



**VOLUME 15 ISSUE 5** September 2018  
BIMONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER  
ISSN (online): 2421-8111

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**CYPRUS CENTER FOR EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**  
**University of Nicosia**

**1993-2018** TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF POLICY FORMULATION AND ANALYSIS

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## AN ANATOMY OF THE CYPRIOT TRAGEDY AND AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EXISTING DILEMMAS



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The establishment of the Republic of Cyprus (1960) took place under particularly adverse conditions. The liberation struggle conducted by EOKA aimed at *enosis* – unification of Cyprus with Greece – and not at an independent state. The Constitution, that was in essence imposed, reflected the imbalance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean. As a result, Turkey acquired guarantor rights while the Turkish Cypriot minority secured privileged treatment. In actual fact the Constitution established a diarchy within the context of a bi-communal state. Thus, many foreign analysts predicted that the future of this island-state was ominous. Indeed, it was also indicated that the new state was born practically moribund.

The period immediately after the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus was turbulent. In addition to the dysfunctional Constitution, there was limited political maturity. There was also lack of pragmatism as well as limited willingness to shape common goals. Furthermore, there were intercommunal and intra-communal conflict, strife and violence as well as external interventions.

The move of President Makarios to propose constitutional amendments on November 30, 1963 led eventually to the escalation of tensions. Within this atmosphere two days before Christmas 1963 an incident led to intercommunal violence. However, the causes were deeper. UN Security Council Resolution 186 (March 4, 1964) essentially legitimized the Doctrine of Necessity as declared by President Makarios following the withdrawal of the Turkish-Cypriot community from the civil service and the state. The Republic of Cyprus was now functioning as a unitary state – it was in fact a second Greek state.

Be that as it may for many Greek Cypriots *enosis* was still the predominant goal. The rise of the military government Junta I, in Greece on April 21 1967 and other events such as the November 1967 crisis which ended with the withdrawal of the Greek Division from Cyprus, led President Makarios to revisit his policy. The objective now shifted to a unitary state, the “feasible”;

*enosis*, the “desirable” was not the goal anymore. Unfortunately, Makarios was systematically undermined both in Cyprus and Greece.

Makarios eventually cooperated with the leader of Junta I George Papadopoulos and succeeded in improving relations between Athens and Nicosia. Yet, when Junta II came to power in November 1973 under Dimitrios Ioannidis, Cyprus entered into an extremely dangerous course. Despite the fact that Makarios had largely succeeded in dismantling EOKA B, Junta II overthrew him on July 15, 1974. Turkey invaded Cyprus five days later, on July 20 1974, declaring that its objectives were the restoration of the constitutional order and the protection of the Turkish Cypriot community. It is worthwhile mentioning that before the coup the intercommunal negotiations were very near to a successful outcome.

After the first ceasefire and the fall of the coup regime in Nicosia, Acting President Glafcos Clerides suggested on July 23 1974 a return to the Constitution of 1960. The Turkish reply was that: "it is too late." While democracy was restored in Athens, the Turkish invasion troops in Cyprus were marching in violation of the cease-fire. When the Geneva Conference collapsed in the morning of August 14, Turkey launched a new attack by sea, air and land. The then Foreign Minister of Greece, George Mavros, had declared a few hours earlier: "Between humiliation and war Greece chooses not humiliation." Prime Minister Constantinos Karamanlis, however, taking all relevant factors into consideration, stated that Greece could not intervene because Cyprus is far away...

What followed is well known. Turkey occupied 38% of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus carrying out ethnic cleansing and committing multiple war crimes. Since then, Turkey has not only been deepening the occupation but it has been trying to dismantle the Republic of Cyprus; its stated objective is to replace it with a new three-headed state structure in which no substantive decision will be taken without its own consent. It is essential to note that due to massive colonization of the northern occupied part of Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriots have become a minority.

An assessment of the existing negotiating acquis leads to the conclusion that over time there has been a substantial shift towards the Turkish positions. This has not only been the outcome of the imbalance of power. Athens and Nicosia over time failed to formulate a comprehensive strategy. What is even worse is that they had been functioning on misleading assumptions. For example, initially it was considered that any solution is better than the status quo. In addition, it is noted that a unique opportunity for repositioning of the Cyprus Problem has been missed since the referendum of April 24, 2004.

In today's critical conjuncture, there are huge dilemmas in relation to the Cyprus question. To the present day the search for a solution on the basis of a bizonal bicomunal federation, based on the negotiating acquis, remains the conventional choice. There are several other scenarios, such as managing the status quo and waiting for better geopolitical conditions to resolve the problem. Also, it is no secret that the scenario of a two-state solution within the EU, with substantial territorial readjustments, has been unofficially discussed by some circles.

