

THE WESTERN BALKAN STATES' PERCEPTION OF TURKEY'S FOREIGN POLICY  
SINCE 2002

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JUNE 2016



THE WESTERN BALKAN STATES' PERCEPTION OF TURKEY'S FOREIGN POLICY  
SINCE 2002

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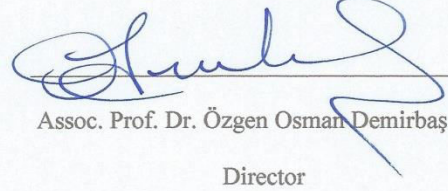
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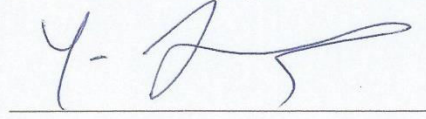
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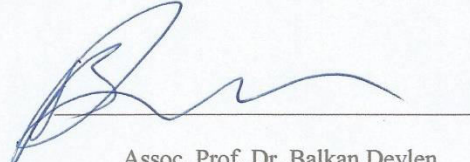
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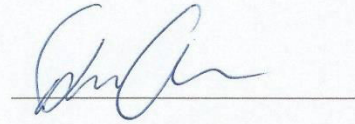
  
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## ABSTRACT

### THE WESTERN BALKAN STATES' PERCEPTION OF TURKEY'S FOREIGN POLICY SINCE 2002

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This thesis analyzes the shift in Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) towards the Western Balkan states, the influence of this shift on these states and the perception of these states on the issue. Namely, until the end of the Cold War Turkey was oriented on preserving stability and status quo in the region. However, the end of the Cold War brought about new challenges for TFP towards the Balkan region. The first challenge that announced the change in TFP was the dismantling of Yugoslavia. The question of Muslim minorities, Ottoman heritage, newly formed states, war in Bosnia and Kosovo were the main reasons that triggered the Turkish political leaders to redefine its policy and to take a more active role towards the Balkans. In its active foreign policy making process Turkey has always been relying on the Western countries. This was the case until 2002 when the new political elite came to power in Turkey. The period after 2002 is the milestone of the Turkish Foreign Policy in the relations with the Western Balkan countries. This time Turkey defined its policy as proactive which is based on historical, cultural and traditional ties with the region. With its new political approach Turkey succeeded to establish very good relations with all Balkan countries. Since 2002 until today, Turkey has shaped bilateral relations in all fields with countries in the region. Therefore, the main focus of this thesis is to examine the perception of the Western Balkan States' officials about the TFP and its influence on political, economic and cultural fields.

Keywords: Turkey, Foreign Policy, Economy, Culture, Policy, Euro-Atlantic integrations, Western Balkans, Perception.

## ÖZET

Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası Batı Balkan Devletleri algı 2002'dan beri

Music, Esmir

Yüksek Lisans, Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Prof. Dr. Balkan Devlen

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Bu tez, Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası'ndaki Batı Balkan Ülkeleri'ne yönelik değişimi, uygulanan dış politikanın bu ülkelere olan etkisini ve bu devletlerin uygulanan dış politikaya yönelik algısını analiz etmektedir. Türkiye, İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın sonuna kadar, Balkanlardaki istikrar ve statükoyu korumaya yönelik bir dış politika takip ediyordu. Ancak, İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın sona ermesi, Türkiye ve Türkiye'nin Balkanlara yönelik dış politikası için bölgede yeni meydan okumalara neden oldu. Türk Dış Politikası'ndaki (TDP) değişikliği ilan eden ilk meydan okuma Yugoslavya'nın dağılmasıydı. Türk siyasi liderlerinin bölgeye yönelik politikalarını yeniden tanımlamalarını ve Balkanlar'da daha aktif bir rol almalarını tetikleyen başlıca nedenler: Müslüman azınlıklar sorunu, Osmanlı mirası, bölgede yeni kurulan devletler, Bosna ve Kosova Savaşları'ydı. Türkiye'de yeni siyasi elitin yönetime geldiği 2002 yılına kadar, dış politika söz konusu olduğunda Türkiye her zaman Batılı ülkelere güvenmişti. 2002 sonrası süreç, Batı Balkan Ülkeleri ile olan ilişkisinde, TDP için bir köşe taşı oldu. Öyle ki; Türkiye bu kez bölgeyle olan tarihsel, kültürel ve geleneksel bağlar temelinde proaktif bir dış politika takip etmeye başladı. Bu yeni siyasi yaklaşım sayesinde Türkiye tüm Balkan ülkeleri ile çok iyi ilişkiler inşa etmeyi başardı. 2002'den bu yana, Türkiye tüm bölge ülkeleriyle bütün alanlarda ikili ilişkiler inşa etti. Dolayısıyla bu tezin ana odağı Batı Balkan Ülkeleri resmi makamlarının TDP algısını ve ayrıca TDP'nin siyasi, ekonomik ve kültürel alanlar üstündeki etkisini araştırmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Dış Politika, Ekonomi, Kültür, Avrupa-Atlantikentegrasyonlar, Batı Balkanlar, Algı.

To My Family

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Justice Development Party
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
BPC	Balkan Political Club
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
DEIK	Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey
EUPOL	European Union Police
EUFOR	European Union Force
EU	European Union
ESDP	European Security and Defense Policy
EUPM	European Union Police Mission
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPFG	Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group
JEC	Joint Economic Commission
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KM	Convertible Mark
MAP	Membership Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Threat Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OIC	Organization of the Islamic Cooperation
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SBB	Union for a better future of BiH
SEECF	South-East European Cooperation Process

TAP	Trans-Atlantic Pipeline
TFP	Turkish Foreign Policy
TIKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TEB	Turkish Economic Bank
UNSC	United Nation Security Council
UNPROFOR	United Nation Protection Force
US	United States
UNGA	United Nation General Assembly
WTO	World Trade Organization
WB	Western Balkan
YECC	Yunus Emre Cultural Center

## INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War in the nineties indicated new changes on the international scene. This period brought about new challenges not just for Turkey but for the international community as well. Strengthening of Kurdish autonomy, political instabilities in its neighborhood, and the dismantling of Yugoslavia were some of the factors that forced Turkey to change the course of its foreign policy. After, Turkish political leaders had recognized the importance to redefine the foreign policy. The first man that took a step in changing the course of Turkish Foreign Policy was Turgut Özal. He called for Turkish activism in the Balkan region in order to contribute to regional stability and preservation of peace.

In the post-Cold War period, the dismantling of Yugoslavia was the first challenge for Turkey. At the very beginning of the crisis, Turkey abstained from any action because it had fear that the situation could become worse if it stood on one side. Additionally, Turkey did not support any kind of secession of Yugoslavia. However, after Macedonia, Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, together with its Western allies Turkey decided to recognize these newly independent states.

In its foreign policy Turkey has always been reliant on the United States and the European Community. This was the case also towards the Western Balkan crisis. The rise of nationalism in Yugoslavia was perceived as a source of possible conflicts in the region. After these three countries gained independence from Yugoslavia, Bosnia was the next country that proclaimed independence. However, this move towards independence resulted in the Bosnian

war. The emergence of war in Bosnia was a direct call for the Turkish involvement. But, Turkey was only able to act in accordance with international community policy.

The Bosniak community in Turkey and other organizations called for Turkish intervention in order to help independence of Bosnia and to stop the war. After being pressured, Turkey had to take a more active role in resolving the Balkan crisis. Through the Organization of Islamic Conference and the UN, Turkey called on other nations to contribute to stop the war in Bosnia. Apart from that Turkey initiated different conferences and initiatives, but this was not enough to stop conflict. Afterwards, Turkey unilaterally decided to support Bosniaks by supplying them with necessities.

The Kosovo War was another reason for Turkish influence, but as in the case of Bosnia, Turkey couldn't intervene independently because in the case of Kosovo it decided to follow US policy. Both in the Bosnian and Kosovo wars, Turkey took part in peacekeeping operations and missions such as UNPROFOR, KFOR and others. Additionally, Turkey was part of a NATO campaign in 1999 which resulted in stabilization of the Balkan region. Dismantling of Yugoslavia and especially the war in Bosnia and Kosovo have opened the door for Turkish involvement in the Western Balkan region. Following the policy of the United States, Turkey succeeded in becoming a very important contributing factor in the stability and peace preservation in the Balkans. After peace was established, Turkey is focusing on strengthening of bilateral relations with all Western Balkan States.

The new era in Turkish Foreign Policy begins from 2002 when the new political elite came to power in Turkey. Foreign policy makers established a new approach towards the Western Balkan States. This approach is based on friendship and understanding of mutual interests of

Turkey and WB countries. Turkey had a long history in this region, for that reason it has a right to its intensive influence more than any other country. Up to today, Turkey continues to influence the Balkan countries in political, economic and cultural fields. Therefore, the main research question of this thesis is formulated as follows: Considering Turkey's involvement of the nineties in the Balkan region and its new diplomatic activism which started in 2002, how does the Western Balkan States perceive this new approach of Turkish Foreign Policy regarding the political, economic, and cultural aspect? In order to answer this question, primarily I will have to provide the context information about TFP shift and influence towards the Western Balkan States.

This thesis aims to fill the void in Turkish literature about the Western Balkan States perception of Turkey and its regional policy. Another important aim of this thesis is to contribute to better understanding of Turkish Foreign Policy impact in the Western Balkan region. Apart from that, this work consistently describes the picture of Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans. Hence, this study will be a significant endeavor in presenting the Western Balkan States' perception of Turkey and its foreign policy. It will be beneficial for students and those interested in Balkan studies.

The thesis consists of five chapters which are interconnected. The first chapter considers the literature written on the topic of the thesis. While the second chapter considers the methodology applied in this thesis. However, the next three chapters describe the change, influence and the perception of Turkish Foreign Policy. Each of these three chapters tend to answer certain questions and provide information which will help us to better understand the topic. Therefore, the thesis chapters are organized as follows:



The first chapter of the thesis analyzes the literature written on Turkey's Foreign Policy towards the Balkan region. This chapter introduces many important scientific works regarding the Turkish policy since the establishment of the Republic, during the Cold War, the post-Cold War period and the new period since 2002 towards the Balkans. The scientific community tries to evaluate the main changes of Turkey's Foreign Policy through history until today. However, a big void is present in the Turkish literature about the perception of foreign political influence of Turkey in the Western Balkans countries.

The second chapter presents the methodology applied in this thesis. For the analysis of books, articles, newspapers, notes and other material the qualitative methods are the most appropriate ones. Additionally, both first and the second sources are used in the thesis. The main cases of this thesis are seven Balkan countries. Within each of these case studies the units of government officials' statements are analyzed. All gathered statements cover the period from 2010 until today. This period characterizes the culmination of cooperation and mutual visits between Western Balkan States and Turkey. It is the result of Turkish activism that started in 2002 when the new political party came to power in Turkey. For the analyses of the statements, a discourse analysis technique is applied. This technique allows us to explain the meaning of each statement in its context.

The third chapter provides an overview of Turkey's Foreign Policy towards Western Balkans States in the post-Cold War era. It examines the reasons of change of Turkey's foreign policy from its passive to more active role in the Balkans. During the crisis in former Yugoslavia, Turkey tried to balance its foreign policy with the United States and with European countries. In line with allies' policy and its efforts through different initiatives on the international level, Turkey contributed to the stabilization and normalization of turmoil in the

Balkan region. This policy has opened the door of the Western Balkans for further Turkey's impact in the region.

The fourth chapter discusses the political, economic and cultural influence of Turkish Foreign Policy in the Western Balkan States since 2002 until today. After the new political elite came to power in Turkey in 2002, they redefined the priorities of the foreign policy. This new approach of Turkish policy is based on historical ties with the Balkan region. However, Turkey has very good bilateral relations with all Western Balkan countries which were established on mutual interests. Turkey supports all political processes of Balkan countries, such as EU and NATO integrations. Additionally, in the economic and cultural field Turkey successfully continues to deepen the cooperation with Western Balkan States.

The last chapter focuses on the Western Balkan States' perception of the Turkish Foreign Policy and its influence on the political, economic and cultural fields. This is the main chapter that analyzes the statements about TFP of the Western Balkan States' officials and provides the answer to the main research question of the thesis. It shows that majority of the Western Balkan countries positively perceive Turkey and its foreign policy in political, economic and cultural aspect. However, few states' officials oppose the political influence of TFP towards their countries.

The research shows that the Western Balkan States have a positive perception of the influence of Turkish Foreign Policy in the political, economic and cultural fields. In the political field, the Western Balkan States specially appreciates the support they receive from Turkey on their path towards Euro-Atlantic integration. Turkey is perceived as a regional power that contributes to the peace, security and stability in the Balkans. However, these States are also

critical and do not accept the interference in their internal matters (the cases: Serbia, Albania, and BiH). In the field of economy, although they are satisfied with the current investments, they strive for additional Turkish investors and the Western Balkan States are very interested in attracting additional Turkish capital. When it comes to the socio-cultural field, the Western Balkan States express satisfaction with the Turkish activities and investments in different projects. They show a readiness to cooperate and to develop socio-cultural relations at the highest level. In this field, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) plays a great role. It is important to note that in the fields of economy and socio-culture both Muslim (Kosovo, Albania, BiH) and non-Muslim (Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro) majority countries perceive Turkey and its foreign policy influence in a positive manner. However, in the political field only Serbia as a non-Muslim majority country and the part of BiH (Serb entity) have negative perceptions of the Turkish Foreign Policy. Hence, out of 183 official statements analyzed in this work, 155 official statements, or 85% out of the total number of statements, show that the Western Balkan States' officials positively perceive Turkish Foreign Policy regarding the political, economic and socio-cultural influence. While in 28 statements, or 15% out of the total statements, the Western Balkan States' officials perceive a negative Turkish Foreign Policy impact in their states. The Western Balkan States acknowledge that Turkey contributes to their economy, supports all political processes and enhances the intercultural understanding and development. Even though there are some objections about Turkish Foreign Policy on the political level, this thesis shows that Turkish Foreign Policy is a successful story in the Western Balkan region.

## CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

To date there has been very little literature written on the Western Balkan States' perception about Turkish Foreign Policy. The majority of the literature is written about TFP towards the Balkan states. In the following text I will be analyzing how the existing literature discusses Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan region in general.

If we analyze Turkey's foreign policy from the period of its foundation we could notice different shapes and orientations towards Balkans. The first period of the modern Turkish Republic policy was about its territorial integrity and the Ottoman heritage, at the same time this policy was shaped by the Western positivists. Observing the Western States and their development Mustafa Kemal and his republican elite were focusing to formulate external relations with the main focus being on security, territorial integrity and sovereignty. In the period of the establishment of the Turkish Republic and after it, Turkey's policy towards the Balkans was in line with preserving the status quo. Moreover, the new Turkish republic sustained of any possible conflicts in its region or in the Balkans that would endanger its sovereignty.<sup>1</sup>

The Balkan region is usually described as a zone of troubles or unstable region that is located on the margins of Europe. This part of Europe has always been involved in conflict throughout history. The last turmoil happened on the beginning of the 1990s when communism started collapsing, a cultural divide between Central and Eastern Europe appeared and leaders with nationalistic ideologies came to power in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. All these

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<sup>1</sup> Mitrovic M., *Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans: The influence of traditional determinants on Davutoglu's conception of Turkey - Balkan Relations*, GeT MA Working Paper Series, No. 10 2014 p. 7

changes led to war in the Balkan region, especially in Bosnia and Kosovo.<sup>2</sup> In this period Turkish regional policy started changing and its policymaking became difficult to understand in a correct way. This follows from different aspects and factors that explain the policy change. On one hand, there are Kemalists who want Turkey to be oriented more towards the West; on the other hand, there are Islamists who took a different approach about this issue. For example, during the Balkan crisis the policy of Turkey was shaped by some ethnic lobbies inside the country who convinced Turkey to take a more active role in the Balkans. Hence, Ankara had to take certain steps and intervene in this region.<sup>3</sup>

Through the 1990's, events in the Balkans worsened the relations between Turkey and Greece with much of the tensions that stemmed from the division of Cyprus and as well disputes over the status of Macedonia. War in Bosnia and Kosovo in which the majority of Muslim population is being persecuted is one of the main reasons why Turkey felt its responsibility to be involved in bringing peace to this region.<sup>4</sup> Historically, the Balkans were a part of the old Ottoman Empire and had been under deep influence of the Empire for five hundred years. In the last 100 years this region had a silent place in Turkish Foreign Policy. But the violent conflicts in the Balkans that happened on the beginning of 21st century brought about a new historical page of the Turkish active Foreign Policy towards this region. Finally, Ankara started playing an active role in resolving conflicts in the Western Balkans.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Gallagher T., *Outcast Europe: The Balkans, 1789-1989, From the Ottomans to Milošević*, Rutledge: New York 2001 p. 1-3

<sup>3</sup> Chubin S., *Green D. J., and Lesser O. I., Turkish Society and Foreign Policy in Troubled Times*, Conference Proceedings, Geneva Center for Security Policy, RAND 2001 p. 7-9

<sup>4</sup>Finlan A., *The Collapse of Yugoslavia 1991 - 1999*, OSPREY publishing: Great Britain 2004 p. 64

<sup>5</sup>Demirtas B., *Turkey and the Balkans: Overcoming Prejudices, Building Bridges and Constructing a Common Future, perceptions*, Summer 2013, Volume XVIII, Number 2, p. 163

There are always different understandings or views of the Turkish policy towards the Balkans. Some scholars see Ankara's regional policy as intention to regain the influence and increase the power as it was in the Ottoman time. But on the other side, Turkey's government justifies its policy with the statements that Ankara has only intention to support and help this region economically and politically. The most important reason of the Turkish engagement in the Balkan area is the common history that people in the Balkan shared with Turks. Apart from history, there are other political and economically oriented motives that Ankara takes into account. Turkey succeeded to reestablish closer and friendlier relationships with all Balkan states through its foreign policy in the last two decades.<sup>6</sup>

The Turkish intensive engagement in the Western Balkans after the cold war caused many people to think about the purpose of such activism. Turkey moved from its position of distant neighbor who was showing no interest in this region. Its foreign policy transformed from the passive stance into an active diplomacy achieving very good relations with Western Balkan States since the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the Turkish cultural influence in the last years widened in these countries through different organizations and institutes. Even though there is a presence of cultural influence, the economic capacity and political weight is not comparable with the current EU's process in the Western Balkan States. Turkey understands that the European Union membership is the main focus of the Balkan states. But at the same time Turkey is aware of its capacity to extend influence in the Balkans. In addition, the increasing Turkish activism in the Balkans received both criticism and as well excessive praise.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Turbedar E., *Turkey's Western Balkans Policy*, TEPAV Balkan Studies Coordinator, p. 1., retrieved from: [http://www.vpi.ba/upload/documents/eng/Turkey%E2%80%99s\\_Western\\_Balkans\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.vpi.ba/upload/documents/eng/Turkey%E2%80%99s_Western_Balkans_Policy.pdf), accessed on: 22.09.2015

<sup>7</sup> Petrovic Z. and Reljic D., *Turkish Interests and Involvement in the Western Balkans: A Score - Card*, Insight Turkey Vol. 13 / No. 3 / 2011 p. 159-160

The change in the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkan region came together with Turkey's neighborhood changing policy. Turkey tries to follow an Islamic foreign policy or to influence the east countries by its attitudes and actions. At the same time it focuses on increasing trade and investments in the Balkans in order to extend influence in the region. Its active diplomacy in the region has launched certain questions about Turkish interests and tendency. Therefore, there are numerous questions that one might ask about Turkish foreign policy. For example, what is the reason for increasing Turkish influence in the region? What are the targets of its active diplomacy in the Balkans? In regards to the creation of a new Turkish policy there are also questions to be taken into consideration such as old and new form of political community. As the Ottoman Empire ruled the Balkan region for five hundred years are there some Turkish communities remaining? If yes, does it mean that TFP is based on the same parameters as it was at that time? Is this a form of old but new Ottoman policy? Even though Turkey is an emerging regional power with its economic and political influence in the region, it is not the only powerful actor in the Balkans. Another powerful actor in the Western Balkans is the European Union which has been present and involved in this region with its different economic and political forms. The European Union's membership is in the main focus of the Western Balkans States' policy. However, Turkey is also an EU candidate member as other Balkan states but a stalemate is noticeable in the Turkey EU negotiation process. Regardless the EU's policy in the Balkans, Turkey tries to make itself as an indispensable country for the Balkan region.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, Turkish policy is seen as more dynamic and more decisive. In the past Turkey was carrying out her policy towards Western Balkans in the line with Western alliances. But today that policy has been changed because Turkey emerged in a regional power

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<sup>8</sup> Linden H., R., and Irepoglu Y., *Turkey and the Balkans: New Forms of Political Community ?*, Turkish studies, Vol. 14, No. 2, 229-255 p. 1-2

or a solo player in the international and regional arena. The main pillars of its political independency is that Turkey relied on geopolitical and economic strength. This new power or new independent Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans brought about mixed reactions by some Balkan states. The main concern by some Balkan politicians was whether this policy is a potential rise of neo-imperial or neo-Ottoman ambitions in the Balkans. However, the Ottoman heritage in the Balkans shaped the Turkish policy towards this region. The culture, tradition and religion shared with some nations in the Balkans is the backbone of more active policy. In addition, the mentioned region is very important for Turkey because it is strategically essential and seen as a bridge for its accession to the European Union. From the other side, Turkey makes effort to play a mediating role and to contribute peace and stability in the Balkans. As Turkey's influence grows in the Balkans the perception of Turks and Turkey varies from state to state.<sup>9</sup>

Turkey sees itself as a very important actor in the international scene, its policy is in accordance with NATO's policy in the Western Balkans. But when the topic is the European Union integrations process in this region, Turkey relies more on Ottoman heritage in order to form its policy. The Muslim communities in the Balkans are one of the main reasons why Turkey wants to be more present in the Balkan countries. Therefore, Turkey tries to convince Muslims in this region that their interests are of a great importance for Turkey. When it comes to relations with non-Muslims Turkey builds trust and friendship with them. Through international initiatives and economic strategies Turkey creates an independent and friendly policy towards Balkans. The initiatives proposed by Turkey have received support by many Balkan countries.

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<sup>9</sup> Somun H., *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans and "Neo-Ottomanism": A Personal Account*, Insight Turkey Vol. 13 / No. 3 / 2011 p. 33-35



This acceptance is a sign that Turkey could play a great role in the Western Balkans.<sup>10</sup> From the historical, cultural and geographical view Turkey is a Balkan country. In the political perspective of Turkey, Western Balkan is a political and strategic region which is still not integrated properly. Therefore, Turkey observes this region as a region in its environment that is not more important than other regions. The meaning of Balkan for Turkey is configured in the political and economic context and also on Turkey - Europe relations. This area is the gate to Europe for Turkey because all roads connecting Turkey with Europe are passing through the Balkans. The maintenance of peace and stability in this region is very important for the security of Turkey and as well for the continuous economic and political relations with Europe. Turkey sees itself as a regional actor, a powerful and a stabilizing factor that is friendly towards the Western Balkan countries. Turkey based its policy on cultural and historical ties with the intention of political mediation and influence on this region. Additionally, the historical ties of Turkey and the Balkans are five centuries long. Hence, a new Turkish foreign policy agenda and the standard of the Turkish foreign policy could be characterized as a double strategy. Both components of this policy are interconnected and have similar but different visions. As a result of change in Turkish foreign policy it is easier to divide it on classic and new Turkish foreign policy. The classic period was a period in which the foreign-policy was a well-known project of Turkey. But the new period is more than a foreign-policy project. It could be characterized as a state project that unifies the foreign and domestic policy of Turkey.<sup>11</sup>

The new Turkish foreign policy concerning the Western Balkans is formed on three bases: the first, recruitment of good relations with traditional partners like Bosnia and Herzegovina,

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<sup>10</sup> Petrovic Z., and Reljic D., *Turkey in the Western Balkans - goals and means of the new foreign policy*, Policy Paper, ISAC Fund, Belgrade 2011 p. 1

<sup>11</sup> Šarčević N., *Zapadni Balkan u Projekciji Turkse strateške vizije*, Izvorni naučni rad, Vol. LXII, br. 4 Oktobar 2010 p. 694-696

Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia; the second is reestablishing or improving relations with Serbia and Montenegro; the third and the last element of this new policy is strengthening the peace and stability of the Balkans through mediation and different diplomatic initiatives. In addition to this new policy, the main priorities will be encouraging a high level of political dialogue, encourage mutual interdependence, ensuring the security for all and protection of the multi-ethnic harmony in this part of the world. From the geopolitical and historical perspective the Balkan region was and it is still in the interest of Turkey, Russia and Europe. This is because of the population concept and of the geopolitical position. Moreover, Russia tries to influence this region offering cheap energy sources and connection to gas pipelines, Europe promises the integration process, Turkey tries to increase its popularity in this region through its new dimension of the foreign policy by increasing its investments and fostering trade. In accordance with intensification of economic interests Turkey signed a visa free liberalization with the Balkan states. Thereby Turkey made better conditions for business between the countries. The geographical position and the growing economy gives Turkey a good place in its relation with the Balkan states.<sup>12</sup>

Ankara has developed a new economic policy and political interest in the Balkans. Even though this policy started gradually to develop soon after the cold war, it became more intensive since 2002 when the AKP (Justice and Development Party) came to power. The change in Turkish foreign policy resulted in better economic relations with Balkan states. Through this change we could notice that the foreign policy of Turkey is more tied to the liberal understanding of international politics. This understanding gives Turkey a chance to influence Muslim communities and other communities in the Balkans. Moreover, Turkey has learned how to cooperate with those communities rather than control them. The Turkish foreign policy towards

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<sup>12</sup> Szigetvari T., *Turkey is back: Turkish interest on the Western Balkans*, EU Frontiers study, Center for EU Enlargement Studies CEUENS No.9, November 2012 p. 2-17

the Western Balkans focuses on cooperation and mediation in relations with those states. This comes from the reason that Turkey has always been a part of the international community in the Balkans. On the other hand, the rise of Turkish activism in the Balkans is being criticized especially after introducing the term "neo-Ottomanism". Many argue that growing Turkish engagement in the Balkans is having suspicious intention. However, the discussion of new Ottomanism is groundless and it has no concrete idea for implementation of this policy.<sup>13</sup> Turkey is interested in EU membership and tries to gain more democratic values. Its current policy towards Balkan countries is different from the past decade. Now, in relations with those countries Turkey does not rely only on military forces, but on its economic achievement. The Balkans have some characteristics from the past Ottoman period that attract Turkey for more intensive cooperation with this region. Moreover, the culture, history, religion are common values that Turkey share with the people living in the Balkans. From the geopolitical perspective the Balkans are seen as a bridge between Turkey and Europe. With regard to economic issues, Turkey tries to extend its influence in the region through strategic sectors such as banking and infrastructure. The other means of influence are not just economic; tourism, trade and educational opportunities also play a great role in the relations with the Balkan countries.<sup>14</sup>

During my analyses of the existing literature on the Turkish foreign policy, I have found that many of the scholars are discussing the development of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans in general. They analyze two different periods of the foreign policy, the one after the establishment of the new Turkish Republic and the period after the end of the cold war in 1989.

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<sup>13</sup> Ruma I., *Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans: new activism, neo-Ottomanism or/so what?*, Turkish policy, Volume 9 number 4 p.134-140

<sup>14</sup> Erbas G., *EU's Foreign Policy towards the Balkans and future prospects of Turkey's membership of EU for the region*, p. 1-7, retrieved from: <http://dspace.epoka.edu.al/bitstream/handle/1/984/EUS%20FOREIGN%20POLICY%20TOWARDS%20THE%20BALKANS%20AND%20FUTURE%20PROSPECTS%20OF%20TURKEYS%20MEMBERSHIP%20OF%20EU%20FOR%20THE%20REGION.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, accessed on: 24.09.2015

From the above discussion, we could easily divide those scholars into two groups. The first group of scholars who claim that Turkey should be more concentrated on its sovereignty and internal policy rather than on the regional policy towards the Balkans. While the other group of scholars try to explain why it is beneficial for Turkey to be present in the Balkans. According to the first group, Turkey sees the Balkan region as Ottoman heritage and the main concern of its policy should not go beyond the ordinary maintenance of good and friendly relations. Turkey has to treat its neighbors equally and without any interference in their internal affairs. However, the other group of scholars think that Turkey should continue a kind of neo-Ottoman policy towards this region. It should increase its influence through different mechanisms in order to maintain peace and stabilization. Additionally, they see the Balkans as a bridge between Turkey and the European Union which could accelerate the process of Turkey becoming a member of the EU. Both of these groups analyze the changes in the Turkish foreign policy and explore the reasons for the Turkish activism in the region. The main reason for the Turkish return to the Balkans is the war in Bosnia and Kosovo. But the main drivers that Turkey consider in the relations with the Balkan states is culture, tradition, history and the Muslim population that live in the Balkans. However, the scholars noticed that Turkey made some changes in its foreign policy after the AKP party came to power in 2002. Through different agendas Turkey tries to impose itself as a mediator in the future crisis in the Balkan region. Moreover, both with economic and political influence Turkey wants to extend and improve its relations with Balkan countries.

All the literature I analyzed was about Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans, but there is less literature written about the perception of this policy by the Balkan states. Therefore, in this work I will be focusing on the Western Balkan States perception of the Turkish foreign policy since 2002 when the AKP came to power. This thesis will be a great contribution to the

Turkish literature and it will fill the existing gaps. Furthermore, the thesis will provide a real picture of Turkey and its policy perception by the Western Balkan States.

## CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I will explain and describe the methods and techniques used during my research process. As well, I will present the way I collected and interpreted data in this work. Additionally, this chapter will discuss the main characteristics of the methodology applied in the thesis. The last discussion will be about ethics and the limitations I had through research.

In order to answer the research questions in my study I chose to employ qualitative methods. My determination for the chosen method is for the reason that qualitative methods are also present in other methodological approaches. However, in the research I will use both qualitative and quantitative methods in gathering and presenting the details of the thesis. In political science both methods are used. The most used forms of data collection in qualitative inquiry are interview, group discussion, observation and reflection, pictures, different texts, field notes and other materials.<sup>15</sup> However, the most popular among those who use this method are the studies of photographs, images from the media, personal documentation, official and public documents and different literature.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the qualitative researchers usually rely on the following ways of collecting data: participant observation, non-participant observation, reflexive journals, field notes, structured interviews, unstructured interviews and analysis of documents and materials.<sup>17</sup> The two well-known theorists of the qualitative research methods analyzed this method in order to prove its validity.

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<sup>15</sup> Major C., *Qualitative research: The Essential Guide to Theory and Practice*, Rutledge, London 2013 p. 10

<sup>16</sup> Taylor S.J. and Bogdan R., *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: The Search for Meanings*, 2nd ed., Singapore 1984 p. 13

<sup>17</sup> Bogdan R., and Ksander M., *Policy data as a social process: A qualitative approach to quantitative data*, Human Organization 39., p. 302-309 retrieved from: [doi:10.17730/humo.39.4.x42432981487k54q](https://doi.org/10.17730/humo.39.4.x42432981487k54q)., accessed on: 28.09.2015

The first theorist argues that:

... qualitative research focuses on the constructed reality of the research participants. It differs from quantitative research in its purpose, focus, methods, and criteria for truth. It rejects many of the quantitative assumptions about research that are based on objective, positivist beliefs about the world, and instead sees reality as constructed in the mind of the knower and situated in cultural and historical contexts.<sup>18</sup>

Another theorist asserts that:

...qualitative research additionally includes such methods as observation of experimental natural settings, photographic techniques (including videotaping), historical analysis (historiography), document and textual analysis, sociometry, sociodrama and similar ethno methodological experimentation, ethnographic research, and a number of unobtrusive techniques.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, in order to answer my research question in the best manner I will use the qualitative approach and its techniques of data gathering and analysis.

## 2.1. Data collection

In my work I used both primary and secondary sources. Primary data are mostly data collected from the first information source that 'has not undergone analysis before being included in the needs assessment'.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, secondary data are data collected from the second source of information 'typically the information has been collected by researchers not involved in the current assessment and has undergone at least one layer of analysis prior to inclusion in the needs assessment'.<sup>21</sup> However, the primary source in this study concern academic works or

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<sup>18</sup> Vander S., W., and Johnston D., D., *Research methods for everyday life: Blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA 2009 p. 179

<sup>19</sup> Berg B., L., *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*, 7th Edition, Boston 2001 p. 3

<sup>20</sup> ACAPS, *Qualitative and quantitative research techniques for Humanitarian needs Assessments*, May 2012 p. 2-3 retrieved from:  
[http://www.parkdatabase.org/documents/download/qualitative\\_and\\_quantitative\\_research\\_techniques.pdf](http://www.parkdatabase.org/documents/download/qualitative_and_quantitative_research_techniques.pdf), accessed on: 30.09.2015

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

testimonies of analysts and scholars. Their historical overviews assisted in depicting the background picture of the research question and to give answer on it. Moreover, specific data I found in news articles, on the official websites of state governments, statements, reports, documents or special archives, political cartoons and audio/video documentation. I used other sources as well such as books, journal articles, essays, magazines, surveys and statistics. However, in my final chapter which is the main chapter of this research I mostly used newspapers as the source. I looked at different newspapers from the Western Balkan states in order to analyze statements of the state officials regarding the Turkish Foreign Policy. The gathered statements cover the period from 2010 until today (2016). The following table presents the number of gathered speeches per country and per year that will be analyzed in the thesis.

