

VIADUCT

FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BRUSSELS, 26-27 APRIL 2018

REPORT

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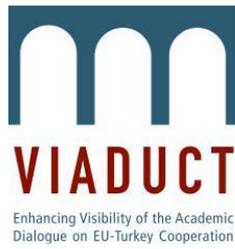
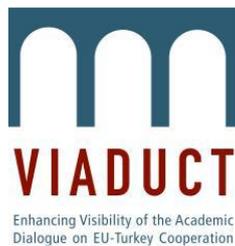


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KICK OFF CONFERENCE

PROGRAMME

26-27 APRIL 2018

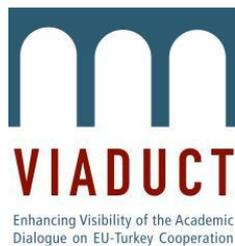
UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION - 11 RUE D'EGMONT - 1000 BRUSSELS

Thursday, 26 April 2018

- 15:00 Start First Annual Conference
- 15:00 – 16:00 Opening Session
Senem Aydin-Düzgit, Sabancı University
Funda Tekin, University of Cologne
Wolfgang Wessels, University of Cologne
- 16:15 – 18:15 Working Groups
Parallel working groups to discuss EU-Turkey relations and address the network's cross-sectorial issues.
- Group 1 - POWER**
Chair: **Atila Eralp**, Middle East Technical University
- Group 2 - RESOURCES**
Chair: **Johannes Pollak**, Webster University Vienna
- Group 3 - PEOPLE**
Chair: **Ebru Turhan**, Turkish-German University
- Group 4 – TEACHING EU-TURKEY RELATIONS**
Chair: **Tomáš Weiss**, Charles University Prague



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Friday, 27 April 2018

09:00 – 10:45

Keynote Speech/Informal Policy Debate

Patrick Paquet, Deputy Head of Turkey Unit, DG NEAR

10:45 – 11:00

Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:30

Round Table

EU-Turkey Relations in the Context of the EU's Future

Chair: **Frank Schimmelfennig**, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich

Short input:

Karlis Bukovskis, Latvian Institute of International Affairs

Lucia Mokrá, Comenius University Bratislava

Valentin Petroussenko, Plovdiv University

Bahri Yilmaz, Sabanci University

12:30 – 13:30

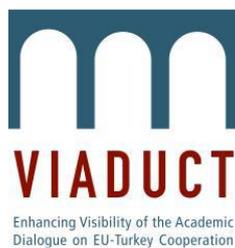
Concluding Remarks and Exchange of Results

13:30 – 14:30

Lunch



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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT VIADUCT

'[VIADUCT – Enhancing Visibility of the Academic Dialogue on EU-Turkey Cooperation](#)' is an academic network that aims to link universities and think-tanks from the European Union (EU), Turkey and the neighbourhood in order to build knowledge on EU-Turkey Cooperation. Funded by the Erasmus+/Jean Monnet programme of the European Union, the network is coordinated by [Prof Wolfgang Wessels](#) and [Dr Funda Tekin](#) at the [Centre for Turkey and European Union Studies \(CETEUS\)](#), University of Cologne. The network was launched on 1 September 2017 and will run for a period of three years till 31 August 2020.

VIADUCT represents a network of [40 partners](#) and one extended network partner from all EU countries, Turkey as well as from Egypt, Georgia, Iceland, Iraq, Israel, Norway, and Switzerland. VIADUCT's goal is to promote research, teaching and policy dialogue on EU-Turkey relations through a '[4x4 approach](#)':

- 4-I strategy: intergenerationality, interdisciplinarity, internationality, intertemporality
- 4 possible scenarios for the future of EU-Turkey relations: managing the fragile status quo, upgrading existing forms of cooperation, reactivating the accession process, dealing with a difficult or even hostile neighbour
- 4 cross-sectorial issues in EU-Turkey relations: power, resources, people, Future of the EU
- 4 dimensions of activities: face-to-face meetings, online exchange, publications, multiplication.

FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

VIADUCT's First Annual Conference took place in Brussels on 26-27 April 2018 in the framework of the First VIADUCT Week and was co-organised by CETEUS and the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA). The conference's purpose was to bring together academics, practitioners, policy makers and civil society representatives to discuss several cross-cutting issues within the broad theme of EU-Turkey relations (Power, Resources, People, Teaching EU-Turkey Relations), including in the context of the ongoing debate on the future of European integration. It gathered more than 50 participants, among which were leading scholars from the EU and beyond, university students, EU practitioners and civil society representatives.

On the first day, after a plenary session that discussed the current state of play of EU-Turkey relations and the relevance of the VIADUCT network, participants split in four parallel working groups to discuss the cross-cutting issues in an informal setting. The second day opened with a keynote speech/policy debate with Patrick Paquet, Deputy Head of Turkey Unit at European Commission DG NEAR and featured a roundtable discussion on EU-Turkey Relations in the context of the EU's Future.



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OPENING SESSION

Funda Tekin (Vice-Director of the Centre for Turkey and European Union Studies, University of Cologne and Project Director of VIADUCT) opened the VIADUCT First Annual Conference by welcoming all the network partners present or represented, and stressed the importance of building a sustainable network of scholars researching on a topic such as EU-Turkey relations which is traditionally a 'moving target'.

The conference marks the first occasion for the VIADUCT network to sit face-to-face and discuss the modalities of the future work and how to give substance and expression to this project. Specifically, she stressed the importance of discussing and teaching prospects of EU-Turkey relations in new and innovative formats. She concluded by encouraging the members to move ahead in this direction over the lifetime of the project.

Wolfgang Wessels (Director of the Centre for Turkey and European Union Studies, University of Cologne and VIADUCT Coordinator) welcomed all participants and explained the network's 4-I approach:

- **Intergenerationality:** the VIADUCT network aims to engage in its activities MA students, PhD candidates, early-stage researchers as well as established scholars.
- **Interdisciplinarity:** VIADUCT addresses cross-sectorial issues that affect EU-Turkey relations and gathers researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds in order to maximise synergies between the different disciplines in the study of EU-Turkey relations.
- **Internationality:** the VIADUCT consortium gathers partners from all EU member states, as well as from Turkey and the EU's neighbourhood.
- **Intertemporality:** VIADUCT aims to enhance research on the history, the current state and the future prospects of EU-Turkey relations.

Senem Aydın-Düzgit (Senior Scholar at Istanbul Policy Center and Associate Professor at Sabancı University) shared her perspective on researching and teaching EU-Turkey relations as a Turkish academic. Specifically, she stressed the need of shifting the mindset of the European Union in order to advance further cooperation with Turkey and to foster substantive dialogue, first and foremost by differentiating between the Turkish civil society and the current government.



WORKING GROUP 1: POWER

The Working Group on 'Power' was chaired by [Atila Eralp](#) (Director of the Center for European Studies and Professor at the Middle East Technical University). Prof Eralp opened the session by emphasising the need to link the change in Turkish domestic policy to the international context. He then suggested the participants to disaggregate the concept of 'power' into two sub-concepts: power as *politics* and power as *security*.

When talking about politics, the analysis should focus on both the domestic and the global context. In this respect, some participants suggested that a turning point has been July 2015, which saw a major change in Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's leadership (more aggressive/nationalist stance, military operation conducted by the Turkish Air Force against the Islamic State positions in Syria and the Kurdistan Workers' Party positions in Northern Iraq). Others argued that some change in Erdoğan's politics had started even before 2015, with Turkey's progressive ambition to put forward a model of government which is different from the liberal democracy that is the dominant model in Europe. Participants discussed possible implications of the political evolution in Turkey on relations with the European Union. One of the arguments was that, in Erdoğan's speeches when he came to power there was never a discourse of 'Turkey joining the EU' but rather 'Turkey *and* the EU'. Erdoğan is a power-seeking politician: he was never ambitious nor enthusiastic about EU membership, but later he thought that he was receiving misleading messages from the EU so he became careful not to lose his credibility because of the membership issue.



The main drivers of EU-Turkey relations were identified within this Working Group as economy, energy, security, and politics. Participants stressed that economy is the main driver that keeps the EU and Turkey together, preventing both from closing their doors.

The debate then moved to the concept of power as security. The participants agreed that, when it comes to security in the region, the EU is not one of the main players in discussing these issues. Participants agreed that four main aspects must be taken into account in the security dimension: weapons industry, PESCO, NATO, and Iran.

