

T.C.
MARMARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
AVRUPA TOPLULUĐU ENSTİTÜSÜ

AB SİYASETİ VE ULUSLARARASI İLİŐKİLER ANABİLİM DALI

**TURKISH-BULGARIAN RELATIONS
WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF EU MEMBERSHIP**

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

NEVİN TÜRKER

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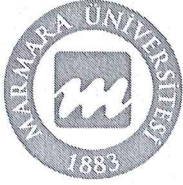
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Danışman: DOÇ. DR. NURAY BOZBORA

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ÖZET

Avrupa Birliđi, üyesi olan devletlerin siyasetlerini, hukuk sistemlerini veya ekonomilerini şekillendirdiđi gibi bu devletlerin birbirleriyle olan ilişkilerini de etkilemektedir. Cumhuriyetin ilk yıllarından bu yana, Bulgaristan Türkiye'nin Balkanlara çıkış kapısı niteliğindeki bir komşusuydu. İhtiva ettiđi Türk-Müslüman azınlığın sayısı da yine Balkan topraklarında kalmış diđer Türk-Müslüman azınlıklarla mukayese edildiğinde hatırı sayılır derecede fazladır. İki devletin ilişkileri ilk yıllarda azınlık meselelerinin halledilebilmesi üzerine şekillenmişken, sođuk savař yıllarında Dođu-Batı eksenli dünya sisteminin dayattığı siyasete maruz kalmış ve birbirlerine karşı "ABD Müttefikii" ve "Sovyet Müttefikii" olarak yaklaşmışlardı. Sođuk savařın sonlarına dođruysa, Bulgaristan'da Türk-Müslüman azınlığa karşı giriřilen asimilasyon süreci kendini gösterdiğinde, iki kutuplu sistemin karşı karşıya getirdiđi bu iki devletin ilişkileri en gergin dönemini yaşamasına sebep olacaktı. Komünizmin çöküp Balkan ülkelerinde demokrasilerin kurulmasıyla Bulgaristan'da bir revizyona gitmiş, eski imajını düzeltme çabasına girişmiş ve bu dođrultuda yönünü Batı'ya çevirmişti. NATO ve AB üyelikleriyle, artık hem Bulgaristan deđişim gösteriyor hem de AB adaylığına kabul edilen Türkiye'yle olan ilişkileri deđişik bir boyuta taşınıyordu. Onlar artık iki sınır komşusunun ötesinde, uluslarüstü bir oluşumun üye ve aday ülkesi olarak aynı birliđin çatısı altında, ortak amaçlara hizmet eden, standartlarını o birliđin belirlediđi ve ona göre hareket etmek zorunda olan devletlerdir. Bu dođrultuda, Türkiye ve Bulgaristan ilişkilerinde etkili olan faktörlerin dikkate alındığı bu tezde, AB'nin iki ülke üzerindeki etkisini ve AB'ye rağmen hâlâ çözüme kavuşmamış meseleleri incelenmiştir.

ABSTRACT

As well as the EU shapes politics, legal systems and economies of its member states, it also affects their relations with each other. Since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, Bulgaria has been a neighbor of Turkey as an opening door to the Balkans. The number of Turkish-Muslim minority in Bulgaria has been considerable when compared with the Turkish-Muslim minorities in other Balkan states. In first years, while the relations of two states formed according to settlement of minority issues; in Cold War years, their relations had been exposed to imposed politics of East-West axis world system. Towards the end of the Cold War, the assimilation policy against Turkish-Muslim minority in Bulgaria gave rise to most tense period of relations between Turkey and Bulgaria. With the collapse of communism and establishment of democracy in Balkans, Bulgaria also chose the way of revision and tried to improve its image. Accordingly, Bulgaria turned its face to West. Bulgaria has been changing with its memberships to NATO and the EU, and a new dimension was added to its relations with Turkey, which was a new candidate to the EU. Thereby, they are under the same umbrella of a supranational entity beyond being just two border-neighbors. Being a member and a candidate state, they serve for same purposes and standards which were set by the Union. In this context, factors which contribute to relations between Turkey and Bulgaria, the impact of the EU on both states and unresolved issues (despite the EU) between two states are examined in this thesis.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANAP:	Motherland Party
ATAKA:	National Union Attack
BAHAD:	Association of Justice, Rights, Culture and Cooperation in the Balkans
BSEC:	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
BSREC:	Black Sea Regional Energy Centre
BSP:	Bulgarian Socialist Party
CBOs:	Community-based Organizations
CEECs:	Central and East European Countries
CEFTA:	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CEI:	Central European Initiative
COMECON:	Communist states, named Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CSOs:	Civil society organizations
DEİK:	Foreign Economic Relations Board
EEC:	European Economic Community
EC:	European Community
ECSC:	European Coal and Steel Community
EU:	European Union
EURATOM:	European Atomic Energy Community
GERB:	Citizens for National Development of Bulgaria
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
ISPA:	Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession
KFOR:	Kosovo Force
MRF:	Movement of Rights and Freedoms
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGOs:	Nongovernment Organizations
OIC:	Islamic Conference
OSCE:	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PABSEC:	Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation
PHARE:	Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies
TBCCI:	Turkish-Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
TEU:	Treaty of European Union
TOBB:	Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey
SAPARD:	Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development
SDS:	Union of Democratic Powers
SEA:	Single European Act
SECI:	The Southeast European Cooperation Initiative
SEEBRIG:	South-Eastern Europe Brigade Multinational Peace Force
SEECF:	South East European Cooperation Process
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
USA:	United States of America
USSR:	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VMRO:	Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity
WEU:	Western European Union

INTRODUCTION

The relations between Bulgaria and Turkey which are neighbor countries started to gain importance, not only depending on geographical proximity but also through political reasons. In addition, these relations are based on the protection of the minority rights after the dissolution of Ottoman Empire. In the history of the Republic of Turkey, relations with Bulgaria have always kept its actuality with the existence of the collaterals (Turkish-Muslim minority) that remained in Bulgarian territory. During the first years of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the two countries signed nonaggression contracts and also agreements for protecting minority rights. Moreover, new dimensions have been added to the relations. From time to time, these two bordering states have acted together or adopted contradictory manners in their foreign policies. With the increasing popularity of the European Community (EC), the two states came closer through the accession to this community. Also, other initiations without the European Union (EU) such as Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) brought them together, too. The most influential factor is that after the integration process of Bulgaria to the Western institutions, these initiatives or cooperational approaches varied with the projects of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the EU. Common strategies were tried to be defined, trade agreements were renewed, partnerships were promoted in such areas. However, some special issues remained between two states which were mostly about the minorities and the immigrants from Bulgaria to Turkey or from Turkey to Bulgaria.

One of the most important periods in understanding the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria was Cold War period; because in contrast to Turkey, Bulgaria took its place as the most loyal friend of the Soviet Bloc. Making fundamental changes after the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, Bulgaria would face to the West from then on. Upon choosing this way, it was time for Bulgaria to pursue joint policies with Turkey. Their attitude during the crisis and wars that occurred in the Balkans shows the factors that are effective in their foreign policies. Relations improved in the course of time, which brought along economic cooperation and commercial agreements in addition to political cooperation.

In this thesis the answers are sought for these questions; how were the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria? How did the international system and its dynamics affect their relations? Did the EU change or shape their relations? In which projects did Turkey and Bulgaria come closer? In what aspect did the relations differentiate from ordinary neighbor relations? How did the activities of these immigrant associations affect the bilateral relations? Were trade volume and bilateral economic activities affected by Bulgaria's full membership to the EU?

The aim of this study is to analyze different dimensions of the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria within the European Union accession processes. Getting access to the EU is required to fulfill some obligations. Hereby, these obligations aggregate the member states and even candidate states to serve at same purposes. In accordance with the objectives of the EU policies or projects, Turkey and Bulgaria sometimes cooperate and this reflects to their relations directly. In this thesis, changes and continuities are trying to be shown. Moreover, it is tried to assay these changes and continuities in their attitudes towards each other with entry of the EU into their lives. In order to understand current relations, previous relations of Turkey and Bulgaria should be known; thus, a historical background is necessary. Historical background will be examined until the Helsinki Summit which is taken as a turning point for both states to the way of the EU.

Without losing sight of historical perspective, Turkish-Bulgarian relations will be analyzed under the light of international developments around the world, then reflections of these developments into the Balkans will be submitted as regional results and lastly, bilateral relations of Turkey and Bulgaria will be examined.

In the first chapter, Turkey-Bulgaria relations will be analyzed under the light of conditions mentioned above. In this context, in order to profoundly understand relations after Helsinki Summit, relations will be examined in the periods of Inter-War, Cold War and Post-Communist era. In the meantime, it will be focused on determinant factors in the foreign policy of both states and regional conditions in general; states' approaches, attitudes towards current political and economic crisis in the Balkans as

well as the effects of the United States of America (USA) and the European Economic Community (EEC) in specifically.

In the second chapter, the enlargement policy of the EU will be examined; especially the South-eastern Enlargement process will be dealt. This part is related with the accession processes of Bulgaria and Turkey. Their attitudes during this process will be taken part. Here again, three conditions take part and the accession process will be given according to international system, its effects on Europe and the Balkans, and finally the attitudes of both states through their integration processes. Additionally, Turkey's EU membership process and political standing of Bulgaria in this period will also be analyzed. The EU's relations with both states, the reasons behind the question that "Why Turkey's membership is so delayed?" and the reasons for the earlier realization of Bulgarian accession to the EU will be explained. Beside the enlargement, other policy and strategies of the EU which relate Turkey and Bulgaria will take place in this part. Regional partnerships, cooperation areas, security strategy of the EU and energy security concept will be treated with specific examples. EU Security Strategy at Southeastern Europe and Nabucco Project are obvious examples for the regional partnerships of Turkey and Bulgaria under the effect of the EU. Despite the fact that Nabucco is not an active project yet; it is the conspicuous example which brings Turkey and Bulgaria together.

In the third chapter, economic, socio-cultural and local issues will be analyzed. These will be serviced under the titles of; migration and minority issues in bilateral relations, relations between governmental and non-governmental actors, and bilateral economic relations. While protocols, treaties, mutual investments and partnerships will be examined to understand the bilateral issues; speeches of diplomats, superior bureaucrats will be examined to see the importance of local actors' role. For this aim, personal interviews with a deputy of Bulgarian Parliament, a Municipality President and the Chairman of Turkish-Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TBCCI) will be made use of. Following its membership to the EU, Bulgaria's new policy of unilateral visa application has changed. This issue and bilateral tourism will also be mentioned in order to understand the effect of the EU. This part will review how and in

what direction negotiations and membership status affected the Turkey-Bulgaria relations through changing international conjuncture. It will be tried to be observed the effects of the EU accordingly. The cultural relations of two countries with the efforts of immigrant associations and municipality twinnings will be explained at the last stage. Besides, economic tables, data about mutual trade activities and investment rates will be analyzed. In this context, answers to the following question will be sought to see whether there is any change or not: What are the role and status of societies, associations, non-governmental organizations and Movement of Rights and Freedoms (MRF) in the relations between these two countries?

Finally, an assessment will be presented on whether Bulgaria's membership and Turkey's candidacy processes had impact on the relations between these two countries. In order to determine this, it is required to make a comparison between the democratization period of Bulgaria and the Europeanization period in terms of Turkey-Bulgarian relations. For a better analysis, the effect of international system in related periods will be given and then the reflections of this situations on the Balkans will be presented, by this way the situations of both Turkey and Bulgaria can be understood under the light of those developments.

Lastly, this thesis is a descriptive study and generally secondary sources were used such as articles, books, reports, surveys, working papers. Local news agencies are often referenced for recent developments. As primary sources personal interviews in Bulgaria were conducted. Official websites of the EU, Turkey and Bulgaria were also preferred in order to follow developments objectively.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TURKISH-BULGARIAN RELATIONS UNTIL 1999

Relations between Turks and Bulgarians date back to centuries ago; but, in this study the focus issue is on modern Turkey and post-Second World War period. So, the relations with Bulgaria were with the foundation of Republic of Turkey.

The main determinant factors that affect Turkey's foreign policy towards Bulgaria and the Balkans are geographic and strategic factors, shared history, Balkan-origin people living in Turkey, and minority problems.¹

Turkey has been regarded in the region as the successor of Ottoman Empire – which ruled over the Balkans for 500 years– and its fidelity to the human and cultural legacy of the Ottoman Empire are the factors that Turkey maintains its closeness to the Balkans. The ethnic conflicts and other threats in the region caused the sensitive fraction in Turkey to develop sympathy for the region and its people.² In that case, what is the origin of Turkish existence in the Balkans and in Bulgaria? It is a well known subject that Ottoman Empire had a policy called as settlement policy. When new lands were added to the Empire people from Anatolia were sent and inhabited those new places. By this way, Turkification of Balkan lands was provided. Bulgaria was under control of Ottoman Empire from 14th century to 1908 –proclamation of Bulgarian independence. Then, Turkey and the Republic of Bulgaria met in stage of history after 1923 with the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey.

1.1. INTERWAR PERIOD

The relations between Turkey and Bulgaria dates back to the first years of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Those years were also corresponded with the interwar period which lasted from 1918 to 1939-40, till the beginning of the Second World War.

¹ İlhan Uzgel, “Balkanlarla İlişkiler”, in *Türk Dış Politikası*, Baskın Oran (ed.), Vol. 2, İstanbul: İletişim, 2009, p. 167-171

² ibid

After the First World War, Europe was in devastation. The victors forced the losers to sign negative and unrealistic treaties which brought more complex problems. They can be listed as follows: determining of territorial borders, regional instabilities, national and regional integration problems, economic underdevelopment, nationalism and authoritarian tendencies. New borders brought new problems such as minority problem and insufficiency for loser states; especially for Germany, Bulgaria, Greece and Albania. Especially in the Balkans, they lost their lands and also took over internal and external minority problems. Therefore, states which lost their territories became ally with powerful states and started armament against their neighbors. This led to worsen their economies. Moreover, foreign loans made them dependent countries.

The main goal of former President of United States, Wilson's principles were to maintain the continuity of peace; but, in application it went against the grain. The League of Nations, founded in 1920 and aimed to form and protect the World Peace, had become an organization that implements the peace in favor of winners by entering under the yoke of the great powers. The Treaty of Locarno was signed between Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Belgium, Poland and Czechoslovakia on 1 December 1925. It was aimed to prevent a possible war between Germany, France, Belgium and Britain. According to this treaty; Germany would keep the borders safe in west (however, Germany did not give the same insurance to eastern borders), and all disputes would be resolved by peaceful means. After the Treaty of Locarno, relations between two countries were normalized by establishing a balance between the requests of France and Germany. In addition, Germany had joined among the great powers of Europe again.³ Briand and Kellogg Pact was signed between the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Poland, Belgium and Czechoslovakia on 27 August 1928. After a while, like other states Bulgaria and Turkey also joined to this pact. Similar to Locarno, Briand and Kellogg Pact also aimed to renounce aggressive war and to prohibit the use of war as "an instrument of national policy" except in matters of self-defense. Nevertheless, due to the insincere policies of France and Britain, pact did not last long.

³ Oral Sander, "Siyasi Tarih 1918-1994", 18th edition, Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2009, p.33-34

Especially after the 1930s, Germany, Italy and Japan's aggressive policies eliminated the meaning of Pact.⁴

While the atmosphere of international system affected the world with those developments, their reflections on the Balkans as regional perspective should also be adverted here. Balkan states shared a common destiny during the interwar period; constitutional governments were overthrown. In the past, they did not have enough strength to stand up to irruptions of great powers; however, after the First World War, number and the effects of these powers were decreased. Thus, there would be a chance to stick together to protect their interests. Nevertheless, all of them had old conflicts and continued their claims on the territories of their neighbors. Albania continued to claim rights on Epir and Kosova region; Bulgaria did the same on Thrace and Dobruja; Greece did the same for south Albania and Macedonia. Yugoslavia and Romania were tried to be deliberate about the defending their own territories against their neighbors. An overall tendency to revisionist and status quo supporter policies were observed in those years. Thereupon, Balkan pact was signed in 1934 between Turkey, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Greece in order to establish a Balkan cooperation. However none of its members had intention to intervene such a conflict between other member states and a great power. Herewith, the Pact was not realistic and sincere at all.⁵ Balkan states were affected by wars in anyway, as well as being in centre of war or being in the edge of war. Either the war would break out in the Balkans or it would spread to the Balkans.

When all these are running out in the world in 1920's and 1930's, Turkish foreign policy usually looked after the national interests of the new state, tried to protect the safety, took care for a peaceful and realistic foreign policy. According to its foreign policy principles, Turkey has brought into connection with Balkan states diplomatically as a new nation-state. The Balkans as a gate to West for Turkey, the importance of this region can be understood well. Thus, establishing good relations with neighbors was

⁴ *ibid*, p.38-39

⁵ Barbara Jelavich, *Balkan tarihi 20. Yüzyıl*, Hatice Uğur (trans.), İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2009, p. 223-225

crucial for Turkey as well as to prove that Turkey was following a different policy than the past.⁶

As concerns to special bilateral developments between Turkey and Bulgaria; it is necessary to trace them to World War I. Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria were joined to the World War I on the same side, they both supported Germany. After the defeat they signed very hard cease-fire agreements; Armistice of Moudros on 30 October 1918 with Ottoman Empire and Armistice of Thessalonica on 29 September 1918 with Bulgaria. According to these agreements, all militaristic and diplomatic relations had to be cut off. Both states withdrew their ambassadors bilaterally. Despite the diplomatic ban, during the Turkish National Independence War, both states struggled for recovering and improving the relations. The personal ties of M. Kemal Atatürk with Bulgarian Prime Minister Alexander Stamboliyski served the purpose. Atatürk wrote a letter to Stamboliyski which described the details and the aims of the independence war as well as demanded to establish good relations. In response, Stamboliyski secretly sent a few Bulgarian parliamentarians to Ankara.⁷ This shows the support of Bulgarian administration to Turkish independence war. Moreover, Bulgaria helped Turkey by sending money, food and weapons in Independence War. When this secret exposed, the government was blamed as acting reverse to the Neuilly; although, after a stagnation process in the relations, these years can be mentioned as softened relations period. Treaty of Neuilly was one of the agreements provided for the Paris Peace Conference after World War I, and was signed between Entente States and Bulgaria. According to this treaty, Bulgaria was obliged to pay compensation and to reduce its army. Moreover, Bosilegrad and a part of the Dimitrovgrad municipality were ceded to Serbia, South Dobruja to Romania, Komotini and Alexandroupolis to Greece.⁸ One more thing that brought Turkey and Bulgaria together was Western Thrace's handover to Greece. Bulgaria was losing its direct outlet to the Aegean Sea and this was a disadvantage for

⁶ Barış Ertem, "Atatürk'ün Balkan Politikası ve Atatürk Dönemi'nde Türkiye-Balkan Devletleri İlişkileri", Akademik Bakış Dergisi, Sayı 21, 2010, p.3

⁷ Esra S. Değerli, "Türk-Bulgar İlişkilerinde Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1919-1923)", Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, Sayı: 18, Ağustos 2007, p. 1-2

⁸ Jelavich, p. 133

both Turkey and Bulgaria. This new development conflicted with their interests and they stood against Greece.⁹

The year 1923 was important for both states. Turkey has become republic and Alexandar Stamboliyski government was overthrown by a coup in Bulgaria. Turkey and new government of Bulgaria signed Pursuant to the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement on 18 October 1925. According to this agreement, the Bulgarian minority in Turkey and the Turkish/Muslim minority in Bulgaria might voluntarily migrate to their original country, and the rights of the minority would be protected.¹⁰ After this agreement, 198.688 Turks emigrated from Bulgaria to Turkey between the years 1923 and 1939.¹¹

On 6 March 1929, the Turkish-Bulgarian Neutrality, Conciliation and Arbitration Agreement was signed between Turkey and Bulgaria. With this agreement, accede to a treaty which would be contrary with the principle of “infrangible peace and sincere and eternal friendship” was prohibited. Moreover, if one of the parties is attacked by another country, the other one would remain neutral.

Intercourse between two states was not only political but also economic. On 12 February 1928 and on 27 May 1930, “Turkey-Bulgarian Trade and Circulation Agreement” were signed. Additionally, on 21 December 1933, two states signed Trade Agreement.¹²

In order to establish a Balkan cooperation, Balkan states met in Athens on 6-10 October 1930 the First Balkan Conference; on 20-26 October 1931 the Second Balkan Conference met in Istanbul; on 23-26 October 1932 the Third Balkan Conference met in Bucharest, and on 5-11 November 1933 they met in Thessaloniki. After the Fourth Balkan Conference, the Balkan Pact was signed on 9 February 1934 in Athens between

⁹ S. Velikov, “Kemal Atatürk ve Bulgaristan”, VII. Türk Tarih Kongresi Bildirileri, 1983, p. 1871

¹⁰ Oral Sander, “Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri”, *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2006, p. 185

¹¹ Cevat Geray, “Türkiye’den ve Türkiye’ye Göçler ve Göçmenlerin İskanı (1923-1961)”, Ek Tablo: 2, Ankara: Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, 1962, s. 79

¹² Mustafa Bıyıklı, “Kaynakçalı Ve Açıklamalı Atatürk Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası Kronolojisi”, *Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, No:22, December 2008, p.367

Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Romania.¹³ However, Bulgaria did not participate in this Treaty due to its revisionist policy; therefore, Bulgaria remained as a country to be cautiously treated by Treaty-member countries.¹⁴ There were many reasons that Bulgaria did not participate in the Treaty. Insisting on its opinion that it had rights upon Macedonia and Western Trace was one of these reasons. Turkey's closeness with Greece in that period was also related with Bulgaria's this attitude.¹⁵ There was a tension between Turkey and Bulgaria. Moreover, Tsar Boris as a dictator came to power with his coup in 1935 and this led Bulgaria to follow a pro-German policy in foreign policy. Despite Turkey's efforts Bulgaria did not accept to enter the Balkan Pact. Notwithstanding, the tension went ahead two more years until the visit of Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü to Sofia in 1937. Visits of statesmen continued in 1938 by Turkish Prime Minister Celal Bayar and Minister of Foreign Affairs Rüştü Aras. Thus, the relations were softened and good relations were promoted year by year. Also, on 31 July 1938 Thessaloniki Treaty was signed between Bulgaria and Balkan Council which removed the demilitarized zone between Turkish and Bulgarian border.¹⁶

While bilateral relations were proceeding like that, the world was on the brink of a new war. Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union was signed in 1939. This treaty contains some sort of territorial agreements and prepared background of Poland invasion. The Second World War had already started in 1939 with the invasion of Poland by Germany. Axis states were Germany, Soviet Union, Japan, Romania, Bulgaria and Italy. Allies were again Soviet Union, the USA, Britain, China, France, Yugoslavia and Greece. Soviet Union changed side due the invasion by Germany which had broken the non-aggression agreement.¹⁷ In above-mentioned common problems remained after the First World War can be shown as reasons for the Second World War.

War surrounded the Balkans in a short time with the attacks of Germany and Italy to whole Yugoslavia and Greece. Just Romania and Bulgaria sided with Axis

¹³ Ertem, p. 11-21

¹⁴ Sander, "Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri", *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, p. 185-187

¹⁵ William Hale, *Türk Dış Politikası 1774-2000*, Petek Demir (trans.), İstanbul: Mozaik, 2003, p. 54

¹⁶ Ertem, p. 18-19

¹⁷ Oral Sander, "Siyasi Tarih 1918-1994", p. 121-141

states in return they get land reclamation. Bulgarian accession to the war also related with the influence of economic downswing. Nazi Germany's escalating influence in the country economically made it one of Bulgaria's main trading partners. Boris tried to remain neutral until March 1941; although, Bulgaria signed the Tripartite Pact with both Germany and Italy. Instead of benefiting from the Bulgarian soldiers, Germany used Bulgarian air space in fighting with Greece and Yugoslavia, both of whom supported the Western Allies—the United States and Britain. In the meantime, when Boris decided to declare war on the Allies, he rejected to cut off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union which sided with the Allies after the Germans attacked in 1941. Because, public opinion was still on the way that Soviet Union was the friend and the liberator of the Bulgarian people.¹⁸ In September 1944, the Soviet Union declared war on Bulgaria and Soviet troops overran the country. From then on, Soviets were going to be taken as model in every area in Bulgaria.

Just as King Boris in Bulgaria, İsmet İnönü in Turkey chose the way of staying neutral during the war. Nevertheless, a tripartite declaration was signed on 19 October 1939 between Turkey, Britain, and France in order to help each other in a case of war circumstance. Additionally, declaration included arms maintenance for Turkey by other two states. Notwithstanding, despite the existence of such declaration, Turkey had continued chromium selling to Germany during the war and this created a disturbance from the point of Soviet Union. It caused suspicion about Turkey's attitude; because Western powers and the Soviets expected from Turkey to enter the war for preventing the advance of Germany. By this way, Turkey would block Germany in the Balkans and cut the power of Germany in Eastern Front.¹⁹ After all, course of war had shown that Germany was beating and Western powers were started to organize peace conferences. In order to join these United Nations (UN) conferences, Turkey had to declare war against Axis states and did it. Herewith, Turkey determined its side from then on. Paradoxically Bulgaria was belonged to East anymore; whereas, Turkey belonged to the West.

¹⁸ Steven Otfinoski, "Nations in Transition Bulgaria", 2nd ed., New York:Facts on File, 2004, p. 15-17

¹⁹ Oral Sander, "Siyasi Tarih 1918-1994", p. 109, 191-193

Results of the Second World War in the terms of the Balkans contain various dimensions. One of the most important of them is the embodiment of new regimes and power grab of prevailing groups in internal resistance movements. Especially in Albania, Yugoslavia and Greece there were powerful resistance groups and constant conflicts between opponents. Communist proponents were leftist and anti-fascist and they strived against Catholic Church. Furthermore, they tried to cut the ties with Western and anti-Soviet institutions. In all institutions, they took Soviets as model and police power was the most important tool of these groups. Except Greece, the rest of the Balkans were under the yoke of Soviet Union. Land reforms were made and the community that was mostly composed of villager, who regarded communism as a threat. Hence, communists' plans about collectivization worsened the circumstances of villagers in deed socially and economically. As a result at the end of 1940s reconstruction of new political system was accomplished in the Balkans. After communist groups outstrip from internal divergences, they organized well and put their policies into practice serially. Societal reforms were depended upon Leninism-Marxism ideologies and were imposed from top.²⁰

During the Second World War the map of the Balkans had changed many times and diversely. The Second World War can be considered as the beginning of the political split and polarity in the world politics. It is the first time that contemporary international relations has been shaped and states determined their sides gradually.

1.2. COLD WAR PERIOD

The period called as Cold War years, lasted from 1945 to 1990, known with political conflicts, military tension, polarization of states and economic competition between Western Bloc and Soviet Bloc. General atmosphere of international world is composed of the rivalry between two super powers: the USA and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). After the Second World War, these two states became hegemonic powers in the world and gathered the satellite states into their sides. The USA was the representative of capitalist world and the USSR was the representative of

²⁰ Richard J. Crampton, *İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan Sonra Balkanlar*, Emel Kurt (trans.), İstanbul: Yayın Odası, 2007, p. 3-9

communist world. The rivalry between two states had continued in every area such as military power, nuclear arms races, politics, economy, technology, space race and even in sports. NATO was founded in 1949 as a tool of collective defence by Western Allies against an attack of any external party. As a response to this establishment, Soviet Bloc formed Warsaw Pact in 1955; although, this was not as effective as NATO and did not last long. The Pact was for friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance. Besides this, an economic organization was also established among these Communist states, named as Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON).²¹

The reflections of the Cold War to the Balkans as a regional were very noteworthy. First of all, it can be said that the Balkans were the testing area of bipolarity of the Cold War. During the Cold War, most of the Balkan states were governed by communist governments. Greece and Turkey were out of this tendency. The Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan were profited by these two states. The Civil War in Greece was backed by communist volunteers from Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia; whereas, the USA supported non-communist Greek government. With this backing, Greece defeated the partisans; therefore, it remained the second non-Communist country in the region, as well as Turkey did.²²

Bulgaria and Romania were the best allies and the most loyal satellites of the USSR. However, Yugoslavia and Albania fell out with the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia's leader Josip Broz Tito had followed a nationalist attitude; so, he was dismissed from Cominform and the relations with Soviet Union were tensed. Then, he rejected the idea of merging with Bulgaria. He preferred to seek closer relations with the West, and then joined to the Non-Aligned Movement.

Bulgaria joined to COMECON in 1949 and to the Warsaw Pact in 1955; whereas, Turkey joined to Korean War in 1950 on behalf of the USA and then was accepted to NATO in 1952. Like other East European states, Bulgarian foreign policy followed the official Soviet policy; yet there was a particular Bulgarian feature in it.