	BIH	SRB	MNE	RKS	AL	MKD	HRV
2010	3	2	2	2	4	2	4
2011	1	2	2	3	2	2	4
2012	3	5	2	8	2	4	3
2013	2	10	2	2	2	2	1
2014	11	2	10	2	4	2	4
2015	13	8	10	7	8	2	1
2016	3	2	6	1	2	1	1

This is the period of intensive cooperation in the relations between the Western Balkan States and Turkey on political, economic and cultural levels. In each footnote the year of the statement is given. There were also statements from an earlier period which differed from country to country. For example, in the case of Kosovo, the official relations between the two countries



were established in 2008. Another example is the case of Montenegro where the official relations were established in 2006. Therefore, the period from 2010 is the most appropriate one for the analysis of Western Balkan States' perception because all statements gathered in this period provide the most accurate information on all states. In the case of some countries these statements provide the information of the governments that rule for two mandates. While in some other cases the governments rule for longer periods; even the period before 2002. In order to analyze the official policy from each state I looked on their foreign ministry websites. For example, in the case of Serbia, Kosovo and BiH I couldn't find any official field regarding relations with Turkey, while in the case of Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia and Albania there are specific fields regarding the perception of TFP. Therefore, the analysis of gathered statements of the officials from the period of 2010 until 2016 and the foreign ministry website fields about TFP will provide the general perception of Turkish Foreign Policy by the Western Balkan States, since a new political elite came to power in Turkey.

## **2.2. Data analysis**

In the research I will use qualitative techniques to analyze the collected data. In order to be able to combine these techniques and to put this in reality I am going to apply a method of triangulation which is used in social science. This concept of "triangulation is borrowed from navigational and land surveying techniques that determine a single point in space with the convergence of measurements taken from two other distinct points".<sup>22</sup> The idea behind this method is that one can be more confident with the result of its research if combining different methods. The concept of triangulation facilitates the validation of gathered data from different

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<sup>22</sup> Rothbauer., Paulette, *Triangulation - The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, Sage Publications 2008 p. 892-894

sources. It refers to the application and combination of a couple of methods in the study of the same research phenomenon.<sup>23</sup> The combination of different theories, empirical material and methods leads to overcome the weakness and bias while using only one method or technique in the study. Moreover, the triangulation in qualitative inquiry increases the credibility and validity of the results in the research. Some scholars of triangulation have tried to define triangulation. One of those scholars defines triangulation as an "attempt to map out, or to explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint".<sup>24</sup> Another scholar defines triangulation as a "method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to research for regularities in the research data".<sup>25</sup> But the third scholar asserts that triangulation "gives a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation".<sup>26</sup>

The qualitative techniques I will use here are historical analysis, case study and discourse analysis. The first technique applied in this work is the historical analysis. This analysis is an integral part of studying history. It helps to understand and interpret various historical events, documents, processes. In addition, it seeks implications of events from the past and their connections with the present and assesses past activities and accomplishments of individuals and institutions. Through this analysis history is understood as a series of competing interpretive narratives. Historical analysis requires grasping the scholarly debate on a certain topic and forming a personal understanding and conclusions of the read material.<sup>27</sup> Hence, in the third and

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<sup>23</sup> Bogdan R., C., and Biklen S., K., *Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods*, Allyn & Bacon 2006 p. 34

<sup>24</sup> Cohen L., and Manion L., *Research methods in education*, 5th edition, Rutledge 2000 p. 254

<sup>25</sup> O'Donoghue T., and Punch K., *Qualitative Educational Research in Action: Doing and Reflecting*, Routledge 2003 p. 78

<sup>26</sup> Altrichter H., Feldman A., Posch P., and Somekh B., *Teachers investigate their work, An introduction to action research across the professions*, 2nd edition, Routledge 2008 p. 147

<sup>27</sup> Wesleyan University, *Historical analysis*, A users guide to Political Science, retrieved from: <http://govthesis.site.wesleyan.edu/research/methods-and-analysis/analyzing-qualitative-data/historical-analysis/> accessed on: 2.10.2015

fourth chapter I will use this technique to give the answer on sub-questions of the main research question of this thesis. The sub-questions I formulated in these chapters are important for easier application of the historical analysis and better understanding of TFP activism in the Balkan region before and after 2002.

The fifth chapter is the core of this research. In this chapter I will analyze each Western Balkan country as the case study. Namely, I will use discourse analysis within the multiple case study. Discourse analysis techniques will help me to interpret the statements and to present the results of the research. All Western Balkan states: Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Albania, Croatia, Kosovo and Macedonia will be set as the case study. In order to analyze the state perception, I looked the state officials' statements of each country. I looked the statements from the ex-presidents, current presidents, ex-Prime Ministers and the current Prime Minister and other officials such as ministers, directors etc. In each state I will look at statements in the local language about state officials' perception. The analysis of each country's statements will depict the perception of the Turkish Foreign Policy in the Balkans.

### **2.3. Ethics and Limitations**

During my research and while working with the literature I will try to take ethics into consideration. Even though ethical challenges are always present when presenting research I have tried to be conscious while writing the thesis and stay professional in this work. Moreover, during the research I will analyze the policies with an open mind. However, there is a chance of mistakes as one scholar has pointed out "four mistakes when explaining the outcomes of research are possible: overgeneralization, selective or inaccurate observation, illogical reasoning and

resistance to change".<sup>28</sup> Throughout my work I will try to distinguish between where I have gathered information from the mentioned literature and of the discussion that is based on my own interpretations. Regarding the data in the main chapter of the thesis, there is limitation to find official statements for each year from 2002 until today. However, I will use only the available data which covers the period from 2010 until 2016. For future research on this topic, I advise candidates to perform interviews in person with the Western Balkan government officials. Of course if they want to do comparative analysis of each year since 2002 then more in depth interviews need to be carried out for each year.

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<sup>28</sup> Chambliss D., F., and Shutt R., K., *Making Sense of the Social World, Methods of Investigation*, Pine Forge Press, London 2010 p. 4

## **CHAPTER 3: THE OVERVIEW OF TURKEY'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE WESTERN BALKAN STATES FROM 1990 UNTIL 2002**

This chapter will provide an overview of the TFP after the cold war with regards to political change towards the Balkan region. The main aim of this chapter is to provide the answer to a sub-question of the main research question in this thesis. Therefore, our focus here is answering the following sub-question: how and why did Turkey change its foreign policy from passive to more active in the Balkans? The answer to this question will help us to better understand the Turkish involvement in the Balkan region and to clearly understand the findings of this work.

### **3.1. The change of Turkey's foreign policy and its implications in the Balkan region after the Cold War**

In the period after the Cold War Turkey faced new political and security challenges. As a result of political and security changes on the international level the political elite of Turkey established a new strategic thinking. A series of changes in Turkish Policy have come on the domestic and international scenes. This change has formulated Turkey's foreign policy, security concern, political and national interests. In order to create an independent or autonomous regional power the Turkish policy makers have made a great effort. The policy makers believed that the post bipolar world brings a new security challenge therefore Turkey should engage more actively in regional security issues. Because of the implications that emerged soon after the Cold

War, which had tremendous and immediate pressure on the Turkish regional security environment, Turkey's foreign policy had to be re-defined.<sup>29</sup>

The end of the Cold War period brought many political and security changes at the international and regional level. The dismantling of Yugoslavia in the Balkan region, the dismantling of the Soviet Union and strengthening of the Kurdish autonomy in Iraq were the main reasons why Turkey decided to make changes in its foreign policy. However, these drastic changes in Turkey's neighborhood opened the way for a more active Turkish involvement in the region.<sup>30</sup> In the early 1990s the President of Turkey Turgut Özal, who was the former Prime Minister, decided to establish a new approach of a more active foreign policy with countries in the region. He decided not only to develop the regional policy 'but to counterbalance the potential geopolitical downgrade of Turkey that loomed large after the collapse of the Soviet Union'.<sup>31</sup>

Before, in 1980s Turkey depended on Western alliances and had poor relations with its neighbors. But during the term from 1983 to 1993 of the former Prime Minister and later President of Turkey Turgut Özal the relations with neighbors have improved. The Turkish president Turgut Özal had believed that Turkey would remain an active ally of the West countries only if Turkey re-define its regional policy and increased its influence in the region. He is a key figure that contributed in changing Turkey's foreign policy pursuing a more active and region focused policy.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Manners I., *Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?*, Journal of Common Market Studies 2002., 40 (2): 235–58. p. 238

<sup>30</sup>Ulutaş U., *Turkey-Israel: A Fluctuating Alliance*, SETA Policy Brief., No 42., 2010 p. 4

<sup>31</sup>Fair Observer, *The contemporary Turkish Neighborhood Policy: The realpolitik behind AKP's foreign policy choices?*, March 20. 2011., retrieved from: [http://www.fairobserver.com/region/middle\\_east\\_north\\_africa/contemporary-turkish-neighbourhood-policy-realpolitik-behind-akps-foreign-policy-choices/#sthash.kDI5u7vG.dpuf](http://www.fairobserver.com/region/middle_east_north_africa/contemporary-turkish-neighbourhood-policy-realpolitik-behind-akps-foreign-policy-choices/#sthash.kDI5u7vG.dpuf)

<sup>32</sup>Sayarı S., *Turkey and the Middle East in the 1990s*, Journal of Palestine Studies, 26(3): 44–55., 1997 p. 45

When it comes to the Balkan region, especially the Western part since the end of the Cold War, there are many aspects of Turkish policy that shows strong commitment to this part. Even though Turkey was separated from the Balkans for about half a century, Turkey again after the Cold War got a chance to re-establish its relations with the Balkan countries. The dissolution of the Communist countries as well as the creation and recognition of the new states brought about new challenges on the international scene. This emergence of the new states paved the way for the Turkish involvement and influence. Therefore, the policy makers in Ankara made effort in developing a new political agenda for approaching the region. In the period of transition and uncertainty of the new and old Balkan states, Turkey felt moral and political responsibilities to act more actively as soon as possible in order to forestall security threats and to contribute regional peace and stability.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, among the other regions Turkey will over its active foreign policy strengthen its social and economic ties with Balkan states. This intention led establishing the seminal initiative Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) in Istanbul on 25th June 1992. The main aim of this initiative is to support economic development of the Black sea and Balkan countries and enhancing the political and economic cooperation between the member states. After that step, the Turkish government encouraged diversifying regional economic relations and cooperation in the Balkans.<sup>34</sup>

The Turkish policy makers in the period of transition of the Balkan countries developed a pragmatic policy in the Balkans. Turkey offered its help and contributions, security and welfare - participation in security operations. Moreover, Turkey concluded agreements, provided technical, developmental and educational assistance, and offered initiatives for cooperation and

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<sup>33</sup> Ekinci U., M., *A golden age of relations: Turkey and the Western Balkans during the Ak party period*, SETA, Insight Turkey, Vol. 16 / No.1/ 2014 p. 103-104

<sup>34</sup> Ozgur N., *1989 Sonrası Turkiye-Bulgaristan İlişkileri, [Turkey-Bulgaria Relations post-1989]*., Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi, edited by Faruk Sonmezoğlu, 609–684. Istanbul: Der Yayınları. 2001 p. 373

dialogue. Even though Turkey took steps and made efforts to change its political and economic status in the Western Balkans, for many reasons these steps were not that successful. Economic crisis in the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, conflicts and tensions in the region prevented Turkey's efforts to ensure its economic, political and social ambitions in the Western Balkan region.<sup>35</sup>

### **3.2. Turkey's position and its reactions to the conflicts in the Western Balkan region**

At the time of dismantling Yugoslavia and the first declaration of independence of Slovenia and Croatia in 1991, Turkey was concerned about the peace and stability in the Western Balkans. In order to preserve the peace in the Balkans, Turkey relied more on the United Nations and the European Community to find a solution for the crisis in Yugoslavia. Although Turkey was against the secession of the Yugoslav republics, in 1992 the above two states were recognized by the International community. However, Turkey decided to follow the decision of the Western countries. When the war started in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey took certain steps and decided to take a more active role in the Balkan crisis. Even though this crisis was not a direct threat to Turkey it became a question of 'soft security' identity and process of migration to Turkey.<sup>36</sup>

One of the main reasons for a more active Turkish involvement in resolving the Balkan crisis is the pressure on policy makers by the Turkish citizens with Balkan origin and Muslims who fled the Balkan countries; especially by those who fled from Bosnia. They pressure Turkey

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<sup>35</sup> Ekinci U., M., *A golden age of relations: Turkey and the Western Balkans during the Ak party period*, SETA, Insight Turkey, Vol. 16 / No.1/ 2014 p. 104-105

<sup>36</sup> Coşkun, Demirtaş, *Birgül, Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Bosnian War - A Constructivist Analysis*, Karadeniz Araştırmaları, 28, 1-18. 2011 p. 6



to help and support the independence of Bosnia and its population. This situation is seen as an opportunity for Turkey's more active foreign policy to bring the stability and peace in the region as well as to confirm its affiliation to its allies. Finally, Turkey decided to start its political and diplomatic actions in Organization of the Islamic Conference, in the United Nations and other International organizations and conferences. During its presidency of the OIC in 1992 Turkey organized special meetings and discussions about the crisis in the Balkan region and the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the United Nation Security Council, Turkey presented an action plan for peace and stability in Bosnia. Moreover, Turkey took part in London Conference in August 1992 which is organized by the European Community regarding the crisis in the Western Balkan countries.<sup>37</sup>

Turkey organized a Balkan Conference in November 1992 inviting all regional and neighbor countries to discuss the solution to stop the war and bring peace. However, all these Turkish efforts with different initiatives, conferences etc. were not successful to bring peace in the Balkans. Yet, Turkey decided to support and help Bosnian Muslims by supplying them with weapons in spite of the United Nation embargo put on Bosnia. The unilateral actions taken by Turkey were criticized, but Turkey continued to lobby for peace and stability in Bosnia. With regard to the crisis in the Balkans Turkey showed a great bilateral activity but also supported a multilateral activity on the same issue. Furthermore, in 1993 Turkey participated with its troops in the peace keeping missions the United Nation Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) stationed in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 7-8

<sup>38</sup>Sayari S., *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: The Challenges of Multi-Regionalism*, Journal of International Affairs, 54/1, 169-182. 2000 p. 177

Another Balkan crisis was the outbreak of war in Kosovo. The outbreak of the conflict in Kosovo was perceived by Turkey as another opportunity for its influence in the Western Balkans. However, Turkey was more cautious with its foreign policy in regard to this crisis in Kosovo. This cautious and restrained policy taken by Turkey towards the Kosovo crisis had a different perspective. In Kosovo live a big Turkish minority and Turkey afraid from Albanian majority oppression on this minority. Turkey also relied on its Western allies decision to the crisis in Yugoslavia but it did not show any great bilateral effort as it did in the Bosnian crisis. Additionally, Turkey participated in the NATO campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999 and in the peace keeping missions in Kosovo.<sup>39</sup>

The Turkish active foreign policy in the Balkans continued to develop. Apart from the Bosnia and the Kosovo case, Turkey was the second country that supported Macedonian independence in 1992 and the first that opened its embassy in the capital city of Skopje. During the period of dismantling Yugoslavia, the conflicts in the region brought about rivalry over the influence in the region between Turkey and Greece. Greece opposed the independence of Macedonia because it had not agreed about the name and flag issues of Macedonia. Therefore, disagreement between Turkey and Greece about the Balkan issues had an important effect on the more active Turkish foreign policy towards the Western Balkans.<sup>40</sup>

The main principles of the Turkish position regarding the Balkan countries in the period after the Cold War were in accordance with its active foreign policy and its geostrategic calculations. All the time Turkey relied on its Western allies, but tried to maintain its regional role and geostrategic importance in the global politics. While putting its effort into resolving the

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<sup>39</sup> Martin G. L., and Keridis D., *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, MIT Press, 2004 p. 147 - 148

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178

Balkan crisis and establishing the peace and stability to this region Turkey followed its traditional principle of preserving the status quo. When the international community, consisting of the European countries and the United States, supported the new territorial changes Turkey just followed their decision but without any deep engagement in the territorial issues. However, for Turkey the crisis in Bosnia opened the door of the Turkish more active foreign policy in the Balkans. The question of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s was very important for Turkey and since that time Turkey became an active player in the region. Following the United States approach Turkey succeed to balance its bilateral actions with other countries interests in the Western Balkans. The European countries and United States feared involving radical communities from Iran in the Bosnian war so they agreed with Turkish involvement as a better option for the Bosnian Muslims. In short, the cooperation between Turkey and Western allies in bringing peace and stabilization in the Balkans ensured a great opportunity for Turkish activism and its influence in the regional surroundings.<sup>41</sup>

After the Cold War period the United States helped Turkey to re-activate its political and military influence in the Western Balkans. Since the crisis started in the Balkans in the 1990s, Turkey was following the United States activities in this region. Whenever the U.S. took an activity in the Western Balkans, Turkey increased its influence in that part of the Balkans. But, after the 9/11 terrorist attack, the United States left Turkey to create an independent position in the Balkans. Since the beginning of the conflicts in the Western Balkan countries Turkey has worked hard to enhance the relations with this countries.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 177

<sup>42</sup>Turbedar E., *Turkey's new activism in the Western Balkans: Ambitions and Obstacles*, Insight Turkey, Vol. 13 / No. 3/ 2011 p. 142

### 3.3. Turkey's activities in the post conflict period in the Western Balkans

During the crisis in the Balkan region Turkey succeed to play a crucial role in bringing peace and stabilization. Turkey was part of any decision or action taken by the International community in order to stop the war in Bosnia and Kosovo. In the period of normalizing the relations between newly independent Balkan states, Turkey made effort to be a mediator between those states by giving support to multilateral initiatives and regional cooperation. Turkey was firmly committed to bring peace and stabilization in the Balkans through regional cooperation projects.<sup>43</sup>

On the Turkish initiative in 1998 in Istanbul, the first meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers of South Eastern European countries was held. The main goal of the meeting was to discuss the end of conflict issues. During this meeting Turkey made an appeal to stop the future violence in the Balkans and to turn a new page of history.<sup>44</sup> In support of better cooperation between Balkan states, the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey (DEIK) organized a conference for the government officials and businessmen of Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Greek and Romania.<sup>45</sup>

In the same year, another summit was held in Antalya in October 1998 but now consisting of presidents and the prime ministers of Albania, Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia, Romania,

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<sup>43</sup> Turkes M., *Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans: Quest for Enduring Stability in the Balkans*, Florida, Ashgate 2004 p. 204

<sup>44</sup>Mfa, *The Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Countries of South Eastern Europe Opening Statement by Mr. İsmail Cem, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Turkey* 8-9 June, 1998, retrieved from: [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-meeting-of-the-ministers-of-foreign-affairs-of-countries-of-south-eastern-europe-br\\_opening-statement-by-mr\\_-ismail-cem\\_-foreign-minister-of-the-republic-of-turkey\\_br\\_8-9-june\\_-1998.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/the-meeting-of-the-ministers-of-foreign-affairs-of-countries-of-south-eastern-europe-br_opening-statement-by-mr_-ismail-cem_-foreign-minister-of-the-republic-of-turkey_br_8-9-june_-1998.en.mfa)

<sup>45</sup> Hr Net, *Southeast European Businessmen's Conference*, Turkish Press Review, 08.06.1998, retrieved from: <http://www.hri.org/news/turkey/trkpr/1998/98-06-08.trkpr.html#13>

Greece, Bulgaria, while Croatia and Bosnia sent observers to join the meeting. The aim of this meeting was again to enhance the dialogue between countries in conflict.<sup>46</sup>

However, one of the main steps towards Balkan cooperation is the Yalta Summit held in 1998 where the participants signed the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Charter. The charter has been converted into a regional organization with goals to reach joint projects in energy, mining, transport and tourism, and as well to remove the barriers of trade.<sup>47</sup>

In the Antalya Summit, 1998, the Balkan Charter on good neighborly relations, stability, security and cooperation in South Eastern Europe was proposed by Turkey. But on the third Summit the Head of State and Government of SEECP (Southeast European Cooperation Process) countries held in 2000 the Turkish proposed charter was signed. However, the Balkan Charter included the support of the Balkan countries integration in the European and Atlantic organizations.<sup>48</sup>

Turkey is also a founder of the Balkan Political Club (BPC) in 2001, which was established as a result of several meetings of fourteen founding members. The main participants were from Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia and Turkey. This political club aimed to increase the cooperation, to ensure the stabilization and understanding between the Balkan States.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Daily News, *Balkan Summit in Antalya to focus on Kosovo turmoil*, 10. 9. 1998, retrieved from: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/balkan-summit-in-antalya-to-focus-on-kosovo-turmoil.aspx?pageID=438&n=balkan-summit-in-antalya-to-focus-on-kosovo-turmoil-1998-10-09>

<sup>47</sup> Hale W., *Turkish Foreign Policy After the Cold War, Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, 1, Annual 1993 p. 244

<sup>48</sup> Hurriyet Daily News, *Ecevit: Charter opens a new era in the Balkans*, 2. 14. 2000., retrieved from: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/ecevit-charter-opens-a-new-era-in-the-balkans.aspx?pageID=438&n=ecevit-charter-opens-a-new-era-in-the-balkans-2000-02-14>

<sup>49</sup> NTV, *Demirel Balkan Siyasi Kulübü toplantısına gidiyor*, NTV, Ankara 2002, retrieved from: <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/190325.asp>

### **3.4. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and dismantling of Yugoslavia were the main reasons for the change in Turkey's Foreign Policy. The changes brought about a better and more active Turkish influence in the region and on the International level. However, the crisis that happened in the Balkans after the 1990s attracted Turkish involvement in the region. This was an opportunity for Turkey to re-define its policy and increase its influence in the Western Balkans. The Balkan region is of geostrategic importance for Ankara. Therefore, Turkey took part in resolving conflicts and bringing stabilization and peace in the Balkans. After the regional changes and the war in former Yugoslavia, Turkey tried to normalize its relations with new independent states. Furthermore, Turkey made efforts to conciliate the Balkan states through regional platforms, conferences, multilateral and bilateral contacts. The common history, geographical and cultural proximity with the Balkan region were the main advantages of Turkey which other countries lacked. Finally, for the stability and peace in the region Turkey constantly supports the Balkan States towards European and Atlantic integrations.

## **CHAPTER 4: TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE WESTERN BALKANS SINCE 2002**

In 2002 when the AKP party came to power in Turkey new changes were brought about in Turkey's foreign policy. The main framework of the new Turkish foreign policy since 2002 was the book "Strategic Depth doctrine" written by the current prime minister of Turkey Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu. The book considers the foreign policy of Turkey based on geographical and historical depth.<sup>50</sup> In regard to Turkey's Foreign Policy towards the Western Balkans, Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu advocates five principles: zero problems with neighbors, balance between security and democracy, multidimensional foreign policy and rhythmic diplomacy.<sup>51</sup> However, this chapter will comparatively analyze the Turkish foreign policy towards the Western Balkan states since 2002. In the relations between Turkey and the Western Balkan states the main focus will be on the political, economic and socio-cultural issues. Here I will try to answer my second sub-question of the main research question: What are Turkey's achievements on the political, economic and socio-cultural level in the relations towards the Western Balkan countries?

### **4.1. Turkey's relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina**

#### **4.1.1. Political aspect**

Turkey applied effort in contributing peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the peace keeping operations and missions which are led by the European Union.<sup>52</sup> In 2003 Turkey signed the agreement with the European Union to establish the conditions for the participation in the

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<sup>50</sup> Davutoglu A., *Stratejik Derinlik*, Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu, Istanbul: Küre, 2009.

<sup>51</sup> Davutoglu A., *Turkey's Zero Problems Foreign Policy*, 20 May 2010 retrieved from: [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/05/20/turkeys\\_zero\\_problems\\_foreign\\_policy](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/05/20/turkeys_zero_problems_foreign_policy) accessed on: 25.09.2015

<sup>52</sup> Terry M., Mays, *Historical dictionary of the peace keeping, third edition*, Scarecrow press, United Kingdom, 2011 p. 111

European Union Peace Mission EUPM in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was the first ever civilian crisis management operation under European Security and Defense Policy ESDP. By participating in the EUPM mission, Turkey made effort to contribute to the stability of the region and specially the stability of the Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>53</sup>

Turkey is committed to the peace in Bosnia, during one meeting, the Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu said: "We need to support peace and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina means peace in the Balkans, Europe and around the world", he asserted that Turkey will always be there for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, Davutoğlu said: "Our duty is to never forget and at the same time to ensure the lack of a culture of hate and revenge" he added that Bosnia was a country with ethnic and cultural differences, which was "a hope" for its development.<sup>54</sup>

Through its strategic depth and of course through the historical, cultural and traditional understanding Turkey wants to present itself as a mediator and arbitrator in the regional issues and conflicts.<sup>55</sup> Apart from that, Turkey plays the mediation role between Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia in some of the unsolved questions between them. In order to keep the progress of resolving unsolved issues Turkey initiates high level meetings between these states. As a result of Turkey's intention to be mediator in the relations between officials who represent Bosniaks from Bosnia and officials from Serbia, tripartite consultation meeting was established

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<sup>53</sup> Koutracos P., *EU International relations Law*, Second edition, Hart publishing, United Kingdom, 2015 p. 471

<sup>54</sup> Daily Sabah, *Turkey's Prime Minister Davutoglu says the world needs to support peace in Bosnia*, July 11 2015, retrieved from: <http://www.dailysabah.com/balkans/2015/07/11/turkeys-prime-minister-davutoglu-says-the-world-needs-to-support-peace-in-bosnia> accessed on: 28.09.2015

<sup>55</sup> Turbedar E., *Turkey's new activism in the Western Balkans: Ambitions and Obstacles*, Insight Turkey, Vol. 13 / No. 3/ 2011 p. 143



in October 2009. The aim of this initiative is to normalize relations and to increase regional cooperation between Belgrade and Sarajevo.<sup>56</sup>

The first meeting between the President of Turkey, Serbia and Bosnia was held on April 24, 2010 in Istanbul. At this summit they adopted the Istanbul Declaration saying that efforts will be made for lasting peace and as well stability to be secured in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is the tangible outcome of Turkey's active policy towards Bosnia. Turkey has been the only country that puts Bosnia and Herzegovina at a high level of its political agenda. As a result, Ankara through its initiative of tripartite consultation succeeded in setting up a bridge between Bosnia and Serbia.<sup>57</sup> These consultations and meetings have made concrete progress, in the same year Bosnia appointed an ambassador to Belgrade. On the other side, the Serbian parliament adopted a resolution condemning the 1995 Srebrenica massacre. Moreover, the Serbian president Mr. Boris Tadic attended the Commemoration in Srebrenica for the first time after the genocide.<sup>58</sup> During the second meeting, Turkey also made efforts to strengthen peace, stability and tolerance. The parties that attended the meeting showed willingness to improve their economic cooperation. They agreed to concentrate on joint participation in different projects and to closer collaborate in the fields such as education, science, culture and sport.<sup>59</sup>

Turkey supports Bosnia and Herzegovina on the way towards EU and NATO integrations. Bosnia-Herzegovina constitutes an essential part in Turkey's foreign policy. Furthermore, Turkey

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<sup>56</sup> Today's zaman, *Turkey focuses on Mideast, ties with others on track*, October 06. 2013, retrieved from: [http://www.todayszaman.com/diplomacy\\_turkey-focuses-on-mideast-ties-with-others-on-track\\_328104.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/diplomacy_turkey-focuses-on-mideast-ties-with-others-on-track_328104.html) accessed on: 06.10.2015

<sup>57</sup> Turbedar E., *Trilateral Balkan Summit in Istanbul*, TEPAV evaluation note, April 2010 retrieved from: [http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1274094120r2517.Trilateral\\_Balkan\\_Summit\\_in\\_Istanbul.pdf](http://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1274094120r2517.Trilateral_Balkan_Summit_in_Istanbul.pdf) accessed on: 10.10.2015

<sup>58</sup> World Bulletin, *Turkey, Bosnia discuss bilateral and regional issues*, May 22 2013, retrieved from: <http://www.worldbulletin.net/haber/109512/turkey-bosnia-discuss-bilateral-and-regional-ties> accessed on: 10.10.2015

<sup>59</sup> B92, *Trilateral Summit Held in Turkey*, 2013 retrieved from: [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=05&dd=15&nav\\_id=86172](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=05&dd=15&nav_id=86172) accessed on: 11.10.2015

advocates the integration of Bosnia into the North Atlantic Threat Organization, the membership in this organization will help the regional stability and security. Even though the international arena's response was negative to Bosnia and Herzegovina's participation in the NATO Membership Action Plan, Turkey with its diplomatic efforts is the major actor of the MAP having been granted to Bosnia.<sup>60</sup> During the NATO meeting of 2010 in Estonia, the Turkish Prime Minister Davutoğlu said: "we are waiting impatiently to see Bosnia-Herzegovina's flag at NATO HQ in Brussels".<sup>61</sup> In regards to the European Union integration process, Turkey upholds the intention of Bosnia to become a member of the EU. The integration of Bosnia in the EU institutions will create a secure place for investing in this country.<sup>62</sup> During a meeting in 2014 Turkey's former president Abdullah Gül pointed out that "Turkey sincerely supports Bosnia and Herzegovina's integration to European and Atlantic institutions. Turkish-Bosnian bilateral relations are special and based upon a deep-rooted historic past and unshakable human bonds. Turkey has always supported Bosnia and Herzegovina and continues to do so".<sup>63</sup>

#### **4.1.2. Economic aspect**

The trade and economic relations between Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina started in 1995 when the Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation was put into a legal framework. In addition, Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investment was put into a legal

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<sup>60</sup> Oktav Zeynep O., *Turkey in the 21st Century: Quest for a new Foreign Policy*, ASHGATE, 2011 p. 143

<sup>61</sup> Turkey & Macedonia word press, *Turkey Calls on EU, NATO to stay open to Balkans*, July 4 2010, retrieved from: <https://turkeymacedonia.wordpress.com/2010/07/04/turkey-calls-on-eu-nato-to-stay-open-to-balkans/> accessed on: 13.10.2015

<sup>62</sup> Balkans aljazeera, *Turska ce pomoci BiH na putu u EU I NATO*, retrieved from: <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/turska-ce-pomoci-bih-na-putu-u-eu-i-nato> accessed on: 13.10.2015

<sup>63</sup> MFA, *Chairman Izetbegovic of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidential Council pays a visit to Turkey*, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/chairman-izetbegovic-of-the-bosnia-and-herzegovina-presidential-council-pays-a-visit-to-turkey.en.mfa> accessed on: 13.10.2015

framework in 1998; in 2002 Bosnia and Turkey signed a Free Trade Agreement which came into force in 2003, the main objectives of this agreement were:

- to promote through the expansion of mutual trade the harmonious development of economic relations between the Parties and thus to foster in the Parties the advance of economic activity, the improvement of living and employment conditions, and financial stability;
- to provide fair conditions of competition for trade between the Parties;
- to contribute by the removal of barriers to trade, to the harmonious development and expansion of world trade.<sup>64</sup>

In order to improve the economic relations with Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina abolished all customs duties and taxes of export in 2007. Additionally, the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement which enables companies to pay taxes back in their home country was put into a legal framework in 2009.<sup>65</sup>

For better cooperation, the Turkish businessmen in 2006 started a new entrepreneurial process by signing the Joint Action Plan between the Turkish Union of Chambers and Stock Exchanges and of Bosnian Foreign Trade Chamber. The plan includes the training of Bosnian personnel within the framework of the Chamber Development Program. There are also other programs run by the Turkish Business World Development Agency to train Bosnian businessmen and personnel.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> *Free trade agreement between the Republic of Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 2003 retrieved from: <http://wits.worldbank.org/GPTAD/PDF/archive/Turkey-BosniaHerzegovina.pdf> accessed on: 15.10.2015

<sup>65</sup> Iseri O., *Research: Economic and Bilateral relations between Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Center for Security Studies - BiH, November 2011 p. 7, retrieved from: [http://css.ba/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/images\\_docs2\\_bih-turkey\\_economic\\_relations\\_ozum\\_iseri.pdf](http://css.ba/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/images_docs2_bih-turkey_economic_relations_ozum_iseri.pdf) accessed on: 15.10.2015

<sup>66</sup> OECD, *SME Policy index, Western Balkans and Turkey 2012*, Progress in the implementation of the small business act for Europe, 2012 p. 171 - 180, retrieved

Turkey is ranked in ninth place of the foreign investments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are around 50 Turkish companies operating in Bosnia<sup>67</sup>, the most active are: Altin Company, Turkish Airlines, Efes Pilsen, Ziraat Bank, Zorlu Holding, Nobel, Natron Hayat (Hayat Holding) etc. The Turkish ambassador in Bosnia Mr. Cihad Erginay pointed out that after the signing of the Dayton Agreement in 1995, trade volume between the two countries increased more than 50 times. He stressed that the two countries will continue to look for ways to increase economic and trade cooperation, adding that in the coming period to increase mutual trade.<sup>68</sup> However, in the recent visit in Bosnia the Turkish president Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said that: "One of the most important steps is Ziraat Bank's investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is an example. Turkey extends its hand to Bosnia and Herzegovina in all areas".<sup>69</sup>

