# CHAPTER I
# INTRODUCTION

## A. Background

The European Union (EU) was formed when several European countries wanted to connect larger countries into one. There is awareness of the negative impact of wars that occurred in the past, making these countries make efforts to save Europe by forming the European Union. Before the formation of the European Union, several international institutions in Europe, referred to as the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), European Economic Community (EEC), and European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC) were included in the pioneering countries as The Inner Six (France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, and Italy).

The primary purpose of its establishment, The European Community (EC), is to create a free market. The specific provisions governing are available in: Article 3(a) which prohibits taxes; Article 3(b) which regulates the Community's standard commercial policies such as in agriculture, fisheries, and transportation; Article 3(g) which requires the Community to explicitly publicize that competition is guaranteed in the internal market is not disturbed, and Article 3(h), which sets about the estimated level of legal need in the free market. The ECSC is a group of Inner Six countries dedicated to reducing trade obstacles and developing marketplaces where products, employees, and capital from the coal and steel industries can freely travel.

The EU has built a single market for goods and services spanning 27 countries, with 500 million citizens free to move and settle wherever they want. It created the single currency — the euro — now a primary world currency, which makes the single market more efficient. As for the success of this European Union, other countries flocked to become members of the EU. These can be seen from the procedure for expanding

membership in the European Union, which begins with the application of countries with potential to join the EU. There are several steps in applying for membership in the European Union. The first step is to recognize and agree that all considerations in the application follow the principles of the European Union. If appropriate, the European Commission will accept the official statement and review whether the economic position and the applicant's country can be under the existing conditions in the EU. The criteria for EU membership require candidates to achieve "stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union". (Morelli, 2010)

Until now, several candidates entered the membership list and applied to the EU. These countries include Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Turkey. We can take example such as Turkey, where one of the applicants began applying in 1987. Turkey has been working on reforms to meet the Copenhagen Criteria needed to open accession negotiations. Moreover. Turkey and the European Union finally started talk the negotiations in 2005. To achieve full membership, Turkey must carry out 35 chapters. One of the negotiations that contain policy areas must be agreed on. However, in its development, the process of negotiating Turkish accession is going very slowly. Only 13 of the original chapters have been opened, and the rest are still closed due to conflicts between Turkey and Cyprus. The stalemate in the negotiation process has resulted in Turkey's membership status remaining uncertain until today. It is also unavoidable that Turkey still has some unresolved issues, such as human rights concerns and the Cyprus conflict. This issue is also a barrier to Turkey's accession to the European Union.

Based on history, the relations between Turkey and the EU have been complicated since the Ottoman Empire, when Turkey first engaged with European countries. After that, the relationship stretches back to 1963, when Turkey signed the Association Agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC), which granted Turkey inaugural membership. However, Turkey's political and economic position was marked by instability, civil unrest, and the Cyprus crisis during the 1970s, resulting in a severe disadvantage in the EU-Turkey relationship. After a military coup in the early 1980s, relations between Brussels and Turkey were momentarily thawed in the 1980s.

Nonetheless, following significant economic and political structural reforms, Turkey officially filed for full EC membership in 1987. Whereas the EC indicated that Turkey was not yet ready to join the Community then, the EC adopted the strategic position of maintaining strong relations with Turkey by desiring to establish a Customs Union with Turkey while deferring full membership. When Turkey was given official EU candidate status in 1999, the EU-Turkey relationship took on a new dimension. This judgment stated that the governments of the EU member-states at the time positively answered the question of whether Turkey could, in principle, join the EU. Accession negotiations began based on a negotiating framework adopted by Turkey. Moreover, the 25 EU member states and Turkey, which comprises the ground principles for the negotiation process. Although the question of whether Turkey naturally belongs to Europe was answered during the 1993 Helsinki summit, the subject continues to raise numerous fundamental problems in the public and political discourse.

However, through a lengthy process, talks on negotiations related to the Copenhagen criteria led to Turkey's proposal being repeatedly suspended due to Cyprus conflict. Until finally the EU Council agreed in 2018 that "no more chapters may be

considered for opening or closing". Therefore, the accession talks have practically come to a halt.

Apart from Turkey, one of the countries from Southeastern Europe is Bulgaria, which has a difficult road to EU membership. In 1992-1993, Bulgaria negotiated its Association or 'Europe' Agreement with the EU. It was signed in March 1993 and serves as the legal basis for the country's existing relationship with the Union. While the European Commission's mandate for negotiating the Association Agreements was restrictive for all CEE applicants, Bulgaria's special issues caused problems. The first was the insertion of an advanced suspension clause that allowed the agreement to be suspended in the case of a violation of human rights and democratic norms. This resulted in a temporary suspension of the agreement as a consequence of an instance of human rights breaches found to have breached one of the Copenhagen Agreement's June 1993 components or conditions. On December 14, 1995, however, amid this period of political unrest, Bulgaria officially sought to join the EU. The plan was proposed by the Bulgarian Socialist Party government, led by Zhan Videnov. In its materials, the Commission still states that it will not review Bulgaria and would postpone admission negotiations, despite the fact that Bulgaria's economy has only just started to recover from the crisis that began at the end of 1996.

