A Charged Friendship: German Narratives of EU-Turkey Relations in the Pre-accession Phase, 1959–1999

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1. Introduction: Diving into Germany's Role in EU-Turkey Relations

After the Second World War, Turkey and countries of 'the West' did not lose any time in establishing a common, post-war institutional architecture: Turkey gained membership to the Council of Europe in 1949 and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1952. Moreover, the country signed an Association Agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC) as early as 1959. This so-called Ankara Agreement entered into force in 1963. Since then, Ankara and Berlin have maintained a close association with each other through trade relations and the high number of people of Turkish origin living in Germany. This chapter's guiding assumption is that German-Turkish relations have always had a particular influence on Turkey's relations with the European Union (EU) and its institutional predecessors. By analysing the German Government's institutional preferences towards Turkey and how these were reflected in the government's narratives before Turkey became a candidate country to the EU in 1999, our study contributes to a better understanding of this *Unique Relationship* that extends well beyond high-level political relations by deeply affecting lives of citizens in both countries.[1]

Over recent years scholarly attention has mainly been focused on Germany's role in Turkey's EU accession process, with full membership negotiations having been initiated in October 2005. This is especially so in relation to the EU-Turkey statement in 2015.[2] However, it is important to

1 Cf. Turhan, Ebru/ Seufert, Günter. German Interest and Turkey's EU Accession Process: A Holistic Perspective. Istanbul, 2015; Turhan, Ebru. With or Without Turkey? The Many Determinants of the Official German Position on Turkey's Accession Process. In: Ebru Turhan (Ed.). German-Turkish Relations Revisited. The European Dimension, Domestic and Foreign Politics and Transnational Dynamics. Turkey and European Union Studies. Vol. 2. Baden-Baden, 2019, pp. 59–90.

2 Cf. Reiners, Wulf/ Tekin, Funda. Taking Refuge in Leadership? Facilitators and Constraints of Germany's Influence in EU Migration Policy and EU-Turkey Affairs during the Refugee Crisis. In: *German Politics*, 2020, Vol. 29; Hauge, Hanna-Lisa/

note that today's discourse about "the most difficult enlargement ever"[3] or "the never-ending story"[4] of Turkey's accession to the EU has its roots in the pre-accession phase stretching back over 40 years before the actual 'granting' of candidacy. Turkey's application for association with the EEC in 1959 and its subsequent Association Agreement of 1963 served as the main institutional basis of EU-Turkey relations. This Ankara Agreement aimed at establishing a Customs Union and freedom of movement for workers within a three-step approach to preparation, transition and finalisation.[5] While the Customs Union was achieved in 1995, Turkey is still waiting for workers' freedom of movement.

After laying out the analytical framework of this chapter, we undertake an analysis of German narratives in government declarations chronologically, decade by decade, from 1959 to the 1990s. Thus, we have been able to disentangle the various complex developments during this period. By contextualising and comparing the official narrative of EU-German-Turkish relations with the German Government's factual intentions and interests, we seek to answer how and why the German Government employed certain narratives over time and to what extent these converge with its interests.

Wessels, Wolfgang. EU-Turkey Relations and the German Perspective. In: Elif Nuroğlu, Ela Sibel Bayrak Meydanoğlu, Enes Bayraklı (Eds.). Turkish German Affairs from an Interdisciplinary Perspective, Frankfurt am Main, 2015; Turhan, Ebru. The European Council Decisions Related to Turkey's Accession to the EU: Interests vs. Norms. Baden-Baden, 2012.

3 Grigoriadis, Ioannis N. Turkey's Accession to the European Union: Debating the Most Difficult Enlargement Ever. In: *SAIS Review of International Affairs*, 2006, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, pp. 147–160.

4 Müftüler-Baç, Meltem. The never-ending story: Turkey and the European Union. In: *Middle Eastern Studies*, 1998, Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 240–258.

5 Cf. European Economic Communities. Agreement establishing an Association between the European Economic Community and Turkey (signed at Ankara, 12 September 1963). In: *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No. L 217, 29.12.1964.

2. The Analytical Framework: Official Narratives and German Interests

This section summarises the analysis' database, context and limitations.

2.1 Method

Narratives provide an "insight on how different people organize, process, and interpret information and how they move toward achieving their goals", suggesting "how the speakers make sense of the commonplace".[6] Furthermore, narratives can reveal speakers' perceptions of certain situations. They reflect "the speaker's view of what is canonical" – the mere mention of anything "unusual and exceptional" will immediately draw listeners' attention.[7] In the context of this chapter, though, we assume that the contrary may also be true; this means that the "spaces and silence"[8] in carefully selected and assessed language of official communications such as government declarations may not only convey what is "canonical",[9] but also what is considered sensitive or problematic and hence demanding special analytical attention. Thus, as adapted for our analysis, narratives by the German Government are defined as interpretations of the evolution, drivers, obstacles and goals associated with German/EU-Turkey relations, in other words justification strategies for certain behaviour.[10] Narrative analysis is based on the assumption that narratives play a critical role in the construction of political behaviour.[11] We pay particular attention to rather explicit attributions, such as 'friend' or 'bridge' that resonate for years and hence have strong potential to be remembered (and quoted) over time.[12]

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6 Patterson, Molly/ Renwick Monroe, Kristen. Narrative in political science. In: *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1998, Vol. 1, p. 316.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Cf. Hauge, Hanna-Lisa, et al. Narratives of a contested relationship: Unravelling the debates in the EU and Turkey. FEUTURE Online Paper No. 28. Cologne, February 2019.
11 Cf. Tekin, Funda/ Schönlau, Anke. The EU-German-Turkish Triangle. A Conceptual Framework for Narratives, Perceptions and Discourse of a Unique Relationship. In this volume, pp. 9-30, p. 20.
12 Cf. Weise, Helena/ Tekin, Funda: German Narratives, Strategies and Scenarios of EU-Turkey Relations 2002–2018: Towards a Unique Partnership – Yet to be defined. In this volume, pp. 79-109, p. 80.