²¹ Temel İskit, *Diplomasi Tarihi, Kurumları ve Uygulaması*, Vol. 2, İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2007, p.200-201

²² Barbara Jelavich, p. 331

Hostility toward Yugoslavia was tolerated by the USSR since Tito fell out with Stalin due to acceptance of the Marshall Plan. Bulgaria still held up its old claim and demands on Yugoslav Macedonia. Yugoslavia was neither a member of COMECON nor the Warsaw Pact, and relations with this state were shaped according to Bulgaria's old claim on Yugoslav Macedonia and of course to the conflict between Tito and Stalin. On the other hand, after the Second World War the people in Greece became poor and communist ideas quickly pervaded among these poor groups. Communist guerrillas, supported by Bulgaria, Albania, Yugoslavia, and the USSR, were used in Greece in order to subvert the existing administration. Thus, the relations of Bulgaria with Greece were strained. In the meantime, relations with Turkey were also unpleasant; Bulgaria and the USSR accused Turkey of accepting Muslim refugees from both Bulgaria and Russia. Moreover, ill-treatment of Bulgaria's Turkish and Bulgarian Muslim minority in its territory was not overlooked. Turkey and Bulgaria signed a peace treaty in 1947.²³

For Turkey, the 1950s were reminded with close relations with the USA as a result of attending the Korean War and acceptance to NATO. Nevertheless, for Bulgaria, diplomatic relations with the USA were severed in the 1950s. Bulgaria remained a loyal member of COMECON and the Warsaw Pact; whereas, Turkey was under the protection of the USA against the possibility of expansionist policies or attitudes of the USSR. Diplomatic relations of Bulgaria with the USA were interrupted in 1950 and were restored with the effect of Chervenkov's new course in 1959.²⁴ In 1968, Bulgarian forces participated in the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia by providing a battalion of troops.²⁵ Then, Bulgaria has improved relations with the West by establishing diplomatic relations with the FRG (Federal Republic of Germany) in 1973 and by the visit of Zhivkov to the Vatican in 1975. It means that he tried to improve relations with the Catholic Church with this visit for Pope Paul VI. Moreover, he also established diplomatic relations with the United States and visited the French president Charles de Gaulle.²⁶

²³ R. J. Crampton, *Bulgaria*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.363-367

²⁴ R. J. Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, 2nd Edition, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 190

²⁵ R. J. Crampton, *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century –and After*, 2nd Edition, New York: Routledge, 1997, p. 334-336

²⁶ Otfinoski, p. 21

Despite the goodwill and progressions with the West some cases worsened Bulgaria's international reputation.²⁷ In 1981, Pope John Paul II survived an assassination attempt by a Turkish assassin who had claimed the plot had been helped by Bulgarian and Soviet intelligence agents. Although, three Bulgarian suspects were acquitted in 1986, Bulgaria's name was put into U.S. State Department list of sponsors of terrorism. The only reason was not about this conspiracy issue. Bulgaria was charged with assisting terrorists because of the fact that it was providing arms and military equipment to 36 nations around the world, during the 1980s.²⁸

During the Cold War years, with the effects of international system, Russian partisanship and internal dynamics of Bulgaria had contained some problems. The main troubles were; precluding all the facilities to citizens except the proponents; prohibition of freedom of expression, conviction of people who opposed to government; forcing to work in cooperatives; isolation of Bulgaria and its citizens from the Western World, restriction of freedom to travel; lack of electricity, water or shops in villages, scarcity of resources and food; prohibition on private property acquisition despite having money and so on. This was the internal appearance of Bulgaria. In the years of Cold War, Turkey was trying to compete with the troubles of multiparty system, Cyprus issue with Greece, prohibitions, conflicts between leftist and rightist groups, walkouts, coup d'états and constitutional amendments.

When examining bilateral relations, after the end of the Second World War until late 1980s, the main factors effecting the relations between two countries were reported to be the general situation of East-West oriented world. However, the negative attitude of the communist government towards the minorities in Bulgaria should not be ignored. This attitude arose from the effort of the communist regime in Bulgaria to create "Sole Nation" – united under a socialist state and the main purpose of this sole nation target was to assimilate the Turks, that is the major minority.²⁹ Bulgaria, with such pressure and restrictions, did not comply with one of the provisions of the Bulgarian Peace Convention – the article stating its commitment "to take all necessary

²⁷ Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, p. 194-201

²⁸ Otfinoski, p. 22-24

²⁹ Sander, p. 189

measures to enable everyone under its reign to benefit from fundamental human rights and freedoms, including freedom to speak, liberty of press, freedom of worship and freedom of thought and meeting, without any discrimination of race, gender or religion”.³⁰ Rather than to deliberate assimilation against the minorities; it will be more stimulating to mention about the developments between two countries as a consequence of such assimilation applications, and 1950 migration would be the first to speak. This migration started with Bulgaria’s intention to deport approximately 250 thousand Turkish and Muslim citizens in August 1950 with Stalin’s encouragement, and resulted with admission about 150 thousand migrants to Turkey in 1951.³¹ After the 1950 migration, during the visit of Bulgarian Prime Minister Todor Zhivkov in Turkey and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivan Bashevi in March 1968, the migration agreement on the reunion of broken families were signed as results of détente in the mutual relations.³² Pursuant to this agreement, signed with the effect of the détente policy of international society and Europe, it was aimed to reunite the families broken as a result of the migration in 1950.³³ For this reason, about 130 thousand migrants migrated to Turkey within 10 years since 1968.³⁴

Since that date until 1985, the conditions of the Cold War shaped the relations between two countries, and the Turkish minority problem showed its serious effects after 1965. The government was disturbed by the ratio of Turkish population in the country (10% of the total population)³⁵ and the increase of Turkish population when compared to the Bulgarian population, despite the previous migrations from Bulgaria to Turkey. Moreover, the assimilation campaign and practice that the communist regime applied on the Muslim minorities for years had become more violent on that date, and the pressure on the ethnical identity had significantly increased. Bulgarian and Turkish schools were united in 1947; Turkish language was prohibited in schools in 1958 and again in 1974; the practice of changing Turkish names with Slav names was

³⁰ Bilal N. Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1986, p. 380

³¹ İbrahim T. TATARLI, presentation with title of “Bulgaristan`da Totaliter Rejimler Zamanında 1950-1951, 1968-1978 ve 1989 Türk Göçlerinin Nedenleri ve Nitelikleri”, in 20. YILINDA 89 GÖÇÜ KONFERANSI, Yıldız teknik Üniversitesi; İstanbul, 7.12.2009

³² Şimşir, p. 384

³³ Tatarlı, YTÜ, 2009

³⁴ Şimşir, p. 338

³⁵ Hale, p. 175

systematically continuing in the meantime; and finally the effort of creating a sole Bulgarian nation was tried to be completed in December 1984 and January 1985. Although this assimilation policy –aiming to prove that there was no Turkish existence in Bulgaria– is seen a way to create a sole-nation socialist Bulgaria, making people forget and erase their identities in such manner can be defined as cruel and superficial.³⁶ The reason to take this date as a milestone is the start of reactions by Turkish/Muslim minority against the Bulgarian government means attempting ethnical clearance on religion, language and culture. As a result of this reaction, the Bulgarian government added mass arrestment, torture, physical violence, relegation and extrajudicial arrestment to its already inhuman applications. It will not be wrong to say that Bulgaria and Turkey had the most stressful period in their history between 1985 and 1989. Diplomatic notes, warnings, Turkey’s claims on Bulgaria’s infringement of human rights and complaints before international society are the examples of such stress. Turkey informed Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the UN, the EU Council and USA of no avail.³⁷

As a consequence of the events, the 3rd (the largest in the republic history) immigration influx from Bulgaria to Turkey took place in June 1989, and 312 thousand migrants arrived to Turkey within only 2 months. The “influx” of such expelled Turkish minority was so great that the Turkish government was required to restart visa implementation. On the other hand, after the big assimilation campaign and the compulsory migration of the Turks from Bulgaria, Zhivkov government was overthrown in November 1989.³⁸

During the Cold War, relations between Turkey and Bulgaria were reminded with considerable hostility, due to mistreatment of the Bulgarian Communist governments towards Turkish minority which was about 10 percent of the Bulgarian population. When Bulgaria forced Turks to emigrate and confiscated their property,

³⁶ Sander, p. 194

³⁷ Hale, p. 176

³⁸ *ibid*

relations deteriorated until the 1990s. The most far-reaching improvement was observed in relations with Bulgaria with the Bulgaria's transition to democracy.³⁹

1.3. POST-COMMUNIST ERA AS A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

Transition period is the period of getting closer to Western institutions in terms of Bulgaria's foreign policy. So, this section is going to be a preparatory step before examining the accession to the EU. Helsinki Summit in 1999 was very crucial for both states in the terms of the EU integration. Turkey was declared as a candidate state and the negotiations were decided to open with Bulgaria. Thus, the year 1999 separates both states' periods from their own histories and gave a start to them on the way of being European states. Notwithstanding, before starting the relations in 1990s, background of these two bordering states' relations would be more illuminating.

In the period before the collapse of communism, relations between Turkey and Bulgaria were about to rupture as a result of Bulgaria's assimilation policy against Turkish and Muslim minority. This policy bothered not only Turkey but also the world public opinion. International actors such as European Council and OIC addressed this situation and requested it to be ended.⁴⁰ Afterwards, the deportation of the Turkish minority in 1989 ended up with mass migrations to Turkey. Turkey referred these events to NATO, the USA and EC. While NATO and EC suspended their commercial relations with Bulgaria,⁴¹ European Council requested a migration treaty to be signed between Turkey and Bulgaria.⁴²

If it is necessary to list the factors determining the relations between these two countries in this new period, primarily, the change in the international system should be stated. The collapse of bipolar system and replacement with multi-polar system enabled the states to act as independent actors without being part of any bloc, and accordingly to make efforts for global and international integration with the rise of globalization.

³⁹ F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, RAND Corporation, 2003, p. 95

⁴⁰ Türkkaya Ataöv, *The Inquisition of the Late 1980s: The Turks of Bulgaria*, International Organization For the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, U.S., 1990, p.18

⁴¹ Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 27 June 1989

⁴² Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 16 June 1989 and 8 July 1989

Democracy, pluralism and market economy were heard often and the system was showing its effects on the relations of the two countries based on such items.

Upon the collapse of communist system and end of the Cold War, expected changes started to be seen in the former Soviet-influenced Eastern Bloc countries, and the world was preparing to find itself in a new formation. The regional situation in those years witnessed significant developments that should be assessed both for Turkey and Bulgaria, and it should be considered while analyzing the relations between two countries. In the Balkans, the number of states increased after the breakup of Yugoslavia and regional instability emerged together with the war in Bosnia, which caused the surrounding countries to be afraid that the war and conflicts would spread in the region or in their countries; and this situation resulted in a lack of confidence among the countries in the region. Western organizations and these post-communist countries got closer with the purpose of finding security outside the region and the dream of accessing Euro-Atlantic area through De-balkanization and Europeanization efforts; and being a part of organizations such as NATO, EU and OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) became a target.⁴³ When the statements of Stanislav Daskalov, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, were looked, he said⁴⁴:

I think that the purpose of foreign policy is a simple one: to protect the country's national interests acting in compliance with the internationally accepted standards. There are different means of achieving this purpose. Be it through integration with the European structures or by expanding the country's relations with its neighbors, being a European country situated in the Balkans, Bulgaria has interesting this aspect, too.

According to this speech, Bulgarian authorities have seen the way of preserving the country's interests by improving her standards to European level. Moreover, emphasizing to the importance of good relations with neighbors can be called as giving green light to bordering states about settling the conflicts.

⁴³ Nurcan Özgür, "1989 Sonrası Türkiye-Bulgaristan İlişkileri", in *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, Faruk Sönmezoğlu (ed.), 3rd ed., İstanbul: Der Yayınlan, 2004, p. 610

⁴⁴ Stéphane Lefebvre, "Bulgaria's Foreign Relations in the Post-Communist Era: A general Overview and Assessment", *East European Quarterly*, vol. 28(4), January 1995, p. 454

Another point to be taken into account in the region was the problem of instability that arose with economic and political crisis among the countries experiencing democratization problems upon the collapse of former regimes. All countries and organizations related to the region were required to include security and cooperation issues in their agenda; as well as the threat of the spread of Yugoslavian crisis to neighboring countries, the possible influence of the rising Serbian nationalism on other nations, and the spread of political and economic instability throughout the region. In the period following 1990, Turkey was seen as an active country in terms of diplomacy and military, and taking balanced initiative.⁴⁵ Within this context, Black Sea Economic Cooperation was seen as a project that covers both the Balkans and Caucasia. This is a good example of the closeness of Bulgaria and Turkey in terms of regional cooperation.

When the balance in Bulgarian domestic policy changed after the end of the Cold War, some changes occurred in decision making and executing policies. It is seen that the government –the decision maker of foreign policy– had three main issue in this period: approach to West and being a part of Western organizations; revising itself through a *sui generis* breaking from the past without stressing out the relations with Russia; and finally, finding a balance for the relations with Turkey and Greece (actually, this balance was in favor of Turkey at first, but upon the increase of European Union’s importance in Bulgarian foreign policy, it would result in a tendency in favor of Greece).⁴⁶

Besides these issues, during this “transition period” Bulgaria had some priorities. Bulgaria’s priorities of foreign policy include stability; the strategy to frame and control the regional conflicts; adaptation of liberalization efforts of the Eastern Bloc countries and being a part of Western Bloc (being a party to NATO was the most important target for this purpose).⁴⁷ Apart from the above mentioned priorities, considering security issues, Bulgaria made cooperation agreements with the countries in

⁴⁵ İlhan Uzgel, “Türkiye ve Balkanlar: Bölgesel Güç Yanılsamasının Sonu”, in *Beş Deniz havzasında Türkiye*, Çağrı Erhan and Mustafa Aydın (ed.), Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 2006, p. 220

⁴⁶ Mustafa Türkeş, “Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri: Bulgaristan Örneği”, in *Türkiye'nin Komşuları*, Mustafa Türkeş and İlhan Uzgel (ed.), Ankara: İmge Yayınları, 2002, p. 175

⁴⁷ Türkeş, p. 171-177

the region. It signed mutual friendship, good neighboring and cooperation agreements with Moldova, Italy, Belarus, Greece and Turkey on 25.02.1993. As well as agreements with political content, military cooperation agreements were signed also with Hungary, Turkey, Greece, Russia, Ukraine, Albania, Germany, Austria, England and France at the level of Ministries of Defence and General Staff and this shows the importance that Bulgaria attached to security issues.⁴⁸

After mentioning the effects of the international system and regional developments, it will be useful to focus on common policies of two states in the Balkans according to their foreign policy strategies. After that, existence of the EU in the Balkans and its effects will take part in this section. Then joint solutions for migrant problems, amelioration the situation of minority in Bulgaria, foundation of Black Sea Economic Cooperation and investments in Bulgaria will be explained as bilateral issues in Turkey Bulgaria relations.

1.3.1. Common Policies in the Balkans

When the Balkans policy of Bulgaria is considered, it is observed that it has adopted multilateralism and equidistance in addition to the four pillars of general foreign policy.⁴⁹ What is meant with these terms is that, they adopt multi-party approach and they do not enter into partnerships with regional powers and refrain from becoming a party to regional conflicts, being at equal distance to all countries.

In the previous section it was mentioned that, Balkans policy tendencies of Turkey were based on the domestic developments, security, economic difficulties and the desire to embrace the historical legacy. Other than these, there were some special conditions that Turkey had seen as opportunity in the filling of power gap; establishment of cooperation with Muslim community living in Albania and Kosovo; surround Greece through military/political relations; continuance of Muslim/Turk

⁴⁸ Vehibe Atalan, "Uluslararası Sistemin Türkiye ve Bulgaristan Dış Politikaları Üzerine Etkileri" *MA Thesis*, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İzmir, 2008, p. 70

⁴⁹ Birgül Demirtaş Coşkun, "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations in the Post-Cold War Era: the Exemplary Relationship in the The Balkans", *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, no:32, Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 2001, p. 32

population in the Balkans and establishment of a balance line against Greece, Serbia and Russia.⁵⁰

For both states, maintenance and sustainability of security was the main concern. Beside this, Bulgaria had strategies such as being at an equal distance in a balanced manner with the neighbours; establish a relation that would balance Turkey and Greece and signing agreements with these countries in order to enable confidence.⁵¹ In brief, the foreign policies of both states in this period were determined by regional problems and the solutions for these problems by sticking on their security and international conditions.

During the Bosnian War, the official foreign policy of Bulgaria was separated into two; the leftists were supporting Serbia and rightists were supporting human rights, namely Bosnia.⁵² Both Turkey and Bulgaria were, at first, in favor of respecting the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. However, there was an ever-increasing public opinion pressure in Turkey due to unresponsive treatment of the state towards Muslim Bosnians' suffering.⁵³ The origin of Turkey's sensitivity for Bosnians was not only coming from the public opinion pressure, but also from the governing sphere. Hikmet Çetin, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at that time, had referred this issue to NATO, UN, OSCE, and OIC in order to arouse the attention of international community on the violence against Bosnians.⁵⁴ Prime Minister Demirel tried to take the support of Middle Eastern Republics and Bush, USA President and President Özal, had requested the help of OIC.⁵⁵ As a matter of fact, besides the efforts in raising awareness for the incidents in Bosnia by requesting help, Turkey actively involved in this war by providing airplanes and military assistance to NATO and UN. Bulgaria; just like Turkey, was in favor of assisting UN Peacekeeping Forces to Bosnia.

Another example for Turkey and Bulgaria displaying a common approach was the independence and recognition issue of Macedonia. Turkey and Bulgaria (despite the

⁵⁰ Uzgel, "Türkiye ve Balkanlar: Bölgesel Güç Yanılsamasının Sonu", p. 227

⁵¹ Özgür, p. 612-613

⁵² İbid, p. 628

⁵³ Hale, p. 277

⁵⁴ Uzgel, "Türkiye ve Balkanlar: Bölgesel Güç Yanılsamasının Sonu", p. 229

⁵⁵ Hale, p. 278

conflict and concerns) both recognized Macedonia that has announced its independence on September 1991.⁵⁶

It is witnessed that these two countries had a common attitude against the embargo on Yugoslavia. Although this was financially disadvantageous for Bulgaria, it had supported such embargo by closing Tuna River, by considering political benefits and the hope of being a part of Western organizations.⁵⁷

Bulgaria and Turkey had shown a common approach on the separation of Yugoslavia and Kosovo conflict. At first, they used to believe, the Kosovo crisis had to be resolved without harming the territorial reign of Yugoslavia.⁵⁸ There were concerns that the independence of Kosovo might cause a new crisis. However, as the violent act of Serbians against Albanians increased, NATO deployed the peacekeeping powers, where Turkey provided active support to the operation with F16 jets. In July 1999, after the Serbs left Kosovo region, Turkey deployed 1000 soldiers to Pristine in order to participate in Kosovo Force (KFOR).⁵⁹ Bulgaria, opening its air space to NATO and requesting autonomy for Albanians,⁶⁰ proved that it was on the same side with Turkey.

General trend of Bulgaria and Turkey was supporting the territorial integrity of the states; however, if cruelties or ethnic conflicts presented disproportionate force to other group both states chose the way of humanitarian help or intervention. After this relative regional issue, examining the existence and effect of the EU in the Balkans will be stimulating.

1.3.2. Existence of EU in the Balkans and Its Effects on Two Countries

The European Union could not have any effect on the Balkans till mid-1990s and was passive since the USA played the major role in regional conflicts. In this period, the crises and conflicts in the Southeast Europe also affected the European

⁵⁶ Philip Shashko, "In Search of Bulgaria's New Identity: The Role of Diplomacy, 1989-2005", in *War and Change In The Balkans Nationalism, Conflict and Cooperation*, Brad. K. Blitz (ed.), United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2006 p. 212

⁵⁷ Crampton, *İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan Sonra Balkanlar*, p. 311

⁵⁸ Türkeş, p. 204-205

⁵⁹ Hale, p. 281-282

⁶⁰ Shashko, p. 215

Union member countries. With the influence of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) established with Maastricht Treaty, the EU wanted to establish a common foreign policy for the member countries that previously had no common policies due to special interests, and to become more active in the region.⁶¹ Moreover, member countries learnt from the conflicts in this period that they all had a common interest in the stability of the Balkans. Therefore, they wanted to take measures in order to prevent conflicts in the region as a main target. In order to achieve this, the EU aimed to present the EU membership to Balkan countries and to use it as a training tool. A dual policy was developed: attribution of the increase of the cooperation among the countries in the region to an obligation for stability; and restoration of the region's political and economic relations with the EU.⁶²

First of all, EU brought forward technical-financial aid programs -Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies- (PHARE) in order to develop efficient and rapid democratization and liberalization processes among the Central and East European countries.⁶³ Afterwards, with the effect of the enlargement policy, the step-by-step negotiations with the countries in the region started as of 1995, and thus the EU enlarged both its borders and zone of influence.

As mentioned, in the first half of the 1990s when the USA was more active, Bulgaria gave priority to NATO membership and kept close relations with Turkey, which was an ally to the West for a long time and a NATO member. Turkey clearly showed its support for the membership to NATO, and also acted in favor of establishing economic and military partnerships with Bulgaria and thus softening the stressful relations during the Cold War period. However, Bulgaria's balance policy between Turkey and Greece slightly changed with EU membership that was put on the agenda after making some progress for NATO membership. And also with EU's intention to show Greece as an experienced member state and a "guide" for the countries of the region triggered this shift. Bulgaria would still keep the balance, but give prominence to

⁶¹ Fraser Cameron, "European Union's Role in The Balkans", in *War and Change In The Balkans Nationalism, Conflict and Cooperation*, Brad. K. Blitz (ed.), United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 100-101

⁶² Uzel, "Türkiye ve Balkanlar: Bölgesel Güç Yanılsamasının Sonu", p. 243

⁶³ Atalan, p. 82

functionality. After all, Turkey was inevitable for NATO and Greece was inevitable for the EU. Greece was more active in this period compared to previous years. However, this does not mean that the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria were damaged. On the contrary, relations were maintained in a good manner, and many bilateral agreements were signed in economic and political areas. Sort of agreements were signed as; “Protocol on the Measures to be Taken for Liberalization of Bilateral Trade Relations and on the Immediate Signature of Free Trade Agreement” on 4 December 1997; Tripartite Antalya Negotiations dated 16 April 1998; 2nd Danube River Bridge Project on 11-14 April 1998; agreements in 1998 with headings Immunity of Borders, Cooperation, Anti-Terrorism. Other than those, an agreement was signed in 1997 for the immigrants from Bulgaria to receive their salaries from Turkey. Regulations on dual citizens’ right to vote and on border entry-exit were among the improvements within this period. Ivan Kostov, who led the Bulgarian government during these developments, made a declaration that Bulgaria would support Turkey’s EU membership in return for Turkey’s support for Bulgaria’s NATO membership.⁶⁴

In 2007, the Balkans’ integration with the EU accelerated with the full EU membership of Bulgaria and Romania, and on the contrary, Turkey’s military, diplomatic and political efficiency in the region was far behind the 1990s. The need for Turkey lost its significance by the Balkan countries –which have direct contact with the USA in terms of military relations and are in front of Turkey with full EU membership. These countries’ expectations from Turkey decreased and Turkey had no tool to offer to Romania and Bulgaria, which were now NATO members.⁶⁵ Even today, during 2011 and 2012, we see Bulgarian public opinion against Turkey’s EU membership and some Bulgarian political parties carry out campaigns in contrary to their promise.

When NATO and EU membership processes brought Turkey and Bulgaria closer, two states came together for some cooperation initiatives. These cooperation or partnerships which some of were founded out of NATO or the EU initiative promoted bilateral relations.

⁶⁴ Özgür, p. 656-669

⁶⁵ Uzgel, “Türkiye ve Balkanlar: Bölgesel Güç Yanılsamasının Sonu”, p. 248-249

1.3.3. Bilateral Relations of Turkey and Bulgaria

The policy against the minority would be seen as a problem for Bulgaria's participation in Western organizations, and this could only be remedied by joint solution with the neighboring countries.⁶⁶ Here, restoration of relations with Turkey can be mentioned. A détente period has started in mutual relations between two states after the collapse of communist regime in Sofia in November 1989 and relations have improved significantly. Moreover, Bulgaria's EU target has definitely contributed to that process.⁶⁷

Restoration of relations between these two countries would have been an initiative in favor of Bulgaria for both the remedy of its damaged prestige and for gaining potential support of Turkey, which was already a part of Western Bloc. It can be said that Bulgaria's policy towards Turkey in 1990s can be understood by examining the tendency for internalizing Europeanization. When examining the foreign policy of Bulgaria, it will be seen that it is settled on four bases:

- a) the end of the implementation of communist ideology;
- b) European orientation (implementation of Western European approaches to international problems);
- c) democratization of foreign policy based on consensus and transparency; and
- d) pragmatism and rationality in the decision-making process.⁶⁸

This means that four pillars are based on removing their image of having communist ideology and showing consolidation of transition to democratic regime; becoming European; achieving democratization in foreign policy by enhancing mutual understanding and disclosure; and acting in a pragmatist and rational manner in decision making process.

Indicative factors in Turkey's policy towards the Balkans and Bulgaria as of the 1990s can be listed as the cooperation initiated with the USA in the Balkans; Turkey's security perception, national developments, economic difficulties, investment

⁶⁶ Birgül Demirtaş Çoşkun, "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations in the Post-Cold War Era...", p. 31

⁶⁷ Gülden Ayman, "The Dynamics of Conflict and Cooperation in Greek-Turkish Relations: a Comparative Analysis", in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Turkish Greek Relations: Issues, Solutions, Prospects*, Fuat AKSU (ed.), İstanbul: OBİV, 2007

⁶⁸ Birgül Demirtaş Çoşkun, "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations in the Post-Cold War Era...", p. 31-32

opportunities; and lastly, the existence of sensitive groups in Turkey to the humanitarian issues in the region.⁶⁹ The competition with Greece and the activism in the region – which was considered as a front line in the defence of Turkey– were opportunities for Turkey to fill the newly developed power gap.⁷⁰ Other than the abovementioned issues, the status of the minority after the ethnic cleansing policy against the Turkish/Muslim minority in Bulgaria –especially just before the transition period– and the great 89 migration, played an important role in the determination of the relations between the two countries. Further, Turkey believed that the relations would improve when the status of the minority was ameliorated. Moreover, in order to show that it was not a military threat against Bulgaria, Turkey demobilized its military troops in borders very first time in 1992 after Cold War.⁷¹

The collapse of Zhivkov government in November 1989 and the reinstatement of minority rights can be accepted as the beginning of the normalization process (when the crisis was over). In Bulgaria, which entered a new period both in national and foreign policy, the first activity of the new leader Mladenov for the restoration of the relations was to give a commitment on the adaptation of democratic principles, respect to the rights of Turkish/Muslim minority and moderation in the official policy for the Turkish/Muslim minority.⁷² Minority rights were reinstated in the first years, and Turks established a political party called Movement of Rights and Freedoms (MRF) for the first time simultaneously with the right to political participation. Mosques were reopened. It was declared that emigrants to Turkey might return. About 150 thousand emigrants returned to Bulgaria upon these developments.⁷³ In addition, several agreements on confidence building measures have been signed between two states and those have helped to reduce threat perceptions and contribute to better mutual understanding. As Larrabee claims; “Today, Turkish-Bulgarian relations are the best they have been since the end of the Second World War.”⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Uzgel, “Türkiye ve Balkanlar: Bölgesel Güç Yanılsamasının Sonu” , p. 220

⁷⁰ *ibid*, p. 227

⁷¹ Türkeş, pg. 194

⁷² Birgül Demirtaş Çoşkun, “Turkish-Bulgarian Relations in the Post-Cold War Era...”, p. 29

⁷³ Hale, p. 282

⁷⁴ Larrabee and Lesser, p. 95

Bulgaria thought that the restoration of the relations with Turkey would be beneficial for some reasons. First, Sofia government's desire to integrate with Western organizations could not be achieved without solving the problems with Turkey. Moreover, Bulgaria wanted to take Turkey's support in order to be a member of NATO. Since Bulgaria was not under the Soviets' security umbrella, the second reason for convergence with Turkey was the intention to come closer for new establishments to secure itself and the interest in Turkey's military power due to its security concerns. Within this context, it was required to establish friendly relations with Turkey. The third reason was the economic crisis in Bulgaria due to the impact of the Turkish minority's removal –lost after the emigration of Turkish minority in 1989– on national economy.⁷⁵

In fact, it was possible for Bulgaria to merge its Westernization aim with economic improvement target. At first it might be difficult to integrate with the West; however neighboring countries –Turkey and Greece– had convenient potential for investment. The purpose underlying the desire to become closer with Turkey was to promote foreign investors that might contribute to the national economy and to increase credit and foreign trade. Turkey leant towards investment in Bulgaria due to reasons such as cheap labour and bureaucratic convenience etc, which facilitated the situation at this point. In accordance with the agreement between Türk-Eximbank⁷⁶ and Bulgarian Bank of Foreign Trade, Bulgaria would be granted 50 million dollars trade loan in 1991.⁷⁷

The statements of Zeki Bayram, the Chairman of Turkish-Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TBCCI), in the interview conducted in April 2010 in Sofia⁷⁸ were the first-hand account on Turkey's tendency of investment in Bulgaria after the communist period. Zeki Bayram, a Motherland Party member politician until 1989, was sent to Bulgaria as an investor on the week after the collapse of Zhivkov government. He mentioned poverty and difficult conditions when they had first arrived

⁷⁵Birgöl Demirtaş-Coşkun, "An Anatomy of Turkish-Bulgarian Relations (1990-2009): Opportunities, Challenges and Prospects", in *Turkish-Bulgarian Relations Past and Present*, Mustafa Türkeş (ed.), İstanbul: Tasam Publications, 2010, p.115

⁷⁶ It is a foundation to improve the export

⁷⁷ Birgöl Demirtaş-Coşkun, "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations in the Post-Cold War Era...", p. 43

⁷⁸ Interview with Zeki Bayram (The Chairman of Turkish-Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry), 22 April 2010, Sofia

to Bulgaria, and exemplified with the practice arising from the difference between regimes. Lack of individual ownership laws, prohibition of owning houses, and employment of state officials as store managers, indicated the continuance of former habits. First of all, negotiations started with Sezan and Pirin –the greatest stores of that time– and of course with Central Bank and Korekom.⁷⁹ A fair was organized by inviting 25 major companies from Turkey. They tried to attract people’s attention with the diversity and amount of products on the stands. They stepped in bakery and transportation sectors as time passed, but experienced difficulties in finding qualified personnel. The companies tried to employ 50% Bulgarian 50% Turkish personnel in order to overcome the worker gap and commingle those two groups. According to Zeki Bayram, although their success in developing a new system was based on their economy training in Turkey and experiences and knowledge in the business, it was also important not to be involved in malpractices and illegality. Besides, he stated that Bulgaria took Turkey as a model in democracy, liberalism and free market economy. Related sections will cover how the number of Turkish companies in Bulgaria increased since then, investments of several recognized companies in Bulgaria and the membership to Chamber of Commerce.