The economic cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina is more prevalent in the sectors of defense industry, wood and paper industry, furniture, food and electronic industries, coal, still and textile industry.<sup>70</sup> The 'foreign trade volume figures indicate that Bosnia and Herzegovina's export to Turkey have increased by 36.5 percent from \$114 million to \$155.5 million in 2014 when compared to 2013, while its imports from Turkey increased by 18.1 percent from \$334 million to \$395 million in 2014'.<sup>71</sup>

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from: [http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/09680DD332A0B554C1257AA30029407C/\\$file/SMEWBalkansTurkey2012.pdf](http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/09680DD332A0B554C1257AA30029407C/$file/SMEWBalkansTurkey2012.pdf) accessed on: 16.10.2015

<sup>67</sup> Balkans Aljazeera, *BiH i Turska politicke i ekonomske veze*, 14. 09. 2012 retrieved from: <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/bih-i-turska-politicke-i-ekonomske-veze> accessed on: 17.10.2015

<sup>68</sup> 24Info, *Erginay: Nakon rata Turska je u BiH investirala blizu milijardu eura*, 13.04.2015 retrieved from: <http://24sata.info/vijesti/ekonomija/225713-erginay-nakon-rata-turska-je-u-bih-investirala-blizu-milijardu-eura.html> accessed on: 20.10.2015

<sup>69</sup> TCCB, *Turkey extends to Bosnia and Herzegovina in all areas*, 20. 05. 2015 retrieved from: <https://tccb.gov.tr/en/news/542/32183/turkiye-bosna-herseke-el-uzatan-her-yonuyle-burada-bulunan-bir-ulke-dir.html> accessed on: 20.10.2015

<sup>70</sup> Vienna Economic Forum, *Investment to Bosnia and Herzegovina*, retrieved from: <http://www.vienna-economic-forum.at/333.html> accessed on: 20.10.2015

<sup>71</sup> Daily Sabah, *Major boost to commercial ties with Bosnia following President Erdogan's visit*, May 20 2015 retrieved from: <http://www.dailysabah.com/economy/2015/05/20/major-boost-to-commercial-ties-with-bosnia-following-president-erdogans-visit> accessed on: 20.10.2015

#### 4.1.3. Socio-cultural aspect

Since 2002 Turkey has opened several educational and cultural centers in Bosnia. International University of Sarajevo is the first Turkish educational institution that was established in the year of 2003 in Sarajevo the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>72</sup> Another Turkish school in Sarajevo is the International Burch University established and opened in 2008 by the Hizmet - religious and educational movement.<sup>73</sup> In 2008 the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) opened a Linguistic Center in Bosnia. Furthermore, in the cooperation of Konya and Sarajevo the Konya-Sarajevo Cultural Educational center was opened in 2007. In the field of education and the promotion of culture Turkey did invest a lot in Bosnia.<sup>74</sup> The educational institutions established in Bosnia are of great importance for the economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are approximately 3000 students from Turkey studying in Bosnia, each student stays about 4-5 years contributing to the local economy.<sup>75</sup>

Through the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) many projects have been done in the cultural and the social environment. Since the establishment of this agency in 1992 Turkey constantly works to re-build (during the war in Bosnia) destroyed mosques, houses, hospital and schools. Moreover, this agency builds new hospitals, schools, roads and cultural

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<sup>72</sup> IUS, *About the University*, retrieved from: <http://www.ius.edu.ba/ius/about-university> accessed on: 20.10.2015

<sup>73</sup> The Guardian, *Turkey brings a gentle version of the Ottoman empire back to the Balkans*, April 02 2013, retrieved from: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/02/bosnia-turkey-ottoman-influence-balkans-sarajevo> accessed on: 20.10.2015

<sup>74</sup> Sostaric M., *Bosnia, revisited: Turkey's gains, challenges and future aspirations*, retrieved from: <http://www.balkananalysis.com/turkey/2011/07/12/bosnia-revisited-turkey%E2%80%99s-gains-challenges-and-future-aspirations/> accessed on: 21.10.2015

<sup>75</sup> World Bulletin, *3000 students study in Turkish universities in Bosnia*, 14 November 2013, retrieved from: <http://www.worldbulletin.net/haber/122905/3000-students-study-in-turkish-universities-in-bosnia> accessed on: 21.10.2015

centers. 'TIKA is engaged in a number of economic, social and cultural projects aimed at assisting development in Bosnia and Herzegovina'.<sup>76</sup>

## **4.2. Turkey's relations with Serbia**

### **4.2.1. Political aspect**

Since 2002 Turkey strives to play a mediator role in the relations between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. In order to improve relations with these countries, Turkey has developed a mechanism of tripartite meetings every year. Through these meetings the Turkish-Serbian relations have strengthened. During the first meeting with the Serbian delegation in 2009, the Turkish president Abdullah Gül presented a five point plan to improve BiH-Serbian relations. The general aim of this mechanism was to reduce the tensions between Belgrade and Sarajevo and to open the door for better bilateral relations and better regional cooperation. For Turkey, Serbia is an important regional actor, as one diplomat said: "Serbia is the key country with which we cooperate in the Balkans. It is an interlocutor for Turkey in the region to promote stability".<sup>77</sup>

In the relations between the two countries, the Sancak region of Serbia where the majority of Bosniaks live is viewed as 'a bridge of friendship'. This region plays an important role in the context of bilateral relations. However, both countries endeavor to develop political relations to economic and commercial fields in the future.<sup>78</sup> For easier travel of their citizens, Turkey and

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<sup>76</sup> Atlas of Creation, *A hand for friendship and loyalty extending to Bosnia*, 07. 08. 2014 retrieved from: <http://atlasofcreation.com/en/Articles/189655/a-hand-for-friendship-and> accessed on: 22.10.2015

<sup>77</sup> Weber B., and Bassuener K., *Croatian and Serbian Policy in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Help or Hindrance? How to effectively employ western leverage*, DPC policy study, Sarajevo and Berlin, October 2012 p. 46

<sup>78</sup> MFA, *Relations between Turkey and Serbia*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-serbia.en.mfa> accessed on: 22.10.2015

Serbia signed a visa free travel agreement in 2010, this was seen as an important step in the bilateral relations.<sup>79</sup>

Serbia has Turkey's support on the way towards EU integrations. While visiting Serbia in 2013 the former deputy Turkish Prime Minister Mr. Bekir Bozdog said that: "Belgrade will not have to wait for the entry into European Union for as long as Turkey has knocked on the European door". Moreover, he added that: "Serbia is a key country when it comes to bringing peace, prosperity and stability in the region and therefore the stability of Serbia and Serbia's economic development is beneficial not only for it, but for the entire region as well".<sup>80</sup>

In the recent conference held in Belgrade it was underlined that Serbia is a stabilizing factor in the Balkans. Therefore, strengthening the bilateral relations between Turkey and Serbia is of great importance for the regional and international initiatives in the future.<sup>81</sup>

#### **4.2.2. Economic aspect**

Turkey's economic relations with Serbia are developing. Turkish firms had begun to reach out to Serbia. However, current Turkish trade with Serbia is not that intensive as it could be.<sup>82</sup> According to the Turkish ambassador Mr. Hasan Oktem, "the relations between Serbia and Turkey are excellent on the political level but in the field of economy the relations are not satisfactory, we need more investments and the Turkish businessmen are afraid to invest in

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<sup>79</sup> RTS, *Most izmedju Srbije i Turske*, 12 Jul 2010, retrieved from: <http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/9/Srbija/736528/Most+izme%C4%91u+Srbije+i+Turske.html> accessed on: 23.10.2015

<sup>80</sup> B92, *Serbia wants good relations with Turkey*, October 4 2013 retrieved from: [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=10&dd=04&nav\\_id=87897](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2013&mm=10&dd=04&nav_id=87897) accessed on: 23.10.2015

<sup>81</sup> SETAV, *A new step forward in bilateral relations after "Turkey and Serbia in the 21st century" conference*, 21 April 2015, retrieved from: <http://setav.org/en/a-new-step-forward-in-bilateral-relations-after-%E2%80%98turkey-and-serbia-in-the-21st-century-conference/news/18672> accessed on: 23.10.2015

<sup>82</sup> Bassuener K., and Weber B., *Towards a New Policy on Bosnia and Herzegovina? Challenges for the Republic of Serbia's regional policy*, HEINRICH BOLL STIFTUNG SOUTH EASTERNEUROPE, Belgrade 2013 p. 7

Serbia".<sup>83</sup> One of the main reasons why Turks do not invest much in Serbia is obtaining complicated documentation to start a business. Although they faced difficulties, Turkish firm Efes became the owner of Pancevo's brewery and has a share of 64% of the Zajecar brewery. In addition, the firm 'Ozer Motor' from Istanbul established a factory in 2007 for the production of electric motors and engine equipment in Boljevac in Serbia.<sup>84</sup>

In 2009 Turkey signed a Free Trade Agreement FTA with the Republic of Serbia which came into force on 1 September of 2010. With the signed agreement the parties agreed to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers for trade. Also they agree on numerous subjects such as sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, intellectual property, rules of origin, internal taxation, anti-dumping and countervailing measures, safeguards, and balance of payments measures.<sup>85</sup>

There are about 30 Turkish business firms operating on the Serbian territory, most of them are located in the capital city of Belgrade. From Serbia Turkey imports mostly steel, iron, rubber and plastic products. Regarding exports to Serbia, Turkey exports vegetables, fruits, textile, vehicles, industrial machines, metal products and electric equipment.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Blagojevic G., *Recent Turkish migrants in Serbia and the role of the Serbian-Turkish friendship Association*, Ethnographic Institute, Belgrade 2007 p. 151

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. p. 152

<sup>85</sup> *Free Trade Agreement Between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Serbia*, retrieved from: [http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web\\_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Serbia/ekler/2.%20Turkey-Serbia%20FTA-main%20text.pdf?lve](http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Serbia/ekler/2.%20Turkey-Serbia%20FTA-main%20text.pdf?lve) accessed on: 24.10.2015

<sup>86</sup> In Serbia, *Serbia - Turkey Business Forum on October 28, 2014*, retrieved from: <http://inserbia.info/today/2014/10/serbia-turkey-business-forum-on-october-28/> accessed on: 24.10.2015



In 2014, the trade volume between Turkey and Serbia was realized as 780 million US\$ with an increase of 12 % compared to 2013. While in the same year, imports from Serbia were about 274million US\$, whereas Turkey's export to Serbia were 560.5 million US\$.<sup>87</sup>

#### **4.2.3. Socio-cultural aspect**

In 2009 Turkey and Serbia signed an agreement to establish TIKA - Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency. This agency was established to help the whole of Serbia not only the region where the majority of Muslims live. Through different projects TIKA aimed to, and continues to improve the situation and to enable more rapid prosperity in the less developed regions in Serbia, which would also lead to the improvement of the bilateral relations. From 2010 until today, TIKA has implemented a number of projects in the field of education, agriculture and health.<sup>88</sup> Turkey also makes effort to promote its culture in Serbia. After signing a couple of bilateral agreements in 2010, Turkey opened the Ataturk Cultural Center in the Sancak region in Serbia.<sup>89</sup> In recent times the Yunus Emre Cultural Center was opened in Belgrade. The Republic of Turkey in parallel with the development of socio-economic policy supports the cultural activities by opening educational centers to promote its culture and demolish stereotypes about Turks in Serbia.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ekonomi.gov, *Trade Volume information between Turkey and Serbia*, retrieved from: [http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web\\_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Serbia/Turkey-Serbia\\_Free\\_Trade\\_Agreement.html](http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Serbia/Turkey-Serbia_Free_Trade_Agreement.html) accessed on: 24.10.2015

<sup>88</sup> Bisevac S., *Tika se ne bavi politikom vec pruzanjem pomoci*, 17.11.2013 retrieved from: [http://www.danas.rs/danasrs/drustvo/tika\\_se\\_ne\\_bavi\\_politikom\\_vec\\_pruzanjem\\_pomoci.55.html?news\\_id=271317](http://www.danas.rs/danasrs/drustvo/tika_se_ne_bavi_politikom_vec_pruzanjem_pomoci.55.html?news_id=271317) accessed on: 24.10.2015

<sup>89</sup> Glas Javnosti, *Turski kulturni centar u Novom Pazaru*, 30.05. 2010 retrieved from: <http://www.glas-javnosti.rs/node/101060/print> accessed on: 25.10.2015

<sup>90</sup> TRT, *Beograd dobio Turski kulturni centar "Yunus Emre"*, 19.05.2015 retrieved from: <http://www.trt.net.tr/bosanski/news/detail/region/2/beograd-dobio-turski-kulturni-centar-yunus-em/44639> accessed on: 26.10.2015

### 4.3. Turkey's relations with Montenegro

#### 4.3.1. Political aspect

Montenegro was in union with Serbia until 2006. Earlier in 2002 Montenegro and Serbia had signed an agreement defining the future of their union. They agreed to start the separation process three years after adoption of the agreement.<sup>91</sup> In a referendum held in May 2006 Montenegro gained independence and became an independent state.<sup>92</sup> After its declaration of independence, Turkey was among the first countries that recognized Montenegro. The official recognition happened on June 12, 2006 and finally diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on July 3, 2006.<sup>93</sup>

As part of its Balkan policy based on stability and peace, Turkey established very close relations with Montenegro considering each other as friendly nations with an excellent level of closeness. Several high level visits and contacts took place between Montenegro and Turkey during the period between 2006 and 2015. One of the most important factors in the relations between the two countries is the existence of a 19% Muslim population (Albanians and Bosniaks). In addition, many people from Montenegro migrated to Turkey during the past times. Diaspora of Montenegro in Turkey is also another important fact for the improvement of Turkish-Montenegrin bilateral relations.<sup>94</sup>

Turkey gives support to Montenegro in all regional and international initiatives and organizations. As a NATO member and the country in the negotiation process with the European

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<sup>91</sup> Crisis Group, *Crna Gora na putu ka nezavisnosti*, Izvjestaj za Evropu br. 169 - 7 Decembar 2005 p. 4 retrieved from: [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/europe/169\\_montenegro\\_s\\_independence\\_drive\\_\\_serbian\\_final](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/europe/169_montenegro_s_independence_drive__serbian_final) accessed on: 25.10.2015

<sup>92</sup> Morrison K., *Montenegro: A Modern History*, I.B. Tauris, New York 2009 p. 205

<sup>93</sup> MVPEI, *Bilateralni odnosi: Turska*, retrieved from: <http://www.mvpei.gov.me/rubrike/bilateralni-odnosi/bilateralni-odnosi/turska> accessed on: 25.10.2015

<sup>94</sup> MFA, *Relations between Montenegro and Turkey*, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-montenegro.en.mfa> accessed on: 25.10.2015

Union, Turkey acts in solidarity with Montenegro and supports the intention of Montenegro to integrate into these organizations. While visiting Montenegro, the Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu said: "Turkey attaches great importance to cultural, ethnic and spiritual diversity ... that is one of the main reasons actually for strong Turkish support for the principal target of the regional countries, including Montenegro, to integrate with European and Euro-Atlantic institutions".<sup>95</sup>

#### 4.3.2. Economic aspect

The Republic of Turkey and Montenegro have good mutual economic and political relations, a rise is seen in the field of communication and cooperation as well. The two countries have signed numerous agreements and memoranda on cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, transport, tourism, banking, the judiciary, police, twinning of the municipalities, health, education, metal industry, trade fairs, business forums and many other areas.<sup>96</sup> In 2007 TIKA office was established in Montenegro. Since 2007 until 2015 through this agency Turkey invested 14 million euro's and realized about 190 different projects in Montenegro.<sup>97</sup> There are many Turkish firms such as: Gintas, Global Ports Holding, Toscelik, Ekin Maden Ticaret ve Sanayi A.S., Sancakli Mobilya, operating in Montenegro.<sup>98</sup> Apart from these companies, the most important is that Turkish Airlines commenced on July 2010 in Montenegro. This company

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<sup>95</sup> Today's Zaman, *Turkey and Montenegro: Two best examples in Balkans*, March 19 2012 retrieved from: [http://www.todayszaman.com/columnists\\_turkey-and-montenegro-two-best-examples-in-balkans\\_274739.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/columnists_turkey-and-montenegro-two-best-examples-in-balkans_274739.html) accessed on: 27.10.2015

<sup>96</sup> Bankar, *Saradnja Crne Gore i Turske u svim oblastima*, October 20 2015 retrieved from: <http://www.bankar.me/2015/10/20/saradnja-crne-gore-i-turske-u-svim-oblastima/> accessed on: 27.10.2015

<sup>97</sup> TIKA Podgoritsa, *Jutarnji program RTCG* 20.03.2015 TIKA Podgoritsa, retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buxiYTUFIPo> accessed on: 27.10.2015

<sup>98</sup> Bankar, *Saradnja Crne Gore i Turske u svim oblastima*, October 20 2015 retrieved from: <http://www.bankar.me/2015/10/20/saradnja-crne-gore-i-turske-u-svim-oblastima/> accessed on: 27.10.2015

plays an important role in improving economic relations between Turkey and Montenegro.<sup>99</sup> As a result of good economic cooperation with Montenegro, the Turkish Ziraat Bank was established in 2015.<sup>100</sup>

In 2010 the first meeting of the Joint Economic Commission between the two countries was held. In addition, the asymmetrical Free Trade Agreement that had been signed in Istanbul on 26 November 2008, came into force on 1 March 2010.<sup>101</sup> Since the meeting was held until today the improvement of bilateral trade and investment relations between Turkey and Montenegro became more intensive.<sup>102</sup>

#### **4.3.3. Socio - cultural aspect**

Turkey attaches a great importance to historical, cultural and educational relations. Therefore, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency in the last few years has implemented about 50 percent of its projects in the field of education and culture. From restoration of historical monuments to an increase in the education capacity, it provides a great contribution to the cultural relations between Turkey and Montenegro.<sup>103</sup> Turkey also provides a scholarships to Montenegrin students within the scope of Government scholarships. One of the most important segments of the relations between the two countries are the students. There are over 200 students from Montenegro studying in Turkey. The students are considered as a bridge

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<sup>99</sup> MFA, *Relations between Montenegro and Turkey*, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-montenegro.en.mfa> accessed on: 27.10.2015

<sup>100</sup> CDM, *Zvanicno Ziraat banka dobila dozvolu za rad u Crnoj Gori*, April 6 2015, retrieved from: <http://www.cdm.me/ekonomija/zvanicno-ziraat-banka-dobila-dozvolu-za-rad-u-crnoj-gori> accessed on: 27.10.2015

<sup>101</sup> Privredna Komora, *Sporazum o slobodnoj trgovini izmedju Crne Gore i Turske*, retrieved from: <http://www.privrednakomora.me/bilateralni-sporazumi> accessed on: 27.10.2015

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Haber, *Turska Agencija za medjunarodni razvoj i koordinaciju*, 11.11.2014 retrieved from: <http://www.haber.ba/vijesti/region/103075-region-tika-od-2007-godine-realizovala-185-projekata-sirom-crne-gore> accessed on: 28.10.2015

between Montenegro and Turkey.<sup>104</sup> Another important step for the promotion of Turkish culture in Montenegro is opening the 'Yunus Emre' institute in the capital city of Podgorica.<sup>105</sup> Turkey as well maintains good relations with the Islamic Community in Montenegro.<sup>106</sup>

#### **4.4. Turkey's relations with Kosovo**

##### **4.4.1. Political aspect**

The relations between Turkey and Kosovo are based on many factors, such as historical relations, tradition, religion and culture. During the conflict that happened in Bosnia and Kosovo after splitting up Yugoslavia, Turkey played a crucial role to stop the war in Kosovo. Additionally, it has been one of the most important lobbyist for Kosovo to become an independent and recognized state with international legitimacy.<sup>107</sup> Kosovo declared its independence on 17 February 2008, one day after declaring independence Turkey recognized Kosovo as a state.<sup>108</sup>

On the international scene, Turkey strongly supports Kosovo's international subjectivity and in all situations strengthening it. For example, on 8 October 2008, Serbia submitted a resolution in the United Nation General Assembly (UNGA) calling for the International Court of Justice to provide an opinion about the legality of Kosovo's independence, while voting for this

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<sup>104</sup> RTV ATLAS, *Turska nastavlja da stipendira crnogorse studente*, Mart 24 2014, retrieved from: <http://www.rtvatlas.tv/vijesti/drustvo/2175-turska-nastavlja-da-stipendira-crnogorske-studente.html> accessed on: 28.10.2015

<sup>105</sup> CDM, *Cultural Center Yunus Emre strengthening friendship of Turkey and Montenegro*, November 22 2015 retrieved from: <http://www.cdm.me/english/photo-cultural-center-yunus-emre-strengthening-friendship-of-turkey-and-montenegro> accessed on: 28.10.2015

<sup>106</sup> Diyanet, *Montenegro Islamic Union president Feyzic visits Religious Affairs*, 06.03.2014 retrieved from: <http://diyanet.gov.tr/en/content/montenegro-islamic-union-president-fayzic-visits-religious-affairs%E2%80%A6/12758> accessed on: 28.10.2015

<sup>107</sup> Gangloff S., *Turkish policy towards the conflict in Kosovo: the preeminence of national political interests*, Vol. VIII, no. 1 June 2004 retrieved from: <http://balkanologie.revues.org/517> accessed on: 28.10.2015

<sup>108</sup> Kosovo thanks you, *Who recognized Kosova as independent state*, retrieved from: <http://www.kosovothanksyou.com/> accessed on: 28.10.2015

Resolution Turkey abstained. Furthermore, on 3 May 2009, Turkey voted for Kosovo's membership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and in the same year gave support to Kosovo's membership in the World Bank. However, Turkey is continuing to lobby for Kosovo to be internationally further recognized and to give support to membership of Kosovo in the international organizations.<sup>109</sup> On the bilateral level, relations between the two states are continuously improving. The Turkish Ambassador to Kosovo, Songul Ozan, has described bilateral relations between Turkey and Kosovo as "excellent" and "special" adding that for Turkey, Kosovo is a "magic key that one uses in Turkey to open a lot of doors".<sup>110</sup>

Turkey is firmly attached to preserve the stability and territorial integrity of Kosovo through a constructive approach with its neighbors on the bases of solidarity and friendship. As well, Turkey supports Kosovo's development and its intention to integrate itself in Euro-Atlantic institutions. During the joint press conference held in 2010 between the Prime Minister of Kosovo and of Turkey, the Turkish Prime Minister said: "We have offered our support [to Kosovo] and we are aware of the duty we have to support Kosovo in the process of integration and its membership in NATO".<sup>111</sup>

The current dialogue on the relation between Pristina and Belgrade is a very important factor which accelerates the integration of Kosovo and Serbia towards the European Union. This dialogue is seen as an instrument to normalize the relations between two countries. In this regard, Turkey gives its full support to the process of normalizing relations and tries to encourage both Serbia and Kosovo to consolidate achievements that have been gained so far.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Kursani S., Violeta H., and Gjikolli G., *Kosovo in Regional Context: Bilateral Political Relations*, KIPRED, Policy paper no: 3/14 May 2014 p. 67-69

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 67-69

<sup>111</sup> Balkaninsight, *New chapter in Kosovo-Turkey relations needed*, November 04, 2010 retrieved from: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/kosovo-turkey-historic-ties> accessed on: 29.10.2015

<sup>112</sup> MFA, *Relations between Turkey and Kosovo*, retrieved from: [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-kosovo\\_.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-kosovo_.en.mfa) accessed on: 29.10.2015

Another link between Turkey and Kosovo is Diaspora which actively contributes to political, cultural, social and economic relations. On the rising level are the contacts between Turkish and Kosovar businessmen, universities, governments, governors and NGO's. Various Turkish investments are present in Kosovo especially in the banking sector, insurance and infrastructure. Therefore, Turkey continuously provides support to Kosovo in all fields.<sup>113</sup>

#### **4.4.2. Economic aspect**

In the region Turkey is the first country on the list that has signed numerous agreements with Kosovo. Most of the signed agreements are on economic cooperation. But one the most important is the Free Trade Agreement signed between Turkey and Kosovo on 27 September 2013. In this agreement Turkey takes the obligation to eliminate customs duties on all industrial goods and on 850 tariff lines on agricultural goods from Kosovo. The other side in the agreement (Kosovo) will also remove customs duties on all industrial goods and as well on 846 tariff lines regarding agricultural goods produced by Turkey. They agreed to abolish all tariffs in a period of 9 years.<sup>114</sup> With this regard, the Turkish Economy Minister said: "With the signing of this new agreement, I believe that the investments will go up and the obstacles will be removed".<sup>115</sup>

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations up to today, Turkey and Kosovo have signed about 40 agreements. They cover political, economic, education, culture, health and other important fields between the two states. The signed agreements give an optimistic hope for the future of the two countries. The economic relations between Turkey and Kosovo are on an

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Chamber, *NEWS: Turkey-Kosovo Free Trade Agreement (FTA)*, Turkey contact point, issue: 20, September 23 - October 4 2013, retrieved from:  
<http://www.chamber.org.il/media/149543/239-41013.pdf?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>  
accessed on: 29.10.2015

<sup>115</sup> Hurriyet Daily News, *Turkey intent of signing free trade deal with Kosovo*, May 31 2012, retrieved from:  
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-intent-on-signing-free-trade-deal-with-kosovo.aspx?pageID=238&nID=22009&NewsCatID=344> accessed on: 29.10.2015 accessed on: 29.10.2015

upward rise. There is an increase of Turkish investments in Kosovo, as well many Turkish companies in the competition have won the biggest public projects. For instance, the Turkish Enka company is completing a highway in Kosovo, the concession of the International Airport of Pristina are given to the Limak Holding. However, there are also other Turkish companies successfully operating in Kosovo such as the Turkish Economic Bank TEB, Ozerler Holding, Calik Holding etc. Turkey is among the six biggest trade partners of Kosovo with 300 Turkish companies operating within the Kosovo territory.<sup>116</sup> In 2012 the trade volume between Kosovo and Turkey was 206.5 million Euros in total. Turkey exported to Kosovo about 199.5, while imported from Kosovo 7 million Euros.<sup>117</sup>

#### **4.4.3. Socio-cultural aspect**

Through the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency TIKA, Turkey invested in many cultural and educational projects in Kosovo. TIKA completed the restoration of very important heritage monuments such as Fatih Mosque, Sinan Pasha Mosque, Sultan Murat Tomb and it also contributes to the protection of other common culture heritage monuments in Kosovo.<sup>118</sup> Additionally, about 400 projects are completed by TIKA in agriculture, health and education. Through its embassy Turkey also supports the Turkish contingent in KFOR mission in Kosovo. Apart from that, Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center and other socio-cultural

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<sup>116</sup> Ambasada-ks, *Kosovo's Ambassador to Turkey, Avni Spahiu evaluated Kosovo's foreign policy priorities, the impact of the European Union in the Balkans, the agreement reached between Kosovo and Serbia and the relationship between Kosovo and Turkey*, retrieved from: <http://www.ambasada-ks.net/tr/?page=2,8,90> accessed on: 29.10.2015

<sup>117</sup> MFA, *Relations between Turkey and Kosovo*, retrieved from: [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-kosovo\\_.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-kosovo_.en.mfa) accessed on: 29.10.2015

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.



institutions and centers were established.<sup>119</sup> Signing numerous agreements between Turkey and Kosovo since 2008 until today, the two states have developed their cultural and educational ties at a high level.

#### **4.5. Turkey's relations with Albania**

##### **4.5.1. Political aspect**

Since the AKP came to power they created a new foreign policy that is wrapped in the concepts of "strategic depth", "pro-activism", "zero problem with neighbors", "geographical centralism" and "soft balancing". However, in the Balkan region Turkey perceives Albania as a country with a Muslim majority that has similar culture and history to Turkish culture and history. With this regard, apart from the other countries in the region Turkey will be an omnipresent country towards Albania as well.<sup>120</sup>

Turkey supports the strategic interests of Albania to become a member of the European Union and Atlantic institutions. After many years of effort, in 2009, Albania became a full member of the North Atlantic Threat Organization.<sup>121</sup> Turkey sees the integration of Albania and other Balkan states in Euro-Atlantic institutions as a positive move that will contribute peace and security of the region. While visiting Albania in 2008 the Foreign Minister of Turkey emphasized that there were no political or problems of any kind between Turkey and Albania stating that Albania was an important country for peace in the Balkans who pursued a balanced policy. Additionally, Turkey works together with Albania in the regional mechanisms such as the

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<sup>119</sup> The American Times, *Turkey's Ambassador to Kosovo speaks on investments, heritage & Strong ties*, retrieved from: <http://www.the-american-times.com/turkeys-ambassador-kosovo-speaks-investments-heritage-strong-ties/2015/02/01> accessed on: 29.10.2015

<sup>120</sup> Aydin A., and Progonati E., *Albanian Foreign Policy in the post-Communist era*, UNISCI Discussion papers, No. 26, May 2010 p. 275-276 accessed on: 30.10.2015

<sup>121</sup> Yahya H., *Stratesko partnerstvo Albanije i Turske od bitke na Saurskom polju 1385 do 'savršenih odnosa'*, 19.11.2015 retrieved from: <http://thebosniatimes.ba/clanak/1946> accessed on: 30.10.2015

Cooperation process with southeast European countries and the BSEC - Black Sea Economic Cooperation.<sup>122</sup> Since Albania became a member of NATO, Turkey and Albania have maintained a very close and friendly partnership in the organization. Furthermore, Albania and Turkey have been working closely in Peace-Keeping operations in Bosnia, Afghanistan and other war-affected countries. Another well-developed cooperation between Albania and Turkey is through the Southeast European Cooperation Process - SEECP.<sup>123</sup>

The relationship between Turkey and Albania is based on mutual friendship, trust and solidarity. There are many Turkish citizens of Albanian origin who live in Turkey as well as a Turkish community living in Albania; they strengthen the cooperation potential between two countries. In addition, defense is also another field of cooperation that strengthens the bilateral relations of Turkey and Albania. Turkish military teams have been training Albanian Armed Forces and supporting them in the field of modernization and logistics.<sup>124</sup>

#### **4.5.2. Economic aspect**

In December of 2006 the Free Trade Agreement - FTA - was signed between Turkey and Albania. The agreement came into force on May 1 2008; as a result the economic and commercial relations between the two countries have started developing further. According to this agreement, tariff and as well non-tariff barriers were eliminated in trade relations between the countries. Turkey has committed itself to annul the custom duties to Albanian originated

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<sup>122</sup> Hurriyet Daily News, *Turkey supports Albania's NATO bid*, 02.27.2008, retrieved from: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-supports-albanias-nato-bid.aspx?pageID=438&n=turkey-supports-albanias-nato-bid-2008-02-27> accessed on: 02.12.2015

<sup>123</sup> Tase P., *Turkey and Albania establish a dynamic agenda of bilateral relations*, May 02 2014, retrieved from: <http://foreignpolicynews.org/2014/05/02/turkey-albania-establish-dynamic-agenda-bilateral-relations/> accessed on: 02.12.2015

<sup>124</sup> Genc M., *Albania-Turkey relations - An example of friendly continuity in centuries*, 15.12.2012, retrieved from: <http://geo.finand.ro/4013/albania-turkey-relations-an-example-of-friendly-continuity-in-centuries/> accessed on: 02.12.2015

industrial commodities and Albania as the other party in agreement is obliged to annul the custom duties of Turkish originated industrial products above the 80 percent.<sup>125</sup>

When it comes to exports and imports, Turkey exports textile, iron, steel and electronic products to Albania while imports of leather, cafe, cacao, metal, gems, plant and animal raw materials arrive from Albania. However, the most frequent items from Albania imported to Turkey comprises 95.7% of all Albanian exports to Turkey. The most traded items are: copper 33.4%, steel scrap 27%, fruits and vegetables 10%, crude oil 10.6%, leather 3.7%, electricity switch 3.8% and chrome 2.8%. Furthermore, the most frequently items that Turkey exports to Albania comprises about 28.5% of Turkish export to Albania. The most traded items are: superchargers and concrete pipes 9.4%, pharmaceutical drug capsule 3.1%, copper frames 2.7%, infrastructure equipment 2.6% refined fuel 2.1%, synthetic fiber trousers 2.0%, tricot shirt 1.9%, raw copper 1.7%, cement additive 1.4% and biscuits 1.6%.<sup>126</sup>

The major Turkish companies and foundations that operate in Albania are: ENKA, Metal Yapi, Aldemir, Gintas, Servomatik, Armada, Calik Holding, Turk Telekom, Makro-Tel, Hes-Kablo, Calikbank, Sekerbank-BKT, Yilmaz Cable, Merinos, Everest, Pino, RM Kocak, Kurum, Dedeman, Ber-Oner, Evsen Group (Albanian Airlines), Gulistan Foundation, Istanbul Foundation and Epoka University.<sup>127</sup>

Turkey is considered to be the second major trade partner of Albania. The trade volume between Turkey and Albania is on the rise. For example, in 2003 Turkey's total export value to Albania was 114 million US\$, while in 2008 the trade volume increased to 306 million US\$.