Analysis of the German official narrative is based on a qualitative document analysis of 30 government declarations dealing with Turkey between 1959 and 1999, thus prior to the country becoming a candidate for joining the EU (pre-accession phase). Government declarations in Germany are speeches by government members before the parliament that not only aim to specify the executive's political actions and policy proposals but also have a symbolic character.[13] Our data set comprises both declarations by chancellors as well as ministers responsible for foreign and internal affairs. In general, we assume that government declarations contain no spontaneous reactions, but rather have been carefully prepared in advance utilising diplomatic language. These declarations convey how the government 'makes sense' of the relations and deliberately leaves out what it does not want to discuss publicly. Hence, the official narrative does not necessarily correlate with public discussion or a single speaker's personal opinions, but instead is aimed at steering the government's actions as a whole. We thus imply an intentional use of narratives, driven by the unintentional sense-making of policy makers' reality at given points in time, dependent on the current cultural context.

To put the conveyed messages or narratives into context, we compare them with the German Government's factual intentions and interests. How are these intentions and interests expressed in official narratives, what goals and justifications in narratives are conveyed and what goals are pursued? Our analysis seeks to reveal whether the official narrative does indeed reflect all interests or whether there are (intentional) blind spots . To determine German interests – in other words, what kind of institutional arrangements it wants the EU to have with Turkey and why – this chapter draws on the *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (AAPD): This is an edited compilation of files on the Foreign Policy of the Federal Republic of Germany that includes various kinds of confidential internal documents and reports declassified by the Federal Foreign Office after 30 years by law. It serves as a comprehensive source for background information on drivers of the German attitude towards Turkey,[14] complemented by a systematic secondary literature review.

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13 Cf. Hoffebert, Richard I./ Klingemann, Hans-Dieter. The policy impact of party programmes and government declarations in the Federal Republic of Germany. In: *European Journal of Political Research*, 1990, Vol. 18, pp. 277–304, p. 280, p.285.

14 The editions consist of reports, personal letters, meeting minutes etc., giving insights and decisive added value to the analysis of the official documents. The Federal Foreign Office has commissioned the research centre *Institut für Zeitgeschichte* with publishing secret and non-secret files in commented volumes after 30 years

2.2 Four Narrative Dimensions in EU-German-Turkish Relations

We presume that German-Turkish bilateral relations have had a major impact on the development of EU-Turkey relations.[15] Hence German statements both on EU-Turkey relations and the bilateral state of relations are analysed. Our analysis is structured along the four decades between Turkey's bid for EEC Association in 1959 and EU candidacy in 1999, namely the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Owing to the major political turning point of transition from Helmut Kohl's chancellorship (1982–1998) to Gerhard Schröder in 1998, the 1990s are divided into two separate sections. To enhance the comparability of official narratives over time, we distinguish four dimensions of content: In the specific historical context of this chapter, firstly, geostrategic arguments deal with Turkey's geopolitical significance for the European continent. Security related topics are the most important rationale from this perspective, such as Turkey's vital role as a pillar in NATO's security architecture due to its geographic characteristics. Secondly, Germany's value as Turkey's main trading partner would be reflected in the economic dimension in the official narrative. This category subsumes all references made to bilateral and multilateral trade, but also economic support schemes such as 'development aid'.[16] Thirdly, political aspects of discourse play a decisive role in the context of accession talks, referring to the first Copenhagen Criterion (political criteria), namely democracy, the rule of law, human rights as well as respect for and protection of minorities. Fourthly and finally, the societal dimension works with ascriptions of what Turkey's and Turkish identity actually 'is'. Religious, cultural identification and ascriptions determining norms, values and behaviour of individuals and groups as well as societal categories applied by the narrators, for instance 'us' vs. 'them', are reflected in this category. A prominent image here refers to Turkey and Turkish people serving as a bridge between Western and Eastern civilizations.

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of closure. At the time of writing, files up to 1987 were accessible. Hereafter, footnotes will abbreviate the Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik as 'AAPD'.

15 Cf. Tekin/ Schönlau, The EU-German-Turkish Triangle, 2022, p. 9-30.

16 The contemporary term 'development cooperation' aims to underline partnership and equality of the involved actors.

3. Germany and EU-Turkey Relations – Pre-dominant Narratives over Time

The following analysis, covering four decades of German official narratives and interests in EU-Turkey relations, identifies resemblances, continuations and gaps therein. The 1960s were mainly driven by security interests and hence all developments in bilateral German-Turkish relations have to be viewed in this context. Although security cooperation continued, a strain was put on the relationship through a fear of further labour migration from Turkey to Germany in the face of Germany's stuttering economy following the oil crisis. Whilst reservation about migration from Turkey forms no part of the 1970's official narrative, this does become increasingly visible in the 1980s and 1990s, at which time Turkey gained more presence in the official German narrative. While Turkey was mentioned 25 times in total between 1959 and 1989, the words 'Turkey' or 'Turkish' appear 133 times in government declarations during the 1990s alone. Both the length and relevance of statements on Turkey increase. Accordingly, with the decisive change of administration from Kohl to Schröder, the 1990s take the major share of analysis in this chapter.

3.1 The 1960s: Turkey as Partner of the West

Germany's emerging post-war economy (*Wirtschaftswunder*) needed additional workers to supply its companies: A German-Turkish bilateral recruitment agreement came into force in 1961, Germany already having become Turkey's main importer of goods in 1949 and 1950. Although the recruitment of Turkish guest workers was certainly in Germany's interests,[17] such considerations were only one part of its enhanced engagement with Turkey.

