

CONSTRUCTIVE EURASIANISM IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN: TÜRKİYE'S ROLE IN BALANCING COOPERATION, SOVEREIGNTY, AND REGIONAL STABILITY

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Analysis No : 2025 / 3

28.03.2025

Introduction

Türkiyes geopolitical position as a connection point between Europe and Asia has gained increasing significance in an era of shifting global power dynamics. The Constructive Eurasianism framework developed by the Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM) offers a strategic vision that will enable Türkiye to navigate safely through the complexities posed by this delicate geopolitical position. This approach positions Türkiye as a nexus between East and West and fosters dialogue and collaboration across the vast Eurasian landmass. It should be underlined that the concept of Türkiye as a nexus between East and West is central to Constructive Eurasianism.

As mentioned in our various past analyses, the core principles of Constructive Eurasianism are strategic autonomy, rejection of anti-Westernism, dynamic geopolitical adaptation, and stability. By advocating for a balanced approach that maintains institutional ties with the West while exploring cooperative opportunities in the East, Constructive Eurasianism decisively rejects anti-Westernism while promoting strategic autonomy, stability, and regional cooperation.[1]

Through these core principles, Constructive Eurasianism positions Türkiye as pivotal in shaping 21st-century geopolitics. Its balanced approach allows Türkiye to navigate complex international dynamics while promoting cooperation over conflict □□ strategy particularly relevant in regions like the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Eastern Mediterranean □ Strategic Relevance and Application of Constructive Eurasianism

The Eastern Mediterranean provides a critical testing ground for this framework. As a region of intersecting interests □□□□□ energy resources to maritime disputes and security concerns □□□ presents challenges and opportunities for Türkiye to apply Constructive Eurasianisms principles. The frameworks emphasis on respecting sovereignty, promoting multilateral collaboration, and addressing destabilization efforts with strategic autonomy is particularly relevant in this contested geography.[3] Through its engagement in energy projects, diplomatic initiatives, and security strategies, Türkiye has demonstrated its potential to act as a stabilizing force while safeguarding its national interests

The Eastern Mediterranean is a region of immense geopolitical significance, serving as a nexus of intersecting interests related to energy resources, trade routes, and security concerns. It has become a focal point for regional and global powers, including Türkiye, Russia, China, the European Union (EU), and the United States. Türkiye's strategic position in this contested geography presents challenges and opportunities for implementing the principles of Constructive Eurasianism.[1]

The Eastern Mediterranean hosts substantial natural gas reserves, particularly in the Levant Basin and Egypts Zohr field. These resources have attracted international attention, with countries such as the island of Cyprus, Israel, Egypt, and Greece forming trilateral partnerships to exploit them. However, these alliances often exclude Türkiye, exacerbating regional tensions. Sovereignty disputes over maritime boundaries □□□□□□□□□□ between Türkiye, Greece, and the southern part of the island of Cyprus —further complicate the regions dynamics.[2]

Türkiyes policy in the Eastern Mediterranean reflects its broader strategic vision. As a critical energy transit corridor linking Middle East and North African producers to European consumers, Türkiye seeks to secure its national interests while avoiding isolation from regional energy initiatives. The region also plays a vital role in Türkiyes security architecture, particularly in countering perceived threats from trilateral alliances and safeguarding its maritime rights under the "Blue Homeland" doctrine.[3]

Application of Constructive Eurasianism to Regional Challenges

Constructive Eurasianism provides a framework for addressing these challenges by promoting stability through balanced partnerships that avoid fostering rivalries or antagonisms. Its principles can be applied to enhance cooperation while respecting the sovereignties of the countries. Constructive Eurasianism advocates for Türkiye to act as a stabilizing force by mediating disputes over maritime boundaries and energy exploration rights and, in other words, promoting stability through balanced partnerships. For example, Türkiye could propose multilateral agreements that include all stakeholders □□□□ as Israel, Egypt, and Greece □□ ensure equitable resource sharing while reducing tensions.[4]

As a nexus between East and West, Türkiye is uniquely positioned to foster dialogue between competing powers in the region. Leveraging Türkiye's strategic position aligns

with Constructive Eurasianisms emphasis on avoiding zero-sum approaches and promoting cooperative solutions that benefit all parties involved.[5] Enhancing Cooperation While Respecting Sovereignty, Constructive Eurasianism underscores the importance of respecting neighboring sovereignties while pursuing regional initiatives.