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<sup>125</sup> Ekonomi, *FTA between Turkey and Albania*, retrieved from: [http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web\\_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Albania/Turkey-Albania\\_Free\\_Trade\\_Agreement.html](http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Albania/Turkey-Albania_Free_Trade_Agreement.html) accessed on: 04.12.2015

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., p. 93

<sup>127</sup> MFA, *Relations between Turkey and Albania*, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-albania.en.mfa> accessed on: 08.12.2015

Albania's total export to Turkey in 2003 was 5 million US\$, but in 2008 it reached 37 million US\$.<sup>128</sup> In the last two years the trade volume increased about 19% compared to the previous year. The realized trade between the two countries in 2014 was 416 million US\$, imports from Albania were 97 million US\$ whereas exports to Albania were 319 million US\$.<sup>129</sup> In 2015 the president of Turkey, during his visit to Albania, said "Turkey wants to more than double annual trade with Albania".<sup>130</sup>

#### 4.5.3. Socio-cultural aspect

Turkey and Albania have similar cultures, therefore they maintain a close interaction and cooperation in the field of culture. Due to historical relations, many common words remained in use in both the Albanian and Turkish languages. Hence, Albanians have a great interest in Turkish language and the history. In 2009 Turkey opened the Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in Tirana, the capital city of Albania. The opened center offers Turkish language courses for interested Albanians and it organizes various cultural activities. Because of the high interest in Turkish language, in 2012 Turkey established the second Yunus Emre Institute.<sup>131</sup> In addition, since 2003 Turkey has established many educational institutions in Albania, such as Epoka University, Mehmet Akif Turkish College, Turgut Özal College, Islamic schools, elementary and

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<sup>128</sup>Sulku M., *Political Relations between Turkey and Albania in the post Cold War period*, Master thesis, February 2010 p. 92 retrieved from: <https://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12611656/index.pdf> accessed on: 15.12.2015

<sup>129</sup> Ekonomi, *FTA between Turkey and Albania*, retrieved from: [http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web\\_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Albania/Turkey-Albania\\_Free\\_Trade\\_Agreement.html](http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Albania/Turkey-Albania_Free_Trade_Agreement.html) accessed on: 16.12.2015

<sup>130</sup> Vijesti, *Erdogan: razvijene zemlje da rijese probleme migranata*, 13.05.2015 retrieved from: <http://www.vijesti.me/svijet/erdogan-razvijene-zemlje-da-rijese-probleme-migranata-833379> accessed on: 16.10.2015

<sup>131</sup> MFA, *Relations between Turkey and Albania*, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-albania.en.mfa> accessed on: 16.12.2015

high level schools etc.<sup>132</sup> Just as in other countries, Turkey established TIKA in Albania. Through this Agency of Cooperation and Coordination Turkey invested in many projects of the common interest.<sup>133</sup> The Turkish Ambassador to Albania noted that "TIKA conducted important activities in education and health sectors as well as for the preservation of the joint cultural history with Albania".<sup>134</sup>

## **4.6. Turkey's relations with Macedonia**

### **4.6.1. Political aspect**

The relationship between Turkey and Macedonia started to improve in the AKP period from 2002 until today. In this period the two countries concluded many agreements which established the judicial basis of the ties between two states. In addition, Turkey contributed to the peace and stability in Macedonia by participating in peacekeeping missions and operations. In 2003 the agreement was signed between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the participation of the Republic of Turkey in the European Union-led forces in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in "EUFOR-Operation Concordia".<sup>135</sup> As well as this, in 2004 another Agreement was signed between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the

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<sup>132</sup> Today's Zaman, *President Gul lays foundation of Turkish University in Albania*, retrieved from: [http://www.todayszaman.com/diplomacy\\_president-gul-lays-foundation-of-turkish-university-in-albania\\_195409.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/diplomacy_president-gul-lays-foundation-of-turkish-university-in-albania_195409.html); and from: [http://www.todayszaman.com/anasayfa\\_albanian-parliament-speaker-visits-turkish-school-after-erdogan-calls-for-its-closure\\_380946.html](http://www.todayszaman.com/anasayfa_albanian-parliament-speaker-visits-turkish-school-after-erdogan-calls-for-its-closure_380946.html) accessed on: 18.12.2015

<sup>133</sup> Daily Sabah, *TIKA Contributes to Albania's cultural and historical heritage*, September 7, 2015, retrieved from: <http://www.dailysabah.com/feature/2015/09/08/tika-contributes-to-albanias-cultural-and-historical-heritage> accessed on: 20.12.2015

<sup>134</sup> Byegm, *TIKA supports education in Albania*, 17.11.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/english/agenda/tika-supports-education-in-albania/87440> accessed on: 20.12.2015

<sup>135</sup> Europa, *The Agreement between Turkey and EU for the participation in military operation in Macedonia*, 04.09.2003, retrieved from: <http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=180> accessed on: 22.12.2015

participation of the Republic of Turkey in the European Union Police Mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (EUPOL Proxima).<sup>136</sup>

Turkey has good relations with Macedonia. As in the other Western Balkan countries, Turkey tries to exercise its political aims towards Macedonia. However, it supports Macedonia at the international level, especially supports the integration into Western Organizations, the EU and helped to integrate Macedonia into North Atlantic Threat Organization. In the case of EU integrations, Turkey and Macedonia have different approaches but a similar obstacle. Both countries have problems with its neighbor Greece.<sup>137</sup> However, at the NATO summit held in 2008, Turkey gave great support to the membership of Macedonia, Albania and Croatia in NATO. At the summit Greece opposed Macedonia's membership, but Turkey insisted on the use of footnotes in each document of organization specifying Turkish recognition of the country as the 'Republic of Macedonia'. In the same year, the two countries signed a "strategy document for reinforcement of bilateral relations between Turkey and Macedonia" aiming to increase cooperation in all fields. Both countries also maintain close relations at parliamentary level through framework of Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group - IPFG and good cooperation in OSCE and the European Council.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, high level visits between Turkey and Macedonia have increased in the recent years, the visits are a sign of friendly and good ties. The visits in 2012 resulted in signing a visa free agreement. However, another important issue in the relations between the two countries is the Turkish minority in Macedonia. According to the 'Ohrid Framework Agreement' Turks (4% of the total population) were granted the right to be

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<sup>136</sup> Europa, *The Agreement between Turkey and EU for the participation in police mission in Macedonia*, 10.09.2004, retrieved from: <http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=182> accessed on: 22.12.2015

<sup>137</sup> Djordjeska M., *Between Myths and Reality - Macedonia between Turkey and the European Union*, p. 7., retrieved from: <http://www.analyticalmk.com/files/2012/01/06.pdf> accessed on: 22.12.2015

<sup>138</sup> Adiyaman S., *Turkey Macedonia Relations*, Bilgesam, March 13, 2012 retrieved from: [http://www.bilgesam.org/en/incele/444/-turkey-macedonia-relations/#.VmmNuL\\_u\\_I5](http://www.bilgesam.org/en/incele/444/-turkey-macedonia-relations/#.VmmNuL_u_I5) accessed on: 24.12.2015

fairly represented in the Macedonian government and the right to accept Turkey as their homeland. Hence, the relations between Turkey and Macedonia continue to develop in all areas.<sup>139</sup>

#### 4.6.2. Economic aspect

Turkey and Macedonia signed the Free Trade Agreement in 1999 but it came into force in 2000. With this agreement, tariff and non-tariff barriers in the trade between the two countries were eliminated. The custom duties on imports into Turkey of industrial products made in Macedonia were abolished since the agreement came into force in 2000 while customs duties on imports into Macedonia of industrial products made in Turkey were abolished in 2008.<sup>140</sup> The trade volume between Turkey and Macedonia was 378 million US\$ in 2012. Turkish exports in that year was 274.69 million US\$ and import was 103.25 million US\$. While in 2014 the trade volume reached 427 million US\$ of which 79 million US\$ was Turkish import from Macedonia whereas 348 million US\$ was Turkish export to Macedonia.<sup>141</sup> In a visit in 2014 the Turkish prime minister announced that "Turkey is ready to sign a Free Trade Agreement with Macedonia which will be the broadest one we have linked with other countries so far. It will include the agriculture and services sectors", he expressed that "we must reach a trade volume level of 1 billion US\$ within three to four years".<sup>142</sup> However Turkish investments in Macedonia have exceeded 500 million US\$. There are many Turkish companies operating in Macedonia, such as

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<sup>139</sup> MFA, *The relations between Turkey and Macedonia*, retrieved from: [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-macedonia\\_en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-macedonia_en.mfa) accessed on: 26.12.2015

<sup>140</sup> Ekonomi, *Free Trade Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia*, retrieved from: [http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web\\_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Macedonia/Turkey-Macedonia\\_Free\\_Trade\\_Agreement.html](http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/content/conn/UCM/path/Contribution%20Folders/web_en/Trade%20Agreements/Free%20Trade%20Agreements/Macedonia/Turkey-Macedonia_Free_Trade_Agreement.html) accessed on: 26.12.2015

<sup>141</sup> MFA, *The relations between Turkey and Macedonia*, retrieved from: [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-macedonia\\_en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-macedonia_en.mfa) accessed on: 26.12.2015

<sup>142</sup> AA, *Turkey, Macedonia aim to double trade volume*, 23.11.2014 retrieved from: <http://aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-macedonia-aim-to-double-trade-volume/90168> accessed on: 26.12.2015

Kurum Holding, Cevahir Holding, Pera Construction, TAV, Novatek, Prodar, Tokar, Ziraat Bank AD Skopje, IK Bank etc.<sup>143</sup> Additionally, in 2014 OXI Group, Mach Group, Dempo Group, Smyrna Pars and Istem Medical companies have announced their investments in Macedonia.<sup>144</sup>

#### **4.6.3.Socio-cultural aspect**

Turkey and Macedonia share common cultural roots, values and history. As a result of strong friendship based on common historical and cultural heritage, Turkey established a TIKA office in 2005 and the Yunus Emre Cultural Center-YECC in 2010. Since the establishment, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency together with the assistance of Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Directorate of Religious Affairs have restored about 500 Turkish historical artifacts in Macedonia. The Yunus Emre Institute carry out its activities to promote the Turkish culture and values. In addition, many Turkish agencies, educational and non-governmental organizations increased in recent years in Macedonia.<sup>145</sup> This year (2015) Turkey opened its Anadolu press agency in Macedonia, the service will publish news both in Macedonian and Albanian. During the opening the Turkish official said: "Yet another newly-established bridge of friendship, we will not only serve as the voice of Turkey in Macedonia, but also as the voice of Macedonia around the world".<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> MFA, *The relations between Turkey and Macedonia*, retrieved from: [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-macedonia\\_en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-macedonia_en.mfa) accessed on: 26.12.2015

<sup>144</sup> Independent, *At least five Turkish companies confirm to invest in Macedonia*, September 20, 2014 retrieved from: <http://www.independent.mk/articles/9481/At+Least+Five+Turkish+Companies+Confirm+to+Invest+in+Macedonia> accessed on: 26.12.2015

<sup>145</sup> Adiyaman S., *Turkey Macedonia Relations*, Bilgesam, March 13, 2012 retrieved from: [http://www.bilgesam.org/en/incele/444/-turkey-macedonia-relations/#.VmmNuL\\_u\\_I5](http://www.bilgesam.org/en/incele/444/-turkey-macedonia-relations/#.VmmNuL_u_I5) accessed on: 27.12.2015

<sup>146</sup> Balkan Insight, *Turkey Opens Macedonian-Language News Service*, November 9, 2015 retrieved from: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/turkey-opens-macedonian-albanian-language-news-service-11-09-2015> accessed on: 28.12.2015



## 4.7. Turkey's relations with Croatia

### 4.7.1. Political aspect

The relations between Turks and Croatians are not derived only from the rich historical heritage, which are supported by the fact that they lived for centuries in the two large and competing empires (the Habsburg and Ottoman), but also the rich cultural heritage which is the result of large migration to the Balkan Peninsula. However, the contemporary ties between Turkey and Croatia are strengthened after Croatian independence. Since then, Turkey and Croatia are very active political partners in a number of diplomatic and political initiatives in the region.<sup>147</sup>

In the last few years Turkey and Croatia have signed many agreements, especially the signing of the Strategy document between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs in 2009 which contributed to the further development of the bilateral relations. Between the two countries there exists very good cooperation regarding regional issues. They developed the Turkey-Croatia-Bosnia-Herzegovina Trilateral Consultation Mechanism in order to strengthen the relationships. In addition, the two countries have also good cooperation in the framework of the South East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP).<sup>148</sup>

Turkey and Croatia are members of the Council of Europe, WTO - World Trade Organization, NATO, and the Mediterranean Union, in which they act as a partners. In 2005 both countries started negotiations as a potential candidate for membership in the EU. Although they

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<sup>147</sup> HTUP, *Hrvatsko-turski odnosi*, retrieved from: <http://www.htup.hr/hrvatsko-turski-odnosi/> accessed on: 28.12.2015

<sup>148</sup> MFA, *Relations between Turkey and Croatia*, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-croatia.en.mfa> accessed on: 28.12.2015

started in the same year to negotiate for membership in the EU, in 2013 Croatia was granted membership while Turkey is still under the negotiation process. However, as a member of the EU Croatia supports Turkish institutions to implement the reforms and shares the experience in the EU accession process.<sup>149</sup>

#### **4.7.2. Economic aspect**

In 2003 Turkey and Croatia signed the Free Trade Agreement, but as Croatia became a member of the European Union in 2013 the signed agreement had to be repealed and replaced by the Customs Union Agreement, agriculture and coal and steel agreements as part of the EU requirements.<sup>150</sup>

Turkey invests in Croatia mainly in tourism, the banking sector and in the textile industry. The biggest Turkish companies in Croatia are Rixos Group and Dogus Holding. However, Turkey is more interested in investing in the Croatian financial sector.<sup>151</sup> Recently the Turkish Eksen Bank Holding (Kent Bank) have bought a majority stake in the Slavonskobrodskoj Brod (Ship-bank) Banci.<sup>152</sup> However, the trade relations between Turkey and Croatia are far from reflecting the existing potential. Trade volume between the two countries showed a decline in 2009 but in 2010 it reached about 460 million US\$. Of that amount Turkey exported 249 million

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<sup>149</sup> Wikipedia, *Hrvatsko-Turski odnosi*, retrieved from: [https://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hrvatsko-turski\\_odnosi](https://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hrvatsko-turski_odnosi) accessed on: 29.12.2015

<sup>150</sup> Ekinci U., M., *5 Questions: Croatia's EU Membership*, July 3 2013 retrieved from: <http://setav.org/en/5-questions-croatias-eu-membership/opinion/6876> accessed on: 29.12.2015

<sup>151</sup> HTUP, *Hrvatsko-turski odnosi*, retrieved from: <http://www.htup.hr/hrvatsko-turski-odnosi/> accessed on: 29.12.2015

<sup>152</sup> Milovan A., *Turska gospodarska ofanziva: Dogus, Rixos I Eksen postaju vodeca imena hrvatskog biznisa*, 16. 10. 2012 retrieved from: <http://www.jutarnji.hr/turska-gospodarska-ofenziva--dogus--rixos-i-eksen-postaju-vodeca-imena-hrvatskoga-biznisa/1060250/> accessed on: 29.12.2015

US\$ to Croatia. Since 2011 until today the trade volume varies between 400 million to 550 million of US\$.<sup>153</sup>

#### **4.7.3. Socio-cultural aspect**

Since Turkey has recognized Croatia as an independent country, they have established the Croatian-Turkish friendship association. Using this association they began to work together in organizing concerts, lectures, exhibitions and picnic friendships. The aim is to exchange the cultural values of the two countries and to strengthen relationships.<sup>154</sup> In numerous visits, Turkish and Croatian officials have signed several important agreements in order to deepen their cultural relations. One of those agreements is titled the "Cooperation Program on Education, Science, Culture and Art between Turkey and Croatia" which contributes to the cultural activities in both countries in the field of education, literature, archaeology, modern art, cinema, theaters, libraries and sports.<sup>155</sup> In 2013 Turkish and Croatian businessmen founded business club, with the goal of advocating, promoting and developing Croatian-Turkish business interests and cooperation. The scope of activities of the Club includes: business meetings, seminars, conferences, promotion, briefings etc.<sup>156</sup> Furthermore, Turkey and Croatia continue joint efforts

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<sup>153</sup> MFA, *Relations between Turkey and Croatia*, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-croatia.en.mfa> accessed on: 30.12.2015

<sup>154</sup> HTUP, *Hrvatsko-turski akademski klub*, retrieved from: <http://www.htup.hr/hrvatsko-turski-akademski-klub/> accessed on: 30.12.2015

<sup>155</sup> Hurriyet Daily News, *Exhibition and agreement to develop mutual relations between Turkey and Croatia*, 12.07.2006 retrieved from: <http://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/exhibition-and-agreement-to-develop-mutual-relations-between-turkey-and-croatia.aspx?pageID=438&n=exhibition-and-agreement-to-develop-mutual-relations-between-turkey-and-croatia-2006-12-07> accessed on: 30.12.2015

<sup>156</sup> HTUP, *Sto je to Hrvatsko-turski poslovni klub*, retrieved from: <http://www.htup.hr/hrvatsko-turski-poslovni-klub/> accessed on: 30.12.2015

to recover the common historical and cultural heritage dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries.<sup>157</sup>

#### **4.8. Conclusion**

Since 2002 the activities of Turkey's foreign policy towards the Western Balkan region are present in all fields of society. However, with its new foreign policy approach on the political, economic and socio-cultural level in the Balkans Turkey plays a very important role. When it comes to the political approach of the Turkish foreign policy towards the Western Balkan States, it can be said that Turkey supports all political processes in these countries such as Euro-Atlantic integrations. Additionally, for the peace preservation and stability Turkey cooperates with these countries through different initiatives and organizations. In the field of economy, Turkey has signed the Free Trade Agreements with all Western Balkan countries. This paved the way for Turkish businessmen to invest in the Balkans. Even though the Turkish investments are not at a satisfactory level, they are on the rise. In the socio-cultural field, Turkey tries to recover the historical and cultural heritage in the Western Balkans. Through its Cooperation and Coordination Agency - TIKA, Turkey supports many projects such as building schools, hospitals, bridges, religious buildings etc. Moreover, in this region Turkey has established numerous educational institutions and organizations. One the most important educational institution being the Yunus Emre Cultural Center - YECC established in all Western Balkan countries to promote the Turkish culture and values. With its active foreign policy Turkey has developed very good and friendly relations and also gained the trust of the Western Balkan States.

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<sup>157</sup> MFA, *Relations between Turkey and Croatia*, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-croatia.en.mfa> accessed on: 30.12.2015

## **CHAPTER 5: TURKEY'S FOREIGN POLICY PERCEPTION BY THE WESTERN BALKAN STATES SINCE 2002**

This chapter will analyze the perception of Turkey's Foreign Policy by the Western Balkan States. The main aim here is to answer the main research question of the thesis by analyzing the statements of the state officials of each country. Therefore, our focus here is answering the following research question: how does the Western Balkan States perceive the new approach of Turkish foreign policy regarding political, economic and cultural aspect? The answer to this question will help us to understand how Turkey's Foreign Policy is seen in the Balkan region. Whether it is perceived positively or negatively; if positive then why it is positive, if negative then way it is negatively perceived.

### **5.1. Bosnia and Herzegovina: the perception of Turkish Foreign Policy**

#### **5.1.1. Political aspect**

In the political context, BiH representatives positively perceive the influence of Turkish Foreign Policy. However, there are certain politicians who do not perceive Turkish policy towards BiH as positive. Regarding the positive perception, BiH officials welcome the presence of Turkey in the region. In this regard, BiH could be a bridge between Turkey and the EU. The Croatian member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina says: "Turkey is NATO member on one side and is not part of the EU on the other. Therefore, BiH can be a high quality link of Turkey with Brussels and EU".<sup>158</sup> As well as the Croatian member, the Bosniak member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina admires Turkey's influence in the Balkans and says that: "Turkey is increasingly present in the region. One country that is economically and politically

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<sup>158</sup> 6yka, Dragan Covic: *Nista nismo poklonili Crnoj Gori*, 24.08.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.6yka.com/novost/87735/dragan-covic-nista-nismo-poklonili-crnoj-gori-> accessed on: 04.01.2016

gaining in strength and which is in a positive and welcome way more present in the region".<sup>159</sup>

Another important thing is that Turkey gives great support to democratic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina and encourages dialogue between Serbia, BiH and Croatia. Additionally, Turkey provides support to BiH towards EU and NATO integrations. Regarding Turkish policy towards BiH, the Bosniak member says:

Turkish diplomacy has great merit for the achieved level of cooperation between Serbia, BiH and Croatia. Special effort invested in establishing a dialogue between Sarajevo-Belgrade. Turkey provides indisputable support to democratic development and the reform processes which our country carries out in the European Union and NATO.<sup>160</sup>

The Bosniak member of the BiH presidency tries to justify the new approach of Turkish influence in the region because there are some prejudices of Ottoman Turkey in the Balkan region. Hence, some political leaders accuse Turkey and its foreign policy that it wants to reestablish the old Ottoman policy in the Balkans. However, the Bosniak member of BiH presidency points out:

I really do not see any reason for suspicion in relation to the role of Turkey, weighing each word on the pharmacy scales. The twenty-first century is, Ottoman Turkey belongs to the past, and we should have good relations with the modern, global extremely influential and benevolent Turkey. A strong and stable Turkey is in the best interest of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the whole of our region.<sup>161</sup>

Apart from Turkey and its foreign policy, the Bosniak member sees Turkish president Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as a very good leader. He talks about the Turkish president in a positive manner,

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<sup>159</sup> Vijesti, *Izetbegović: Investicije i tržište islamskih zemalja važno za BiH, ali i cijeli region*, 07.02.2013, retrieved from: <http://vijesti.ba/clanak/129629/izetbegovic-investicije-i-trziste-islamskih-zemalja-vazno-za-bih-ali-i-cijeli-region> accessed on: 05.01.2016

<sup>160</sup> Fena, *Izetbegović: Snažna potvrda izvanrednih odnosa između BiH i Turske*, 13.05.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.bh-index.com/izetbegovic-snazna-potvrda-izvanrednih-odnosa-izmedu-bih-i-turske/> accessed on: 05.01.2016

<sup>161</sup> Fena, *Izetbegović: Snažna potvrda izvanrednih odnosa između BiH i Turske*, 13.05.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.bh-index.com/izetbegovic-snazna-potvrda-izvanrednih-odnosa-izmedu-bih-i-turske/> accessed on: 05.01.2016

stating that: "he does not belong only to the Turks, of course. I think of his leadership among the Muslims, he decisively and effectively supports the aspirations of Muslim peoples for freedom and the establishment of democratic government".<sup>162</sup> Speaking personally as a Bosniak member Turkey and Turks are seen as protectors of BiH and its interests. In this regard, he says:

We all have some nations who stand behind us. Turks stand behind Bosnia-Herzegovina and behind Bosniaks, but in an intelligent manner. They will not support us in conflict, but they will support us in reconciliation, a renewal of the economy and inter-personal relations, in the integration processes toward the EU and NATO.<sup>163</sup>

Bosnia and Herzegovina in relations with Turkey do not have any open political dispute. In an official statement of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, all members of the Presidency have said that: "Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Turkey are friendly countries, which have no outstanding political issues".<sup>164</sup> On the other hand, some political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not agree with the Turkish influence in BiH. They think that Turkey has no right to interfere in the country and its region. For instance, the President of the Serb entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina negatively perceives Turkey and Turkey's Foreign Policy. As the president of the Serb entity he says: "we don't believe in a good intentions of Turkey in BiH. Turkey plays a role of fans for Bosniak interests in BiH".<sup>165</sup> Hence, for him Turkish foreign policy in BiH is support inclined only towards Bosniaks. In another statement he says: "Turkey's intentions are dangerous to us because their policy is turning out to be one of

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> B92, "Palestinians and Bosniaks see Erdogan as their leader", 06.11.2012, retrieved from: [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2012&mm=11&dd=06&nav\\_id=83023](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2012&mm=11&dd=06&nav_id=83023) accessed on: 05.01.2016

<sup>164</sup> Avaz, *ČLANOVI PREDsjedništVA BiH U TURSKOJ Čović počasnu gardu turske vojske pozdravio sa "Merhaba asker"*, 10.12.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/209274/clanovi-predsjednistva-bih-u-turskoj-covic-pocasnu-gardu-turske-vojske-pozdravio-sa-merhaba-asker?url=clanak/209274/clanovi-predsjednistva-bih-u-turskoj-covic-pocasnu-gardu-turske-vojske-pozdravio-sa-merhaba-asker> accessed on: 05.01.2016

<sup>165</sup> Glass Srpske, *Turska se mijesa u odnose BiH kao zastupnik bosnjackih interesa*, 27.04.2010, retrieved from: [http://www.glassrpske.com/novosti/vijesti\\_dana/Turska-se-mijesa-u-odnose-u-BiH-kao-zastupnik-bosnjackih-interesa/lat/38780.html](http://www.glassrpske.com/novosti/vijesti_dana/Turska-se-mijesa-u-odnose-u-BiH-kao-zastupnik-bosnjackih-interesa/lat/38780.html) accessed on: 07.01.2016

taking sides and protecting only the interests of Bosniaks".<sup>166</sup> While on the other side he undermines the existence of Bosnia and Herzegovina stating that: "BiH couldn't survive even when the Turks were here for 500 years, so not even these now modern Turks will succeed to do anything".<sup>167</sup>

When the Turkish President visited Kosovo, in his speech he said that 'Kosovo is Turkey and Turkey is Kosovo', wanting to express the good relations between Turkey and Kosovo. However, the statement of the Turkish president was misunderstood by Serbia and Serbs in BiH. Therefore, the President of the Serb entity commented that: "Turkey makes huge problems for us in BiH. Turkey does not have an unlimited right to interfere in the politics of the Balkans".<sup>168</sup> Additionally, he supports Serbia and its vital interests in BiH saying that: "Turkey threatens the territorial integrity of Serbia by recognizing the independence of Kosovo. But our position in the BiH institutions is no recognition of Kosovo independence".<sup>169</sup> After Turkey expressed readiness to bring closer and to support reconciliation between BiH and Serbia, the President of the Serb entity pointed out that:

During the war of the nineties Turkey was on the side of Serbia's enemy, and even today such a relationship is not different. They (Turkey) have never worked in the interest of Serbia and the Serbian people, so I do not understand them when they say, objectivity and impartiality as a guarantee that will be good mediators in improving relations between the countries of our region. Turkey, in mediating the establishment allegedly of good neighborly relations between Serbia and Bosnia

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<sup>166</sup> Balkaninsight, *Serbia Rattled by Turkish PM's Bosnia 'Threat'*, 14.07.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbia-on-alert-after-alleged-erdogan-s-remarks> accessed on: 07.01.2016

<sup>167</sup> Srna, *DODIK: "BiH nije mogla opstati ni za vrijeme turske vladavine, pa neće ni ovi sada savremeni Turci uspjeti ništa"*, 11.02.2016, retrieved from: <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/219515/dodik-bih-nije-mogla-opstati-ni-za-vrijeme-turske-vladavine-pa-nece-ni-ovi-sada-savremeni-turci-uspjeti-nista?url=clanak/219515/dodik-bih-nije-mogla-opstati-ni-za-vrijeme-turske-vladavine-pa-nece-ni-ovi-sada-savremeni-turci-uspjeti-nista> accessed on: 08.01.2016

<sup>168</sup> Poskok, *Dodik: ranije se govorilo da je Sarajevo Turska i Turska Sarajevo*, 31.10.2013, retrieved from: <http://poskok.info/wp/dodik-ranije-se-govorilo-da-je-sarajevo-turska-i-turska-sarajevo/> accessed on: 08.01.2016

<sup>169</sup> Glass Srpske, *Turska se mijesa u odnose BiH kao zastupnik bosnjackih interesa*, 27.04.2010, retrieved from: [http://www.glassrpske.com/novosti/vijesti\\_dana/Turska-se-mijesa-u-odnose-u-BiH-kao-zastupnik-bosnjackih-interesa/lat/38780.html](http://www.glassrpske.com/novosti/vijesti_dana/Turska-se-mijesa-u-odnose-u-BiH-kao-zastupnik-bosnjackih-interesa/lat/38780.html) accessed on: 08.01.2016



and Herzegovina, was representing solely the interests of Bosniaks. They were always supporting them.<sup>170</sup>

Considering the Turkish foreign policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina, the president of the Serb entity has fears regarding the Turkish influence and sees this policy as expansionistic. In his statement he expresses the reasons for his stance and tries to justify the Serbian influence in BiH. Therefore, he says that:

Serbia has no expansionist role towards Republic of Srpska in terms of annexation or otherwise, while Turkey very clearly says that Sarajevo is her part. When Turkish officials come to Sarajevo they say that the time of the Ottoman period in BiH was the best time in this area and express the need to restore these values, their intentions mustn't be ignored. And now we have to close our eyes, not to listen, and that one day to wake up in an Ottoman state. Therefore, we must not neglect the possible role of Turkey, for instance, in the next couple years.<sup>171</sup>

While visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey and his counterpart discussed the elections in two Bosnian cities and Bosnian membership in international organizations. The discussed issues were perceived by the President of the Serb entity as "typical interference in the internal matters of Bosnia and Herzegovina".<sup>172</sup> He tried to depict this by saying: "If I went to Turkey and talked about the Kurds and their problems in Turkey and demanded that their election procedures be changed, it would be the same".<sup>173</sup> Moreover, he sees Turkey as a factor that undermines the existence of his entity by giving support to the BiH institutions together with the international community. In this regard he says: "We are witnesses of the violations of law and unlawful violence carried out under the auspices

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<sup>170</sup> Balkans.aljazeera, *Dodik protiv turskog posredovanja*, 31.08.2011, retrieved from: <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/dodik-protiv-turskog-posredovanja> accessed on: 08.01.2016

<sup>171</sup> Srna, *Srbija nema pretenzije na srpsku Turska kaze da je Sarajevo njen dio*, 09.09.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.srna.rs/novosti1/236071/srbija-nema-pretenzije-na-srpsku---turska-kaze-da-je-sarajevo-njen-dio.htm> accessed on: 09.01.2016

<sup>172</sup> Politicsforum, *Dodik: Turkey interferes in BiH internal affairs*, 07.05.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.politicsforum.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=28&t=139659> accessed on: 09.01.2016

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

of the part of the international community, especially the Western states and Turkey.<sup>174</sup> He points out that: "Turkey wants a unified and centralized Bosnia. The Bosnian Serb community resent Turkey's strong presence in Bosnia motivated only by support for the Bosnian Muslims".<sup>175</sup> Apart from the President of the Serb entity in BiH, the head of the SBB - BiH (Union for a better future of Bosnia and Herzegovina), also negatively perceives Turkey's Foreign Policy. In his view, Turkey and its officials are inclined only towards one family but not to all peoples living in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With this regard, he says:

We recommend to the President of Turkey, Erdoğan, that instead of supporting one family, surname Izetbegovic, Turkey be dedicated to all Bosniaks, as well as to the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with all its constituent people and citizens. I require a lot of respect for each other at the level of the state, not the regime, our countries should lead sovereign national policies.<sup>176</sup>

He sees Turkish president Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as someone who does not have a right to defend Bosniaks in BiH. In his opinion, the Turkish president wants to import the ideology of conservative Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, he asserts that:

Erdoğan is anti-democrat, I talk about the regime, not about the Turkish people, who tries to rule with conservative Islam. He wants a reincarnation of the Ottoman Empire, but it is not good that as some political imbeciles think that is possible to rule the multi-ethnic Bosnia with conservative Islam and radicalism and as well the concept of Bosniaks who are pro-Western, secular nation aware of its indigenous religion and national identity.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Sputniknews, *Republic of Srpska Referendum to Be Response to Western Violence*, 25.11.2015, retrieved from: <http://sputniknews.com/europe/20151125/1030749888/srpska-republic-bosnia.html> accessed on: 10.01.2016

<sup>175</sup> Hurriyetdailynews, *Bosnian Serb leader condemns Turkey's activities in Bosnia*, 16.08.2010, retrieved from: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=bosnian-serb-leader-condemns-turkeys-activities-in-bosnia-2010-08-16> accessed on: 10.01.2016

<sup>176</sup> Slobodna-bosna, *NA ISTIM TALASNIM DUŽINAMA: Radončić i Dodik kritikovali Izetbegovića zbog podrške Erdoganu*, 11.08.2014, retrieved from: [http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/15742/na\\_istim\\_talasnim\\_duzinama\\_radonchic\\_i\\_dodik\\_kritikovali\\_izetbegovica\\_zbog\\_podrske\\_erdoganu.html](http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/15742/na_istim_talasnim_duzinama_radonchic_i_dodik_kritikovali_izetbegovica_zbog_podrske_erdoganu.html) accessed on: 11.01.2016