Internationally, the 1960s landscape was characterised by evolving bipolarity during the Cold War era, with Turkey and Germany becoming part of the Western security architecture. Both countries supported each other's inclusion in multilateral frameworks: Turkey opted for Germany's inclusion in NATO, which was achieved in 1955, whilst Germany supported

17 Cf. Mayer, Matthias M. Germany's preferences on the Ankara Agreement: Ministerial actors between Cold War security concerns, Turkish European ambitions and the Wirtschaftswunder. Paper to be given at Fourth Pan-European Conference on EU Politics of the ECPR – Standing Group on the European Union, 2008, p. 19; AAPD 1962. Botschafter Grewe, Washington, an das Auswärtige Amt. Dok. No. 230, pp. 1030f.

Turkey's bid for EEC Association for which it applied on 31 July 1959.[18] When Turkey and Greece applied for association to the EEC at roughly the same time in 1959,[19] the Council tried to handle the Greek and the Turkish application as equally as possible. While other members of the Community and the Commission argued that more time was needed to assess these particular applications,[20] the German delegation promoted acceleration of this process for Turkey.[21]

The German Government's focus was on geopolitical, security-related aspects of German-Turkish relations and Turkey's position in NATO: Against a background of increased Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) activity in the Cyprus conflict and partly converging interests between the USSR and Turkey, for instance, Germany and the United States opted to grant defence assistance for Turkey to keep it closely attached to the West.[22] Germany contributed about 58.5 million US Dollars[23], one third of the EEC's financial package, to aid financially troubled Turkey within the framework of the Association Agreement and provided additional monetary support within the 'OECD Consortium to Aid Turkey'.[24]

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18 Schreiben der Botschaft der Türkischen Republik, Herr Hikmet BENSAN, an den Präsidenten der Kommission der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, Herrn Professor Hallstein, vom 31. Juli 1959, betrifft Assoziierung der Türkei mit der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft. Brussels, 5 September 1959. In: Archives Historiques, Conseil de la Communauté Économique Européenne, Conseil de la Communauté Européenne de l'Energie Atomique, CM 2/1963, No: 0841.

19 Greece in June 1959, Turkey in July 1959.

20 Italy and France were particularly reluctant in regard to Turkey's association; Rat der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft. Einleitende Aufzeichnungen, 7. Oktober 1959, R/739/59, pp. 4f; AAPD 1962. Gespräch des Bundesministers Schröder mit dem französischen Außenminister Couve de Murville in Paris. Dok. 272, pp. 1209f.

21 Cf. Rat der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft. Einleitende Aufzeichnungen. 9. September 1959, R/644/59.

22 Cf. AAPD 1962. Botschafter von Broich Oppert, Ankara, an das Auswärtige Amt. Dok. No. 52, pp. 256f; AAPD 1965. Aufzeichnungen des Botschafters von Walther. Dok. No. 71, p. 302; Dok. No. 451, p. 1863; AAPD 1967. Dok. No. 419, pp. 1603f. In fact, the Cyprus conflict came with some tricky implications for Bonn: Against the background of its own division in Eastern and Western Germany, it aimed at finding a balanced position between Turkey and the Cypriots.

23 Cf. Mayer. Germany's preferences, p. 19.

24 Cf. AAPD 1964. Dok. No. 21, pp. 115f; Dok. No. 47, p. 232.; A consortium established by the OECD to coordinate financial donors in support for Turkey; A similar consortium was established for Greece, cf. Kuchenberg, Thomas C. The OECD Consortium to Aid Turkey. In: *Studies in Law and Economic Development*, 2(1), pp. 91–106.

Furthermore, the Federal Foreign Office behind closed doors justified economic support for Turkey with its position as a "cornerstone within our system of defence"[25] and frequently underlined this position with its partners, such as France.[26]

Germany's official narrative at the time largely converges with its interests. As such, no special attention is given to Turkey in government declarations: Only 2 out of 64 government declarations in the 1960s refer to Turkey.[27] If Turkey is mentioned at all, it is within the geostrategic dimension, underlining Turkey's importance in the context of "multilateral constructions"[28] and "bordering the Soviet Union".[29] Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger describes German-Turkish relations as "traditionally friendly".[30] The economic dimension, namely the Association Agreement, was mentioned only once.[31] The recruitment agreement itself did not form part of any government declaration. Political reservations about the Turkish political system's volatility and identity ascriptions of Turkish people did not play a major role at that time. The Turkish military coup of 27 May 1960 did not affect the German Government's official narration of Turkey at all, to the extent that it was not even mentioned in official declarations.

Although we will argue within this chapter that the German Government deliberately avoided any mention of labour migration in its official narrative over the following years, the low number of references in government declarations from the 1960s does not yet allow us to draw such conclusions. At this stage it is more likely that relations with Turkey were not an issue of public priority, given that migration was only just about to start. The focus on geostrategic and economic considerations in the official narrative followed a general trend in Europe at that time. *Aydın-Düzgit et. al.* conclude from their analysis of public discourse that the fear of "losing Turkey to Soviets"[32] overrode any value-based differentiation.

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25 Bundesarchiv. 72. Kabinettssitzung am 8. April 1963, https://www.bundesarchiv.de/cocoon/barch/1000/k/k1963k/kap1_2/kap2_17/para3_7.html [30.11.2019].
26 Cf. AAPD 1964. Dok. No. 47, p. 232; Dok. No. 48, p. 237; Dok. No. 188, p. 779.
27 In 2016, about 80 percent of German government declarations mentioned Turkey. Cf. Weise/ Tekin, German Narratives, Strategies and Scenarios of EU-Turkey Relations 2002–2018, 2022, p. 105.
28 Deutscher Bundestag. Regierungserklärung. 87. Sitzung, 5.11.1959, p. 4692.
29 Deutscher Bundestag. Regierungserklärung.185. Sitzung, 25.09.1968, p. 10053.
30 Ibid.
31 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Regierungserklärung. 90. Sitzung, 18.10.1963, p. 4198.
32 Aydın-Düzgit, Senem et al. Turkish and European Identity Constructions in the 1815–1945 Period. FEUTURE Online Paper No. 4. Cologne, July 2017, p. 7.

