

Summary

The goal of the study is to verify the hypothesis the author was induced to put forward as a result of preliminary research regarding *inter alia* the minority issue in contemporary Turkey conducted on the territory of this state since 2009. Conclusions of the preliminary survey laid a foundation for hypothesis that changes implemented into domestic legal order of the Republic of Turkey within the framework of accession negotiations with the European Union since its beginning on 3rd of October 2005 have no reflection on actual conditions of existence of persons belonging to such groups or reflect them in a very limited degree. A main reason of such a state of affairs is the supposition that real improvement of their situation and, in consequence, gradual empowerment of these groups would collide with a political interest of Justice and Development Party being in power since 2002. The aim of research is to verify this hypothesis and to indicate prospective issues in which legal changes implemented into Turkish law within the negotiation process do not meet real needs of members of minority communities.

Used in a title of the thesis division into ‘Muslim minorities’ and ‘non-Muslim minorities’ results from provisions of the *Treaty of Lausanne* (1923) which is by today a legal basis of Turkey’s policy towards minority groups. According to the interpretation of its articles 38 and 39 applied by authorities of the new-proclaimed (1923) Republic of Turkey, legally sanctioned minority status may be granted only to groups professing religion other than Islam. Moreover, despite the fact that none of these groups has been explicitly indicated in the treaty and there are no legal obstacles all non-Muslim groups to be granted the minority status, in practice only Greeks, Armenians and Jews enjoy resulting privileges. While Roman Catholics and Assyrians belonging to one of Eastern Christian churches remain in specific legal vacuum, minorities like Kurds, Arabs, Zaza people, Circassians, Laz people or drawing either from Islam or other confessions Alevis from a legal point of view do not even exist. In the light of Turkish law all of them are Turks and do not possess any tools of protection of own ethnic, cultural and language identity. As a result of specificity of Turkish minority policy, communities that do not identify themselves with Turkish majority benefit from legal changes implemented within the framework of negotiation process only partially and in varying degrees, potentially not meeting their real needs. Precisely this dichotomy is what laid a foundation for second distinction used in a title of the thesis – division into ‘legal’ and ‘real’ situation of minorities in contemporary Turkey.

Further, although an axis of the research is classification of minority groups applied on a ground of Turkish legislation the author extensively refers also to ways of understanding of the term 'minority' resulting from the most important international legal acts. In this context, it is significantly worth to be emphasized that in consequence of the lack of one, widely accepted definition of 'ethnic minority', 'national minority' and 'language minority' particular states have wide possibilities to shape own minority policies freely and without restraints what the Republic of Turkey exactly does.

Among wide scope of research methods and survey tools specific for political, legal and historical sciences a particular importance falls on legal and institutional analysis, decision analysis and behavioral method enriched with in-depth interviews with the representatives of religious communities, foundations and associations established by each of examined minority groups. Furthermore, the research is based on reach Polish, English and Turkish language literature what enables to analyze and present possibly widest spectrum of ways of perceiving the minority issue in Turkey present on a ground of respectively Polish, Western European, North American and Turkish science.