<sup>177</sup> Avaz, *RADONČIĆ: Ne može Erdoan tobože braniti Bošnjake u BiH, a istovremeno tu naciju ne priznavati u Turskoj!*, 17.04.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/173610/radoncic-ne-moze-erdoan-toboze-braniti-bosnjake-u-bih-a-istovremeno-tu-naciju-ne-priznavati-u-turskoj?url=clanak/173610/radoncic-ne-moze-erdoan-toboze-braniti-bosnjake-u-bih-a-istovremeno-tu-naciju-ne-priznavati-u-turskoj> accessed on: 12.01.2016

### 5.1.2. Economic aspect

Bosnia and Herzegovina perceives Turkish influence as a chance to strengthen the economic ties. In this regard, the Croatian member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina says: "it would be so irresponsible that such a powerful country economically and politically and security do not accept as a friend that you are offered and when it comes to the economy, investment".<sup>178</sup> As well as this, Turkey is perceived as a country that could take a joint role with Bosnia to invest in other countries. BiH is doing everything in order to attract the Turkish investments. With regard to this, the Croatian member says: "We'll solve bureaucratic problems related to business in BiH. We'll change some laws. What we ask from you is, not only to invest in BiH, but to invest together with Bosnian businessmen in third countries".<sup>179</sup> Moreover, the Serb member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina confirms the good relations with Turkey pointing out that: "relations between the two countries are very good and friendly".<sup>180</sup> In his opinion, Bosnia and Herzegovina praises Turkish support, investments and help in all aspects. During the meeting with the Turkish president Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the Serb member said:

This is a man who knows Bosnia and Herzegovina well, who is very present here and as a head of the country that invested a lot in BiH and truly helped this country. We are very grateful to Turkey which opened quotas for the import of meat from BiH and we hope that due to the long duration of this agreement the production will very quickly increase in BiH. Moreover, we are grateful for the projects, more than 700 projects and 300 million KM (150 million euros) in reconstruction projects are carried out by TIKA (Turkish International

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<sup>178</sup> 6yka, Dragan Covic: *Nista nismo poklonili Crnoj Gori*, 24.08.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.6yka.com/novost/87735/dragan-covic-nista-nismo-poklonili-crnoj-gori-> accessed on: 04.01.2016

<sup>179</sup> Trt, *Poslovni savjet Turska-BiH*, 12.12.2015-12.02.2016, retrieved from: <http://www.trt.net.tr/hrvatski/region-2/2015/12/12/poslovni-savjet-turska-bih-406829> accessed on: 04.01.2016

<sup>180</sup> Balkans.aljazeera, *Potpisani ugovori i memorandum i o saradnji BiH i Turske*, 20.05.2015, retrieved from: <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/potpisani-ugovori-i-memorandumi-o-saradnji-bih-i-turske> accessed on: 04.01.2016

Cooperation and Coordination), an agency that has really done a lot here in BiH.<sup>181</sup>

Turkish investments are welcomed in BiH because they contribute to the development of the country and the whole region. The Bosniak representative confirms that: "Direct investments and various other forms of economic cooperation and trade exchange with Turkey significantly contribute to the rapid development of our region".<sup>182</sup> In the official statement the representatives asserted that economic cooperation is at a high level between the two countries and they see opportunity for promotion and joint appearance in third markets. Additionally, in the statement BiH Presidency members expressed their gratitude to President Erdoğan, officials of the Republic of Turkey and the Turkish people, for the continuous support that the Republic of Turkey provides to all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>183</sup> The economic presence of Turkey in the Balkan region, especially in Bosnia, is very important. This importance is confirmed by the Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina who sees Turkey as one of the most important partners of BiH. In his opinion, Bosnia and Herzegovina expect a deepening of the economic cooperation with Turkey. Apart from EU integrations as a BiH priority, cooperation with Turkey is in line with BiH priorities. Regarding this, the minister said:

The EU remains a priority, but equally important is the cooperation with other countries, some of which we can have mutual benefits. Turkey is one of these countries and, of course, I expect to be in this plan, particularly the business plan, in terms of further strengthening of economic cooperation, things continue to improve. I expect Turkey to play a constructive role.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Fena, *Izetbegović: Snažna potvrda izvanrednih odnosa između BiH i Turske*, 13.05.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.bh-index.com/izetbegovic-snazna-potvrda-izvanrednih-odnosa-između-bih-i-turske/> accessed on: 05.01.2016

<sup>183</sup> Avaz, *ČLANOVI PREDsjedništVA BiH U TURSKOJ Čović počasnu gardu turske vojske pozdravio sa "Merhaba asker"*, 10.12.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/209274/clanovi-predsjednistva-bih-u-turskoj-covic-pocasnu-gardu-turske-vojske-pozdravio-sa-merhaba-asker?url=clanak/209274/clanovi-predsjednistva-bih-u-turskoj-covic-pocasnu-gardu-turske-vojske-pozdravio-sa-merhaba-asker> accessed on: 05.01.2016

<sup>184</sup> Balkans.aljazeera, *Crnadak: BiH neće priznati Kosovo zbog Srbije*, 08.04.2015, retrieved from: <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/crnadak-bih-uce-priznati-kosovo-zbog-srbije> accessed on: 06.01.2016

The Turkish presence in the Balkan region is often negatively perceived by some politicians who always criticize its influence. However, the Minister of Development, Entrepreneurship and Crafts of the Federation of BiH thinks that only with economic influence Turkey could overcome obstacles of its policy, therefore he points out that:

Very often cultural and historical facts are politicized and abused, and I think that the best medicine to stop the abuse of facts is to raise the level of economic relations between the small BiH economy and a large fast-growing Turkish economy.<sup>185</sup>

The fact that Turkey is a very important trade partner of BiH is also confirmed by the President of the BiH Foreign Trade Chamber who perceives Turkey in a positive manner. Accordingly, he states, "the most important foreign trade partner of Bosnia and Herzegovina is Turkey".<sup>186</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina also perceives Turkey's economic potential as an opportunity for further cooperation with this country. Therefore, the Vice President of the Democratic Action Party says:

Our intention is to strengthen economic cooperation with Turkey, because we know that Turkey in the past few decades had the momentum in the economic sense and we believe that there are various possibilities that could open the commercial and economic cooperation so that BiH could have many more benefits.<sup>187</sup>

Apart from those who positively perceive the Turkish foreign policy and its economic influence there are also those who negatively observe Turkish economic presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, the President of the Serb entity thinks that Turkey uses its economy to support only Bosniaks in BiH. He says: "we think that Turkey is an important disturbing factor,

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<sup>185</sup> Fokus, *BiH i Turska zaslužuju puno bolje ekonomske odnose*, 21.10.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.fokus.ba/124618/biznis/bih-i-turska-zasluzuju-puno-bolje-ekonomske-odnose/> accessed on: 06.01.2016

<sup>186</sup> Faktor, *Smanjen vanjskotrgovinski deficit BiH: Izvoz u Tursku povećan za više od 50 posto*, 10.02.2016, retrieved from: <http://faktor.ba/smanjen-vanjskotrgovinski-deficit-bih-izvoz-u-tursku-povecan-za-vise-od-50-posto-foto/> accessed on: 07.01.2016

<sup>187</sup> Exyugoslavia, *Odnosi Turske i BiH prerastaju u sve veće prijateljstvo*, 05.03.2015, retrieved from: <http://exyugoslavija.com/odnosi-turske-i-bih-prerastaju-u-sve-vece-prijateljstvo/> accessed on: 07.01.2016

precisely because it selectively acts and it uses its huge economic and political potential to be only on one side".<sup>188</sup> A similar stance is taken by the Head of the SBB political party who thinks that Turkey tries to exploit BiH country through certain companies. He says: "I expect BiH to get a fair economic status from Turkey instead of only controversial and failed investments, rather than just drawing a huge amount of money through the "Cengiz Group", "BH Airlines" and others from our very poor country".<sup>189</sup>

### 5.1.3. Socio-cultural aspect

In this area, Turkey is perceived as a country that tends to restore all cultural and historical monuments as well as the relations between the peoples of BiH. Therefore, BiH representatives are aware of the cultural and traditional ties between Turks and people who live in Bosnia. The Croatian member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina is of the opinion that Turkey behaves friendly to all people in BiH. He says that: "We cannot ignore the fact that Turkey has one of its interest in BiH, he emphasizes Turkey is friendly to everyone in BiH and this has to be heard clearly".<sup>190</sup> Additionally, considering the history of BiH and Turkey as a powerful state he says: "We must respect what BiH is and its structure, what the history was of Bosnia and Herzegovina when it was bound to the Turkish people. It would be silly if all this was not taken into account".<sup>191</sup> As well as this, the Bosniak member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina praises Turkish influence in every aspect of the BiH society. According to his statement: "Turkey renews destroyed bridges, and the right ones, such as Mostar and Visegrad,

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<sup>188</sup> Sandzakpress, *Milorad Dodik: Erdogan nam prijete*, 12.07.2014, retrieved from: <http://sandzakpress.net/milorad-dodik-erdogan-nam-prijete> accessed on: 11.01.2016

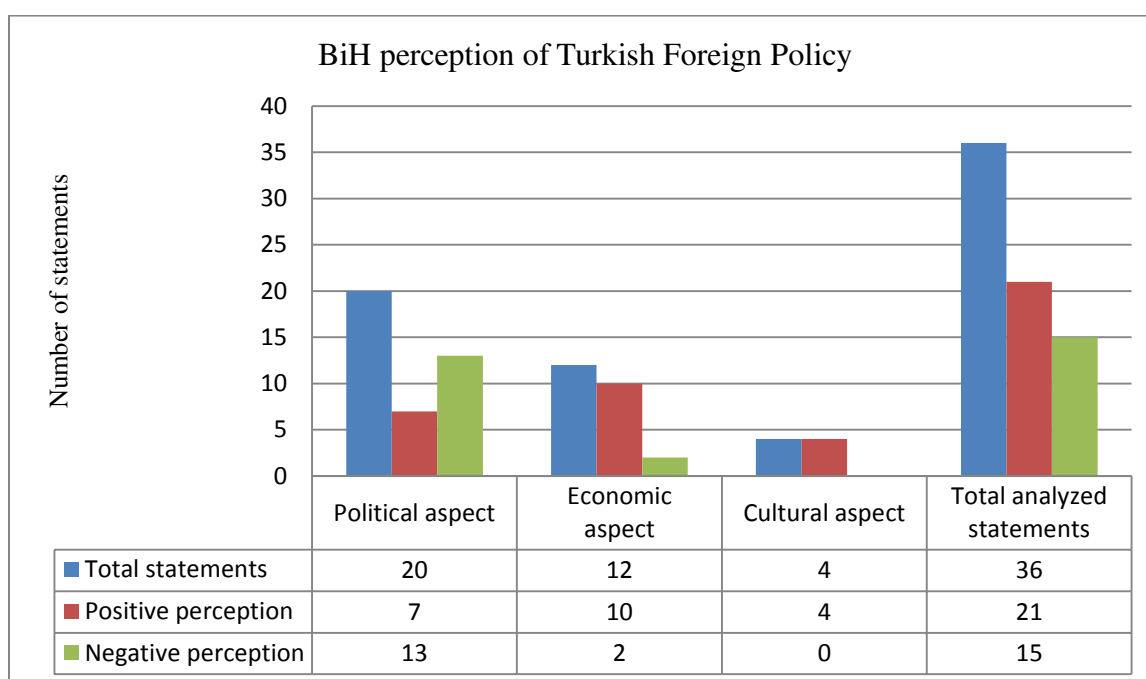
<sup>189</sup> Slobodna-bosna, *NA ISTIM TALASNIM DUŽINAMA: Radončić i Dodik kritikovali Izetbegovića zbog podrške Erdoganu*, 11.08.2014, retrieved from: [http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/15742/na\\_istim\\_talasnim\\_duzinama\\_radonchic\\_i\\_dodik\\_kritikovali\\_izetbegovica\\_zbog\\_podrske\\_erdoganu.html](http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/15742/na_istim_talasnim_duzinama_radonchic_i_dodik_kritikovali_izetbegovica_zbog_podrske_erdoganu.html) accessed on: 11.01.2016

<sup>190</sup> 6yka, *Dragan Covic: Nista nismo poklonili Crnoj Gori*, 24.08.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.6yka.com/novost/87735/dragan-covic-nista-nismo-poklonili-crnoj-gori> accessed on: 04.01.2016

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

but also those spiritual and political, between peoples and nations".<sup>192</sup> In addition, the vice president of the Democratic Action Party of BiH also points out their history as an important factor in the relations between the two countries. With regard to this, he says: "Considering the history of this area and everything else, we believe that Turkey is a sincere friend of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of all its peoples and citizens".<sup>193</sup>

#### 5.1.4. Conclusion



**Table 1. The number of analyzed statements of BiH officials regarding the TFP (2010-2016)**

In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in total I analyzed 36 official statements. Out of which, 21 statements give a positive perception of Turkey's Foreign Policy. These 21 statements comprise the majority of the state representatives; made up of, representatives, ministers and

<sup>192</sup> Fena, *Izetbegović: Snažna potvrda izvanrednih odnosa između BiH i Turske*, 13.05.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.bh-index.com/izetbegovic-snazna-potvrda-izvanrednih-odnosa-izmedu-bih-i-turske/> accessed on: 05.01.2016

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

other officials. In their opinion, Turkey and its policy towards BiH is seen as positive and beneficial. Bosnia and Herzegovina praises the support that Turkey provides in the political, economic and cultural fields. In the political aspect, 7 statements are with positive perception. BiH sees Turkey as a very important partner towards its path to EU and NATO integrations. Additionally, Bosnia and Herzegovina perceives Turkey's policy as a friendly and brotherly one. Turkey is recognized as a factor that supports peace, stability and all nations in BiH. In the economic aspect, 10 official statements show positive reaction towards TFP. Turkey is one of the most important economic partners of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkish investments are welcome in BiH. Additionally, BiH makes efforts to deepen economic cooperation with Turkey. Besides the political and economic field, 4 statements show positive perception about cultural relations. In this aspect, BiH praises Turkish influence; especially its investments in the cultural sector of the country. However; Turkish Foreign Policy is also negatively perceived by some BiH leaders. Actually, out of 36 in total analyzed statements, 15 statements show negative perceptions in the political and economic field. These statements however, only reflect the opinion of the Serb entity leaders of BiH and not the whole state. In the political aspect, the Serb political leaders are strongly against any Turkish influence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Namely, the president of the Serb entity sees Turkey in a negative manner. In his view, Turkey does not equally support Bosnian society. Moreover, he accuses Turkey of interfering in the internal matters of the country.

## **5.2. Serbia: the perception of Turkish Foreign Policy**

### **5.2.1. Political aspect**

The political relations between Serbia and Turkey are not at a satisfactory level. In this field, relations with Turkey are always changing. There are many reasons for this, one of them is



Turkish support for the independence of Kosovo; which is still a state under the constitution of Serbia. However, Serbia sees Turkey as a strategic partner with whom it has a historical relationship. During a meeting with the Turkish Prime Minister in 2010, the former President of Serbia said: "We have a long history of relations in the political field and today we confirm the closeness of our culture".<sup>194</sup> Apart from the former president, the Current President of Serbia quite positively sees Turkey's Foreign Policy towards Serbia and in the Balkan region. However, regarding the question of Kosovo independence, Serbia does not agree with Turkey's policy on this issue. With this regard he says: "We see Turkey as a very important partner, with whom we do not agree on all issues, but with whom we want to improve our bilateral relations and contribute to stability in the region".<sup>195</sup>

On Turkey's initiative Serbia accepted the establishing of trilateral cooperation together with Turkey and BiH. However, a couple years after the establishment of the trilateral cooperation Serbia refused to join the meetings. This was because of the statement 'Turkey is Kosovo and Kosovo is Turkey' that the Turkish Prime Minister expressed during his visit to Kosovo. The Serbian President reacted to this statement by saying: "We expect an apology from Turkey. Until we get an apology, as president of Serbia, I will not attend the trilateral Turkey-Serbia-Bosnia and Herzegovina meeting, because the meeting is not a meeting of supporters of the war, but of democratic countries".<sup>196</sup> Furthermore, Serbia do not see Turkey's lobbying and asking other countries to recognize the independence of Kosovo as positive. The Kosovo

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<sup>194</sup>Glas-javnosti, *Tadić i Erdogan: Srbija i Turska prijateljske zemlje*, 13.07.2010, retrieved from: <http://www.glas-javnosti.rs/clanak/politika/glas-javnosti-13-07-2010-j/tadic-i-erdogan-srbija-i-turska-prijateljske-zemlje> accessed on: 12.01.2016

<sup>195</sup>B92,*Srbija-Turska, tiha voda breg roni*, 15.05.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.b92.net/mobilni/info/713944> accessed on: 13.01.2016

<sup>196</sup> Oslobodjenje,*Nikolić: Neću prisustvovati trilateralali Srbija-Turska-BiH*, 26.10.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.oslobodjenje.ba/vijesti/region/nikolic-necu-prisustvovati-trilateralali-srbijaturskabih> accessed on: 15.01.2016

question is a hot issue between the two countries. With this regard, the president said "I tried to make these relations turn into a sincere friendship between the two nations".<sup>197</sup> Adding that: "Kemal Ataturk's ideas are no longer ideas of leadership of Turkey".<sup>198</sup> Apart from Serbian presidents, other Serbian officials commented on Turkey's foreign policy. For example, the former Prime Minister of Serbia perceives Turkey as a very important country for Serbia. He says: "for the stability of the region the Serbian-Turkish relations are very important and as well the developing partnership between the two countries".<sup>199</sup> However, the statement that the Turkish Prime Minister uttered about Kosovo sends a negative message. He points out that: "The message of the Turkish Prime Minister is not diplomatic. These words, uttered in Prizren, certainly do not contribute to political stability in Kosovo and Metohija, nor return the trust between Serbs and Albanians".<sup>200</sup>

The uttered statement of Turkish officials during their visit to Kosovo had a negative impact on the political relations between the two countries. It triggered many negative statements from the Serbian officials; who expressed doubts about the sincerity of Turkey in the Balkan region, especially towards Serbia. With this regard, the Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia stated in his speech:

Kosovo is not Turkey and I urge an apology to be given from Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. I believe that this statement is a big scandal and I ask for an immediate public apology from Turkey and its Prime Minister Erdoğan. This is unacceptable behavior in international relations. Kosovo is not Turkish since the

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Blic, *Nikolić: Ataturkove ideje više ne žive u Turskoj, tražim izvinjenje od Erdogana*, 26.10.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.blic.rs/vesti/politika/nikolic-ataturkove-ideje-vise-ne-zive-u-turskoj-trazim-izvinjenje-od-erdogana/k0bq90e> accessed on: 16.01.2016

<sup>199</sup> Novosti, *Dačić i Gul: Srpsko-turski odnosi ključni za region*, 23.11.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/politika/aktuelno.289.html:407278-Dacic-i-Gul-Srpsko-turski-odnosi-kljucni-za-region> accessed on: 16.01.2016

<sup>200</sup> Rtcg, *Dačić traži izvinjenje Erdogana*, 25.10.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.rtcg.me/vijesti/region/29431/dacic-trazi-izvinjenje-erdogana.html> accessed on: 16.01.2016

Balkan Wars. Many hide behind nice words, but it was needed to pick-up emotions, to understand what interests are behind the scenes.<sup>201</sup>

The same statement about Kosovo was commented on by the Foreign Ministry of Serbia. In an official statement, the Foreign Ministry condemned the uttered sentence by the Turkish official. The ministry stated that: "such statements cannot be accepted as friendly, it deviates from the assurance which Belgrade officials get from their Turkish counterparts".<sup>202</sup> In addition, the Former President of the Serbian Assembly negatively commented on the statement of the Turkish Prime Minister uttered in Kosovo. He said that: "The statement is tough and scandalous, and I expect a reaction not only from our country, but also from the international community. Such a statement does not go in the direction of improving relations".<sup>203</sup> Apart from the Turkish policy regarding Kosovo, Serbia negatively perceives Turkey's Foreign Policy towards Serbia in relations with BiH. Serbia do not regard with pleasure some of the Turkish acts in the Balkan region. Additionally, Serbia would rather have trilateral cooperation with its neighbor Croatia than Turkey. In this regard, the current minister of Foreign Affairs points out: "I would more like a trilateral agreement between Serbia, BiH and Croatian instead of with Turkey. Turkey presents itself as a sponsor of BiH, and behaves as if we are children and we do not know what we have to do".<sup>204</sup> Besides negative statements from Serbian officials, the current President of the Parliament of Serbia, positively perceives Turkey and Turkey's Foreign Policy towards Serbia. Talking about the relations between the two countries of Serbia and Turkey, she says: "I'm sure

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<sup>201</sup> Rtcg, *Dačić traži izvinjenje Erdogana*, 25.10.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.rtcg.me/vijesti/region/29431/dacic-trazi-izvinjenje-erdogana.html> accessed on: 17.01.2016

<sup>202</sup> Naslovi, *Stefanović: Izjava Erdogana skandalozna i teška*, 24.10.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.naslovi.net/2013-10-24/akter/stefanovic-izjava-erdogana-skandalozna-i-teska/7542067> accessed on: 17.01.2016

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Slobodna-bosna, *IVICA DAČIĆ O KOMŠIJAMA: "Turska se predstavlja kao sponzor BiH i ponaša se kao da smo djeca"*, 04.01.2016, retrieved from: [http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/25742/ivica\\_dacic\\_o\\_komsijama\\_turska\\_se\\_predstavlja\\_kao\\_sponzor\\_bih\\_i\\_ponasa\\_se\\_kao\\_da\\_smo\\_djeca.html](http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/25742/ivica_dacic_o_komsijama_turska_se_predstavlja_kao_sponzor_bih_i_ponasa_se_kao_da_smo_djeca.html) accessed on: 06.02.2016

we can agree that every obstacle and every challenge needs to be answered with a willingness to engage in open dialogue and to increase our cooperation wherever possible".<sup>205</sup>

### 5.2.2. Economic aspect

In its relations with Turkey, Serbia wants to deepen economic cooperation. It sees Turkey as an opportunity to attract Turkish investments. The two countries have good prospects for economic development. Considering this, the Former President of Serbia says: "it is the great role of Turkey in the Balkans and Serbia in the Western Balkans".<sup>206</sup> Regarding the economic issues Serbia wants to encourage Turkish investors. The current President of Serbia says: "Our friendship is much higher than our economic exchange. Maybe it is better like that. It's better if friendship produces economic exchange rather than economic exchange produces friendship."<sup>207</sup> Serbia wants to deepen economic cooperation with Turkey. Considering the friendship between the two countries, Serbia sees opportunity for Turkish investments in different aspects. The President of Serbia points out: "Turkey is our partner which could help us to get into markets that we did not open, it can help us with its investments and our technology, because we have extraordinarily educated staff ".<sup>208</sup> Moreover, Serbia offers itself to the Turkish investors. In his statement, the President states that:

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<sup>205</sup> Novosti, *Gojković: Odnosi Srbije i Turske na dobrom putu*, 13.04.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/politika/aktuelno.289.html:543291-Gojkovic-Odnosi-Srbije-i-Turske-na-dobrom-putu> accessed on: 18.01.2016

<sup>206</sup> Glas-javnosti, *Tadić i Erdogan: Srbija i Turska prijateljske zemlje*, 13.07.2010, retrieved from: <http://www.glas-javnosti.rs/clanak/politika/glas-javnosti-13-07-2010-j/tadic-i-erdogan-srbija-i-turska-prijateljske-zemlje> accessed on: 12.01.2016

<sup>207</sup> B92, *Srbija-Turska, tiha voda breg roni*, 15.05.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.b92.net/mobilni/info/713944> accessed on: 13.01.2016

<sup>208</sup> Rts, *Trojni samit u Ankari*, 15.05.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/9/Politika/1323776/Trojni+samit+u+Ankari.html> accessed on: 14.01.2016

Turkey has almost everything; some God given, some man-made, but we need help to build on this and to further develop. We do not need help which we will not return - you invest, we will employ, and you again reap the profits.<sup>209</sup>

One of the important factors in attracting the Turkish investors is the Muslim population in Serbia, which is considered as a bridge between the two countries. With this regard, the Serbian President says that:

Serbia wants good relations with Turkey, especially because the part of our territory has the citizens of Islamic faith who have special ties with Turkey. So Turkish investors could invest more in Serbia and Turkey can help to develop part of Serbia with a predominantly Muslim population.<sup>210</sup>

The Serbian President sees Turkey as a country with an important strategic position and regional influence. He points out that: "The Balkans are impossible without Serbia, but Serbia cannot do everything needed in the Balkans without the help of Turkey".<sup>211</sup> In addition, together with Serbia and Bosnia, Turkey formed a trilateral cooperation for better understanding and reconciliation between the three nations. Serbia saw this step as very positive for the future relations between the countries and for its economic development. Therefore, the President of Serbia said: "I am certain that Serbia's sustainable development is not possible without friendly relations in the region and we will make further efforts for cooperation at all levels, so that our future will be stable and will face economic progress".<sup>212</sup> Other officials of Serbia perceive Turkey as an important economic factor. Serbia and Turkey have very deep relations,

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<sup>209</sup> Vesti, *Nikolić i turski privrednici: Nema Balkana bez Srbije, ni uspeha Srbije bez Turske*, 05.02.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.vesti.rs/Tomislav-Nikoli%C4%87/Nikolic-i-turski-privrednici-Nema-Balkana-bez-Srbije-ni-uspeha-Srbije-bez-Turske.html> accessed on: 14.01.2016

<sup>210</sup> B92, *Nikolić: Srbija se ne meša u odnose muslimana*, 29.12.2015, retrieved from: [http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2015&mm=12&dd=29&nav\\_category=11&nav\\_id=1079981](http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2015&mm=12&dd=29&nav_category=11&nav_id=1079981) accessed on: 14.01.2016

<sup>211</sup> Trt, *Nikolić: Srbija ne može na Balkanu bez Turske!*, 05.02.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.trt.net.tr/bosanski/turska-1/2013/02/05/nikolic-srbija-ne-moze-na-balkanu-bez-turske-15431> accessed on: 15.01.2016

<sup>212</sup> Kurir, *NIKOLIĆ U ANKARI: Poziv Turskoj da ne lobira za Kosovo*, 15.05.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.kurir.rs/ankara-nikolic-na-samitu-turska-srbija-bih-clanak-790011> accessed on: 15.01.2016

considering the importance of these relations they established the council for better economic cooperation. With this regard, in his statement the Current Prime Minister of Serbia said:

We will establish a Council at the highest level, which will lead the two prime ministers, from the areas where we have the largest and most striking cooperation. It will lead the ministers from those areas, and we will meet very often .... We think that together we could build and do much more. All that a country offers to the Turkish investors, Serbia will offer one dollar more, its service and itself as a better place to invest.<sup>213</sup>

Apart from economic partnership with Turkey, Serbia is ready to talk about cooperation in other fields. A speaker of the Serbian Parliament points out that: "good economic relations are more than pure economics, and since Serbia fully respects the importance of economic cooperation, it is at the same time, dedicated to the promotion of other forms of cooperation".<sup>214</sup> Serbia is open for further cooperation in the field of agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture of Serbia points out that: "there are real opportunities to make very significant progress in cooperation between the two countries and the improvement of trade relations in the field of agriculture and food industry".<sup>215</sup> Besides further economic cooperation, Serbia sees Turkey as a bridge to get into third markets. With this regard, Minister says: "Turkey has its own trade and economic interests, and I think with the optimism we can look at the prospects for higher forms of cooperation, common interests and appearances in third markets and the development of our

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<sup>213</sup> Informer, *SRBIJA I TURSKA OSNIVAJU SAVET za još bolju saradnju i napredak obe zemlje!*, 28.12.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.informer.rs/vesti/politika/47864/SRBIJA-I-TURSKA-OSNIVAJU-SAVET-za-jos-bolju-saradnju-i-napredak-obe-zemlje> accessed on: 17.01.2016

<sup>214</sup> Novosti, *Gojković: Odnosi Srbije i Turske na dobrom putu*, 13.04.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/politika/aktuelno.289.html:543291-Gojkovic-Odnosi-Srbije-i-Turske-na-dobrom-putu> accessed on: 18.01.2016

<sup>215</sup> Kvantas, *Značajne mogućnosti za saradnju Srbije i Turske u agraru*, 08.02.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.kvantas.rs/poslovanje-sa-turskom/3833-znacajne-mogucnosti-za-saradnju-srbije-i-turske-u-agraru> accessed on: 18.01.2016

economic relations".<sup>216</sup> In the opinion of the Chairman of the Turkish-Serbian Business Council the economic relations with Turkey are very good. He says: "Economic relations between Serbia and Turkey are currently at its peak".<sup>217</sup> Moreover, Serbia sees Turkey as an opportunity to reach to third markets. With this regard, the Chairman points out that:

The Turkish market, with its high-volume and purchasing power, is a strong partner with a large sales potential. At the same time, Serbian companies see that through Turkey they can reach third markets such as Iran, Iraq and countries in which Turkish is spoken.<sup>218</sup>

Serbia has a great potential for foreign investments. In this regard, an economic counselor at Serbia's Consulate General in Istanbul says: "Turkish people are not fully aware of Serbia and its potential".<sup>219</sup> Serbia expresses satisfaction with Turkish investments especially in the banking sector. Thus, the Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications of Serbia said: "This is the golden age of economic relations between Serbia and Turkey".<sup>220</sup> Furthermore, Serbia as part of trilateral cooperation has signed a joint program with BiH and Turkey for further deepening of the economic cooperation. While signing this agreement, Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications in his speech stated:

The medium-term program of the trilateral trade committee of Serbia, Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the period from 2016 to 2018, provides for the improvement of economic cooperation between the three countries. The signing of this program, which we started in August this year in Ankara, is a big step

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<sup>216</sup> Kvantas, *Potpisan Memorandum o razumevanju u oblasti poljoprivrede Srbije i Turske*, 28.09.2011, retrieved from: <http://www.kvantas.rs/poslovanje-sa-turskom/2747-potpisan-memorandum-o-razumevanju-u-oblasti-poljoprivrede-srbije-i-turske> accessed on: 19.01.2016

<sup>217</sup> E-turska, *Koristeći trenutak, Turska i Srbija pokušavaju da povećaju trgovinu*, 24.02.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.e-turska.com/koristeci-trenutak-turska-i-srbija-pokusavaju-da-povecaju-trgovinu/> accessed on: 20.01.2016

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Kvantas, *Koristeći trenutak, Turska i Srbija pokušavaju da povećaju trgovinu*, 25.02.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.kvantas.rs/poslovanje-sa-turskom/3945-koristeci-trenutak-turska-i-srbija-pokusavaju-da-povecaju-trgovinu> accessed on: 20.01.2016

<sup>220</sup> Lynch L., *Zlatno doba odnosa između Srbije i Turske, e-novine*, 28.12.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.e-novine.com/svet/svet-tema/128846-Zlatno-doba-odnosa-izmeu-Srbije-Turske.html> accessed on: 20.01.2016

forward and aims to improve the economic and business cooperation between our countries. We expect to increase trade and have far more Turkish investments than before.<sup>221</sup>

In relations towards Turkey, Serbia is more interested in attracting Turkish investments and investors. The policy, based only on economic relations, is very beneficial for Serbia. With this regard, the Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications of Serbia points out that:

Economic ties, which show all relevant data, were never better in relations between Serbia and Turkey, trade reached 745 million euros, two and a half times more than in 2010; since the free trade agreement came into being.<sup>222</sup>

Regarding the economic relations between Serbia, Turkey and BiH, the President of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce says: "Only together can we succeed because we have potential, there is no other way except cooperation and economic ties between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey and Serbia at all levels".<sup>223</sup>

### 5.2.3. Socio-cultural aspect

In the last period, the two countries are trying to extend their cooperation in the cultural field. Turkish soft power is quite influential in Serbia. The policy of Turkey in this field contributes to elimination of prejudices of Turkey. Hence, the Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications of Serbia says: "Tele novelas and Serbian tourists have contributed to the improvement of our mutual relations and the elimination of stereotypes".<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Bhrt, *Ministri Srbije, BiH i Turske potpisali sporazum o jačanju privredne saradnje*, 19.10.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.bhrt.ba/vijesti/region/beograd-danas-potpisivanje-sporazuma-srbija-bih-turska/> accessed on: 21.01.2016

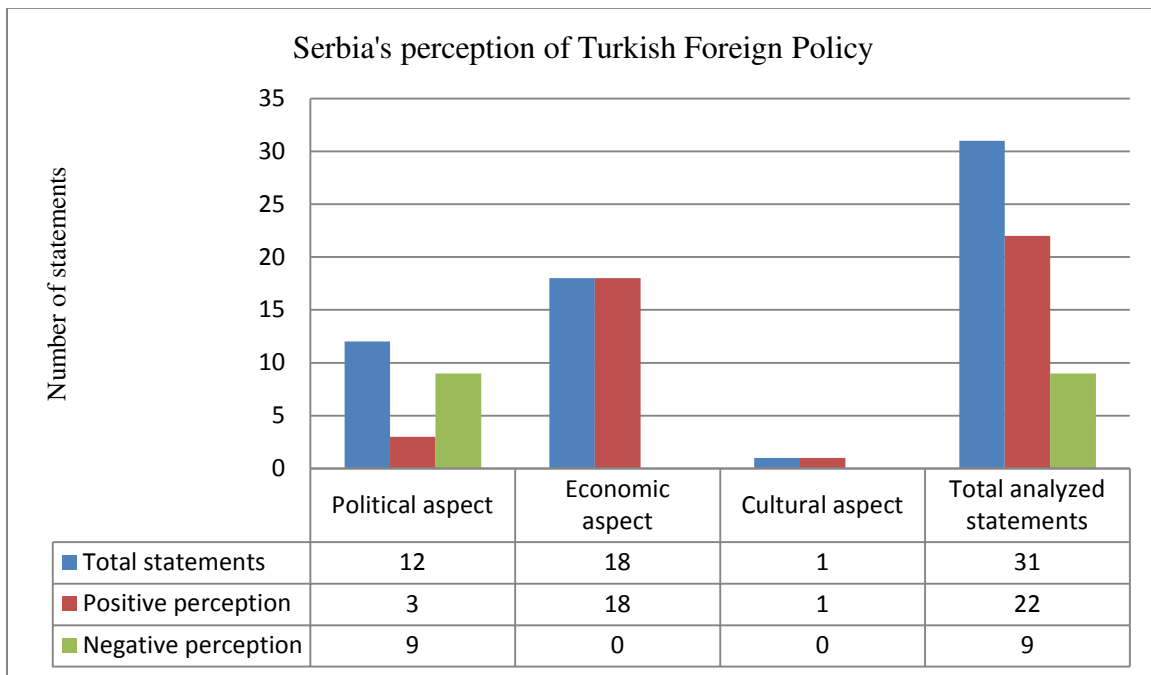
<sup>222</sup> Trt, *Bozay: Ulaganjem i investicijama Turska želi da poboljša odnose sa Srbijom i zemljama na Balkanu*, 04.02.2016, retrieved from: <http://www.trt.net.tr/bosanski/region/2016/02/04/bozay-ulaganjem-i-investicijama-turska-zeli-da-poboljsa-odnose-sa-srbijom-i-zemljama-na-balkanu-427382> accessed on: 06.02.2016

<sup>223</sup> Vesti, *Šarović: Unaprijediti saradnju*, 20.10.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.vesti.rs/Ekonomija/Sarovic-Unaprijediti-saradnju.html> accessed on: 06.02.2016

<sup>224</sup> Lynch L., *Zlatno doba odnosa između Srbije i Turske, e-novine*, 28.12.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.e-novine.com/svet/svet-tema/128846-Zlatno-doba-odnosa-izmeu-Srbije-Turske.html> accessed on: 20.01.2016



## 5.2.4. Conclusion



**Table 2. The number of analyzed statements of Serbia's officials regarding the TFP (2010-2016)**

In the case of Serbia, I analyzed 31 official statements of the Serbian officials. Out of 31 statements 22 statements have a positive perception of Turkey's Foreign Policy towards Serbia. Serbia sees Turkey as its very important strategic partner without which it cannot do everything it wants in the Balkan region. In a political aspect, only 3 statements show a positive perception. However, 9 statements show a negative perception in the political relations with Turkey because Serbia does not consider Turkish support to be much in this field. The reason for this is because the two countries do not agree on certain political issues in the Balkans. For example, Turkey is lobbying for Kosovo independence but Serbia opposes this policy because Kosovo territory is still under the Serbian constitution. However, in the economic field, 18 official statements show a very positive reaction about TFP. Serbia and Turkey have good economic relations. Serbia is satisfied with the investments from Turkey but it sees chances to deepen the cooperation. There

is also another important fact through which the two countries want to improve economic relations, that is the tripartite cooperation established between Serbia, Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the field of culture only 1 statement is analyzed. Cultural relations are not that much in focus by the Serbian officials, but it is considered that the Muslim population in Serbia is a good link in the relations with Turkey.