Under the current circumstances, I believe that the best option is to adopt an evolutionary approach, with the ultimate goal of establishing a functional federal framework that will emerge as a result of the revision of the 1960 Constitution.<sup>1</sup> This includes significant gradual steps as well as confidence building measures that may open the way for a lasting settlement. It is extremely difficult to enter a new state of affairs overnight. So far, the negotiations have been aiming to a totally new state of affairs, which most Cypriots do not trust. An evolutionary approach will create mutual benefits and allow time to create a new atmosphere in which a set of common objectives could be formulated. In this case as well the role of Turkey is critical.

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<sup>1</sup> See my article entitled "Revisiting the Cyprus Question and the Way Forward" published in March 2017 at the Turkish Policy Quarterly, vol. 15, no. 4, - <http://turkishpolicy.com/article/841/revisiting-the-cyprus-question-and-the-way-forward>

## A EMERGING DARK IMAGE OF EUROPE



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These days EU institutions and Member States work really hard and intensive to reach a consensus over the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027. Negotiating a new MFF is always tough business. State interests and claims are well-presented and well-defended, the European Commission tries to break a good balance and, in the end, in the very last minute, the Head of States and Governments will finalize the deal. Tough business indeed, but business as usual.

This year is said to be a crucial one. It is crucial because of quite a few peculiarities, but most of all, it is crucial because it shall be followed by an even more critical year. EU political observers and analysts know very well that each year is framed as decisive. Most of the times stakeholders are urged to take action and meet some artificial deadlines early enough, before the circumstances change. Time is a well-known leverage the EU Commission exerts on Member States. Some buy it, still some wouldn't do it. In the end, larger Member States seem to have their way to get a "fairer" share of the MFF and smaller ones get just the "fair" share their size determines.

Urgency is always relevant in EU politics and bargaining is always entangled with some ups and downs. But, in some months from now the EU will indeed look different and the setting for getting things done may change for good. Britain will leave the EU. Brexit talks are really difficult and they are primed to get even more difficult in the coming weeks. Eventually however there will be some compromise along the lines of the current framework. Both the EU-27 and the UK government will definitely have some problems in finalizing the deal, as well as in legitimizing it at the national level. In the end, there is a date for the ultimate Brexit and no side seems eager to change it.

Brexit is the expected event to come in 2019 and in many respects the EU already functions as a Union of 27. There will be some controversy left behind and there will be some difficult transitional period. Things look rather more feasible and manageable than the opposite. Having this done is a shared interest.

Down the road there is yet another expected change, which could be more difficult to manage and come to terms with. As European Parliament elections approach, concerns over the image of an emerging political map of Europe grow bigger. Legislators in the EU Parliament have greater power than ever before and the composition of Political Groups in that Parliament does matter.

In fourteen EU Member States, nationalist and popular right political parties are gaining ground and their popular support may grow even more. According to the latest reports, these parties are far from negligible. Looking into the results of the most recent national elections, in Finland the Finns reached 18%, in Sweden the Sweden Democrats 17,6%, in Germany the Alternative for Germany 12,6%, in Denmark the Danish People's Party 21%, in the Czech Republic the Freedom and Direct Democracy 11%, in the Netherlands the Freedom Party 13%, in Austria the Freedom Party 26%, in France the Front National 13%, in Slovakia Our Slovakia 8%, in Bulgaria United Patriots 9%, in Hungary the Jobbik 19%, in Italy The League 17,4%, in Greece the Golden Dawn 7%, and in Cyprus ELAM 3.7%. If these percentages are reflected in the European Parliament elections in 2019 the political map of EU will shift toward the right edge of the ideological continuum. This will definitely have some ramifications on the day-to-day politics and decision-making across the EU.

Although it is difficult to predict or estimate the actual percentage that each of these parties will secure in the upcoming European Parliament elections or the number of Members of the European Parliament (MPEs) that will come from these parties or whether these MPEs will join the same Group or vote in the same way, it should be noted that the aforementioned political parties (and maybe others) could probably get a much higher percentage in European Parliament election and secure a much bigger representation in the European Parliament than they have in their national Parliaments and have had in the past in the European Parliament. There are some good reasons to expect that. First, participation in European Parliament Elections is lower –while in some cases much more lower– than in national elections. Compared to the voters of traditional political parties, the voters of nationalist and popular right parties demonstrate more commitment and eagerness to support their party in all elections, including European Parliament elections. In that regard, one should expect much higher percentages for these parties, even if they get the same or even lower number of votes in the European Parliament elections than they got in recent national elections.