Economic relations are an area that enabled close and active relations between Turkey and Bulgaria, which was trying to adopt a new regime. Active and increasing economic relations between the two countries can be explained with geographical closeness, and accordingly direct and cheap logistic opportunities; the stability in Turkey after the economic reforms as a result of 24th January Resolutions; and the dynamism of private sector in Turkey and the attraction of privatization.⁸⁰

Along with the investments and initiatives in the first years of democratization, Turkey’s investments in Bulgaria were also on the agenda since 1997. Capacity for these investments was sufficient, and this improvement would cause employment opportunities. The basis of 1999 Free Trade Agreement was formed after 1997.⁸¹ The agreements signed for Turkey-Bulgaria trade and economic relations and their legal

⁷⁹ Store chain in time of one-party regime in Bulgaria where shopping with foreign currency

⁸⁰ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, “Turkish-Bulgarian Relations in the Post-Cold War Era...”, p. 42-43

⁸¹ Türkeş, p. 202

background include Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments on 6 June 1994, Agreement of Prevention of Double Taxation on 07.07.1994, Tourism Agreement on 1997 and Agreement on Cooperation in Energy and Infrastructure on 1998.⁸²

Beside the economic convergence, cooperation areas between the two countries were not limited with the help for war victims or humanitarian intervention. Beyond the approaches to conflicts, they are also convening in regional organizations. Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) is one of the most specific examples for these regional organizations which brings these two states together.

What makes this cooperation important for the mutual relations is that BSEC is a direct initiative which is founded by Turkey and with the joining of Bulgaria, and also it is not under the influence of any external power. Azerbaijan, Albania, Bulgaria, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Ukraine, and Greece convened and signed Istanbul Declaration on 25th June 1992 upon the initiative of Turkey, in order to integrate the Black Sea economy within the global economy. Afterwards, 11 countries (and later 12, with the participation of Serbia) published the Bosphorus Declaration and committed to obey the principles of Helsinki Final Pact of Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in their relations.⁸³ On 5 June 1998, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation was turned into a regional economic cooperation organization with the BSEC Pact signed in Yalta.⁸⁴

The main aims of the BSEC include the cooperation of the contracting countries in fighting with crime, especially organized crime, and realization of several projects on trade and economic improvement, energy, banking and finance,

⁸² Official Website of Undersecretariat of the Prime Ministry for Foreign Trade, Bilateral and Multilateral Relations-Bulgaria, <http://www.dtm.gov.tr/dtmweb/index.cfm?action=detay&yayinID=236&icerikID=210&dil=TR> 05.01.2011

⁸³ Çağrı Erhan, "Türkiye ve Bölgesel Örgütler", in *Beş Deniz havzasında Türkiye*, Çağrı Erhan and Mustafa Aydın (ed.), Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 2006, p. 414

⁸⁴ Official Website of Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Black Sea Economic Cooperation, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/karadeniz-ekonomik-isbirligi-orgutu-kei.tr.mfa> 05.01.2011

transportation, communication, science and technology, environmental protection, tourism and natural disasters.⁸⁵

BSEC, as mentioned above, is an organization established upon the initiative of Turkey and it is concordant with the national benefits of Turkey. It reached to such level that Bulgaria had shown a negative approach to BSEC for a while in the past. Although BSEC was established with the aim of economic cooperation, Bulgaria thought that it might increase the political power of Turkey in the region due to its aims and principles or that Turkey might use BSEC in such manner⁸⁶ and thus did not participate in Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) held in 1993.⁸⁷ It objected free circulation within the member states and the participation of Central Asia Turkic Republics in this organization.⁸⁸ Another reason for Bulgaria's staying distant to BSEC was that the participation of Bulgaria in such Western organizations –as it desired for long– would be a constraint for its participation in another organization alternative thereto.⁸⁹

BSEC is an initiative that Turkey has realized by prioritizing its national benefits, without any EU interference. However, the commitment stated in the Bosphorus Declaration proves that it is an initiative required to follow the EU rules. In the establishment of this organization, balance in the relations with the West was regarded.

1.4. BULGARIA'S APPLICATION PROCESS TO NATO AND EU AND TURKEY'S ATTITUDE

After the 1991 elections, Bulgaria turned its face to the USA and NATO together with the Union of Democratic Powers (SDS) government headed by Filip Dimitrov. The movements in the region were important in the priorities given to these two new actors in the new structure. The war in Yugoslavia increased the importance of

⁸⁵ ibid

⁸⁶ Erhan, p. 415

⁸⁷ Official Website of State Planning Organization - Karadeniz Ekonomik İşbirliği, <http://www.dpt.gov.tr/PortalDesign/PortalControls/WebContentGosterim.aspx?Enc=51C9D1B02086EAFBF69CEF5F299AE5B4>, 05.01.2011,

⁸⁸ Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", in *Türk Dış Politikası*, Baskın Oran (ed.), vol.2, İstanbul: İletişim, 2009, p. 487

⁸⁹ Birgül Demirtaş Çoşkun, "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations in the Post-Cold War Era...", p.41-42

NATO membership. Bulgarian parliament announced its NATO membership target in 1993 and accordingly started national policy activities towards the protection of minority rights, ban of death penalty etc.⁹⁰ SDS government regarded the NATO membership inevitable (with no alternatives) and gave more importance to integration with Europe; however, the next party in rule, Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP-1994), emphasized the importance of Russia –maybe because of the inconsistency among NATO and the concerns against East Europe Countries– and argued that it was necessary to display sensitivity not to damage relations with Russia while participating in European organizations.⁹¹ The reason for NATO’s concern was that the instability in the country, ethnic problems, territorial conflicts, other economic, political and social problems posed risks for NATO members, and thus NATO found enlargement unfavorable.⁹²

Other Western organizations approached differently towards East Europe countries’ integration with the West. European organizations can be regarded willing as both contributors to and factors of the conversion experienced in East Europe after the bipolar system. The EU, OSCE, Western European Union (WEU) and European Council supported Eastern European countries’ integration, and aimed to enlarge their area of influence while doing this.⁹³

It was seen that Bulgaria tried to meet various criteria for NATO and EU memberships. Increasing the number of privatizations and fighting with crime and malpractices –both by taking into consideration the Copenhagen Criteria which was a must for EU– were activities carried out during the SDS government.⁹⁴ After declaring its request for NATO membership –although not officially– in 1990, Bulgaria tried to show this intention by showing that it was ready to provide military support to Cambodia War and Gulf Crisis.⁹⁵ There were some other operations Bulgaria supported.

⁹⁰ İlhan Uzgel, “Balkanlar la İlişkiler”, p. 486

⁹¹ Nurcan Özgür, “1989 Sonrası Türkiye-Bulgaristan İlişkileri”, p. 610

⁹² S. Tasev, “Diskusiya za Bidešteto na NATO”, *Voenen Jurnal*, Broj 4, (Sofiya: “Sv. Georgi Pobedonosets” 1994), p. 20

⁹³ Lykke Friis, “EU Enlargement... And Then There Were 28?”, *The EU: How Does It Work?*, Elizabeth Bomberg and A. Stubb (ed.), Oxford: OUP, 2003, p. 187-188

⁹⁴ Crampton, p. 310

⁹⁵ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, “Turkish-Bulgarian Relations in the Post-Cold War Era...”, p. 31

Bulgaria opened its air space during the Kosovo crisis as mentioned above, supported the idea of military operation against Serbia and fulfilled its mission in the Yugoslavia embargo, although it later caused material loss and became a focus for smuggling and malpractices.

It is already mentioned that one of Bulgaria's major foreign policy aims in the period after Cold War was to integrate with Western organizations, and in order to achieve this, it was necessary to restore the relations with Turkey for the sake of solving problems with neighboring countries. Being both an ally of West for long time and a NATO member from the very beginning, Turkey was a country with a potential to support Bulgaria. President J. Jeleu requested Turkey's support for NATO membership in 1993, and Süleyman Demirel, the President of Turkey at that time, declared that Turkey was ready to provide this support. Bulgaria participated in NATO's Partnership for Peace Program in 1994 and applied for full membership to NATO in February 1997. Bulgaria expected the same support from Greece, and these two neighboring countries actually supported Bulgaria's NATO membership in the Madrid Sessions held in 1997.⁹⁶ After this date, Bulgaria was invited to negotiations and then to alliance with 6 more countries (Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) in 2002 Prague Summit and became an official member on 24 March 2004.

Bulgaria tried to be close to the European Community since early 1990s and made various contacts. Bulgaria was accepted in European Council on 7 May 1992.⁹⁷ Moreover, Bulgaria made agreements with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and European Development Bank within the framework of PHARE (Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies) program with the European Community, and the Partnership Agreement entered into force in February 1995.⁹⁸ Upon these developments, Bulgaria officially applied to the EU in December 1995. In 1997 Luxembourg Summit, it was announced that Bulgaria would be accepted in the community together with the group named as second wave. Although the European Council declared that Bulgaria's membership would not be possible due to economic

⁹⁶ Vehibe Atalan, p. 78

⁹⁷ Crampton, p. 303

⁹⁸ Özgür, p. 635-636

conditions, it fulfilled the political criteria sufficiently.⁹⁹ This was significantly affected by the fact that Bulgaria changed its approach towards the Turkish/Muslim minority and made serious progress by developing its organizations that are active in the fields of democracy, law, human rights and protection of minority in order to develop its relations with Turkey and fulfill the Copenhagen Criteria. It signed agreements with Turkey regarding the fight against terrorism and organized crime. In fact, while Turkey gained candidate status in 1999 Helsinki Summit, Bulgaria was invited to negotiations and thus got one step ahead of Turkey, from which it had requested support for participation in Euro-Atlantic organizations. Finally, on 1 January 2007, Bulgaria became an EU member and Turkey's second EU member neighbor representing the EU border.

⁹⁹ Website of Encyclopedia of Nations- Bulgaria Foreign Policy,
<http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/World-Leaders-2003/Bulgaria-FOREIGN-POLICY.html>,
6.12.2010

CHAPTER II

TURKEY-BULGARIA RELATIONS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ENLARGEMENT POLICY OF THE EU

2.1. ENLARGEMENT POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The history of the EU, based on the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), was founded with Treaty of Paris in 1951. Six years later, with Treaty of Rome in 1957, the European Economic Community (EEC) was founded jointly by Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. The enlargement of the Community started with Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom in 1973. These countries were followed by Greece in 1981 and by Portugal and Spain in 1986. With the inclusion of Austria, Finland and Sweden in 1995, the fourth enlargement wave was accomplished. This section analyzes the last enlargement, which is called as the Southeastern Enlargement.

Maastricht Treaty known as Treaty on European Union (TEU) was signed on 7 February 1992. It constituted the last stages of the community which are economic and monetary union, and created the European Union. The emergence and the integration process of the European Union are quite related to the enlargement. By widening with the new members, the EU has been gaining its own structure and identity. As a policy; enlargement has always been an integral part of the integration process and the policy-making in the EU.¹⁰⁰ Formally, in Madrid European Council on December 1995, EU policy shifted firmly towards enlargement. Commission's collection of reports issued in Agenda 2000 and focused on institutional reform, internal policy reform, and accession negotiations.

According to article 49¹⁰¹ of the TEU, which constitutes the legal basis of any accession, the EU is open to all European countries. However, in order to join the EU,

¹⁰⁰ Ulrich Sedelmeier, "Eastern Enlargement", Helen Wallace, William Wallace and Mark A. Pollack (ed.), in *Policy-Making in the European Union* (421-428), New York: University Press, 2005, p. 402

¹⁰¹ Article 49 of TEU: Any European State which respects the principles set out in Article 6(1) may apply to become a member of the Union. It shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after consulting the Commission and after receiving the assent of the European Parliament, which shall act by an absolute majority of its component members.

the applicant country must adhere to the principles of article 6(1)¹⁰² of the TEU; to which all the member states subscribe and the EU is based on it. These basic elements are respecting the principles of liberty, democracy, respecting for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. From a historical perspective, there are five main legal stages of development of enlargement law of the European Communities (Union):

1. Article 98 ECSC¹⁰³;
2. Articles 98 ECSC, 237 EEC¹⁰⁴ and 205 EURATOM (European Atomic Energy Community);
3. Articles 237 EEC and 205 EURATOM as amended by the SEA (Single European Act) and Article 98 ECSC;
4. Article O TEU (all the other articles were abrogated);
5. Article 49 TEU (O renumbered) with a reference to Article 6(1) TEU.

The conditions of admission and the adjustments to the Treaties on which the Union is founded, which such admission entails, shall be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the applicant State. This agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all the contracting States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/en/treaties/dat/12002M/htm/C_2002325EN.000501.html#anArt59

¹⁰² Article 6 of TEU: 1. The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States.

2. The Union shall respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed in Rome on 4 November 1950 and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States, as general principles of Community law.

3. The Union shall respect the national identities of its Member States.

4. The Union shall provide itself with the means necessary to attain its objectives and carry through its policies. http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/the-policy/conditions-for-enlargement/index_en.htm

¹⁰³ Article 98 of Treaty Establishing the ECSC: Any European State may apply to accede to this Treaty. It shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after obtaining the opinion of the High Authority; the Council shall also determine the terms of accession, likewise acting unanimously. Accession shall take effect on the day when the instrument of the accession is received by the Government acting as depositary of this Treaty.

¹⁰⁴ Article 237 of Treaty of Rome: Any European State may apply to become a member of the Community. It shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after obtaining the opinion of the Commission.

The conditions of admission and the adjustments to this Treaty necessitated thereby shall be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the applicant State. This agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all the Contracting States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

Legal base also specifies the properties of the enlargement policy; according to which, the EU is a community of values based on peace, freedom, democracy and the rule of law, as well as tolerance and solidarity as the world's largest economic zone.

For almost fifty years, the purpose of the EU has been both a deepening while taking in new members (widening). The EU attempted to implement these two integrations synchronously. To provide integration by peaceful means is the primary aim and the duty of the policy.¹⁰⁵

2.1.1. Southeastern Enlargement of the EU

The post Cold-War period marked the beginning of the EU enlargement towards the east. Among the factors leading to this policy shift are the collapse of Berlin Wall in 1989, the reunion of the West and the East Germany in 1990, the emergence of a safety zone between Europe and Russia, the demand for the integration of European people who share a common culture, desire to deepen and widen the European integration, plans of the USA about NATO's enlargement to the east, and the weakening effect of the USA on Europe.¹⁰⁶

Besides the factors that led the EU to enlargement, such a policy shift also had some sorts of advantages. Security is one of them. Because Southern European countries were composed of varying ethnicities, there was always the potential of ethnic conflict. Bringing these states (post-communist countries) under the same umbrella would keep peace in the region. Once started, it would be inevitable for any conflict to spread; so, these states should not be left alone. Moreover, political crises always trigger economic ones and it brings instability, financial problems, unemployment, and migrations. To prevent such crises and to provide peace and stability both in the region and in the community, the enlargement was the brilliant option. Furthermore, with willing Southeastern European countries who desired more democratic and liberal conditions, it would be easier to expand its impact area within the region. Beside all of

¹⁰⁵ Official Website of Secretariat General for EU Affairs, History of Enlargement, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=264&l=2>, 12.11.2010

¹⁰⁶ Vehibe Atalan, p. 81-82

these, with its potential market, Eastern Europe became very attractive to the EU for maximizing its economic growth and prosperity.

The European Union has rules and procedures for enlargement. These start with the application submitted to the Council of Ministers. In due time, the Commission declares its opinion on candidates. If the candidates are sufficient to meet the criteria, Council decision is taken unanimously to start accession negotiations. The first phase of accession negotiations (conducted by the Commission) is screening the candidates' ability to apply the *acquis*, and identifying potentially controversial issues for negotiations. Council presidency conducts bilateral accession negotiations on the basis of common position by the Council and Commission. Then, accession treaties are endorsed by Council (unanimity), the Commission, and the European Parliament (simple majority). Eventually, accession treaties are ratified by applicant and member states.¹⁰⁷

Same procedures were applied for Central and East European Countries (CEECs) before their accession to the EU. The pre-accession strategy is one of these steps and developed in 1994 to prepare the CEECs for the EU membership. This strategy is based on four facts; implication of Europe Union Agreements, Accession Partnerships and National Programmes for the Adoption of the Acquis, pre-accession assistance, and political dialogue.¹⁰⁸

Afterwards, the applicant country's conditions or improvements are monitored and reviewed through regular progress reports of the Commission. Specific programs were developed for Southeastern European countries for their EU accession processes: PHARE (Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies), which has aimed at institutional building measures across all sectors and investments, including regional development programmes; ISPA (Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession), which finance environmental and transport infrastructure projects;

¹⁰⁷ Ulrich Sedelmeier, p. 404

¹⁰⁸ Official Website of European Commission, Enlargement, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/index_en.htm, 29.04.2012

and SAPARD (Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development), designed for agricultural and rural development.¹⁰⁹

There are enlargement criteria and enlargement principles which have to be fulfilled by the applicant country. These unchangeable and unquestionable principles include the conditions for being a European state; respect for freedom, democracy, human rights, fundamental rights, and rule of law, all of which must be satisfied by the applicant country. The first principle, the principle of “Europeanness”, does not only mean the geographical location but rather it refers to the socio-cultural identity of the country. This is also related with the community’s absorption capacity of the new member, and the member’s compatibility with the community values. The more compatible the member country is (i.e. the more similarities the member state contains), the sooner the integration process will be, and the easier the EU will absorb the new member. In conclusion, the basic aim in enlargement is providing the deeper and wider integrations together and in parallel. Evaluating the Europeanness identity is an evidence of this purpose.

In order to create such kind of an identity, the criteria were brought up to the candidate countries. In the period of pre-accession the candidates must struggle to reach equal values with the EU standards to eliminate the differences. That is why democracy and the respect to freedom, rule of law, and fundamental freedoms are so important. These are basic elements of the EU. Nevertheless, the last enlargement shows that the criterion about being a part of Europe or being a European country is more important than the criteria of democracy. The new twelve states are post communist states and their liberal democratic regimes are younger and more inexperienced than the previous members. So, why these states are accepted to the Union despite their misfit on the values of the Union? The answer is about the penetration strategy of the EU. It is obvious that the differentiations between the new members and the EU cannot be ignored. Nevertheless, to widen its domain among the whole continent is vital for the EU.

¹⁰⁹ For more information see the study of Kürşat Hacıtahtiroğlu, “Avrupa Birliği’nin Genişleme Evrelerinde İzlenen Siyaset ve Türkiye İlişkileri”, *MA Thesis*, İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Fakültesi, İstanbul, 2006, p. 78-80

The second principle, the principle of democracy and freedom, has always been an integral part of the integration process. This principle was highlighted in Schuman's 1952 speech where he criticized the communist countries for being "dependant". How serious the EU (the EEC of the time) is about this principle can clearly be seen in the cases of Greece and Turkey. When the coup d'état occurred in both countries, the Community immediately decided to sustain the negotiations due to the damage to democracy. In article 237 of EEC, it was stressed that 'permits the accession of a state only if that state is a European State; and its constitution guarantees, on the one hand, the existence and continuance of a pluralistic democracy and, on the other hand, effective protection of human rights'.¹¹⁰

EU enlargement policy is based on three basic principles: consolidation of commitments, conditionality, and communication. These concepts called as "3C Strategy" and occurred with the report of European Commission on Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2006 – 2007.

- Consolidation means that the Union is cautious about assuming any new commitments. The EU will be more selective and rigorous in accepting new members. Absorption of the EU and harmonization of member states become compulsory for the Union.

- Accurate but equitable conditionality is applied to all candidate and potential candidate countries. During the accession process, every step forward depends on each country's own progress in meeting the compulsory conditions. This approach helps to consolidate reforms and to prepare new Member States to fulfill their obligations upon accession. According to this approach, until a candidate country meets the whole criteria properly, its membership date would not be in a view to announce.

- For a successful enlargement, the EU must take the support of its citizens. Member States should communicate effectively.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Dimitry Kochenov, "EU Enlargement Law: History and Recent Development: Treaty – Custom Concubinage?" <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/pdf/2005-006.pdf> (17.03.2011), p. 10

¹¹¹ Commission of the European Communities, "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2006 – 2007", Brussels, 2006,

All the above mentioned principles of membership were accompanied by a set of criteria. The embodiment of these criteria is the Copenhagen Criteria, which constitutes the road to accession for candidate states. The Copenhagen Criteria for membership came on the agenda in 1993. Since 1993, the principle of conditionality has become more crucial to the enlargement policy. The Copenhagen Criteria to be fulfilled by any candidate state are:

Political criteria: Applicants must have fully functioning liberal democratic systems, including respect for human rights, the rule of law, and protection of minorities by stable institutions.

Economic criteria: There must be a functioning market-based economy with the capacity to withstand competitive pressure and market forces in the EU.

General criteria: Applicants must be prepared to take on the obligations of membership, and adhere to the Union's objectives of political, economic and monetary union.

By Copenhagen Criteria, the applicant country must change its domestic policies and institutions to match with those of the EU. Once the applicant country is granted full membership, it must transfer its sovereignty to the supranational body of the EU.

2.1.2. Accession Process of Bulgaria to the EU

Bulgaria's accession process to Western Institutions started with the politics of new democratic governments. Bulgaria set its sight on Western organizations, the EC being one of them. Relations started with the Convention on Trade, Business and Economic Relations, signed on 8 May 1990, with the EEC, which was followed on 17 September 1990 by the opening of the PHARE Programme for Bulgaria. On 1 November 1990, the Convention on Trade, Business and Economic Relations entered into force. It envisaged gradual elimination of the quantitative limitations on Bulgarian

import to the Community, and making mutual concessions in the field of trade in agricultural goods.¹¹² Considering the content of the convention, these relations can best be characterized as economic in nature. No political concern or expectation was seen in those years. Then, as of 22 December 1990, the Bulgarian Parliament expressed the willingness of the Republic of Bulgaria to become a full member of the European Communities. Signing of the Europe Agreement with the European Community was regarded the first round of Bulgaria-EC negotiations, and a step towards this ultimate goal. On 8 March 1993, the Europe Agreement of Association for Bulgaria and the Provisional Agreement on Trade and Related Matters were signed.¹¹³ Thus, the Europe Agreement supplied a framework for improvement of a profound dialogue and for the establishment of a free trade zone between Bulgaria and the European Community.

Eventually, the European Council in Copenhagen gave the green light to CEECs saying verbatim: "The associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe that so desire shall become members of the European Union." and continued "Accession will take place as soon as an associated country is able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions required." On 24 November 1994, Bulgaria and the other associated countries were further invited to join the EU declarations on foreign policy and security issues. On 29 May 1995, the first Bulgaria–EU Association Council meeting was held in Brussels. They discussed issues relating to the strategy on Bulgaria's integration into the EU, regional stability, and the free movement of Bulgarian nationals within the EU Member States and within the Schengen group.¹¹⁴

Bulgaria officially applied for EU membership on 16 December 1995. On 15 July 1997, the Commission declared its opinion on Bulgaria's application for

¹¹² Website of Sofia News Agency, Timeline: Bulgaria and the EU, http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=70184, 15.06.2010

¹¹³ Bulgarian Euro info Centre Network, Chronology of events in the field of Bulgarian-EU relations, <http://www.eic.bcci.bg/chronolo.htm>, 15.06.2010

¹¹⁴ Website of Sofia News Agency, Timeline: Bulgaria and the EU, (26.09.2006), http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=70184, 15.06.2010

membership. Thus, the Republic of Bulgaria was accepted as a candidate country; however, it was not considered sufficient to start negotiations for accession.¹¹⁵

Getting rid of old habits –communist executions, socialist background, etc.– was not an easy task for Bulgaria. Expectedly, The EU did not consider Bulgaria’s democracy successful. The newly established democratic institutions and practices of liberal economy in Bulgaria fell short of the EU expectations. For example, corruption, organized crimes, insufficient legal and administrative reforms, economic problems, rise of inflation, unemployment rates, and increasing foreign debt all pointed to a worsening situation.

In its July 1997 opinion, the European Commission reported that Bulgaria had fulfilled the commitments undertaken under the European Agreement on the Free Movement of Goods. However, despite the considerable progress achieved, great efforts were still needed to be made before the Community *acquis* was fully and effectively applied by Bulgaria. The same opinion report concluded¹¹⁶:

Bulgaria has set up democratic institutions and their stability now seems secure. They must be reinforced by practices more in keeping with the rule of law at all levels of the State apparatus. Free and fair elections produced changeovers of government in 1994 and 1997.

Shortcomings remain on respect for fundamental rights but the new government elected in April 1997 has announced a series of reforms in the right direction.

Considerable efforts must be made to combat corruption, improve administration of justice and provide fuller protection for individual freedoms, particularly as cases of abuse of power on the part of the police and the secret services are still all too frequent.

Although the Turkish minority seems well integrated, this is not the case with the Romany (tzigane) population.

The improvements since the new government came to power suggest that Bulgaria is on the way to meeting the political conditions set by the European Council in Copenhagen.

¹¹⁵ Official Website of European Commission, *Commission Opinion on Bulgaria’s Application for Membership of the European Union*, DOC/97/11, Brussels, 1997. p. 8
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/dwn/opinions/bulgaria/bu-op_en.pdf, 13.11.2010

¹¹⁶ Official Website of European Commission, *Commission Opinion on Bulgaria’s Application for Membership of the European Union*, p. 19

Then, Luxemburg Summit was held on 12-13 December 1997 where the European Council decided to start negotiations for accession with Hungary, Poland, Estonia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Cyprus. However, these applicant countries had varying capacities and potential. Thus, the Council decided to accelerate the preparation for negotiations with Bulgaria, Latvia, Slovakia and Romania in the same summit. On 13 October 1999, the European Commission published its second Regular Report on the candidate countries' progress towards accession, in which it recommended the opening of accession negotiations with Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Malta.¹¹⁷ In line with that report, in Helsinki Summit of 10 December 1999, the European Council decided to start negotiations with Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Malta. The Helsinki Summit can be regarded a turning point both for Bulgaria and Turkey in that Bulgaria started negotiations with the EU while Turkey was granted candidacy status.

The October 1999 Report noted that Bulgaria made progress in the areas of motor vehicles, drug precursors, legal metrology and product liability. However, significant work was still necessary for the transposition of the "New Approach" Directives.