3.2 The 1970s: Military Alliances in Times of Conflict

The Cold War and oil crisis very much shaped the 1970s international agenda. Turkey's occupation of Northern Cyprus in 1974 became a security issue for NATO.[33] Moreover, a gradual alignment of Turkey and the USSR with ongoing financial offers by the latter led to tensions within NATO.[34] Greece's decision to drop out of military engagement within NATO after the second phase of Turkey's intervention in Cyprus left German officials in fear of leaving NATO's 'southern flank' exposed. Despite its controversial actions, military assistance to Turkey was perceived as strengthening NATO in the region.[35]

At the same time, German officials were aiming to prevent broader public discussion on military shipments to Turkey against this background.[36] This strategy was perhaps based on a government impression that German citizens would rather support Greece in the conflict after Turkey's second intervention phase. Furthermore, the German Government was seeking to prevent a public perception in which the country needed to step into the (financial) breach in place of the US which had imposed an arms embargo on Turkey (1975–1978) in response to the conflict.[37] While financial and military support continued, with Germany further consolidating its role

33 Richter, Heinz A. Historische Hintergründe des Zypernkonflikts. In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 12/2009, pp. 3–8.

34 Cf. AAPD 1977. Gesandter Peckert, Ankara, an das Auswärtige Amt. Dok. No.75, pp. 380f.

35 Between 1964 and 1995, Turkey and Greece received (material) grants of about 9 billion German Mark in total through four bilateral agreements, which underlines the German *Sonderrolle* (special role). The importance of this dimension to the Turkish-German relations is underlined by the fact that Germany has continuously been Turkey's biggest European distributor of arms, only surpassed by the United States, despite the fact that the US did not deliver for a long time. Cf. AAPD 1974. Dok. No. 271, pp. 1201f; Deutscher Bundestag. Unterrichtung durch den Bundesrechnungshof. Drucksache 13/2600, 1998, pp. 85f; Kramer, Heinz/Reinkowski, Maurus. Die Türkei und Europa. Eine wechselhafte Beziehungsgeschichte Stuttgart, 2008, p. 142; SIPRI Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Arms Transfer Database, https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers/background [22.08.2019].

36 Cf. AAPD 1974. Dok No. 271, p. 1201, Footnote No. 5; AAPD 1975. Dok. No. 32, pp. 175f; Dok. No. 226, p. 1054. During 1975, the arms embargo held up by American congress posed an increasing threat to NATO, up to inoperability of the Turkish forces due to lack of supplies. The American Government's bid to Germany to step into the breach contradicted Germany's commitment to friendly, balanced relations with both sides in the conflict.

37 Cf. AAPD 1974. Dok. No. 238, pp. 1034f.

as Turkey's advocate in Europe,[38] domestically, the German Government started to seal itself off from Turkish migration. Between 1961 and 1974, nearly 650,000 workers had migrated from Turkey to Germany. Migrants from Turkey living in Germany accounted for approximately 80 percent of more than 1 billion US Dollars in foreign remittances to Turkey during the early 1970s.[39] Over the course of the 1970s, this issue of labour migration increasingly caused strains within the relationship. In the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement of 23 November 1970, the Member States and Turkey had agreed to implement step by step the freedom of movement of workers between 1976 and 1986. Germany in particular as number one destination for Turkish workers became increasingly hesitant due to its own labour market situation.[40] In 1973, the German Government terminated the bilateral recruitment agreement and was looking to restrict family reunion – a fact that was not reflected in German Government declarations.[41] Although frequently discussed amongst the Member States, this issue has not been mentioned at all in the declarations.

Germany's official narrative about Turkey focused on the Cyprus conflict's impact and its geopolitical implications. In summary, the narrative was one on a *Complicated Military Ally*. Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher carefully underlined that bilateral financial assistance for Greece[42] following its military regime was aimed to balance relations with both countries as a contribution to stabilisation of this conflictual region: "Support for Greece is not meant to be against Turkey, an ally, with whom we have friendly and close relations for many years without interruptions."[43] On the instruments of membership and association,

38 Kramer/Reinkowski. Türkei und Europa, p. 142, p. 146.

39 Cf. Akkuş, Güzin Emel. The Contribution of the Remittances of Turkish Workers in Germany to the Balance of Payments of Turkey (1963–2013). In: Elif Nuroğlu, Ela Sibel Bayrak Meydanoğlu, Enes Bayraklı (Eds.): Turkish German Affairs from an Interdisciplinary Perspective. Frankfurt am Main 2015, pp. 185–212, pp. 197f.

40 AAPD 1976. Dok. No. 421, pp. 1118f; Dok. No. 422, pp. 1120f; Dok. No. 261. pp. 1194f; Dok. No. 283, pp. 1297f.

41 Bade, Klaus J. Als Deutschland zum Einwanderungsland wurde. In: Zeit Online, 24.11.2013, https://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/zeitgeschehen/2013-11/einwanderung-anwerbestopp [01.12.2019].

42 To support a new democratic beginning in Greece, Genscher offered to consider financial assistance (*Kapitalhilfe*) to the new Greek Government of 60 million euro and further support of the same amount (*Projekthilfe*) in the two consecutive years.

43 Deutscher Bundestag. Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Plenary Protocol 7/115. Bonn, 18.09.1974, p. 7700.

