

MAŁGORZATA CZERMIŃSKA

Kraków

ORCID: 0000-0002-6935-1031

JOANNA GARLIŃSKA-BIELAWSKA

Kraków

ORCID: 0000-0003-3473-2827

MARTA ULBRYCH

Kraków

ORCID: 0000-0003-3886-371X

TURKEY'S POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EU-TURKEY CUSTOMS UNION

INTRODUCTION

The nature and orientations of Turkey's foreign policy have been traditionally determined by the multidimensional identity of the country, conditioned by its strategic location and historical experience. At present, an increasingly important role is also played by the growing national economic and demographic potential, which has been particularly noticeable since 2002 when the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* – AKP) came to power (Smoleń 2014). It marked the beginning of a new era in the foreign policy of Turkey; the concept refers to the Ottoman imperial past of the country, whereas its practical implementation can be seen in endeavours of President Erdogan, oriented towards strengthening the international political and economic position of Turkey. The strategic objectives of the adopted model of multisectoral policy primarily include deepening the relations with countries from the neighbouring regions based on the 'zero problems' policy and using diplomacy as soft power measures. Due to its geographical location and national security concerns, but also on account of the energy needs of the economy, Turkey is strongly engaged in the Middle Eastern region. At the same time, however, taking into consideration the relatively increased importance of other regions in the global economy, the Turkish State develops relations with other areas as well. Owing to a rise in the number of emerging economies on the African continent, Turkey's foreign policy for that region gained a new dimension thanks to the political framework initiated with the document entitled *Action Plan for the Opening Policy towards Africa* in 1998. The Turkish 'opening policy towards Africa' was a clear sign of its intention to foster engagement on the whole continent, but the internal problems of the Turkish economy related to the 1999 earthquake and the 2000–2001 financial crisis postponed the implementation

of the strategy adopted. The reform package introduced at that time enabled gradual improvement of the economic situation, which consequently allowed to restore the idea of developing economic relations with African countries. Turkey's engagement in diplomacy, trade, investment and financial aid in Africa has increased markedly since 2005, declared as the 'Year of Africa' by the Turkish government (Shin 2015). However, the beginning of permanent cooperation is assumed to be 2008.

Therefore, the article aims to present the results of an analysis of the conditions shaping the Turkey–Africa relations in the context of the EU–Turkey Customs Union. In order to achieve the research goal so defined, it was helpful to systematize the most important related projects. The problem seems to be particularly important as since the late 20th century Turkey has clearly intensified its engagement in other regions of the world (including Africa), but those relations are indirectly affected by the European Union through its Customs Union with Turkey and the related legal framework. In addition, the Union remains Turkey's largest trading partner (in 2018, it accounted for half of Turkish exports and more than 36% of Turkish imports).

The following research hypotheses were adopted in the study:

- Turkey's opening to Africa in the 21st century is the result of changes in Turkey's foreign policy aimed at gaining a stronger global position.
- Difficulties in the functioning of the customs union have contributed to the weakening of Turkey's relations with the EU and the increase of Turkish interest in Africa.

Empirical (indirect observation and description) and general methods, including deduction and induction, were used to achieve the aim of the study. Research techniques such as cause-and-effect, comparative, documentary, historical, and synthesis were of great importance.

THE CONCEPT OF A *TRADING STATE* AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN TURKEY

After the republic was proclaimed in 1923, in subsequent decades Turkey's foreign policy was mostly based on building and strengthening links with the West. The creator of the foundations for the Republic, Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), initiated the modernisation of the economy and defined the pro-European orientation of changes, reflected in the Turkish foreign policy basically until the end of the 20th century. As a consequence, Turkey tightened its relations with the European countries, whereas it limited cooperation with the neighbouring countries in the east (Adamczyk 2017: 266-277). The most significant trade relations influencing the development of Turkish trade were linkages with the European Community. Institutional relations between the partners began in 1963 with the signing of the Association Agreement envisaging, *inter alia*, the introduction of a Customs Union, which was finally achieved in 1995. Four years later, Turkey was granted the status of a candidate for accession to the European Union; since 2005, it has been engaged in accession negotiations. The analysis of the geographical composition of Turkey's trade indicates a dominant position