Finally, the session addressed the question of the recent elections in Turkey and their impact on the Turkish society (especially with regard to its economic crisis in the country) and on EU-Turkey relations.



In conclusion, the Working Group identified four main research areas for the VIADUCT network in the field of 'Power':

1. Turkish stance on Russia
2. PESCO dimension: exclusiveness or inclusiveness towards Turkey?
3. Brexit: how will the security scenario change?
4. Turkish dilemma between normative contestation and pragmatic-strategic interest in the fields of security and economy.



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WORKING GROUP 2: RESOURCES

The Working Group on ‘Resources’ was chaired by [Johannes Pollak](#) (Director of Webster University Vienna) and saw the participation of [Şuhnaz Yılmaz](#) (Associate Professor of International Relations and Associate Dean of College of Administrative Science and Economics at Koç University), [Bahri Yılmaz](#) (Senior Scholar at Istanbul Policy Centre, Professor at Sabancı University and member of the VIADUCT Advisory Board), [Senada Šelo Šabić](#) (Senior Research Associate at Institute for Development and International Relations, Zagreb), [Mathias Jopp](#) (Director of Institut für Europäische Politik) and [Wolfgang Wesels](#) (Director of the Centre for Turkey and European Union Studies, University of Cologne and VIADUCT Coordinator).



The Working Group elaborated on the energy-related interdependences and connections between the European Union and Turkey. Johannes Pollak opened the session with an introduction on the EU’s energy supply situation. Currently, the EU imports 53 % of all consumed energy. The energy production in Europe fell by about 40 % between 2000 and 2014, while the overall consumption was on the rise. There-

fore, the EU’s import dependency on natural gas as a bridge technology is set to rise from 60 to 80 % by 2035. The supply suffers furthermore from defective infrastructure at Europe’s fringes since stakeholders are reluctant to invest in politically instable areas in the East (as e.g. Ukraine) and North Africa. Furthermore, the EU’s geopolitical environment does not offer many trade alternatives. Another problematic issue in Europe’s energy supply is the ‘disconnect’ between politicians and industry in the assessment of Europe’s supply reliability, as Johannes Pollak stated.

The group then reviewed EU-Turkey relations in the context of the EU’s import dependency. The group agreed that the EU has a high interest in the Southern Gas Corridor, and that Turkey became the EU’s primary target in reducing import dependence on Russia by the end of the 2000s. However, Turkey itself is dependent on Russian gas imports and is currently diversifying its own energy mix by putting emphasis on domestic production of coal and renewables. The group discussed Johannes Pollak’s statement that Turkey’s objective to become an ‘energy hub’ in the future is unlikely to be achieved due to the lack of infrastructure. Furthermore, the state-owned energy company BOTAŞ Petroleum Pipeline Corporation as a hard-to-beat competitor is a further obstacle for foreign investments in Turkey’s energy market.

WORKING GROUP 3: PEOPLE

The Working Group on ‘People’ was chaired by [Ebru Turhan](#), (Assistant Professor at Turkish-German University), and benefitted from the contributions of Geoffrey Edwards (Senior Fellow at Cambridge University), Sema E. Sedaroglu (Guest Lecturer at University of Iceland), Melike Janine Sokmen (Researchers at Barcelona Centre for International Affairs), and Ayşen Üstübici (Assistant Professor at Koç University).

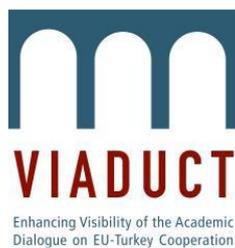
The discussion of the Working Group focused on whether or not there has been or it is possible to have a progress in the so-called EU-Turkey deal. From this question, the different issues and scenarios related to the deal were analysed, focusing in particular on the sustainability of the deal and on the different



factors to be taken into account that can influence the future of the agreement. Here in particular two issues were identified: visa liberalisation, which seems far from happening, and the EU economic help to the Turkish government, which interests the EU with regard to the way the money is spent to address the situation of refugees in the country, and which represents, together with the EU humanitarian aid, an important contribution to ease the economic burden on the Turkish government for taking care of the refugees in the country.