Chancellor Helmut Schmidt stated that bringing countries such as Greece, Portugal, Spain and Turkey closer to the Community would promote their economic development and thereby develop or stabilise their democratic order.[44] While this statement suggests the political dimension's increasing importance in discourse, one has to note that the second military intervention by Turkey in 1971 gained little German attention. Even though the German Bundestag held a debate on 12th March 1971 about Turkish *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) in Germany, the coup was not mentioned in this or the following debate two weeks later.[45]

In conclusion, Germany's interest in Turkey during the 1970s became more ambivalent compared with the 1960s, a development not fully reflected in government declarations from that time. However, it is possible to identify the geostrategic dimension's continuing importance. The sensitive issue of labour migration is not reflected in government declarations of the 1970s, although labour migration played a major role in bilateral relations. Turkey did not play a role in government declarations (only 2 out of 93 declarations mentioned Turkey), though the situation in Cyprus and its implications for NATO continued to be of serious concern for the German Government and its (transatlantic) partners. First indications of an increase in the importance of democratic order did not lead to addressing negative developments in the official narrative. Hence, we argue that the German Government subordinated all concerns regarding migration or political order to balanced relations with the Turkish Government in view of geostrategic considerations. Consequently, general issues of concern were not addressed, but instead geostrategic aspects were underlined.

3.4 The 1980s: Growing Conflict

The military coup in Turkey on 12 September 1980 and the following military rule had consequences for the country internationally. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe discussed the possibility suspending Turkey's representation.[46] Countries with former military regimes such as Spain, Portugal and Greece argued that Turkey's new military leaders could use membership in the Council of Europe as legitimisation

44 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Schmidt. Plenary Protocol 8/5. Bonn, 16.12.1976, p. 48.

45 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Plenary Protocol 6/108. Bonn, 12.03.1971; Deutscher Bundestag. Plenary Protocol 6/109. Bonn, 24.03.1971.

46 Cf. Council of Europe. Statue of the Council of Europe. Art. 8.

of their control. From Germany's point of view, though, the Council of Europe would lose its main instrument for exerting influence on Turkey if it stopped the dialogue and hence pushed to keep relations open.[47] During its Council of the European Communities (EC) presidency in 1983, the German Government tried to end the blockade of EC financial assistance ('fourth financial protocol') to Turkey by promoting Turkish economic and social development as well as investments in industry and infrastructure. However, all efforts failed to convince other EC Members and the European Parliament.[48] Moreover, the German Government gave its consent to retain ongoing NATO deployment, explaining that continuation would be in the interests of the alliance's unity, which was of foremost importance.[49]

While Germany took over a strong position in European and international arenas to maintain good relations primarily due to security considerations, at a bilateral level Germany suspended its visa exemption for Turkish nationals in 1980. France soon followed Germany's example.[50] The establishment of an area of freedom of movement in 1986, as foreseen by the Ankara Agreement, was regarded a "sword of Damocles"[51] by German authorities: In light of a tight German labour market situation and based on perceived "difficulties regarding the integration of foreigners"[52] the German Government was eager to provide Turkey with measures that were aimed to support the Turkish Government in ceasing its labour

47 Cf. Szatkowski, Tim. Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die Türkei 1978 bis 1983. Oldenbourg, 2016, pp. 78f.

48 Cf. Wessels, Wolfgang. Die Europäische Politische Zusammenarbeit. In: Werner Weidenfeld/ Wolfgang Wessels (Eds.): Jahrbuch der Europäischen Integration 1983. Baden-Baden, 1984, pp. 227–239, p. 235.

49 Cf. AAPD 1980. Gesandter Pfeffer, Brüssel (NATO), an Auswärtiges Amt. Dok. No. 269, p. 1387.

50 Cf. Council of Europe. Minutes of the 67th Session of the Committee of Ministers, held on 16 October 1980, 1980, CM (80) PV 4, p. 26; Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Situation in Turkey, 1980, Recommendation 904.

51 Pfuhl, Detlef. Außenbeziehungen. In: Werner Weidenfeld/Wolfgang Wessels (Eds.): Jahrbuch der Europäischen Integration 1986/1987, Baden-Baden, 1987, pp. 222–231, p. 227.

52 AAPD 1985. AA Referat 411, 13 September 1985. In: AAPD 1986, Aufzeichnung des Ministerialdirigenten Trumpf, p. 57: „Arbeitsmarktlage und Schwierigkeiten bei der Integration von Ausländern haben die Bundesregierung dazu veranlaßt, den Anwerbestopp zu erlassen und später auch den Familiennachzug einzuschränken."

emigration.[53] The German Government facilitated a revival of association talks and release of financial assistance, because it perceived Turkey's application for EC membership on 14 April 1987 as buying time so that final decisions could be made on freedom of movement.[54]

In bilateral meetings with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal, German Chancellor Kohl stated that problems with Turkish guestworkers in Germany were based on their cultural background. He pointed to different religious identities, stressing that Germany would not become an immigration country.[55] This was at a time when anti-immigrant sentiments and talk of guestworkers returning to their country of origin characterised German public debate.[56] Kohl's stance was to remain unchanged during the 1990s.[57] In this context, Foreign Minister Genscher warned the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1986, that early application for EC membership and the related migration issue could become a point of discussion in the upcoming German elections.[58]

In Germany's official narrative, Turkey was mentioned in eight government declarations between 1980 and 1983, while the declarations in the following years until 1990 do not contain a single reference. All references made from 1980 to 1983 belong to the geostrategic dimension, accompanied by economically coined arguments.[59] Support for Turkey, amongst other countries, was part of a "Western strategy to strengthen

53 Cf. AAPD 1987. Aufzeichnung der Ministerialdirektoren Jelonek und Freiherr von Richthofen, p. 695.

54 The EC-Turkey Association Council had met last time before the Coup of 12 September 1980. Cf. AAPD 1986. Aufzeichnung des Ministerialdirigenten Trumpf, pp. 58f; AAPD 1987. Aufzeichnung der Ministerialdirektoren Jelonek und Freiherr von Richthofen, p. 697.