After the negotiations started on 28 March 2000, the first meeting at deputy level was held. Bulgaria presented negotiations' positions on 8 chapters. On 25 May 2000, the second meeting at deputy level was held. Six chapters for negotiations were opened and Bulgaria presented four new negotiations' positions. On 14 June 2000 the second Intergovernmental Conference at ministers' level was held in Luxemburg. Four negotiations' chapters were closed ahead of schedule. On 2 August 2000, Bulgaria presented its position on the chapter "Free Movement of Capital". On 24 October 2000 third session at deputy level was held in Brussels. Bulgaria presented one position and three new negotiations' chapters were opened. On 16 November 2000 fourth meeting at deputy level was held. Bulgaria presented four negotiations' positions and four chapters were opened for negotiations. On 20 November 2000 third meeting at ministers' level

¹¹⁷ Marc Marescau, "EU Pre-accession Strategies: Political and Legal Analysis", in *The European Union Enlargement Process and Turkey* (133-163), Muzaffer Dartan and Çiğdem Nas (ed.), Istanbul: Publication of Marmara University European Community Institute, 2002, p.138-142

was held. The chapters Culture and Audiovisual Policy, External Relations, Statistics, and Consumers and Health Protection were provisionally closed.¹¹⁸

In its November 2000 Report, the Commission highlighted the adoption of a framework law implementing the New and Global Approach principles.

On 1 December 2000 The Council of Ministers on Justice and Home Affairs decided to exclude Bulgaria from the Schengen visa list. On 30 March 2001, the fifth meeting at deputy level was held. Three new chapters were opened. On 17 May 2001, the sixth meeting at deputy heads of delegations level was held. Two new negotiation chapters were opened. On 11 June 2001, the fourth meeting at ministers' level was held. Three new chapters were opened and the chapter on Company Law was provisionally closed. On 27 June 2001, the 7th meeting at deputy level was held (Chief Negotiators' level). On 27 July 2001, the 8th meeting at deputy level was held. Two new chapters were opened and the chapter on Free Movement of Capital was provisionally closed. Between September and October 2001, Bulgaria presented three positions for negotiations. On 26 October 2001, the 9th meeting at deputy heads level was held. Two chapters were opened and the chapter on Telecommunications was provisionally closed. On 28 November 2001, the 10th meeting at deputy heads of delegations level was held. Three chapters are opened, and the chapter on Freedom to Provide Services was provisionally closed. On 20 December 2001, the 11th meeting at deputy level was held. The chapter on Industrial Policy was opened and provisionally closed. On 21 March 2002, the 12th meeting at deputy level was held. Two chapters were opened for negotiations. On 22 April 2002, the 13th meeting at deputy level was held. The chapters on Economic and Monetary Policy, Social Policy and Employment, and Institutions were provisionally closed. On 10 June 2002, the chapters on Free Movement of Persons, Free Movement of Goods, and Taxation were provisionally closed. On 29 July 2002, the chapter on Customs Union was provisionally closed. On 30 September 2002, the chapter on Financial Control was provisionally closed.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Bulgarian Euro info Centre Network, "Chronology of events in the field of Bulgarian-EU relations"

¹¹⁹ Bulgarian Euro info Centre Network

On 9 October 2002, the European Commission's regular reports were published, recommending the accession of 10 new Member States. The European Commission expressed its support for Bulgaria's accession to the EU in 2007. Especially the protection of the minority rights was appreciated.

In its 2002 Regular Report, the Commission commented on the current situation of Bulgaria before recommending the accession of 10 states in 2004, excluding Bulgaria. The report showed that Bulgaria had had great progress on the way to accession; however, it was not found sufficient for full membership in 2004 alongside the other 10 states. The Commission stressed the following¹²⁰:

Bulgaria fulfilled the political criteria. Since that time, Bulgaria has made considerable progress in further consolidating and deepening the stability of its institutions guaranteeing democracy the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.

Significant progress has been made on the judicial reform strategy with the adoption of an Action Plan and major amendments to the Law on the Judicial System.

Bulgaria continues to respect human rights and freedoms. Bulgaria has considerably improved the legal framework, for tackling trafficking, corruption and organized crime as well as for asylum. However, there are a number of areas which continue to give cause for concern... Bulgaria also needs to strengthen its efforts to reform the child care system, to make sure that the best interests of the child are reflected and reduce the number of children in institutions.

The recent changes to the Penal Code are an important step in removing discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.

Concerning the Roma community, little has been done to remedy problems of social discrimination or to take concrete action to improve very poor living conditions. The adoption of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation would be an important step forward in this regard.

According to this progress report, Bulgaria was found capable with respect to human rights and protection of minority rights. With its improvements, Bulgaria made strong impressions among the candidate states which did not go unnoticed by the EU authorities; although the condition of Roma community was still critical.

¹²⁰Commission of the European Communities, Regular Report on Bulgaria's Progress Towards Accession, Brussels, 09.10.2002, http://ec.europa.eu/bulgaria/documents/abc/rr-bg-en-2002_en.pdf, 30.04.2012, pg.34

On 24-25 October 2002, the European Council in Brussels took a decision that the Commission and the Council shall prepare a "package" for Bulgaria and Romania, which should contain a detailed "roadmap" for accession of both countries and increased pre-accession assistance. On 18 November 2002, the chapter on Energy was provisionally closed for Bulgaria. On 2 June 2003, the chapter on Transport policy was provisionally closed. On 30 June 2003, the chapter on Environment was provisionally closed. On 29 October 2003, the chapter on Justice and Home affairs was provisionally closed. On 5 November 2003, the Commission's regular reports were published. November 2003 Report noted that Bulgaria had made good progress in the field of free movement of goods and had progressed in the field of customs. On 4 June 2003, chapters of Agriculture, Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments, and Financial and Budgetary Provisions were provisionally closed. On 15 June 2004, the chapters on Competition Policy and others were provisionally closed.¹²¹ The October 2004 Report pointed out that Bulgaria had made continued progress with regard to free movement of goods. Greater effort would be required in the area of public procurement.

After negotiations were concluded, the Treaty of Accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU was signed in Luxemburg on 25 April 2005. Then, on 11 May 2005, Bulgarian Parliament ratified the EU Accession Treaty. The October 2005 Report noted that, in spite of considerable progress, Bulgaria needed to make greater efforts in the area of public procurement and in non-harmonised sectors.¹²²

The European Commission released its Comprehensive Monitoring Report on 16 May 2006, delaying the final decision on Bulgaria and Romania's accession date for October 2006. Eventually, accession took place on 1 January 2007 and Bulgaria became a full member of the EU.

After the accession, the monitoring mechanism of the EU continued to work and, according to 2010 reports about European Union Funds Parliamentary Control

¹²¹ Bulgarian Euro info Centre Network

¹²² Official Website of the European Union, Summaries of EU legislation, http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/customs/e07101_en.htm, 03.06.2011

Commission, Bulgaria had improved in spending and distributing the funds correctly. Especially for regional development, serious amount of funds were used. The lowest amount of fund was used in competition ability of Bulgarian economy and for Environment.¹²³

When the accession process of Bulgaria was analyzed, as was mentioned before, the progress in minority rights was always appreciated. At this point, the effect of Movement of Rights and Freedoms Party (MRF) should be taken into consideration. MRF had always been represented in parliament in the 1990-2005 period elections. This had been a huge gain for Bulgaria on the way to the EU in that MRF was considered to represent the Turkish minority. MRF attributed its success to not adopt racist or separatist policies, but rather to their emphasis on national unity of Bulgaria. In the democratic period, Bulgarian governments gave their old rights, and the opportunity for politization back to the minorities thus contributing to Bulgaria's Westernization.

Another endeavor of Bulgaria on the way to the EU was overcoming its problems with neighbors. Among the problems solved in this period were water problem with Greece, the problems of Macedonian language with Macedonia, the construction of a bridge on Danube River with Romania. Furthermore, free trade agreements were signed with Turkey and Macedonia aimed to promote trade and economic relations according to the criteria of the EU.¹²⁴

After the accession, one major problem was still unresolved: Schengen problem. Bulgaria and Romania were (and still are) out of Schengen despite their memberships. Before the completion of this paper, due to the Netherland's veto, the leaders of the EU agreed to postpone the decision to September 2012 about the inclusion of Bulgaria and Romania in the Schengen Area.¹²⁵ Furthermore, the Dutch Government found Romanian and Bulgarian fight against corruption and organized crime inadequate.

¹²³ http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6573 28.01.2011

¹²⁴ Avrupa Birliği Yolunda Bulgaristan, http://www.sumen.info/bulgaristan/bulgaria_02.php 06.05.2010

¹²⁵ Alina Grigoras, "EU Postpones Decision on Romania, Bulgaria Schengen Entry Until September", <http://www.nineoclock.ro/eu-postpones-decision-on-romania-bulgaria-schengen-entry-until-september/>, 09.03.2012

In recent years, Kapitan Andreevo border gate (between Bulgaria and Turkey) was inspected as required. For Turkey, Kapitan Andreevo is an important point of entrance to the European Union. Especially drug trafficking and other illegal entrances to the EU should be prevented; so, Bulgarian officers should ensure the security of area. In February 2010, three parliamentarians from the European Parliament and Interior Minister of Bulgaria Tsvetan Tsvetanov made an investigation in that border. The technical equipment and the physical structure of the border were found satisfactory to maintain the crossings according to standards.¹²⁶ Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner for Home Affairs, had also made a check in Kapitan Andreevo. Malmström's conclusion will definitely affect the decision on Bulgaria's inclusion in Schengen¹²⁷.

As can be understood, the Bulgarian-Turkish border and the maintenance of its security play a decisive role on the decision of the EU Commission as to whether or not Bulgaria should be in Schengen. As was mentioned above, however, the Commission put off its decision on September 2012 due not to the investigation report but rather to the Dutch veto, which also argued that Bulgaria could not fulfill its duties of overseeing border security.

Bulgaria took an independent decision on visa into its own territories. This decision foresees that until the date of the full accession of Bulgaria to the Schengen area, Bulgaria will unilaterally accept Schengen visas for stays of less than 3 months.¹²⁸ In accordance with this regulation, people who have Schengen visas do not need any special Bulgarian visas anymore.

Turkey's support for Bulgaria on its way to westernization was discussed in previous chapter; so, it is better not to repeat it. Therefore, having reviewed Bulgarian EU accession process, it would be better to move on to a thorough survey of Turkey's yet incomplete EU accession process.

¹²⁶Website of Kırcaali Haber, Kapitan Andreovo Sınır Kapısında 'Shengen İncelemesi', (01.02.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6593 03.02.2011

¹²⁷ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Bulgaristan'ın Schengen Bölgesi'ne Girme Çabası, (11.02.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6628 12.02.2011

¹²⁸ Official Website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Bulgaria, "Bulgaria opened its doors to foreign tourists and investments", (25.01.2012), <http://www.mfa.bg/en/News/view/32287>, 02.04.2012

2.1.3. Accession Process of Turkey to the EU

Connection between Turkey and the EU started through the application of Turkey for associate membership on 31 July 1959 to the EEC. The reasons of this application can be categorized as ideological, economic, security-related ones, and the effect of Greece as a competitor in the region. One of the most famous foreign policy principles of Turkey has been Westernization since the proclamation of the Republic. Integration with the Western institutions has been one of the main goals since the times of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Going one step further after the ideological reason, the economic reason for application was Turkey's desire to benefit from the funds of the EEC. The security-related one was related to threat the perception from Soviet Union. In those years, the Soviets increased the pressure on Turkey, which forced Turkey to seek shelter in the Western Bloc. The last factor that led Turkey to apply to the EEC was the effect of Greece. In those years, Turkey and Greece attended international institutions together as a form of competition. In 1959, 26 days after Greece's application for associate membership to the EEC, Turkey applied for the same thing. The underlying reason of Turkey's application was that it did not want to see Greece in Western alliance which Turkey was not part of. Moreover, staying outside the EEC market, Turkey could not dare to compete with Greece economically. The EEC accepted both of them due to security concerns, believing that both states should be on Western Bloc rather than being closer to the Soviets.¹²⁹

Ankara Agreement was signed on 12 September 1963, and formal relations started. However, one article of Ankara Agreement has always been imprecise. It said that whenever Turkey reached an expected level so as to fulfill the requirements of the ECC, the possibility of its membership would be examined. This mean that it would always be an open-ended process for Turkey rather than giving guarantees.¹³⁰

On 23 November 1970, Additional Protocol was signed, only to enter into force on 1 January 1973. There was a suspension decision by the EEC in the beginning

¹²⁹ Deniz Vardar, "Türkiye Avrupa Topluluğu/Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri", *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, Faruk Sönmezoğlu (ed.), 3rd ed., İstanbul: Der Yayınlan, 2004, p.442-445

¹³⁰ Cihan Dura and Hayriye Atik, *Avrupa Birliği, Gümrük Birliği ve Türkiye*, Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, 2007, p. 483-484

of 1980s due to the Turkish coup d'état. It was a major blow to democracy and freedoms; so, the EEC found appropriate to suspend relations, which remained frozen until 1986 meeting of EC-Turkey Association Council. Less than one year later, on 14 April 1987, Turkey applied officially to the EEC for full membership. Turgut Özal –the then Prime Minister– had liberalist views and practices in both domestic and foreign policy, and making Turkey a member of the EEC was one of his major aims. The reasons of this application were also based on political, economic, foreign policy related, domestic, and defense related reasons just as the previous ones. First of all, politically, Turkey's democracy would be guaranteed by the Union's policies; because, the basic policy of the EEC required setting up a democratic system and maintaining it. As for the economic reasons, due to the coup, foreign economic relations were broken while at home the privileges were abolished. Because of that, Turkey wanted to overcome this situation, and it aimed outward-oriented growth, which could be only by being a full member to the EEC. Thirdly, Greek full membership to the Community made Turkey passionate and lonely in international arena. In order to compete with Greece on an equal platform, full membership was an essentiality. Fourthly, in domestic policy the Motherland Party (ANAP) –the party of Turgut Özal– was supported by the majority of electors. After the Ankara Agreement, Turgut Özal wanted to achieve this Westernization goal during his term in power. Lastly, Turkey, as being a powerful NATO member, felt that she should naturally be in the EEC. This is because other NATO members in Europe were also members of the EEC. In addition to playing a key role in defense of Europe, Turkey wanted to play a role economically and politically in the same territory.¹³¹

The opinion of the Commission for this application was declared on 18 December 1989 and it stated that there would not be any enlargement in EEC until 1993 in order to achieve European Single Act. However, after 1992 they re-evaluated the

¹³¹ Meltem Müftüler Baç, *Türkiye ve Avrupa: Soğuk Savaş Sonrası İlişkiler*, İstanbul: Alfa yayınları, 2001, p. 32-41

situation and concluded that the EEC would continue with 15 or 18 members. Accordingly, the case of Turkey would also be dealt after this time.¹³²

8 years after the application, Customs Union was accepted between the sides. Generally, only member states were included in the Customs Union. In other words, candidate states could not be accepted to Customs Union until being a full member to the EU. However, Turkey was in the Customs Union, though it was not even a candidate state. This was an extraordinary practice in the history of the EU. This development caused debates in Turkey. Some politicians considered this as a form of exploitation by the EU. Without granting Turkey membership within the Union, the EU has been benefiting from the tariff and quota applications of Turkey. Other politicians, however, regarded this as advantageous and viewed this as a success on the way to integration with the EU.

Actually, Customs Union brought some rights, responsibilities and obligations. It regulated the trade of industrial and manufactured agricultural products. The fundamental principle of the Customs Union was the free circulation of those goods, which fall within the scope of the Customs Union, without being subject to any kind of restrictions.¹³³

On 21 December 1995, Free Trade Agreement was signed between Turkey and the EU. This agreement included the goods and products of ECSC.¹³⁴

1997 Luxembourg Summit was one of the most significant dates for Turkey; because, Turkey's name was not on the candidate list and it was a disappointment for Turkish authorities. After the Summit's decision, Turkish government decided to suspend the relations with the EU. Two years later, in the Helsinki Summit, the candidacy of Turkey was registered by the EU. So, 10-11 December 1999 Helsinki Summit has always reminded a successful turning point for the Turkish community. On

¹³² Harun Arıkan, *Turkey and the EU an Awkward Candidate For EU Membership?*, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2006, p.66

¹³³ Muzaffer Dartan, "Turkey-EU Relations With Particular Reference to the Customs Union", in M. Dartan, M. and Çiğdem Nas, eds., *The European Union Enlargement Process and Turkey*, İstanbul: A Publication of Marmara University European Community Institute, 2002, p. 283

¹³⁴ Armağan Kırışman and Çınar Özen, "Changing Patterns in Turkey-EU Relations: From Eligibility to Candidacy and Beyond", *the Turkish Yearbook*, vol. XXXVI, 2005 p.121-122

8 March 2001, the EU Accession Partnership, which sets out priorities toward full membership for Turkey, was adopted by the Council of Europe. In the following years, some of the amendments were made in the Turkish domestic law according to the EU standards and criteria. For example, death penalty was abolished in 2002. Eventually, though, on 9 January 2004, Turkey signed the 13th protocol of European Human Rights Convention, which prescribes the abolition of death penalty, including war-time crimes.¹³⁵

In the Brussels Summit on 17 December 2004, after European Commission's report and recommendation, the decision was taken to start the membership negotiations with Turkey on 3 October 2005. Not much progress has been made since that time. The current situation in accession negotiations are as the following:¹³⁶

- One chapter (the chapter on Science and Research) has been opened and provisionally closed.
- Turkey has commenced negotiations on 13 of the 33 chapters (including the Science and Research chapter): chapter 4 - Free Movement of Capital, chapter 6 - Company Law, chapter 7 - Intellectual Property Law, chapter 10 - Information Society and Media, chapter 12 - Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy, chapter 16 - Taxation, chapter 18 - Statistics, chapter 20 - Enterprise and Industrial Policy, chapter 21 - Trans-European Networks, chapter 27 - Environment, chapter 28 - Consumer and Health Protection and chapter 32 - Financial Control.
- Two chapters are still to be opened: chapter 17 - Economic and Monetary Policy, and chapter 26 - Education and Culture
- Chapters whose screening reports has been approved by the Council of the European Union with Benchmarks are: chapter 1 - Free Movement of Goods, chapter 3 - Right of Establishment and Freedom to Provide Services, chapter 5 - Public Procurement, chapter 8 - Competition Policy, chapter 9 - Financial Services, chapter 11

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 122-130

¹³⁶ Secretariat General for EU Affairs, Current Situation in Accession Negotiations, (05.06.2011), <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=65&l=2>, 25.06.2011

- Agriculture and Rural Development, chapter 19 - Social Policy and Employment and chapter 29 - Customs Union.

- Chapters whose draft screening reports are to be approved at the Council of the European Union are: chapter 2 - Freedom of Movement of Workers, chapter 13 - Fisheries, chapter 14 - Transport Policy, chapter 15 - Energy, chapter 22 - Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments, chapter 23 - Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, chapter 24 - Justice, Freedom and Security, chapter 30 - External Relations and chapter 33 - Financial and Budgetary Provisions.

- Screening Reports of chapter 31 - Foreign, Security and Defense Policy have not been drafted yet.

17 of these 33 chapters are still blocked and a mere 3 chapters are eligible for opening. The reason for EU's suspension of eight chapters (Freedom of Movement of Goods, Right of Establishment and Freedom to Provide Services, Financial Services, Agriculture and Rural Development, Fisheries, Transport Policy, Customs Union and External Relations) is declared to be Turkey's refusal to grant port access to Greek Cypriot vessels and planes. In other words, as long as no progress obtains in the ongoing Cyprus reunification talks, Turkey's accession will carry its uncertainty.¹³⁷

After the evaluation of the current issues in relations between the EU and Turkey, the Bulgarian attitude towards Turkey's accession process to the EU within the context of official speeches, declarations as well as the reaction of Bulgarian public is discussed below.

Bulgaria's Attitude towards Turkey's EU Membership

Turkey's attitude towards Bulgaria's EU membership and NATO membership were mentioned before. Turkey supported integration efforts of Bulgaria with those institutions. Despite the old and negative relations between two states, the international and regional conditions bring them together. In order to analyze the attitude of the

¹³⁷ Fadi Hakura, "Turkey and the European Union", Turkey's Global Strategy, LSE Ideas Report, May 2011, s. 13

political elite of Bulgaria towards Turkey's accession to the EU, examples from the speeches of politicians will be helpful. Former Bulgarian President Zhelu Zhelev, in a congress in University of Plovdiv, speaking of the EU enlargement, said that it should continue with Turkey. According to Zhelev, Turkey will supply financial sources to the EU with its population and developed economy.¹³⁸

A further example of Bulgarian political elite's reaction to Turkey's EU membership target can be given by the speech of Bulgarian Prime Minister. In 2010, during his visit to Turkey, Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov stated his supports for Turkey's integration process and reforms for the EU, saying that the referendum about Turkey's EU membership is not on the agenda.¹³⁹ In response to French Ambassador to Sofia Etienne De Ponsin's statement that Bulgaria should declare clearly its position on whether or not Turkey should join the EU, Borisov stressed:¹⁴⁰

I think that in the presence of my colleague Erdogan when we are solving such complicated issues between Bulgaria and Turkey, which have existed for centuries, commenting on what a clerk said upon leaving Bulgaria does not make sense, you shouldn't even be asking me about it... If the Bulgarian Ambassador in Paris goes to Sarkozy and gives him the advise on what to do in the same way, I think the French reaction will be that our envoy will be expelled from France.

Those words illustrate the attitude of the Bulgarian political elites towards Turkey, however; in April 2010, the petition for leaving Turkey out of the European Union indicates that public opinion diverges from government opinion. The banners and posters in Sofia streets included slogans as "Turkey is not a part of Europe", "No to Turkey", "Turkey in the EU? –Never!" By this campaign, the supporters of VMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity) intended to figure out what the reaction of the Bulgarian public would be to Turkish membership in the EU in case of a possible referendum.

¹³⁸ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Eski Cumhurbaşkanı Dr. Jelev: "AB, Türkiye'ye çok muhtaç", 08.04.2011, http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6852 01.05.2011

¹³⁹ Habibe Özdal, Borisov'un Ankara Ziyareti ve Öne Çıkan Konular, (01.02.2011), <http://www.usak.org.tr/makale.asp?id=1333>, 26.10.2010

¹⁴⁰ Website of Sofia News Agency, Bulgarian PM Slams French Ambassador over Turkey, (04.10.2011), http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=120780, 15.03.2011

On 14 July 2010, VMRO, known as an ultra-nationalist and racist party in Bulgaria, collected 320.000 signatures against the membership of Turkey to the EU. In October 2010, after the discussions in parliament, the referendum was decided to be held when the EU took its final decision on Turkey's full membership.¹⁴¹

In the context of domestic policy of Bulgaria, there is an intervention on dual citizens' right for vote. With an amendment on 13 May 2011, subsequently approved by the Bulgarian parliament, Bulgarian citizens residing outside the EU countries (predominantly Bulgarian citizens of Turkish origin living in Turkey) were rid of their rights to vote in Bulgarian domestic elections. The purpose of this move was to prevent any possible influence of dual citizens, most of whom live in Turkey, on Bulgarian elections. This was also a measure to pre-empt any political influence of Turkish nationals on the EU politics. As is known, EU member states send their national representatives to the European Parliament, and this amendment aimed to eliminate the possibility of sending Turkish representatives in Bulgaria to the European Parliament. However, this decision is considered to be anti-democratic and a violation of human rights by the Venice Commission.¹⁴²

The process on this issue started to be discussed in 1997, and the draft was shaped by those words; "Citizens of Bulgaria who live in a non-EU country –i.e. Turkey– cannot vote. In order to vote, they should reside in Bulgaria or in a member state of the union at least 3 months before elections." The draft blocking Turkish electors' votes in sending parliamentarians to European Parliament was approved in Assembly in 2007; though, MRF informed that they would go to Constitutional Court to have this amendment's nullified.¹⁴³ In 2009, the draft's content was modified to extend the 3-month residence requirement to 10 months residence. At the end of 2009, the draft

¹⁴¹ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Türkiye-Bulgaristan İlişkileri 2010 Böyle Geçti, (21.12.2010), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6447, 22.12.2010

¹⁴² European Commission for Democracy Through Law (Venice Law) and OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Joint Opinion on the Election Code of Bulgaria, Strasbourg, 21 June 2011, <http://www.osce.org/odihr/80841>, 12.03.2012

¹⁴³ Türkiye'deki Bulgar vatandaşlarına AP seçiminde oy kullanma engeli, (23.02.2007), <http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2007/02/23/gnd125.html>, 03.05.2011

was again carried to assembly; but, President Georgi Pervanov vetoed the parliament-approved law, underlining that it violated human rights and was anti-democratic.¹⁴⁴

Another amendment to block the “electoral tourism” is made in Citizenship Record Law. It is envisaged that the concerned citizens would prove their changes in residence if they moved from their addresses between 1 September 2010 and 31 January 2011.¹⁴⁵ In other words, if a citizen changes his/her address, he/she has to show evidence which proves the ownership of the real estate or a rental contract from notary. Unless they confirm their new address, they will lose their right to vote in elections. However, Constitutional Court made an inquisition and found the new residence condition in electoral codex unconstitutional.¹⁴⁶ The court found the amendments as discrimination against the Bulgarian citizens who live abroad. The parliament accepted the new electoral law in July 2011, according to which the residency rule for electors is set for 6 months instead of 12 months.¹⁴⁷

In order to conduct a study on its citizens living abroad, and to find solutions to their problems, on 24 March 2010, Turkish Prime Ministry established the “Presidency of Turks and Relative Communities in Abroad”. Votes of Turkish citizens are decisive in the parliament’s chair distribution; so, Turkey is also subscribed to this issue with a great interest. Turkish Foreign Ministry has always supported right to vote of the Bulgarian citizens in Turkey. Organizing voters’ transportation to Bulgaria, providing public schools for ballot boxes, and giving permission to governmental labor to go and use their right of vote in Bulgaria are the obvious encouragement examples of this attitude. Hence, the amendment in electoral law of Bulgaria was found inappropriate by Turkey.

¹⁴⁴ İhsan Aydın, “Komşudaki Seçim Kanunu Veto Yedi”, *Olay*, (19.01.2011), <http://www.olay.com.tr/makaleler/ihsan-aydin/komsudaki-secim-kanunu-veto-yedi-9807.html>, 03.05.2011

¹⁴⁵ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Seçim Turizminin Durdurulması Amacıyla Kanun Değişikliği Yapılıyor, (31.03.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6816 02.04.2011

¹⁴⁶ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Anayasa Mahkemesi Seçim Kanunundaki İkamet Zorunluluğunu Aykırı Buldu, (05.05.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6976 06.05.2011

¹⁴⁷ Official Website of National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, Parliament Adopts at First Reading Amendments to the Electoral Code, <http://www.parliament.bg/en/news/ID/2241>, 03.07.2011

The Attitude of the EU towards Turkey and Bulgaria

If it is necessary to compare two states' membership processes, different attitude of the EU towards these states can be observed. It is a well known fact that Turkey has spent so long time on the way to integration with the EU; however, Bulgaria joined the EU in a much shorter time. How could this be possible? Why was Bulgaria accepted before Turkey? The answer is related to both the perception of the EU and the performance of the two states. The first reason is the absorption capacity of the EU. In comparison to Turkey, the absorption of Bulgaria by the Union was perceived to be much easier than that of Turkey. Bulgaria was a wanted member for the EU with its sparse population. Also to Bulgaria's advantage were the fact that it allowed the EU to penetrate into old communist territory, that it had overcome its minority problems, and geographically, it occupied a strategic location (the nearest point of Europe to Asia and direct coast for Black Sea).

On the other hand, Turkey has always become a handicapped country for the EU with its shortcomings with respect to fundamental rights, minority and human rights, restrictions on freedom of expression, rejection of the recognition of Cyprus, disagreement between Greece because of continental shelf in Aegean Sea, and the Kurdish issue. Moreover, the members of the EU generally believe that Turkey is not a part of Europe culturally, historically or geographically. Religion is another factor for this separation. The EU was generally regarded as a "Christian Club" and a "Privileged Partnership" was recommended to Turkey from time to time.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, when viewed from the concept of absorption capacity, Turkey is a hard nut to crack with its dense population. Especially, in the public opinion of the EU member states, the population of Turkey causes a concern due to the free movement of persons. Europeans are not at ease with the possibility of Turkish workers' migration influx to their countries.

¹⁴⁸ Ceren Zeynep Ak, Mensur Akgün and Sylvia Tiriyaki, "Challenges 2009: EU-Turkey Relations On the Road To...?", in *Finding Common Grounds: Rediscovering the Common Narrative of Turkey and Europe*, Slovakia: Research Center of The SFPA, p. 80-86

To sum up, many reasons can be cited for the inclusion of Bulgaria and exclusion of Turkey in the EU. The divergences between Turkey and European countries are the most obvious ones; although, the interests and the aims of the EU are playing subordinate role, too.

In the context of the European Union, the enlargement processes and the reaction of the EU to Bulgaria and Turkey were examined above. On the other hand, regional partnerships also play a central role in Bulgarian-Turkish relations. Below are the EU-influenced partnerships that drew the two countries together.

