

VIADUCT Teachers' Training Seminar

The VIADUCT Teachers' Training Seminar took place on 30 May - 1 June 2018 in Prague, at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University. It welcomed ten participants from various institutions in Turkey, Czechia, Greece, Belgium, Bosnia, and Moldova. Their background comprised a broad spectrum of disciplines, including international relations, European studies, politics, business, and law. The seminar focused on the questions of what and how to teach about EU-Turkey relations and for whom, and what innovations may raise students' interest in the topic.

The EU-Turkey relations are at the same time a very specific and a very broad topic. As a result, it is not easy to target course curricula to the particular student audience, both in terms of attractiveness for the students and of the contribution to the overall disciplinary and methodological training. The participants have concluded that there is a decline in interest in EU-Turkey relations in Turkey due to the stalled enlargement process and low prospect of employment related to the subject of the study. At the same time, there is a rising interest in Turkey and its relations with the EU among European students, particularly because of the instrumental role of Turkey in the EU's dealing with the migration crisis in 2015-2016 and its influence on the EU-NATO cooperation. Nevertheless, the participants agreed that a whole course on EU-Turkey relations would not attract sufficient audience at EU universities, because it would be considered too specific. Instead, individual aspects of the EU-Turkey relationship can feature as instructive case studies in broader courses on EU history, EU law, EU politics, or EU economic integration. In Turkey, in turn, it is still worth offering whole courses on EU-Turkey relations, because the issue is too important for Turkey and Turkish policy in all sectors to be left unaddressed.

Consequently, the group discussed two parallel, but distinct questions. Namely, which topics should be addressed in the EU-Turkey relations course and how could EU-Turkey relations feature in broader courses. In the former case, the participants agreed that there are several topics that need to be covered in any course on given theme. Particularly, the historical perspective of EU-Turkey relations, the institutional framework for the relationship, the economic, political, and legal aspects of the customs union, as well as the dynamics and institutional embedding of the accession process. In addition to that, however, the course can draw from a very broad pool of issues that constitute the backbone of the cooperation and non-cooperation between the EU and Turkey. These are, among others, the Cyprus conflict, migration, energy security, NATO cooperation, human rights and minority rights, relations with Greece, the issue of absorption capacity, rule of law and democracy.

In the latter case, the EU-Turkey relations can enrich teaching in all sorts of disciplines and curricula. For historians, for example, the EU-Turkey relations may serve as a case of transnational history and cross-border influence between separate national developments. For international relations and politics, the issue of Turkish role in EU-NATO cooperation may be interesting, while the European studies may be rather interested in Turkey as a specific case of enlargement policy. For public policy analysis, the Europeanisation of Turkish institutions and policies is relevant and for economics the customs union between the EU and Turkey could serve as a good case of instruction. The relationship between the two may feed into sociology courses through various channels, namely through the question of

European identity in Turkey, the issue of migration, or the discourses on and attitudes to the EU in Turkey and Turkey in the EU. Similarly, the EU-Turkey relations provide a number of interesting documents that may be analysed through the legal scholarship perspective, such as the customs union, the association agreement, and the migration deal.

It is not enough to know what to teach and to whom, if one does not know how. Therefore, the seminar participants actively participated in the 3rd Conference on Teaching and Learning Politics, International Relations and European Studies as a part of their teachers' training. The conference brought together more than 60 scholars and teachers who actively seek innovation in their teaching and experiment with new technologies and approaches. Advantages and drawbacks of teaching strategies, such as role playing and simulations, were discussed and the opportunities provided by new technical tools, such as social media and cloud-based applications, were presented. The seminar participants not only actively participated in the conference, but also subsequently re-thought the teaching of the EU-Turkey in light of the new knowledge and inspiration. In particular, the role of new technical tools and solutions, such as online real-time polls, electronic shared white boards, or twitter analysis as an assignment for students studying EU-Turkey relations, was quoted as inspirational method to engage students in the subject. In general, a student-centred approach, which is extensively described in teaching-focused literature, seems to be crucial in ensuring students' participation and in cultivating their interest in EU-Turkey relations even in times where there is little belief in the success of the accession negotiations. Particularly, role playing, simulations, and jigsaw method were highly evaluated by the participants as promising methods of instruction that push students to think differently and to step into other people's shoes.