55 Cf. AAPD 1985. Dok No. 129, Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Kohl mit Ministerpräsidentin Thatcher in Chequers, p. 654; AAPD 1985. Dok. No. 185, Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Kohl mit Ministerpräsident Özal in Ankara, p. 987.

56 Cf. Der Spiegel. ‚Nimm deine Prämie und hau ab' Ausländerpolitik: Koalitionsstreit um die Wende, No. 34/1983, pp.26 – 31.

57 Cf. Müftüler-Baç, Meltem. Through the Looking Glass: Turkey in Europe. In: *Turkish Studies*, 2000, Vol. 1, pp. 21–35; Turhan. European Council decisions, p. 172, 200.

58 Turhan. European Council decisions, pp. 98f; Secretariat du Conseil des Communities Europeennes. Letter of Prime Minister Turgut Özal to the President of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities, Léo Tindemans. Ankara, 14th April 1987.

59 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Schmidt. Plenary Protocol 8/203. Bonn, 28.02.1980, p. 16171.

the independence of states that want to assert their independency against a new hegemony",[60] stated Foreign Minister Genscher in January 1980. Turkey is characterised as a "important partner" due to its "strategic location".[61] Culturally infused sentiments in domestic politics regarding Turkish migration were clearly compartmentalised away from strategic interests: "(T)his allied country (Turkey) as a participant of the Islamic Conference of Islamabad is a proof that the pursuit of Islamic interests and objectives and the objectives of the Western Defence Alliance are not opposites but compatible".[62]

During the 1980s, the political component in the German official narrative gains strength: Accession of Spain and Portugal and association of Turkey would "strengthen Europe's stability".[63] The state of Turkey's political system caused worries in Germany.[64] Foreign Minister Genscher addressed Turkey's role within NATO as a "community of values", calling Turkey to "come back to democracy",[65] referring to the coup of 1980. As outlined in the sections above, the military coups of the previous two decades had not been addressed in government declarations.

Germany followed a rather dual approach during the 1980s. While the 1973 coup had not gained much attention, the narrative of *political concern* becomes more present in the 1980s. Narratives belonging to the geostrategic dimension (*important partner*) remain the most important in official discourse followed by those related to economic issues, with both dimensions are being closely intertwined. As with the prior decade, constraining Turkish migration to Germany and its rationale were not part of official discourse, although arguments referring to political and identity issues were slowly gaining in importance.

60 Deutscher Bundestag. Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Plenary Protocol 8/196. Bonn, 17.01.1980, p. 15599.
61 Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Schmidt. Plenary Protocol 8/203. Bonn, 28.02.1980, p. 16188.
62 Deutscher Bundestag. Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Plenary Protocol 8/203. Bonn, 28.02.1980, pp. 16188f.
63 Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl. Plenary Protocol 10/4. Bonn, 04.05.1983, p. 69.
64 Cf. Turhan. European Council decisions, p. 108.
65 Deutscher Bundestag. Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Plenary Protocol 10/13. Bonn, 15.06.1983, p. 691.

3.5 A Rocky Road to Candidacy: The 1990s Under Helmut Kohl

Whilst some have argued that Turkey's membership bid "fell on deaf ears"[66] after the end of Cold War, Turkey's geostrategic importance in the Western security architecture remained emphatically relevant. With emerging conflicts in the Balkans,[67] the Caucasus and the Middle East,[68] it could be said that the country was at the crossroads of almost every conflict affecting Europe.[69] Hence, Germany finds itself now in a position of constant conflict between its strategic interests[70] in Turkey and domestic politics – considerations that were of less importance in previous decades.

Although Helmut Kohl's chancellorship began in 1982, Turkey was in fact not part of government declarations until the early 1990s, at which time there was a sharp increase in the number of mentions.[71] During that period, EU-German relations with Turkey became increasingly important in domestic politics. This development was mainly driven by an 'integration debate' amongst the German public, especially in relation to the 'Kurdish question', while at the same time there was a surge of right-wing block activities in the shape of violent attacks on foreign nationals or people of foreign descent living in Germany.

For the first time in 1992 Kohl added the identity dimension to a government declaration. He stated that "Turkish people living and working here (were) important 'bridges' between our peoples",[72] but added that the government would not accept domestic Turkish conflicts as issues that should be dealt with on German territory. This was set against the Kurd-

66 Müftüler-Baç, Meltem. Turkey's Role in the EU's Security and Foreign Policies. In: *Security Dialogue*, 2000, Vol. 31, pp. 489–502, p. 489.

67 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Gerhard Schröder. Plenary Protocol 14/41. Berlin, 08.06.1999, p. 3485.

68 Cf. Hauge, Hanna-Lisa et al. Mapping milestones and periods of past EU-Turkey relations. FEUTURE Working Paper, 2016, p. 14.

69 Cf. Tirman, John. Improving Turkey's "Bad Neighbourhood" Pressing Ankara for Rights and Democracy. In: *World Policy Journal*, 1998, Vol. 15, pp. 60–67, p. 61.

70 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl. Plenary Protocol. 12/2. Bonn, 14.01.1991, p. 22; Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl. Plenary Protocol. 12/5, Bonn, 30.01.1991, p. 68.

71 The following section is mainly based on secondary literature. By the time of writing, the *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik* were available until 1987.