of the EU Member States, accounting for 50% of Turkish exports in 2018 (TurkStat 2019). Nevertheless, the prospect of Turkey's accession to the EU becomes ever more remote; apart from political issues – including the rule of law – there are also financial considerations related to the European budget, which is mainly financed by the richest EU Countries (Kwaśny, Mroczek, Ulbrych 2018). In 2018, the Council unanimously decided that the accession negotiations with Turkey were in fact locked in stalemate and that it was impossible to consider either opening or closing any further negotiation chapters (European Commission 2019).

The analysis of Turkey's foreign policy in the past two decades shows the re-orientation of the geographical scope of the country's economic cooperation, caused not only by the deadlock in the accession negotiations, but primarily by the economic pragmatism of Turkey and its strategic horizons (Kalin 2011: 63-70). Moreover, the extension of the area of interest reflects the implementation of the new concept of Turkey's foreign policy, i.e. tightening relations with countries from the neighbouring regions. Such an approach results from pursuing the concept of 'strategic depth' developed by Ahmet Davutoğlu, based on two dimensions: geographical depth and historical depth. The former emphasises that Turkey is situated in the centre of various geopolitical areas of influence: the Mediterranean and Black Sea basins, the Middle Eastern and Caucasian regions, Europe and Asia. The latter refers to the Ottoman imperial past of the country and the fact that it was in the epicentre of a number of important historical events (Ulbrych 2013). In order to build closer economic and political relations with regional organisations, Turkey should be open to all stakeholders from all directions, in accordance with the '360-degree policy' (Shiu 2013). The process was made possible by the 1980s reforms liberalising the Turkish economy and the changed geopolitical role of Turkey after the end of the Cold War. The 1980s reforms initiated by T. Özal were aimed at the development of an outward-oriented economy, i.e. transition from the so-called import substitution to export promotion or an export-oriented economy. Starting from 1984, quotas and other quantitative restrictions related to foreign trade were subject to reduction. Furthermore, a floating exchange rate regime was adopted, with the convertibility of the lira introduced in 1987, and long-term financial flows were permitted. Due to the gradual introduction of the aforementioned rules, trade turnover doubled and inward foreign direct investment increased nearly by a factor of twelve in 1984–1991 (Hiç 2008: 119-130). In addition, as a result of the dissolution of the USSR and the end of the bipolar system, Turkey regained independence in shaping its foreign policy, thus freedom to improve relations with countries of particular importance in terms of language, culture, religion, ethnic or historical relationships. Unfortunately, due to the recurring financial crises of 1994, 1999, 2001, the 1990s were not favourable for the country's economic development. However, the situation changed in 2002, the year to mark the beginning of stable economic growth in subsequent years, interrupted by a decline in GDP by 4.7% in 2010. Although the last available data for 2018 show that the growth of the Turkish economy slowed down significantly (to a rate of 2.6%), between 2002 and 2018 the country's GDP rose by 132% (World Bank 2019).

Thus, the above conditions changed the manner of Turkey's foreign policy making as it ceased to be defined exclusively in terms of national security. In the pursuit of the country's economic interests, the Turkish authorities carry out various activities in order to diversify Turkey's commercial and broader economic policy. Its economic interests largely determine political processes, including foreign policy orientations (Wódka 2013). It is worth pointing out that at present economic diplomacy has apparently gained in importance in building national power and image (Molendowski 2017: 449-465). In the context of the Turkish model, Professor Kirişçi used the term introduced to the literature by R. Rosecrance in 1986 – *trading state*. The concept assumes that foreign policy making is determined by economic factors. In order to enhance their respective competitive positions in the international market, interrelated countries choose trade cooperation (Özdemir; Serin 2016: 468 – 475). Such increased interrelation may serve two functions for the Turkish economy: allowing peaceful resolution of conflicts and expanding outlets for domestic producers. Turkey's national interest must be defined in broader categories, also taking account of economic considerations such as the need for trade and export expansion, investment opportunities and the security of energy supply (Kirişçi 2009: 29-50).