A second element that should be considered in explaining the potential for bigger participation of nationalist and popular right parties in the European Parliament is that these parties express overt euro-sceptic and euro-pessimist arguments, which seem to be appealing to some European citizens. It seems that the growth of the nationalist and popular right euro-phobic agenda correlates with the persistence of some socio-economic and political problems

that drove EU into certain crises in the last decade. Paradoxically, the European Parliament elections will offer a convenient campaign platform for these parties to express their views on the EU and promote their vision for an “alternative Europe.”

A third element to be considered in the same direction is the degenerating support for traditional political parties. These parties may still have a strong and committed hard-core of supporters but their political periphery is not that healthy. Not in all cases, not in all countries, but the fact is that traditional parties are somehow losing their power of attraction. Additionally, in the vast majority of EU Member States there is a growing tendency for a good number of voters, who support traditional parties, not to attend European Parliament Elections. The average participation in European Parliament elections shows some steady decrease. For two decades now, average participation in European Parliament elections is below 50% with the historic low of 42.61% in the latest elections in 2014. That tendency seems to work to the benefit of nationalist and popular right parties.

The prospect of a European Parliament composed of a much higher number of nationalist and popular right MEPs causes uncertainty and makes EU institutions nervous. Negotiating the new MFF under the shadow of European Parliament elections is quite a mission. The EU Commission and some Member States who see the odds of a compromise to be better at this stage invest on the uncertainty of the post-European Parliament elections to urge for fast progress and an ultimate result at the soonest possible. On the other hand, rushing a deal on the new MFF may not be a good idea, for if it does not materialize into a good and fair balance, it may work to the benefit of the nationalist and popular right parties. But even if the balance is fair enough, nothing that comes from the EU is fair enough for these parties.

Negotiating the new MFF under these circumstances is just one case that shows the potential impact of the emerging political image of Europe. Although there is not much time or resources to turn the situation upside down, there is always time to think how Europe will look like in a few months and what could be done about it.

## MACEDONIAN MYTHOLOGIES AND REALITIES



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With the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991, the name of Macedonia came at the center of a dispute between Greece and the newly independent Republic of Macedonia or Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia. Greece opposed the use of the name 'Macedonia' by the newly formed Republic, citing historical and territorial concerns, resulting from the ambiguity between the new state, the adjacent Greek region of Macedonia and the heritage of the ancient kingdom of Macedon, which falls under the Greek historical heritage and legacy. Moreover, as millions of ethnic Greek inhabitants of Greek Macedonia identify themselves as Macedonians, and are not related to the Slavic inhabitants of the newly formed Republic in their northern borders, Greece also objected to the use of the term 'Macedonian' for the largest ethnic group of the neighboring country.

The new Republic was accused of usurping and appropriating symbols and figures that are historically considered elements of the Greek culture and heritage (like the Vergina Sun, the emblem of the ancient Macedon and Alexander the Great) and of endorsing the irredentist concept of a 'United Macedonia', which would include territories of Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, and Serbia. Between 1992 and 1995, the dispute focused on the new state's flag, which incorporated the Vergina Sun symbol. This was resolved when the flag was changed under the terms of an interim accord agreed between the two states in October 1995.

The naming dispute has intensified to the highest level of international mediation, involving many attempts to achieve a resolution. The two countries formalized relations in 1995 and committed to start negotiations on the naming issue, under the United Nations. Pending a solution, the provisional reference "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (FYROM) is used by most international organizations and states that do not recognize translations of the constitutional name Republic of Macedonia (Република Македонија, Republika Makedonija). Greece further blocks the accession of FYR Macedonia to the EU and NATO that the country fervently wishes to join, until a solution to the naming issue is found.

Since 2006, the FYR Macedonia government launched a project of 'Antiquization' for the purposes of identity construction internally, and asserting pressure on Greece externally. The Macedonian Diaspora of the USA, Canada, Germany and Australia also fervently promoted the project. Under this project, airports and train stations were renamed after ancient Macedonian figures and statues of Alexander the Great and Philip II of Macedon were erected in cities throughout the country. Massive statues of Alexander the Great and Philip II adorn the capital's main square – renamed to 'Macedonia' Square – while airports, highways, stadiums have been named after them (including Skopje's airport, the country's main highway to Greece, etc.). Greece perceived these actions as provocative, the dispute intensified and further impeded FYR Macedonia's EU and NATO applications.