72 Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl. Plenary Protocol 12/87. Bonn, 02.04.1992, p. 7176; Deutscher Bundestag. Klaus Kinkel. Plenary Protocol 12/218. Bonn, 13.04.1994.

ish-Turkish conflict having recently become an issue of German domestic security:

> "Like the two million Turkish citizens who live here in Germany, the several hundred thousand Kurdish people among them are welcome guests and fellow citizens in Germany who can count on our care. But it is evident that there are basic rules of hospitality in every country of the world: Whoever makes use of it has to respect the law and order of the host country".[73]

In the full original German quote, the term 'hospitality' appears four times. As such, Kohl's statement not only creates proximity between Turkish (and Kurdish, in this context) and German people, but also at the same time a certain distance. This distance is reflected in a quote of Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel in which Turkey is regarded as being *European with exceptions:*

> "Turkey belongs to the European family. But at the same time we owe an open word to our Turkish friends. We must not conceal either the problem of freedom of movement or the major problems, such as the human rights situation or the Kurdish question, which Turkey in particular is called upon to overcome in order to create the necessary conditions for this".[74]

A unique feature of the Kohl administration's government declarations in the 1990s – compared with all other administrations – is its explicit attribution of the word 'friend' to Turkey. From the 1960s to 1991 Turkey was mentioned only five times as one or one of many 'friends' or 'friendly states'.[75] Such expressions were also used by the Kohl administration to underline Turkey's geostrategic relevance amongst domestic critics and express grief as well as humility towards Turkey and the Turkish community in the context of arson attacks[76] against people of Turkish descent

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73 Deutscher Bundestag. Klaus Kinkel. Plenary Protocol 12/218. Bonn, 13.04.1994, p. 18865.

74 Deutscher Bundestag. Klaus Kinkel. Plenary Protocol 13/210. Bonn, 11.12.1997, p. 19112.

75 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Kurt Georg Kiesinger. 5/185. Bonn, 25.09.1968, p. 10053; Deutscher Bundestag. Hans-Dietrich Genscher. 7/115. Bonn, 18.09.1974, p.7700; Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Schmidt. 9/34. Bonn, 07.05.1981, p. 1712; Deutscher Bundestag. 10/4. Bonn, 04.05.1983, p. 69; Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl, 12/2. Bonn, 14.01.1991, p.21.

76 In the early 1990s, Germany's right-wing movement gained strength, culminating in attacks in different German towns. Between 1990 and 1992 alone, 42 people

in Germany.[77] Most of the time, though, this notion has been used only within messages containing criticism, mainly on the political dimension concerning Turkey's human rights situation. Accordingly, the notion of 'friend' can be assessed as justification strategy, putting Germany into the position of being able to criticise Turkey. It appears most frequently at a time of rather tense bilateral relations and in speeches by members of the Kohl government that was known to have a critical stance towards Turkey's accession to the European Union.[78]

In the 1990s, relations with Turkey and their portrayal in the official narrative became increasingly complex, linking different dimensions with each other, such as the geostrategic and the political, especially in 1992 with the "escalation of violence in southeast of Turkey" where "violence may not be a means of politics".[79] In view of the deteriorating human rights situation in Turkey, Germany even suspended its arms deployment there in 1995. "As part of the Western community of values – as member of NATO, the Council of Europe and Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) – Turkey itself must be measured against European standards and obligations",[80] Kohl said.

In summary, the early 1990s are characterised by a diffuse picture towards Turkey. The Kohl administration was a proponent of the EU-Turkey Customs Union and stated to be further interested in an expansion of bilateral (trade) relations but continued to oppose Turkish accession to the community. Secondary literature and alleged statements from Kohl suggest that his personal rejection was based on cultural grounds and

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died in right-wing attacks. Cf. Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung. 25 Jahre Brandanschlag in Solingen, https://www.bpb.de/politik/hintergrund-aktuell/161980/brandanschlag-in-solingen [05.03.2020].

77 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl. Plenary Protocol 12/162. Bonn, 16.06.1993, p. 13855f; Deutscher Bundestag. Klaus Kinkel. Plenary Protocol 12/218. Bonn, 13.04.1994, p. 18864f.

78 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl. Plenary Protocol 12/78. Bonn, 02.04.1992, p. 7176; Deutscher Bundestag. Klaus Kinkel. 12/118. Bonn, 13.04.1994, pp. 18864f; Deutscher Bundestag. Klaus Kinkel. 13/145. Bonn, 05.12.1996, pp.13057f; Deutscher Bundestag. Klaus Kinkel. Plenary Protocol 13/210. Bonn, 11.12.1997, pp. 19112f.

79 Deutscher Bundestag. Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Plenary Protocol 12/20. Bonn, 17.04.1991, p. 1255; Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl. Plenary Protocol 12/87. Bonn, 02.04.1992, p. 7177; Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl. Plenary Protocol 12/162. Bonn, 16.06.1993, pp. 13855f; Deutscher Bundestag. Klaus Kinkel. Plenary Protocol 12/218. Bonn, 13.04.1994, p. 18864.

80 Deutscher Bundestag. Helmut Kohl. Plenary Protocol 12/87. Bonn, 02.04.1992, pp. 7176f.

concerns about Turkish migration. These issues are touched on, but not extensively covered in the narratives conveyed through government declarations. The usage of the 'friend' notion as justification strategy for criticism is an outstanding feature of the 1990's Kohl government.

3.6 A Turning Point: The 1990s Under Gerhard Schröder

The change of governments from Helmut Kohl to Gerhard Schröder in 1998 is said to represent a "catalyst of Turkish accession to the EU"[81]: While Kohl preferred an association with Turkey (and the Commonwealth of Independent States) under the exclusion of membership prospective, Schröder was a staunch supporter of Turkey's accession.[82] After a failed attempt to achieve Turkey's candidacy status at the German Council Presidency Cologne Summit in June 1999, Schröder worked extensively on achieving this goal at the following summit. In a personal letter to Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit, he expressed his desire to keep the channels for talks open and bring Turkey into the community.[83]

Between Schröder's election and the European Council's Helsinki Summit in 1999, when Turkey was granted candidate status, Turkey was mentioned in a number of speeches, two by Chancellor Schröder, one by Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer and one by Interior Minister Otto Schily (out of 16 government declarations in total). The fact that Schily was the first Minister of the Interior to have mentioned Turkey in a government speech underlines the importance that Turkey carried at that time in matters of German domestic security.[84] The issue of Turkish-Kurdish conflicts remained on the agenda as it had in the Kohl era. Unlike his predecessor, until the 1999 Helsinki Summit the Schröder government never used the 'friendship' notion. Schröder rather preferred to speak about (geopolitical) interests and responsibility when advocating for Turkey's integration:

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81 Turhan, Ebru. Turkey's accession process: do member states matter? In: *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 2016, Vol. 4/24, pp. 463–477, p. 466.