The political instability and lack of will in politics regarding EU accession parties led to relatively slower economic and political reforms and a worse record of acquisition implementation. In addition, the EU's hampered and threatened assessment process against Bulgaria is due to a lack of progress in dealing with high-level corruption. The literature on Europeanization to test the impact of the pre-accession of EU political requirements on effective democracy by adjusting the reading of the rule of law, transparency, bureaucratic quality, government stability with corruption.

[Racovita, 2011] Corruption is subject to EU monitoring mechanisms because the Copenhagen criteria mention the rule of law, transparency, and separation of powers and provide the ability for sin to distort them (corruption in the legislature reduces accountability and representation; corruption in the judiciary suspends the rule of law, and; corruption in public administration results in the unequal provision of services). It makes Bulgaria increasingly show a lack of progress in overcoming high corrupt rates and a lack of active participation in politics.

However, there are steps given to Bulgaria in meeting the political criteria for EU accession. One of them is the involvement of the EU and aid agencies from each government concerning Bulgaria. The governments of EU member states sought linkages with the generic EU approach through so-called twinning projects funded by the national Phare2 program. In cases where a given member state was implementing EU-funded twinning projects with government or judicial authorities in Bulgaria while also financing projects through its bilateral aid agency, the twinning projects were seen as a kind of law enforcement complement to the aid agency's focus on development. [Todorov, 2008] After that, Bulgaria successfully became member of EU in 2007. against this backdop, this research explains the problematic of Turkey's accession into EU by making comparison to the accession process of Bulgaria into EU.

## B. Research Question

Why is Turkey's accession into the EU more problematic than Bulgaria?

## C. Purpose of Research

Based on the thesis proposal entitled "A Comparative Study Between Turkey – Bulgaria Accession to European Union (EU)," the author aims to answer the questions that exist in the formulation of the problem of how turkey until now has not been

accepted by the EU as a member by looking at their identity or how constructivist see this kind of problem.

## D. Theoretical Framework

**Constructivism Theory**

In continuing the dominance of neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism, the study of International Relations makes an idea of constructivism theory. The concept of constructivism, they believe, is to convince people that the structures that unite humanity are determined more by shared ideas than by material forces. The belief represents an ideological perspective that once dominated the International Relations discipline, especially before World War II; and second, the belief that identity and actors' interests are more determined by shared ideas than natural factors. Therefore, it has a meaning where the actions of an actor in achieving their national interests can be determined by motives, reasons, and desires that are more formed by interactions between individuals in the surrounding environment. It can be in the form of social, political, economic, and cultural structures that characterize how an actor carries the ideas of his country.

According to Alexander Wendt regarding constructivism, "socially shared knowledge is knowledge that is both common and connected between individuals". Moreover, Wendt emphasized, that "the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature [Wendt, 1999]. Previous major theories of international relations argued that national interests are based on tangible reasons for determining national interests. However, Wendt's constructivism holds that shared ideas, rather than tangible facts, shape national interests. According

to Wendt, everything has a material foundation, such as bodies for individuals and territory for states.

Furthermore, constructivism examines various dimensions that are the construction of ideas as a result of interactions between actors, such as plans, opinions, issues, values, identities, norms, cultures, and so on, in contrast to mainstream perspectives such as Realism, Liberalism, and Structuralism, which place a strong emphasis on the actors and various patterns of relationships between them. However, constructivism, instead, theorizes about the meaning of absent interest. Just as identities and interests are produced through social practices, missing interests are understood by constructivists as creating absences and omissions that are understandable products of social rules and structure. (Hopf, 1998) However, there is a specific definition of constructivism, such as Adler, who informs us that constructivism "is the view that how the material world shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of the material world". (Zehfuss, 2002)

Therefore, seeing the situation of Turkey's plan to participate in becoming a member of the European Union, which until now has not been accepted by the EU, makes many state actors question this issue. As a result, according to a constructivist perspective, the EU is a socially constructed actor; the interests of the EU and its member states are molded by their identity concepts and the dominant norms and values of European and global international society. This is reflected in the EU's foreign policy actions, such as identity considerations that impact the EU's ties with all other actors, not just the 'Muslims' Turkey. In other words, EU–Turkey relations are not isolated in which a deviation from a strategic, utility-driven EU foreign policy is unavoidable due to cultural differences with non-EU players.

- **Identity**

Identity is characterized by many factors, such as race, ethnicity, and gender, that mention the most proper place of difference. According to Goffman's analysis, identity is where a country can show a characteristic that exists in that country in comparison to another. In constructivists, the state has many social identities built socially through interactions with other actors. [Theys, 2017] In addition, identity can be understood as a self-representation of how actors realize who they are and how they signify their interests. One of them is that State identity is generally seen as part of the culture, which most constructivists define as a socially embraced belief. [Alexandrov M. , 2003] Given the controversial assumptions of the state, Wendt's approach to identity is how the state has a self-understanding that will later shape the interests of the state.