2.2. REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS OF TURKEY AND BULGARIA UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE EU

Regional accordance processes have usually been analyzed in terms of new functionalism which is the re-interpreted form of the functionalism theory. New functionalism has been developed by Ernst B. Haas and Leon Lindberg and is related to formations of regional integration. To Haas, the chief cause of countries to tend to integrate is the interest expectations of the decision makers from likely associations. In examples of regional accordance processes, one can cite ECSC and EEC.¹⁴⁹ To Haas' definition, regional integration can be explained by economic solidarity between nations, solutions to conflicts and organizational capacity needed for construction of international judicial administrations, and replacing transnational market rules with national ones.¹⁵⁰ Once these factors band together, the emerging accordance and organization will start to expand and grow by showing positive spillover effect.¹⁵¹

Positive spillover effect is a concept which may start in one industry and spills over to another, and ultimately to the integration of the countries. The countries, i.e. the sides of the integration, can realize that the expansion of the integration can become useful as the process develops in an unplanned manner. As the integration expands, the

¹⁴⁹ Ernst B. Haas, *When Knowledge is Power: Three Models of Change in International Organizations*, the USA: University of California Press, 1990, p.23-30

¹⁵⁰ Ernst B. Haas, *Beyond The Nation-state: Functionalism And International Organization*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964, p:34-35

¹⁵¹ Leon N. Lindberg and Stuart A. Scheingold, *Europe's Would-Be Polity: Patterns of Change in the European Community*, the USA: Prentice Hall, 1970, p.117-127

countries may be able to stabilize their relations and derive high benefit. Thus, the integration concept gives way to the establishment of rules and norms in the solution of the conflict between countries. Though the theory defines the development and the process towards development, the interest of the countries and citizens, the difficulty of acceptance by trans-organizations, and similar causes can be viewed as possible problems in the application of theoretical framework.

Turkey, now, is one of the top twenty economies in the world. It is foreseen that Turkey will maintain its position in the years ahead. In addition, it is well known that Turkey wants peace and stability in her region. Ankara government has set out to apply the regional integration projects within this context. The most noteworthy criticism to Turkey's efforts is that Turkey wants to adapt herself to problematic regions with economic under capacities.

Regional co-operation is a precondition for long-term stability in a region. Regional initiatives promote the peace and thus provide stability. Turkey and Bulgaria, too, have joined in some regional projects.

In line with EU directives, Turkey and Bulgaria collaborated in three projects about assessment and management of flood risks: 1- Maritsa River Basin Floods, Risk Analysis and Assessment, Mobilization of Information Resources for Reducing the Effects of Flood, 2- Flood Forecast Capacity Development, 3- Flood Control Capacity Development.¹⁵² Nevertheless, the sprinkler system and dams in Bulgaria decrease the quantity of Maritza River in Turkey in summer time, and fail to prevent the floods in Edirne in winter times.

Beside these, in December 2000 and in November 2001, all 19 countries in the Black Sea Basin (Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Georgia, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia) came together and signed the Declaration on Water and Water Related

¹⁵²“The Obligation of “International Cooperation” in Meriç (Maritza-Evros) Basin Water Management”, Orsam Su Araştırmaları Programı, Report No: 4, April 2011, 16-18
http://www.orsam.org.tr/trUploads/Yazilar/Dosyalar/2011418_orsamwaterreport4.pdf, 20.08.2011

Ecosystems in the Wider Black Sea Region. Moreover, the EU Commission initiated the establishment of the Black Sea Regional Energy Centre (BSREC) in February 1995 under its SYNERGY programme with Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro. Based in Sofia, the centre aims to develop cooperation between Black Sea region countries and the EU in the energy field, as well as among the countries themselves.¹⁵³

In transportation of South Caucasus and Middle Asian energy resources to Europe, Turkey, Bulgaria and other states in the region have pioneering roles and duties. The majority of energy sources are located in the east of Turkey, yet the majority of energy is consumed in the west of Turkey. Carrying out this duty requires cooperation in the field of energy and bilateral economic relations to be established between regional states. Turkey and Bulgaria are two such countries. For example Nabucco, discussed in the upcoming section, is an example of such cooperation in the field of energy.

2.2.1. EU Security Strategy at Southeastern Europe

The end of the Cold War and the September 11 attacks marked a shift in the perception of security. The possibility of a great war which might result in heavy casualties has decreased. Great wars have been replaced by the threat of terrorism. Being global in nature adds to the influence of terrorism. So, the concept of security is not limited with national security; but, it is shifted to international security perception. Moreover, not only the security of civilians but also the security of economy, environment, energy, education and health become important.¹⁵⁴

The EU has first taken a clear stance on security by its Common Security and Foreign Policy in the cases of Bosnia and Kosovo. Conflicts in the Balkans, and the

¹⁵³ Mustafa Aydın, "Europe's New Region: The Black Sea in the Wider Europe Neighbourhood", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, May 2005, p. 271-273

¹⁵⁴ Atilla Sandıklı, "Uluslararası Güvenlik Yaklaşımlarındaki Değişim", http://www.bilgesam.org/tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1032:uluslararası-güvenlik-yaklaşımlarındaki-değişim&catid=122:analizler-güvenlik&Itemid=147, 12.06.2011

instability and insecurity of region led the EU to look for new strategies. This new security strategy was shaped under the authority of the EU's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Moreover, it is adopted by the Brussels European Council of 12 December 2003. In general, European security strategy identifies as global challenges and key threats such acts as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure, and organised crime. For example, regional conflicts may pose a threat to minorities, and fundamental freedoms and human rights. These may lead to extremism and terrorism, and provoke state failure. Moreover, state failure may obtain in cases of civil conflict, bad governance, corruption, the abuse of power, weak institutions and the lack of accountability. The crimes which undermine states are basically trafficking of drugs, women, children and arms, which, in the case of a state failure, have the potential to infiltrate into the Union. In short, such criminal activity is often associated with weak or failing states.¹⁵⁵

Furthermore, the EU Security Strategy clarifies its objectives as addressing these threats, building security in its cross-border countries, and developing an international order based on effective multilateralism. It also assesses the policy implications that these objectives have for Europe: be more active in pursuing its strategic objectives, increase its capabilities, pursue coherent policies and work with its partners.¹⁵⁶

According to European Security Strategy, security is a precondition of development. They define the conflict as something that not only destroys infrastructure, including social infrastructure, but also encourages criminality, hinders investment, and makes normal economic activity impossible. Many countries and regions are caught in a cycle of conflict, insecurity and poverty, the Balkans being one of them.¹⁵⁷ Before the last enlargement, the EU had fears of conflicts within its

¹⁵⁵ European Security Strategy, http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/foreign_and_security_policy/cfsp_and_esdp_implementation/00004_en.htm, 28.07.2011

¹⁵⁶ *ibid*

¹⁵⁷ "A Secure Europe in a Better World", European Security Strategy Paper, Brussels, 12 December 2003, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf>

frontiers; but, with the accession of the Balkan states, the threat got into the Union's own territory.

In the face of these threats, the importance of small military units becomes important. They have rapid deployment and mobility, flexibility and fast control power; which are not the case with standard armies, given limited space and time. The EU has a military unit which is composed of eighteen Battle Groups, consisting of 1500 troops reinforced with combat support elements. These groups rotate actively, are ready for deployment at all times, and are deterrent and capable of taking active mission within a large operation. The groups are ought to be deployed within 5–10 days of approval from the Council. It must be sustainable for at least one month to maximum four months.¹⁵⁸

The idea of this group was first discussed in the Helsinki Summit, and in 2003, the first operation was performed in Kongo. Turkey joined the Battle group in 2005 with the Italian-Romanian-Turkish Battle Group. Bulgaria, too, is in Battle Group under the Balkan Battle Group. Despite the operations in Kongo (2003), in Chad and Darfur (2007), in Kongo (2008), in Libya (2011), the Battle Group could not go beyond being symbolic. Humanitarian aids and deterrence efforts could not carry the EU to the global standards.¹⁵⁹

Apart from initiatives foreseen by the European Security Strategy, Turkey and Bulgaria have collaborated in a number of partnerships. For instance, Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Greece, Italy, Romania and Turkey signed an agreement to set up a multinational peacekeeping force for Southeastern Europe (SEEBRIG) in September 1998, bringing together a number of BSEC and NATO member countries. Here are sort of organizations most BSEC members joined;

- i. The Southeast European Cooperation Initiative (SECI),
- ii. South East European Cooperation Process (SEECF),
- iii. Stability Pact,

¹⁵⁸ Emine Akçadağ, "Unutulmuş AB Askeri Gücü: Avrupa Muharebe Grupları", http://www.bilgesam.org/tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=948:unutulmu-ab-askeri-guecue-avrupa-muharabe-gurplar&catid=70:ab-analizler&Itemid=134, 12.08.2011

¹⁵⁹ ibid

- iv. The Central European Initiative (CEI) and
- v. Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA).¹⁶⁰

In the evolution of the Turkey's accession process to the EU, it is obvious that Turkey generally follows parallel policies with the Union. Turkey supported EU's foreign policy positions in general, for example it had participated in peace-keeping forces in the Ivory Coast and in the Balkans. However, according to the different interests of both sides, these relations of cooperation might change. Especially, being neighbour with Middle East and Eurasia will bring conflicts with European strategic concerns.¹⁶¹ Three recent examples can show the bilateral divergences in their strategies. The first one is the issue of Iranian nuclear ambitions. Turkey disagrees with the EU on the economic sanctions against Tehran. Instead, Turkey goes for intensifying diplomatic ties with Tehran. Moreover, Turkey surprised the Europeans by voting against the last round of sanctions at the UN Security Council. Turkey allied with Brazil in order to secure Iran's agreement to swap uranium for fuel rods on Turkish soil. The second arena where Turkey's interests conflicts with those of the EU is the Cyprus issue. Turkey –as a member of NATO but not of the EU, objects to Cypriot participation in EU-NATO meeting (Cyprus is part of the EU but not of NATO). As a response, Cyprus vetoes strict defense cooperation between the EU and Turkey. Energy security is the third area for conflicting interests and policies. Turkey and the EU have declared the benefits of the Nabucco pipeline to diversify energy supplies and bypass Russia. Once completed, it will transport 31 billion m³ of natural gas from the Middle East, Caucasus and Central Asia to European consumers. Yet, the weak accession process has diluted interest for Nabucco and other ambitious joint projects.¹⁶²

Another major arena of Turkish-Bulgarian cooperation secured by the EU is about energy security, which is clearly exemplified by the Nabucco project, discussed in the next section.

¹⁶⁰ Mustafa Aydın, p. 273

¹⁶¹ Fadi Hakura, p.13

¹⁶² Ibid, p. 15

2.2.2. Energy Security and Nabucco Project

Energy security has a critical role in national security. Energy security concept is generally defined as *the adequacy of energy supply at a reasonable price*. This definition supposes that energy should be physically available and its price should be affordable.¹⁶³

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines the energy supply security as the availability of energy at all times in various forms, in sufficient quantities, and at affordable prices, without unacceptable or irreversible impact on the environment.¹⁶⁴

At the European level, the concept of energy security is defined by the European Commission in a similar fashion:

Energy supply security must be geared to ensuring the proper functioning of the economy, the uninterrupted physical availability at a price which is affordable while respecting environmental concerns. Security of supply does not seek to maximize energy self-sufficiency or to minimize dependence, but aims to reduce the risks linked to such dependence¹⁶⁵

Availability of energy sources is important for both economic development and sustainability of modern communities.¹⁶⁶ Countries have foreign dependency for uninterrupted energy supply. Energy supply security come in two categories: short term and long term. Short term energy supply security might be compromised in cases of interruption of supply related with unpredictable climate conditions and technical problems. Long term energy supply security might be compromised in cases of the risk of insufficient supply to meet the demand and political instability. Long term energy

¹⁶³ Sanam S. Haghighi, *Energy Security: The External Legal Relations of the European Union with Major Oil and Gas Supplying Countries*, Portland: Hart Publishing, 2007, p. 14

¹⁶⁴ UNDP, "World Energy Assessment Overview: 2004 Update", 2004, p.42.

¹⁶⁵ See Commission (EC), 'Towards a European Strategy for the Security of Energy Supply' (Green Paper) COM (2000) 769 Final

¹⁶⁶ Sinisa Tatalovic, "Energy Security and Security Policies: The Republic of Croatia in Comprehensive Perspective", *Politicka Misao*, (2008), Vol. XLV, No. 5, p.117.

supply security risk may occur when energy production and transport investments are blocked due to political and economic factors.¹⁶⁷

A categorization of the risks associated with gas security is prepared by Jonathan Stern, who analyzed the most relevant risks that should be taken into consideration in designing a policy for such security. He provided such a two-way categorization mostly on gas; however, the same categorization is, to some extent, relevant for oil. These aspects are reserve depletion, the structure of supply contracts, the investment regime, the insecurity of energy sources, the insecurity of energy transit routes, and the insecurity of energy facilities.¹⁶⁸

Energy security problem of the EU started with the last enlargement wave in 2004 with the accession of new member states in Southeast Europe. Energy dependency of new member states was high, and this factor made the problem more important. Besides, the decrease in oil and natural gas reserves in North Sea and the decline in coal production, the import dependency of the EU in energy increased. Thus, energy security risk has been increasing.¹⁶⁹ Among other risks for energy security are high energy prices, possible depletion of energy reserves, and the occurrence of regional supply shortfalls.¹⁷⁰

Within the EU, only Denmark and the UK are independent on oil imports. Also, both countries and the Netherlands have no dependency on gas imports. Demand for gas in Europe is rising whereas European gas production is expected to decline, and natural gas production will not rise much above current levels in the foreseeable future. Thus, there is a growth in demand for natural gas from outside the EU. Moreover, research indicates that most energy is used up in the EU.¹⁷¹

The European Union is one of the major global energy consumers and is overly dependent on imported gas for which Russia is the key supplier. Before the 2008

¹⁶⁷ Janusz Bielecki, "Energy Security: Is the Wolf at the Door?", *The Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance*, Vol. 42, No. 2, p. 237

¹⁶⁸ Sanam S. Haghighi, p.18-19

¹⁶⁹ İsmail Hakkı İşcan, "Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkilerinin Geleceği Açısından Avrupa Birliği Enerji Güvenliği Sorunu", *Uluslararası Ekonomi ve Dış Ticaret Politikaları*, Vol.1, No.2, p.126-127

¹⁷⁰ Haghighi, p. 9-10

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 10-13

financial crisis, limited capacity to expand short-term supply drove up prices. Moreover, increasing demand for oil and gas imports and supplier wealth strengthen Russia's and Iran's hands, and secured their position in regional and international policies.¹⁷²

Since the collapse of Soviet Bloc, Europe's energy source area has changed geographically. Energy supply shifted from the Middle East to Russia. Russia would be an alternative to the Middle East for diversifying the energy sources. Furthermore, Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States region are relatively more stable and secure compared to the Middle East region. However, according to the energy security concept, the reliability of the producer or the supplier country is not enough; the transporter country's reliability is also required. Within this context, Turkey and Bulgaria play a crucial role in the Nabucco Project which has been planned as an alternative to Russian gas in the EU.

As the most concrete and largest project of the EU in terms of supply security and resource diversity, Nabucco was brought into being with the agreement signed on 13 July 2009 in Ankara. The project –supported by the USA and the EU– consists of pipelines with a length of 3300 km, most of which will pass through Turkey. According to first anticipations, the project starts from Georgian and Iranian borders and ends in Baumgarten destination point in Austria. Gas quantity to be transported is calculated as 31 bcm/year and estimated expense amount as €7.9 billion. The project partners are Botaş A.Ş., Bulgarian Energy Holding EAD, MOL Plc, OMV Gas & Power GmbH, RWE AG and TRANSGAZ SA.¹⁷³

Nabucco's Bucharest Declaration in January 2009 defines “resource diversity” as the primary objective. Creating more secure, transparent, predictable, sustainable energy markets and easier market economy conditions provide justification for resource diversity. The declaration suggests that the project will be for the benefit of all producer, consumer and transit countries. Member countries of the project stated that

¹⁷² Carlos Pacual and Evie Zambetakis, “The Geopolitics of Energy: From Security to Survival”, in *Energy Security: Economics, Politics, Strategies and Implications*, Carlos Pacual and Jonathan Elkind (eds.), Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2010, p. 9

¹⁷³ John M. Roberts, “Black Sea and European Energy Security”, *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* Vol. 6, No. 2, June 2006, p. 217

the project was in accordance with the EU's fundamental principles and policies on energy in the recent period, and reminded the EU's target to open a new energy corridor to Middle Asia, Caucasia and Middle East.¹⁷⁴

It is under consideration to supply the required gas by Nabucco from Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Iraq, Iran and Egypt. The main concern here is whether Azerbaijan –where the line will be connected in the first stage– will fill the pipes or not. If serious doubts in Turkmenistan gas are taken into account, some questions are seen arising on whether the Azeri gas will be below the capacity. Turkmenistan's participation into Nabucco will be a notable success both for the project and Turkey. By the way, the claims that Turkmenistan does not possess enough gas to contribute to the Project are understood to be invalid. EU authorities think that the quantity Turkmen gas is much more than current data, and have been preparing their studies accordingly. On the other hand, Turkey wishes Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan to have a special part in the project; however, it does not only want to set off relying only on these countries, and tries to engage Qatar, Iran and other Middle Eastern countries for the gas to fill the pipes.¹⁷⁵

Nabucco is predicted as a useful project for both the EU and the partners of project. It will increase the energy security of the EU and decrease the gas dependency of CEECs to Russia. Moreover, it would strengthen the ties between the EU and the supplier countries. Turkey and Bulgaria would be two examples of these beneficiaries. Maybe two of these states joined this project by looking after those interests, especially the gaining due to the usage of their lands for gas transportation.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Laçiner Sedat, Arzu Celalifer Ekinci and Gülay Kılıç, "AB-Türkiye İlişkileri ve Avrupa'nın Enerji Güvenliği", in *Yeni Dönemde Türk Dış Politikası, Uluslararası IV. Türk Dış Politikası Tebliğleri*, Osman Bahadır Dinçer, Habibe Özdal, Hacı Necefoğlu (eds.), October 2010, Ankara: USAK Yayınları, p.148

¹⁷⁵ *ibid*, p. 148-149

¹⁷⁶ Katinka Barysch, "Should the Nabucco Pipeline Project be Shelved?", Centre for European Reform Policy Briefing, London, May 2010, pg. 1-2

CHAPTER III

LOCAL ISSUES AND LOCAL ACTORS IN TURKISH-BULGARIAN RELATIONS

Local actors and local issues between Turkey and Bulgaria generally are related with the cross-border activities. When compared with the previous chapter, this chapter is narrower and focused on bilateral relations. Historical and the permanent issues of relations such as problems of Turkish immigrants¹⁷⁷, Bulgarian immigrants which immigrated from Turkey and Muslim/Turkish minority in Bulgaria constitute the main subject. The reflection of these problems on bilateral relations will be examined. The effects and the importance of the immigrant associations as NGOs, will be followed in the next parts. Turkish immigrant associations organize campaigns or social activities in order to maintain the cultural lives and political participation of Turkish/Muslim minority in Bulgaria. Besides, the perception of the EU about minorities and its expectations from member states, Bulgarian attitude towards Muslim/Turkish minority in its borders, compensation demands for Thracian Bulgarians who emigrated from Turkey to Bulgaria in 1913 will be treated in detail. Finally, except from minority issues economic and cross-border activities like new visa application, tourism, bilateral investments, and cooperations sectors between two states will be examined.

3.1. EMIGRATION AND MINORITY ISSUES IN BILATERAL RELATIONS

Minorities have been one of the most problematic issues for centuries. Sometimes they caused wars, sometimes they became the victims of mistreatment, assimilations, or genocides. The reflection of minority issue on the Turkey-Bulgarian relations will be studied in this section.

In Bulgarian Constitution there is no expression of “minority”; instead “citizens whom mother tongue is not Bulgarian” is used to define Turkish minority in the article 36/2. Although, in various reports prepared by the EU institutions and in bilateral treaties that establish the status of the Turkish minority, the expression of

¹⁷⁷ The statement of Turkish Immigrants will refer to Turkish/Muslim immigrants in Turkey who came from Bulgaria.

“Turkish minority” or “Muslim minority” is used; the word *minority* is not found in Bulgaria Constitution.¹⁷⁸ This attitude is regarded as anti-democratic by many authorities. Moreover, establishing a party based on ethnic origin is prohibited by the new Bulgarian Constitution with the article 11.4 (from July 1991).¹⁷⁹

Aside from the legal gap in the status of minorities, education in Turkish is also one of the most important issues for Turkish minority. According to national education Law adopted in 1999 in Bulgaria, mother tongue was removed from the curriculum as a compulsory course and started to be given 4 hours in a week as elective course, scheduled only at weekends and after school time. Students who choose the Turkish lesson cannot take any other foreign language lesson. Therefore, the demands and tendency of Turkish students to Turkish lessons decreased. On the other hand, Turkish course teachers at schools are not listed as permanent staffs. Other well-known problems are ineffective provision of textbooks and training of Turkish teachers by Bulgarian authorities. So, students are not qualified enough due to the lack of books and teachers. For example; although, Kardzhali Teacher Institute was founded in order to train Turkish course teachers in 1992; the institute has not accepted any students since 2004.¹⁸⁰ Beside the education problem Turkish broadcast and publishing is also another troubling issue.

Turkish broadcast and publishing: Despite the abolition of the restrictions on Turkish broadcasting and publishing in accordance with the EU standards, there are still ongoing problems on this issue. In spite of all recommendations of Council of Europe, Bulgarian administration insists on its restrictive attitude. Other basic problems on this issue are neglectfulness of representatives from MRF, financial problems, and the absence of intellectual class. On the other hand, in Bulgaria, the newspaper

¹⁷⁸ Kader Özlem, “The Transformation of Turks of Bulgaria in Historical process and the Effects of EU Membership Process of Bulgaria to Turkish Minority”, the Journal of International Social Science, vol.1/2, Winter 2008, http://www.sosyalarastirmalar.com/cilt1/sayi2/sayi2pdf/ozlem_kader.pdf, p. 365, 17.02.2011

¹⁷⁹ Pawel Grabowski, Shayan Khawja, Júlia Lampášová and Stephanie Schramm, “The Impact of the EU on Minority Rights Issues During the Accession Process”, http://tudresden.de/die_tu_dresden/zentrale_einrichtungen/zis/newseceu/outcomes/papers_folder/MINORITY%20GROUPS%20RIGHTS_final.pdf, p.11, 11.04.2011

¹⁸⁰ Website of Kircaali Haber, Bulgaristan’da Türkçe Eğitim Yetersizliği, (19.03.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6771 2.5.2011

“Müslümanlar”/”Musulmani” has been publishing since 1990 as Head Mufti’s media organ. In 1992, some Turkish newspaper and magazines such as “Zaman”, “Mozaik”, “Kırcaali Haber”, “Kaynak”, “Deliorman”, “Alev”, “Mozaik” and “Hoşgörü” began to be published. Since 2002, on National Bulgarian television -Channel 1-, news has been broadcasted in Turkish for 10 minutes every day.¹⁸¹ Actually, this broadcasting and their coverage are not sufficient; they are just for pulling the wool over EU’s eyes. Indeed, there is still not any independent and constant Turkish radio station.

Economic problems in Bulgaria affect minority as well as everyone. Unemployment rate is high and migration to the EU countries for work is very common in Bulgaria. Moreover, the regions inhabited by minorities are subjected to discrimination about government investments and EU fund transfers. The funds came from the EU are mostly used for Bulgarian densely populated regions. Turkish people generally work in tobacco sector or factories of any kind. Tobacco does not bring so much profit for Turkish families due to the fact that tobacco buyers keep the prices low. Thus, the migration of those Turks to big cities or Western European countries is inevitable and being migrant workers becomes their fate. Correlatively with this issue the social life and the choice of profession are also a little bit problematic for minority in Bulgaria. Although they are represented in political life, Turkish people have troubles to find job in public service or in the army. This situation had reflected on the progress reports of the EU about Bulgaria in the process of membership. For example, in 2003 and 2004 Progress Reports of Bulgaria, Commission said¹⁸²;

The Turkish minority is integrated into political life through elected representation at national and local levels and through increasing representation in public administration. Further efforts are still needed for the socio-economic integration of ethnic Turks who live in economically underdeveloped regions.

In conjunction with previous subjects the social security is also another issue that has to be solved and is going to be discussed in the following. Turkey and Bulgaria do not have an extensive social security agreement already. The payments of retired

¹⁸¹ Mümün TAHİR, “Türklerin Bulgaristan’daki Medyakal ve Kültürel Hakları”, http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=8&id_aktualno=59, 03.04.2011

¹⁸² 2004 Regular Report on Bulgaria’s Progress Towards Accession, http://europe.bg/upload/docs/Regular_Report_2004_EN.pdf, 12.05.2011

Bulgarian citizens who live in Turkey were resolved. Moreover, the working years in Bulgaria are considered valid in Turkey; thus, immigrants from Bulgaria gain the chance for early retirement. However, there are many points waiting to be settled especially for immigrants in Turkey.

Religious problems often came to agenda in recent Turkish-Bulgarian relations and also had a wide coverage in media. The issue about the appointment and the selection of the Head Mufti was an ongoing case in Bulgaria and this is also going to be discussed in further section. Other problems are about Ottoman waqf properties, and the training of Turkish language teachers.

Ethnic discrimination activities by some chauvinist groups or parties may be considered as “otherization” of Muslim/Turkish minority. TV channels belong to racist political parties are making propagandas against Islam or Turkishness, against MRF or Turkey. Legacy of Ottoman Empire is tried to be insulted or despised both in history education and in social life.

Lastly, the visa application had created troubles for Turkish citizens when they were trying to enter Bulgaria. With the new law in 2008, rules in taking visa had become stricter, and the procedure became complicated. Under these circumstances, a very serious problem was created not only for the dual citizens but also for the Turkish citizens who did not have Bulgarian citizenship –who has relatives in Bulgaria and wanted to visit them– or just an ordinary Turkish citizen who wanted to visit Bulgaria. This will be also discussed in the following parts.

3.1.1. Minority Strategy of the European Union

Before starting the issues on minorities, mentioning about the place and the definition of the minority concept in international law and in the EU law will be relevant and explanatory. Minority Rights Group International’s definition of minority is as the following: “disadvantaged ethnic, national, religious, linguistic and cultural

groups who are smaller in number than the rest of the population and who may wish to maintain and develop their identity”¹⁸³.

In the recommendation 1201 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe about the rights of national minorities, the expression “national minority” refers to a group of persons in a state who:

- a. reside on the territory of that state and are citizens thereof ;
- b. maintain longstanding, firm and lasting ties with that state ;
- c. display distinctive ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic characteristics ;
- d. are sufficiently representative, although smaller in number than the rest of the population of that state or of a region of that state ;
- e. are motivated by a concern to preserve together that which constitutes their common identity, including their culture, their traditions, their religion or their language.¹⁸⁴

The Union is based on the values of respect for human dignity, democracy, equality, liberty, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. In addition, the societies of the Member States are characterised by pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men.¹⁸⁵

The EU does not have a minority policy; instead, it has a minority regime/strategy which is mostly composed of political and semilegal regulations, rather than binding legal norms. This strategy is determined with regulations in the Community Law and minority regime of Council of Europe is adopted as a frame; respecting for fundamental rights, equal treatment, precluding of discrimination, combating with

¹⁸³ Minority Rights Group International, “Who are minorities?”, <http://www.minorityrights.org/566/who-are-minorities/who-are-minorities.html>, 11.04.2011

¹⁸⁴ Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, *recommendation 1201 (1993)*, <http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta93/EREC1201.htm>, 12.04.2011

¹⁸⁵ Official Website of the EU, The Founding Principles of the EU, http://europa.eu/scadplus/constitution/objectives_en.htm, 30.04.2012

racism and xenophobia are the main endeavors according to this frame.¹⁸⁶ The aim of this strategy is to prevent new minority formations when maintaining to live together in peace and tolerance by preserving different groups' divergences. Moreover, before the last enlargement to Southeastern Europe it was related about new minorities which means immigrant workers and asylum seekers.

In order to create a minority policy, a common definition of minority is required. In order to define minority, member states should share a common idea on minorities. By this way, standards and norms can be improved about minorities; however, this is also related with the domestic politics of the members and some of them are really sensible on this issue. Although, the EU is accepted as a supranational body, the member states do not transform all rights to the Union. Especially the Balkan states –new members, may not fit to common opinion with the other European members in the protection of the minorities' rights.