DEVELOPMENT OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICAN COUNTRIES

When analysing the development and degree of Turkey's economic links with Africa, it must be noted that the whole continent is regarded as a homogeneous region, which raises methodological doubts relating to generalisation in the context of significant differentiation of countries in terms of demography, economic structure and openness or endowment with natural resources (Szukalski 2013: 244-266). This study adopts a traditional division of Africa functioning in Turkish policy since the times of the Ottoman Empire: into North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa (Özkan 2010a: 93-105). The long period in question can be broken down into three main stages in the development of Turkish foreign policy towards African countries:

- the Ottoman period;
- the times of the Republic;
- the government of AKP.

The historical roots of Turkey–Africa relations date back to the Ottoman times when the area of North Africa was controlled by the Empire in the 15th and 16th centuries. As regards Sub-Saharan Africa, the Ottomans only ruled along the coast of the Red Sea in areas of today's Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan (Shinn 2015). Therefore, the Ottoman nostalgia is mostly justified in the northern part of the African continent, perceived as a necessary element of the diversification of Turkish foreign policy due to its Muslim population and the fact that it is frequently considered to be included in the Middle East.

After the Republic of Turkey was created in 1923, due to the adopted occidental orientation, the development of relations with African countries was no priority for

Turkish policy. The process was further hindered by the colonisation of Africa. During the Cold War, however, the Turkish government began to attach greater importance to developing political and economic relations with African states. It supported the decolonisation process started at the turn of the 1950s and the 1960s, recognised the independence of all the states and established formal diplomatic relations with them. But those events did not translate into permanent relations (Aybar, 2016:1-27).

Table 1

Major events undertaken by the Turkish authorities in the context of developing political and economic relations with African countries

Year	Event
1998	Adoption of the document entitled <i>Action Plan for the Opening Policy towards Africa</i> , initiated by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs I. Cema as an element of the emerging multidimensional vision of Turkey's foreign policy.
2003	Approval of the strategy entitled <i>A Strategy on Development of the Economic Relations with African Countries</i> , with assumptions such as: increasing Turkey's share in the total volume of African countries' trade to 3% within three years and negotiating preferential trade agreements with African countries in compliance with Turkey's international commitments.
2005	Declaration of the 'Year of Africa' by the Turkish government.
2008	Adoption of <i>The Istanbul Declaration on Turkey–Africa Partnership: Solidarity and Partnership for a Common Future</i> during the First Turkey–Africa Cooperation Summit.
2014	Holding of the Second Turkey–Africa Partnership Summit in Malabo under the theme of <i>A New Model of Partnership for the Strengthening of Sustainable Development and Integration</i> .

Source: Own study based on: Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-africa-relations.en.mfa>, 21.11.2019.

The turning point proved to be 1998, the year in which the Turkish government announced its action plan for Africa, partly in response to the refusal to recognise Turkey as a candidate for accession to the EU at the 1997 summit. The programme was the outcome of consultations involving representatives of various ministries, agencies and the private sector. Its postulates were oriented towards improving political, economic and cultural relations between Turkey and African countries as well as intensifying relationships with Africa within the framework of international organisations (Table 1). The objectives comprised an increase in the number of diplomatic missions, the development of trade relationships, military cooperation, development and humanitarian aid and technical assistance. Unfortunately, internal political turmoil (a three-party coalition government) and the financial crises in the economy prevented Turkey from fully implementing the plan (Özkan 2010b: 533-540). Nevertheless, by adopting its strategy for the development of economic relations with African countries in 2003, the AKP government continued and intensified the process. The Turkish engagement in African issues was stressed in 2005, declared by Turkey as the 'Year of Africa'. In the same year, Turkey obtained the observer status in the African Union (Bilgic; Nascimento 2014). 2008 was of special

