

# Transactional or Transcendent? Turkey's Ties to the European Union

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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**The West's relationship with Ankara will become increasingly cold as long as populist leaders on both sides continue polarizing their constituents with anti-Muslim and anti-Western rhetoric.**

**W**ith populist political movements gaining traction across the world, it has become increasingly important for the European Union to understand populist leaders' motivations both at home and abroad, and to calibrate its foreign policy accordingly. Having come to power as Turkey's prime minister in 2003, Recep Tayyip Erdogan is the archetype of populist leaders gaining prominence today, and just like US President Donald Trump and Dutch politician Geert Wilders, Erdogan uses foreign threats as a political tool for rallying support at home. For the two sides, stoking anti-Muslim and anti-Western sentiment, respectively, has become an easy political tactic for winning votes domestically. However, the question remains: as far as Turkey is concerned, is this civilisational polarisation a superficial, temporary political tactic that the countries will be able to transcend, or does it signal a more fundamental shift in Turkish-EU ties towards nothing more than a transactional relationship?...

*To read the full article, download the PDF above. This item was originally published on the [Heinrich Boell Foundation website \(https://eu.boell.org/en/2017/05/08/transactional-or-transcendent-turkeys-ties-european-union\)](https://eu.boell.org/en/2017/05/08/transactional-or-transcendent-turkeys-ties-european-union). ❖*

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