The project of Antiquisation was criticized by academics as it revealed a weak image of archaeology and of other historical disciplines in public discourse, and presented a danger of marginalization of the country (with pre-fabricated, usually made in China, grand plaster copies of Alexander the Great put in every village square). Another criticism came from ethnic Macedonians, who saw this policy as divisive: on the one hand those who identify with a (made in China) classical antiquity and those who identify with the Slavic culture. Ethnic Albanians (25% of the country's population) saw this as a further attempt to marginalize them and exclude them from the national narrative. Moreover, foreign diplomats warned that the project reduced international sympathy for the FYR Macedonia in the naming dispute.

The case of the FYR Macedonia is a typical case where a fledgling state is forming a nation-building process, the national narrative of which aims to enhance a sense of common identity to a diverse population and justify its existence as a nation-state (in the eyes of its population and of the international community). The symbolic framework for the development of this national identity was 'rediscovered' in the glorious ancient Macedonian past of the region. After all, everybody knew Alexander the Great and the Macedonian civilization; to be able to prove that 'we' are the descendants of 'them' immediately places 'us' to another status and justifies our *raison d'être* as a group and legitimizes our national cause. The fact that the ancient Macedonian legacy was already validated and appropriated by the Greek national historical narrative did not seem to matter. The particular dispute clearly demonstrates that symbols and myths are important elements to national identities because of the meaning that is attached to them and they do have enormous capabilities in mobilizing the masses, forcing elites to take political actions.

On 17 June 2018, the two countries signed an agreement to end the naming dispute. Macedonia will be renamed 'Republic of North Macedonia', in exchange for Greece to allow its applications to EU and NATO membership. The agreement still requires ratification by both parliaments to come into

effect, while FYR Macedonia is to hold a referendum. The agreement is a compromise between the two sides (no use of term 'Macedonia' vs. Macedonia and only Macedonia) and does not have the popular support in any of the two. It is however interesting to see how this will evolve and whether pragmatism and realism will prevail over emotional attachments stirred by symbolic frameworks. After all, as Nikola Dimitrov, the FYR Macedonia foreign minister recently said 'in the past we sacrificed our reality for mythology. Now we are sacrificing mythology for reality, and reality is what really matters'.

## THE EVOLUTION OF US-TURKISH RELATIONS FIXED AND VARIABLE DETERMINANTS



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### **A precious but fragile alignment**

US-Turkish partnership dates back to the initial stages of the Cold War. In the aftermath of World War II the new world order and the bi-polar structure of the international system urged Washington to pursue an active international role and to design a global security strategy that attempted to contain the expansion of Soviet influence towards Western Europe. In that context we had the creation of the Trans-Atlantic alliance and NATO. This development led to a meteoric rise of Turkey's geo-strategic value to the West and, particularly, the US security interests, underpinned by three interdependent factors: Ankara's pro-Western orientation as a result of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's reforms (confirmed by Turkey's accession to NATO in 1952), Turkey's geographic proximity to the Soviet Union and its position in the broader Middle East. As characteristically underlined in a secret US National Intelligence Estimate (NIE-9), dated February 26<sup>th</sup> 1951, "[i]n the unlikely event that Turkey should abandon its pro-US alignment, the effect on US interests in the Near East would be extremely serious. There is little doubt that pro-Western elements in most of the adjacent countries, who now hold a precarious balance of influence, would be seriously demoralized and their influence weakened if Turkey abandoned its present alignment."<sup>1</sup> If we look at the three of the factors mentioned above, two of them are pertinent with geography (proximity to the Soviet Union and position in the Middle East). Since geography is characterized by stability, revolutionary changes that would jeopardize Turkey's geostrategic value could hardly emerge. On the other hand, the political orientation of the country is a variable element and, as clearly stated in NIE-9, Turkey's pro-Western alignment is particularly valuable to the United States. In that sense, alignment is not just a factor but an independent variable that defines Turkey's contribution to the US interests. The main hypothesis here is the following: should Turkey abandoned its pro-Western alignment then geography's importance would be downgraded respectively. Therefore, despite the stability of the geographic

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<sup>1</sup> National Intelligence Estimate, "Turkey's Position in the East-West Struggle," INR Files, NIE-9, 26 February 1951. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, Vol. 5, 1119-11126.

factor, a change in Ankara's pro-US and pro-Western policies could cause respective changes in the way Washington viewed Turkey.