It was also noted that a discussion on the situation of refugees in Turkey and on how the deal is concretely affecting people is currently lacking. Another question that was raised was how a possible collapse of the deal could be defined, and what it would entail. This discussion was also related to possible elements that could make the deal sustainable, in particular on the Turkish side, and here all the participants agreed on the centrality of the prospect of visa liberalisation, while other reforms such as amendments of the law on terrorism and data protection were considered as a marginal issue.

Concerning the influence that the deal has on the accession negotiations, the main outcome of the discussion was that the idea of accession in the different reports appears quite technical, while migration is far more than a technical issue.



WORKING GROUP 4: TEACHING EU-TURKEY RELATIONS

The Working Group was chaired by [Tomáš Weiss](#) (Head of Department of European Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University Prague) and started with a presentation of the first VIADUCT Teaching Paper ‘Applying Learner-Centred Approach to Teaching Turkey-European Union Relations’ by the author [Selin Türkeş-Kılıç](#) (Assistant Professor at Yeditepe University). The paper describes her concept for a three-hour class she is teaching on EU-Turkey Relations to about 20 students in their 4th year of university.

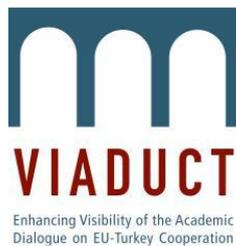
Selin Türkeş-Kılıç pointed out that due to the structure of university entrance exams, less attention can be paid to learning and teaching issues in Turkish secondary education, therefore in university teachers try to break up pre-conceptions and include new teaching methods. Another problem which was discussed is the decline in interest in EU-Turkey relations. Dr Türkeş-Kılıç agreed with the assertion, but pointed out that this can be used as a way to show students that they can apply the learned skills to other topics as well.

Her course concept is based on four teaching pillars:

1. *Pre-Lecture discussion sessions.* The pre-lecture discussions are a fundamental pillar of Dr Türkeş-Kılıç’s teaching concept. These discussions are led by the students themselves or by the Teaching Assistant, but never by Dr Türkeş-Kılıç herself so as to allow for a more informal discussion. Students have the possibility to exchange their individual information and pre-conceptions on the topic at hand. The discussions are followed by the lecture. This is very challenging for the lecturer as he/she never knows what will be discussed in the first session and therefore has to be very flexible in his/her lecture so as not to address topics twice or lose the students’ interest during the lecture.
2. *Analysis of primary sources.* The pre-lecture discussion sessions show that students are not well informed about the EU and EU-Turkey relations, or at least not accurately. This is also a result of trusting news channels without questioning sources. Dr Türkeş-Kılıç therefore puts emphasis on teaching the students how to analyse primary sources themselves. She thereby enables students to fight their own preconceptions and challenge the myths they learned over the years.
3. *In-class simulation exercise.* At the end of the class, Dr Türkeş-Kılıç puts aside two sessions for simulation exercises, for which the students have to write a negotiation brief in advance.
4. *Research paper.* The class ends with the preparation of a research paper. Instead of providing pre-defined topics for this, Dr Türkeş-Kılıç facilitates a discussion of the research questions in the class so that students are not left alone in this process.

The Working Group then discussed the complicated issue of how to get students involved in the class. Dr Türkeş-Kılıç sees the pre-lecture discussion as key for reaching this aim. Also letting students bring





current news pieces to the discussion can activate them as they see that the issues discussed in the classroom relate to everyday life.

The Working Group finally discussed how to include these thoughts into the upcoming VIADUCT Teachers' Training Seminar. Topics for the agenda of the seminar could be, among other things : how to engage the students further; the question of self-censorship in a politically complicated teaching with a special focus on online classes and social media. Furthermore, the seminar itself will represent a key opportunity for teachers to exchange best practice.



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KEYNOTE SPEECH/INFORMAL POLICY DEBATE

On the second day of the conference, the VIADUCT network had the chance to meet Patrick Paquet (Deputy Head of Turkey Unit at the European Commission's Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations – DG NEAR) for a Keynote Speech and Informal Policy Debate just a few days after the Commission published its 2018 progress report on Turkey.¹

Patrick Paquet explained that the Commission structured the new reports according to the principle of 'fundamentals first', emphasising the rule of law and fundamental rights in a separate section at the beginning of the report. The state of emergency affected many areas, such as chapter 23 on judiciary and fundamental rights, for which serious backsliding was recorded, but also chapters like audio-visual policy, employment and social policy as well as economic criteria. A new methodology of assessment put stronger emphasis on the state of play achieved in alignment for all policy areas.