importance to the development of Turkey–Africa relations for a number of reasons. First of all, the African Union declared Turkey a strategic partner of the continent during the summit held in Addis Ababa. Turkey’s application to join the African Development Bank (AfDB) received a positive opinion and, as a result, five years later Turkey became its 26th non-regional member. Furthermore, on 18-21 August, a summit was held in Istanbul with the participation of representatives from 49 African countries who adopted *The Istanbul Declaration on Turkey–Africa Partnership: Solidarity and Partnership for a Common Future*. The priority cooperation areas were defined as follows: Inter-governmental Cooperation, Trade and Investment, Agriculture and Small and Medium Scale Enterprises, Health, Peace and Security, Infrastructure, Energy and Transport, Culture, Tourism and Education, Media and Environment. A second summit was held on 19-21 November 2014 and resulted in the adoption of the *Declaration and Joint Implementation Plan for the Period of 2015 to 2019*. A third summit of the Turkey–Africa Partnership is planned for 2020. Meanwhile, Africa–Turkey Economic and Business Forums take place in order to promote and strengthen mutual trade and investment cooperation. So far, those have allowed to negotiate and sign cooperation agreements with regional organisations and communities, i.e. the African Union Committee, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)¹.

The analysis of Turkey’s trade with Africa indicates the intensification of mutual linkages. In 2018, the value of Turkish exports to Africa was USD 14.5 billion, i.e. 140% of the 2009 figure. Simultaneously, Turkey’s exports to North Africa rose by nearly 30%, whereas those to other African countries increased by 45% (TurkStat 2019).

Table 2

Shares of the EU and Africa in Turkey’s trade in 2009, 2014 and 2018 (%)

%	2009		2014		2018	
	Export	Imports	Export	Imports	Export	Imports
EU	46.2	40.2	43.5	36.7	50.0	36.2
North African countries	7.3	1.6	6.2	1.4	5.6	2.1
Other African countries	2.7	1.2	2.5	1.0	3.0	1.1

Source: Own study based on: (TurkStat 2019).

¹ For more on the subject of African economic communities see: (Garlińska-Bielawska 2019). In addition to entering into agreements with the communities, Turkey opened its embassies there. New embassies started operating in the following order: in Abuja (ECOWAS) in 2005, in Dar-es-Salaam (EAC) in 2010, in Lusaka (COMESA) in 2012 as well as in Addis Ababa (IGAD) and Libreville (ECCAS) in 2013 (website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey).

Nevertheless, the share of Africa in Turkey's total trade remains insignificant. In 2018, sales to those markets accounted for 8.6% of the value of Turkish exports. With regard to imports, African countries play an even lesser role in the Turkish economy – 3.2% of Turkey's total imports originate in Africa. At the same time, the share of the EU Member States remains high: in 2018, the EU's single market accounted for 50% and 36.2% of Turkish exports and imports respectively (Table 2).

CONDITIONS FOR TURKEY'S TRADE RELATIONS WITH AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN THE LIGHT OF THE CUSTOMS UNION WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

Due to the Turkey–EU Customs Union in place, Turkey has no possibility to enter into trade agreements with third countries without the EU's consent. Consequently, it involves significant influence of the European Union on Turkey's commercial policy; furthermore, Turkey negotiates and concludes free trade agreements at the same time as the EU. Turkish trade relations with third countries are particularly affected by the provision of Article 3(2) of Decision no. 1/95 (European Union 1995), stipulating that products from third countries are considered to be in free circulation in the Community or in Turkey if the import formalities have been complied with and any customs duties or charges having equivalent effect which are payable have been levied in the Community or in Turkey, and if they have not benefited from a total or partial reimbursement of such duties or charges. Therefore, an industrial product imported to the EU from a country having concluded a free trade agreement with the EU can be brought duty-free into the customs territory of either the EU or Turkey. Where Turkey has not signed a similar agreement with such a country, Turkish products will not enjoy duty-free access to the country's market. Therefore, Turkey would need to negotiate a separate free trade agreement with a country forming a free trade area with the EU. At present, Turkey is expected to enter into free trade agreements (FTAs) with countries that have become preferred trading partners of the EU. However, such partners often lack sufficient motivation to sign separate free trade agreements with Turkey as they are able to freely export their products to the Turkish market under agreements already concluded with the EU. Such a solution does not entail opening their own domestic markets to Turkish exports. As a result, Turkey has not managed to enter into trade agreements with some of the EU partners (Algeria, the Republic of South Africa). The EU includes a 'Turkey clause' (European Parliament 2016) in trade agreements signed with third countries, expressing the need for them to sign free trade agreements with Turkey as its Customs Union partner. However, the clause is not binding on such third countries. Where it concerns countries with which Turkey has marginal trade relationships, the signing of a free trade agreement with the EU but not with Turkey is of no significance. However, if such a country is a major trading partner, such as South Korea or Japan, it becomes an urgent issue. Turkey expects that negotiations regarding such free trade agreements with both the EU and Turkey should start, continue, conclude and enter into force at the same time (SOWG Report 2015).