82 Cf. Schwarz, Hans Peter. Helmut Kohl. Eine politische Biografie, 2nd edition, München, 2012, pp. 714f.

83 Cf. Schöllgen, Gregor. Gerhard Schröder. Die Biographie, München, 2015, pp. 453f.

84 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Otto Schily. Plenary Protocol 14/20. Bonn, 23.02.1999, p. 1385.

References to the geostrategic dimension continued under Schröder and became especially relevant in regard to the Kosovo crisis.[85] For him, Turkey remained an "important and weighty partner"[86] for Europe as well as the whole region. He revives the narrative of a *geostrategic partner*. Schröder's narrative, however, has a different 'moral of the story'[87] than his predecessor Kohl's: Europeans had an interest in supporting Turkish democrats and winning them over to 'European ways', in terms of policies and shared values.[88] Schröder held that one cannot emphasise Turkey's strategic importance for Europe and NATO without offering a membership perspective beyond the Customs Union. As such, statements in the political dimension dominate both Schröder's chancellery and the 1990s more generally, with the EU perceiving itself "not as a Club of the Christian Occident, but as a community of values".[89] A Turkey, that not only admits but really applies these values, would be welcomed as a member of the EU, Schröder said.[90] Even though he favoured Turkey's accession, he emphasised his preference for a "European Turkey".[91]

4. Conclusion

Analysis of the EU-German-Turkish triangle can present itself as a cumbersome process, given the relationship's age and complexity. Narrative analysis of selected documents has served as a useful tool for structuring the multifaceted nature of this relationship. Supported by the AAPD's insights into German foreign policy, it has been possible to show how German interests regarding Turkey's rapprochement process with the EU was manifested in official narratives throughout different decades.

Having said that, 1960s and 1970s provided few examples of declarations which could be analysed, despite Germany's clear interests and active contributions to a relationship that was dominated by geostrategic consid-

85 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Gerhard Schröder. Plenary Protocol 14/41. Berlin, 08.06.1999, p. 3487.
86 Ibid.
87 Cf. Tekin/ Schönlau, The EU-German-Turkish Triangle, 2022, p. 120.
88 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Gerhard Schröder. Plenary Protocol 14/41. Berlin, 08.06.1999, p. 3487.
89 Deutscher Bundestag. Gerhard Schröder. Plenary Protocol 14/79. Berlin, 16.12.1999, p. 7215. Argument repeated on page 7220.
90 Cf. Deutscher Bundestag. Gerhard Schröder. Plenary Protocol 14/79. Berlin, 16.12.1999, p. 7215.
91 Schöllgen. Gerhard Schröder, p. 454.

erations. The Cold War alone seemed sufficient explanation for Germany to support Turkey's economic development and stability through EC association.

Turkey's geostrategic position has been its most significant asset during the pre-accession phase – even though it could not balance the political and societal/identity related concerns and 'drawbacks'. German attempts to restrict migration from Turkey to Germany became more of an issue in the mid-1970s. From that time on, this sensitive topic was of great concern to the German authorities, albeit not directly addressed in government declarations. This duality continued in the 1980s: the geostrategic role dominated discourse, but political aspects such as Turkey's state of democracy started to gain in importance, with early indications being identified during the 1980s, reflecting the EC's evolving self-conception from an economic actor into a community with shared values. Those factors were increasingly associated with Turkey's stability, with regard both to its economy and geostrategic position, while the migration issue – and closely linked thereto the identity dimension – is left out of the official narrative. An expectation of increasing migration from Turkey to the EC effectively put a brake on bilateral institutional development, which was driven by the German perspective. The German side was aware that the perceived cultural incompatibility was a sensitive issue and avoided addressing such concerns in the official narrative for a long time. Accordingly, narrative analysis is necessarily incomplete when looking only at what is being said. Equally important is to look at what is not being said.

The 1990s differ from previous decades. Firstly, the quantity and quality of statements related to Turkey increased in official discourse. This increase underlines a growing relevance for the German audience, especially in relation to German domestic politics, not least with the Turkish-Kurdish conflict being raised as a question of German domestic security. Secondly, all four dimensions are considered to be relevant. During both Kohl cabinets in the 1990s, the focus shifts to arguments in the political and identity dimensions, though geostrategic discourse remains important: Turkey stood "on the crossroads of almost every issue of importance",[92] such as conflicts in the Balkans, Cyprus, Iraq, Russia and the post-Soviet states. The economic and geostrategic dimensions appear to be intertwined, albeit economic issues do not play a major role. Use of the *friendship narrative* is very characteristic for the two terms: When the

92 Richard Holbrook cited in: Tirman. Improving Turkey's "Bad Neighbourhood", p. 61.

government aimed to address an issue delicate to the Turkish state – such as migration or the state of democracy – the friend notion appeared to justify that Germany had raised its voice on these matters.

This is in sharp contrast to the stance taken by Chancellor Schröder, who openly promoted Turkey's accession to the EU. He was a decisive proponent of Turkey's EU membership bid and facilitated the European Council's decision to grant Turkey candidate status. His narrative was geostrategic-political: Generating political stability in Turkey through accession was in the Union's geostrategic interest. From Schröder's perspective, Turkey needed the EU to take over responsibility – not a friend providing admonishing words. When Angela Merkel (CDU) became Chancellor in 2005 she continued this pragmatic enlargement policy towards Turkey only in the spirit of 'pacta sunt servanda' and in light of the close bilateral relationship.