Contrary to what many predicted, after the end of the Cold War Turkey became an even more attractive ally to the Western powers. Its participation to the Gulf War in 1991 by making İncirlik air base available to US bombers, despite domestic disputes, was a resounding message to the West that Turkey was still an efficient proxy of US and European interests in the Middle East in the post-Cold War era.<sup>2</sup> Turkish application for accession to the European Economic Community (EEC), which had been submitted a few years earlier, adds to the value of this assumption. Furthermore, Turkey was also expected to facilitate the West in keeping the oil-rich Turkic former Soviet Republics of Central Asia away from radical Islamist influences.<sup>3</sup> Last but not least, as the rise of the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) political hegemony was based on a mild interpretation of political Islam and on a clear intention to proceed with reforms demanded by Turkey's EU-accession process,<sup>4</sup> the West was eager to observe the existence of a "Turkish model".<sup>5</sup> This model, the argument goes, which is characterized by the co-existence of Western-type democracy with mild political Islam, could be useful for Middle Eastern societies struggling to avoid subjection to radical jihadism, in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks.<sup>6</sup>

### **The end of the "Turkish model"**

However, the "Turkish model" vanished ingloriously as Recep Tayyip Erdoğan prevailed over his moderate foes and eventually imposed a more conservative and repressive government style. At the same time, he chose to promote an ambitious foreign policy agenda which aimed at least to increase Turkey's regional influence or, at best, to render Turkey a regional hegemon in the broader Middle East.<sup>7</sup> The main power indicator that Ankara tried to exploit to this end was its soft power, namely its capacity to influence Arab groups and populations which espouse similar religious doctrines. By adopting the profile of a religious leader with trans-border appeal, Mr. Erdoğan chose to

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<sup>2</sup> Patricia Carley, "Turkey's Role in the Middle East," *United States Institute of Peace*, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, "Central Asia: Shatter Zone," *The Atlantic*, April 1992 Issue. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1992/04/central-asia-shatter-zone/518034/>. Πρόσβαση στις 11/11/2017.

<sup>4</sup> Burhanettin Duran, "The experience of Turkish Islamism: between transformation and impoverishment," *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Volume 12, Number 1 (2010): 5-22.

<sup>5</sup> Shadi Hamid, "How Much Can One Strongman Change a Country?" *The Atlantic*, June 26, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/06/erdogan-turkey-islamist/531609/>. Accessed on June 26, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Halim Rane, "An Alternative to the 'Turkish Model' for the Emerging Arab Democracies," *Insight Turkey* Vol. 14, No. 4 (2012): 47-65. Meliha Benli Altunisik, "The Turkish Model and Democratization in the Middle East," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 1/2 (2005): 45-63.

<sup>7</sup> Michalis Kontos, "Hegemony and Balance of Power in the Middle East," *Eastern Mediterranean Geopolitical Review*, Vol. 2 (2016): 11-28, 25.

clash with the Western “civilization” in order to promote an alternative Islamic paradigm. In this framework, a new set of interactions emerged, which critically affected Turkey’s relations with several actors like the US, the EU and Israel, as well as with other Muslim states like Iran, Syria and Egypt.

While this reshuffling was taking place, US partial retreat from the Middle East after 2011 created perceptions of a regional power vacuum.<sup>8</sup> These perceptions, among other consequences, reinforced Turkish plans for the region and, along with the destabilizing effects of the “Arab Spring” and the emergence of ISIS and other jihadist groups, triggered a quest for a new regional balance of power. The dynamics unleashed by those developments brought Turkey and Russia close to each other in times of Cold War-like tensions between Moscow and NATO. This flirt was seen with suspicion by Washington, as it was coupled with statements made and actions initiated by President Erdoğan which could erode NATO’s unity.<sup>9</sup> In that sense, the issue of the purchase of S-400 by Turkey is a major security challenge for the US and NATO which put Turkey’s commitment to the Trans-Atlantic alliance to the test.

### **In search of credibility**

The ongoing rift between Turkey and the US emerged as a result of the fundamental change of Turkey’s political orientation and foreign policy alignment. The later could be seen as the main determinant of the ongoing deterioration of US-Turkish relations. Diplomatic disputes like the Turkish demand for extradition of Imam Gülen, or the detention of the US pastor Andrew Brunson in Turkey increase bilateral tensions, while US support of Syrian Kurdish YPG creates perceptions of an existential threat in Ankara. However, the rest of the factors that have traditionally defined Turkey’s geostrategic value—namely those related with geography—remain intact. This is why the primary goal of Washington is to achieve the re-alignment of Ankara through a stick-and-carrot strategy. The US would not like to see Turkey in a full-fledged alignment with Russia, as this would suggest a major re-distribution of power at a global scale. At the same time, the pressures the Turkish lira and the Turkish economy suffer from may force Mr. Erdoğan to re-examine his stance towards the US and (especially) the EU. However, anti-US sentiments in the Turkish society may continue increasing, thus setting obstacles to a potential restoration of bilateral relations. Apart from tangible interests and estimations, what is equally important when trying to restore

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 23-25.