When the European law¹⁸⁷ is examined, it seems that there are primary and secondary legislations in the sources of Community Law. Founding Treaties, Merger Treaties and Accession Treaties composed the primary legislation such as; treaties which established the ECSC, EEC, EURATOM, SEA, TEU, Treaty of Amsterdam and Treaty of Nice. Treaties in Primary legislation stand at the top of hierarchy of norms like a national constitution. They are effective and binding. Following source of the Community Law is secondary legislation which is composed by the regulations, directives, decisions, opinions and recommendations. Regulations, directives and opinions are binding; but the others are non-binding for the member states. For regulations there are some characteristics; they have general applicability, direct applicability and direct affect. It means; a regulation is not addressed towards a certain member state or institution or individual, a regulation shall be in force in all member states as soon as it enters into force in Brussels. Member state does not have to or may not do anything to make a regulation a part of its law. Its effect on individuals is

¹⁸⁶ Erol Kurubaş, "Avrupa Birliği'nin Azınlıklara Yaklaşımı ve Avrupa Bütünleşmesine Etkileri", *Liberal Düşünce*, 2001, 23, p. 120-144

¹⁸⁷ Walter Cairns, "*Introduction to European Union Law*", 2nd ed., London: Cavendish Publishing, 2002, 72-79

depends on two conditions; the norm should be unconditional and sufficiently precise. If those conditions are not met it does not have direct effect and it brings neither a right nor a liability. Third sources of EU law are agreements. Agreements are signed with third countries –non-member states; so, they are not concluded among member states.

According to the Treaties, free movement right, combat with ethnic discrimination and the equal pay for women and men are organized and mentioned; however, there is not any estimation about the fundamental rights.

Minority Rights in Copenhagen Criteria

The Copenhagen criteria are adopted by the European Council in 1993, in order to determine the conditions for enlargement of Southeastern Countries. In the report of Minority Rights Group International it is defined as follows;

The political, economic and legal criteria relate to the candidate's stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights; its functioning market economy and ability to cope with competitive pressures; and its ability to transpose the Community *acquis*, respectively. The fourth element is internal to the EU in that it relates to the EU's capacity to absorb new member states.¹⁸⁸

The political criteria to be met by the candidate countries are also stated that, these countries must have achieved the protection of minorities besides the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights.

In the post-communist era, Bulgaria's harsh assimilation policy was reformed – ethnic minorities regained their original names, “assimilation” prisoners received amnesty, and the Penal Code was also improved. These were the positive developments in Bulgaria and beneficial for Bulgarian accession process to the EU. Despite these considerable changes, until 1999, the existence of minorities has not been recognized by Bulgarian authorities and there is still not any statement as “minority” in their constitution. Especially the condition of the Roma community is awful. As it is

¹⁸⁸ Minority Rights Group International, Pushing for Change? South East Europe's Minorities in the EU Progress Report, www.minorityrights.org/download.php?id=523, 12.04.2011

mentioned in previous parts, in Progress Reports which belonged to Bulgaria's progress, the EU insisted many times on the improvement of the conditions of Roma community. Their habitat is lacking hygiene, their children cannot take well education. All aside, they are considered as black people in the USA; so, they cannot integrate with the rest of the community.

In the last enlargement, Bulgaria is shown as a model for others with the removal of ethnic differences and the notion of a peaceful co-existence between minorities. It had a repercussion in the EU and international NGOs that Bulgaria has successfully solved its minority problems. But the position of minorities in reality still remains problematic. Especially, the strong inclusive identity is restricting some minorities from their ethnic self-identification. Moreover, officially some ameliorations were made for the maintenance of the EU standards and for persuading the EU by Bulgaria; however, the truth of the matter is different. Despite the fact that Bulgaria is a EU member state, when it is compared to the Fascist Term and also the first years of Communist Term, the situation of Turkish/Muslim minority in Bulgaria was better indeed. Freedom of press and expression, permit for Turkish language in schools, existence of Turkish schools etc. were well-known applications in those terms. Nevertheless, in present day, none of these are guaranteed by Bulgaria for Turkish/Muslim minority.

3.1.2. Social Rights of Turkish Immigrants from Bulgaria in Turkey

One of the most important effects of Bulgaria's accession to the EU is the regulations about the social rights of Turks in Turkey who emigrated from Bulgaria. As it is known, by being a member state of the Union in 2007, Bulgaria and people who have citizenship of Bulgaria had to meet the obligations and gained right to benefit of EU law. Who owns Bulgarian citizenship may benefit from the social rights with reservation of derogations, restrictions or shortly exceptions within the framework of Community Law.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁹ Kamuran Reçber and Barış Özdil, "Enjoyable Rights of Turks Who Lived in Bulgaria or Returned to Turkey in EU Security Law", in USAK Yearbook of International Politics and Law, vol.1, Ankara, 2008, p. 198

Turkey contains many immigrant Turkish citizens who have also Bulgarian citizenship. So, this community has rights in Bulgaria from their past years. Turkey and Bulgaria had signed an agreement in 1998 for the payments of pensions in Turkey. Thus, immigrants from Bulgaria could receive their payments in Turkish banks and did not need to go to Bulgaria anymore for their pensioner payments.

Bulgaria became a part of Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers with a reservation on the 2nd and the 4th paragraphs of Article 12¹⁹⁰, in 7 June 2000; whereas, Turkey accepted the whole article in 24 November 1989. By taking these reservations it is thought that Bulgaria wanted to make a provision to Turkey's demands on this issue.

Working times of Turkish nationals residing in Turkey who were forced to emigrate since 1 January 1989 until 8 May 2008 from countries that social security agreement was not signed, would be evaluated in terms of social security as old age pensions to be charged by.

Regulation on debiting and assessing the periods of time spent abroad is created in 2008. According to the regulation, any person -who was forced to migrate from a state with which Turkey did not sign a social security contract and who acquired

¹⁹⁰ European Social Charter - Article 12: The right to social security

“With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to social security, the Contracting Parties undertake:

1. to establish or maintain a system of social security;
2. to maintain the social security system at a satisfactory level at least equal to that required for ratification of European Social Security Code;
3. to endeavour to raise progressively the system of social security to the highest level;
4. to take steps, by the conclusion of appropriate bilateral and multilateral agreements, or by other means, and subject to the conditions laid down in such agreements, in order to ensure
 - a. equal treatment with their own nationals and the nationals of other Contracting Parties in respect of social security rights, including the retention of benefits arising out of social security legislation, whatever movements the persons protected may undertake between the territories of the Contracting Parties;
 - b. the granting, maintenance and resumption of social security rights by such means as the accumulation of insurance or employment periods completed under the legislation of each of the Contracting Parties”

<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/035.htm>, 01.06.2012

Turkey's citizenship- can benefit from this right¹⁹¹. In order to debit the work times where they came from they are required to;

- a. be subjected to immigrate from the state that they came since 01.01.1989 until 08.05.2008,
- b. take Turkish citizenship and reside in Turkey after the forced migration,
- c. not to take any salary or income from a social security organization, including the salaries taking according to the Law of Filled the Age of 65, Dependant, Derelict Turkish Citizens, dated on 01.07.1976 and numbered 2022,
- d. certify the working times in the country they came,
- e. petition for debiting.

Since that time, an immigrant from Bulgaria gained the right to become pensioner in Turkey by paying his/her own premiums of years in Bulgaria and provides the retirement requirements of Turkey. For example, a woman has to work 20 years in Turkey to become retired, and she had 8 years working time in Bulgaria and worked 12 years in Turkey. If she pays the cost of 8 years premium in Turkey she will complete 20 years and will become retired by means of this regulation.

3.1.3. The Müfti Issue of Turkish/Muslim Minority in Bulgaria

Bulgarian Muslims with a population of approximately one and a half million, can be accepted as one of the largest minority in the European countries. The most important support and assurance of Bulgarian Muslims in the national and international arena is the institution of Head Müfti which is based upon international law with the protocol signed in 19 April 1909 and the Istanbul Treaty signed in 29 September 1913. Depending on the Head of Mufti, there is a High Islamic Institute in Sofia and three Religious Vocational High Schools in Shumen, Rousse and Kardzhali [Momchilgrad]. Moreover, a center is training hafiz. In forty public schools teach in the Islamic religious lessons are taught one hours per week and Qur'an courses are held during

¹⁹¹ Yurtdışında Geçen Sürelerin Borçlandırılması ve Değerlendirilmesine İlişkin Yönetmelik, (Regulation on Debiting and Assessing the Periods of Time Spent Abroad), Resmi Gazete, no: 27046, dated 06.11.2008

summers in many regions inhabited by Muslims. In addition to books in Bulgarian and Turkish Muslims now publishes a monthly magazine. The organization also made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Because all of these, the head of Mufti is a crucial institution for the Muslim minority in Bulgaria and this made the institution as a target of the Bulgarian administrators. Muslims have the right to determine their own representatives; although, the Bulgarian official authorities demands the registration of this candidate. Until 2002, this registration was made by a department of religious affairs; however, since 2002, this duty is executed by Sofia Supreme Court and after every congress that Mufti was elected, the results were brought to court and the registration was cancelled.¹⁹²

Recent years, the issue about mufti assignment of Muslim minority caused discussions between Turkey and Bulgaria governments. Nedim Gencev is the previous Mufti and supported by Bulgarian authority, led to the cancellation of registration in 12 May 2010 and the real candidate of Muslims Mustafa Aliş Hacı was not recognized.¹⁹³ This was not the first action against the results of the congress by Nedim Gencev and he got reactions and protests by Turkey and the Muslim minority in Bulgaria. Being an old staff of secret service in communism years, accusing by peccation and corruption makes him a “persona non grata”. In order to get the Mufti chair, the objections against the elected Mufti shows his greediness among the public opinion. Furthermore, those anti-democratic interventions to the Muslims’ right to elect their own Mufti are reproached because Bulgaria is a member of the European Union now and has to satisfy the criteria. The root of the problem arose from Gencev’s claim. Muslims in Bulgaria have chosen their legitimate heads by organizing 7 conferences since 1994. Nevertheless, Nedim Gencev as claiming to be the leader of Muslim community did not participate in any 7 conferences. The press releases department of Head Mufti published a call for public and asks; “If he (Gencev) argues that he has estimation and notability before Muslim community, why does he throw himself at the mercy of the

¹⁹² Ayhan Demir, “Bulgaristan’da Neler Oluyor?”, *Milli Gazete*, 16.06.2010

¹⁹³ Website of Bal-Göç, Bulgaristan’da Yaşanan Olumsuz Gelişmelere İlişkin Açıklama, (23.07.2010), <http://www.balgoc.org.tr/2010/m2/1.html>, 12.12.2010

court? Or, is he afraid of facing with community that he claims leadership?¹⁹⁴ According to the same local news agency, Nedim Gencev –bestowed as the president of the high religious council of Muslims by the judicial decisions which ignores the will of the Muslim society– held a press conference in BTA news agency with his unlawfully appointed so-called regional Muftis on 8th October 2010 and he reiterated the claim that he is the religious leader of the Muslim minority.

This crisis more or less took place in Turkey’s agenda, too. When the reflections of these developments on bilateral relations are examined, the declaration of politicians and representatives of NGOs will give the clues. In respect thereof, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated that "Especially today, we testified it together that Turkish minority in Bulgaria as being citizens have equal rights would have contribution in the stability, prosperity and development of Bulgaria and would have positive effect on bilateral relations between two states." He continued with the certain issue and said that;

...the issue of Mufti is an interested one and the elections will be held within the democratic dimensions in a very short time. In addition, its safety is also going to be provided and with this election the peace and relief will come. Therefore, I would like to thank my dear colleague and friend. Yet, these are the domestic affairs of Bulgaria. I believe that peace is a desire as a result by everybody.¹⁹⁵

As it is seen Erdoğan did not give an interventionist speech and even it can be called as neutral. Maybe some parts of religious people wanted Erdoğan to be more dominant; though, this speech and the meeting of Erdoğan and Mustafa Aliş –who is the elected Mufti of Muslims in Bulgaria– was enough to make Gencev angry. Gencev expressed his opinion about the meeting of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Mustafa Aliş as follows: “This is a foreign country's attempt of intervention to the religious affairs of Muslims in Bulgaria”.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Bulgaristan Müslümanları'nın Kamuoyuna Seslenişi, (15.10.2010), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6222, 15.10.2010

¹⁹⁵ Başbakan Erdoğan Sofya’da, <http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/58175-basbakan-erdogan-sofyada>, 6.10.2010

¹⁹⁶ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Gencev: “Devlet İstihbarat Ajanı Olarak Geçirdiğim Yıllar En İyi Yıllarımdı”, (09.10.2010), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6191, 10.09.2010

In order to overcome the dilemma about the registration of Head Mufti in Bulgaria a national conference was convened on 12 February 2011 by the current Head Mufti administration. About 220 signatures were collected for the conference in question. 988 delegates attended to the conference from the 1217 and Mustafa Aliş Hacı was reelected by whole delegates' votes.¹⁹⁷

According to the Turkish Foreign Ministry statement; the expectation of Turkey from now on is that Bulgarian authorities should register the conference's result and respect to the decisions of community's will of right to determine their own Mufti – who is elected according to democracy and transparency; so, its legitimacy and the representative character are unquestionable. In this context, there is no doubt that the preservation of the rights of Muslims in Bulgaria according to the universal values and the standards of the EU is going to ensure the strengthening ties between two states.¹⁹⁸ In spite of the fact that senior managers of the EU Human Rights Commission also participated in the conference; Bulgaria's EU membership and the claims of Bulgaria being democratic, the result of the conference in which M. Aliş Hacı was reelected, is not registered again. So, Mustafa Aliş Hacı brought this unfair and anti-democratic situation to European Court of Human Rights.¹⁹⁹ Eventually, on April 2011 the issue was solved on the behalf of Bulgarian Muslims and Bulgarian Appellate Court recognized the conference held by Head Mufti in 12 February 2011. Therefore, elected Mufti is formally recognized.²⁰⁰ However, it is found unfair to take the decision of the election's result by a judge in Sofia instead of Muslims. This made the conferences and elections unnecessary and meaningless.

¹⁹⁷ Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dışişleri Bakanlığı Sözcüsü'nün Bir Soruya Cevabı, (08.02.2011), http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sc_-4_-18-subat-2011_-disisleri-bakanligi-sozcusu_nun-bir-soruya-cevabi.tr.mfa 29.3.2011

¹⁹⁸ ibid

¹⁹⁹ Ahmet Çetin, "Bulgaristan'daki Müftülük Krizi Üzerine Röportaj-2", (15.03.2011), <http://www.tuicakademi.org/index.php/kategoriler/roportaj-ve-soylesiler/1008-bulgaristandaki-muftuluk-krizi-uzerine-roportaj-2>, 25.3.2011

²⁰⁰ Bulgaristan'da Başmüftülük Krizi sona Erdi, (30.04.2011), <http://www.showhaber.com/bulgaristanda-basmuftuluk-krizi-sona-erdi-431015.htm>, 30.04.2011

3.1.4. The Issue of Thracian Bulgarians

The attitude of the new government in Bulgaria can explain the last situation and the relations between two states. In July of 2009, GERB won the elections with the 39 % rate of vote. The Prime Minister Boyko Borisov has been known with his opposition towards the Turkish minority. At the beginning of the GERB's period, the nationalist politicians wanted to abolish the 10 minutes Turkish broadcast on the national television channel and Borisov asserted that his party would give support the nationalists' referendum demand. However, he retreated after the reactions from Turkey and Europe.²⁰¹ By the way, more important issue for the Turkish Foreign Ministry was the compensation demand for 1913 Thracian Bulgarian immigrants. Because Bulgarian former Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev announced that Turkey owes to the descendants of the Bulgarian refugees from Eastern Thrace²⁰² and this would constitute an impediment for Turkey in EU negotiations.²⁰³

In the literature, Thracian Bulgarians issue is related with the Treaty of Friendship between Bulgaria and Turkey, signed in Ankara on 18 October 1925. With this treaty the rights of Turks in Bulgaria and the Bulgarians in Turkey were guaranteed. Besides the treaty, a protocol was also signed which mentions about the immovable property. To this respect, Bulgarian politicians have raised the compensation question several times, in the relations of Turkey with Bulgaria and also with the EU. Likewise, these efforts reciprocated in the European Parliament Resolution on Turkey's 2007 Progress Report, but the resolutions are not binding.²⁰⁴ Under the topic of Regional issues and external relations the article 40 states²⁰⁵:

²⁰¹ Kader Özlem, "Son Dönem Sofya-Ankara İlişkilerinin Analizi", <http://www.turansam.org/makale.php?id=1206>, 22.02.2011

²⁰² According to Bulgarian estimates and claims, Turkey owes a compensation of 10 billion dollars to the descendants of the Bulgarians, who left their estates in Eastern Thrace as well as in Asia Minor. These include over two million decarees of agricultural land, homes, and other property.

²⁰³ "Bulgaria PM Binds Turkey's Joining EU to Thracian Bulgarians Compensations", (11.04.2008) http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=92134, 03.03.2011

²⁰⁴ Muzaffer Vatansever, "Bulgaristan'ın Tazminat Talebi ve Türkiye-Bulgaristan İlişkilerinin Seyri", (22.01.2010), <http://www.usak.org.tr/makale.asp?id=1287>, 26.10.2010

²⁰⁵ European Parliament, European Parliament resolution on Turkey's 2007 Progress Report, 2.05.2008, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2008-0224+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>, 22.03.2011

Recalls Turkey's commitment to good neighbourly relations, and stresses its expectation that Turkey will refrain from any threats against neighbouring countries and resolve all outstanding disputes peacefully in accordance with the UN Charter, other relevant international conventions and bilateral agreements and obligations; in particular, invites the Turkish authorities to enhance, in the spirit of good neighbourly relations, the dialogue with Greece (e.g. on the Aegean continental shelf) and Bulgaria (e.g. on the property rights of Bulgarian Thracian refugees) in order to resolve all outstanding bilateral issues;

Not only in the period of former government but also in the era of new government, Bulgaria had come with same assertions. The Diaspora Minister of Bulgaria Bojidar Dimitrov declared that the compensation issue could be the precondition of Turkey's EU membership. Thereupon, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu stated that the immigration was bilateral and if Bulgaria insists on this demand, Turkey would also seek for the rights of Turkish immigrants; thus, Bulgaria could be the loser one.²⁰⁶ Borisov also agreed with Davutoğlu; so, Bulgaria and Turkey have not agreed on specific deadlines for the settlement of the compensations dispute; however, expert groups of both sides are studying on this issue silently in the face of such situation. Nevertheless, the above-mentioned treaty binding for both Turkey and Bulgaria; so, the compensation cannot be unilateral. Same demands would be asked by Turkish officials for the Turkish immigrants, too. Actually the immigration process from Turkey to Bulgaria could be stopped by 1930s or decreased after 1930s; although, the immigration from Bulgaria to Turkey has always been continuous and dense term by term. Even in 2000, Bulgaria was the second emigrant country to Turkey after Germany.²⁰⁷ This result shows the amount and the gap between Turkey's and Bulgaria's immigrant receiving.

On the other hand, according to Professor Cengiz Hakov, there is not an open defined question between Turkey and Bulgaria. Moreover, the Thracian Bulgarians issue was resolved years ago with Treaty of Friendship and also in 1925 Ankara Agreement, both states accepted that Turkey and Bulgaria do not have any problems with each other. With an additional protocol to Treaty of Friendship, Turkish minority

²⁰⁶ Kader Özlem, "Son Dönem Sofya-Ankara İlişkilerinin Analizi"

²⁰⁷ Turkish Statistical Institute, Göç İstatistikleri, http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?tb_id=38&ust_id=11, 21.3.2011

in Bulgaria was going to benefit from the rights which foreseen in Neuilly Treaty in 1919 and the Bulgarian minority in Turkey was going to benefit from the rights which determined in Lausanne Treaty in 1923. In subparagraph “B” of protocol, resolution of both minorities’ immovable property question is projected.²⁰⁸ According to this treaty, immovable properties of immigrants (except in İstanbul) who migrated after October 1912 to Bulgaria and who migrated after October 1912 to Turkey were going to be state-owned.

Besides the experts who are the historians, scholars and academicians; non-governmental organizations are also struggling to prove Turkish immigrants’ immovable properties in Bulgaria. BAHAD (Association of Justice, Rights, Culture and Cooperation in the Balkans) carries out a work coordinative with Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey about the registration of all immovable properties that remained in Bulgaria of Turkish immigrants.²⁰⁹ By this endeavoring it is aimed both to resolve a possible grievance and to help the government on the issue of compensation to Bulgarian descendants.

3.2. RELATIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS

As well as political and security issues; economic and socio-cultural relations are effective on international relations or foreign policies of the states. In this part, the activities of non-governmental organizations, municipalities, personal connections of parliamentarians both from Bulgaria and Turkey, and economic ties between two states will be addressed to show the different kinds of bilateral relations.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are non-state actors whose aims are neither to generate profits nor to seek governing power. CSOs unite people to advance shared goals and interests.²¹⁰ They have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and

²⁰⁸ Cengiz Hakov, “Trakya’yı Terk Etmiş Olan Bulgarların Çözülmemiş Taşınmaz Mal Sorunları Var mıdır?”, *Rumeli Dergisi*, No:19, May 2011

²⁰⁹ Website of Association of Justice, Rights, Culture and Cooperation in the The Balkans, “Önemli Duyuru!”, (03.01.2011), <http://www.bahad.org/tr/Duyuru.asp?ID=5>, 11.2.2011

²¹⁰ UNDP, *UNDP and Civil Society Organizations: A Toolkit for Strengthening Partnerships*, New York, 2006, p. 3

values of their members or others, and are based on ethical, cultural, scientific, religious, or philanthropic considerations. CSOs include nongovernment organizations (NGOs), Professional associations, foundations, independent research institutes, community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations, people's organizations, social movements, and labor unions.²¹¹ Beside these, NGOs are a unit of CBOs which are not founded by government and which do not have any institutional connection with governmental bodies.²¹²

CSOs take part in foreign policy-making process by competing, completing and cooperating with the state. Another way for shaping foreign policy can be by penetrating the shortcoming issues of the state. Moreover, becoming a consulting body for the state and supporting the foreign policy maker is a way to be a part of foreign policy-making process.²¹³ In this context, the existence and the importance of immigrant associations in Turkey should be explained in the rest part of this study. They are regarded as responsible from the Turks abroad and the tie between the Balkans is believed to be much stronger with these associations.

Immigrant associations²¹⁴ have been established for defending the minorities' or relatives' rights remained in Bulgaria. By this way, the issues about minorities are brought to agenda and associations take part in Turkey's foreign policy. Expectations from these associations can be specified as; to keep alive the ties between Muslim/Turk community remained in Bulgaria, to raise awareness about their rights and freedoms, to help them in continuity of their cultural lives and support their political experiences. Moreover, in reality, the associations assume the responsibilities such as; collection and distribution of social aid in an emergency, registration and settlement of the refugees,

²¹¹ Asian Development Bank, *Civil Society Organization Sourcebook*, Philippines: Asian Development Bank, 2008, p.1 <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/CSO-Staff-Guide/CSO-Staff-Guide.pdf>, 23.06.2011

²¹² Ahmet Emin Dağ, *Uluslararası İlişkiler & Diplomasi Sözlüğü*, İstanbul: Anka, 2004, p. 317

²¹³ Semra Cerit Mazlum and Erhan Doğan, *Sivil Toplum ve Dış Politika: Yeni Sorunlar Yeni Aktörler*, İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2006, p. 15

²¹⁴ It means immigrants from The Balkans, but in this chapter it is accounted for immigrants from Bulgaria in Turkey.

giving scholarship for students, social assistance and solidarity, determination of the immigrants' adaptation problems and organization of protests.²¹⁵

Within this context, the existence and the actions of the immigrant associations in Turkey play crucial role in the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria, politically, culturally and economically. People, who have dual citizenship, can vote in Bulgarian elections and by these associations, they become aware about their right to vote. Additionally, associations provide transportation facilities in electoral period. Thus, there is a direct influence occurs in Bulgarian domestic policy with the votes of Turkish immigrants. MRF put 3 deputies in parliament by the votes from Turkey in 2005 elections. This is the result of immigrant associations' effect on Turkish foreign policy by increasing the representativeness of Turkish minority in Bulgaria. One more benefit of Turkish votes to Turkey is that since Bulgaria is a member of the EU, they send parliamentarians to the European Parliament. The number of deputies elected by Turkish voters will increase the chance of sending them to the European Parliament. Bulgaria has 17 members in the EP and 2 of them are Turkish (Metin Kazak and Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova). Metin Kazak is a member of The European Parliament delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee. He prepared a report on trade and economic relations with Turkey.²¹⁶ In addition, he had a speech about 2010 Progress Report on Turkey. He says:

..let us remember that the Ankara Agreement provided for the four freedoms of movement and for the customs union between Turkey and the EU. Also, several ECJ rulings, as well as existing visa regimes for other candidate states, have proved the point that visa liberalisation for Turkish citizens, especially businesspeople and students, should be clearly endorsed in this report.

Secondly, we should call for new momentum on the stalled situation in Cyprus. Implementation of the Council decision of 26 April 2004 would greatly encourage Turkey to implement the EC-Turkey

²¹⁵ Nurcan Özgür-Baklacioğlu, "Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikasında Rumeli ve Balkan Göçmen Dernekleri", in *Sivil Toplum ve Dış Politika: Yeni Sorunlar Yeni Aktörler*, Semra Cerit Mazlum and Erhan Doğan (ed.), İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2006, p. 85-90

²¹⁶ Official Website of European Parliament, Report on Trade and Economic Relations with Turkey, (23.08.2010)
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sidesSearch/search.do?type=REPORT&language=EN&term=7&author=38613>, 20.06.2011

Association Agreement. This would not only lead to economic and political gains for both sides, but would also allow all the inhabitants of the island to trade freely, and it would eliminate the current double standards in the EU. It is time to show that the European Parliament can make a difference.²¹⁷

So, it is obvious that election activities are conducted with governmental support and coordination. Turkish authorities desire to keep ties alive with minority in Bulgaria and their expectation from both MRF and immigrant associations is to bring up the problems of immigrants and minorities into agenda. Undoubtedly, Turkish members of the EP from Bulgaria are delightful developments for Turkey.

3.2.1. Bilateral Visits of Non-governmental Organizations and Local Actors

The current government in Bulgaria does not want to see MRF as mediator between Turkey and Bulgaria. It asserts that two states can compromise mutually. They think that the cooperation and projects of the EU and other partnerships will already bring two states together.²¹⁸ In the interview with Turkish deputy of MRF Remzi Osman,²¹⁹ he said that MRF is very effective in advocating of rights of citizens equally, in being a negotiator or mediator to make minority's voice heard and in establishing mutual ties between Turkish universities and Bulgarian universities, signing protocols with them. Additionally, he continued with the practices of MRF as barrage partnership on Tunca River (fund was taken from the EU) and the way to Komotini-Greece was opened in MRF's ruling time. He explained the existence and influence of the EU among Bulgaria and Turkey relations as developing partnerships and common working areas. According to Remzi Osman, these could not be achieved if Bulgaria was not a member of the EU. Related with that, the EU aim of Bulgaria could not be succeed without the affect of MRF. MRF was the accelerator in maintaining of Copenhagen Criteria by the efforts in the fields of minority rights and democracy. By the way, in

²¹⁷ Official Website of European Parliament, Debate on 2010 progress report on Turkey, (08.03.2011), <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sidesSearch/search.do?type=CRE&term=7&author=38613&language=EN&startValue=0>, 20.06.2011

²¹⁸ Muzaffer Vatansever, Report with Bulgarian Minister of Interior Tsvetan Tsvetanov, USAK AB Arařtırmaları Merkezi, <http://www.usak.org.tr/makale.asp?id=1528>, 26.10.2010

²¹⁹ Personal interview with MRF Deputy Remzi Osman, in Bulgarian National Assambly, Sofia, 22.04.2010

economic sense, the current and famous Turkish investments in Bulgaria are; Şişecam, Metro Construction in Sofia and Thracian otoban. Additionally, common works are; dam construction in order to prevent the flood, bilateral restoration endeavours in historical artifacts, Nabucco project in energy sector, combating with terrorism and opening to external markets together. The investments, trade and business connections will be treated soon.

Despite the expectations of Bulgarian government, the meetings between MRF and Turkey' formal and informal associations continue. State Minister of Turkey Faruk Çelik met Vice President of Movement of Rights and Freedoms Ruşen Rıza and discussed the problems of minority in Bulgaria especially on education, culture and religion.²²⁰ Çelik, declared the importance of MRF's struggles in development and strengthening of Bulgaria. Above all, he expressed the MRF's role in preservation of minorities' rights in Bulgaria.