As a result, Turkey has entered into 22 preferential trade agreements (excluding the Customs Union with the EU). Those are agreements concluded, *inter alia*, with the Western Balkan countries, the Mediterranean countries, Malaysia, South Korea, Chile, Georgia², four of which concern African states: Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Mauritius (Table 3).

Table 3

Free trade agreements concluded by Turkey with African countries

No.	Country	Date signed	Date in force	Elimination of duties on industrial products
1.	Tunisia	25.11.2004	1.7.2005	1.7.2014
2.	Morocco	7.4.2004	1.1.2006	1.1.2015
3.	Egypt	27.12.2005	1.3.2007	1.1.2020
4.	Mauritius	9.10.2011	1.6.2013	1.1.2022

Source: own study based on: WTO, <http://rtais.wto.org>, access: 12.11.2019.

The Free Trade Agreement with Egypt, including the main agreement and three protocols, is characterised by the broadest scope. It was signed in Cairo on 27 December 2005 and entered into force on 1 March 2007. It eliminated customs duties and non-tariff barriers in trade between the Parties. The agreement also covered a number of areas directly or indirectly related to trade in goods, e.g. sanitary and phytosanitary measures, trade in services, foreign direct investment, internal taxes, balance of payments, public procurement, State aid, intellectual property rights, anti-dumping and safeguard measures.

Customs duties applied by Turkey to industrial products originating in Egypt were lifted upon the entry into force of the agreement, whereas those imposed by Egypt on industrial products originating in Turkey were supposed to be gradually eliminated by 1 January 2020, in accordance with the lists contained in Protocol I to the agreement.

With regard to agricultural products, Turkey and Egypt granted to each other the elimination of or reduction in tariffs and/or the reduction or elimination of tariffs in the form of tariff quotas originating in the partner country. The agricultural products subject to the reduction in or elimination of customs duties are listed in Protocol II to the agreement. Products benefiting from such preferential tariffs should be consistent with the rules of origin defined in Protocol III to the agreement (Egypt–Turkey Free Trade Agreement).

The agreement with Tunisia was signed on 25 November 2004, mainly for the purpose of extending and tightening economic cooperation between the Parties, increasing the living standards of the partner countries' inhabitants, gradually eliminating difficulties in and restrictions on trade in goods (including agricultural products),

² For more information visit the WTO website, <http://rtais.wto.org>, (access: 12.11.2019).

promoting harmonious development, ensuring fair competition conditions and creating conditions and incentives for investment, particularly in the case of mutual investment-related initiatives. In accordance with Article XXIV of the GATT, liberalisation covered 'substantially all' of mutual trade, over a nine-year period for the implementation of the provisions (Free Trade Agreement between Turkey and Tunisia).

In comparison with the Agreement with Tunisia, the Agreement signed with Morocco on 7 April 2004 has narrower objectives, focused on tightening and fostering harmonious development of economic relations between the partners and ensuring fair competition conditions, assumed to lead to harmonious development and expansion of world trade. The scope of trade liberalisation is narrower as well, in particular with regard to trade in agricultural products (Free Trade Agreement between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Turkey).

The Free Trade Agreement between Turkey and Mauritius is the first free trade agreement concluded by Turkey with a Sub-Saharan African country. It was signed on 9 September 2011 and entered into force on 1 June 2013. It stipulated the elimination of customs duties imposed on imports and exports of industrial products, the abolition of all quantitative restrictions and measures having equivalent effect on importation and the regulation of the exchange of concessions regarding agricultural products, technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, internal taxation, dumping, safeguard measures, payments, the rules of origin and intellectual property rights (Free Trade Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Mauritius).

