



*'[Turkey's EU] membership prospects are buried.'*

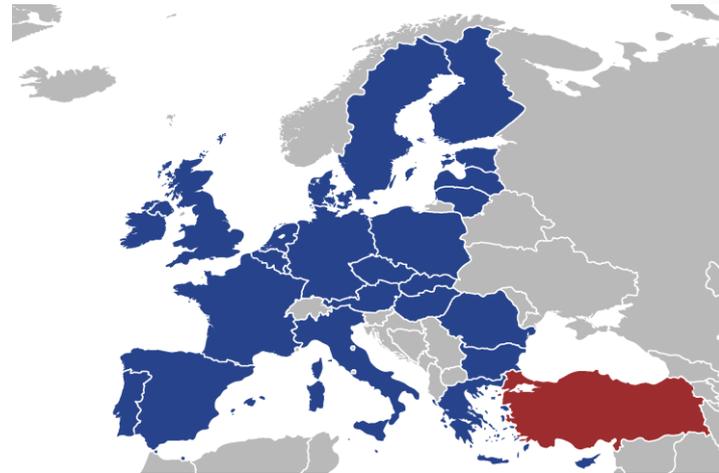
*-Austrian Chancellor Christian Kern*

*April 17, 2017*

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

Naz Akyol

- **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**

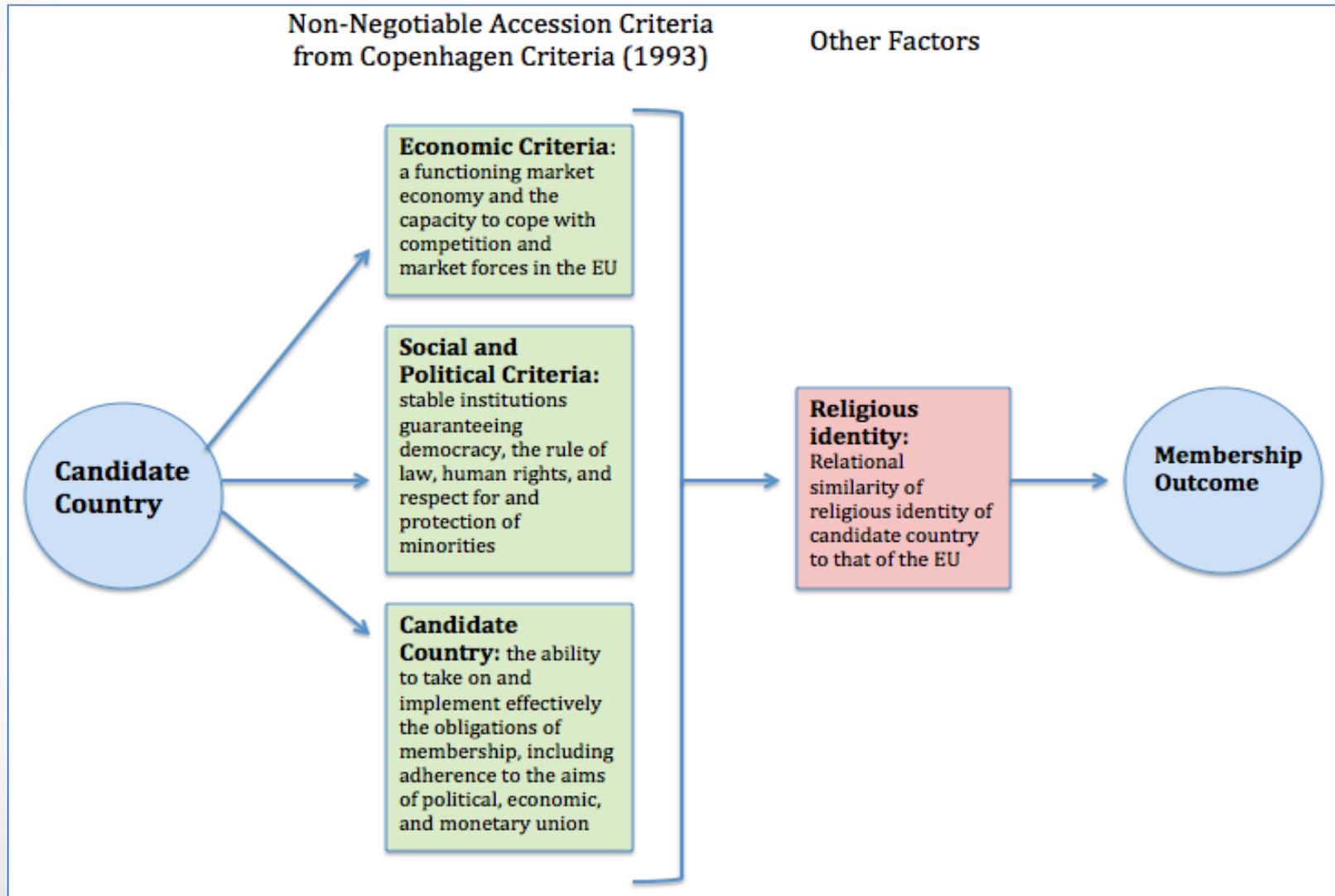
### Practical

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

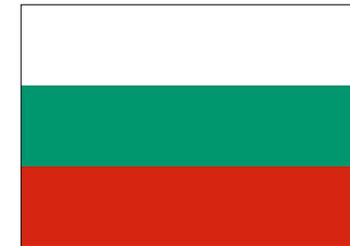
# Results I

## 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