in 2004 compared to 2003 amounting to \$US601 million and \$US256 million respectively<sup>31</sup>. Yet this cooperation could be more intensive and export values higher. The Turkish market is vast and offers new prospects for Polish enterprises.

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<sup>28</sup> Before the EU summit in Brussels of 17 December 2004 some Polish politicians had advised Prime Minister Marek Belka how to put European counterparts under pressure and convince them to support Ukraine. Poland was to demand a special declaration concerning future EU membership for Ukraine in exchange for Polish acceptance of the commencement of accession negotiations with Turkey in 2005. Jacek Saryusz - Wolski, Vice-President of the European Parliament, was among the biggest supporters of such policy.

<sup>29</sup> J. Bielecki, 'Traktujmy Turków poważnie. Wywiad z Adamem Danielem Rotfeldem', op. cit.

<sup>30</sup> Before 2003 Arab countries had tended to perceive Turkey as a representative of American interests in the Middle East. Another source of tensions was its close relations with Israel, especially military cooperation. When the Turkish Grand National Assembly did not agree to make Turkish military bases available for American forces in 2003 despite strong support from Prime Minister Erdoğan, relations between Turkey and Arab countries, especially Syria, improved.

<sup>31</sup> J. Bielecki, 'Korzystamy na tureckim boomie', *Rzeczpospolita*, 17 December 2004.

## **Divergent Interests**

Although Turkey and Poland have many converging interests, Turkish membership could also constitute a threat to the Polish position in a few areas. Firstly, Turkish accession will affect the amount of European funds allocated to Poland. Obviously, such a decrease in available funds will not be the most important consequence, however, it will be perceived as such almost immediately by those local authorities which are responsible for their distribution. There are many scenarios in this regard concerning the financial aspects of Turkish membership. According to Robert Dziejulski and Marcin Cecot, the first budgetary year following enlargement may cost the EU from €8,5 billion to €21 billion if Turkey joins the Community in 2015<sup>32</sup>. The authors assumed that 28 countries will be EU member states in 2014, namely the EU-25 plus Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia. In this scenario the final sum depends on the conditions of accession accepted by both sides; for example, the higher sum represents 100 percent of allocated funds paid from the first year. A future solution in this area will be vital as far as funds available for Poland are concerned.

Undoubtedly, the final cost will be determined by EU policies. If the EU decides, for example, to decrease funds for the common agricultural policy, Poland will be forced to compete with Turkey for the limited amount of money. Nevertheless, such a situation may also create opportunities for Polish – Turkish cooperation while negotiating future EU budgets. Both countries will certainly be interested in a maximum outlay for the CAP.

Turkish accession will affect the voting system in EU institutions, especially as far as qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council of Ministers is concerned. Undoubtedly, the Polish voice in EU institutions will be weakened after further enlargements, and especially after Turkish accession compared to the present situation. However, Poland will not lose much of its voting power in comparison with medium size or small member states. The results of research into the probable consequences of Turkish membership of the EU was conducted by Katarzyna Smyk support this claim. The author bases her argument on the Banzhaf Power Index and assumes that 29

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<sup>32</sup> R. Dziejulski, M. Cecot, *Najważniejsze konsekwencje członkostwa Turcji w UE* (Warszawa: UKIE, 2004), p. 43.

countries would form the EU after 2015<sup>33</sup>. Moreover, she presumes that the voting processes in the UE-29 would be based on the relevant provisions of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe<sup>34</sup>.

Katarzyna Smyk claims that the Polish vote in the Council of Ministers will lose weight, namely 3,1% according to the Banzhaf Power Index; however, its loss will be relatively small and similar to those of other large member states. In this context, Turkish accession will be disadvantageous primarily to EU members with medium-sized or small populations, such as Greece or Estonia.

At the same time Turkey will have the right to veto any decision which requires unanimity within the Council of Ministers. Obviously a larger number of members will result in an increase in divergent interests and Turkey, like all other EU countries, will be able to make use of its veto in order to block any unsatisfactory proposals. Although unanimity is required only in a limited number of cases, for example, constitutional amendments, its influence on EU law is still significant.