In contrast, Turkey has not concluded preferential agreements with countries from the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (including the RSA), whereas the countries concerned have preferential trade agreements with the European Union. Many of Turkey's FTA partners are relatively small trading partners, perhaps except for the EFTA and the Republic of Korea. The FTAs concluded so far and notified to the WTO exclusively cover trade in goods but not services or investment; only the free trade agreement with the Republic of Korea has a broader scope as it comprises commitments regarding investment and services as well.

THE EU-TURKEY CUSTOMS UNION – SHORTCOMINGS AND PROSPECTS FOR MODERNIZATION

The Customs Union between Turkey and the European Union (EU) became effective on 31 December 1995, under Decision No 1/95 of the EC-Turkey Association Council of 22 December 1995 (European Union 1995). The Decision established free movement of industrial products in the common customs territory and Turkey assumed an obligation to adapt to the *acquis communautaire* in a number of internal market areas. Upon the creation of the Customs Union, all customs duties and charges having equivalent effect on industrial products were eliminated (European Union 1995, Article 4), quantitative restrictions between the parties became prohibited (Eu-

ropean Union 1995, Articles 5 and 6), whereas Turkey adopted the common customs tariff in importation (European Union 1995, Article 13).

The Additional Protocol included a *standstill* clause stipulating that neither the EU nor Turkey must introduce any new restrictions other than those existing on the date of the entry into force of the Additional Protocol. Decision no. 1/95 referred to no other freedoms of the common market; therefore, freedoms other than the free movement of goods (such as services and public procurement) remain excluded from the Customs Union. The provisions of the Protocol imposed on Turkey the obligation to align itself to the EU's common commercial policy towards non-EU countries; in particular, it concerns the obligation to gradually adapt to the tariff preferences applied by the EU.

With regard to unilateral preferences, Turkey initiated the General System of Preferences (GSP) through the harmonisation with the European Union's GSP on 1 January 2002 and then extended the system in order to fully align itself with the European Union's GSP in the following years (UNCTAD 2017). The import regime decree published by the Ministry of Economy entered into force at the beginning of 2006, which enabled full alignment with the European Union's GSP. Turkey also adapted its system of unilateral preferences to that of the EU. Turkey offers GSP, GSP Plus and Everything But Arms (EBA) solutions to certain developing countries the least developed countries, which is of importance to African states as most of them rank among poorly developed or the least developed countries, thus benefiting from the system³.

Respecting to the material scope of preferences, Turkey follows the GSP reforms undertaken by the EU, focusing its preferences on the most disadvantaged states by removing high- and upper-middle-income countries and countries that benefit from other privileged arrangements, with Regulation (EU) No 978/2012 constituting the basis for Turkey's GSP (Turkish Official Gazette 2014). Therefore, since 2014 the countries excluded from the EU's GSP have not been covered by the Turkish GSP either.

Customs duties are suspended or reduced, depending on the degree of product sensitivity, as in the EU's GSP. Tariffs on non-sensitive products are fully suspended, whereas those on sensitive goods are reduced. Turkey reserved the right to suspend preferential treatment of GSP products in certain circumstances. Following the EU, Turkey applies a special incentive arrangement for Sustainable Development and Good Governance, referred to as the 'GSP Plus', comprising additional tariff preferences. All customs duties on products covered by the Turkish GSP Plus were suspended for countries benefiting from such special incentive arrangements in accordance with the European Union's GSP Plus, but the group of beneficiaries includes no African state.

