

Abstract

Turkey is a country lying on the frontier of Europe and Asia. Its borders reached to Europe for many centuries in the past, however, then as a frontiers of hostile intruder. Nowadays, Turkey intentions are different. Turkey wants to become full-fledged member state of the EU and contribute to the development of the European society. Have we overcome the prejudice of the past? Is our society advanced enough to accept a country with distinct culture and religion?

This question is very topical today. It has been discussed in media on daily basis, either on governmental or European level. Discussion shows, however, certain helplessness or apprehension, mainly regarding to the general public. Will politicians succeed in convincing the European public opinion about the rightness of such a step? There are many exceptions coming either from politicians or European citizens. It is necessary to answer following questions; is Turkey ready for entering the EU? Is the European Union ready for Turkey?

This thesis focuses on investigating stances, which are both pro and con the Turkish EU membership. It characterizes and analyses the major reservations of general public, opinions of supporters and opponents; and it should help to create own attitude toward this topic. The thesis aims to analyze the sources of problems and provide the basis for self decision to the reader.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first one provides overview of development of EU-Turkey relations from the very beginning up till the present. It tries to outline the effort of Turkey on its way to Europe as well as stance of European institutions to this process. Turkey has been approaching to Western culture for whole last century. After WWII it became a member of Western defense structures and the cooperation with EEC began in 1959. The major part deals with the last decade, during which Turkey gained the status of a candidate country and the way for full membership has opened.

In the second chapter lies the focal point of my work. It analyzes in detail the obstacles, which both Turkey and the EU must overcome, so that the accession process was as smooth as possible. First part solves the question,

whether Turkey can be considered European country, second analyses the point of different religious country entering predominantly Christian Europe. Third part ponders over stability of democracy in Turkey, assessing if the country fulfills the criteria set up by European Union in founding treaties, such as human rights, Kurdish question, Turkish army and position of the National Security Council. Fourth part points out to the territorial aspects of enlargement, fifth to the geopolitical extent of such enlargement. Further part deals with economic situation of Turkey and its consequences for the EU. The last part treats the issue of migration.

Third chapter depicts the stances of particular member states and other selected countries towards the accession. In the conclusion, the purpose of enlargement of the EU by Turkey is examined.