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<sup>33</sup> The Banzhaf Power Index is “a quantity to measure the political power of each member of a voting system. A member of a voting system is, e.g., a party in a parliament or a country in a confederation. In general, each member will have a certain number of votes, and so its power will be different. The index is derived by simply counting, for each member, the number of winning coalitions it can participate in but which are not winning if it does not participate”.

Source: <http://math-it.org/Mathematik/MathPol/Banzhaf.html>. See also: A. D. Taylor, *Mathematics and Politics. Strategy, Voting, Power and Proof* (New York – Berlin: Springer-Verlag 1995).

<sup>34</sup> K. Smyk, *Konsekwencje przystąpienia Turcji dla procesu decyzyjnego w Unii Europejskiej* (Warszawa: UKIE, 2004), p. 1-4.

**Table 1. QMV positions of UE members according to the Treaty  
establishing a Constitution for Europe**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Population in percent of EU-29</b>	<b>Banzhaf's index in EU-25</b>	<b>Banzhaf's index in EU-29</b>	<b>Change in percent</b>
Germany	14,7%	0,10407	0,10203	-2,0%
<b>Turkey</b>	<b>12,6%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0,0996</b>	<b>-</b>
United Kingdom	10,7%	0,07614	0,07644	0,4%
France	11,0%	0,07587	0,07611	0,3%
Italy	10,3%	0,07475	0,07469	-0,1%
Spain	7,3%	0,0567	0,05491	-3,2%
<b>Poland</b>	<b>6,8%</b>	<b>0,05602</b>	<b>0,05429</b>	<b>-3,1%</b>
Romania	3,9%	-	0,03786	-
Netherlands	2,9%	0,03715	0,03052	-17,8%
Greece	2,0%	0,03304	0,02495	-24,5%
Czech Republic	1,8%	0,03287	0,02474	-24,7%
Belgium	1,8%	0,03279	0,02463	-24,9%
Hungary	1,8%	0,03271	0,02453	-25,0%
Portugal	1,9%	0,03262	0,02442	-25,1%
Sweden	1,6%	0,03162	0,02314	-26,8%
Bulgaria	1,4%	-	0,0225	-
Austria	1,4%	0,03103	0,02239	-27,8%
Slovakia	1,0%	0,0287	0,0194	-32,4%
Denmark	1,0%	0,0287	0,0194	-32,4%
Finland	0,9%	0,02854	0,01918	-32,8%
Croatia	0,8%	-	0,01886	-
Ireland	0,7%	0,02737	0,01768	-35,4%
Lithuania	0,6%	0,02737	0,01768	-35,4%
Latvia	0,4%	0,0263	0,01628	-38,1%
Slovenia	0,4%	0,02598	0,01585	-39,0%
Estonia	0,2%	0,02547	0,01521	-40,3%
Cyprus	0,1%	0,0249	0,01445	-42,0%
Luxembourg	0,1%	0,02465	0,01413	-42,7%
Malta	0,1%	0,02465	0,01413	-42,7%

Source: K. Smyk, *Konsekwencje przystąpienia Turcji dla procesu decyzyjnego w Unii Europejskiej* (Warszawa: UKIE, 2004), p. 6.