The representatives from MRF came to Turkey to meet the representatives from some formal institutions and non-governmental organizations in March 2011. Representatives visited Çorlu Municipality and discussed issues on culture, tourism, and sports. Immigrant associations in the Thracian region also came together with MRF representatives. Especially, the problems of Turkish immigrants from Bulgaria about residence permit, employment permit, citizenship and visa were talked and they tried to find solutions²²¹. In Istanbul, MRF delegates gave speech about the works on human rights they carry out and the new election law in Bulgaria which interests dual citizens in Turkey. The mufti issue and the problems of Bulgarian Turkish students who study in Turkey were discussed, too.²²²

Besides a political party from Bulgaria a non-governmental organization from Turkey visited Bulgaria. President of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), Rıfat Hisarcıklıoğlu visited the Turkish-Bulgarian

²²⁰Website of Association of Bal-Göç, B.G.F. Heyeti'nin Ankara Temasları, <http://www.balgoc.org.tr/2008/ankara/index.html>, 25.03.2011

²²¹Website of Kırcaali Haber, "HÖH Heyeti Türkiye'de Görüşmelere Başladı", (10.03.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6728 15.03.2011

²²² Website of Association of Bal-Göç, HÖH Heyeti, Balkan Türkleri Göçmen ve Mülteci Dernekleri Federasyonu'nu (BGF) Ziyaret Etti, <http://www.balgoc.org.tr/2010/hoh/hoh.html>, 15.03.2011

Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Sofia.²²³ During the visit, Hisarcıklođlu met with Turkish businessmen in Bulgaria and described them as soft power of Turkey.

Head of Turkey's Constitutional Court Hařım Kılıç also visited Bulgaria as guest of the President of Constitutional Court Evgeni Tanchev. A protocol about cooperation was signed between two states' constitutional courts. Protocol prescribes to promote the relations by sharing knowledge and experience bilaterally.²²⁴

One of the last developments in the bilateral relations is also related with the minority in Bulgaria. Attack on Muslim Minority in a mosque in Sofia by supporters of ATAKA is condemned by former President of Bulgaria G. Pirvanov, Turkish Foreign Ministry, Prime Minister of Bulgaria Borisov, Turkish deputy of MRF Remzi Osman, Association of BAL-GÖÇ and also people from both Turkish and Bulgarian communities.²²⁵ In the official declaration of Turkish Foreign Ministry, attack of ATAKA was evaluated as a reflection of the racist attitude of that party. Additionally, it is remarkable that it occurred in a European Union state; even though, the EU is against such attitudes like racism, ethnocentrism, exclusionary nationalism and islamaphobia. These crimes are against humanity and diametrically opposed with the fundamental values of the EU based on.²²⁶ The president of MRF Ahmet Dođan in his speech said "The best acquisition of Bulgaria in last 20 years is ethnic peace. This is the basic element of our democracy and security. Sabotaged of this peace by a party endangers not only the national security but also the individual Bulgarians' security." Like Turkish Foreign Ministry, Dođan calls NATO, Council of Europe and European Parliament for duty, as well.

The most recent newsbreak which is a breakthrough in Bulgaria's policy towards Turkish minority has arrived in completion term of this study. National

²²³ Website of Turkish Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, TOBB Bařkanı TBTSO'yu Ziyaret Etti, http://www.tbcci.bg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=411%3A2011-02-25-08-40-23&catid=34%3Aactivities&Itemid=60&lang=tr, 25.03.2011

²²⁴ Website of Kırcaali Haber, "Türkiye Anayasa Mahkemesi Bařkanı Hařım Kılıç Bulgaristan'ı Ziyaret Etti", (08.04.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6849 22.04.2011

²²⁵ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Haber Arřivi Mayıs 2011, <http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=4&Year=2011&Month=5>, 25.05.2011

²²⁶ Website of Kırcaali Haber, T.C. Dıřıřleri Bakanlıđı'ndan, ATAKA'nın Saldırısına Kınama, (21.05.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=7043, 25.05.2011

Assembly of Bulgaria made a declaration that condemns the assimilation process that was applied as an official state policy towards the Bulgarian Turks by Todor Zhivkov, the totalitarian leader of the Communist regime and the forced emigration of 1989.²²⁷ In the official website of National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, declaration dated 11 January 2012 appeared as below²²⁸:

Another item on the agenda of the first day of the parliament's 8th session was the adoption of a Declaration against the forceful assimilation of Bulgarian Muslims (known also as "Revival Process") during the Communist regime. The declaration was proposed by the parliamentary group of the Blue Coalition's co-chair Ivan Kostov and was adopted with the votes of 122 deputies. Three deputies abstained. With this Declaration the members of parliament condemn the assimilation policy of the totalitarian regime towards the Muslim faith minority in Bulgaria as well as the revival process. According to the document the chasing away of 390 000 Bulgarian citizens of Turkish descent back in 1989, carried out by the totalitarian regime, fits the definition of ethnic cleansing. With the declaration the deputies urge the Judiciary in the country and the Chief Prosecutor to undertake all the necessary steps to bring to a close the case against the culprits of the so called "Revival Process". The attempts to close the trial, on the grounds of legal prescription, transfers the guilt from the real perpetrators to the Bulgarian people. In the preamble of the declaration deputies express their indignation at the fact that in the course of the last 20 years the Bulgarian legal system has not made possible the punishment of those guilty for the attempted forceful assimilation.

Media emphasized that this statement was not resulted from any pressure from the EU or Turkey. In international press and also in Turkey, this condemnation was regarded as an "apology" and questioned its lag. Moreover, they wrote that this apology was conveyed to Turkish people.²²⁹ In declaration, neither "apology" nor were "Turkish" words used. Even these words unmentioned, most of those concerned perceived the meaning of Bulgaria's condemnation as an apology from Turkey and Turkish people. Sufferers from this so called Revival Process cannot be satisfied with this condemnation and the expectation would be for more. However, this declaration

²²⁷ Muzaffer Kutlay, "Historical Decision of the Bulgarian Parliament: Assimilation Process Condemned", (16.01.2012), <http://www.usak.org.tr/EN/makale.asp?id=2532>, 12.02.2012

²²⁸ Website of National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, News "The Eight Session of the 41st National Assembly has started. The first plenary sitting of the year began with statements on behalf of parliamentary groups" (11.01.2012), <http://www.parliament.bg/en/news/ID/2348>, 23.02.2012

²²⁹ Julian Popov, "Bulgaria, Turks and the Politics of Apology", (26.01.2012) <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/01/2012122102331935532.html>, 12.02.2012

may open them the right to sue for old criminals and possibility of their punishment arose.

3.2.2. Municipality Partnerships

In recent years the municipalities in Bulgaria (especially in Turkish regions' municipalities) got into partnership with the Turkish municipalities. Darica Municipality in Kocaeli and Krumovgrad in Kardzhali became sister municipalities.

Derince in Izmit and Stanimaka in Asenovgrad, are also sister municipalities since 2010. According to this partnership, a group of businessman visited Derince Municipality and notified their intentions about bilateral trade and developing the relations.²³⁰

Yıldırım Municipality in Bursa and Cebel Municipality in Kardzhali became sister municipalities. Besides those, Bursa Metropolitan Municipality and Momchilgrad Municipality launched such a partnership and developed socio-cultural relations each other. Supports are generally made by Turkish side to backward areas of Bulgaria. For example, Bursa Municipality presented a funeral vehicle to Momchilgrad²³¹. Moreover, not only by bilateral helps but also with ties between the political parties, the municipalities targeted to promote the fellowship. MRF visited Bursa Metropolitan Municipality with a group of deputy and gave a briefing about the current status of Bulgarian political life.²³² President Recep Altepe, insisted on the importance of Bulgaria and the cooperation with Bulgaria for Bursa, due to the immigrant population of Bursa.

The municipalities from Turkey and Bulgaria which have partnership protocol are as the following: Gaziemir Municipality and Kirkovo Municipality, Bornovo Municipality and Momchilgrad Municipality, Nilüfer Municipality and Ardino

²³⁰ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Asenovgradlı İş Adamları Derince Belediyesini Ziyaret Etiler, (29.01.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6578 30.01.2011

²³¹ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Bursa Büyükşehir Belediyesi Mestanlı'ya Cenaze Yıkama Aracı Hediye Etti, (26.01.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6569 27.01.2011

²³² Website of Kırcaali Haber, Kardeşlik Bağları Güçleniyor, (12.03.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6737 13.3.2011

Municipality, Taşköprü (Yalova) Municipality and Ruen Municipality, Orhaneli Municipality and Kuklen Municipality, Tekirdağ and İzmir Municipalities with Kardzhali Municipality, Beymelek Municipality and Antonovo Municipality, Avanos Municipality and Madan Municipality, Büyükkarıştıran Municipality and Topolovgrad Municipality, Kartal Municipality and Asparahuovo (Ardino) Municipality, Subaşı Municipality and Kubrat (Razgrad) Municipality, Çiftlikköy Municipality and Kavarna Municipality, Bandırma Edincik Municipality and Nikopol Municipality, Demirtaş Municipality and Smolyan Municipality, Görükle Municipality and Kubrat Municipality, Kestel Municipality and Kirkovo Municipality, Mudanya Municipality and Tirgovishte Municipality, Osmangazi Municipality and Omurtag Municipality, Zeytinbağı Municipality and Batak Municipality, Edirne Municipality with Haskovo and Yambol Municipalities, Süloğlu Municipality and Mineralni Bani Municipality, Meriç Municipality and Stambolovo Municipality, Avcılar Municipality and Razgrad Municipality, Büyükçekmece Municipality and Pavel Bani Municipality, Küçükçekmece Municipality and Loznitsa Municipality, Silivri Municipality with Aydos and Ruen Municipalities, Ümraniye Municipality and Pazardzhik Municipality, Bergama Municipality and Asenovgrad Municipality, Babaeski Municipality and Lubimets Municipality, İğneada Municipality and Malko Turnovo Municipality, Kofçaz Municipality and Bolyarovo Municipality, Lüleburgaz Municipality and Silistre Municipality, Pınarhisar Municipality and Miçurin Municipality, Şekerpınar Municipality and Cebel Municipality, Samsun Municipality and Dobrich Municipality, Tekirdağ Municipality and Shumen Municipality, Devrek Municipality and Belene Municipality, Çorlu Municipality and Dulovo Municipality (Silistre).²³³

As Dulovo Municipality President Güner Ramis says, there are too many compatriots in Çorlu and their existence is very effective in choosing a partner municipality²³⁴. This situation goes same for other towns.

²³³ Statistical Data for the Sister City of Local Administration, www.migm.gov.tr/Dokumanlar/Kardes_Sehir_Istatistik.xls, 02.05.2011

²³⁴ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Çorlu ile Dulovo Belediyeleri Arasında Kardeş Şehir Protokolü, (07.03.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6709 03.05.2011

In order to understand the issue in detail, interviews were made with President of Dzhebel Municipality Bahri Ömer and President of Krumovgrad Municipality Sabihan Mehmet in April 2010 in Bulgaria for this study. According to Bahri Ömer's report, Yıldırım Municipality and Dzhebel have been sister municipalities since 1993 and they settled economic, cultural, scientific, technologic, technical cooperation and partnership on education, sports, health care and city planning. For example, Dzhebel Municipality brought students from Bulgaria to Turkish universities for visiting many times. The number of Dzhebel people living in Yıldırım is three times the local inhabitants in Dzhebel. As a result, Dzhebel became attractive for investment to entrepreneurs from Turkey. For example, Bulgarian entrepreneurs did not prefer to make investment in this region because of the possibility of immigration; however, Sönmez International and other Turkish firms made investments and opened factories in this city. Musan, the meat company is also established by Turks and native people are employed here. Cultural activities can also be given as examples for their bilateral relations. Students are sent to Turkey for education, books were sent to Dzhebel from Yıldırım Municipality, the old fountain from Ottoman time was restored by Bursa Municipality, an ambulance was sent from Yıldırım Municipality to Dzhebel. Moreover these solidarity examples, diplomatic relations were also settled and meetings with Abdullah Gül, when he was the vice Prime Minister, and with Ahmet Davutoğlu, when he was the adviser of Prime Minister, were organized.

The interview also contains the internal issues of Bulgaria which are related with Turkey, too. According to President Bahri Ömer, internal policy is based upon hostility against Turks. VMRO, GERB and ATAKA are on the same side and in order to keep the support of ATAKA, the government can refuse the fund for construction of barrage with Turkey. Moreover, in his opinion, Jewish lobby is behind the government and provoked Borisov about saying "To become powerful, to increase the participation in elections you should rush up nationalism and rake the hostility against Turkish people and fiddle with Ahmet Doğan." According to Bahri Ömer, if Turkey became member of

the EU neither Bulgaria nor Greece would be in such a situation economically. There would be solidarity and crisis would not be effective on both countries as it was.²³⁵

In the meantime, Turkish towns terminated their partnerships with Bulgarian municipalities, which recognized the actions of 1915 as Armenian Genocide. Turkish Ministry of Interior wrote a circular letter for the municipalities to be taken out of the list for twinning towns, Focus News informs.²³⁶ At first, three Turkish towns terminated twinning after it became clear their Bulgarian twin towns recognized Armenian genocide. These are Bursa, Kırklareli and Adapazari. They terminated twinning with Dobrich, Plovdiv and Shumen after the circular letter of July 18, 2008. Afterwards, this number increased to 12 municipalities.

After local actors and minority issues, economic dimensions also take important place in the bilateral relations. Next part is about the mutual trade, investments and tourism topics.

3.3. BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Turkey is one of the most important commercial partners of Bulgaria. After Bulgaria became member of the EU, Bulgaria's position also gained a new feature for Turkey as a new direct entrance to Europe. In trade between Turkey and Europe, Bulgaria is the main transition road for transportation. Moreover, Bulgaria is very close to Turkey's trade centers. Both the Bulgarian accession to the EU and neighborhood of these two countries keep them close in economic relations. After 2007, with the membership to the EU, Bulgaria also joined the Customs Union and by this way, nullification of tariffs was recognized by Turkey and Bulgaria in reciprocal trade. Ten percent decrease in corporation and income tax rate made Bulgaria an attractive place for Turkish enterprisers.²³⁷ Recent developments in trade between two countries, factors that affect investments and contributory sectors of tourism will be detailed in this section.

²³⁵ Interview with Bahri Ömer, President of Dzhebel Municipality, 23 April 2010.

²³⁶ Website of Panarmenian Network, Turkish Towns Terminated Twinning With 12 Bulgarian Municipalities, (12.03.2011), <http://www.panarmenian.net/eng/world/news/29248/>, 22.03.2011

²³⁷ Website of TBCCI, "Bulgaristan ile Türkiye Arasındaki Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkiler", http://www.tbcci.bg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=120&Itemid=161&lang=tr

3.3.1. Trade Relations

Turkey is one of the most fast-growing countries in Europe and 16th biggest economy in the world. After 2001 financial crisis, Turkey followed an export based strategy and in ten years, its average economic growth rate reached to 5.4 %. The European Union is by far Turkey's leading customer.²³⁸ Nevertheless, in the last 10 years, rates of Turkish exports to the Union countries have been progressively decreasing. These rates decreased to the level of 46% from the level of 56%. Increasing rates of other partners that follow the EU countries, which are The United States, China, and Iraq, can be demonstrated as the reason of this decrease. In the respect of import, Turkey's main counterparts are Russia, China, Germany, the USA and Iran. Similar with the rates of export, a decreasing trend is observed in imports from the EU to Turkey. In last 10 years, level of import reduced from the level of 48% to 37%.²³⁹

According to Table 1; although, Turkey has reached its record values in foreign trade, it still has a high trade deficit due to its high energy dependency on Russia and its Middle Eastern neighbors.

Table 1: Foreign Trade Statistics of Turkey

	Export (FOB)	Import (CIF)	Foreign Trade Volume	Trade Balance Deficit	Export / Import (%)
2005	73.476	116.774	190.251	-43.298	62,9
2006	85.535	139.576	225.111	-54.041	61,3
2007	107.272	170.063	277.334	-62.791	63,1
2008	132.027	201.964	333.991	-69.936	65,4
2009	102.143	140.928	243.071	-38.786	72,5
2010	113.883	185.544	299.428	-71.661	61,4

²³⁸ Official Website Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, "Ekonomik Görünüm", <http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=index#>, 30.04.2012

²³⁹ Turkish Statistical Institute, Foreign Trade Statistics, http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?tb_id=12&ust_id=4, 28.04.2012

2011	134.969	240.838	375.807	-105.869	56,0
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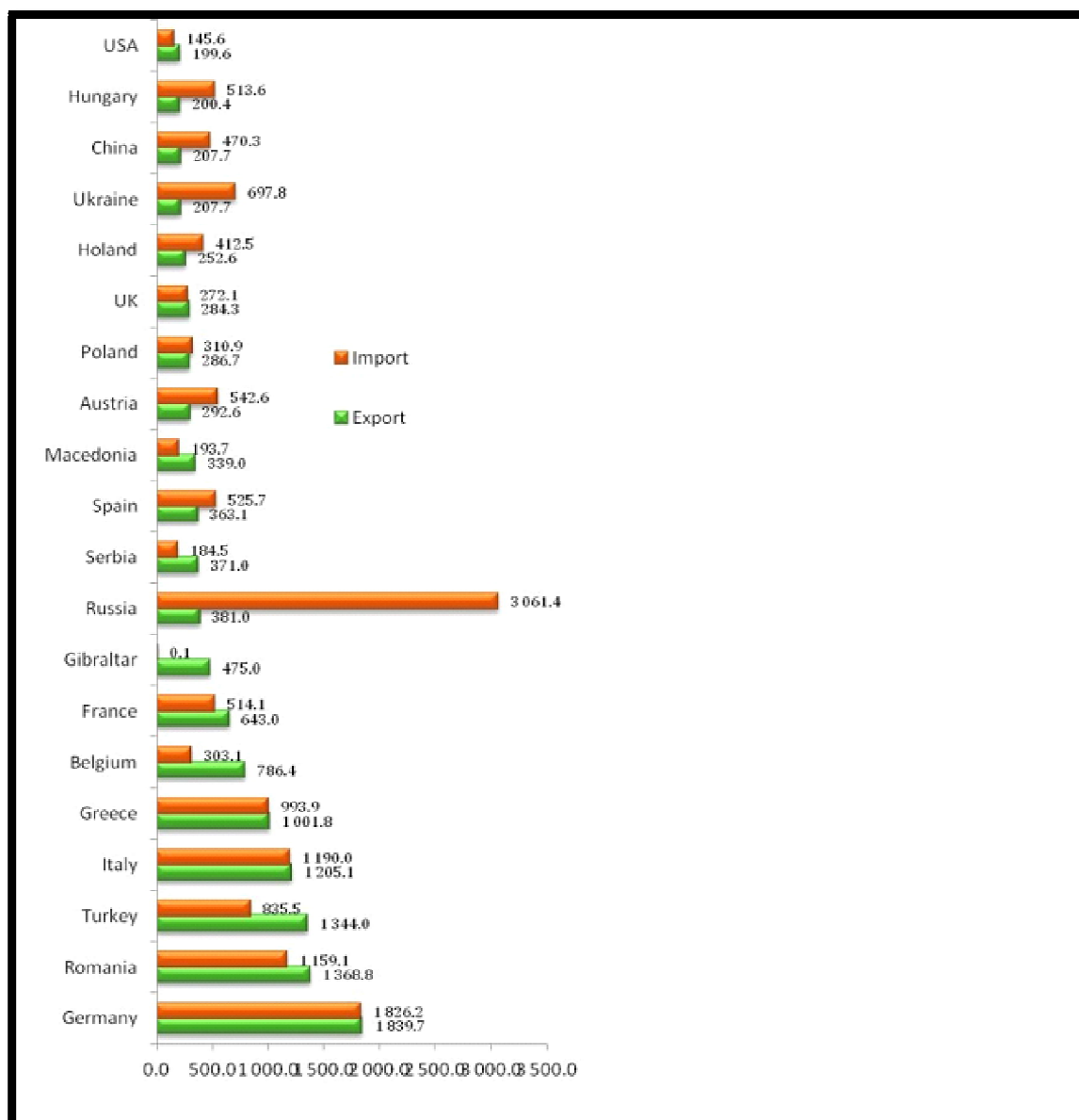
Source: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ekonomi Bakanlığı,
<http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=79192159-19DB-2C7D-3D5AE56731D11E50> (30.04.2012)

From the point of Bulgaria; since its accession to the European Union, Bulgaria has a considerable success in its foreign trade with 23% growth. Bulgarian exports to the EU increased by 25% in 2010 and reached 18.6 billion leva. Germany, Italy, Romania and Greece, composed 61.6% of the EU exports of Bulgaria, and became main trading partners of Bulgaria.²⁴⁰ In addition to these, Bulgarian exports go mainly to Turkey, Belgium and France. Bulgarian exports are mostly semi-processed goods and unprocessed products. In terms of import, Germany, Italy, Russia, Greece, France and Austria are the leading countries. Bulgarian essential imports are food products, fuel, energy and capital goods. In 2009 and 2010, Bulgarian foreign trade was affected by the global economic crisis. In this respect, Bulgaria's main trade partners, mostly from the EU, reduced their orders.²⁴¹

²⁴⁰Official Website Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, “2010 Yılında Bulgaristan'ın AB'ne İhracatı %25 Artmıştır”,
<http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=ulusticgundem&icerik=73C42984-D8D3-8566-4520C3FE1CA3ED69>, 17.11.2011

²⁴¹ <http://www.globaltrade.net/international-trade-import-exports/m/c/Bulgaria.html>

Figure 1: Main Trade Partners of Bulgaria in 2011



Source: Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency
<http://export.government.bg/ianmsp/en/foreign-trade-of-bulgaria> (14.04.2012)

Figure 1 points out the main trade partners of Bulgaria in 2011. According to this data, Turkey placed near the top. In bilateral relations, before global financial and economic crisis, Turkey was one of the biggest markets for Bulgarian goods with 11% of total export rates. At the same time, 6% of export goods in Bulgaria came from Turkey and Turkey took place at the fourth position among Bulgaria's trading partners.²⁴² But, the crisis affected bilateral economic relations of Turkey and Bulgaria

²⁴² *ibid*

in 2009. According to Bulgarian National Bank, in 2009, there was shrinkage in total trade volume between Turkey and Bulgaria with a rate over 40% ²⁴³ and became \$ 2.506 million. By all accounts in Table 2, the trade between two states had usually been balanced; however, due to the crisis, Turkey's export to Bulgaria was \$ 1.389 million while its import from Bulgaria was \$ 1.116 million. After 2010, export and import rates were reversed and Turkey's export got behind the import rates. Export increased 7% and reached to \$ 1,497 million in 2010, while it was \$ 1,389 million in 2009. On the other hand, imports from Bulgaria to Turkey rose from \$ 1,116.9 million to \$ 1,700.6 million in 2010.

Table 2: Turkey's Foreign Trade with Bulgaria ('000 \$)²⁴⁴

YEARS	EXPORT	IMPORT	EXP/IMP	VOLUME
2000	252,934	465,408	0.54	718,342
2001	299,415	393,516	0.76	692,931
2002	377,502	506,002	0.75	883,504
2003	619,101	684,348	0.90	1.303,450
2004	894,307	949,727	0.94	1.844,034
2005	1.176,714	1.186,204	0.99	2.362,918
2006	1.567,020	1.635,944	0.96	3.202,964
2007	2.060,678	1.949,813	1.06	4.010,491
2008	2.151,534	1.840,008	1.16	3.991,542
2009	1.389,199	1.116,902	1.24	2.506,101
2010	1.497,960	1.700,664	0.88	3.198,624
2011	1.623,000	2.474,620	0.65	4.097,620

Source: Turkish Statistical Institute

http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?tb_id=12&ust_id=4

Main products in mutual trade vary from food to textile. For instance some of Turkish exports are vegetable and fruit products, textile fibre and products, minerals excluding metal products, electrical machines and equipments, iron and steel, metals excluding iron, land transport vehicles, outfitting, and accessories. While examples of

²⁴³ Sofya Büyükelçiliği Ticaret Müşavirliği, "Bulgaristan Hakkında Aylık Rapor", Sofia, December 2009, www.musavirlikler.gov.tr/upload/BG/aralik2009.doc, 04.08.2011

²⁴⁴ For imports on Euro basis,

http://stat.bnb.bg/bnb/dd/new_import_coun.nsf/fSearch?OpenForm&Seq=2&EN

For export on Euro basis, http://stat.bnb.bg/bnb/dd/new_exp_coun.nsf/fSearch?OpenForm&Seq=2&EN

some Turkish imports are metal products excluding iron, oily seed and fruits, coal tar and crude oil products, metal ore and reminders, inorganic chemicals and radioactive elements, plastic products, corky and wooden products, cereals, electrical machines and equipments.²⁴⁵

Since Turkey and Bulgaria have old neighbor ties, they regulated their trade relations according to some agreements and treaties. Table 3 illustrates the list of commercial and economic agreements between Turkey and Bulgaria.

Table 3: Commercial and Economic Agreements between Turkey and Bulgaria

Name of Agreement	Signature Date
International Highway Transport Agreement	1977
Agreement on Trade and Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation	1994
Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement	1994
Double Taxation Prevention Treatment	1994
Tourism Cooperation Agreement	1997
Free Trade Area Agreement	1998
Agreement and Protocol on Cooperation in the Fields of Energy and Infrastructure	1998
Bilateral Air Transport Agreement	2004
Agreement on Maritime Transport	2004

Source: Turkish Prime Ministry Undersecretariat of the Foreign Trade
<http://www.dtm.gov.tr/dtmadmin/upload/ANL/AvrupaDb/Bulgaristan.pdf>,
 (10.05.2011)

²⁴⁵ Website of Foreign Economic Relations Board, Türkiye-Bulgaristan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri, http://www.deik.org.tr/Pages/TR/IK_TicariIliskilerDetay.aspx?tiDetId=48&IKID=68, 09.05.2011

There are amendments in some agreements; on 1 January 2007, the Free Trade Agreement replaced with Turkey-EU Customs Union Decision. In addition, International Highway Transport Agreement expired.²⁴⁶

3.3.2. Turkish Investments in Bulgaria

According to liberal theory, economic relations are useful for peace settlement. Hereunder, if two states have economic and commercial ties they will not have conflicts. Rıfat Hisarcıklioğlu, the Chairman of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), said the same thing about Turkey and Bulgaria in a Sofia visit. He also gave the EU as an example; the idea of European Community has arisen from such economic and commercial relations. When Rıfat Hisarcıklioğlu visited TBCCI in Sofia he mentioned about the importance of Bulgaria for Turkey as being a door to Western markets. In addition to this, he expressed that half of the foreign trade is made between neighbor countries in the world; so, ties between Bulgaria and Turkey strengthens both economy and friendship.²⁴⁷

Alongside of the Chairman TOBB, the Chairman of Turkish-Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry also believes that two states are indispensable for each other. Statement of Zeki Bayram gave information about Turkish investments in Bulgaria. 8500 Turkish company established after 1990 in Bulgaria and 1250 of these are still operating companies²⁴⁸. Nevertheless, it is not possible to talk about any substantial investment of Bulgaria in Turkey. According to the Undersecretariat of Treasury of Turkey, there are 330 Bulgarian-invested active firms in Turkey.²⁴⁹ Pristo Oil is a private enterprise and can be an example to considerable investment of Bulgaria in Turkey.

²⁴⁶ Bulgaristan Cumhuriyeti Ülke Raporu, Konya Ticaret Odası, p. 22, <http://www.kto.org.tr/dosya/rapor/Bulgaristan.pdf>, 04.01.2012

²⁴⁷ “TOBB Başkanı Türk işadamları ile bir araya geldi”, (25.02.2011), <http://zaman.bg/tobb-baskani-turk-isadamlari-ile-bir-araya-geldi/>, 25.05.2011

²⁴⁸ ibid

²⁴⁹ Official Website of Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Undersecretariat of Treasury, Doğrudan Yabancı Sermaye Yatırımları, <http://www.hazine.gov.tr/irj/portal/anonymous?NavigationTarget=navurl://831679608c6ba2da641258f88362f886>, 29.05.2011

With the accession process to the EU and affords for maintaining the Copenhagen Criteria made Bulgaria more stable in economics; so, this led Bulgaria to be an appropriate country for foreign investments. Another facility for investors is foundation of Foreign Investment Agency in Bulgaria which aims the elimination of barriers in front of the investments and this made bureaucracy and procedures easier.

Between 1999 and 2006, Turkey was the 16th country that makes investments in Bulgaria²⁵⁰. Table 4²⁵¹ was prepared to demonstrate the foreign investment values in Bulgaria and Turkey's share among these countries. According to data of Bulgarian National Bank, since the full membership of Bulgaria to the EU, cumulative Turkish investments in Bulgaria cost € 900.4 million at the end of 2010 (210.4 in 2007, 190.2 in 2008, 220.2 in 2009 and 279.6 in 2010). According to this data, Turkey was the 20th in list of foreign investors in Bulgaria.