Even though an appeal commission over the measures taken under the state of emergency already



started working, Mr Paquet did not see a change in the overall picture so far. Regarding the referendum on the presidential system in 2017, Mr Paquet underlined the Commission's serious concerns. However, if on the one hand the changes to the system are unprecedented, on the other hand the overall impact would depend on the implementation of laws still to be adopted. For now, MS have not considered 'going the extra mile' of stopping negotiations with Turkey which is costlier than the status quo. A full reversal of the current trend in Turkey is however needed for the opening

of new chapters in the accession negotiations, argued Mr Paquet.

Mr Paquet emphasised the need for ongoing dialogue and highlighted major areas of cooperation: migration and asylum; the fight against terrorism; trade and economy, cooperation in railways and infrastructure; and energy. The field of energy is especially considered as a priority by the Commission.

Regarding the Customs Union upgrade, standard and rules to be applied by Turkey would bring fundamental changes in the areas of services, agriculture and public procurement. For historical reasons, human rights clauses have not been included in this agreement but this would now be considered in any

¹ European Commission, Turkey 2018 Report, SWD(2018) 153 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018SC0153&from=EN>, last accessed on 07 May 2018



upgrade of the Customs Union thereby aligning the Customs union with the general practice followed by the EU, stated Mr Paquet.

In his concluding remarks, Patrick Paquet pointed to the difficulties in the visa liberalisation dialogue at the moment. A work plan including proposals on anti-terror legislation that the Commission received from Turkey is currently under examination. However, the European Parliament does not consider visa liberalisation as a topic on the agenda as long as the overall situation in Turkey remains unchanged.



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ROUND TABLE: EU-TURKEY RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EU'S FUTURE

The round table on EU-Turkey relations in the context of the EU's future was chaired by [Frank Schimmelfennig](#) (Professor of European Politics and Director of the Center for Comparative and International Studies at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology and the University of Zürich). The round table hosted contributions from [Karlis Bukovskis](#) (Deputy Director and Researcher at the Latvian Institute of International Affairs), [Lucia Mokrá](#) (Dean of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences at Comenius University Bratislava), [Valentin Petroussenko](#) (Lecturer at Plovdiv University), and [Bahri Yilmaz](#) (Senior Scholar at

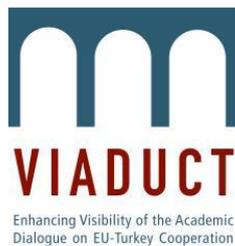
Istanbul Policy Centre, Professor at Sabancı University and member of the VIADUCT Advisory Board).



[Frank Schimmelfennig](#) opened the session with a reflection on the concept of 'polycrisis' of the EU: i.e. a multi-dimensional crisis that includes the migration crisis, the rule of law crisis in some EU member states, and the geopolitical crisis at EU's borders. Seen from this perspective, Turkey is still an important partner for the EU, for instance when it comes to migration issue, as the EU is not capable to find internal solutions.

[Karlis Bukovskis](#) discussed the political situation and the rise of populism in Turkey. He argued that, in modern societies where policies and technology are increasingly interlinked, the idea of nationalism and the exacerbation of divergences in values between countries and regions has gained prominence. Secondly, he analysed the institutional aspect of a possible Turkish membership in the EU. According to [Karlis Bukovskis](#), from an institutional perspective the EU is very good at absorbing small states and countries in transition, not big countries like Turkey. Therefore, before Turkey can join the EU, the whole institutional structure of the EU must be reconsidered. Finally, he mentioned the common areas of interest between Turkey and the EU, among which is the security aspect in the neighbourhood.

[Lucia Mokrá](#) analysed the Slovak perspective on migration flows and Turkey's role in managing these flows. Slovakia has had very few experiences of immigration flows. Consequently, the educational system for migrants is very limited due to formal requirements and the system of national registrations is not efficient. Prof Mokrá argued that, in order to have a common solution shared by all member states, is not necessary to codify a new framework. The existing EU Treaties and the solidarity principle would be sufficient in this respect. Finally, [Lucia Mokrá](#) highlighted the relevance of VIADUCT's aim to enhance academic evidence-based research on EU-Turkey relations, including on key topics such as human rights.