The creation of the Customs Union contributed to growth in trade between Turkey and the EU, increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) flows, the harmonisation of legislation, particularly with regard to issues related to the single market. However,

³ For more on the subject of the EU's GSP EU see: (Czermińska 2019: 376-400).

problems connected with the functioning of the Customs Union appeared over time. In addition, new developments concerned both international trade and the commercial policy of the EU after unsuccessful Doha Round multilateral negotiations within the WTO, in particular after the removal of certain 'Singapore issues' (public procurement, competition policy and investment) from the agenda of the Ministerial Conference held in Cancún in 2003. The early 21st century witnessed a change of the EU's commercial policy priorities, with increased importance of preferential trade agreements, in particular deepened and comprehensive free trade agreements and new-generation trade agreements⁴. Those changes in the common commercial policy posed certain challenges to Turkey, considering its non-participation in the CCP decision-making as a non-EU country. Therefore, the necessity to amend the existing agreement was increasingly expressed.

Work on the modernisation of the Customs Union was accelerated after the issue by the World Bank of the report entitled 'Evaluation of the EU–Turkey Customs Union' on 28 March 2014, financed by the European Commission (World Bank 2014). One month before the issue of the report, Turkey and the EU appointed a Senior Official Working Group on the Update of the EU–Turkey Customs Union and Trade Relations (SOWG), (SOWG Report 2015). On 27 April 2015, it issued a report comprising three pillars of the future modernisation of the Customs Union. The first pillar concerns better implementation of and/or amendment to Decision no. 1/95 on the Customs Union; the second pillar is the extension of the Customs Union to new areas such as agriculture, services and public procurement; and the third pillar refers to improving the institutional structure (SOWG Report 2015: 2–4). In December 2016, the European Commission proposed to extend the scope of the Customs Union to the liberalisation of trade in agricultural products, services, amending entrepreneurship law.

Such an extension of the Customs Union to agricultural products and services would be substantially beneficial to both parties. The average MFN tariff on agricultural products in the Turkish customs tariff is high – 49%⁵. The liberalisation of two-way trade in agricultural products and the adoption of the EU's common external tariff for agriculture would involve significantly reduced protection of Turkish imports for certain goods and lower employment in agricultural holdings, whereas exports of foodstuffs of animal origin from Member States to Turkey would rise. Simultaneously, the inclusion of goods in the Customs Union would require Turkey to adopt and implement the EU legislation concerning food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary rules.

⁴ For more on the subject see: (European Commission 2006).

⁵ Tariff protection remains particularly high, exceeding 80% on average, with regard to meat, dairy products, sugar and sugar confectionery. In addition, Turkey can further increase customs duties since only 50% of its tariffs are bound (i.e. it is impossible to increase those above the bound rates); in particular, all customs duties on agricultural products are now bound, whereas the respective share for industrial goods is 34% (WTO 2017b, p. 11). For comparison, in the EU customs tariff the average MFN tariff on agricultural products is 14.6%, that on industrial goods – 4.3%; in addition, all customs duties are bound (WTO 2017a, p. 48).

As regards the liberalisation of services, a hybrid approach combining characteristics of the EEC and GATS models can be considered for Turkey⁶. In the case of certain service industries in which the degree of the harmonisation of legislation is already very advanced, the EEC option could be preferred, leaving the GATS model for other areas.

Within the framework of the renewed Customs Union, Turkey is expected to adopt the EU's *acquis communautaire* with regard to public procurement, increasing transparency and competition. In 2011–2014, virtually all public contracts (99.7%) were awarded to domestic undertakings (Ülgen 2017).

CONCLUSION

Turkey's foreign policy has been determined by the multidimensional identity of the country, conditioned by its strategic location and historical experience. A separate aspect is that of concluded agreements which may indirectly limit the autonomy of a country's international actions. In the case of Turkey, such an agreement is the Agreement on the Customs Union with the European Union.

Turkey's relations with Africa have had a long history, with three distinct stages, but economic cooperation has only visibly intensified in recent years. It is exemplified by four free trade agreements entered into by Turkey in the early 21st century (with Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Mauritius). Despite their conclusion, the share of mutual trade has been insignificant; furthermore, the proportion varies between specific regions of the continent – North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. Turkey trades definitely more intensively with North Africa, which is determined by the perception of the region as part of the country's immediate environment due to historical 'proximity' resulting from the Ottoman past of the North African nations and the Muslim population in the countries concerned as well as by the fact that North Africa is regarded as part of the broader Middle Eastern region. In contrast, Sub-Saharan Africa has been seen as a remote geographical region, more associated with poverty, epidemics and civil wars rather than with a region to do business with.