²⁵⁰U. Burç Yıldız, Bulgaristan Ekonomisi Büyümeye Devam Ediyor, Yeni Ufuklar, <http://www.izto.org.tr/NR/rdonlyres/4E60B2181E0C4355ACA5274A7D44D32C/10331/YENİUFUKLARUĞURBURÇYILDIZ.pdf>, 14.04.2005

²⁵¹ Table contains top 23 investor countries in Bulgaria and was prepared according to data from Bulgarian National Bank

Table 4: Annual Foreign Direct Investments in Bulgaria by Countries (million €)

Country	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Austria	122	204.1	298.2	580.1	673	1505.6	3479.4	4621.5	5183	6061.5	6442.5	5476.1	5586.2
Belgium							68.7	141.2	249.1	287.8	387.2	461.1	446
Cyprus	209	293	292.2	360.1	447.9	470.1	643	852.1	1279.8	1580.2	1829.5	2048.8	2148.8
Czech Rep.	14.2	24.8	17.6	40.2	31.5	315.1	175.2	479	421.2	492.2	533.1	618.5	575.4
Denmark	1.3	2.8	2.9	15.9	44.6	41.5	72.6	189.9	230.9	286.8	265.7	252.7	271
France	59.7	101.4	114.8	134.6	141.6	180.3	208.3	386.6	458.5	641.5	756.4	750.4	774.6
Germany	419.4	353.9	327	439.9	439.7	680.7	776.8	1074.7	1281.1	1859.6	2007.4	2197.4	1910.9
Greece	95.7	233.3	273.1	472.4	541.4	637.2	1029.3	1689.7	2304.9	2694	3032.4	3165.5	3138.7
Hungary	8.2	6.4	8.9	18.5	177.8	224.4	311.2	487.9	714.6	934.8	1048.1	1126.3	1081.5
Ireland	4.9	11.9	3.7	1.1	2.5	19.7	108.2	526.5	820.7	746.6	778.9	794	748.6
Israel	1.2	5.1	6.9	7.8	14.9	27.8	42.5	110.4	244.7	213.9	222.4	226	228.8
Italy	37.2	31.5	308.5	330.1	406	479.8	575	501.8	383.4	464.8	515.6	568.9	575.5
Lithuania						13.7	6.4	8.5	48.5	286.8	199.5	214.1	214.9
Luxemburg							363.1	271.8	350.8	982.8	607.3	893.3	1031.6
Malta	1.9	5.3	6	6.6	8	8.4	12.8	7.1	278.1	333.3	392.9	335.3	359.7
Netherlands	79.9	201.8	310.6	167.7	472.9	632.2	940.7	1933.4	4591.1	4692.3	5772	7364.6	7636.7
Russia	145.5	33.5	38.6	32.4	51.2	49.4	178.6	248.2	522	792.4	1005.1	1222.8	1355.6
Spain	97.2	2	7	6.8	10.8	18.2	58.7	227.3	678.5	875.4	908.9	1030.5	1050.9
Switzerland	76.6	95.3	104.9	109.6	197.1	299.6	446.3	352	556.4	633.2	658.5	633.1	586.5
The UK	239.2	220.3	239.7	227.3	300.7	343.7	648.7	1433.2	2109.1	2685.4	2897.3	2712.8	2585.7
The USA	260	281.5	322.1	335.3	374.6	451.3	614	826.8	917.9	1459.6	923.2	970.4	913.6
Turkey	41.4	57.8	50	91.8	76.7	107	176	231.6	210.4	190.2	220.2	262.5	251.3
Virgin Islands	-0.9	19.4	31	35.4	68	129.6	250.6	269.9	387.7	467.5	623.5	657.8	693.3

Source: Bulgarian National Bank, <http://www.bnb.bg/Statistics/StExternalSector/StDirectInvestments/StDIBulgaria/index.htm> (11.01.2012)

If it should be compared with direct investments of Bulgaria in Turkey, figures show that investments cost € 41 million in 2008, € 45.7 million in 2009 and € 48.7 million in 2010.²⁵² Here, a balance cannot be observed between Turkish investments in Bulgaria and Bulgarian investments in Turkey. By all accounts, except 2007 and 2008, Turkey generally exhibited an increasing attitude in its investments in Bulgaria.²⁵³ By the way, this increase during the years could not be enough to stay within the top 15 investor countries. After the collapse of communism, when Bulgaria had a transition to democracy Turkey penetrated into Bulgarian market quickly and her investments were considerable. With this breakthrough, Turkey benefitted from Bulgarian market for a long time; but, with the Westernization efforts of Bulgaria, its attractiveness was considered by other countries. That is why Turkey could not stay at the top of the foreign investors list in Bulgaria.

As an example of noticeable investment of Turkey in Bulgaria it will be given Şişecam. Şişecam is one of the most famous Turkish firms in Bulgaria since 2004. \$ 380 million invested for two factories in Tırgovishte and 1.500 workers are employed in these factories.²⁵⁴ Almost whole of the production is exporting and \$ 153 million endorsed in 2009. Moreover, it added a new factory in Tırgovishte to produce automobile glass on February 2011.²⁵⁵

Another remarkable Turkish company in Bulgaria is “Alcomet” located in Shumen which produces aluminum products. Over 730 workers are employed in this entity and operating income of was \$ 112 million Euro in 2008, \$ 82 million Euros in 2009.²⁵⁶

²⁵² Bulgarian National Bank, Selection of Statistics,
<http://www.bnb.bg/Statistics/StStatisticalBD/index.htm>, 15.12.2011

²⁵³ Bulgarian National Bank, Foreign Direct investment in Bulgaria,
www.bnb.bg/Statistics/StExternalSector/StDirectInvestments/StDIBulgaria/index.htm, 09.01.2012

²⁵⁴ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Şişecam Bulgaristan’da 4 yeni fabrika kuruyor, (12.01.2011),
http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6517, 14.01.2011

²⁵⁵ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Şişecam Bulgaristan’da yeni bir fabrika daha açtı, (07.02.2011),
http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6610, 09.02.2011

²⁵⁶ Website of Foreign Economic Relations Board, Türkiye-Bulgaristan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri,
http://www.deik.org.tr/Pages/TR/IK_TicariIliiskilerDetay.aspx?tiDetId=48&IKID=68, 09.05.2011

Dedeman Company got into the Bulgarian market by accepting the management of hotels in Sofia and Plovdiv in March 2008. Sofia branch of Ziraat Bank was opened on 11 July 1998 and Demirbank Bulgaria was opened on 22 Mach 1999.²⁵⁷

Süzer Holding is a shareholder of "ZMK Nikopol" paperboard factory at the rate of 87.5 percentages. Other big investments can be counted as; in cleaning and hygiene products Hayat Chemistry as Varna centered; in automotive sector Tekno-Aktaş as Plovdiv centred; Arcomat in Kazanlık; in electronic circuits MikroAK; in bottled water Kom; in wooden products Gabrovnitsa firm of Kastamonu Entegre; in textile Şahinler and Sanitelli factories in Kardzhali and Plovdiv; in bus company Etap Adres; in pharmaceutical industry Nobel-Pharma. On the other hand, there are some trademarks which are in service in Bulgarian market; Taç, Eczacıbaşı Vitra, Eti, Ülker, Ece, Colins, Ten, Koton, Sarar, İstikbal, Doğtaş, Yağmur, Isuzu, BMC, Temsa, Polisan, Betek ve Beko, Aygaz, Ramstore, Zorlu Linens, Damat, Altınbaş.²⁵⁸

President of TOBB declared that Bulgaria joined to 3rd Regional Business Forum in Çanakkale. Delegates from TOBB and DEİK, Consul General of Turkey Ramis Şen, Sofia Ambassador İsmail Aramaz and President of TBCCI Zeki Bayram came together for discussing the constant economic relations in recent times. To improve the stable relations between two states they try to increase the cooperation between SMEs (Small and Medium sized Enterprises).²⁵⁹ A protocol was signed between these three institution in 19 March 2009 envisaged to cooperate in tourism, agriculture, construction business and SME activities.

A cooperation protocol was signed between Lüleburgaz Businessmen Association and Burgas Chamber of Commerce²⁶⁰. Cooperation will base on tourism due to the fact that Burgas is a coastal town and has a port.

²⁵⁷ ibid

²⁵⁸ ibid

²⁵⁹ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Türk-Yunan-Bulgar İş Forumu Çanakkale'de Düzenlenecek, (15.03.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6770 20.3.2011

²⁶⁰ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Lüleburgaz ile Burgas arasında ekonomik işbirliği anlaşması, (15.04.2011), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=6877 18.4.2011

Construction business is another popular investment area in Bulgaria for Turkish entrepreneurs. The information about the construction service in Bulgaria by Turkish investments in the following part of the thesis is taken from the report about Turkish-Bulgarian mutual relations 2011²⁶¹. Doğuş-Eko consortium bore the construction of 57 kilometers of Trakia Motorway between Karnobat and Burgas in March 2003²⁶². Estimated cost of the project is quoted as 47.5 million Euros and finance of the project is obtained by European Investment Bank. Construction of Podkova-Makozo Highway which supplies the connection between Bulgaria and Greece is assumed by Hazinedarođlu Construction.

Serbia part of the Sofya-Niš expressway is given to ENKA-Bechtel consortium. The project is financed by USA Eximbank. Feasibility study for the 42 kilometers part of the project in Bulgaria is given to Japan Investment Bank.

MNG Holding took over the project of wastewater treatment facility which is financed by ISPA fund (for agricultural development of Southeast Europe by the EU), in the regions Gorna Oriahovitsa, Dolna Oriahovitsa and Liaskovets. Aim of the project is to prevent the pollution of Yantra River and it costs 8.9 million Euros.

Penta Incorporated Company undertook the reconstruction of Grand Otel Sofia which costs 6 million Dollars.

Other activities of Turkish investments can be counted as Akfen-EXPO 2000 Business District construction, Intertek International Incorporated Copmany-Tokushunkai Sofia Hospital construction and wastewater treatment facility project by consortium of MAPA-TEKSER-MASS-GÜNAL.

There is lack of infrastructure in Bulgaria. After the EU membership, with the help of EU funds, a lot of infrastructure projects started to be carried out such as energy, transportation, drainage and water treatment. Turkish firms also turned their hand to this

²⁶¹ Website of Foreign Economic Relations Board, Türkiye-Bulgaristan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri, http://www.deik.org.tr/Pages/TR/IK_TicariIlişkilerDetay.aspx?tiDetId=48&IKID=68, 09.05.2011

²⁶² Website of İnşaat ve Ticaret A.Ş., Transportation Projects, <http://www.dogusinsaat.com/dogusinsaat/projects.aspx>, 08.06.2011

area; however, with the 2009 financial crisis, construction sector in Bulgaria has damaged and stagnation was observed in Turkish firms' activities in Bulgaria.

Visa application was a problem for businessmen. Visa cost for short term visits is more expensive than other region countries. Business trips hinders because of the long waiting period between day of application and the result of the application. Fortunately, the decision of -Turkish businessmen who have Schengen Visa may be accepted quicker and they do not need any invitation letter- was taken. Thus, an enormous handicap was relatively overcome. Here are other ongoing problems in Bulgaria which put the economic relations to inconvenience.

Encountered Problems in Economic Relations between Turkey and Bulgaria are as follows:

- Inefficient bureaucracy
- Very slow and inefficient judiciary system
- High level of corruption
- The non implementation of the intellectual property and copyright laws
- Significant amount of the population having limited revenue
- Work permit costs 550 Dollars capitation in Bulgaria and it should be renewed every year. Moreover, restriction of employing 10 Bulgarian workers for per foreign worker is increased the cost of small companies.

- Difficulties faced during the transport and in borders are these; in Kapıkule (Capitan Andreevo) Border, Bulgarian side does not activate more than one gate or they lose the time in changing officers' shift. Highness of highway tolls and lack of a list that was determined according to the arrival points is another difficulty. Misunderstanding from the receipts of highway prices which are prepared in Bulgarian language and fining due to the wrong documents in police controls in highways are the main troubles for foreign travelers in Bulgaria. Especially, after October, exhausting of free pass documents for trucks leads to undersupply of trucks.

3.3.3. Bilateral Tourism

Tourism between Turkey and Bulgaria has always been active since Bulgaria passed to democracy. Especially, in the first years of democracy, the cheap consumer's good in Bulgaria was very attractive for Turkish people. In first years, Turkish immigrants mostly visited their homelands for their relatives, for selling their properties or taking their names back. Most of them considered Bulgaria as the first choice to go to holiday due to the old habits and familiarity with the country. Over years, their children got used to go to Bulgaria because of the cheap entertainment services or to study at university.

Education tourism may be noted as in the major reasons of the ascending tourism figures. There is a huge attendance to Bulgarian universities by the Turkish youth. Attractiveness of those universities are based on some reasons such as; the affordable price, accreditation from The Council of Higher Education of Turkey, no need to pass the Turkish university exam, education language is English or Bulgarian (that reason provide them to learn a second language), Schengen visa (during their education period they can own Schengen visa and have right for free movement in Europe), and the most important one is graduating from an EU member state university.

Beside the education tourism, immigrants in Turkey go to Bulgaria for elections. In 2005 and 2009 parliamentary elections and in 2007 local elections were held in Bulgaria. So, the attendance, by immigrants who have dual citizenship, to these elections from Turkey was very high. Thus, the number of departing and arriving people between Turkey and Bulgaria had increased those years.

Table 5: Departing Foreigners and Citizens from Turkey to Bulgaria and Arriving Foreigners and Citizens to Turkey from Bulgaria

Departing foreigners and citizens	Years	Arriving foreigners and citizens
371 560	2000	381 545
537 714	2001	540 437
853 003	2002	834 070
1 040 985	2003	1 006 268
1 324 106	2004	1 310 643
1 622 600	2005	1 621 704
1 196 979	2006	1 177 903
1 347 616	2007	1 239 667
1 512 243	2008	1 255 343
1 623 640	2009	1 406 604
1 448 923	2010	1 433 970
1 488 228	2011	1 491 561

Source: Turkish Statistical Institute

http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?tb_id=51&ust_id=14, (14.04.2012)

According to Turkish statistical Institute's data, ten nations who mostly visited Turkey in 2007 are; Germany, Bulgaria, Iran, Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Greece, the UK, France and Holland. In the first year of the membership of Bulgaria, this country's citizens visited Turkey with a huge amount as being second after Germany. When the departing tourists are examined, the order is again similar; Germany, Bulgaria, Russia, Georgia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Greece, the UK, France and Holland.²⁶³ It is interesting that Bulgarian citizens did not break off their visits to Turkey after being EU citizens. Table 5 shows the increase in the tourism between two countries from 2000. It can be claimed that the cultural information may have an impact on this continuity. In recent years, Turkish TV serials as *Gümüş*, *Asmalı Konak*, *Ihlamurlar Altında*, *Yabancı Damat*, *Binbir Gece* and *Aşk-ı Memnu*, started to appear on TVs in Bulgaria and this

²⁶³Turkish Statistical Institute, Türkiye'ye Giriş-Çıkış Yapan Ziyaretçiler, Haber Bülteni, no:10, December 2007

development had a broad repercussion.²⁶⁴ In a documentary, Bulgarians sought an answer for the question of “Why did Turkish serials become so popular?” and at the end of the documentary, a tour company owner told that, the number of Bulgarian tourists visiting Turkey increased by 40%²⁶⁵. After the serials on TV, perception of Turkey by Bulgarians changed, the prejudice against Turkey gave its place to curiosity and interest towards Turkey. Serials which are shot in Cappadocia, in Istanbul or in Gaziantep made people wonder and attracted them to come and see Turkey.

Outside of reasons that enhance the tourist flow, other relevant issue with the tourism relations between Turkey and Bulgaria is visa application of Bulgaria. It had created a tremendous impact in past years, because of the fact that Bulgaria abolished the transit visa applications in border gates when it became member to the EU. In this respect, people who wanted to come to Turkey by passing Bulgaria, or who wanted to go to other countries by passing Bulgaria must take transit visa form foreign delegations of Bulgaria²⁶⁶. After this application, in order to overcome the problems faced by Turkish citizens who live in Europe, Turkey signed an Agreement with Bulgaria on 10 March 2007. In accordance with this Agreement, citizens who have the residence permit from EU / Schengen countries, Switzerland and Liechtenstein or who are EU / Schengen visa holders, right of visa-free transit pass through Bulgaria was set up to 5 days. This application does not cover citizens holding a private passport.²⁶⁷

According to the new application, who want to take Bulgarian visa and visit Bulgaria he/she ought to find an inviter, and this inviter has to ratify the notarized invitation in police headquarters. In addition, while visitors enter to Bulgaria they have

²⁶⁴“Bulgaristan'da Türk dizileri tartışıldı”, *Milliyet*, 27.04.2010, <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/bulgaristandaturkdizileritartisildi/dunya/sondakika/27.04.2010/1230501/default.htm>, 14.04.2011

²⁶⁵ Website of Kırcaali Haber, Bulgarlar Türk Dizilerinde Gördükleri "Büyüklerine Saygıdan" Etkilendi, (04.01.2010), http://www.kircaalihaber.com/?pid=3&id_news=5516, 14.05.2011

²⁶⁶ Official Website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bulgaristan'dan Transit Gececek Vatandaşlarımızın Dikkatine!, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/bulgaristan_dan-transit-gececek-vatandaslarimizin-dikkatine_tr.mfa, 25.06.2011

²⁶⁷ Official website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tatil Aydınlatma Projesi, 20.07.2009, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/fransa.tr.mfa>, 23.06.2011

to inform the purpose of their visit and the address of residence. Inviters have to notify that their guests arrival to immigration offices within 5 days.²⁶⁸

This application is regarded as a restriction by both Turkish citizens and Turkish authorities. Before the application, ordinary Turkish citizens who did not have Bulgarian citizenship, could take their transit visa in border gates and had continued their voyages; however, now who wants to go to Bulgaria or pass through Bulgaria to reach other countries –neither member of Schengen nor out of Schengen– cannot take transit visa on gates. The procedure had become complex, long and expensive for Turkish citizens. This might affect tourism statistics adversely between Turkey and Bulgaria.

Fortunately, last developments indicate that there are improvements on behalf of enter into Bulgaria. With a decision of Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria, dated 27th January 2012, holders of valid Schengen long term visas will be granted entry into Bulgaria as long as the visa was issued in Switzerland or Liechtenstein²⁶⁹. Hereby, entrance and residency in Bulgaria was permitted for holders of Schengen visa without Bulgarian visa.

Another important and new amelioration in Bulgaria is that Bulgaria decided to accept people from Turkey who have special (green) passport. Almost all EU countries except Bulgaria, has exempted Turkish citizens with special passports from visa requirements. With this new decision, Turkish citizens with special passports can enter and transit through the territory of Bulgaria without visas and reside for a period not exceeding three months within any six-month period from the date of first entry. Granting this new application is described as an expression of goodwill on the

²⁶⁸ Official Website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bulgaristan'dan Transit Geçerek Avrupa Birliği Veya Schengen Ülkelerine Seyahat Edecek Vatandaşlarımızın Dikkatine! (04.07.2007), http://www.mfa.gov.tr/bulgaristan_dan-transit-gecerek-avrupa-birligi-veya-schengen-ulkelerine-seyahat-edecek-vatandaslarimizin-dikkatine_-4-temmuz-200.tr.mfa, 25.06.2011

²⁶⁹ “A Step Forward to Schengen in Bulgaria”, <http://www.questbg.com/en/news-a-events/mish-mash/1800-a-step-forward-to-schengen-in-bulgaria.html>, 09.03.2012

Bulgarian side and is in the context of good neighbourly relations with the Republic of Turkey.²⁷⁰

²⁷⁰ Official Website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Bulgaria, “Bulgarian visa requirement for holders of Turkish special passports falls away”, (25.01.2012), <http://www.mfa.bg/en/News/view/32287>, 02.04.2012

CONCLUSION

Bilateral relations between states are formed under various factors. These factors may be the international atmosphere and its effects on these states, territorial issues, minorities, historical and ideological conflicts, water problems etc. But yet, international and regional developments are the most influential factors on bilateral relations. Their effects can also be seen in Turkish-Bulgarian relations.

Influence of the changes in international system shape the states' bilateral relations, too. Turkey and Bulgaria are two neighbor states who are affected and whose relations are shaped by Cold War and the European Union. The years of 1980s were reminded with the assimilation policy of Bulgaria against Turkish/Muslim minority in its territory. According to Bulgarian historical consciousness, Turkey and Turkish people were the descendants of the "Ottoman dictators" who tortured their (Bulgarian) ancestors. This widespread belief among Bulgarian people made the communist "National revival" policy easy to apply. The government forbade most of the Turkish and Islamic applications in the minority's cultural and social lives. Even their mother language was forbidden; so, the people who spoke Turkish was punished or sentenced. After a while Turkey and international organizations gave reactions and ultimatums to Bulgaria. Those years were the worst terms in the Turkish-Bulgarian relations.

Collapse of Communism was the start of a new era which Bulgaria passed into a democratic regime with a liberal economy. The relations between Turkey and Bulgaria tend to soften. Bilaterally, Turkey helped its neighbor and wanted to eliminate old problems and internationally, the EEC and NATO gave to Turkey the task of being a model to other countries in the region.

With the end of the Cold War, beside the relations of Turkey and Bulgaria, a new global order has come in international relations, too. After the collapse of communist regimes in socialist states, they were faced with new creations. In the Balkans, on the one hand states struggled with ethnic problems, on the other hand they tried to get used to democratic regimes and their applications. Besides these regional developments, in broader perspective, these states were willing to join Western

institutions. Already the Western institutions such as NATO and the EEC wanted to add them into their systems. The region has a sensitive characteristic due to its geopolitical position and potential penetration area for the EEC. Bulgaria was also one of the Balkan states which were expected to join into to the EEC.

In the last enlargement wave Bulgaria and Romania entered into Community after 12 years from formal application; a shorter candidacy period when it is compared with Turkey's candidacy period. In comparison, Turkey and Bulgaria have huge structural, ethnical and cultural differences; so, the comparison of their accession processes may not be healthy. Although, it is obvious that the population and size of Bulgaria is found more digestible by the EU and Turkey with its population, size, differentiations and problems with Greece, doomed to be prolonged in its accession process. Absorbtion capacity is important because it directly affects the shares from budget, funds and also representation of the member state within the European Council.

Turkey obviously gave support to Bulgaria on its accession way to the Western Institutions every time and in every area. In the context of the EU membership, the attitude of Bulgaria towards Turkey's accession has changed after its own full membership to the Union. In domestic policy, the public opinion has diverged according to opposition parties attitudes. In foreign policy, before the membership, Bulgarian state leaders made their declarations in the direction of their supports for Turkey's membership to the EU; whereas, after the membership of Bulgaria this discourse was weakened. Formally, Turkey is always supported by Bulgarian government; however, in Bulgarian cabinet and streets are full of opposers. They demanded to take a referendum to determine whether Turkey's membership should be supported or not. Opposers have always been; but, the membership made them more courageous to raise their voice. This issue of course reflects to the relations informally. Turkey is aware of common opinion in Bulgaria or the sides who supports Turkey or who opposed for its membership process. This courage can be shown in the new applications of Bulgaria; for example in visa application. With the full membership, Bulgaria put a new visa application for Turkey and despite having Schengen visa, nobody could enter to Bulgaria from Turkey without Bulgarian visa. This

inconveniences the Turkish citizens' entrance to Bulgaria. Fortunately, the improvements in visa application will give additional impetus to economic, cultural, commercial and academic links between the two countries. The Government's decision will facilitate human contacts between citizens of both countries.

Bulgaria –beside Greece, constitutes the entrance of the EU for Turkey. Thus, the point of entry and exit is occurring Turkish-Bulgarian border crossings. Not only trade and tourist flow but also other common activities recognizing between Turkey and Bulgaria. They combat with smuggling and organized crimes in order to maintain Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters (third pillar of the EU). Moreover, according to EU Water Framework Directive and European Flood Risk Management Policy they developed a regional cooperation for the prevention of water pollution and flood losses in Maritsa River Basin.

Furthermore, beyond the border relations Turkey and Bulgaria cooperate in more comprehensive projects of the EU such as Nabucco in energy area. Turkey has a strategic location by staying on the alternative energy arterial road of Europe. Turkey's function on this way is coincides with Bulgaria. Cooperations, bilateral economic investments and partnerships between the states for energy, bring them together. Bulgaria is the first gate for energy entry from Asia and Turkey is the widest transporter state in the EU's border. The connection between Turkey and Bulgaria will not carry only the energy but also the money. Nabucco is the best example for this partnership. After for many years neighborhood, they became a candidate and a member state of the EU, and their initiative will not working just for their own interests. It will work for a supranational body –the EU.

As well as being neighbor, the other most important element of the bilateral relations of Turkey and Bulgaria is Turkish/Muslim minority in Bulgaria. The development about this community has always been interested by Turkey. Minorities and improvement of their conditions got general approval in the EU. These developments were reflected in progress reports of Commission, they appreciate Bulgaria due to the respect for minority rights. Nevertheless, the issue of minorities constitutes a special place and different meaning in Turkish-Bulgarian relations. There

are ongoing problems which affect the agenda of both states. First of all, the social rights and retirement payments were discussed and solved between two states. Then, the election dilemma of Mufti in Bulgaria had a tremendous impression in Turkey, too. In their official visits to Bulgaria, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Turkey took this issue into their agenda. On the other hand, Bulgarians have demanded compensation for their ancestors who migrated from Turkey in 1913. For a long time, they claimed that Turkey should retrieve the loss of the Bulgarian immigrants from Turkey. For these reasons, Turkish and Bulgarian authorities often come together to solve their problems.

After the membership of Bulgaria to the EU, the condition of minorities and the parliamentary elections took a significant place in the relations. Dual citizens have right to use vote in Bulgarian elections and this has a direct effect on the results. Moreover, these votes affect the members of the European Parliament who are the representatives of Bulgaria. Supports and affords of immigrant associations in this process cannot be undermined. They awakened immigrant community in Turkey and provoked them to use votes on the behalf of MRF –the party composed mostly by Turkish parliamentarians. These civil society organizations are generally collaborating with the government and become influential on both immigrants in Turkey and Turkish/Muslim minority in Bulgaria. Nevertheless, there is an adverse event for Turkish people who have dual citizenship and live in Turkey. The Bulgarian Parliament approved the amendment in electoral code which prescribes that Bulgarian citizens should reside in their official addresses for the last four months before the elections. This refers that; Bulgarian citizens who live abroad –especially in Turkey, will chose two ways; either they stay in Bulgaria during four months before the elections or they do not use vote. This amendment is intended to restrain the “election tourism” by GERB and ATAKA. If Turkish people lose their rights to vote the votes of MRF will decrease. This aim is tried to be reached. The reflections and the results of this amendment have not definite yet.

Besides the problems, partnerships and cooperations are formed on the other side of the relations. With the efforts of non-governmental organizations and immigrant associations, the cultural and social sharings are increasing between two communities.

Trips, health tourism, trade, education facilities, municipality partnerships and even the television serials are positive developments for bilateral relations. After Bulgaria became a full member of the EU, the attraction of Bulgaria rose for students and Turkish investors. Though, new visa application undermines trends of Turkish tourists to Bulgaria. They find to take Bulgarian visa difficult; so they do not prefer to go to Bulgaria. Taking Schengen visa is easier than getting a Bulgarian visa.

Another relation kind between Turkey and Bulgaria is economic and trade relation. Due to border neighborhood, they have always been in contact, especially in border trade. The statistic and authorities declared that the booming year is 2008 in bilateral trade, which is the next year of Bulgarian accession to the EU.²⁷¹ According to explanations, Turkey and Bulgaria had increased their trading volume after the membership of Bulgaria to the EU. In 2007 and 2008 the values are the best in their history. There is a decrease in 2009 due to the financial crisis; however, the volume pushed up again in 2010. Despite the fact that Bulgaria became a member of the EU and entered the new foreign markets, the economic ties with Turkey was not damaged or worsened. The effect of the EU was not that bad. Trade continuity between two neighbor states can be considered as an old habit.

The accession of Turkey to the European Union will affect the structures of both sides. On the aspect of the EU, when Turkey become a member of the EU, its political structure, budgetary and fund distribution, demographic structure, European culture and identity will be changed. On the other hand, Turkey will reach the most long-term target in the history of the republic. Adoption of the EU policies into Turkey's domestic policy will strengthen the democracy, the shares from budget and funds will support these policies applications, free movement of Turkish citizens and goods will be ensured. To achieve all these, candidate states should undergo some sort of tasks and processes. Turkey also continues to pass this process and is joining this tasks or partnerships and cooperation with the EU in energy sector, in security, in economic areas and various policy branches. These partnerships close up Turkey and

²⁷¹ http://www.tbcci.bg/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=34&Itemid=60&lang=tr&limitstart=8, 24.06.2011

Bulgaria together and strengthen their relations. With the accession process to the EU, they become more than neighbors who share common border.

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