Examples of Türkiyes Engagement

Türkiye has already demonstrated aspects of Constructive Eurasianism through its involvement in regional initiatives. Türkiye's seismic research, drilling activities, and energy projects in contested areas highlight its commitment to securing its maritime rights while exploring potential resource-sharing avenues. Despite tensions and diplomatic efforts with interested regional countries over Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), Türkiye has proposed dialogue mechanisms to resolve disputes peacefully. The "Blue Homeland" doctrine, Security Initiatives, reflects Türkiyes broader strategy to assert its maritime rights while maintaining stability through enhanced naval presence.

Conclusion

Constructive Eurasianism provides Türkiye with a strategic framework to navigate the complexities of modern geopolitics, particularly in the contested region of the Eastern Mediterranean. By emphasizing principles such as strategic autonomy, rejection of anti-Westernism, dynamic geopolitical adaptation, and stability, this approach redefines Türkiyes role as a pivotal actor in fostering dialogue and collaboration across Eurasia. The concepts focus on balancing cooperation with sovereignty enables Türkiye to mediate conflicts, promote multilateral partnerships, and safeguard its national interests without compromising regional stability.

In the Eastern Mediterranean, Constructive Eurasianism offers solutions to pressing challenges such as maritime disputes, energy resource competition, and security concerns. Türkiyes engagement in seismic research, energy exploration, and diplomatic initiatives demonstrates the practical application of these principles. The "Blue Homeland" doctrine further reflects Türkiyes commitment to asserting its maritime rights while maintaining a balanced approach to regional cooperation.

However, successfully implementing Constructive Eurasianism requires overcoming significant obstacles, including exclusion from regional alliances like the East Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF) and perceptions of aggression by neighboring states. By adhering to its core principles and leveraging its unique geographic position as a nexus between East and West, Türkiye has the potential to lead by example in balancing cooperation with sovereignty.

Ultimately, Constructive Eurasianism positions Türkiye as an adaptable and stabilizing force in Eurasia. Its principles enhance Türkiyes geopolitical relevance and contribute to long-term peace, economic growth, and social cohesion across the region. As global

power dynamics evolve, Constructive Eurasianism provides a valuable roadmap for addressing regional challenges while fostering inclusive collaboration and minimizing the adverse effects of ambitious zero-sum game practices pursued by certain countries.

*Photo: Türkiye Gençlik Birliği

[1] Teoman Ertuğrul Tulun, Constructive Eurasianism: Revisiting Definitions, Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM), February 26, 2025.

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[4] Mehmet Oğuzhan Tulun & Teoman Ertuğrul Tulun, The Necessity of Constructive Eurasianism, AVİM Commentary No. 2017/51 (June 12, 2017).

[5] Yılmaz Sever & Bilgin Pamir, Turkeys Geostrategic Vision and Energy Concerns in the Eastern Mediterranean, Yaşar University Publication (2016): 121–123.

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To cite this article: TULUN, Teoman Ertuğrul. 2026. "CONSTRUCTIVE EURASIANISM IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN: TÜRKİYE'S ROLE IN BALANCING COOPERATION, SOVEREIGNTY, AND REGIONAL STABILITY." Center For Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Analysis No.2025 / 3. March 28. Accessed November 08, 2026. https://www.avimbulten.org/en/Analiz/CONSTRUCTIVE-EURASIANISM-IN-THE-EASTERN-MEDITERRANEAN-TURKIYE-S-ROLE-IN-BALANCING-COOPERATION-SOVEREIGNTY-AND-REGIONAL-STABILITY

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