

GLOBAL TURKEY  IN EUROPE

Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), Istanbul Policy Center (IPC) and Stiftung Mercator

cordially invite you to the roundtable discussion on

MODERNIZING THE CUSTOMS UNION: A KEY TO REINVIGORATE A RULES-BASED EU-TURKEY RELATIONSHIP?

After the approval of Turkey's constitutional change, it is now crunch time in the EU-Turkey relations. The big question lying ahead of us is whether or not the accession talks will be formally suspended, now that any justification for EU actors to claim that Turkey "sufficiently fulfils" the Copenhagen criteria is removed. Nevertheless, Turkey remains a strategic partner for both the EU and its Member States in a wide range of areas, including trade and security, which were recently highlighted as priority areas by Germany and France. This implies that active and honest discussion between actors in the EU and Turkey on how to face existing challenges and rethink relations is needed more than ever.

In this reality of rising tensions between the EU and Turkey and increasing doubts concerning Turkey's accession, the economic front could become even more central in reinforcing the future relationship. The EU is Turkey's first trade partner and Turkey ranks among the EU's first five import and export markets. The entry into force of the customs union in 1996 has not only boosted Turkey's economic power, but also paved the way for its democratization and Europeanization. On the economic front, the debate surrounds both the risk of an economic crisis in Turkey, and the prospect of opening negotiations on a modernized customs union. Whether or not an upgraded customs union could serve as a pillar in a novel rules-based institutional frame between the two parties stands as a question urging debate.

The first event of Global Turkey in Europe V programme, to be held in Paris, will offer a timely opportunity to discuss the issue of economic partnership between EU and Turkey, with a particular attention to the upgrading of the customs union and its possible economic and political effects on Brussels-Ankara relations.

15 DECEMBER, 15:00 – 18:00

EUISS

100, AVENUE DE SUFFREN - PARIS

PROGRAMME

14:30 Welcome Coffee

15:00 Welcome and Introduction

NATHALIE TOCCI

Director, IAI

FLORENCE GAUB

Senior Analyst, EUISS

FUAT KEYMAN

Director, IPC

DANIEL GRÜTJEN

Head of Istanbul Office, Stiftung Mercator

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JACQUES PELKMANS

Senior Research Fellow, CEPS

Facilitator of the roundtable

MIA FORBES PIRIE

The Policy Partners