### **5.3. Montenegro: the perception of Turkish Foreign Policy**

#### **5.3.1. Political aspect**

Officially, Montenegro perceives Turkey as a friend, and the relations with Turkey are described as very good and friendly. There is cooperation between the two countries on all levels. Montenegro especially praises the support that it receives from Turkey on the path towards NATO integrations.<sup>225</sup> Therefore, the President of Montenegro says: "I express satisfaction with the good relations between Montenegro and Turkey".<sup>226</sup> Montenegro sees Turkey as a partner with whom it wants to cooperate in the area of the Rule of Law, fighting against organized crime and corruption. With this regard, the President states that: "the cooperation between the two Governments and within their ministries of justice is of particular importance for the realization of the rule of law, especially in the fight against organized crime and corruption".<sup>227</sup>

Other state officials also see Turkey and its foreign policy towards Montenegro positively. For instance, former Prime Minister of Montenegro confirms that: "bilateral relations between

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<sup>225</sup> Mvpei, *Diplomatski odnosi: Turska*, retrieved from: <http://www.mvpei.gov.me/rubrike/bilateralni-odnosi/bilateralni-odnosi/turska> accessed on: 07.02.2016

<sup>226</sup> Cdm, *Istanbul: Vujanović na svečanoj Sesiji povodom obilježavanja bitke kod Čanakale*, 23.04.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.cdm.me/politika/istanbul-vujanovic-na-svecanoj-sesiji-povodom-obiljezavanja-bitke-kod-canakale> accessed on: 07.02.2016

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

our countries are excellent".<sup>228</sup> As part of its strategic aim to become an EU member, Montenegro is committed to building good relations with Turkey because it sees Turkey as a very influential actor in the region and on the global level. Considering this, the former Prime Minister says: "regardless of our ambitions to become part of the EU, we must bear in mind that Turkey is also a very strong country that can represent our needs in the wider region in terms of global platforms".<sup>229</sup> While the current Prime Minister of Montenegro says: "It is my pleasure to note that the relations between Montenegro and Turkey are very good and friendly, which reflects on the intensity of the political dialogue at all levels".<sup>230</sup> Additionally, he asserts that: "dynamic political dialogue between Turkey and Montenegro gave an additional impetus to the development of economic cooperation".<sup>231</sup> Furthermore, Montenegro sees Turkey as a very important actor for the stability of the Western Balkan region. From the political perspective, Montenegro is very thankful for the support that it receives from Turkey towards EU and NATO integrations. After Montenegro received the official invitation from NATO, the Prime Minister expressed appreciation to Turkey and to the Turkish government with this statement:

The decision of the foreign ministers of NATO to invite Montenegro for membership. For our country it has historical significance, but also a special importance for the region and for the Alliance. I take this opportunity to thank the friendly Turkey, your government and you personally, for their continued support and assistance provided by Montenegro and the region in the Euro-Atlantic path. We highly appreciate the contribution of your country making a positive decision for Montenegro.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Slobodnaevropa, *Turska i Crna Gora potpisali protokol o saradnji u EU intergacijama*, 10.06.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/archive/news/20140610/500/500.html?id=25416820> accessed on: 09.02.2016

<sup>229</sup> Bozkurt A., *Turska i Crna Gora: Dva najbolja primjera na Balkanu*, *Predsjednik*, 23.03.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.predsjednik.gov.me/press-centar/intervju/112821/Turska-i-Crna-Gora-Dva-najbolja-primjera-na-Balkanu.html> accessed on: 10.02.2016

<sup>230</sup> Rtcg, *Đukanović: Odnosi s Turskom veoma dobri*, 29.10.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.rtcg.me/vijesti/politika/70662/djukanovic-odnosi-s-turskom-veoma-dobri.html> accessed on: 10.02.2016

<sup>231</sup> Portalanalitika, *Đukanović: Dinamičan dijalog Crne Gore i Turske podsticaj za ekonomsku saradnju*, 18.09.2015, retrieved from: <http://portalanalitika.me/clanak/201987/dukanovic-dinamican-dijalog-crne-gore-i-turske-podsticaj-za-ekonomsku-saradnju> accessed on: 11.02.2016

<sup>232</sup> Cdm, *Đukanović: Turska važna za stabilnost Zapadnog Balkana*, 04.12.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.cdm.me/politika/dukanovic-turska-vazna-za-stabilnost-zapadnog-balkana-0> accessed on: 12.02.2016

In addition, Montenegro sees Turkey as a global player, whose role is of the greatest importance for the peace, security and stability of the Middle East. Montenegro is sure that Turkey will overcome the current security crisis. Therefore, the current PM points out: "We strongly believe that Turkey will play a historic role in overcoming the current humanitarian and security crisis, like which so far Europe and the world did has faced".<sup>233</sup> Turkey has given support for the membership of Montenegro into the North Atlantic Threat Organization. The Deputy Prime Minister expresses thankfulness to Turkey:

We thank Turkey for its support for Montenegro's integration into NATO. We received an invitation to join the alliance, and that is extremely important for all potential investors, including Turkey, who are planning to invest in Montenegro. In addition we are bound by traditional, religious and kinship ties as well as the bridges of economic cooperation.<sup>234</sup>

Turkey is a very important strategic partner for Montenegro. The support that Montenegro receives on the path to NATO and EU integrations is especially appreciated. With this regard, the President of the Montenegrin Parliament points out:

Montenegro has a special relationship with Turkey, as a country that connects the east and west, the land that connects all diversity in Europe. Our relations have a long historical memory in the 20th century turning into friendship and cooperation that would, hopefully, in the 21st century grow into full communion in the context of NATO and the EU.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Vijesti, *Đukanović: Turska je jedan od ključnih aktera na globalnom planu*, 28.10.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/dukanovic-turska-je-jedan-od-kljucnih-aktera-na-globalnom-planu-857793> accessed on: 25.02.2016

<sup>234</sup> Luboder M., *Delegacija iz Rožaja posjetila Turski grad Duzde i nekoliko fabrika, Rozaje*, 03.03.2016, retrieved from: <http://www.rozaje.me/delegacija-iz-rozaja-posjetila-turski-grad-duzde-i-nekoliko-fabrika/> accessed on: 05.03.2016

<sup>235</sup> Crnogoratorska, *Zvanična posjeta predsjednika Velike Narodne Skupštine Republike Turske Crnoj Gori*, 22.10.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.crnogoratorska.com/predsjednik-velike-narodne-skuptsine-republike-turske-u-cg/> accessed on: 06.03.2016

The relations between Montenegro and Turkey are an example of true friendship. Montenegro really appreciates all that has been done by Turkey in the political field. Considering all this, in his statement the President of the Montenegrin Parliament stated as follows:

I have a special obligation towards Turkey, as I'm in Istanbul elected as the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE. I got great support from Turkey then, they even withdrew its candidate to open a space for my election. It was a sign of the relationship and friendship towards Montenegro.<sup>236</sup>

According to the Vice President of the Montenegrin Parliament, in the political field, Turkey is perceived as a strong supporter of Montenegro's national interest to become a full NATO member. Additionally, Montenegro has a good cooperation with Turkey in exchange of information and experiences between the two parliaments.<sup>237</sup> Also, Montenegro can benefit a lot from the Turkish experiences on its path towards European Union. The Minister of Justice of Montenegro confirms that: "The Republic of Turkey, as a candidate for membership in the EU, their experience can help Montenegro in achieving its EU-integration agenda, especially in the use of EU funds."<sup>238</sup> Moreover, Montenegro wants to deepen cooperation with Turkey in the area of the Justice System. The Minister also states that: "The government strongly supports the cooperation of the Supreme Courts of Montenegro and Turkey".<sup>239</sup>

Montenegro and Turkey also cooperate in other areas. They have signed an agreement for joint army training. For Montenegro this is a great opportunity to train its soldiers in Turkey

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<sup>236</sup>Faktor, *Ranko Krivokapić, predsjednik Skupštine Crne Gore: Balkan se ponovo uznemirio*, AA, 09.03.2016, retrieved from: <http://faktor.ba/ranko-krivokapic-predsjednik-skupstine-crne-gore-balkan-se-ponovo-uznemirio/> accessed on: 11.03.2016

<sup>237</sup> Crna.Gora, *Odnosi CG i Turske su izvanredni*, 18.09.2015, retrieved from: <http://crna.gora.me/vijesti/politika/odnosi-cg-i-turske-su-izvanredni/> accessed on: 12.03.2016

<sup>238</sup> Gov, *Republika Turska svojim iskustvom može pomoći Crnoj Gori u ostvarivanju evrointegracione agende*, 10.01.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.gov.me/vijesti/110949/Potpredsjednik-Vlade-i-ministar-pravde-Crne-Gore-Dusko-Markovic-primio-ministra-za-evropska-pitanja-i-glavnog-pregovara-Republ.html> accessed on: 15.03.2016

<sup>239</sup> Kolektiv, *Marković: Rezultati crnogorskih sudova među najboljima su u Evropi*, 29.09.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.kolektiv.me/54549/markovi-rezultati-crnogorskih-sudova-meu-najboljima-su-u-evropi> accessed on: 16.03.2016

which is the second army in NATO. Hence, the spokeswoman of the Ministry of Defense of Montenegro says: "now we have the conditions to educate and train our army in the Turkish military academies, training grounds and training centers".<sup>240</sup> Apart from other aspects of bilateral relations, Turkey and Montenegro have strengthened their army cooperation. Montenegro expresses satisfaction for having opportunity to train its soldiers in Turkey. With this regard, the executive director of the Alpha Center states:

Our country has the privilege to train our military members in Turkey. Especially bearing in mind that Turkey has invested enormous efforts and significant resources to modernize its army and it is considered one of the most serious and the most numerous military contributors to the Alliance. I expect that we will strengthen our interoperability in future NATO missions.<sup>241</sup>

### 5.3.2. Economic aspect

Montenegro is working on deepening its economic cooperation with Turkey in different areas. The Prime Minister points out that: "the two countries have expanded the field of action of economic cooperation, with the possibility of realization of new projects in a number of areas ranging from energy to banking".<sup>242</sup> In regard to future relations, he asserts: "We remain dedicated to the end of further enhancement of cooperation in all fields of mutual interest".<sup>243</sup> Turkish institutions in Montenegro are the main contributors for development of the relations between the two countries. With regard to this, the Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro says:

Cooperation with Turkey is a privilege, because it is a country among the strongest economies of the world. For the further development and improvement

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<sup>240</sup> Vesti, *Crna Gora i Turska jačaju vojne odnose*, 05.11.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.vesti.rs/NATO/Crna-Gora-i-Turska-jacaju-vojne-odnose.html> accessed on: 14.03.2016

<sup>241</sup> Vesti, *Crna Gora i Turska jačaju vojne odnose*, 05.11.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.vesti.rs/NATO/Crna-Gora-i-Turska-jacaju-vojne-odnose.html> accessed on: 20.03.2016

<sup>242</sup> Cdm, *Tradicionalno dobri odnosi Crne Gore i Turske dodatno unaprijeđeni*, 31. 07.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.cdm.me/politika/tradicionalno-dobri-odnosi-crne-gore-i-turske-dodatno-unaprijeđeni> accessed on: 12.02.2016

<sup>243</sup> Cdm, *Đukanović: Turska važna za stabilnost Zapadnog Balkana*, 04.12.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.cdm.me/politika/dukanovic-turska-vazna-za-stabilnost-zapadnog-balkana-0> accessed on: 12.02.2016

of economic relations with Turkey, the Turkish Embassy in Montenegro and TIKA take a special place with special roles, with many contributions.<sup>244</sup>

Montenegro has found itself guilty of not doing its best for the Turkish investments. Apart from that, Montenegro recognizes the hand of friendship that was given by Turkey. Regarding this, the president of the Montenegrin Parliament says:

Overall relations have constantly been frequent, friendly, but they were not used in the right way. I think the situation in Montenegro was not open in the right way for Turkish investors. The prosecutor recently said in Parliament that it will be shown that the real foreign investors were plundered in Montenegro. I think that was the reason for the Turkish withdrawals in certain projects. Turkey was ready to invest more in Montenegro. An example of true friendship towards a country we had by the Republic of Turkey.<sup>245</sup>

Montenegro welcomes the investments of Turkey in the agricultural area. However, there is a need for more cooperation in this field. The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Montenegro says: "The experience of Turkey for us can be very valuable".<sup>246</sup> For Montenegro, Turkey is a very good example of the economic development. Therefore, the Minister of Economy of Montenegro points out:

I believe that Turkey is a world economic giant and Montenegro, as a small Balkan country, based its development on a similar basis, such as the openness of the society, the private sector as an engine of economic growth, and protection of property rights.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Gov., *Potpredsjednik Husović otvorio simpozijum „Unapređenje ekonomskih odnosa između Turske i Crne Gore” u Podgorici*, 19.05.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.gov.me/vijesti/138768/Potporedsjednik-Husovic-otvorio-simpozijum-Unapredjenje-ekonomskih-odnosa-izmedju-Turske-i-Crne-Gore-u-Podgorici.html> accessed on: 27.02.2016

<sup>245</sup> Faktor, *Ranko Krivokapić, predsjednik Skupštine Crne Gore: Balkan se ponovo uznemirio*, AA, 09.03.2016, retrieved from: <http://faktor.ba/ranko-krivokapic-predsjednik-skupstine-crne-gore-balkan-se-ponovo-uznemirio/> accessed on: 11.03.2016

<sup>246</sup> Portalanalitika, *Ivanović primio predstavnike Turske razvojne agencije*, 12.02.2014, retrieved from: <http://portalanalitika.me/clanak/134173/ivanovic-primio-predstavnike-turske-razvojne-agencije> accessed on: 16.03.2016

<sup>247</sup> Portalanalitika, *KAVARIĆ: Vlade Crne Gore i Turske imaju odlične odnose*, 16.05.2014, retrieved from: <http://portalanalitika.me/clanak/146497/kavaric-vlade-crne-gore-i-turske-imaju-odlicne-odnose> accessed on: 16.03.2016

Montenegro expresses desire for Turkish investments especially in the energy sector of the country. The Minister of Economy says: "We strongly express a desire for Turkish investors to take part in the process of restructuring the Montenegrin aluminum industry".<sup>248</sup> The cultural cooperation with Turkey is another important point which Montenegro takes into consideration. Furthermore, the Minister of Economy states that: "From the cultural aspect it is noticeable that a great closeness and understanding of the two peoples, starting from ethical principles, is desirable as business behavior. Such cultural closeness gives special impetus to cooperation between the two economies".<sup>249</sup> In addition, Montenegro appreciates the current Turkish investments in the country. With this regard, the Minister of Economy says: "We are very proud of the Turkish investments in Steel, Gintas and the Port of Bar, as well as many other investments".<sup>250</sup> In addition to the Minister of Economy, the Minister for Information Society and Telecommunications confirms the very good relations between the two countries, pointing out: "We have the opportunity to note the good cooperation and friendly relations between Montenegro and Turkey".<sup>251</sup> Montenegro seeks from Turkey more investments, especially in the energy sector. Therefore, in one of his statements, the Minister said:

Montenegro is interested in the inflow of capital from Turkey, particularly in the energy sector, transport infrastructure and mining. Today I want to announce that in the next few days the Turkish Ziraat Bank is to apply for a license to operate in Montenegro. We also discussed the possible cooperation in the field of textile industry, as companies from Turkey have considerable experience in this area.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Portalanalitika, *KAVARIĆ: Ponosni smo na turske investicije*, 19.05.2014, retrieved from: <http://portalanalitika.me/clanak/146961/kavaric-ponosni-smo-na-turske-investicije> accessed on: 18.03.2016

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Vijesti, *Lazović: Turska Ziraat banka će aplicirati za licencu*, 05.12.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/lazovic-turska-ziraat-banka-ce-plicirati-za-licencu-808433> accessed on: 18.03.2016

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.



### 5.3.3. Socio-cultural aspect

Montenegro is proud of its relations with Turkey, especially the Bosniak citizens of Montenegro, who are the bridge between the two countries. In his statement, the President of Montenegro points out:

Turkey has a good connection with this place for a lot of reasons; historic and also economic. We are proud of our relations with the Turks and Turkey because we think it is good. This was seen by a number of our Bosniaks, who perceive Ankara as a good connection and a good bridge, and I think we have developed a good atmosphere to be preserved and improved on. I do not see that there is a risk that our inter-relationship and harmony to be in any way disturbed, but it is a constant duty to work towards the improvement of relations, not yearly, monthly, but daily.<sup>253</sup>

The cultural relations between the two countries are in progress. On the opening of the Turkish Cultural Institution in Montenegro, the Vice president of the Parliament of Montenegro stated:

Relations between our countries are progressing in all areas - economic, social and political, which represents a good element to build the cultural cooperation. The 'Yunus Emre' Institution will not only be a good carrier of cultural presentations of Turkey and Montenegro, but also a factor of cultural exchange of our citizens.<sup>254</sup>

Another important factor in the relations between Turkey and Montenegro are Turkish citizens of Montenegrin origin, they are a very important link between the two countries. It is estimated that around 250.000 people with Montenegrin origin live in Turkey. One of the Montenegrin aims is to reestablish the connection with these people. With this regard, the Vice president of the Parliament of Montenegro points out that: "It was agreed that in the future, to intensify contacts of the Montenegrin authorities, Turkish state authorities and Association

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<sup>253</sup> Cdm, *Vujanović: Ne očekujem skorije rješavanje pitanja Prevlake*, 17.08.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.cdm.me/politika/vujanovic-ne-ocekujem-skorije-rjesavanje-pitanja-prevlake> accessed on: 08.02.2016

<sup>254</sup> *Vijesti, Kultura da unaprijedi odnose Crne Gore i Turske*, 07.11.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.vijesti.me/vijesti/kultura-da-unaprijedi-odnose-crne-gore-i-turske-804096> accessed on: 12.03.2016

Foundations, with the aim of achieving the best possible position for the operation and implementation of activities".<sup>255</sup> In addition, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency has done a lot for Montenegro. Through many different projects, this agency contributes to the Montenegrin society. In this regard, the Minister for Human and Minority Rights says: "the Agency's contribution to the development is not only of cooperation between Montenegro and Turkey, but also directed to the development and prosperity of Montenegro itself".<sup>256</sup>

Additionally, he comments on the investments of TIKA stating that:

Through more than 13 million euros, 220 different donor projects were implemented in our country of which the largest share refers to education, but the willingness is recognized to allocate the resources on the whole territory of Montenegro and where they are really needed the most".<sup>257</sup>

Through its agency that operates in Montenegro, Turkey has also donated in the health sector. Considering this, Montenegro is really thankful to Turkey. The Director of the Health Insurance Fund says that: "donation is just confirmation of exceptionally good relations between our countries that have already experienced the level of strategic partnership, the establishment of economic cooperation, but also cooperation in health, cultural and any second level".<sup>258</sup>

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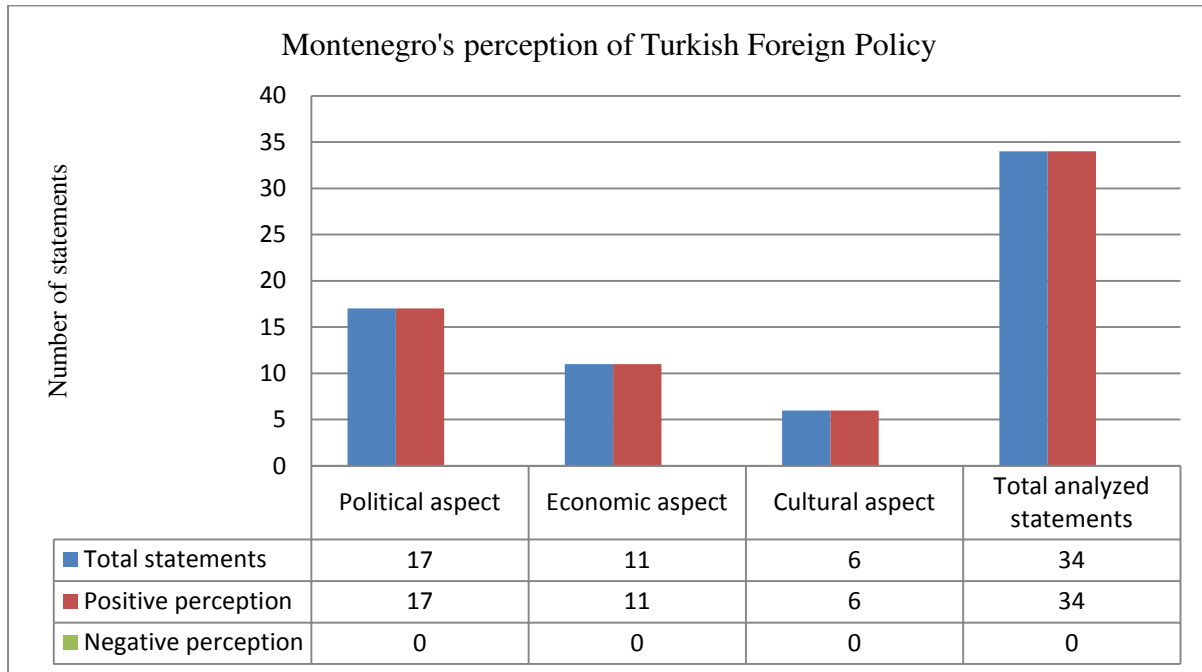
<sup>255</sup> Cdm, *Mustafić u Istanbulu: Iseljenici most saradnje između Crne Gore i Turske*, 13.02.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.cdm.me/politika/mustafic-u-istanbulu-iseljenici-most-saradnje-između-crne-gore-i-turske> accessed on: 14.03.2016

<sup>256</sup> Gov., *Nova saradnja na unaprijeđenju ljudskih i manjinskih prava: Numanović - Jazidi*, 29.02.2016, retrieved from: <http://www.gov.me/naslovna/vijesti-iz-ministarstava/158277/Nova-saradnja-u-unapredenju-ljudskih-i-manjinskih-prava-Numanovic-Jazidi.html?alphabet=lat> accessed on: 18.03.2016

<sup>257</sup> Cdm, *Numanović-Galip: Investiranje u Crnu Goru je ulaganje u Evropu*, 23.02.2016, retrieved from: <http://www.cdm.me/politika/numanovic-galip-investiranje-u-crnu-goru-je-ulaganje-u-evropu> accessed on: 18.03.2016

<sup>258</sup> Fzocg, *Turska vlada donirala nedostajuće petovalentne vakcine uz pomoć Fonda za zdravstveno osiguranje*, 09.07.2014, retrieved from: <http://fzocg.me/print.php?id=860> accessed on: 20.03.2016

### 5.3.4. Conclusion



**Table 3. The number of analyzed statements of Montenegro's officials regarding the TFP (2010-2016)**

In the case of Montenegro, I analyzed about 34 official statements of Montenegrin officials. All analyzed statements show a positive perception of Turkey and Turkey's Foreign Policy towards Montenegro. Montenegro appreciates and welcomes Turkish influence in all aspects of society. In the political field, 17 statements show that Montenegro sees Turkey as a partner on the path towards EU and NATO integrations. The support that Turkey provides to Montenegro towards Euro-Atlantic integrations is especially appreciated. In the field of economy, 11 statements show that Montenegro is proud of realized Turkish investments. It is interested in deepening the economic cooperation in the energy sector and other sectors of mutual interest. In the cultural area, the two countries have also achieved a certain level of cooperation and

understanding. Therefore, 6 official statements confirm that Montenegro is committed to strengthening socio-cultural relations.

#### **5.4. Kosovo: the perception of Turkish Foreign Policy**

##### **5.4.1. Political aspect**

Since Kosovo became an independent state in 2008, Turkey has done a lot and continues to do so at all levels. Especially in the political field, Turkey gives full support to Kosovo. With this regard, the President of Kosovo confirms that: "Turkey has played and continues to play an important role in support of the sovereignty and integrity of Kosovo and the international consolidation of the country".<sup>259</sup> Apart from president of Kosovo, the Prime Minister says that: "Turkey has played an important role at all times, in support of freedom, independence and now in support of strengthening and further consolidation of the democratic state of Kosovo".<sup>260</sup> Kosovo perceives Turkey as a strategic partner which supports Kosovo in the regional issues especially the dialogue with Serbia. In this regard, the Prime Minister of Kosovo says: the "Republic of Kosovo welcomes the involvement of Turkey in activities aiming at fostering and strengthening regional cooperation in the Balkans considering it as Kosovo's strategic partner".<sup>261</sup>

Kosovo especially appreciates the support that Turkey provides for the recognition of the Kosovo state on the international level. Hence, the Deputy Prime Minister of Kosovo, says: "I

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<sup>259</sup> Noa, *Jahjaga: Kosova ka dëshmuar se është ndërtuar në parimin qytetar*, 23.04.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.noa.al/mob/index.php?type=artikull&id=177775.html> accessed on: 20.03.2016

<sup>260</sup> Ardhmeriaonline, *U vlerësuan lartë marrëdhëniet ndërshtetërore mes Kosovës e Turqisë*, 09.02. 2013, retrieved from: <http://ardhmeriaonline.net/artikull/article/u-vleresuan-larte-marredheniet-ndershteterore-mes-kosoves-e-turqise/#.VvM6OObu9ZY> accessed on: 22.03.2016

<sup>261</sup> Kryeminister, *Prime Minister of Republic of Kosovo Hashim Thaçi meets Prime Minister of Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan*, 14.03.2011, retrieved from: <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,1888> accessed on: 25.03.2016

express gratitude for the efforts of the Turkish Prime Minister, to support and strengthen the state independence of Kosovo, especially for the recognition of different countries in the world".<sup>262</sup> Additionally, she declares: "I highly appreciate the relations between Kosovo and Turkey, and between the two nations, Albanians and Turks".<sup>263</sup> In addition, Turkey is a friendly country which gives enormous support to Kosovo in political and economic areas. In this regard, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, confirms that: "Turkish diplomacy, run by (former) Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and (former) Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, has greatly supported Kosovo's recognition internationally and Kosovo's acceptance in regional cooperation".<sup>264</sup> Moreover, Kosovo confirms Turkish support in all fields and welcomes it. The Speaker of the Parliament of Kosovo says: "Kosovo had seen Turkey's support during the war, and Turkey's support continued after the war ".<sup>265</sup> Kosovo welcomes and accepts all projects launched by Turkish officials in the Balkan region. With this regard, he states: "We welcome every project that serves peace, stability and establishment of new ties".<sup>266</sup>

Kosovo and Turkey are strategic partners. With this regard, the Minister of Internal Affairs of Kosovo states that: "The Turkish Republic is a strategic partner of the Republic of Kosovo, and this partnership will continue in all areas without exception".<sup>267</sup> As a strategic partner, Turkey gives support to Kosovo in many other areas. Especially in a political aspect, Turkey supported Kosovo's independence and it continues to give assistance for admission of Kosovo in

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<sup>262</sup> Kosovoalive360, *Edita Tahiri në manifestimin "Një valixhe, një arkë" në Stamboll*, 17.06.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.kosovalive360.com/edita-tahiri-ne-manifestimin-nje-valixhe-nje-arke-ne-stamboll.html> accessed on: 25.03.2016

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Mfa-ks, *Kosovo zahvalno Turskoj za svoje putovanje do nezavisnosti*, 22.10.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=3,131,1457> accessed on: 26.03.2016

<sup>265</sup> News, *'Turkey contributing to relations among Serbian, Bosnian and Albanian peoples'*, 27.04.2012, retrieved from: <http://news.az/articles/turkey/59131> accessed on: 26.03.2016

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> Kosovapress, *Kosovë-Turqi - Marrëveshje për riatdhesim*, 15.12.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.kosovapress.com/sq/siguri/kosove-turqi-marreveshje-per-riatdhesim-59338/> accessed on: 27.03.2016

international organizations. Hence, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports says that: "cooperation with Turkey helps peace and stability in the region and creates the basis for cooperation in many important fields".<sup>268</sup> Turkey is a very important partner with whom Kosovo has special relations based on various factors. Therefore, Kosovo's Ambassador to Turkey, in his statement, explains some important factors regarding relations with Turkey:

There is a common vision for the Euro-Atlantic future of the Balkans. Turkey has been among the very first countries that recognized our independence, and then continued to provide meaningful political support to our country in international platforms. On the other hand, from 2008 onwards, namely from the establishment of diplomatic relations and opening of Resident Embassies in Ankara and Pristina, 40 agreements have been concluded between the two governments, while many more agreements have been initiated. They cover a very wide range of topics, including political, economic, security, education, health, culture and so on.<sup>269</sup>

#### 5.4.2. Economic aspect

Kosovo praises the relations between the two states, especially on the political and the economic level. According to the president of Kosovo, there is a need to deepen cooperation in the economic field and in areas of mutual interest.<sup>270</sup> As Kosovo is very interested in deepening the economic cooperation with Turkey and to attract Turkish investments, the Prime Minister of Kosovo points out that: "The Government of the Republic of Kosovo has a strong will to further advance the excellent cooperation between our two friendly states in all fields of bilateral interest."<sup>271</sup> Additionally, he states: "For us, Turkey is one of the main economic partners and we

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<sup>268</sup> Mkrs-ks, *Kosovo and Turkey with extensive cooperation in the field of culture*, 05.11.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.mkrs-ks.org/?page=2,6,1128#.VvMnjebu9ZY> accessed on: 28.03.2016