[Valentin Petroussenko](#) addressed the issue of Bulgaria-Turkey relations. Bulgaria and Turkey have had through the years traditionally a good relationship and Bulgaria has a keen interest in maintaining it in light of its external border with Turkey. He recognised that the current regime in Turkey is undoubtedly an important cause for concern among most of the EU member states, which have lower trust in the idea of rebuilding and refreshing relations with the country. Prof Petroussenko then underlined the importance of a sustainable EU foreign policy approach due to possible differences between the current Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU and the upcoming Austrian Presidency (due to take over in July 2018). While Bulgaria tends to have a flexible approach and promote understanding and dialogue with Turkey, Austria is well known for its strong opposition to Turkish EU membership.

[Bahri Yilmaz](#) addressed the issue of Turkey's EU membership. He summed up the arguments against Turkey's membership as follows:

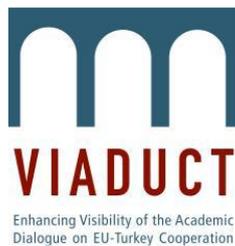
- Turkey is different from the EU from a historical, cultural and religious point of view, thus Turkey's membership is not consistent with a 'European identity';
- Turkey is the 'other': Turkey has always been regarded as an 'outsider' to Europe with whom special relations had to be established mainly for security reasons;
- Turkey is too poor and because of its demographic size it would have a dominant position in EU institutions and decision-making process;
- The labour migration towards the rest of the EU induced by Turkey's accession will increase the social costs and decrease living standards within the EU.
- Once a member, Turkey would receive substantial financial assistance from structural, regional and common agricultural funds.

On the other hand, the traditional arguments in favour of Turkey's EU membership are the following:

- Thanks to Turkey's geostrategic importance the EU can become a global political power;
- Turkey is a strategic partner for the EU in terms of energy security and diversification and would allow the EU to decrease its energy dependence on Russia;
- Turkey has a great economic potential that can foster the EU's economy and make it more competitive.

Prof Yilmaz finally summed up the main future scenarios of EU-Turkey relations, which are in his view: 1) full membership (unrealistic for the time being); and 2) no membership. The latter scenario is further broken down in a number of options: a) a privileged partnership and cooperation in security and economic matters; b) an endless and stalling accession process; c) Turkey increasingly looking towards the





USA for a strategic partnership in the security realm but moving its attention in the foreign policy realm from the West over Russia towards the Middle East.

As a conclusion he stated that what Turkey expects from the European Union is a 'fair chance' in the negotiations process without any prejudices.

Frank Schimmelfennig concluded the roundtable by highlighting the EU conundrum when it comes to EU-Turkey relations: Turkey is too relevant to be fully out of the EU, and too relevant to be fully in.

The roundtable was followed by a lively debate on migration, EU conditionality, Turkey-UK similarities and the future approach of the EU towards authoritative regimes.



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CONCLUDING REMARKS AND EXCHANGE OF RESULTS

In this session, selected rapporteurs summarized the main findings and results of the Working Groups held on the previous day to the plenary conference.

[Funda Tekin](#) (Vice-Director of the Centre for Turkey and European Union Studies, University of Cologne and Project Director of VIADUCT) then concluded the conference by summarising three main findings and demands emerged from the discussions with regard to teaching and researching EU-Turkey relations:

- In order to analyse WU-Turkey relations, it is essential to also look at what is happening inside the EU;
- Research on EU-Turkey relations is closely interlinked with research on Future of the EU;
- Teaching EU-Turkey relations demands new and innovative approaches.

Finally, Dr Tekin underlined the importance of the First Annual Conference as a first key step in building a sustainable network of scholars working on EU-Turkey relations and invited all partners to explore ways in which the links within the network can be intensified further.



On the margins of the VIADUCT First Annual Conference, [Atila Eralp](#) received the first VIADUCT Teaching Award for Lifetime Achievement in outstanding teaching in the fields of EU-Turkey relations and the Future of Europe.