<sup>9</sup> Burak Begdil, “Turkey: What Ally?” *Gatestone*, September 22, 2014. <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4715/turkey-ally>. Access on 30 September 2014. Normal Stone, “Erdogan’s dreams of empire are perilous to Turkey,” *The Guardian*, 6 December 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/dec/06/erdogan-turkey-russia-syria-foreign-policy>. Access on 26 July 2016. Steven A. Cook, Michael J. Kopolow, “Turkey is no longer a reliable ally,” *Wall Street Journal*, August 10, 2016. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/turkey-is-no-longer-a-reliable-ally-1470869047>. Accessed on 12 August 2016.

ruined relationships is trust, which depends on the perceptions of credibility on both sides. Especially in Washington, which misses the days of Turkey's unquestioned loyalty. As long as the Middle East remains a significant region for US global interests, Washington will always hope for a more credible, preferably post-Erdoğan Turkey.

**GENDER PAY GAP**

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Pay discrimination based on gender is considered illegal in many countries. However, statistics show that there is no equal pay for equal work in the world. At the same time there is much more than that, if we look at the job opportunities between genders. Closing or at least shrinking the gender salary gap should be a top priority in the political agenda of decision makers. When men and women will earn equal salaries for equal jobs, the ties between families will be strengthened, job opportunities will be the same for both genders and eradicating poverty will be accelerated with the inclusion of more women in the markets.

A considerable percentage of women nowadays have higher education and exceptional university results. However, they do not have the same job opportunities as men with the same educational record and experience, would have. That is, because women are being considered by societies as the caregivers and the ones that should be responsible for raising kids. Therefore, at the pick of her career, a woman who decides to have a kid, in most cases, needs a period to go through pregnancy, spend time with her baby the first months and then, go back to work. During that period, a man could have a promotion or a raise in his salary.

The debate here, is whether men and women have equal opportunities after they become parents. During the first years of a child's life it is important for parents and kids to spend time together. The norm is that women have the "responsibility" and the "sensitivity" to be with their kids and take care of them. But is that true? Who says that a father should not spend time with his kids? And who decides whether a father could be equally as good as a mother would be in raising kids? However, the trend is that women should stay home, and men – with the role of the provider - should be the ones to continue working, having more job opportunities and perhaps getting promoted, at the time that the woman would reject proposals and refuse to travel.

Based on that idea, one would think that a reduced maternity leave would serve the cause of shrinking wage gaps. But that has been proved wrong, if one checks the results of countries that reduced the maternity leave period.

Reducing maternity leave period, was considered by some policy makers as a one-way road to tackling discrimination against women in the job market. The idea was that employers would not have second thoughts in hiring women, if the maternity leave period would not affect their businesses. But again, such a policy would affect the family ties and was proved ineffective. The truth is that a mother needs and wants to spend time with her kids and that should be ok. Kids also need their parents, especially during the first months of their lives.

To satisfy both, tackling wage gap and keeping closed family ties, Iceland seems to be the country with the most progressive results by regulating obligational paternity leave for mothers and fathers. The guaranteed paternity leave, voted in 2000 in Iceland, has had remarkable results in the job market and at home. In 2004 a woman would get paid \$0,81 at the time that a man would receive \$1 while today she would make \$0,90. There is still much more to be done, but the results are promising.

In Cyprus, there is a 14,8% wage gap between men and women. Women associations and NGOs demand serious political measures that would change the results and would set women in a better place in the job market. But having a look at the representation of women in political life of the island, one would expect the above results. The Council of Ministers is composed by 11 ministers, out of which only two are women while only 10 Members of the Parliament are women, out of the total of 56 Members of the Parliament.

In the sector of parenthood, like other societies, in Cyprus women are expected to be the caregivers and they are expected to be the ones to stop looking towards their career and look after their kids. According to a 2017 publication of the European Institute for Gender Equality, 50,1 % of the women in Cyprus were responsible for caring and educating their children or looking after elderly people, when the corresponding percentage for Cypriot men was 34,1%. Additionally, only 9,7% of the working women would spent time for sporting, doing cultural or leisure activities outside of their home, and 21,7% would be the corresponding percentage for men.

Obviously, there is a lot of field of improvement in the case of Cyprus. Women level of representation should be improved and there should be much better policies to have equal pay for equal jobs. To tackle discrimination in the labor market, I would consider guaranteed paternity leave as a priority.