<sup>269</sup> Ambasada-ks, *Kosovo's Ambassador to Turkey, Avni Spahiu evaluated Kosovo's foreign policy priorities, the impact of the European Union in the Balkans, the agreement reached between Kosovo and Serbia and the relationships between Kosovo and Turkey*, 27.08.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.ambasada-ks.net/tr/?page=2,8,90> accessed on: 30.03.2016

<sup>270</sup> Infodirekt, *Jahjaga: Komuniteti turk, urë lidhëse mes Kosovës dhe Turqisë*, 07.08.2015, retrieved from: <http://infodirekt.tv/index.php/lajme-all-fix/35695-jahjaga-komuniteti-turk-ure-lidhesemes-kosoves-dhe-turqise> accessed on: 20.03.2016

<sup>271</sup> Hashimtaci, *Prime Minister Thaçi received by Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan*, 15.05.2013, retrieved from: [http://www.hashimthaci.com/recep\\_erdogan\\_and\\_hashim\\_thaci.html](http://www.hashimthaci.com/recep_erdogan_and_hashim_thaci.html) accessed on: 24.03.2016

will make all efforts to boost commerce and increase the number of investors in Kosovo".<sup>272</sup> As well as the President and the PM, the Minister of Foreign Affairs says that: "Kosovo's success is due in part to friendly relations with Turkey, Kosovo's economic development, which amounted to 6 per cent in the period of five years, is the result of cooperation with Turkish business organizations".<sup>273</sup> Moreover, business arrangements concluded between Kosovo and Turkey are signs of good relations between the two countries. Considering these business arrangements, the Minister points out that: "they can definitely play a role in making sure Serbia and Kosovo look at the Turkish model of prosperity, model of growth, model of putting business and action before the words of politics to foster good relations in the future".<sup>274</sup>

Although the officials praise Turkish investments they express a need for better cooperation between the two countries. With this regard, the Minister of Trade and Industry of Kosovo points out that: "trade relations between Kosovo and Turkey are good, but we hope that soon this cooperation will further deepen".<sup>275</sup> In addition, Kosovo works hard on policy reforms of small and medium enterprises, therefore it sees Turkey as an example of policy reforms in this area. The Minister says that: "Turkey's experience in the development of small and medium enterprises and development of industrial zones, techno-parks, are the areas from which we seek your support".<sup>276</sup> Turkey is also a very important trade partner of Kosovo, regarding this Kosovo's Ambassador to Turkey states that: "Turkey ranks among the 6 biggest trade partners of

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<sup>272</sup> Tota E., *Turkey is an important partner for Kosovo*, *Balkaneu*, 19.02.2015, retrieved from: [www.balkaneu.com/turkey-important-partner-kosovo/](http://www.balkaneu.com/turkey-important-partner-kosovo/) accessed on: 24.03.2016

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> Koha, *Kosova, vend tërheqës për investitorët turq*, 01.09.2012, retrieved from: <http://koha.net/?id=8&arkiva=1&l=113537> accessed on: 27.03.2016

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

Kosovo. Naturally, this adds an important dimension to our relations".<sup>277</sup> Regarding the economic relations between the two countries, the President of the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce points out that: "the interest of both countries became more intense. In our relations interest and profit should lead us. Kosovo is a secure backbone of connectivity between Turkey and Europe".<sup>278</sup>

### 5.4.3. Socio-cultural aspect

The socio-cultural relations between Kosovo and Turkey are characterized by many factors. However, the most important factor in the relations between the two countries is the Turkish community which contributes to Kosovo society. With this regard, the President of Kosovo says that: "Turkish community involvement at all levels of governance in Kosovo proves the commitment to building a democratic state".<sup>279</sup> Additionally, Kosovo perceives this community as a bridge with Turkey, which rights are guaranteed and protected by the state. The president asserts that: "The Turkish community in Kosovo is the bridge between the two countries and the rights of the community as well as other communities in Kosovo are guaranteed by law and the constitution."<sup>280</sup> Moreover, Kosovo's Ambassador to Turkey in his statement states that: the relations between Kosovo and Turkey are based on numerous factors, such as the historical reflections, the presence in Turkey of a large number of citizens of

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<sup>277</sup> Ambasada-ks, *Kosovo's Ambassador to Turkey, Avni Spahiu evaluated Kosovo's foreign policy priorities, the impact of the European Union in the Balkans, the agreement reached between Kosovo and Serbia and the relationships between Kosovo and Turkey*, 27.08.2011, retrieved from: <http://www.ambasada-ks.net/tr/?page=2,8,90> accessed on: 30.03.2016

<sup>278</sup> Rtklive, *Bashkëpunim mes bizneseve të Kosovës dhe Antalisë*, 21.05.2015, retrived from: <http://www.rtklive.com/?id=3&r=31322> accessed on: 30.03.2016

<sup>279</sup> Noa, *Jahjaga: Kosova ka dëshmuar se është ndërtuar në parimin qytetar*, 23.04.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.noa.al/mob/index.php?type=artikull&id=177775.html> accessed on: 20.03.2016

<sup>280</sup> Infodirekt, *Jahjaga: Komuniteti turk, urë lidhëse mes Kosovës dhe Turqisë*, 07.08.2015, retrieved from: <http://infodirekt.tv/index.php/lajme-all-fix/35695-jahjaga-komuniteti-turk-ure-lidhesemes-kosoves-dhe-turqise> accessed on: 20.03.2016



Albanian origin, the presence in Kosovo of an important Turkish community".<sup>281</sup> However, the field of education is another important factor in the relations with Turkey. The Speaker of the Parliament of Kosovo states that: "Turkey assisted Kosovo in education, health and conservation of historical heritage".<sup>282</sup> Kosovo is especially interested in the cooperation of Turkey on a cultural level and in the field of education. In the statement, Minister of Education of Kosovo says:

We, as a new state, need your help, especially in the preparation of cadres in the exact sciences, technical and medical fields". It's a great opportunity to build a partnership of our universities with both the public and private universities in Turkey, to create the possibility of joint degrees, joint programs and build partnerships between programs in Kosovo and Turkey.<sup>283</sup>

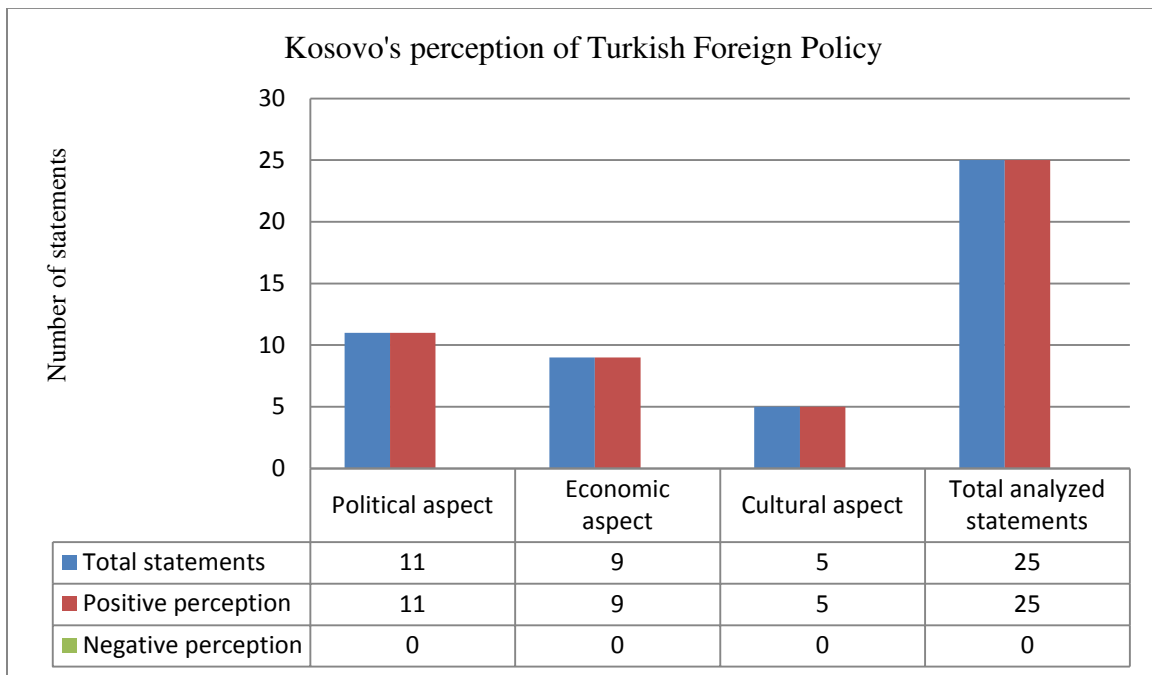
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<sup>281</sup> Ambasada-ks, *Kosovo's Ambassador to Turkey, Avni Spahiu evaluated Kosovo's foreign policy priorities, the impact of the European Union in the Balkans, the agreement reached between Kosovo and Serbia and the relationships between Kosovo and Turkey*, 27.08.2011, retrieved from: <http://www.ambasada-ks.net/tr/?page=2,8,90> accessed on: 30.03.2016

<sup>282</sup> News, *'Turkey contributing to relations among Serbian, Bosnian and Albanian peoples'*, 27.04.2012, retrieved from: <http://news.az/articles/turkey/59131> accessed on: 26.03.2016

<sup>283</sup> Koha, *Memorandum Mirëkuptimi mes Kosovës e Turqisë në fushën e arsimit*, 21.10.2015, retrieved from: <http://koha.net/?id=27&l=80485> accessed on: 26.03.2016

#### 5.4.4. Conclusion



**Table 4. The number of analyzed statements of Kosovo's officials regarding the TFP (2010-2016)**

In the case of Kosovo, I analyzed 25 official statements about Turkey's Foreign Policy towards the Kosovo state. All analyzed statements show a positive perception of Turkey and its policy in Kosovo. Turkey is seen as a friendly country whose influence is welcome in all aspects of the Kosovo society. In the political field, 11 statements show positive perception of TFP. Turkey is lobbying for the further recognition of the Kosovo state on the international level. Additionally, Turkey is among the first countries that recognized the independence of Kosovo. Kosovo sees Turkey as its strategic partner and welcomes all Turkish initiatives for regional reconciliation. In the economic field, 9 official statements show that the relations between the two countries are very good. In this field, Kosovo wants to learn from the Turkish experience in the area of small and medium enterprises. Apart from these two fields, the cultural relations are of great importance for the two states. Out of 25 analyzed statements in total, 5 statements show

a positive reaction in the socio-cultural field. At the top is the Turkish minority which is a bridge between Kosovo and Turkey. Kosovo is interested in deepening the cooperation with Turkey in the field of education. Hence, Kosovo appreciates the support that it receives from Turkey in political, economic and cultural areas.

## **5.5. Albania: the perception of Turkish Foreign Policy**

### **5.5.1. Political aspect**

Officially, the relations between Albania and Turkey are based on friendship and traditional links. However, since 2002 these relations gained the dimension of Strategic Partnership. There is no political or other problem between the two countries. Albania and Turkey have some things in common. For example, both countries are members of NATO, they are EU accession candidate states, they are also common members of several regional organizations and initiatives. The cooperation between the two countries exists in all areas of mutual interest. Albania sees Turkey as a country that plays a crucial role in favor of peace and stability in the Balkan region.<sup>284</sup> Therefore, the Albanian president states: "Turkey is the country which plays a crucial role in bringing peace and stability".<sup>285</sup> He expresses the need for assistance between the two countries in terms of security issues, organized crime, illegal trafficking and terrorism. In regard to fighting against terrorism, he says "the risk of terrorism shows that countries are interdependent in terms of their safety and cannot fight this risk alone".<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Punetijashtme.gov, *Relations with Regional Countries*, retrieved from: <http://www.punetijashtme.gov.al/en/mission/albania-in-the-region/relations-with-regional-countries> accessed on: 30.03.2016

<sup>285</sup> VOA, *Presidentin Turk, Erdogan: Arritjet do t'i ndajmë me vëllezërit shqiptarë*, 13.05.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.noa.al/artikull/erdogan-vjen-ne-shqiperi-pritet-nga-nishani/492593.html> accessed on: 31.03.2016

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

Albania and Turkey have many things in common; history, tradition, culture etc., as well, the strategic cooperation between two countries being of the great importance. In this regard, Albanian ex-Prime Minister (until 2013) stated: "the Albanian people and the Turkish people are associated with thousands of strings of friendship and a traditional sense of solidarity. We are happy that in recent years this friendship and the excellent relations has increased and further consolidation has reached the highest levels".<sup>287</sup> As well as the ex-Prime Minister, the current prime minister says that Albania sees Turkey as a very important and strategic partner with whom the Albanian government continue to cooperate. In his view, "Turkey is a force with a specific importance in our region, considering that both sides are NATO members makes our cooperation more solid and intense".<sup>288</sup> Albania actively cooperates with Turkish institutions and with Turkey in International organizations such as NATO. With this regard, the Chairman of the Parliament of Albania says: "the excellent and brotherly relations between the two countries have expanded in some areas, such as political, economic, cultural, commercial, etc.".<sup>289</sup> He noted that "the parliamentary friendship between Albania and Turkey, is quite active." As these two countries have good parliamentary cooperation they also have developed a good cooperation within the North Atlantic Threat Organization. The Chairman of the Parliament of Albania assesses that: "Albania and Turkey as member countries of NATO have influenced their responsibilities in maintaining stability".<sup>290</sup> Moreover, Albania appreciates the support that it

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<sup>287</sup> Arkivalajmeve, *Marrëdhëniet Turqi-Shqipëri, Davutoglu: Të shkëlqyera falë kontributit personal të Berishës*, 18.10.2009, retrieved from: <http://www.arkivalajmeve.com/Marredheniet-Turqi-Shqiperi-Davutoglu-Te-shkelqyera-fale-kontributit-personal-te-Berishes.330550/> accessed on: 31.03.2016

<sup>288</sup> Koha, *Vizitën në Beograd Rama e vlerëson epokë të re për Ballkanin*, 05.11.2013, retrieved from: <http://koha.net/?id=27&l=32102> accessed on: 31.03.2016

<sup>289</sup> Albalove, *Meta – Çiçek: Marrëdhëniet mes Shqipërisë dhe Turqisë janë vëllazërore*, 25. 11. 2015, retrieved from <http://www.albalove.ch/meta-cicek-marredheniet-mes-shqiperise-dhe-turqise-jane-vellazerore-video/> accessed on: 01.04.2016

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

receives from Turkey in all fields but especially in international defense organization. During his meeting with the Turkish official, the Minister of Defense of Albania said:

I thank the Turkish counterpart for the support Turkey has given to Albania, especially its membership in NATO and the assistance provided by the Turkish state to the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania, for the modernization of tools and equipment, and the increase in the educational level of the Albanian military.<sup>291</sup>

He claims that there are good relations between Albania and Turkey and expresses hope for further development of relations in the future. With this regard, he says that: "the relations between our two countries are excellent and will continue to intensify further in the future".<sup>292</sup> In addition, Albania strongly supports Turkey's membership in the European Union. Therefore, the Minister of Defense emphasizes: "in our political concept, the European Union is incomplete without Turkey".<sup>293</sup> Integration into the European Union is a common interest of both Albania and Turkey. Regarding this issue, the Chief Foreign Policy Adviser at the Albanian Parliament says that: "these two countries are moving towards a strategic partnership, which means economic and political interests in common".<sup>294</sup> Both countries share the same opinion when they say that the inclusion of Turkey in the triangle of strategic partnership does not affect Albania's aspiration for EU membership.<sup>295</sup>

The Albanian ambassador in Turkey points out that priorities of Albania are focused on strengthening bilateral relations, on Economic, Cultural and Defense diplomacy. Therefore, he states:

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<sup>291</sup> Arkivalajmeve, *Shqipëria dhe Turqia zgjerojnë bashkëpunimin ushtarak*, 12.03.2010, retrieved from: <http://www.arkivalajmeve.com/Shqipëria-dhe-Turqia-zgjerojne-bashkepunimin-ushtarak.424910/> accessed on: 01.04.2016

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> Dailymotion, *Gjoni dhe Ngjela për marrëdhëniet Turqi-Shqipëri* - News, Lajme - Vizion Plus, 24.11.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3f8nmf> accessed on: 01.04.2016

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

Turkey and Albania have a joint plan on many international issues. Cooperation in the fields of defense, is a powerful dimension of Turkish-Albanian bilateral relations. Team Training, Naval and airstrike activities by the Turkish Navy and Air Force have trained the Albanian Armed Forces; our outputs are based on the logistics and funds for modernization allocated from the Turkish territory, while Albanian soldiers assigned to Afghanistan in the framework of the NATO are serving within Turkish troops deployed in the region. Turkey and Albania enjoyed wonderfully progressive relationship for many years and are entering higher levels of partnership, the Strategic Partnership Document. Such agreements intensify political relations, both economic and cultural. Currently there are 170 effective agreements between Turkey and Albania.<sup>296</sup>

The Albanian ambassador confirms the support and assistance that Turkey provided towards Albania's membership into NATO. He states that Albania has benefited a lot from 'Turkey's experience and position' in this defense organization. In addition, he confirms that Turkish parliament was among the first legislature bodies that ratified Albania's membership in NATO. In his view, "bilateral relations between Albania and Turkey are deeply rooted on both nations' common history; Tirana and Ankara enjoy a great level of excellent cooperation! There are no political disputes among the two countries thanks to the excellent political relation".<sup>297</sup>

Besides positive perceptions on Turkish Foreign Policy towards Albania, there are also negative perceptions. A deputy from the ruling Socialist Party of Albania (PS), negatively perceives some acts of the Turkish president. Namely, during the visit to Albania in 2015, Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan asked from the Albanian government to close the schools that were opened by the 'Hizmet social movement'. Additionally, President Erdoğan labeled this civil society movement as a terrorist organization. However, a deputy in the Albanian Parliament, Ben Blushi, called on the government to reject Erdoğan's request

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<sup>296</sup> Zeri, *Ambasadori Muçaj: Feja e shqiptarëve është shqiptaria*, 14. 03. 2015, retrieved from: <http://zeri.info/aktuale/23790/ambasadori-mucaj-feja-e-shqiptareve-eshte-shqiptaria/> accessed on: 04.04.2016

<sup>297</sup> Ambasadat, *Turkey Is Albania's Strategic Partner In Balkans* – Interview Ambassador Muçaj, 02.04.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.ambasadat.gov.al/turkey/en/turkey-albania%E2%80%99s-strategic-partner-balkans-%E2%80%93-interview-ambassador-mu%C3%A7aj> accessed on: 04.04.2016

describing this as interfering in internal affairs of the country. He said that "Albania is not a province of Turkey ... internationally recognized terrorist organizations are only determined by UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. No country's president can ask for such a thing while on his visit to another country."<sup>298</sup> He continued with his statements by saying: "this is vassalage. It is not reasonable and it is unacceptable! That is why something like this should categorically be rejected. We will reject this because we are not a Turkish colony!"<sup>299</sup> Regarding this request, an advisor to the Albanian president from 2007 to 2010, said that: "we respect Turkey and Erdoğan, but we have no reason to close these schools."<sup>300</sup>

### 5.5.2. Economic aspect

In terms of economy, Albania sees Turkey as an important and crucial country and market. In this regard, Turkey is the fourth commercial partner of Albania.<sup>301</sup> The economic cooperation between Albania and Turkey is increasing. The Albanian president states that: "Turkey's aid has been continuous and uninterrupted in different areas and we'll be forever grateful for the continued assistance of Turkey".<sup>302</sup> The president assesses that there is still space to further increase trade exchange. He especially points that Albania expects Turkish investments in the sector of energy, infrastructure, logistics, etc. Moreover, the field of transport is a very important

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<sup>298</sup> Haberler, *Albanian Lawmakers Reject Erdoğan's Call To Close Turkish Schools*, 15. 05. 2015, retrieved from: <http://en.haberler.com/albanian-lawmakers-reject-erdogan-s-call-to-close-726567/> accessed on: 04.04.2016

<sup>299</sup> Avaz, *Albanski parlament Erdoanu: Mi nismo turska kolonija i nemamo oca izvan zemlje!*, 19.05.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.avaz.ba/clanak/178583/albanski-parlament-erdoanu-mi-nismo-turska-kolonija-i-nemamo-oca-izvan-zemlje?url=clanak/178583/albanski-parlament-erdoanu-mi-nismo-turska-kolonija-i-nemamo-oca-izvan-zemlje> accessed on: 04.04.2016

<sup>300</sup> Cihan, *Albanian lawmakers reject Erdoğan's call to close Turkish schools*, 15.05.2015, retrieved from: <https://www.cihan.com.tr/en/albanian-lawmakers-reject-erdogans-call-to-close-turkish-schools-1787222.htm> accessed on: 06.04.2016

<sup>301</sup> Punetejashme.gov, *Relations with Regional Countries*, 11.05.2011, retrieved from: <http://www.punetejashme.gov.al/en/mission/albania-in-the-region/relations-with-regional-countries> accessed on: 30.03.2016

<sup>302</sup> Top Channel, *Forumi i biznesit Shqipëri-Turqi, vlerësohen marrëdhëniet tregtare*, 13. 05. 2014, retrieved from: <http://top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=299128&ref=ngj> accessed on: 31.03.2016

area where Turkish investments are welcome. The president also praises Turkey's geostrategic role for the Trans-Atlantic Pipeline (TAP) and sees this project as having strategic importance.<sup>303</sup> Moreover, Albania is doing everything that Turkish investments be present on its territory. The Albanian Prime Minister points out that "the weight of great friendship and goodwill between two sides are far more than current concrete results in the field of cooperation, particularly in the field of Turkish investments in Albania".<sup>304</sup> The Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship perceives the foreign policy of Turkey as very positive in terms of economy. He also supports Turkish economic activities in Albania and confirms significant steps forward in bilateral relations. Moreover, in his statement he praises the Turkish economic model and its investments in Albania:

Albania is a totally open and welcomes the investments of Turkish companies. Today Albania is a market for investments of Turkish companies from the most important. I must say that the interest of Turkish companies is growing every day. Today the number of companies operating in Albania, the Turkish joint venture or Turkish-Albanian, is 296 companies. Turkey is one of the most significant stories of economic success through the great turnaround this country has managed to achieve, and I think we have what we learn from the Turkish economic model, and especially the success of the last ten years.<sup>305</sup>

Even though some officials express good economic cooperation and satisfaction with Turkish investments, the Ambassador of Albania in Turkey says that Albania aspires more to be done on economic dimension. The relations between Albania and Turkey have been and are very good. The Ambassador points out that:

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<sup>303</sup> VOA, *Presidentin Turk, Erdogan: Arritjet do t'i ndajmë me vëllezërit shqiptarë*, 13.05.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.noa.al/artikull/erdogan-vjen-ne-shqiperi-prietet-nga-nishani/492593.html> accessed on: 31.03.2016

<sup>304</sup> Koha, *Vizitën në Beograd Rama e vlerëson epokë të re për Ballkanin*, 05.11.2014, retrieved from: <http://koha.net/?id=27&l=32102> accessed on: 31.03.2016

<sup>305</sup> Ekonomia, *Shqipëri – Turqi, marrëveshje të tregtisë së lirë edhe në shërbime e investime*, 18.12.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.ekonomia.gov.al/al/newsroom/lajme/shqiperi-turqi-marreveshje-te-tregtise-se-lire-edhe-ne-sherbime-e-investime&page=14> accessed on: 01.04.2016



Economic relations should be expanded, because Turkey is not yet one of the first economic partners of Albania, but of course Turkey is a sure ally of Albania, a NATO member. At the same time the Government and the Turkish government, are trying and working to bring these relations to the level of strategic cooperation.<sup>306</sup>

### 5.5.3. Socio-cultural aspect

In the context of culture, Albania is interested to deepen its cooperation with Turkey. There are many reasons for better socio-cultural cooperation between the two countries. Albania praises Turkish educational institutions established in Albania. Another factor in the relations between the two states is Albanian Diaspora. With this regard, the Prime Minister of Albania sees Albanians and Turks as a linkage between two countries and as two nations with a common history. In the following statements the PM states:

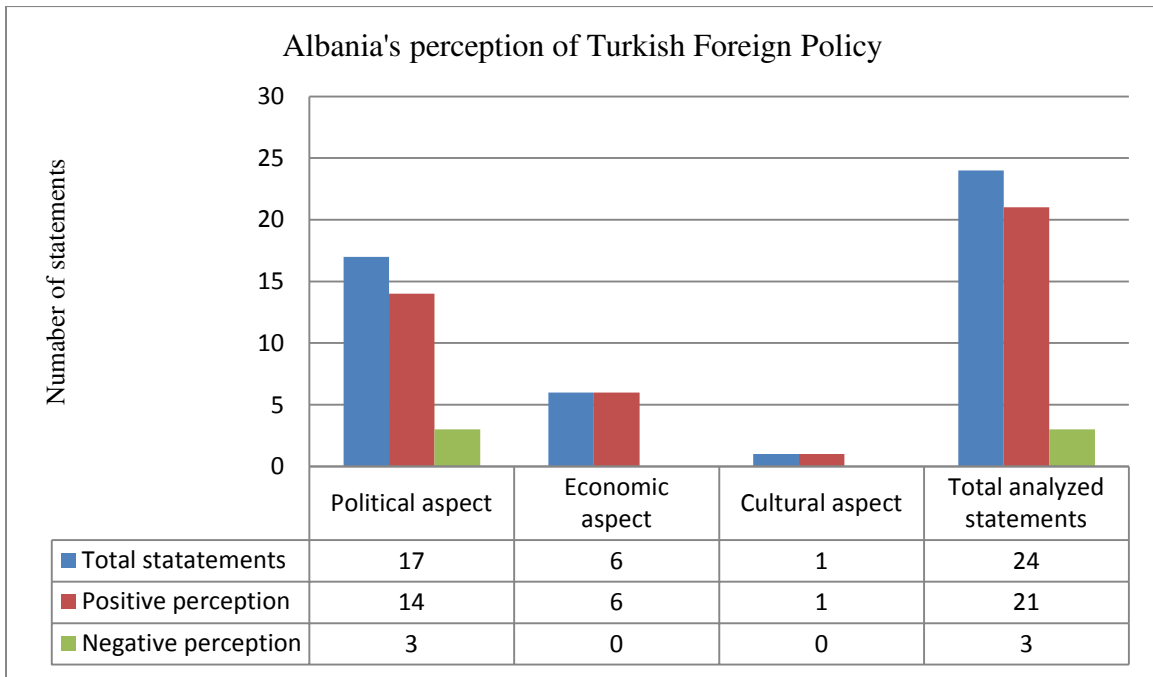
Albanians and Turks have a long history with each other, a story that has led many Albanians to Turkey, many of whom are still there and have built their lives there. I'm always happy to hear the words of all the excellent Albanian representatives of Turkish politics, just as I am very happy that the presence of Albanians in Turkey is one of the strongest bridges linking our two countries.<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> Shqiptarja, *Marrëdhëniet ekonomike me Turqinë, sfida e ambasadorit Muçaj*, 25. 10. 2014, retrieved from: <http://shqiptarja.com/news.php?IDNotizia=248171> accessed on: 04.04.2016

<sup>307</sup> Koha, *Vizitën në Beograd Rama e vlerëson epokë të re për Ballkanin*, 05.11.2014, retrieved from: <http://koha.net/?id=27&l=32102> accessed on: 31.03.2016

### 5.5.4. Conclusion



**Table 5. The number of analyzed statements of Albania's officials regarding the TFP (2010-2016)**

In the case of Albania, I analyzed about 24 official statements regarding Turkey's Foreign Policy perception. Out of 24, 21 statements are positive about TFP. Therefore, Turkish efforts in the political, cultural and economic spheres are welcome in Albania. With regard to the political aspect, 14 statements show that Albania especially appreciates the support and assistance of Turkey in NATO and during the EU accession process. Albania sees Turkey as a partner of strategic importance. Additionally, Turkey is perceived as good partner in security issues, fighting against organized crimes, human trafficking and terrorism. There are as well 3 statements with negative perceptions. These statements reflect opinions of certain politicians who accuse Turkish leaders of trying to interfere in the internal matters of Albania. In the economic sphere, 6 official statements show that Albania is quite satisfied with Turkish investments but it seeks for more investments. Although there is only 1 statement with positive

perception, the cultural aspect is of great importance to both countries. Albania considers Turkish citizens with Albanian origin as a linkage between two countries. Moreover, Albania respects the efforts of Turkish institutions to reestablish the cultural channels and to restore heritage in its territory.

## **5.6. Macedonia: the perception of Turkish Foreign Policy**

### **5.6.1. Political aspect**

Officially, Turkey is labeled as the second country that recognized the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, and as the first country that recognized this country without any reservation regarding identity or language issues. However, after 2006, the communication and cooperation between Macedonia and Turkey started to be more intensive and active in all fields. There are many fields of mutual interest covered with contracts. Macedonia and Turkey have signed about 36 international agreements and 49 international documents, some of them are still in the procedure. Cooperation is intensive in the political, cultural and economic areas. Moreover, Turkey supports the intention of Macedonia to become a member of NATO and the EU. Macedonia especially appreciates Turkey's devotion to promote the constitutional name of Macedonia.<sup>308</sup>

Macedonia perceives Turkey and its foreign policy as very positive in the political field. Therefore, the President of the Republic of Macedonia expresses gratitude to Turkey for the constant support that Macedonia receives in order to become a member of NATO. He underscored that: "Macedonia, having met already NATO membership conditions, appreciates

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<sup>308</sup> Mfa.gov, *Diplomatic relations with Republic of Turkey*, retrieved from: <http://mfa.gov.mk/index.php/en/for-macedonian-citizens/travel-advice/82-2014-03-19-12-37-46/bilateralni-odnosi/sosedstvo/249-sosedstvo-turcija> accessed on: 06.04.2016

Turkey's involvement in this matter".<sup>309</sup> Moreover, the Macedonian president empathetically supports Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. During the protests that swept Turkey in 2013, President George Ivanov said that: "Mr. Erdoğan should not be troubled [by the protests] and should resist. We all know that foreign countries interfere in such events and play their own games. His [Erdoğan's] heart is with ours and our heart is with his".<sup>310</sup> Besides the president, the Prime Minister of Macedonia also praises Turkey's Foreign Policy. During a meeting with Turkish officials, the Prime minister of Macedonia confirmed the stance of his country by stating:

The Republic of Turkey is our years-long friend and strategic partner and this meeting is just another indicator of the excellent relations between Macedonia and Turkey, featuring high-level friendship and understanding, intensive cooperation on all levels, open dialogue, and further realization of projects of common interest in many spheres. The Republic of Macedonia particularly appreciates the fact that the Republic of Turkey in the period since its independence declaration until now is consistent in its respect of Macedonia's national and state interest in bilateral and multilateral communication and that it unconditionally supports our country on its European and Euro-Atlantic road.<sup>311</sup>

The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Macedonia takes a similar stance on TFP. He confirms the deepening of cooperation with Turkey and praises Turkey's support to the Macedonian issues. Regarding this, the Foreign Minister says: "the cooperation between Macedonia and Turkey deepens every year and Turkey's recognition of Macedonia with its constitutional name is very important for us".<sup>312</sup> In addition, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary

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<sup>309</sup> President.gov, *Meeting with Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan*, 05.10.2011, retrieved from: <http://www.president.gov.mk/en/media-centre/press-releases/701.html> accessed on: 08.04.2016

<sup>310</sup> Marusic J. S., *Macedonians Divided Over President's Support for Erdogan*, *Balkaninsight*, 08.07.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/macedonian-president-s-whole-hearted-support-for-erdogan-divides-critics/> accessed on: 08.04.2016

<sup>311</sup> Vlada, *Gruevski-Davutoglu: Macedonia, Turkey foster excellent ties*, 17.09.2015, retrieved from: <http://vlada.mk/node/9423?language=en-gb> accessed on: 10.04.2016

<sup>312</sup> Mfa.gov, *Macedonian Foreign Minister Poposki is in Turkey*, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/macedonian-foreign-minister-poposki-is-in-turkey.en.mfa> accessed on: 12.04.2016

Group for Cooperation with the Parliament of Turkey says that: "Macedonia highly appreciates the support from Turkey, especially bearing in mind the fact that Turkey was the first country that recognized the Republic of Macedonia under its constitutional name and the first country to open its Embassy in Macedonia".<sup>313</sup> Considering the bilateral relations between the two countries, he states that: "Macedonia and Turkey have fruitful cooperation on a bilateral and multilateral level in many fields such as; economy, trade, industry, defense, education and culture".<sup>314</sup> One of the most important factors in the political relations with Turkey is the Turkish minority. Hence, the Member of Parliament and Secretary General of the Movement of the Turks Party in Macedonia sees Turkey as support especially for the Turkish minority in Macedonia. He perceives Turkey as harborage saying that: "our joint position was that, to overcome the current problems we are facing, we need rational steps and we need the continued support from Turkey".<sup>315</sup> Overall, Macedonia maintains very good relations with Turkey in all fields. With this regard, the Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Policy has emphasized that there are "good and friendly relations between Macedonia and Turkey, intensive cooperation on a political and economic level, as well as cooperation in the field of education".<sup>316</sup>

### **5.6.2. Economic aspect**

In economic terms, Macedonia sees the growing Turkish economy as an opportunity to increase cooperation and to attract more investments from Turkey. Therefore, the President of

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<sup>313</sup> Sobranie, *Macedonia and Turkey have excellent cooperation and historical and cultural ties*, 11.01.2012, retrieved from: [http://www.sobranie.mk/2012-b9713eeb-6945-485d-ba90-8e06281e68d8-ns\\_article-macedonia-and-turkey-have-excellent-cooperation-and-historical-and-cultural-ties-11-01-12.nsp](http://www.sobranie.mk/2012-b9713eeb-6945-485d-ba90-8e06281e68d8-ns_article-macedonia-and-turkey-have-excellent-cooperation-and-historical-and-cultural-ties-11-01-12.nsp) accessed on: 14.04.2016

<sup>314</sup> Ibid.

