



‘[Turkey's EU] membership prospects are buried.’

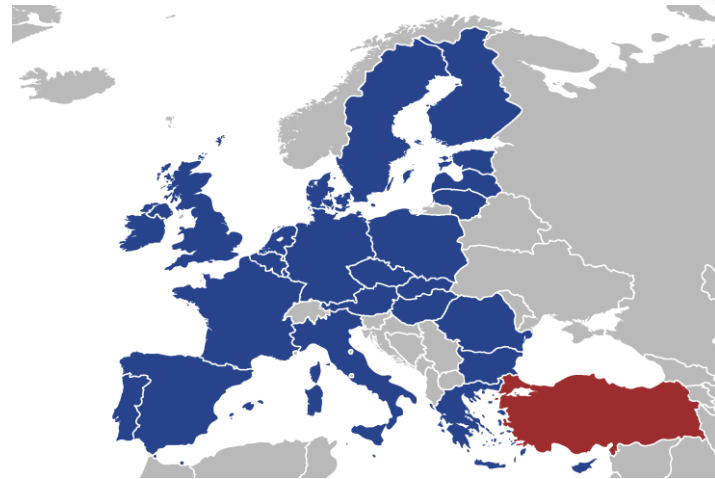
-Austrian Chancellor Christian Kern

April 17, 2017

Conditions of European Integration: The Salience of Religious Identity in the Case of Turkey's EU Membership

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- **Growing body of literature on the relationship between religion and politics**
- **Relatively little application in integration studies**
- **Turkey: Candidate since 1987, perhaps farther than ever from membership in 2017**



Given that Turkey has sufficiently met the Copenhagen Criteria for accession into the EU, why has it not become a member yet?

**Research
Puzzle**

**Research
Question**

Significance

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretical

Gap in knowledge in existing scholarship

- Scholarship on economic, political, and social drivers of integration
 - Neo-functionalism
 - Intergovernmentalism
 - Social institutionalism
- Scholarship on identity and **religion**

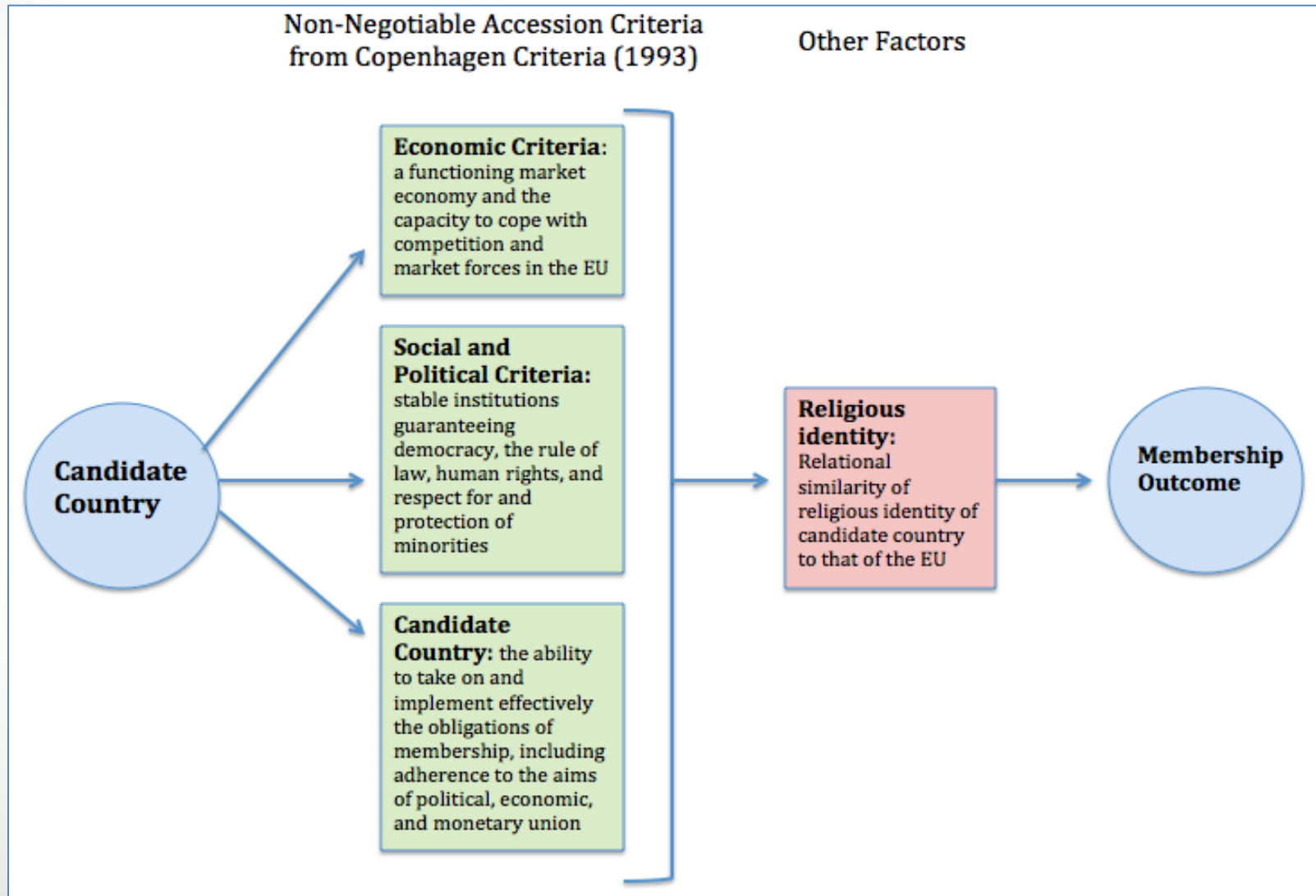
Practical

Implications for policy and diplomacy

- Turkey side –foreign policy and identity politics
- EU side –institutional and systematic bias

Argument

A Comprehensive Framework



Case Selection

Why Turkey?



- **Single-Case Study**
- **Unique Case**
 - Data Rich
 - Isolating causal mechanism
 - Using comparative cases

Research Methods

A Mixed-Methods Approach

Part I (quantitative)

- Policy chapters (13 out of 35)
- Proxy variables
- **Comparison:** Bulgaria and Romania
- Scoring and Ranking

Part II-1 (Quantitative)

- Textual analysis: **content analysis**
 - Word frequencies and word searches

Part II-2 (Qualitative)

- **Historical representation**
 - Timeline
 - Events

Results I

Bulgaria and Romania Comparison

Turkey's performance on the Copenhagen Criteria is compared to that of Bulgaria and Romania at the time of their accession →

→ Turkey should have become an EU member by now →

Turkey's
Score: +2



→ the Copenhagen Criteria cannot be the only conditions for membership

Results II

the Factor of Religious Identity

Two sets of documents:

- Official
- Media

Code: Key words related to religious identity

Word frequencies and word searches

- Present in all documents
- Low frequencies → extenuating circumstances



So What?

Implications, Limitations, and Opportunities for Further Research



Cartoon Movement:
<https://www.cartoonmovement.com/collection/77>

- **Religious identity matters!**
 - Just how much: ?
 - Language and discourse analysis
 - comparative cases and comprehensive textual analysis
- Theory: operationalizing religious identity
- Practice: rethinking foreign policy