## THE EUROPEAN CHARTER OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AND FINANCIAL AUTONOMY: THE CYPRIOT CASE



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### **Introduction**

Cyprus has ratified the European Charter of Local Self-Government (Charter) on May 16<sup>th</sup>1988. This article briefly assesses Cypriot local government's financial autonomy based on the respective principle safeguarded by the Charter.

### **The European Charter of Local Self-Government**

The Charter is an international treaty, adopted under the auspices of the Congress of the Council of Europe, affirming the importance of local government for the exercise of democracy. The Charter has come into force in September 1<sup>st</sup> 1988 and has been ratified by 47 member states of the Council of Europe.

It commits the parties to implementing basic rules assuring the political, administrative and financial independence of local authorities. The Charter defines the principles that protect local autonomy, such as the existence of adequate administrative structures, the conditions under which local responsibilities are exercised, administrative supervision of local authorities' activities and financial resources.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Council of Europe (2010) the principle of "financial autonomy" has the following practical effects:

- Local authorities are entitled to adequate own resources that they can freely enjoy while exercising their powers (article 9.1.)
- These local resources should be proportional with the local powers/duties provided for by the Constitution (article 9.2.)
- An important part of these local resources should derive from local taxes defined by local authorities themselves (article 9.3.)

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the most important principles are those of "local self-government", "decentralization", "administrative autonomy" and "financial autonomy" to name but a few. For more see: (Council of Europe, 2010).

- Local authorities will have access to the national capital market in order to finance their investments (article 9.8.)

This principle appears to be the most important of all, since it determines whether local government is truly autonomous. Thus, without adequate resources and without the possibility of using them in a truly independent manner, there cannot be real autonomy in local government (Pratchett, 2004: 364).

### **Financial Autonomy in Practice: Cypriot Local Government**

The Republic of Cyprus is an island state, divided into six districts, 39 municipalities and 484 communities. Cypriot local government actors face serious financial restrictions reflecting the fact that their financial capacities have been constrained by the central state structures. Table 1, categorizes Cypriot local government actors indicating crucial differences in their financial capacities.

The expenditures of local government as a percentage of the Cypriot GDP and total public sector expenditure are very low, reaching the second lowest level in Europe. Only Malta spends less money (EKDDA, 2010: 267). As noted by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (2011: 24), these restricted financial resources have to do with the *"limited powers due to the small size of the country" ... or because ...: "historically the country has been heavily concentrated."*

**Table 1: Financial Characteristics of the Cypriot Local Government Actors**

<b>Actors (2008-2012)</b>	<b>Own resources min €</b>	<b>Own resources max €</b>	<b>State grants min €</b>	<b>State grants max €</b>
Urban Municipalities	10,094,114	29,206,703	3,978,261	17,850,948
Suburban Municipalities	1,401,433	14,805,288	1,548,522	10,846,000
Rural Municipalities	52,500	6,752,000	853,788	2,732,000
Displaced Municipalities	24,586	67,937	80,909	1,766,274
Communities	10,000	1,688,850	9,000	477,500
Displaced Communities	0	500	1,000	1,000

Source: Kirlappos, 2017.

To make matters worse, local government in Cyprus is characterized by a massive reliance on central government subsidies. Cypriot local government actors are highly dependent on the various state subsidies, without whom, as the Auditor General notes, they would not be able to meet their obligations

(2016: 5). Roughly 40% of the revenues of the Municipalities came from state subsidies (ibid), while government subsidies cover as much as 80% for development and construction projects conducted in the Communities (Ministry of the Interiors, 2013).

Local financial autonomy has also been restricted due to actions taken by the local government actors themselves. Since the current legal framework made no provision regulating default and bankruptcy, excessive and reckless borrowing was consequently allowed.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the total municipal combined debt became as high as €448.904.248 (Auditor General, 2015), with Cyprus GDP for the same year reaching €17.637.200.000. In this context, additional pressure was exerted on the already limited financial capacities of the local government actors, which further endangers their efficiency as well as the quality of the services provided to the citizens.

### **Conclusions**

Despite the fact that Cyprus has ratified the Charter in the late 1980s, the implementation of its principles and particularly the one of financial autonomy has proven to be poor. Consequently, Cypriot local government's autonomy is in practice restricted, along with its ability to function effectively as the administrative level closest to citizens. Besides the poor implementation of the financial autonomy principle by the central state structures, the reckless actions taken by the local government actors themselves further restrict their financial autonomy.