<sup>315</sup> Independent, *Macedonian MP Enes Ibrahim PAYS Visit to Turkish Gran National Assembly*, 09.03.2016, retrieved from: <http://www.independent.mk/articles/28772/Macedonian+MP+Enes+Ibrahim+Pays+Visit+to+Turkish+Gran+National+Assembly%22> accessed on: 14.04.2016

<sup>316</sup> Sobranie, *Macedonia and Turkey have excellent cooperation and historical and cultural ties*, 11.01.2012, retrieved from: [http://www.sobranie.mk/2012-b9713eeb-6945-485d-ba90-8e06281e68d8-ns\\_article-macedonia-and-turkey-have-excellent-cooperation-and-historical-and-cultural-ties-11-01-12.nsp](http://www.sobranie.mk/2012-b9713eeb-6945-485d-ba90-8e06281e68d8-ns_article-macedonia-and-turkey-have-excellent-cooperation-and-historical-and-cultural-ties-11-01-12.nsp) accessed on: 15.04.2016

Macedonia points out that: "Turkey's emerging economy opens serious opportunities for our country. The common past of all Balkan states and the need for pinpointing the traditions of cooperation, coexistence and openness bring us closer".<sup>317</sup> Moreover, Macedonia has traditional relations with Turkey in all fields; however, the economic field should be improved. In this regard, the Macedonian Prime Minister says that: "economic perspective between two countries depend the most on the businessmen, we should create a profitable climate and the businessmen themselves should increase the trade exchange. The businessmen have our support".<sup>318</sup> In addition, the Prime Minister expresses high support for Turkish companies, in his statement he says: "I have twice visited several Turkish cities, met with several businessmen and presented our capabilities. We will continue to make efforts and to help the Turkish companies who want to expand their businesses outside of Turkey".<sup>319</sup>

### 5.6.3. Socio-cultural aspect

In the socio-cultural relations between the two countries, Turkish minorities play a great role. Macedonia respects and praises the contribution of Turks in Macedonian society. With this regard, the Speaker of the Macedonian Parliament, points out that: "there were strong relations between the citizens of both countries".<sup>320</sup> Additionally, he sees Turkish people as contributors to the multicultural society in Macedonia. He says that: "Turkish identity was highly respected in

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<sup>317</sup> President.gov, *Meeting with Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan*, 05.10.2011, retrieved from: <http://www.president.gov.mk/en/media-centre/press-releases/701.html> accessed on: 08.04.2016

<sup>318</sup> Independent, *Davutoglu-Gruevski Meeting: Economic Relations Should Mirror the Political Ties*, 23.12.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.independent.mk/articles/12661/DavutogluGruevski+Meeting+Economic+Relations+Should+Mirror+the+Political+Ties> accessed on: 10.04.2016

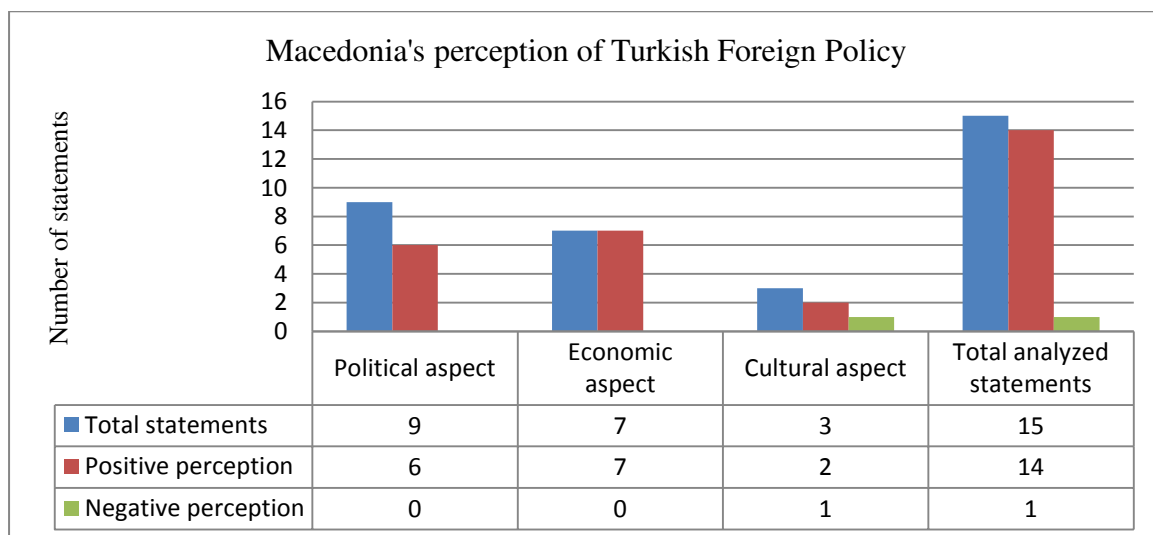
<sup>319</sup> Balkans.aljazeera, *Rast trgovinske razmjene Makedonije i Turske*, 23.12.2014, retrieved from: <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/rast-trgovinske-razmjene-makedonije-i-turske> accessed on: 10.04.2016

<sup>320</sup> Dailysabah, *Macedonian parliament speaker visit strengthens Turkey-Macedonia relations*, 27.06.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2014/06/27/veljanovskis-visit-strengthens-turkeymacedonia-relations> accessed on: 12.04.2016

Macedonia and Turkish people contribute to the country's multicultural nature".<sup>321</sup> Apart from positive factors in this field, Macedonia negatively perceives Turkish impact on Macedonian society through its soft power; namely, because of the great influence of Turkish TV series' on the Macedonian society. In 2012 Macedonia considered passing a bill in order to reduce the impact of Turkish TV series'. In this regard, the Information and Society Minister comments that:

Our own programs have started being broadcast after midnight because of Turkish soap operas. On every channel I see a Turkish soap opera like 'Muhteşem Yüzyıl' [The Magnificent Century], 'Ezel,' or 'Binbir Gece' [A Thousand and One Nights]. They're all fascinating, but to stay under Turkish servitude for 500 years is enough.<sup>322</sup>

#### 5.6.4. Conclusion



**Table 6. The number of analyzed statements of Macedonia's officials regarding the TFP (2010-2016)**

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

<sup>322</sup> Hurriyetdailynews, *Macedonia bans Turkish soap operas*, 14.11.2013, retrieved from: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/macedonia-bans-turkish-soap-operas.aspx?pageID=238&nid=34636> accessed on: 12.04.2016

In the case of Macedonia, I analyzed 15 official statements out of which 14 statements gave a positive perception of Turkish Foreign Policy towards Macedonia. Macedonia appreciates the role of Turkey and its policy towards Macedonian vital interests. In the political, cultural and economic areas of Macedonia, Turkey provides great support. Out of 15, 6 statements confirm that Turkish policy is seen positively by Macedonia. The support that Turkey provides to Macedonia towards its path to EU and NATO integrations is of the utmost importance. In economic terms, 7 statements show that Macedonia sees Turkey's growing economy as opportunity for a further deepening of the economic relations between two countries. Apart from the political and economic fields, 2 official statements show that the cultural area is very important between Macedonia and Turkey. However, Turkey's soft power in Macedonia is perceived as impacting on its society. With this regard, out of 15 analyzed statements only 1 statement confirms a negative perception by a Macedonian official.

## **5.7. Croatia: the perception of Turkish Foreign Policy**

### **5.7.1. Political aspect**

Officially, the relations between Croatia and Turkey are very good and friendly. The two countries are without open issues. Croatia sees Turkey as a very important international partner with whom it successfully develops cooperation at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. This cooperation Croatia exercised with Turkey through the UN, NATO and SEECP is because of a shared common stance with regard to regional and international issues. Moreover, together with Turkey, Croatia works on more initiatives which will bring peace, security and stability at the regional and the international level. Both Croatia and Turkey agree on the issue that integration of all Balkan states into Euro-Atlantic institutions will be a guarantor of stability and



safety.<sup>323</sup> Croatia and Turkey were on the same path towards the European Union. In this period, the president of Croatia had said: "When Croatia becomes a member of the EU, you will have another friend in the club".<sup>324</sup> However, in 2013 Croatia became a member of EU, but Turkey is still on the same path. From this aspect, Croatia hardly supports Turkey on its path towards EU integrations. Now as a member of the European Union, the President of Croatia says:

The European Union should not put new obstacles in Turkey's path to membership. In Croatia we know that some countries that had previously joined the EU were not required to answer some of the questions we had to answer, however there is a large difference between Croatia and Turkey. Turkey is a big country. It has a big population and it is a big country in other aspects.<sup>325</sup>

Turkey, as the second NATO member, strongly supported the integration of Croatia in NATO. Therefore, Croatia respects the enormous support provided by Turkey. Regarding this, the Prime Minister says: "Croatia and Turkey nurtured 'appropriate' relations, without any outstanding political issue, allies in NATO. Turkey has provided its support to Croatia on the road to NATO".<sup>326</sup> Moreover, the two countries share similar stances on regional issues. For example, in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with Turkey, Croatia supports the unity of BiH. With this regard, the Croatian Prime Minister says: "We are committed to the survival and prosperous future of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a single state with three constituent peoples. Croatia and Turkey have a common views on the issue".<sup>327</sup> In addition, the path towards

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<sup>323</sup> Mvep, *Croatian-Turkish bilateral relations*, 01.06.2010, retrieved from: <http://tr.mvep.hr/en/news-and-announcements/croatian-turkish-bilateral-relations,6199.html> accessed on: 15.04.2016

<sup>324</sup> Abdullahgul, *President Gül Accentuates Turkish-Croatian Amicable Relations*, 14.03.2011, retrieved from: <http://www.abdullahgul.gen.tr/news/397/79181/president-gul-accentuates-turkishcroatian-amicable-relations.html> accessed on: 16.04.2016

<sup>325</sup> Dnevnik, *Josipović: EU ne bi smjela Turskoj stavljati nove prepreke*, 04.11.2011, retrieved from: <http://dnevnik.hr/vijesti/svijet/josipovic-eu-ne-bi-smjela-turskoj-stavljati-nove-prepreke.html> accessed on: 16.04.2016

<sup>326</sup> Vesti, *Kosor: Hrvatska i Turska imaju zajedničke poglede o BiH*, 27.11.2010, retrieved from: <http://www.vesti.rs/Vesti/Kosor-Hrvatska-i-Turska-imaju-zajednicke-pogled-e-o-BiH.html> accessed on: 18.04.2016

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

European Union has brought these two countries even closer. Croatia sees Turkey as of the great importance for the whole of Europe. Thus, the Foreign Minister of Croatia says that:

Turkey is a very important factor in the region. The theme of the European Union is very important. Turkey and Croatia together started accession negotiations with the EU. This is one of the cornerstones of our relations. In this period, we have become an EU member, not because we were a lot better, but we are smaller. Croatia is a country which believes that Turkey's EU membership is very important for both Turkey and the EU. This is very important issue in the development of the whole of Europe.<sup>328</sup>

As very good partners, Croatia and Turkey have signed a memorandum to further cooperation in European issues. With this regard, the Foreign Minister said: "Croatia supports Turkey's path and membership in the EU. We believe it would be beneficial for both parties. The Memorandum of Understanding will enable further cooperation in the field of European affairs".<sup>329</sup> Croatia hardly supports Turkey to become a member of the EU. As well, Turkey has Croatian support in all other issues also. When there was discussion about the refugee crisis, the Foreign Minister pointed out: "Fortunately some measures are being taken to talk to our Turkish partners. This is the most important thing. These people come via Turkey and Turkey absolutely deserves more financial help after having hosted so many Syrian refugees".<sup>330</sup> Additionally, after Croatia officially became a member of the EU, the Speaker of the Parliament of Croatia has said:

Croatia has become a member of the EU, but has not moved away from the Balkans. We remain friends with Turkey, we advocate a policy of enlargement of

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<sup>328</sup>Trt, *Vesna Pusić u Ankari: Hrvatska vjeruje da je članstvo Turske u EU-u veoma važno*, 19.12.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.trt.net.tr/bosanski/turska-1/2014/12/19/vesna-pusic-u-ankari-hrvatska-vjeruje-da-je-clanstvo-turske-u-eu-u-veoma-vazno-34792> accessed on: 18.04.2016

<sup>329</sup>Blic, *Turska i Hrvatska potpisale memorandum o saradnji u evropskim poslovima*, 20.12.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.blic.rs/vesti/svet/turska-i-hrvatska-potpisale-memorandum-o-saradnji-u-evropskim-poslovima/nk0y3nz> accessed on: 18.04.2016

<sup>330</sup>Pop V., *The EU is seeking a deal with Turkey to stem the flow of migrants*, Croatia's foreign minister said, Pressreader, 22.09.2015, retrieved from: <http://www.pressreader.com/belgium/the-wall-street-journal-europe/20150922/281732678282690/TextView> accessed on: 18.04.2016

the European Union because it is important for peace in Europe, and in this noble project, there's a place for Turkey as well.<sup>331</sup>

### 5.7.2. Economic aspect

Regarding the economic relations with Turkey, Croatia sees opportunity for improving economic cooperation and increasing trade exchange. Therefore, the President of Croatia says that: "The economic relations are not at the desired level. Croatia must do more here. Croatia has not yet realized the full potential of the Turkish potential".<sup>332</sup> Besides, according to the ex-president of Croatia, Croatia has very good relations with Turkey but it should strengthen the economic cooperation in tourism. With this regard, he says: "Croatia and Turkey have good bilateral relations, but should strengthen economic cooperation, especially in the tourism industry where we can be partners, not competitors".<sup>333</sup> Moreover, the Prime Minister of Croatia also confirms the good relations with Turkey and expresses the need for better cooperation in the economic area of the two countries. She says: "On the economic level, there is a plenty of room for progress. I submitted a list of companies interested in investing in Turkey. From our perspective Croatia is open for Turkish investments".<sup>334</sup> There are certain Turkish investments in tourism and financial sector of Croatia. With this regard, the Foreign Minister of Croatia, welcomes Turkish investments into the Croatian financial sector. Additionally, the tourism sector is also an important area for Turkish investments. The Minister confirmed this by saying: "There

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<sup>331</sup> Dalmacijanews, *Leko u Turskoj, Erdogan pozvao na investiranje u Hrvatsku*, 09.04.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.dalmacijanews.hr/clanak/4gfu-leko-u-turskoj-erdogan-pozvao-na-investiranje-u-hrvatsku> accessed on: 19.04.2016

<sup>332</sup> Dnevnik, *Josipović: EU ne bi smjela Turskoj stavljati nove prepreke*, 04.11.2011, retrieved from: <http://dnevnik.hr/vijesti/svijet/josipovic-eu-ne-bi-smjela-turskoj-stavljati-nove-prepreke.html> accessed on: 16.04.2016

<sup>333</sup> Jutarnji, *Mesić i Erdogan: Ojačati turističku suradnju*, 13.06.2006, retrieved from: <http://www.jutarnji.hr/mesic-i-erdogan--ojacati-turisticku-suradnju/223282/> accessed on: 18.04.2016

<sup>334</sup> Vesti, *Kosor: Hrvatska i Turska imaju zajedničke poglede o BiH*, 27.11.2010, retrieved from: <http://www.vesti.rs/Vesti/Kosor-Hrvatska-i-Turska-imaju-zajednicke-poglede-o-BiH.html> accessed on: 18.04.2016

are significant Turkish investments in the financial sector and tourism in the area of much greater potential in both directions".<sup>335</sup>

Croatian officials especially potentiate the need for deepening of economic cooperation and trade exchange with Turkey. Therefore, the President of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, perceives Turkish capital as opportunity for deepening the cooperation with Turkey. Hence, he says that: "It is a fact that Turkey determined Croatia as the western border of its economic expansion in Europe. This gives us the opportunity for major economic cooperation in the coming period, especially on the issue of Turkish investments".<sup>336</sup> Also, the Director of the Agency for Investment and Competitiveness says that Croatia is very interested in attracting Turkish investors. With this regard, he says: "there will be a more active approach to Turkish investors. We shall intensify our activities towards Turkey. Turks are very good and interesting investors and Croatia is a good step towards the markets of the Western Europe for them."<sup>337</sup> Moreover, the Member of the Croatian National Party in the Croatian Parliament, welcomes and praises Turkey and the Turkish economy. For Croatia, Turkey is a very important market which could help Croatia to reach other markets. With this regard, he says:

Excellent political ties between Croatian and Turkey have not yet been sufficiently monitored with economic activity. So there is an incredible place. Croatia is a place that is attractive for investments by Turkish companies in the tourism, energy, environmental protection and some other activities, on the other hand, Turkey is a huge market with regard to Croatia. Thirdly, to us Turkey is a

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<sup>335</sup> Index, *Pusić poručila Turskoj da su europske kritike "ukori pred priključenje"*, 19.12.2014, retrieved from: <http://www.index.hr/mobile/clanak.aspx?category=vijesti&id=790846> accessed on: 18.04.2016

<sup>336</sup> Bicač D., *Nakon Čefte sansa su Turci, Poslovní*, 10.09.2012, retrieved from: <http://www.poslovni.hr/domace-kompanije/nakon-cefte-sansa-su-turci-215358> accessed on: 19.04.2016

<sup>337</sup> Milovan A., *Turska gospodarska ofenziva: Dogus, Rixos i Eksen postaju vodeća imena hrvatskoga biznisa*, Jutarnji, 16.10.2012, retrieved from: [http://www.jutarnji.hr/turska-gospodarska-ofenziva--dogus--rixos-i-eksen-postaju-vodeca-imena-hrvatskoga-biznisa/1060250/?fb\\_comment\\_id=165510956906560\\_313541](http://www.jutarnji.hr/turska-gospodarska-ofenziva--dogus--rixos-i-eksen-postaju-vodeca-imena-hrvatskoga-biznisa/1060250/?fb_comment_id=165510956906560_313541) accessed on: 19.04.2016

medium through which we can get to Central Asia and Turkic countries where Turkey is the first partner.<sup>338</sup>

### 5.7.3. Socio-cultural aspect

In the context of culture, Croatia perceives Turkey as a very important factor that contributes to cultural understanding. The President of Croatia confirms this by saying that: "Croatia recognizes the importance of Turkey and it takes an important mediating role between different cultures and countries, different regions, south-east Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia".<sup>339</sup> Moreover, Turkish soft power is positively perceived by Croatia. Especially TV series which have huge influence on the Croatian society. These series have brought about the removal of stereotypes and to better understanding of modern Turkey and Turks. With this regard, the Member of the Croatian National Party in the Croatian Parliament welcomes and praises Turkey and Turkish influence stating that:

This large Turkey, as a big market, a great civilization, a great culture, as well as a great tourist power in the Mediterranean, is something that is now entering Croatian homes, primarily due to Turkish soap operas. Turkish TV series, which in the last three years, have helped us to see Turkey through a completely different lens of the modern lifestyle, which is not different from the way we live.<sup>340</sup>

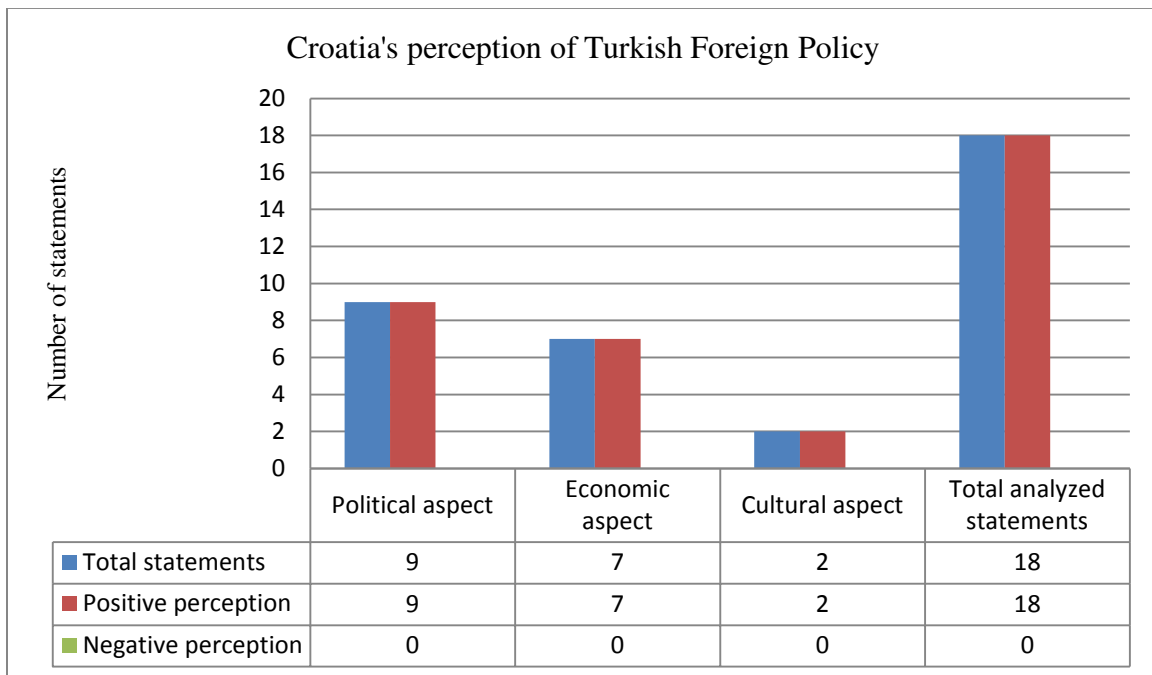
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<sup>338</sup> Begovic M., F., *Richembergh: Saradnja RH i Turske benefit za obje zemlje*, AA, 02.12.2013, retrieved from: <http://aa.com.tr/ba/politika/richembergh-saradnja-rh-i-turske-benefit-za-obje-zemlje/302900> accessed on: 19.04.2016

<sup>339</sup> Trt, Grabar-Kitarovic na Hrvatsko-Turskom privrednom forumu u Zagrebu: Turska pripada Evropi, 27.04.2016, retrieved from: <http://www.trt.net.tr/bosanski/region/2016/04/27/grabar-kitarovic-na-hrvatsko-turskom-privrednom-forumu-u-zagrebu-turska-pripada-evropi-479321> accessed on: 28.04.2016

<sup>340</sup> Begovic M., F., *Richembergh: Saradnja RH i Turske benefit za obje zemlje*, AA, 02.12.2012, retrieved from: <http://aa.com.tr/ba/politika/richembergh-saradnja-rh-i-turske-benefit-za-obje-zemlje/302900> accessed on: 19.04.2016

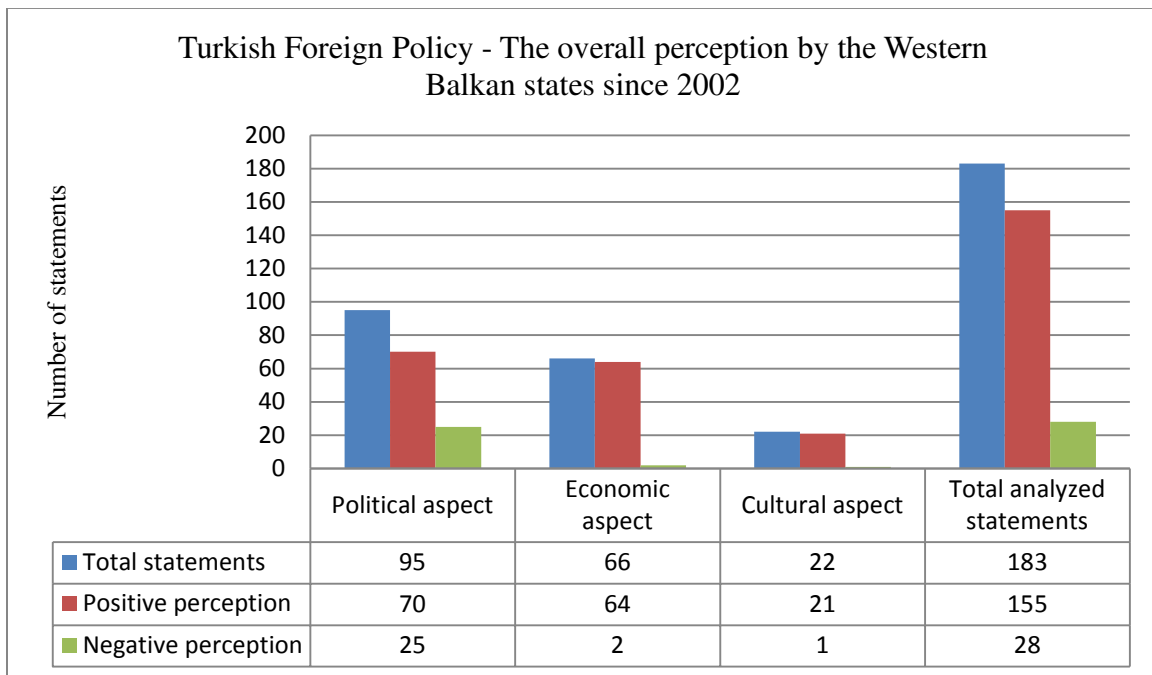
#### 5.7.4. Conclusion



**Table 7. The number of analyzed statements of Croatia's officials regarding the TFP (2010-2016)**

In the case of Croatia, I analyzed 18 official statements. All statements analyzed were positive about Turkey's Foreign Policy towards Croatia. Namely, Croatia sees Turkey as a very important factor in the region. Relations between the two countries are good and friendly. In the economic field, 7 official statements show that Turkey is considered to be an economic partner with whom Croatia wants to deepen its cooperation. Also, Croatia would like to attract more Turkish investors. From the political perspective, 9 statements show that Croatia gives enormous support to the Turkish path towards EU integrations. Additionally, Croatian regional and international policy is in line with the Turkish in some aspects. Both countries have the same stance when it comes to the support of Bosnia and Herzegovina unity and other regional questions. In the cultural field, 2 statements confirm that Croatia and Turkey have good cooperation. Turkish cultural influence is especially appreciated by Croatia.

### 5.8. The overall assessment of Turkish Foreign Policy by the WB states



**Table 8. The number of analyzed statements of the overall perception of the Western Balkan States regarding the TFP (2010-2016)**

In this research I analyzed a total of 183 official statements concerning Turkey's Foreign Policy in the Balkan region. This research shows that the Western Balkan States, out of the total statements analyzed, give 155 official statements that positively perceive Turkish foreign policy towards their states. The majority of these positive statements are related to the political, economic and cultural influences of Turkey. While the minority, or 28, of the official statements show negative reaction to the Turkish influence in the Balkan region. These statements are mostly related to the political aspect. As well as this, it is important to note that in the case of Croatia, Kosovo and Montenegro there are no negative reactions on TFP related to any of the aspects, while the major negative reactions come from BiH and Serbia.

In the political field, 70 official statements show that the Western Balkan States appreciate the Turkish support that they receive on their path towards EU and NATO integrations. Turkish support towards the Western Balkan States' vital interests on the national and international level is another positive factor which is positively perceived. Moreover, Turkey's contribution to reconciliation of the Balkan States through different initiatives is especially respected. Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia and Croatia have no political objections towards TFP. In the same field, out of the total number of statements, 25 official statements show negative reactions towards Turkey and its foreign policy. Namely, some of the Western Baltic States' officials condemn the interfering of some Turkish officials in the internal affairs of their countries. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the president of the Serb entity sees Turkey and its policy as unjust and destructive in BiH. Therefore, the Serb entity is the most critical about Turkish Foreign Policy. The second most critical country about TFP in this field is Serbia. Turkish support to Kosovo and the Turkish approach to regional issues are criticized by Serbia. There are also some negative reactions by Albanian politicians regarding the interference in the internal matters by the Turkish president.

In the economic area, out of the total statements, 64 statements show that the Western Balkan States welcome the Turkish investments but they seek further deepening of economic cooperation. All Western Balkan countries perceive Turkey as a strategic partner with great market. They are very interested to attract Turkish investments and investors. All the Western Balkan countries have a positive perception regarding this field. However, there are 2 official statements with negative reactions about Turkish economic influence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The president of the Serb entity and the political leader of SBB political party



accuse Turkey of exploiting the BiH capital. Additionally, they accuse Turkey of abusing its economic influence in BiH.

In the socio-cultural field, out of the total statements, 21 statements show that Western Balkan countries express interest for further cooperation in this field. Turkish cultural institutions, Turkish investments in the cultural sector and Turkish minorities are the main factors in the relations between the Western Balkan States and Turkey. All Western Balkan countries express the will for deepening of the cooperation with Turkey in the field of culture. Besides positive perception, only 1 statement shows a negative reaction about Turkish TV series' impact on Macedonian society. One Macedonian official is concerned about the increase of Turkish soft power in Macedonia.

Overall, the Western Balkan States consider Turkey as very good friend and trust their foreign policy. Turkey supports all political processes in the Western Balkan States; it invests in the Western Balkan countries and together with the Western Balkan States shares traditional and cultural values. These factors are the most respectful ones. Even though there are negative perceptions in the political and economic fields, the positive perceptions far outweigh them.

## CONCLUSION

When it comes to the Turkish Foreign Policy shift towards the Western Balkan countries, we can talk about two periods of this policy. The first period is the beginning of the nineties and the second period starts in 2002. In the first period Turkey made very important steps regarding its foreign policy towards the Western Balkan States. It took an active role in resolving the Balkan crisis and preservation of peace and stability. This role paved the way for the future presence of Turkey in the Balkan region. However, the period after 2002 is the milestone of TFP impact in Western Balkan countries. This impact is reflected in the political, economic and cultural fields of the Western Balkan States. Moreover, Turkey created the policy based on common values, common history and tradition of people that live in the Balkans. The main interest of Turkey is to develop a friendly, stable and peaceful environment. Therefore, Turkey supports all political processes of the Western Balkan States such as Euro-Atlantic integrations. Turkey has also concluded many different agreements with these countries on a bilateral level. Its economic influence in the Balkan region is increasing from year to year. This approach of Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Western Balkan States brings certain benefits and competitive advantages for each side.

The Western Balkan countries positively perceive TFP influence since 2002 towards their states. These countries describe Turkey and its foreign policy as friendly. They especially appreciate the support that Turkey provides them regarding the EU and NATO integrations. In the economic field, these countries seek further economic cooperation with Turkey. They see Turkey as a very important strategic partner from whom their countries could have economic benefits. Some countries are expressing satisfaction with Turkish investments while others are

trying to attract more investments from Turkey. In the cultural sphere, the Western Balkan States express interest in further deepening of cultural cooperation with Turkey. These perceptions confirm the analysis of 183 statements of the Western Balkan States' officials. Namely, in 155 official statements or 85% out of the total number of statements, TFP is positively perceived by the Western Balkan States. While, in 28 statements or 15% out of total statements, the Western Balkan States' officials negatively perceive TFP impact in their states. The majority of the analyzed statements of the state officials perceive Turkey and its influence on political, economic and cultural levels in a positive manner. However, the minority of the analyzed statements of the state officials negatively comment on TFP, especially its influence in the political field of their countries.

The findings of this research show us that Turkish Foreign Policy is effective in the Western Balkan States. This is especially seen in the economic field where all the Western Balkan countries express satisfaction with Turkish investments and they tend to intensify the cooperation with Turkey in this area. The willingness of these states for deepening the cooperation with Turkey is a good sign for Turkey to expand its regional influence in the Balkan region. In addition, when it comes to the political level, the Western Balkan countries see Turkey as a friend and a partner at both the international and regional level because Turkey supports all political processes of Western Balkan countries. Moreover, the findings suggest that Turkey should not interfere in the internal affairs of the Western Balkan States because the interference triggers negative reactions towards Turkey and its policy. With its investments, cultural influence, friendly and strategic political approach towards Western Balkan States, from 2002 until the present, Turkey has gained a good image and reputation in the Balkan region.

For future research on the Western Balkan States' perception regarding Turkish Foreign Policy I suggest more in-depth interviews be conducted with the state officials. Because of the extensive work I did in this thesis (by focusing on seven countries), those who plan to do similar work I would advise the focus to be on one state's perception. Additionally, if someone wants to do a comparative approach of these states then I suggest comparison of two countries only. This is because it would be easier for the researcher to operationalize the variables and to answer the research questions. With regards to the perception of the Turkish Foreign Policy, I recommend only one aspect to be examined, either political, economic or socio-cultural. In such a case, the researcher will be directed to the specific question on which a more detailed answer will be given about the perception.

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