In this context, the First Turkey–Africa Cooperation Summit held in Istanbul in August 2008 can be considered a milestone of the new era in Turkey–Africa rela-

⁶ The Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEC), concluded by the EU with members of the European Free Trade Area, comprises the liberalisation of trade in services. The EEC members, including Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, adopted the whole *acquis communautaire* in that area in exchange for access to the single European market. Based on full harmonisation of legislation, the model ensures the liberalisation of trade in services, enabling complete elimination of barriers arising from the legislation or regulatory frameworks of the participating countries. Another option to liberalise trade in services is the model of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), in accordance with which EU partners assume obligations concerning the elimination of barriers to market access and the adoption of the principle of the most-favoured-nation treatment for each service sector separately. In comparison with the EEC model, the GATS approach represents a lower level of market integration.

tions. In the light of the Istanbul Declaration, the areas of cooperation were defined very broadly, including intergovernmental cooperation, trade and investment, agriculture, rural development, health, peace and security, infrastructure, energy, transport, culture, tourism and education, media and information and communication technology as well as the environment. It is worth also emphasising that the cooperation is institutionally supported by the African Union, whereas agreements are concluded not only with individual countries, but with economic communities as well (ECOWAS, COMESA).

The creation of the Customs Union with the European Union has stimulated mutual trade, but at the expense of the impossibility for Turkey to freely enter into trade agreements with third countries and the reluctance of some of them to conclude separate agreements with Turkey where free access to the EU market is indirectly guaranteed to them through the Customs Union. Over time, problems related to the functioning of the Customs Union began to emerge, which resulted in setting proposed orientations of change, both institutional and material. Specifically, the extension of the scope of free trade to agricultural products and services is perceived as potential for additional trade gains for both parties in the future, but at the expense of significantly increased alignment costs, especially on the part of Turkey.

Following the analysis, it is possible to conclude that Turkey's opening to Africa results from both the internal transition of Turkey and a more pragmatic orientation of Turkish foreign policy, taking account of economic considerations, seeking outlets, enhancing investment opportunities. Such an approach is consistent with the strategy of gaining a stronger global position by deepening political and economic relationships with various regions. However, considering Turkey's efforts to become an EU Member State, the concluded agreement on the Customs Union and the dominant position in Turkish foreign trade, the position of the European Union as Turkey's strategic trading partner is not in jeopardy.

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Dr hab. Małgorzata Czermińska, Wydział Prawa, Administracji i Stosunków Międzynarodowych, Krakowska Akademia im. A. F. Modrzewskiego (em-czermi@cyf-kr.edu.pl)

Dr hab. Joanna Garlińska-Bielawska, Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Krakowie (garlinsj@uek.krakow.pl)

Dr Marta Ulbrych, Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Krakowie (ul-brychm@uek.krakow.pl)

Słowa kluczowe: Afryka, unia celna, Unia Europejska, Turcja

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ABSTRACT

Following the assumptions of the new model of foreign policy, the Turkish government is developing political and economic relations with regions that have not been the main focus of this country's interest so far. Turkey, like other large economies, is deepening the scope of its engagement in Africa thanks to the gradual political stabilization and economic development of the countries of this continent. The revival of bilateral relations is based on a number of political initiatives that have been taken over the last two decades. The aim of the article is to present the results of the analysis of conditions shaping Turkey-Africa relations in the context of the European Union (EU)-Turkey Customs Union. The following research hypotheses were adopted in the study:

– *Turkey's opening to Africa in the 21st century is the result of changes in Turkey's foreign policy aimed at gaining a stronger global position.*

– *Difficulties in the functioning of the customs union have contributed to the weakening of Turkey's relations with the EU and the increase of Turkish interest in Africa.*

Empirical (indirect observation and description) and general methods, including deduction and induction, were used to achieve the aim of the study. Research techniques such as cause-and-effect, comparative, documentary, historical, and synthesis were of great importance.