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<sup>2</sup> This practice was conducted with the approval of the Council of Ministers and with state guarantees. For more see: Kirlappos A., Philippou P., Agapiou-Josephides K. (2019)

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## THE EFFECTS OF GLOBALISATION ON EDUCATION: FROM NEO-LIBERALISM TO SOCIAL JUSTICE



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Over the last decades, social scientists have placed great emphasis upon issues intertwined with the phenomenon of globalisation. Globalisation - as an ongoing process - has an important impact on all aspects of human activity: from economy and trade to socio-cultural policies (Razak, 2011). Such effects have increasingly become more apparent due to advances in technology and communication (Tahir, 2011) allowing for the movement of not only peoplescapes or ethnoscapes, but also technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes (Appadurai, 1996). Despite difficulties encountered in providing a solid conceptualisation of the notion, globalisation may be identified as the global intensification of social interactions, in which local events are influenced by what is happening in far distance, and vice versa. Simultaneously, the ease of travel and the opening up of the labour market has reinforced 'super diversity' around the world, while deconstructing the notion of rigid, collective, and territory-attached cultures and identities (Barrett, 2013).

Education 'has become a primary medium of globalisation and an incubator of its agents' (Marginson, 1999: 19). Globalisation, through the changes it brought about to various institutions and structures of our post-modern societies, has led to the creation of diverse, and often conflicting, approaches to education. The tenets attached to the interconnectness of the market around the globe, stemming from hyper-liberalist and post-fordist accounts of globalisation, may be 'blamed' for global segmentation in the field of education as portrayed in the global education policies developed by international organisations (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2016; 2017). On the one hand, liberalist agendas of globalisation that call countries to become economically competitive, lead to the increasing standardisation of education policies, processes, and procedures, in terms of evaluation, encouraging schools around the world to implement 'blanket policies' leading disenfranchised and disadvantaged minority and immigrant groups to further marginalisation, exclusion and suffering (White & Cooper, 2013).

In more detail, in terms of education, Ball (2007) argues that neoliberalism is the dominant politico-economic ideology that influences the formation of global education discourses suggesting the introduction of market mechanisms in the education domain. What neoliberalism has introduced to education refers to international benchmarking, the privatisation of education, importing management techniques from the corporate sector, and other ideals such as choice, competition, and decentralisation (Verger *et al.*, 2012). As a consequence, school-based management, teachers' accountability, public-private partnerships, and conditional fund-transfer schemes are some of the global education policies often cited as a result of neoliberalism.

However, such policies often entail culturally assimilative accounts of education focusing on: launching indicators and benchmarks aiming to 'measure' school success, while disregarding issues pertaining to social inclusion; learning and teaching in the official language of the reception country, while disregarding other mother languages; and, introducing English as the medium of instruction as a response to recognising its dominant role in trade and business. On the other hand, globalisation has simultaneously mobilised a global justice movement aiming to *inter alia* promote egalitarian policies around the world. International and European organisations, as for example the United Nations and UNESCO, but also the Council of Europe and the European Union, appear to be strong-willed to safeguard human rights, equity, and social justice regardless of national, ethnic or religious backgrounds (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2016; 2017). Arguably, the adverse economic and social changes associated with globalisation demand the introduction of new ways of thinking in educational systems across the world.

Evans (2008: 272) in attempting to address the question 'if an alternative globalisation is possible', argues for 'replacing the dominant (hegemonic) global regime with one that maximises democratic political control and makes the equitable development of human capabilities and environmental stewardship its priorities'. Transnational activist and theorist activity opposing the current hegemonic form of globalisation has been called as 'the global justice movement'. Globalisation through the lens of social justice and decolonisation should refrain from 'an overly-simplistic approach (can't we all just get along?) approach' to 'a systemic approach that insists first and foremost on the construction of an equitable and just world' (Gorski, 2009: 88). Verger *et al.* (2012) claim that globalisation also 'fosters the organisation of transnational social justice movements that struggle for the realisation of education as a global public good and its endorsement as a human right'. Civil society movements, such as the Global Campaign for Education, but also coalitions of nation states, such as the ALBA countries in Latin America, are found to contest to the domination of neoliberal policies pressing for increased state intervention in education.

In conclusion, the conjunction between the neoliberal and social-justice agendas of globalisation has greatly influenced educational policy in developing, but also in developed countries. By bringing to the surface the debate between the two 'facets' of globalisation – the neoliberal versus the socially-just one – what I argue is that future research ought to examine the question 'what are the implications of the global social-justice movement for national education policies across the world within a neoliberal context'. Arguably, the dominance of the neoliberal model has led to global preoccupation with 'excellence', and accountability in education as part of the development of a global knowledge economy (Wilkins, 2015). The need to examine the intersection between such a model and a global egalitarian agenda of equity is thus imperative.

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ISSN (online) 2421-8111



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