Although Poles generally support Turkey on its road to EU membership, they are afraid of Turkish emigrants. This is shown by the outcome of a survey conducted by CBOS in August 2004. It appears that 21 percent of respondents perceived the future presence of Turks in Poland as advantageous. In contrast, 47 percent were against Turkish emigration to Poland while 32 percent had no idea as far as that issue was concerned<sup>35</sup>. Interestingly, such an outcome seems to contradict EU membership with full rights for Turkey which is supported by most of Poles. According to the survey, free movement of people, guaranteed in the ‘Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union’, should be limited in the case of Turkey. Article 15, Paragraph 2, of the Charter reads as follows: “Every citizen of the Union has the freedom to seek employment, to work, to exercise the right of establishment and to provide services in any Member State”<sup>36</sup>. The question is why Poles are opposed to potential Turkish emigration. By the way, it should be emphasized that Poles are sceptical not only about emigrants from Turkey, but also those from other non-EU countries. The relevant findings from the CBOS report are presented in Table 2. The most plausible explanation for such an outcome in Poland is the high level of unemployment. In August 2004, when the survey was conducted, unemployment was very high having reached 20,6 percent<sup>37</sup>. In comparison with August 2004, it had decreased to 15,7 percent by July 2006<sup>38</sup>. Nonetheless, unemployment still constitutes one of the most serious problems for Polish society and therefore any political decision which might complicate the situation in the Polish labour market is viewed with anxiety. The survey shows that 47 percent of respondents pointed to the economic threat of emigration, while only 7 percent were concerned with terrorism and 6 percent with cultural differences<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> Source: *Obcokrajowcy w Polsce* (Foreigners in Poland), CBOS Report BS/141/2004. Available only in Polish on the following website: [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K\\_141\\_04.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K_141_04.PDF)

<sup>36</sup> *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*, 2000/C 364/01.

<sup>37</sup> Source: [http://www.stat.gov.pl/dane\\_spol-gosp/praca\\_ludnosc/kwart\\_inf\\_ryn\\_pracy/2005/I/tab3.pdf](http://www.stat.gov.pl/dane_spol-gosp/praca_ludnosc/kwart_inf_ryn_pracy/2005/I/tab3.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> Source: [http://www.stat.gov.pl/dane\\_spol-gosp/praca\\_ludnosc/bezrob\\_pow/2006/07\\_06.xls](http://www.stat.gov.pl/dane_spol-gosp/praca_ludnosc/bezrob_pow/2006/07_06.xls). All above statistics were prepared by Central Statistical Office in Poland.

<sup>39</sup> Source: *Obcokrajowcy w Polsce* (Foreigners in Poland), op. cit., p. 4.

**Table 2. Would you accept emigrants from these countries in Poland?**

<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO IDEA</b>
<b>Russia</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Vietnam</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Belarus</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Ukraine</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>African states</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Arab states</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Turkey</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>32</b>

The above table is based on the findings of CBOS survey BS/141/2004 of August 2004.

## **Conclusions**

Turkish membership constitutes a significant opportunity not only for the European Union in general, but also for Poland. Although the quality as well as the intensity of bilateral relations between Turkey and Poland will depend on future particular interests, there are many convergent interests and tremendous potential for cooperation within the EU. In contrast to those member states with middle-sized or small populations, Poland will be able to gain a lot thanks to Turkish membership. It will not lose much of its current influence in EU institutions, for example in the Council of Ministers. Furthermore, Polish and Turkish voting patterns in those institutions can be expected to be similar or even the same.

As far as Turkish membership is concerned, the support declared by consecutive Polish governments has been a permanent component of Polish foreign policy. Moreover, it has been independent from changes in the political scene. The attitude of the new right-wing cabinet, which was formed as a result of the parliamentary elections of September 2005, is the best example of such continuity. According to the official statements of leading politicians, Poland will not accept a privileged partnership for Turkey as a substitute for a membership with full rights.

Representatives of Polish authorities refer to political advantages and European visions connected with membership for Turkey rather than to particular advantages for Poland. From the Polish point of view the most significant contribution that Turkey could make would concern European security in general and the security of energy supplies in particular. Turkey's future role as a transit country for crude oil and gas to

Central Europe will be crucial and of great strategic importance for Poland which seeks alternative sources of supply.

As regards public opinion, Poles are generally in favour of Turkish membership. In comparison with other EU citizens, the percentage of supporters of Turkey is the highest in the EU. There are at least a few reasons for such an outcome, namely the historical background, the positive picture of Turkey in the Polish press, the absence of a Turkish minority in Poland, and no clear attitude on the part of the Catholic Church as well as an increase in the number of contacts between Poles and Turks, especially thanks to mass tourism to Turkey. However, there is also a paradox connected with the level of public support in Poland for Turkish membership. Although it is as high as 62 percent, Poles do not seem willing to accept emigrants from Turkey. One of the CBOS surveys shows that the main reason for such a paradox is high unemployment rather than cultural differences.