The concept of identity has received much attention in constructivist approaches to EU–Turkey relations. This is due mainly to the prospect of Turkish accession to the EU igniting hot political discussions in Europe about whether Turkey is a European country with a viable accession perspective based on culture, religion, geography, and history. Applied to the case of EU–Turkey relations, the constructivist perspective would contend that the identity incompatibility between the EU and Turkey on the grounds of mainly cultural and religious differences between the two is socially constructed and cannot be assumed as a given. Compared with Bulgaria, which also has its state identity, makes it more convincing that the EU is seeing or making a point that identity can be the factor of their accession. Therefore, constructivism offers a broad conceptual and theoretical foundation for understanding EU–Turkey interactions. It permits scholars to investigate the relationship's identity and value-laden features without succumbing to naive essentialism. The case of EU–Turkey relations also brings contrasting ideas advanced by various constructivist versions.

## E. Arguments

Based on the data and research results in the previous discussion, the hypothesis of this study is as follows:

1. In a constructivist view, the existence of the interest of the European Union in shaping its regional identity becomes an exciting value in the international Community. This shows that there is a possibility of identity factors from Turkey, which is one of the reasons for the difference in the country's character. It can also be proven by comparing with the other states which also sent their proposal for joining the EU, such as Bulgaria, which from their geography and identity are already entangled in the scope of Europeanization.

## F. Research Method

In writing this thesis proposal, the author conducts research using qualitative methods. In that way, the author collects data and information based on journals that can be a source for the author to answer the formulation of existing problems. The qualitative method is used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behavior, and interactions. (Pathak, Jena, & Kalra, 2013) Moreover, in qualitative methods, the author will explain and answer the research question based on the perspective of Turkish society in response to identifying issues that hinder the membership process from entering the European Union.

The data sources used in this proposal are based on the primary data sources: the official documents issued by the latest researchers. It can be in the form of books, journals, and articles of study on International Relations that help the author answer the research problems. The author used a descriptive qualitative data analysis technique to examine the research data, then describe the issue based on current facts and connect

those facts. Meanwhile, the author's writing approach is the deductive method, in which the author begins the discussion by stating the problem in general and then explicitly describing the effect of the previously discussed issues. In analyzing this topic, the author already researched some related journals, but they just stated the case based on economic, political, and human rights problems. Therefore, the author will focus on constructivist perspectives, which can be one of the factors that Turkey still cannot join the EU members in comparison with the Bulgaria's case in the accession process.

## G. Range Of Research

To understand this research process, the author will focus on explaining how Turkey wants to be a member of the European Union by explaining its reasons. After understanding the point, how the European Union followed up on Turkey's proposals to become a member should be examined. Compared with Bulgaria, which has the same track record in fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria, Bulgaria received special treatment from the EU. In reality, until now, Turkey's proposal is still unfinished, and the author will explain this problem based on the constructivist point of view where there is an identity issue. The period of this research is from the first time Turkey applied to the EU in 1987 through its candidacy status in 1995, as well as the recent evolution of its process as accession discussions beginning in 2005 till the present still in high-level Political Dialogue. Nonetheless, the writer may utilize data before or after the time mentioned earlier if the issues to be researched are distantly linked to the problem of the thesis to widen the study area.

## H. Systematic Writing

The system of writing in this research is arranged as follows:

**Chapter I** consist of the Background, Research Question, Purpose of Research, Theoretical Framework, Hypothesis, Research Method, Range of Research, and Systematic Writing.

**Chapter II** will explain in more detail the process of submitting a Turkish membership proposal to the EU. By presenting the factors that hinder this submission process, especially in identity issues, by including facts or case studies showing differences in culture and state identity that do not follow EU principles. Moreover, this chapter will talk about the history of Bulgaria's accession to the EU and the special treatment it had from the EU.

The flow of writing sub-chapter I will begin by explaining Turkey's history with the EU, the history of relations between Turkey and EU, the process of entering a proposal to join as a member, and the stages of submission. In addition, the author will also mention the obstacles that have hindered Turkey until now, which have not been accepted. Furthermore, in sub-chapter II, the author will explain the history of relations between Bulgaria and EU, the Bulgaria process in carrying out the stages of applying as an EU member with Bulgaria's condition at that time, which had some obstacles that were not under the requirements of becoming a member until it reached the point where Bulgaria received special treatment from the EU.

**Chapter III** the author will compare the case study between Turkey and Bulgaria through the similarity of the two who proposed to become EU members who both have problems in their countries until there are obstacles in the application process.

**Chapter IV** contains a broad conclusion from the discussion results in the previously described chapter, accompanied by the author's views on this issue by providing suggestions for subsequent research.